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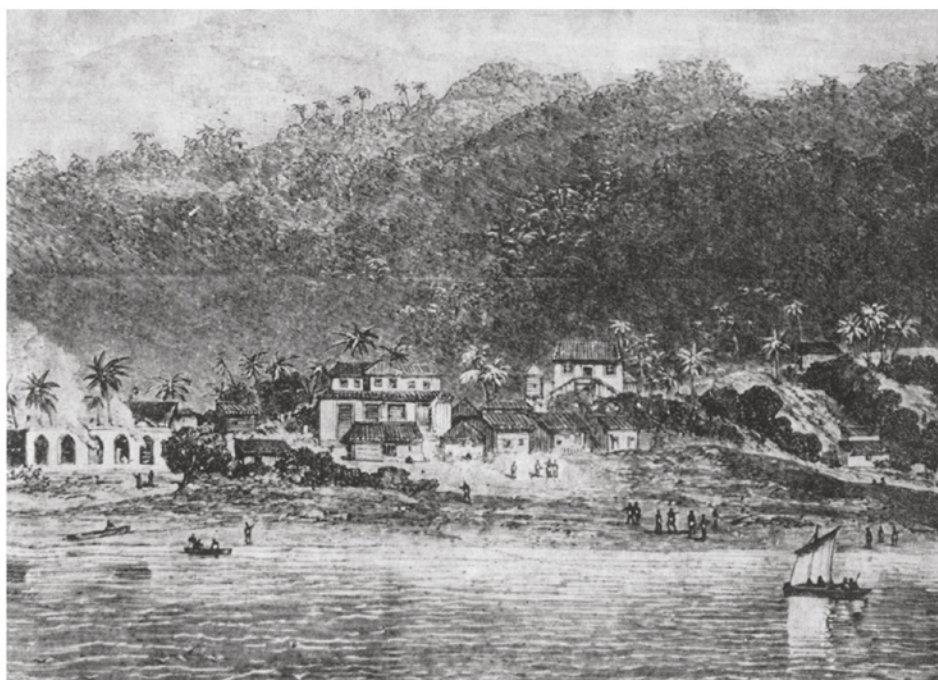
Nº17

# A HISTORY OF JAMAICA

FROM ITS DISCOVERY BY  
CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS  
TO THE YEAR 1872

W.J.Gardner

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**A HISTORY OF JAMAICA**  
**FROM ITS DISCOVERY BY**  
**CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS**  
**TO THE YEAR 1872**

Including an  
Account of its Trade and Agriculture;  
Sketches of the Manners, Habits, and Customs of all Classes  
of its Inhabitants;  
and a Narrative of the  
Progress of Religion and Education in the Island  
BY

**W.J.GARDNER**



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## NOTE TO NEW EDITION

IN connection with this new edition of Rev. W.J. Gardner's "History of Jamaica," it will probably interest readers to know something of his life and work.

The Rev. W.J. Gardner was born November 21, 1825, at Cheltenham, England, was trained for missionary work at Bedford, and after his ordination, which took place at Lower Street Chapel, Islington, sailed with his young wife on November 24, 1849, for Jamaica, where he was appointed to take charge of the Mission station at Chapelton. He removed from thence to Kingston on January 8, 1856, where he became pastor of the North Street Congregational Church. Here he took an important share in promoting the social and religious improvement of the island, the history of which he has told so ably in the volume which he prepared and carried through the press when visiting England in 1873.

Mr. Gardner founded the first building society in Jamaica, also the Society for Promotion of Pure Literature. He was an earnest missionary, and his object was, from the first, to educate his people in the duty and privilege of providing from their own resources for the maintenance of the gospel in their midst. His efforts were not in vain, for at the time of his death he presided over a large and influential Church which had attained the honourable position of self-support.

Mr. Gardner died in Jamaica at the comparatively early age of forty-nine on November 25, 1874. He was buried in the churchyard of North Street Congregational Church, having just completed twenty-five years of missionary work in Jamaica. His death was a great loss, not only to his church, but to the island at large.

ASTON W. GARDNER.

KINGSTON, JAMAICA.

## PREFACE TO THE ORIGINAL EDITION

No work has been published, attempting to give a detailed and systematic history of Jamaica, since the year 1828, when the Rev. G.W.Bridges printed his "Annals." Thirty-five years before, Mr. Bryan Edwards had published his compendious "History of the West Indies;" and as early as 1774, the elaborate work of Mr. Long appeared.

Nearly half a century having elapsed since the date of the latest of these publications, during which time important events have occurred, there was ample room for another history, which, while not neglecting the records of the past, should faithfully register those of more recent days.

The books above alluded to were written by men who were identified with slavery, and looked upon all public events as they affected the maintenance of that system. Mr. Edwards was the most liberal in his views, but Mr. Bridges, though a clergyman, was one of its most determined advocates.

The history of the colony naturally presents itself under a very different aspect, to men of the present day, to what it did to those writers. And yet the fierce struggle for emancipation is so far an event of the past, as to allow a calm and dispassionate estimate to be made of the character of men who, trained amid the influences of slavery, struggled to uphold a system now almost universally condemned.

In writing the history of the colony during the days of slavery, the author has availed himself of the labours of those who have preceded him, but the sources from which they derived their information have been carefully investigated. The public records of the colony have been searched, and a great mass of books and pamphlets, published from time to time, examined. In fact, no source of information to which it was possible to gain access has been neglected. Whether the writer has succeeded in eliciting the



truth, so often obscured by party strife, his readers must determine. He can honestly say that such has been his endeavour.

The sketches of the habits, manners, and customs of the people will, it is hoped, illustrate the progress which has taken place in the social life of the island; while the history of religion and education has been penned in a spirit of kindly sympathy with all earnest Christian workers.

If in any quarter complaint may be made that the work does not enter so largely into certain recent occurrences as might be desired, it must be borne in mind that what is still the subject of controversy can hardly be said to belong to the domain of history; and yet the hope is expressed that the statements made may be accepted as facts, and thus prove of value in forming a correct judgment of the true character of those painful events.

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# History of Jamaica

## PERIOD I

### DISCOVERY BY COLUMBUS, AND SPANISH OCCUPATION

#### CHAPTER I THE DISCOVERY

WHEN Christopher Columbus, worn out with years of hardship, anxiety, and cruel neglect, was dead, Ferdinand of Spain ordered a magnificent monument to be prepared, on which was inscribed: A CASTILLA Y. A, LEON NUEVO MUNDO DIO COLON. (To Castile and Leon, Columbus gave a new world.) Yet it was not to Spain alone, but to mankind the New World was given. For though prior to the brilliant discoveries of Columbus at the close of the fifteenth century, the inhabitants of the Eastern hemisphere were ignorant of the vast continent of America, there can be little doubt that in coming ages its history is destined to surpass in interest that of most other portions of the globe.

The early history of Columbus, his long, and for years ineffectual struggles to gain attention to his ideas; the unfavourable circumstances under which he at length set forth on his voyage of discovery, cannot be recapitulated here; they belong to the life of the great navigator. It can only be briefly recorded that on his first

voyage he discovered some of the Bahama Islands, Cuba, and Hayti; and that on his second voyage he made arrangements for the partial colonization of Hayti, and then proceeded to visit Cuba. He was as yet quite ignorant of the true character of the discovery he had made, and was under the impression that Cuba was the extreme eastern point of the continent of Asia. He supposed that by sailing along the coast he would ultimately arrive at Cathay, and other countries described by Marco Polo and Mandeville. While thus engaged he heard repeatedly from the natives, with whom he kept up constant communication, of an island lying to the south abounding in gold. Of this place he had heard something during his first voyage, and on Saturday, May 3rd, 1494, he changed his course and sailed in the direction indicated.

In a few hours the blue summits of lofty mountains were discerned, and an Indian fisherman who accompanied him informed him that the land was called "Xaymaca," a word signifying "a land of springs." This word, with a slight modification, the island still retains.

It was not until two days later that the great navigator reached the shore, and this fact may explain the discrepancy found in the dates ascribed to the time of discovery. Columbus was filled with admiration as he looked upon the magnificent scenery. Hills and valleys, forests and savannahs, or prairies, diversify the northern coast he was then approaching. He was also much struck by the signs of abundant population, indicated by the numerous little villages.<sup>1</sup> As he came within two or three miles of the shore, he was met by a fleet of seventy canoes, filled with Indians, all gaily painted and adorned with feathers. They appeared less peaceful than the inhabitants of Hayti and Cuba, for they brandished wooden lances and swords, and uttered yells of defiance. The conciliatory measures of Columbus prevented any collision, and presently his ships anchored in a harbour to which, on account of the beauty of the surrounding scenery, he gave the name of Santa Gloria. It is now called Port Maria.<sup>2</sup> This harbour not being sufficiently sheltered, especially as one of his three vessels required

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Martyr. "Decades," pp. 20, 21. English translation.

<sup>2</sup> Southey thinks it was St. Ann's Bay, but evidence is in favour of Port Maria.

repair, he next day sailed a few leagues to the westward, to a more secluded place, which he called Ora Cabecca, or as it is now pronounced, Oracabessa. He was not allowed to enter without molestation; a boat he had sent to take soundings was attacked by two large canoes, but the Indian arrows fortunately fell short. The boat was recalled, and Columbus with his little fleet sailed boldly into the harbour, the shores of which were surrounded by armed people. Though reluctant to proceed to extremities, Columbus thought it necessary to overawe the natives. The whole of the boats, well armed, were sent ashore, and a few Indians wounded by arrows discharged from crossbows: a large bloodhound was let loose, which so terrified the poor creatures that they fled in the greatest confusion. Columbus then took possession of the land in the name of Ferdinand and Isabella, the Spanish sovereigns.

Very early next day six Indians appeared on the shore as messengers of peace. They were kindly treated and presented with trinkets. Very soon the shore was lined with great multitudes of people, who brought provisions of a superior quality, though similar in kind, to those cultivated on the neighbouring islands. During the few days that Columbus remained in harbour nothing occurred to disturb the friendly relationships thus established. Leaving this spot, Columbus coasted the island in a westerly direction, almost constantly surrounded by the canoes of the natives, who came off from all parts, and manifested the greatest desire to exchange whatever they possessed for trinkets.

Having reached the extremity of the island, and the wind being favourable for reaching Cuba, the fleet steered in that direction, attended by a young Indian who, notwithstanding the entreaties of his friends, insisted on accompanying the wonderful strangers to their own land.

From the 18th of May to the 22nd of July Columbus continued to explore the coast of Cuba. He then crossed over to Jamaica once more, and for nearly a month sailed very slowly along the southern coast, baffled by the trade wind, but enraptured by the surpassing loveliness of the scenery. During this cruise numbers of canoes put off from the shore and attended his vessels. At length he reached what is now known as Old Harbour Bay. Here he had a remarkable interview with a cacique, or chief, who, accompanied by his family, approached with all the state and dignity that

prevailed among that primitive people. On the 19th of August, the exploration of the southern coast being complete, Columbus again left the island, the last point visible being that called Port Morant.

With the exception of a circumstance to be presently referred to, nothing more was known of the island for eight years, when it was again visited by the great navigator under circumstances of the most painful character. Though basely used by the nation he had served with much fidelity, the fourth voyage of Columbus was marked by many brilliant discoveries. Great disasters, however, and at length, with only two shattered, leaky vessels, he put into Puerto-Beuno (or Dry Harbour) on the 23rd of June, 1503. Finding no natives and no good water, he next day sailed to a sheltered spot since called Don Christopher's Cove. Here he ran his vessels ashore side by side, and having lashed them together, erected a thatched roof over all. In this pitiable condition the heroic discoverer remained for twelve months, his hardships aggravated by the ravages of a cruel disease, the misconduct of many of his men, and above all by the heartlessness of the governor of Hayti, who for a long time delayed to send succour, though early informed of his misfortunes.

Columbus endeavoured to establish friendly intercourse with the natives, and arranged to pay for all the provisions they brought. At the same time he endeavoured to maintain rigid discipline amongst his men. Diego Mendez explored the island as far as its eastern extremity, and made arrangements with the different caciques to send in ample supplies of food, for which payment was to be made in trinkets, and other articles of European manufacture. This valuable service performed, he volunteered to carry a letter to Ovando, the governor of Hayti, describing the circumstances in which Columbus was placed, and requesting that a ship might be immediately sent to his relief.

With one Spanish comrade and six Indians, Mendez set forth in a canoe on his perilous errand, but hostile Indians encountered him, and obliged him to return.

Nothing daunted he again started, but with six Spaniards and ten Indians, and after terrible hardships, and the death of an Indian from thirst, he reached Cape Tiburon. After a series of adventures he arrived in the presence of Ovando. This man delayed for months to send the required assistance, and it was not till the faithful Mendez, with great difficulty, procured a ship on his own

responsibility, that Ovando sent another to accompany it, and thus enabled Columbus to leave the island.

The period which elapsed between the departure and the return of Mendez had been an eventful one. Sickness had broken out and intensified the feelings of despondency with which the crews regarded their wearisome detention. About the sixth month two brothers named Porras headed a mutiny. The kindly endeavours of Columbus to conciliate the infuriated mob having failed, his brother Bartholomew adopted sterner measures, and ultimately the brothers Porras and the greater portion of the crew seized ten canoes which had been bought from the Indians, and put to sea, intending to reach Hayti. The attempt failed, provisions fell short, and the Indians who had been forcibly impressed by the mutineers as rowers were cast overboard: some clung to the sides of the canoes, but their hands were cut off. The Spaniards returned to land, and subsequently made two other equally fruitless attempts to reach Hayti. For a long time after this they wandered about the east end of Jamaica, ill treating the Indians and seizing their provisions; and to add to their perfidy, told these poor people to go to Columbus for payment, and to kill him if he refused.

The supplies, which had hitherto been freely brought to the stranded vessels, now began to fail, and it was at this crisis that Columbus resorted to the often told expedient to work upon the fears of the Indians.

Knowing that an eclipse of the moon was at hand, he gave out that the great God he worshipped was angry with the people of the land for not supplying his wants, and that at a certain hour he would hide the moon in darkness. So it happened. In terror the Indians besought him to intercede on their behalf; this, after some reluctance, he promised to do, and as the darkness passed away they ascribed it to his prayers. From that day there was no scarcity of food, though the Indians could not understand how these strange foreigners could consume ten times as much as they were accustomed to do.

A heavy trial now arose from another quarter. Ovando had secretly sent a small ship under the command of Diego de Escobar, an avowed enemy of Columbus, to see in what position that great navigator was really placed. This man delivered a piece of bacon and a barrel of wine to Columbus, waited a few hours for a letter, and then sailed away. A deep gloom now fell upon the minds of all, even the courage of the most faithful began to fail. About this

time the great navigator addressed one of the most pathetic letters to be found on record to the Spanish sovereigns, in which he pourtrayed the accumulating horrors of his position. The letter is even more affecting from the fact that he had but little hope that it would ever reach its destination.

Though Columbus had sent to Porras a portion of the trifling present he had received at the hands of Escobar, that bad man was far from reciprocating this act of generosity, and endeavoured to excite the evil feelings of his companions still more by declaring that no vessel had arrived; that what people thought they saw was only a phantom ship, caused by the magical arts of Columbus; and foolish as this may appear, it gained credence in that superstitious age. At length the mutineers returned to the neighbourhood of the ships, and took possession of Mayma, an Indian village situated near the spot where Seville was subsequently erected.

They soon after proceeded to attack Columbus; but Bartholomew, with a few brave men, sallied forth, and failing in an attempt to make an amicable arrangement, he took Francisca de Porras prisoner, and slew several of his followers. Thus the rebellion was crushed, and soon after the ships sent by Diego Mendez and Ovando arrived. Columbus, in the joy of deliverance, was ready to forget past misconduct, and all save Francisca were freely pardoned. On the 28th of June, 1504, the island was left, and for a few years appears to have remained unvisited. But the quietude of Indian life was again to be disturbed; and a reign of cruelty, followed by the total annihilation of all the aboriginal inhabitants, was only too soon inaugurated.

## CHAPTER II

### SPANISH OCCUPATION

THE only authentic notice we have of Jamaica, between the first and second visit of Columbus to its shores, is of an incidental character.

The enterprising though unscrupulous navigator, Alonzo de Ojeda, during his explorations in these seas ran short of provisions, and despatched a caravel to Jamaica, under the command of Juan de Vergara, to see what could be obtained. An ample supply of food was procured from the natives, though on what terms does not appear. This was about the year 1502.

To this same Alonzo, in concert with Diego Nicuessa, the island was subsequently assigned by the court of Spain as a kind of common appanage to the government of Darien, which had been conferred upon them. These men soon quarrelled about the limits of their respective districts, but Diego Columbus, the son of the great discoverer, settled the difficulty so far as it related to Jamaica. The same dishonourable course of conduct pursued towards Christopher Columbus had been adopted in reference to Diego. But he was not disposed to submit quietly to the wrong, and instituted proceedings in the grand court of the Indies to obtain possession of all the privileges which belonged to him by right of inheritance from his father. The result was that he was declared to be hereditary viceroy and high admiral of all the lands Columbus had discovered; and that he was entitled to one-tenth of the gold and silver which should at any time be procured. In face of this verdict, the king refused to confirm him in anything beyond the government of Hayti, and it is questionable if he would have done even this had not Diego strengthened his position by marriage with a lady connected with several of the most powerful families in Spain.

He arrived at the seat of government in July, 1509, and with his wife, who was commonly addressed as the vice-queen, established a reign of splendour and refinement wonderful in a new colony.



Soon after he sent Juan de Esquivel with seventy men to take possession of Jamaica. Ojeda on hearing this declared that he would have the head of Esquivel if he found him in the island. The latter, however, proceeded on his errand in November, 1509, and succeeded in bringing the Indians under subjection without bloodshed. It is a remarkable fact that though this man had subdued an insurrection among the Indians in Hayti a few years before by the adoption of the most severe measures, he was the mildest governor the aborigines of Jamaica ever had. The nobility of his character was very strikingly illustrated a few months after his settlement in the island. Ojeda, after a series of extraordinary adventures, had been cast upon the shores of Cuba in great distress, so that notwithstanding his former threats of vengeance he was compelled to send to Esquivel for succour. A ship was immediately despatched to bring him to Jamaica. Esquivel received him into his dwelling, treated him with the greatest kindness, and when sufficiently refreshed, enabled him to proceed to Hayti. Ever after they were the best of friends.

The adventures of Columbus naturally rendered the neighbourhood of Santa Gloria a place of interest to all who had served under that great hero. Juan de Esquivel, probably assisted by Diego Columbus, accordingly laid the foundations of the first city, near the site of the deserted Indian village of Mayma. It was called Sevilla Neuva, and a few fragmentary remains may still be traced among the cane-fields of Seville estate. When Sir Hans Sloane visited the island, some of the ruins were in a tolerable state of preservation; and from his account, and from other sources of information, an idea may be formed of the original design of its founders.<sup>1</sup> One inscription bore the name of Peter Martyr, who is described as being the abbot. On this account he is often spoken of as having resided on the island, but of this there is no evidence. He was originally a soldier, then, after the fashion of many in those days, he became a priest, and was subsequently appointed a member of the council of the Indies, abbot of Seville in Jamaica, and prior of the church at Grenada in Spain. He died in 1526. Three years before his death he wrote a valuable work on the West Indies. It contains, however, no allusion to his ever having seen his distant cure. In one place he refers to the increasing growth of

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<sup>1</sup> Sir Hans Sloane's "History of Jamaica," vol. i.

*cassia trees*, introduced, he says, by a Spaniard of distinction “into Hispaniola, Cuba, and Jamaica (whose rich, abbilike priory, gracious Ceaser lately gave me).”<sup>1</sup> He speaks again of “my priory Jamaica, by a new name called the island of St. James;”<sup>2</sup> and of a household servant sent to the West Indies “to looke into the affairs of my Paradisian Jamaica.”<sup>3</sup>

Peter Martyr was personally acquainted with most of the early Spanish navigators.

“He loved to talk with marineres,  
That come from a far countree.”

He must have known all the circumstances of the detention of Columbus near his abbey, but his account displays no personal acquaintance with the spot, and for some reason he omits all reference to Ovando.<sup>4</sup>

Returning to the account of Sloane, it would appear that Seville, if completed according to the original design, would have been a place of considerable size. The foundations of houses were found nearly two miles distant from the church; wells were scattered about, and some remains of graveyards indicating a considerable population. A tower or castle provided with battlements had been commenced, its walls some feet thick of mingled stone and brick.

The materials for erecting a very spacious dwelling were also seen, probably designed for the governor, as a ducal coat of arms was engraved on one of the stones. Bridges, in his “Annals of Jamaica,” says the city was often enlightened by the frequent visits of Columbus and his vice-queen. Of this there is no proof. The fact seems to be that, though Diego Columbus evidently contemplated the establishment of a powerful and prosperous appanage to his other possessions, the design was abandoned, and the island never attained to anything approach-ing the splendour of Hayti and Cuba.

The enforced abandonment of Seville led with other causes to the comparative neglect of this beautiful island, and yet the reason

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<sup>1</sup> “Decades of Peter Martyr” (old English translation), Dec, 7, chap. ix. p. 271; see also Dec. 8, chap. i. p. 282.

<sup>2</sup> Dec. 8, chap. ix. p. 311.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 308, 309.

<sup>4</sup> Dec. 3, chap. iv. pp. 116, 117,

that occasioned the early desertion of this infant city will probably never be known with certainty. By some it is ascribed to an assault by the Indians, who are said to have cut off all the inhabitants, but this is most improbable. Other writers ascribe it to a plague of ants making the place utterly uninhabitable. Those who know most of tropical ants will not be so ready as others to pronounce the story incredible, especially as Herrera gives a graphic account of the miseries inflicted by these creatures at Hayti in 1518.<sup>1</sup> Probably the position of the city rendering it peculiarly accessible to the attacks of freebooters was the chief if not the only cause of its desertion. The Spaniards had assumed the exclusive right of traffic in these seas, and in consequence a host of daring adventurers, chiefly French and English, sought to wrest by violence some portion of the enormous wealth occasionally to be obtained. As early as 1526 special instructions were given to Spanish vessels to sail in company, in consequence of the depredations of French corsairs;<sup>2</sup> and there is reason to believe that they frequently landed near Seville. Still it was not deserted during the days of Juan de Esquivel: after governing the island many years he died, generally respected, and was buried at Seville. He had founded two other settlements: Oristan, on the southwestern coast, probably Bluefields;<sup>3</sup> and the place now called Old Harbour, but then known as Puerto de Esquivella. Here he established a shipbuilding yard, and long after the port was a favourite resort of the Spanish galleons on their homeward voyage. Sugar plantations were established in several places, cotton was cultivated, and also the vine, from which good claret was made. The cattle introduced into the island flourished, and numbers were exported to Cuba for sale.

Esquivel was succeeded by Francisco de Garay. He was a cruel, avaricious, and vain man. On reaching Jamaica he at once introduced that system of slavery which had already reduced the Indians in Hayti and Cuba from millions to thousands, and which resulted there, as in Jamaica, in their utter extermination.

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<sup>1</sup> "Herrera Decades," 2, book iii. chap. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Southey's "History of West Indies," vol. i. p. 156.

<sup>3</sup> So frequently alluded to by Gosse, the naturalist, in his works on Jamaica,

An expedition in which he was engaged was almost equally fatal to the few white inhabitants. On the 27th of June, 1518, he set forth with eleven vessels, nearly nine hundred Spaniards, and a great number of Indians, to establish a colony at Panula, on the mainland. But the geography of these districts was then so imperfectly understood that De Garay found, on his arrival, that the place had already been annexed by Cortes. Most of the men who had accompanied him from Jamaica put themselves under the command of that distinguished but unscrupulous leader. De Garay himself soon after died, not without suspicion of poison, though Herenensis, the executioner of justice in Jamaica, quoted by Peter Martyr, ascribes his death to pleurisy.<sup>1</sup> His unfortunate expedition and subsequent emigration so reduced the white population, that a law was passed prohibiting any vessel taking away a man from the island, unless another was left in his place.

The next governor was Don Pedro de Esquimel, who is declared by the historian, Las Casas, to have been the most cruel of all the oppressors of the Jamaica Indians. He was the last governor who resided in Seville, but very little is known of his administration. His name is perpetuated in many parts of the island, which are called after him. The Pedro plains of St. Ann, the Pedro Bluff in St. Elizabeth, and Pedro river, are instances.

For upwards of one hundred and twenty years after-wards, only a few circumstances can be related of the progress of events. Driven from Seville, the Spaniards crossed over the island and settled in the plain near the Rio-Colre, where they built the town of St. Jago de la Vega, or as it is now generally called, Spanish Town. It was thought to have all the advantages of an inland town, in comparative immunity from the attacks of freebooters, and yet was within a convenient distance of the ocean. The square, laid out in the manner of all Spanish-American towns, still remains. The old Hall of Audience was in existence when Sloane wrote his history, and its simplicity quite sets aside the extravagant stories which are sometimes told of the former magnificence of the town. Still it attracted all the more wealthy inhabitants of the colony, became the seat of government, and for a little while gave the title of marquis to Don Luis, the grandson of Columbus. This man, who soon after died, without issue, entered in 1545 into a

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<sup>1</sup> "Decades," pp. 288, 289,

compromise with the court of Spain, by which he gave up all claim to the viceroyalty of the New World for a pension of one thousand doubloons in gold, and the title of Duke de Veragua and Marquis de la Vega. A monastery, an abbey, and two churches were soon built, but of these no vestiges remain.

In 1580 Portugal was connected with the crown of Spain, and in 1608 one of the many law-suits which the descendants of Columbus had to institute for the maintenance of their rights was decided in favour of a branch of the Portuguese house of Braganza; and thus the inhabitants of Portugal began to feel an interest in Jamaica, and many emigrated to it. Among these were a few Jews, who, if known as such, suffered no persecution. Their descendants returned in many instances to the colony after the British conquest, and formed the nucleus of the present numerous Jewish community. Some new life was thus infused into the colony, but too little to overcome the indolence into which the old Creole inhabitants had gradually sunk.

A smart shock was given early in 1597 to their lethargic habits. On the 29th of January an English buccaneer dropped anchor in what is now known as Kingston harbour, and landing near Passage Fort, marched some six miles up the country to Spanish Town, which he plundered without opposition. Other parts of the island were visited, and it was not until the 6th of March that the unwelcome visitors took their departure. They subsequently asserted that they got very little of any value.

Thirty-nine years later Colonel Jackson, another roving adventurer, invaded the colony. He collected a force in the Windward Islands, and landed, like his predecessor, at Passage Fort, with about five hundred men. The colonists had learnt a lesson from their former defeat, and probably had received notice of the danger which threatened them. Jackson found them prepared to oppose his progress, and in the sharp fight that ensued he only gained the victory with the loss of forty men. When he reached Spanish Town, he plundered it of all it contained of value, and only spared it from destruction on payment of a large ransom, obtained, it would appear, from treasure previously hidden. Many of the English deserted their commander, delighted with the beauty of the country; and the survivors were handed over to the English, who conquered the island seventeen years later.

Internal divisions were soon to prove even more disastrous than the visits of buccaneers. The Spanish settlers quarrelled with those

from Portugal, and some of the latter were expelled from the colony, while many Spaniards sought safety in the more prosperous island of Cuba. These circumstances explain the large disproportion between the number of inhabitants and houses in Spanish Town when taken by the English. The town was then thinly populated compared with former years.

Never during the whole period of Spanish occupation had it been a prosperous colony. Its trade was at all times very insignificant. The old port of Esquivel had been superseded by Caguaya, or Port Royal, though this was not a place of much importance. Passage fort was the point of communication with Spanish Town. The trade of the island consisted chiefly in the supply of food to the homeward bound ships from Mexico and other parts of the main land, and a few articles of export. The splendid grazing properties of the soil in St. Ann's and the western parishes had been very early recognised; and though after the decline of Seville that part of the island was nearly deserted, innumerable herds of swine fed there, and at one time it was computed that as many as 80,000 were annually killed for the sake of their lard, which was sent to Havannah to meet the homeward bound fleets from that place. The chief shipping place was the little village of Manteca, now called Montego Bay.

The forests yielded valuable woods; mahogany is spoken of thirty-six feet in girth; *lignum-vitæ* of fabulous size; fustic, and some other varieties, Hides, indigo, and cocoa, the latter quoted at three shillings a bushel, were also exported in small quantities. The ships which reached the colony supplied the inhabitants with dress, wine, and a few other articles of necessity or luxury. Some sugar and tobacco were grown, but chiefly for home consumption. Pine-apples at sixpence each are alluded to by old writers, and Avocado pears—that unrivalled luxury—at threepence each. Naseberries, guavas, plantains, bananas, melons, lemons, oranges, and limes, are all known to have been tolerably abundant.

Peter Martyr says that the island had beautiful trees, some indigenous, others introduced. He describes two sorts of bread; the maize or Indian corn, which multiplies its seed two or three hundred-fold, and which yields two or three crops a year, and what he calls the *iucca* or cassava. He describes it as being made into cakes (*carribi*), which would keep for two years uncorrupted. This plant is now little used for bread, but is well known as the source from which casareep is derived.

A careful comparison of the conflicting accounts to be found in the pages of Sloane, Brown, Blome, and other early writers, gives to Spanish Town, at the time of the English conquest, about 3,000 inhabitants, of whom half were Europeans, or their descendants, and half slaves. The condition of these bondsmen was better than that of most of their class; they lived under the eye of their owners, and were not therefore exposed to the caprice of middle men, or overseers. That they were generally treated with consideration is also apparent from the fidelity with which they clung to the fortunes of their masters after the invasion. It is a noteworthy fact that a negro is spoken of as holding the office of priest when the English conquerors landed. The other parts of the island were very thinly inhabited. Scattered in the villages, and on the plantations, or *hatos*, there was not a larger number than Spanish Town contained.

The habits of the inhabitants generally were not unaffected by the comparative freedom of colonial life, and yet restrained by that dignity which marked the old Spanish families. Amid the staid, yet congenial amusements in which they indulged, and the homely plenty with which the woods and plantations supplied them, they had so much of real enjoyment, as to look upon the demand of the English conquerors, that they should leave the island, as a sentence of banishment from all they held dear. They had ceased to be colonists in the ordinary acceptance of the term; Jamaica was their home; there was no other spot on earth to which they could give that name.

The statements of early writers render it possible to form a fair idea of the general aspect of the island. To the east of Spanish Town, beyond the swamps, was the plain of Liguany, at the sea border of which Kingston now stands. It was then called the *Hato de Liguany*, and in many parts was covered with cedar and other trees. Horned cattle and horses, to the number of 40,000, grazed on the luxuriant herbage. When the English captured the island, the *hato* belonged to a rich widow, who resided at the place then as now called the *Cavaliers*. Here she had a goodly dwelling, and also some sugar works.

Still farther to the east was the *Hato of Ayala*, or *Yalos*, now called *Yallahs*. Here also were vast herds of cattle, and some small sugar works by the rivers. It was much exposed to the attacks of the freebooters, who frequently landed at *Los Ana*, now *Bull Bay*, and at *La Cruz de Padre*, now called *Yallahs Bay*. Yet more to the

east was the Hato of Morant, abounding in hogs and horned cattle. General Venables, in his report to Cromwell, thus described it :—"It is a large and plentiful hato, being four leagues in length, consisting of many small savannahs, and has wild cattle and hogs in very great plenty, and ends at the mine which is at the Cape, or Point of Morant itself, by which towards the north is the Port Antonio."

The whole of the north side of the island was nearly deserted. The ruins of Seville were commonly reported to be haunted by the ghosts of the old cavaliers. A very small plantation, developed into a fine sugar estate by a Captain Hemming after the conquest, and still bearing the name of Seville, was the only cultivated spot for many miles. There was also the little port of Manteca or Montego Bay. The Indians had long been exterminated, their villages had mostly been situated within sight of the sea, if not on the coast. But very far up the hills, approachable then only from the north, may be seen in the parish of Manchester traces of one of their last retreats. The sites of their villages are now covered by a luxuriant growth of ferns. These places, known as the fern grounds, are from twenty to eighty acres in extent, and all around are magnificent forest trees.<sup>1</sup>

No better proof of the utter desolation of this side of the island towards the close of the Spanish occupation can be given than the fact, that when their forces retired to it to make a final stand, the English troops had to be sent round by sea; there was no road across the island which could be used for such a purpose. Returning to the south, the extreme western point occupied by the Spaniards could not have been far beyond where the town of Savanna la Mar now stands. The point of Negril was known as Punto Negrillo. The Hato Cabonico was near Oristan, now Bluefields. More towards Spanish Town the Hato of El Elbano, so called from its forests of ebony; a few miles further was Caobano, or Black River, near which were forests of mahogany. The Hato of Pereda came next on the homeward route; here the English found a small village. The now populous parish of Manchester was uninhabited, many traces of Indian villages were found between Milk River and Alligator Pond, but the Spaniards had exterminated them, driving one party over the Devil's Race, and

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<sup>1</sup> Bridges' "Parish of Manchester," pp. 19, 20.



causing others to hide in the caves of the sea-bound rocks, where their bones have been found. In Vere the Hatos Yama and Guatibocoa appear to have been the only settlements, but in the more mountainous parts of Clarendon there was a little cultivation. At Porus there was a settlement, and a well of Spanish construction yet remains. In the lowlands of Clarendon a little tobacco was grown. In Guanaboa (a district in the English parish of St. John's) cocoa trees flourished. In the Healthshire hills there was some copper, from which it is believed the bells in the old abbey church were cast. The country between Passage Fort and Old Harbour had been cleared by Indians, and was in some parts cultivated by Spaniards.

Such was the island after nearly a century and a half of Spanish occupation. The Indians had been exterminated, but the soil had not been cultivated to any considerable extent. Cuba and Hayti, with the rich mines of Mexico and the South American States, attracted the Spaniards far more than a country in which honest persevering industry was required to secure the advantages which the island has yielded, and will yet yield to a far larger extent. Before tracing the progress made under British rule it is desirable to record some facts relative to the aboriginal inhabitants of the land.

## CHAPTER III

### THE ABORIGINAL INHABITANTS

THE West Indian Islands were at the time of their discovery occupied by two distinct races of Indians. The most warlike of these, called Caribbs, were not found in Jamaica. They mostly inhabited what are now known as the Windward Islands. The Bahama Islands, Cuba, Hayti, Porto Rico, and Jamaica, were occupied by a far more gentle race: indeed, the smaller islands were once inhabited by the same people, but an incursion of the warlike Caribbs from South America destroyed the more effeminate tribes; and probably it was only the distance and extent of the larger islands that preserved them from the same fate.

Any inquiry into the origin of the race which formerly lived in Jamaica would not be attended with satisfactory results, and would, moreover, occupy considerable space. Leaving this question, an attempt will be made to describe them as fully as the imperfect records handed down will permit.

Their complexion was of a tawny or copper hue, but they were painted with a variety of colours. They were destitute of beards, but their hair was long and straight; they were of medium height and gracefully proportioned, but that they were so very beautiful as some assert is fairly open to question. No doubt a few of the women were so, but such cases must surely have been exceptional. As a rule their faces were broad, and the nose flat and wide. But the habit of preternaturally compressing the forehead in infancy gave an unnatural elevation to the hinder part of the head, and must have imparted a most unpleasant aspect to the countenance. The only advantage that appears to have resulted from this practice, was the hardening of the skull to such a degree as not only to enable it to resist the blow of their wooden swords, but, it is said by Herrera, to blunt and even break Spanish blades.

Their clothing was scanty in the extreme, but they were exceedingly fond of paint and feathers. When Columbus first saw the multitude who crowded the shore on his arrival at Jamaica, he

observed that they were painted of almost every colour, black predominating. Some were partly covered with palm leaves, others wore garlands of flowers, and occasionally the neck and arms were similarly decorated. The little squares of cloth worn by the elder women were often dyed. The houses occupied by the Indians were of very simple construction. They usually consisted of a tall central post, around which, at equal distances, were placed a number of smaller posts forming a circle: to these wild canes were lashed; the roof was formed of the same material, and covered either with the tops of canes or by palm leaves.<sup>1</sup> Slight as these structures were, they withstood the violence of ordinary storms.

The caciques dwelt in buildings similarly constructed, though larger and occasionally much ornamented. They were kept clean, the floor was sometimes strewn with palm leaves, just as rushes were once laid down in England, and a shady place beneath trees was usually selected. These cottages often stood alone, surrounded by a little garden, sometimes in clusters of four or five, and occasionally they were arranged so as to form a square.

For sleeping, hammocks were used; *hamac* was the old Indian name. These were made of twine, netted. The twine itself was made from the cotton which grew abundantly in this and other islands, and was often dyed a variety of beautiful colours. These, with a few flat plates on which to dry cassava, some earthen pots and calabashes, comprised as a general rule the furniture of their huts. Some of the caciques were however more favoured. The early invaders speak of seats and other articles of furniture, curiously wrought out of single pieces of wood (generally ebony) into the shape of animals. But such articles were far from common; that they should be seen at all speaks much for the ingenuity and perseverance of the people, especially as they were without tools of iron.

The Indians were very abstemious in their use of food. It consisted chiefly of roots, among which the potato may be mentioned, cassava, and maize. The cassava was prepared, much as it is now, by scraping the roots, cutting it in small pieces, which were then dressed and strained with great care, to extract the water, which is poisonous. It was then made into cakes, which

kept good for some time. The other species of cassava which has no poisonous properties they eat either roasted or boiled.

They were very partial to fruit, of which there was a considerable variety. Fish was in great demand, especially crabs and other shell-fish. The *utia*, or Indian coney, was regarded as a delicacy. Birds were also eaten at their feasts. But the dish most appreciated was the *guana*. The Spaniards first looked with disgust upon this creature; the idea of eating a monstrous lizard some three feet long, and very repulsive in appearance, was something very shocking to them. They, however, learned to like it. Among the Indians it was royal game. The common people reserved them for their chiefs, and they are still tolerably abundant on the islands in Old Harbour Bay.

The practice of smoking tobacco, now so common, was first noticed among these people. The Spanish discoverers were astonished at beholding so many of the natives walking about with what appeared like little firebrands in their hands or mouths. They soon ascertained that these were leaves which they folded within each other, and from which, when lighted, they proceeded to inhale and then puff out the smoke. The surprise expressed at this, to the Spaniards, novel habit, was very great, but they soon learned to adopt it. The natives called the plant *cohiba*, and the word *tabaco* was applied to a tube they sometimes used. Different shapes of *tabacos* or tubes were seen; a very common form consisted of a small straight tube with two branches at one end, which were inserted in the nostrils. This mode of using the plant speedily occasioned semi-stupefaction, and was used by the priests for a purpose to be presently described.

Some little attention was given to rearing this plant, but beyond this, and the cultivation of cassava, maize, pepper, and cotton, very little was done to supplement the bountifulness of nature. Their agriculture was of the most simple character, and consisted in burning off the dry grass and weeds; the signs of this improvident system may be seen in many parts of Jamaica to this day. If maize was to be planted, the earth was drilled with a sharp-pointed stick, and four or five grains dropped in the hole, over which the earth was cast by the foot. For cassava, little hillocks were prepared, into which a few pieces of the root were put. As

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Martyr.

among all uncivilised nations, this work was chiefly done by women. As with agriculture, so with most other pursuits, little energy was displayed. Not only the earth, but the rivers and the sea, yielded so easily all that was required, that like most other people similarly situated, and having no artificial wants, they indulged habits of indolence. Their canoes were well made, of various sizes; some so small as only to hold a single person, others could receive forty, fifty, or even more. They were hollowed out of a single trunk of a *ceiba*, or cotton tree, and not only propelled, but guided by paddles. Those made in Jamaica were of a very superior description and highly ornamented. Columbus measured one that was ninety-six feet in length and eight broad. They were formed by the agency of fire and the stone hatchets still occasionally discovered. The weapons seen among the people were of a very simple kind; a sort of wooden sword, clubs and lances, hardened at the end by fire, and sometimes tipped by a flint or the sharp bone of a fish, completes the list.

They had fishing hooks made of bone, and fastened to a bark line. For larger fish they used lances as harpoons, and they had fishing nets made of cotton and of fibres. The most extraordinary mode of fishing used among them is thus described by Oviedo. He says: "The Indians of Jamaica and Cuba go a fishing with the remora, or sucking fish. The owner on a calm morning carries it out to sea, secured to his canoe by a small but strong line, many fathoms in length; and the moment the creature sees a fish in the water, though at a great distance, it darts away with the swiftness of an arrow, and soon fastens upon it. The Indian in the mean time loosens and lets go the line, which is provided with a buoy that keeps on the surface of the sea, and serves to mark the course which the remora has taken, and he pursues it in his canoe until he conceives his game to be nearly exhausted and run down. He then, taking up the buoy, gradually draws the line towards the shore, the remora still adhering with inflexible tenacity to its prey." In this way turtle have been caught, if we believe the testimony of Oviedo, Herrera, and Peter Martyr.<sup>1</sup>

There was only a very little gold found among the natives of Jamaica. It was obtained by digging small holes by the side of a rapid part of a river. As the water flowed through these, portions

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Martyr. "Decade" 7, book vii, pp. 268, 269.

of the sediment were deposited: if any sign of metal was observed, the sands were collected and subjected to repeated washings until the grains were separated. The process was rude in the extreme, but was imitated by the Spaniards, who caused basins to be hollowed out on the banks of the Rio Minho near the Longville Estate. The Indians wrought the gold they obtained into flat plates and coronets, and used it also to form the noses, eyes, and some other parts of masks made out of wood, but the use of which is not known.

Like many people who are given to habits of indolence, they displayed considerable grace and activity in dancing and other amusements. Not only the evening, but frequently the whole night was spent in dancing: this they accompanied with songs, and also the rude music of a kind of drum. They had also a sort of timbrel made with shells,<sup>1</sup> but this could only be used by the chief person of the village. These dances were often attended by great numbers of people, and were not unfrequently very licentious in their character. Sometimes the performers waved palm branches as they danced, and often these festivities were connected with religious ceremonies.

A very favourite game among the people was called *Bato*: men and women joined in it, and each considerable village had a ground set apart for the game. Sometimes the village was divided into two parties; occasionally one village played against another, in which case the conquered regaled the conquerors at a feast. It was played with a light elastic ball, curiously compounded of roots and herbs. This was thrown from one to another, and was not only caught by the hand, but on the head, shoulders, elbow, knee, back, or foot, and thence propelled again with wonderful dexterity. Sometimes mimic fights or tournaments were organised, but what commenced in sport often terminated in bloodshed. The women, and even men had their household pets, parrots especially, and also alcos, a small dog which never barked.

In their intercourse with each other they appear generally to have been kind. They were extremely so to the strangers who first visited these shores. Many touching instances of this are given in the records of the voyages of Columbus; and when that great mariner was wrecked upon the northern coast of this island, and

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Martyr. "Decade" 3, book vii. p. 132.

on another occasion at Hayti, the good feeling of the people was exhibited in a striking manner. The utter extermination of these races by the Spaniards is one of the darkest blots upon the page of history.

As to the moral purity of the people little can be said. They were grossly licentious, but truth requires that it should be recorded that even here they do not contrast unfavourably with their conquerors. The tale of lust and rapine, inseparable from the complete record of Spanish occupation, is sickening in the extreme.<sup>1</sup>

Their mode of government was very simple in its character, yet not altogether devoid of dignity. The princes or chieftains were called caciques. In some of the small islands a few men of energy obtained authority over a number of inferior chiefs. Thus Hayti was divided into five principalities, some of which were ruled by caciques of very considerable ability. There was one custom in relation to these chiefs of very questionable advantage. It was not thought right that they should die like ordinary mortals, and so when it was supposed that they were near their end, they were strangled. A cacique might suffer one of the common people to be disposed of in the same way, as a mark of favour, otherwise they were left in their hammocks, with bread and water near at hand, to die in solitude. The departed chief was disembowelled, the body dried in an oven, and then placed in a cave. Occasionally the remains of the common people were burnt, more frequently they were buried, but with far less ceremony than the caciques. Among the Caribbs it was usual to bury one of the living wives, or sometimes one of the slaves, with a chief.<sup>2</sup> The dignity of cacique was hereditary, with certain restrictions. Among his many wives there was one who was chief or queen. If she had children the eldest son inherited the title, but if she was childless the dignity did not go to the brothers of the caciques or their descendants, as in Europe, but to the eldest sister and her offspring.<sup>1</sup> The reason assigned for this was that her children must belong to the favoured family, but the supposed children of the brothers might only be such by repute, and not in fact. It was in consequence of this

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Martyr. "Decade" 7, book x. pp. 279, 280.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. "Decade" 3, book ix. pp. 133-144.

arrangement that Anacaona became cacique or princess of one of the provinces of Hayti on the death of her brother Behechio.

It now only remains to describe the religious ideas and customs of the aborigines. Like almost every people they believed in the existence of a Supreme Being. He was immortal, invisible, omnipotent, but not uncreated; for he had a mother who presided either in the sun or moon. He was called by several names, chiefly by that of *focahuna*, and lived in the skies, but they never ventured to address worship to him. They had a number of inferior deities, to whom they offered the homage they withheld from the Supreme. These were called Zemes. They were of several kinds; each cacique had one as his peculiar divinity. Some belonged to families, but it would appear that they were equally beneficent to any one who happened to possess them; hence they were often stolen, just as Rachel carried away the gods of her father Laban. The size and shape of these idols varied greatly; some were made of cotton;<sup>2</sup> most were so small that they could be bound to the forehead of the owner when going to battle, to shield him from danger; others were considerably larger.<sup>3</sup> One preserved to a recent date, and probably now in existence, is described as being "about seven inches in height, composed of a mixture of earth and pulverised stone, baked to the hardness and consistency of granite, and representing the rude features of a human being; a flattened head, with knobs on each side representing ears, and fixed on a conical base." To some of these idols particular powers over the elements, seasons, rivers, seas, woods, &c., were ascribed.

Like most other nations whose legends have been examined, these people had traditions which, though strangely perverted, clearly indicate a misty acquaintance with the facts of creation. In Hayti there was a large cavern of a very remarkable character, in which were images, and to which in times of drought the natives would come with offerings of fruit and flowers, It was from this place the sun and moon were said to have issued.<sup>1</sup> Men came from another cavern, Peter Martyr says from two caverns, one large,

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Martyr. "Decade" 3, book ix. pp. 143.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. "Decade" I, book ix. pp. 50-52.

<sup>3</sup> Peter Martyr obtained much of his information on the religion of the people from a book written by a priest named Ramonus, who lived among the Indians.



from which big men came, while a smaller cave produced those of a lesser stature. They were for a long time destitute of companions, but one day they saw strange creatures that proved to be women: these they could not catch at first, as they were so slippery. The feat was at last accomplished by some hard, rough-handed men, and so the world was peopled. A tradition of the deluge also existed: it was believed to have covered the whole earth, leaving only islands, which were once mountain tops.

In some of the villages houses were set apart for the purposes of their religion. These were under the charge of priests, called Butios; they professed to see visions, to dream dreams, and to foretell coming events. Protracted fastings, and the fumes of tobacco in the way they used it, produced these trances. These men were accustomed to paint their bodies with pictures of the Zemes, and their influence was increased by the knowledge they possessed of the healing art. They however made great use of charms and incantations. Like the African Myal man of the present day, they appeared to suck certain parts of the bodies of their patients, and would then exhibit substances they professed to have brought away.<sup>2</sup> At other times they would assert that they had banished the malady to the sea, to the mountains, or to some distant part. Sir Hans Sloane, in his magnificent work on Jamaica, quotes from Lopez de Gomara to the following effect.

He says the Butios used tobacco to dream and see visions by. They “do eat of this bray’d or made small, but the smoke of it is taken into the nostrils when they are to give answers, by which they see many visions, being not themselves: the fury being over, they recount for the will of God what they have seen. When they cure they shut themselves with the sick, surround him, smoaking him with the same, suck out of his shoulders what they say was the disease, showing a stone or bone they had kept in their mouth, which women do keep as relics.”<sup>1</sup>

Occasionally grand festivals were held in honour of the Zemes. A day having been proclaimed by the caciques, the people from all parts would assemble. A procession was formed, in which men and women appeared in their ornaments, the younger females naked. The cacique marched at the head, beating a drum, but remained at

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Martyr. “Decade ” 1, book ix. p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. “Decade” 1, book ix.

the entrance of the house where the idols were, and into which the women went singing, and bearing baskets of cakes and flowers. These the Butios received with loud cries, and having offered to the Zemes, broke and distributed to the heads of families: these fragments were kept as amulets. Some of the people thrust short sticks in their mouths to occasion vomiting, the females danced, and songs were sung in praise of the Zemes and the caciques.

The priests were far from honest in their proceedings. Once a party of Spaniards surprised some people who were listening to sounds which seemed to proceed from one of the Zemes, and which were received as oracles. On breaking the image it was found that it was hollow, and that a tube passed from it to a bed of leaves, under which an Indian was concealed, to produce the sounds they heard.

Many of their dances were closely connected with their religious worship, and symbolized the more remarkable events in their history. The songs with which they were accompanied were called *Areytos*. In some of these the worthy deeds of the departed caciques were related in a sort of metrical history, very much the same as Homer sung the praise of Trojan heroes. Other songs were of a sacred character, and had reference to their religious faith, while others were prophetic. Among this class was, it is said, one which predicted that strangers, covered with clothing and armed with the thunders and lightnings of heaven, would come among them. These songs were taught the children of the caciques by the Butios, and were accompanied with the music of the drum and the kind of timbrel before described, called a *maguey*.<sup>1</sup>

Such were the habits and customs of these people. The only question that now remains has relation to their ideas of a future world. They supposed that the dead roamed about at night, and remained in gloomy retreats during the day; occasionally they were said to mingle with the living and visit them in bed. They might be known by a particular sign on their person. Such however was not the fate of those who had been good in their lifetime. They were taken to a place of happiness called *Coyaba*. Here they were united to all they had loved best upon earth. In this happy valley they

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Martyr goes more into details in his "Decades," 1, book ix. pp. 52-54, and "Decade" 7, book x. p. 277.

<sup>1</sup> Peter Martyr. "Decade" 3, book vii. pp. 132, 133, &c.

were regaled with luscious fruits, chief of which the guava and mamey were mentioned. No cares or anxieties disturbed their peace; but all who remember the habits of their life, will not be surprised to hear that they anticipated unlimited sensual gratification as one of the highest enjoyments of the future state.

# PERIOD II

## FROM CONQUEST BY THE ENGLISH, 1655, TO THE GREAT EARTHQUAKE, 1692

### CHAPTER I HISTORICAL EVENTS

THE greater number of writers on Jamaica history have thought it desirable to enter upon a consideration of the motives which induced Oliver Cromwell to undertake the expedition to the West Indies; and their views have not unnaturally been affected by the opinion they had previously formed of the general character of that remarkable man.

The investigations of Carlyle and others of late years have contributed greatly to the better understanding of that period of English history; facts which prejudice had concealed for nearly two centuries have been brought to light, and errors, disseminated from generation to generation, have been corrected. Without entering into details, it may be observed that the wrongs inflicted upon British traders and colonists in the West Indies were such as no man really concerned for the glory and honour of his country could behold without resentment, or refrain from taking measures to redress as soon as the opportunity was afforded. That the kings of the Stuart dynasty had tamely submitted to Spanish arrogance and cruelty, was no reason why a true-hearted Englishman like Cromwell should do the same.

As soon as the Protector was able to turn his attention to the relations of the British nation with foreign powers, he proceeded to vindicate its honour where it had been treated with indignity. The gallant Blake, having humbled the Dutch by a succession of brilliant victories, was sent in the year 1655 with a well-appointed

fleet into the Mediterranean, and soon adjusted, in his own practical manner, sundry disputes with different states. The Duke of Tuscany was compelled to give indemnity for wrongs inflicted upon English merchants, and the pirates of Barbary were taught a wholesome lesson. These victories were not without effect in securing religious liberty for the persecuted Waldenses, a race in which Cromwell and his secretary Milton were deeply interested.

The attention of the Protector was not however wholly engaged by these undertakings: another fleet had been prepared, the destination of which was kept a profound secret. When the sealed orders were opened, it was found that the commanders were instructed "to obtain an establishment in that part of the West Indies which is possessed by the Spaniards." Had Blake been in command, it is very probable that Spanish dominion in the West Indies would have been annihilated, and Cuba, Hayti, and Porto Rico have become British colonies; but this naval hero was engaged elsewhere, and so the command of the fleet was entrusted to Admiral Penn, and that of the army to General Venables.

That neither of these men were to be trusted seems almost indisputable: they were both willing to serve the cause of the exiled Stuarts when opportunity offered, but whether Cromwell had any reason to question their fidelity is not so clear. It is probable that he was not free from suspicion, and that it was on that account he appointed three commissioners who accompanied the expedition, and were invested with power to control the operations of the commanders. Their names were Butler, Searle, and Winslow.

Divided responsibility usually results in disaster, and in this case a variety of causes combined to augment the danger. The force under the command of Penn and Venables numbered between six and seven thousand soldiers and sailors. Of the former only a very small proportion were veterans, or even men of military experience, many were volunteers, and more were far better acquainted with jails and vagabondage than martial exploits. It is quite true that victories have been won by armies no better constituted, but in such cases they have been commanded by men of a higher order than Penn or Venables.

It has been customary with Spanish writers to speak of this West Indian invasion as wholly unwarranted and unprovoked. Some English authors and writers of Jamaica history have impugned the motives of Cromwell in directing it, yet it may not unreasonably be asserted that few warlike expeditions have had so good a warrant.

Fortunately, one of the most clear and convincing state papers to be found in the records of these times is extant in reference to these transactions. It was originally written in Latin by the poet Milton, Cromwell's secretary, and an English translation of the same may be found in the collective edition of his prose works.<sup>1</sup>

The cruel wrongs endured by Englishmen from the Spaniards in the West Indies are fully recapitulated by Milton, including not only such wholesale massacres as those at St. Kitts in 1629, at Tortuga in 1637, and at Santa Cruz in 1650; but a number of attacks on English vessels, accompanied by plunder, and often by the murder or torture of the crew, the latter often followed by hopeless slavery in the mines. The plea put forth by the Spaniards that dominion in these seas belonged to them exclusively, by right of discovery and the authority of the pope, is ably dealt with. That Cromwell had ample justification for his dealings with the Spanish nation there can be no doubt. But when Milton, true to his deep religious convictions, wrote of "the most noble opportunities of promoting the glory of God, and enlarging the bounds of Christ's kingdom, which we do not doubt will appear to be the chief end of our late expedition to the West Indies," he described his own aspirations and those of Cromwell, but certainly not those of many who at that time went forth to the Western Archipelago.

The armament was fitted out by General Desborough, and sailed from Portsmouth on the 26th of December, 1654. At the end of next January it arrived at Barbadoes, and notwithstanding the dissensions which even thus early had arisen between the commanders, a number of colonists joined it. The 4000 soldiers who had sailed from England were reinforced by 3000 volunteers from Barbadoes, Nevis, and some other islands; additions were made to the original fleet of thirty ships, and on the 31st of March the combined forces sailed for Hayti, and reached their destination on the 13th of April, 1655.

The calamities which befell the expedition at this place do not properly belong to the history of Jamaica. They furnish the darkest blot on the history of the Protectorate. What better could be expected when neither admiral, general, or commissioners worked in unison? It is to be feared that other causes helped to aggravate the mischief. Pepys in his diary gives his authority for recording a

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. ii., Bohn's Edition.

statement seriously reflecting on the personal courage of the admiral; while Bridges, in his "Annals of Jamaica," refers to an alleged subservience on the part of Venables to female charms.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Hill, in his "Lights and Shadows of Jamaica History,"<sup>2</sup> tells as a fact, received as historical in Hayti, of an attachment on the part of Venables to a Spanish young lady, taken on board his vessel from a prize. This lady, though not reciprocating his feelings, managed, it is said, so to influence him as to lead him into errors which made the capture of Santo Domingo almost impossible. Whatever share cowardice and folly had in the repulse, the results were disastrous in the extreme; and at length the troops were re-embarked, after suffering loss, not only from the enemy, but by hunger and disease. One-third of those who arrived in the ships must have been cut off, for when the fleet sailed for Jamaica, sailors and soldiers only numbered 6550 men, according to the statement of Venables. Winslow, one of the commissioners, died soon after leaving Hayti.

On the 3rd of May, 1655 (just one hundred and sixty years after the date of the discovery of the island), the British fleet rounded the point of Caguaya, or Port Royal as it is now termed, and anchored off Passage Fort. No opposition of a serious character was offered, the fire of the few guns was soon silenced, and on the landing of the troops they fell into the hands of the English; and the four or five hundred colonists, who had been hastily gathered together as the fleet appeared in sight, fled towards Spanish Town. Instead of a prompt and vigorous pursuit, time was wasted in holding a council of war, at which it was decided to advance against the capital and seize it without delay. The troops had hardly begun their march, the rear in fact was not yet in motion, when Venables discovered that there were woods between the fort and the city: these it was feared might conceal a foe, and the general having ordered a retreat to be sounded, went on board ship to spend the night. While the troops were thus left exposed to the night air loaded with the miasma of the adjacent swamps, the inhabitants of Spanish Town, in which they might have slept securely had they been led by a man of spirit, were busily engaged in hiding their more valuable effects. Next day the troops

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<sup>1</sup> Bridges' "Annals," vol. i. p. 202.

<sup>2</sup> Hill's "Lights and Shadows," pp. 18, 19.

advanced, and as they drew near the little city a flag of truce approached, negotiations commenced, and Venables, instead of completing them in the city, which was utterly defenceless in the midst of an open plain, marched his troops back once more to the swamp-surrounded fort! How they passed the night may be faintly conceived by any one who has visited the spot; but morning came at last, and ere long the abbot and the town-major of Spanish Town appeared to treat with the invaders, and gravely assured General Venables that while the terms were under discussion he and his men should be unmolested. Whether this speech awakened Venables to a sense of the absurd position in which he had placed himself, is not recorded, but it appears that he now told the ambassadors that the army had come to occupy the island, and demanded immediate supplies for its support. These were granted, though for another week the troops remained inactive. An offer was made that if the Spaniards would become British subjects they should retain their possessions, or if they wished to return to Europe they were at liberty to do so; but they declared that they had no other home than Jamaica, and would rather die in it than beg their bread in another country.

The governor of the island at this time was Don Arnoldi Sasi, an old man, not destitute of courage, but wanting in that promptness of action which might have enabled him to force the English back to their ships, a step which was strongly urged upon him by some of the Portuguese settlers. On the 11th of May articles of capitulation were signed. They provided that any of the inhabitants who wished to leave the island could do so, but they were only to take with them wearing apparel and food sufficient for the voyage. Time was allowed for this, and the colonists availed themselves of it to retire to the north side of the island with all their valuables and slaves. Previous to this, some of the inhabitants had driven away their cattle, but a Portuguese, Don Acosta, who had assisted in negotiating the treaty, sent a negro, who is also described as a priest, to remonstrate against this breach of faith. The unfortunate ambassador was hanged, and Don Acosta retaliated on his cruel countrymen by informing the English commander of the places where the cattle were secreted.

At last the British troops entered the city and took possession of the empty dwellings. There was not much left to plunder, but that little was soon appropriated, and such houses as were not required for the use of the troops were destroyed. Some diligence was



displayed in digging, not only in the town, but in the neighbourhood, for hidden treasure: a good deal of copper money about the size of a farthing was discovered, but no gold or silver, To these copper desposits the list of secreted money so often spoken of as existing in Cuba doubtless referred.<sup>1</sup> The stories of buried treasure, long handed down among the English settlers, are still occasionally heard, and spots are even now pointed out in which it is supposed they are hidden.

A small leaven of puritan feeling and a large amount of ruffianism led the troops into a display of energy of another kind. Spanish Town, or St. Jago de la Vega, as it was then called, contained an abbey and two churches: these were demolished, and the bells melted down for shot. The anti-papal feeling which led the men to call these places the Red and White Cross Churches, and then to destroy them, was too strong to allow the thought that they might have been appropriated to the purposes of a purer worship.

Events of a painful nature soon followed; the miserable disputes between Penn and Venables became more bitter. The troops were not properly supplied with provisions, and what they had was bad in quality. A letter written by General Fortescue asserts that for forty-eight hours the soldiers in Spanish Town had been without food. This was in the middle of May: in another month two thousand men, or about one half of the army, were prostrated by sickness. The swamps near Passage Fort, and bad and insufficient food, had done their work, and now want of clothing and medicine began to be experienced. The contractors for the expedition were no doubt very guilty, but it must be added that the infatuated soldiery had ruthlessly destroyed vast numbers of the herds of cattle which a little before had covered the plains around Spanish Town and that on the edge of which Kingston now stands. General Venables soon fell ill, and only five field officers were left fit for duty. When matters had thus reached a crisis, a council of war was held. It was recommended that Venables should return to England and represent the condition of the army. But Penn, not thinking it desirable that the general should reach England before him, at once set sail with a portion of the fleet. Venables followed; and it is some satisfaction to know that, on

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<sup>1</sup> Long's "History of Jamaica," vol. i. p. 584.

arriving in England, they were both sent to the Tower by Cromwell. Venables, in a narrative preserved in the council chamber of Jamaica, endeavoured to defend his conduct. It was simply indefensible. It has been said that he was a sincere friend of the Stuart dynasty,<sup>1</sup> but no dynasty could be effectually served by such an incompetent man. He brought reproach and dishonour on the British flag, and then left his unhappy soldiers to perish.

The command of the ships still remaining in the harbour was taken by Goodson, a man of sterling piety and a fine specimen of the British seaman. Major-General Fortescue assumed command of the army; he also was a worthy man, and enjoyed, as he deserved, the confidence of the Protector. Notwithstanding the demoralised state of the army, he had shown considerable activity in sending parties after the fugitive Spaniards and their slaves, who hung about the neighbourhood of Spanish Town, surprising small bodies of stragglers. Some fifty of these were taken prisoners, and half that number killed. When he was left to the supreme command he found that Don Sasi had been able to get over to Cuba, leaving a considerable number of men and their slaves to harass the English, encouraged by the hope that he would soon return with reinforcements. Fortescue had, some time before, pointed out to Venables the road Don Sasi had taken, and the route by which he might be pursued. When he could act independently, that wary Spaniard had made good his escape.

By this time Cromwell had been informed of the disaster at Hayti and the capture of Jamaica. While indignant that so little had been effected, he was not the man to lose any advantage, however imperfect, and he at once took the needful measures to preserve and improve the new colony. Sedgewicke was immediately despatched to supply the place of Winslow, and furnished with the requisite instructions, together with reinforcements and provisions. Cromwell, though he had expected some more important conquest than Jamaica, was determined to make the best of it. He saw that it was a place from which the Spaniards could be assailed, for already his warships and privateers were bringing valuable prizes into harbour. Twelve vessels belonging to the Dutch, whose carrying trade he was determined to suppress, had arrived at one time. Other vessels

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<sup>1</sup> Bridges, &c.

soon followed, and from these prizes the necessities of the soldiers were opportunely supplied. Goodson, who could not remain inactive, made a dash at St Martha, on the Spanish Main; and though the inhabitants fled, with their valuables, into the woods, he burnt the town, captured a few ships, and thirty brass guns.<sup>1</sup>

Letters written to Fortescue and Goodson by Cromwell, during the autumn of 1655, have been preserved.<sup>2</sup> From that addressed to the former, we learn that supplies had been liberally sent, and that active measures had been taken to secure colonists from New England and the Windward Islands. It is added: "Both in England, and Scotland, and Ireland, you will have what men and women we can well transport" Fortescue was in his grave, with thousands beside of the first settlers, ere this letter reached the island; but the tide of emigration, such as it was, poured in. A thousand "Irish girls" are spoken of;<sup>3</sup> and no doubt many made good wives for such as chose to settle down. Scottish "rogues and vagabonds," also alluded to, were a less desirable importation; and yet modern wisdom has helped to people the magnificent provinces of Australia with colonists of a still worse description,

Cromwell's letter to Goodson is full of pious references, but it is by no means deficient in warlike directions. For the Spaniards are likely to send "a good force into the Indies." Twenty ships have been already sent by England, and seven more of thirty or forty guns each will soon follow; and so Cromwell hopes that "the Lord may have blessed" the admiral, so that he may fight the Spaniards; a people upon whom the Protector looked, not without some cause at that time, as an incarnation of evil.

In October, 1655, Sedgewicke arrived, and on the 8th of that month he and others formed themselves into a sort of executive council for the administration of government. Fortescue was president, but dying immediately after its formation, D'Oyley took his place. This officer never seems to have enjoyed the confidence of Cromwell, who suspected him, with good cause, of attachment to the Stuarts. He, however, steadily devoted himself to the improvement of the fortifications, and as letters from England and the statements of prisoners justified the belief that a large Spanish

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<sup>1</sup> Goodson's letter, in "Thurloe," iv, p. 150.

<sup>2</sup> Carlyle's "Letters of Oliver Cromwell." Letters, 141-143.

<sup>3</sup> Long, vol. i. p. 224.

fleet would soon arrive, he strengthened Passage Fort, and erected a battery at Careening Point, mounting twenty-one guns.

While D'Oyley is thus engaged, it will be desirable to take a general view of the infant colony as it was seen by Sedgewicke on his arrival. The brave Fortescue, writing to the Protector not long before his death, had described Jamaica as a "fruitful and pleasant land, and a fit receptacle for honest men." But these he affirmed to be the greatest want. Others wiser than himself, as he modestly observed, declared it to be the best land upon which they had ever set their foot. All it wanted was "godly society," and, "for the present, bread." This the new commissioner found to be only too true. Sedgewicke's letters describe the army as being in a deplorable condition. Many of the officers were sick, many were dead, and not a few had left the island.

The mortality among the soldiers has already been alluded to. It still continued, and their carcases in numerous instances lay unburied among the bushes and on the highways. The living were more like ghosts than men, and numbers lay about the streets crying piteously, "Bread, for the Lord's sake." Distressing as these scenes were, Sedgewicke saw plainly that they were in no small degree the result of gross neglect and reckless folly. Twenty thousand cattle had been killed, and the rest driven so wild that it was almost impossible to catch them. Horses, once accounted as "the vermin of the country," had become so scarce that ships had been sent to New England to fetch some from thence. Provisions had been rooted up and destroyed, with the connivance, if not by the command, of some of the officers, who wished to throw every obstacle they could in the way of colonisation, being anxious to return home.

While such feelings actuated so many of the leading men, it can scarcely be wondered at if they permitted deeds which tended to depreciate the value of the island as a colony. But the culpable neglect of property required for daily wants is less explicable. Though provisions were scarce, still Sedgewicke found thirty thousand pounds of bread, which was mostly reserved for the use of parties sent into the interior, but it was left in casks exposed to the weather in the open air. Clothing, shoes, arms, and ironware lay about the shore, exposed to sun, rain, and thieves. Though provisions were expected, no preparation whatever had been made to receive them. Sedgewicke wondered, as well he might, that so many wise men who had been before him should allow the

property of the state to be thus injured, when a few men might have erected a shed, at least to cover it from the weather. If he was tempted for a moment to blame Fortescue, he soon discovered of what wretched materials his army was composed, and how determined the officers were to throw every obstacle in the way of settlement. He had brought a thousand tons of provision with him, but he was told that not a man could be spared to erect a shed to receive it, and he had to get sailors from the fleet, by whom a storehouse, a hundred feet long and twenty-five in width, was erected in a week. Here all the food he brought, as well as what he could find—undamaged, was stored away, a supply sufficient with care to last for six or eight months. There was no longer occasion for the men to eat dogs, cats, rats, and lizards, as they had been doing. Sedgewicke had, however, grave misgivings as to the future. It was the conduct of the soldiers that gave him concern. "Such kind of spirit breathing in Englishmen," he said, "I never met with till now." Not only were they unwilling to work themselves, but they threw obstacles in the way of others; while choosing rather to starve than work, they claimed all the land near the town, so that Sedgewicke could with great difficulty supply land to a few planters who had lately arrived. He could not refrain therefore from writing to the Protector, advising him that there would again be a want of food unless further supplies were sent.

In the mean time the deadly fever of the West Indies was doing its work. When satiated with victims from among the earlier arrivals, Colonel Humphrey (the son of the Humphrey who had borne the sword before Bradshaw at the trial of Charles I.) arrived with his regiment of 850 men. Within a few weeks not one-third remained fit for duty, and among these, only four of the officers. Tradition says that fifty died on the 5th of November: this is an exaggeration, but the mortality was dreadful, often twenty a day. The water and food were bad; there was no proper hospital accommodation, and no female nurses.

In the midst of all this discontent, desolation, and death, the brave Sedgewicke kept heart of hope, like a true hero as he was. Cruisers were sent out, and brought in many prizes. The parties despatched against the Spanish slaves, who kept up a kind of guerilla warfare, met with occasional success, and many slaves were brought into subjection. A number of the Portuguese, who had never completely amalgamated with the Spaniards, offered to surrender on condition that they might remain as settlers, or leave

the colony: among these were a few Jews. The navy seems to have enjoyed a remarkable exemption from the sickness which, by the end of the year, had reduced the army to less than half its original strength. Goodson worked harmoniously with Sedgewicke, and on the 4th of January, 1666, they unitedly issued a strong proclamation to the soldiers, urging them to turn their attention to the cultivation of the soil, and proposing to allot lands to each man. The officers, who declared that they were urged by the importunities of the men, immediately prepared and presented a petition to D'Oyley, urging the necessity of their withdrawal from the island. Of course it could not be complied with, but it no doubt helped to shorten the days of the gallant Sedgewicke. If now and then a few soldiers commenced a plantation, it was soon neglected and overrun with weeds, though some gardens established by the sailors at Green Bay, for the supply of vegetables and herbs, thrived well.

Among the fugitive Spaniards on the north side of the island, famine and disease were as disastrous as among the English. Some five hundred are supposed to have perished, and only three hundred remained in huts at Rio Hoja in St. Ann's. Some small parties also still lingered along the western coast, and early in February a party of a hundred soldiers was sent against them. About sixty were found in ambush near Parratty Point; after a slight engagement, seven of these were taken prisoners, but the rest escaped. From the prisoners it was learnt that a force of a thousand men was soon expected at Pedro Point. These tidings were not without good results; the prospect of an attack made officers and men more reasonable for a time. A dozen of the former met together, and decided that if the island was planted, the crops would be luxuriant, and not only would there be an abundance of food, but they now saw what the sagacious Cromwell had observed long before, that the island was admirably situated for inroads on the Spanish possessions, and that in fact it might become the magazine of all the wealth in the West Indies. Unfortunately, too many of the officers remained obstinate; they failed to encourage the men, and not a ship sailed for England without crowds importuning Sedgewicke for permission to return.

In April bread was again scarce. The soldiers deserted, not only singly, but in small parties, and though on one occasion three out of a band of twenty were executed, the officers generally were disposed to look on with indifference. Six out of the seven

ministers sent by Cromwell with the army were now dead. Trouble, and want of "godly society," had nearly broken Sedgewicke's heart. In deep anguish he wrote of those around him: "I believe they are not to be paralleled in the world; a people so lazy and idle, as it cannot enter into the heart of any Englishman that such blood should run in the veins of any born in England, so unworthy, slothful, and basely secure." Still he felt the officers were most blameworthy; they alleged the men were unwilling to work, but the truth was, "most certain that *they* are not willing the soldiers should plant."

Early in June orders came that Sedgewicke should assume supreme command, but his days of heroic toil were nearly over, and on the 24th of June his noble spirit passed away. His sagacity discerned the serious blow the retreating Spaniards had inflicted on the colony in liberating their slaves. He expressed his conviction that they must be brought to terms, though he feared their total destruction was the only effectual plan of subjugation. They have, he wrote, "no moral sense, and do not understand what the laws and customs of civil nations mean: we know not how to capitulate or treat with any of them; but be assured they must either be destroyed or brought in upon some terms or other, or else they will prove a great discouragement to the settling of the country." Had he lived he might have succeeded in bringing them into subjection. But for one hundred and forty years these people—afterwards known as Maroons—with numbers continually augmented by runaway slaves, were a plague to the colony. To sketch the history of Maroon depredations would be impossible. They became less ferocious in after years, but in the earlier days of colonial history they rarely gave quarter to any who fell into their hands. Soon after Sedgewicke died a party of forty soldiers were cut off by these people as they straggled carelessly from their barracks. Detachments sent in pursuit only killed some seven or eight, for the Maroons readily retired into mountain fastnesses, where they could exist in comfort without any of those appliances which are indispensable to a white man.

Sedgewicke's death once more reinstated D'Oyley as governor. This general was in secret correspondence with the exiled Stuarts. Apart from this he was a good officer, though by no means well fitted for any other than a military government. It is not very easy, from the imperfect records of these troubled times, to understand clearly all the different agencies which were at work in the colony,

but it may be assumed with tolerable correctness that hostility to the planting interest and to civil government, combined with hatred to the personal adherents of Cromwell, explains the severity with which D'Oyley treated certain persons. Colonel Holdip was removed from his command: his men charged him with oppression, and he was cashiered. The charges were subsequently declared false, and the Protector received him kindly. The truth is, he desired a civil instead of a military government, and he was the "best and most forward planter" in the colony, if the statement of Admiral Goodson is to be believed.

Major Throckmorton was accused of insubordination, tried by a court-martial, sentenced to death, and shot next day. Archbould would have shared the same fate, but the charge was too trumpery, and he was acquitted. Barrington is the name of another officer also obnoxious to the governor, but he had powerful friends in daily intercourse with Cromwell, and it was not safe to meddle with him. The fact is that these men had opened plantations in the fine district of Liguany: like Holdip and all planters they desired a civil government. This, and their industry, was enough to condemn them in the eyes of the majority of the leading men around them.

Cromwell, on receiving intelligence of the death of Sedgewicke, lost no time in supplying his place, and appointed General Brayne, who had been governor of Lochabar, in Scotland. Brayne arrived on the 14th December, 1656, with about one thousand recruits. About the same time Governor Stokes arrived with sixteen hundred persons (men, women, children, and negro slaves) from Nevis. It was stipulated, on behalf of these settlers, that masters should have the same proportion of land assigned for their slaves as was allowed for hired or indented servants. Other planters came from Bermuda and Barbadoes, and about three hundred more from New England. These last, after much hesitation, were persuaded by the favourable accounts which reached them of the fertility of the new colony.

When men of substance were thus being attracted to the shores, it was extremely unfortunate that some of the most unhealthy spots in the island should have been selected for their abode. The richness of the soil around Port Morant is unquestionable, but the Spaniards had always declared the place to be very unhealthy. Goodson, however, recommended it, and Stokes with his followers, delighted with its fertility, settled there. Until houses



could be erected they dwelt in tents, but heavy rains soon fell, and this misfortune, combined with the fatigue and exposure inseparable from the establishment of a new settlement, added to the natural unhealthiness of the spot, speedily occasioned a frightful mortality. By the middle of January three hundred were dead. Still these brave pioneers persevered, and not only proceeded with their houses but erected a fort. At the end of February Stokes and his wife both died; he commended his three sons to the care of Cromwell; the eldest was only fifteen years of age, but their descendants continued for a long time to occupy land in that locality.

Notwithstanding the continued mortality, sweeping away according to Long two-thirds of these planters by the end of March, they still persevered, and sixty properties appear to have been settled according to a return published in 1671. In other districts more favourable to European life the mortality in the early part of 1667 was very great, and some food sent from England being exhausted, a partial famine was once more experienced.

Brayne, like the most noble-minded of his predecessors, still toiled on. He left no effort untried to encourage agricultural operations, and cashiered some officers who continued to oppose the employment of the soldiers. Where small grants of land were made to the men they succeeded, in many cases remarkably well; but where they were employed by officers and planters to work on their estates disastrous results too often followed. The natural desire to obtain the largest possible amount of work from the labourer was not modified by the reflection that a tropical climate is ill-adapted for the out-door toil of the European, unless great care is exercised; and the result of over work and exposure, mingled with intemperate and dissolute habits, occasioned much mortality among the white servants. Free emigration was in consequence greatly retarded, and the colony obtained an ill name which it has not entirely lost to the present day.

Alarmed by the mortality among English labourers, Brayne was induced to apply to Cromwell for an importation of African slaves, enforcing his plea by the argument that as their masters would have to pay for them, they would feel a greater interest in the preservation of their lives than in that of mere labourers, and therefore be more careful only to work them with moderation.

While busily engaged in raising the island to the position of a flourishing colony, Brayne did not forget the Spaniards, who were

preparing to regain it if possible. Military precautions were not neglected. The buildings at Careening Point were greatly improved, and the importance of the spot now called Port Royal was fully recognised. In March a couple of Spaniards were captured by a hunting party. They stated that most of their companions were gone to Cuba, but that about two hundred, including women and children, remained in the neighbourhood of Oristan. A considerable number of negroes still lurked in the woods. Against these a party was sent, which met with some success, but it was no secret that a vigorous effort would soon be made to recover the colony. Ships were accordingly sent home to ask for help, and these bore the first specimens of exportable produce in the shape of a few tons of fustic.

The effort of Brayne in fostering a love for agricultural pursuits was greatly impeded by the fact that the arrears of pay due to the soldiers remaining in the colony were unpaid, while those who had returned to England were paid in full. This could not fail to occasion great dissatisfaction, though Brayne did what he could to allay it, by paying a portion of the arrears due to married officers out of a fund at his disposal: he also represented the injustice in strong terms to the Protector. In other respects affairs generally were beginning to wear a more hopeful aspect. Provisions were plentiful. Colonel Barrington and other planters had succeeded admirably in the growth of tobacco and sugar cane. Small herds of cattle and flocks of sheep were now to be seen in the pastures, and by August of the year which had begun so disastrously the hearts of all who were not negroes or bond slaves were comforted. For these last, the now undoubted fertility of the soil only promised an increase of toil. But over the minds of all men a temporary cloud soon cast its shadow. Brayne was dying. He had suffered much from the fever of the country, and he sought by excessive blood-letting to regain his health. The remedy was as bad as the disease, especially as, notwithstanding his weak state of health, he would not allow himself the needful rest. He had applied for permission to return home, but so long as he was charged with the care of the colony he could not relax his efforts to promote its welfare; and so on the 2nd of September, within ten months of his arrival, he died, worn out, as thousands of gallant Englishmen have been before and since, in establishing the magnificent colonial empire which some in the present day affect to despise. An infant colony could do but little to emulate the funeral pomp of

other countries, but all the posthumous honours that were possible were conferred on the remains of the lamented governor. To him belongs the credit of having established what has been called the "planting interest." But he was far in advance of the age in which he lived, when he proposed that Jamaica should be allowed free trade with all the nations of the world at peace with England. Port Royal, so long the chief commercial mart of the West Indies, was founded by him. Caguaya was the name given to the spot by the Spaniards. This was a corruption of the Indian word Coratoe, given to the great aloe which covered the opposite hills, and was retained by the English until the restoration of the Stuart dynasty.

In consequence of the death of Governor Brayne, D'Oyley was once again called to assume the government of the colony. In this position he was subsequently confirmed, and he held office not only during the remainder of the Protectorate, but during the earlier years of the reign of Charles II. To this monarch he was undoubtedly attached, and it was owing to Cromwell's knowledge, or at least suspicion of this fact, that he had been superseded on former occasions. He appears to have anticipated a similar course of conduct now that he was obliged once more temporarily to take the management of affairs. His letters to Cromwell and Fleetwood<sup>1</sup> are so worded as to indicate no anxiety for a permanent appointment, while they show that he would not decline it if offered. He was appointed, and in his subsequent administration of affairs he gave many indications of talent: he had evidently profited by former experience.

His military qualities were soon called into requisition by a most determined attempt of the Spaniards to regain possession of the colony. Under the auspices of the Viceroy of Mexico and the Governor of Cuba a formidable expedition was fitted out, and in May, 1658, Don Sasi landed on the north side and encamped at Ocho Rios. He was accompanied by about five hundred men, and at once took steps to call in and unite the scattered parties of negroes, and the band of fugitives last heard of at Oristan or Bluefields. These measures had no sooner proved successful than a force of one thousand soldiers arrived from Spain; these landed at Rio Nuevo, and strongly fortified a cliff near the river. They were

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<sup>1</sup> Bridges' "Annals," vol. i. pp. 226, 227.

able to do this without interruption, as some days elapsed before D'Oyley was aware of their presence. To advance by land was impossible, for the interior of the island was little known, the tract followed by the Spaniards across the mountains was not passable for heavy baggage or artillery, and moreover large bodies of troops might easily be cut off by ambuscades, which would be easily planned by the fugitive negroes, to whom the mountains were familiar.

D'Oyley was obliged to advance against the enemy by sea. On the 11th of June he sailed from Port Royal with seven hundred and fifty men. Eleven days were occupied in the voyage, and as soon as the ships were brought to anchor opposite the Spanish fortifications, the soldiers were landed, and immediately drove in an opposing party, with a loss of four and twenty men. An attempt was then made to bombard the fortress, but it was too high to be reached by the guns of the ships D'Oyley had at his command. During the night, which was now commencing, the English were busily engaged in preparing scaling ladders. The Spaniards are said to have spent the time in prayer. In the morning D'Oyley sent a messenger with a flag of truce to demand immediate capitulation. The Spanish commander made a very handsome present to the messenger, and sent a jar of sweetmeats to D'Oyley, but refused to surrender. He probably deemed his position impregnable, elevated as it was on a towering cliff, with a rapid river flowing at its base. Another night passed, and on the morning of the 24th the besieged saw two of D'Oyley's ships working to leeward; they soon opened a brisk fire on the fort, and as they thus engaged the attention of the enemy, D'Oyley having directed the other ships to open fire in front, forded the river at the flank of the battery with most of his soldiers. An entrenched position rather more than a quarter of a mile from the fort was carried without difficulty, and the troops, elated by success, dashed on with their scaling ladders to the walls of the fort, headed by their general. Five times they sought to gain the summit, and as often were they repulsed, but the English were becoming desperate; on all sides they attempted to scale the walls. The Spaniards, perplexed by the cross fire to which they were exposed, at length recoiled, and in a moment the English were masters of the position. The carnage was terrible, and as the now conquered Spaniards sought to escape to the hills behind, they were shot down in great numbers. Upwards of four hundred, or one-third of those actually within the fort, were slain; among these

were two priests. More than a hundred prisoners were taken, together with a royal standard, many other flags, guns, and ammunition. Provisions, wine, and spirits fell into the hands of the conquerors, to whom such refreshments were peculiarly welcome.

The loss on the part of the English was inconsiderable: four officers and twenty-three privates were killed. The victory was attended by results that could scarcely be anticipated. It impressed the Spanish commanders in these seas with a profound respect for British valour, and a powerful fleet of fourteen ships, which was about to sail with large bodies of troops, to complete the conquest of the island, changed its destination and left the Spanish fugitives to their fate. Many of these hapless men made good their escape to Cuba. Some, however, remained, with Don Sasi at their head. Their old slaves still cooperated with them, and a party of these, under the command of St. Juan de Bolas, whose name still lives in that of certain hills in the centre of the island, were very formidable.

Throughout the whole of the next year these Spanish and negro guerilla bands gave great anxiety to the colonists, but early in 1660, D'Oyley learning that about one hundred and fifty of them had left the mountain fastnesses, and were encamped at the old spot at Ocho Rios, determined to attack them. Colonel Tyson was detached with a party of about eighty men and a number of negroes to carry rations and baggage. Advancing overland they surprised the encampment and slew about fifty men; the rest immediately fled. Don Sasi was with them, but managed to reach a spot a few miles distant: here, with some of his friends, he embarked in a canoe and reached Cuba. The place of his final departure is still known as Runaway Bay.

The cruelties so long inflicted on British subjects by the Spanish in the West Indies, forbid much sentimentality in reference to their defeat by D'Oyley; but it is impossible to contemplate the departure of Don Sasi and his few remaining followers without emotion. Jamaica had been to them a much-loved abode, and it had all the charms of home in their estimation; therefore they lingered when others fled and only departed when every hope was destroyed.

It is pleasing to record that Don Sasi lived to a great old age. Following the example of many in the middle ages, he exchanged the sword of the warrior for the cowl of the priest. In a monastery in Spain the remainder of his days were passed. It may be hoped

that, soothed by religious exercises, he enjoyed a tranquillity he could not have known in the days of earthly power, and that thus the evening of life was passed in peace.

Soon after the news of the victory of Rio Neuva reached England, the man by whose energy Jamaica had been annexed to the British dominions closed his eventful career. Cromwell died on the 3rd of September, 1658. His successor, Richard, was not equal to the responsibilities and dangers of the government at home, and it is therefore not at all surprising that he paid little or no attention to this distant colony. And though Charles II. was restored to the throne on the 29th of May, 1660, exactly twelve months passed before any communication from that monarch reached his subjects in Jamaica.

Before entering fully upon this new phase of local history, it will be necessary to review the events which had transpired between the return of D'Oyley from his victory on the north side until the receipt of this intelligence. One of his first acts was to make an excursion to the Spanish possessions on the mainland. Here he plundered the town of Tolu, burnt some galleons, and then returned laden with spoil. The buccaneers now began to resort in great numbers to Caguaya, where they were not only free from molestation, but found an excellent market for their spoil, the proceeds of which they freely expended. The planters here found a ready sale for all they produced, and looked in consequence with complacency on the deeds of the freebooters. The town—as the result of the increasing traffic—was greatly improved, and constituted a naval dépôt. The population of the island was steadily increasing, notwithstanding the mortality among many of the new comers. It was unfortunate for the peace of the colony that among recent arrivals were some Royalists, who sought beyond the seas a safer asylum than they found in their own home. And soon after the death of Cromwell led many of his attached friends to seek safety in the possession with which his name was so naturally associated. Among these, Waite, Blagrove, and some other prominent republicans might be mentioned. Mr. Bryan Edwards mentions a prevailing rumour that President Bradshaw died in Jamaica, and his grave was said to be marked by a cannon placed upon it. Mr. Bridges, while denying this, says a son of Bradshaw subsequently came to the island. But neither statement is correct. Bradshaw never came to Jamaica, and he had no son. During the Protectorate an Independent or Congregational Church

worshipped within the walls of Westminster Abbey. Bradshaw was a member of this church, and when he died he was buried within the Abbey—a funeral sermon from Isaiah lvii. 1, being preached by the Rev. Mr. Rowe, the pastor of the church,<sup>1</sup> His bones, with those of Cromwell and Ireton, were subsequently exhumed and carried to Tyburn, but there is not the slightest proof that they were subsequently brought to the island. A son of Scott, one of the judges of Charles I., subsequently arrived and established the plantation of Y.S. in St. Elizabeth. Harrison was urged to escape to the colony, but declined to do so. His children, however, came after his execution, and settled in St. Andrews. The pedigree of some of the best of the old families in the island may be traced back to prominent Royalists and republicans of the seventeenth century.

However disposed such men might be to forget their former differences when landed on a distant shore, it was impossible that they should never come into collision, and both Bridges<sup>1</sup> and Hill<sup>2</sup> have committed themselves to the opinion that it was to such political animosities the execution of Colonels Tyson and Raymond is really to be attributed. If so, that event was a very dark stain on the character of D'Oyley. But it is simple justice to his memory to say that he appears to have held the reins of government impartially in his later years; and though the mutiny headed by those brave though unfortunate officers was not altogether uninfluenced by old animosities, D'Oyley seems to have dealt with it on its simple merits. Long declares the causes which led to the mutiny to be doubtful. Sir William Beeston, subsequently governor of the island, who arrived at the end of April, 1660 (three months before the mutiny), says: "The men wanted to live no longer as soldiers, but to settle as colonists."<sup>3</sup> This seems to be the simple truth. D'Oyley, as a military man, was strongly attached to a military form of government, and he may have felt that it was the one best adapted to the peculiar circumstances of the colony: he accordingly held a monthly court-martial at Spanish Town. The planters naturally desired a civil government, and many soldiers, weary of military rule, which was all the more burdensome as their pay was in arrears, joined them in their demands. A meeting was held at Guanaboa, in St. John's, when it was determined to set up

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<sup>1</sup> "Christian Witness," 1868, pp. 312–316. Article by Rev. T. Coleman.

a civil government. The regiment of which Tyson was colonel advanced towards Spanish Town, accompanied by numbers of others who sympathised with them, and determined to place Raymond at the head of affairs. D'Oyley hastily gathered together his adherents, and having succeeded in making Raymond and Tyson prisoners, their followers were soon dispersed, mainly through the persuasions and personal influence of Major Hope, of St. Andrews. The two colonels were immediately tried by court-martial and shot. Tradition still points out the tamarind tree in Spanish Town beneath which they fell. In the excitement of the moment D'Oyley either did not remember, or did not care, that he had no legal authority to sanction such a punishment. This was on the 2nd of August, 1660, twelve days after tidings of the restoration of Charles II. reached the island.

The absence of any official instructions from the new monarch occasioned considerable anxiety. As the island had been captured by Cromwell, a general idea prevailed that Charles would restore it to the Spaniards, with whom he had been on friendly terms. The newly-developed zeal of the planters was in consequence checked; the sugar-works and plantations were neglected, and many prepared to leave the colony. At length the king found time to think of Jamaica, and on the 29th of May, 1661, D'Oyley got his commission and instructions. The former was read at Caguaya, which has ever since been called Port Royal. The latter substantially conferred the very privileges struggling for which Raymond and Tyson lost their lives. They provided that D'Oyley should, as soon as possible, call together the principal planters, some other white inhabitants, and the chief officers of the army, and, having read his commission, proclaim Charles II. as king. A council of twelve persons was then to be appointed, including a newly-made secretary. Five were to constitute a quorum. They were empowered to make laws, provided they were not repugnant to those of England; to constitute civil courts, direct the military forces, proclaim martial laws, &c. The governor was directed to discourage drunkenness and debauchery, and to maintain the Protestant religion according to the Church of England. He was

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<sup>1</sup> "Annals," vol. i. pp. 241, 242.

<sup>2</sup> Hill, "Lights and Shadows," pp. 34 35.

"Long's History," vol. i. p. 682.



also to complete the fortifications at Port Royal, to encourage planters, and allot and register lands.<sup>1</sup> A council, which was rather irregularly constituted, was convened. Its members proceeded to frame laws and levy taxes. The expenses of the government were estimated at £1640 per annum; of this £800 was awarded to the governor and £100 to the chief justice. Colonel Ward was the first to hold this office; Colonel Barry succeeded him. That military men should hold such a position seems strange, but there were those who seemed to long for a continuance of the absolute power of the court-martial. And in reference to the execution of a certain man, D'Oyley said it was necessary "to let them see that the law could do as much as a court-martial."<sup>1</sup>

D'Oyley never took kindly to the new form of government. He had been trained to the law, and had held a civil government in Ireland, but the military profession was the choice of his maturer years, and military rule seems to have been his idea of what a colony required. The establishment of the new order of things was by no means agreeable to him, and gave opportunities to the friends of Raymond and Tyson to exult over him. He soon professed a desire to lay down his office, and his wish was gratified. A large number of emigrants, who arrived about the middle of 1662, brought word that Lord Windsor might shortly be expected. The intelligence was correct; his lordship soon came, and D'Oyley left the colony in September. His faults were those of military commanders of the age. He had saved the colony by his brilliant victory at Rio Neuva, but the time had assuredly arrived when it was desirable that another should take his place. Lord Windsor, subsequently Earl of Plymouth, reached Jamaica on the 11th of August, 1662, but was only about two months in the island.

If we may receive the testimony of Pepys, he was ill-suited for the position he occupied. His early return to England was evidently regarded with suspicion. Pepys writes: "Lord Windsor being come home from Jamaica, unlooked for, makes us think that these young lords are not fit to do any service abroad."<sup>2</sup> Ten days after we learn from the same authority that "Lord Windsor came to kiss the duke's hand." He told the duke of his having taken a fort from the Spaniards, and how he got sick on reaching a certain degree of

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix to "Journals of House of Assembly," vol. i. pp. 2-4.

latitude, and never got well (though he did take the fort) till he got to the same spot on his way home. What the duke thought we are not informed, but Pepys was of opinion that the young nobleman was weary of being out of his own country where he might have pleasure, and that it was a great shame for him to go to the playhouse on the first afternoon of his being in town.

Apart from all personal merits or demerits, Lord Windsor's name is a very important one in Jamaica history. His instructions, though in many respects similar to those of his predecessor, differed in some important particulars. A salary of £2000 per annum was awarded him. In four quarters of the island one hundred thousand acres of land were to be set apart as a royal demesne; he was also empowered to grant to himself and his heirs for ever fifty thousand acres. Provision was made for a duty of five per cent. on exports, not to commence, however, for seven years; and this in instructions afterwards given to Modyford was extended to twenty-one years. But the most important clause was one empowering the governor, with the advice of his council, to call assemblies; the laws, however, were not to be in force above two years, unless they had obtained the approval of the crown.<sup>1</sup>

The loss of many valuable records in the earthquake at Port Royal, then the principal seat of government, explains the difficulty which attends a proper investigation of the early history of the colony. Bridges states that Windsor called no assembly.<sup>2</sup> This is opposed to a statement to be found in the twelfth volume of the "Journals of Assembly," which is to the effect that "he named a council of twelve persons, and called an assembly freely chosen by the people at large, who passed a body of laws, containing among others one for raising a revenue, the collection, disposition and accounting for which was regulated by the Assembly."<sup>3</sup> These laws, it would appear, were not confirmed by the king, and so expired in two years.

Of more importance than the instructions was the proclamation<sup>4</sup> from the king, dated Dec. 14, 1661, which was brought over by Lord Windsor. After setting forth the great fertility and other advantages of the island, and providing thirty acres of land for all over twelve years of age residing in it or who should arrive within

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<sup>1</sup> Bridges' "Annals," vol. i. p. 247.

<sup>2</sup> Pepys' "Diary," Feb. 13, 1663.

two years, it proceeds:—"And we doe further publish and declare, that all children of our naturall borne subjects of England, to bee borne in Jamaica, shall from their respective births, bee reputed to bee free denizens of England; and shall have the same priviledges, to all intents and purposes, as our free borne subjects of England."

Lord Windsor also brought a seal designed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and a mace. He soon proceeded to apportion lands. Little was heard of thirty acre lots, but six, ten, and even twenty thousand acres were given to some favoured individuals. Lynch, Hope, Archbould and Beeston had extensive domains: the three last divided about half the parish of St. Andrews. It was inevitable that such vast tracts should remain for the most part uncultivated. Suspicions as to Lord Windsor's intentions led to a great deal of discontent, but if the alarm was justified it soon subsided, the planters being satisfied that no steps were contemplated likely to affect their interests: the more martial among them were gratified by the announcement that an expedition was about to be despatched against St. Jago de Cuba. The justness of such a measure was a question into which few were likely to look. Port Royal was full of adventurers, and twelve ships and upwards of a thousand men were soon equipped. The town was plundered, how many were killed of the inhabitants cannot now be known, but according to Long two thousand houses were destroyed, and thirty-four cannon, of which four were sent to the Tower of London; seven ships, and a thousand barrels of gunpowder, were taken, with a loss to the English of only six men: the conquerors returned laden with spoil.

Lord Windsor, satisfied with his exploit, did not even wait to review the militia which had been organised, but securing his share of the plunder, sailed for home on the 28th of October, to lose his mysterious malady on the voyage, tell the duke of the fort he had captured, and give honest Pepys something to trouble his mind and record in his diary. This closing transaction of the "young lord's" administration is recorded simply as a matter of colonial history. In estimating the character of this and similar transactions regard

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix to vol. i. "Journals of Assembly," pp. 5-8.

<sup>2</sup> Bridges' "Annals," vol. i. p. 252.

<sup>3</sup> "Journals of Assembly," vol. xii. p. 167.

<sup>4</sup> Appendix to "Journals," vol. i.

must be had to the character of the age, and some allowance must be made for the provocations the English had endured for many generations from the Spaniards.

The sudden departure of Windsor was not attended by the inconvenience that might have been expected. Sir Charles Lyttleton had accompanied him to the island as lieutenant. This gentleman at once assumed the government. He was well connected, and was also a distinguished adherent of the Stuarts. Though after his return to England he was promoted to the command of the Duke of York's regiment, and the governorship of Sheerness and Landguard, he resigned these valuable appointments rather than take the oaths at the Revolution, and died at a great old age in the quiet retirement of his country seat at Hagley, in Worcestershire. His first wife having died in Spanish Town, he was married to "La belle Temple," one of the beauties of the court of the second Charles, and for a time maid of honour to the queen. But these associations were no hindrance to the faithful discharge of his duties. The first of these was to provide for the reception of the Spaniards, who might soon be expected. Fort Charles was commenced, and guns mounted to protect more fully the rising town of Port Royal.

While this necessary work was in progress, all the nervous people in the colony were nearly frightened into fits by an announcement of Beeston, who having paid some attention to astrology, declared that "all the planets in the heavens were in Mars ascendant of the Spanish nation;" an astronomical fact which it seems was indicative of no little evil to Jamaica. There really appeared to be some truth in the prediction, for early in 1663 a dozen ships and about fifteen hundred men having sailed for Campeachey, three of the vessels were wrecked. Then another small fleet sent to expel the French from Tortuga was also unsuccessful. But now the stars played the Spaniards false, for the Campeachey expedition conquered after all, the town was sacked, and twenty ships filled with treasure taken. For a long time after this the harbour of Port Royal was continually filled with prizes of immense value brought in by the buccaneers. The leading inhabitants were delighted with the treasures which were thus poured out upon the shores, though they could not forget their internal foes. The Maroon negroes, though comparatively few in number, virtually kept possession of the centre of the island, and did not spare a single white inhabitant who attempted to form a

settlement in the interior. The governor first tried what conciliation could do, and offered twenty acres of land and freedom to all who would surrender. The offer was unheeded. The Maroons were free as the birds of the forest already, and as for land, they had thousands of acres of the richest in the colony amid those mighty mountains, had they cared for cultivation. At length their old commander, Juan de Bolas, was sent against them; but he had lost his ancient skill, fell into an ambuscade, as any raw English recruit might have done, and was killed. Next year a party of whites under Captain Colbeck went against them, but his success was very partial. A treaty they made with him was soon broken. The country had to pay £240,000 from first to last, and the legislatures of successive generations to pass forty-four laws before they were even partially brought under subjection.

The first assembly of which there is any official record was convened early in 1664: writs for the election of thirty persons had been issued in the preceding December. They met at Spanish Town, on the 20th of January, sat till the 12th of February, and then adjourned to the 17th of May, when they assembled at Port Royal. Viewed as legislators, it must be admitted that these gentlemen were extremely jovial; they seem to have enjoyed themselves heartily. It might have been better for the land had all their successors been as light-hearted and genial, for the laws they passed were very sensible ones. But, while granting a revenue, they took good care to keep its disposal in their own hands, a right their successors never relinquished.

It was rather unfortunate for the colony that on the 12th of May Sir Charles Lyttleton returned to England. And like a true-hearted English gentleman, he gave an honest report of the country. The government was not disagreeable, and the people were contented; but while easy to govern, they were "yet apter to be led than driven."

On the 4th of June Sir Thomas Modyford arrived. Four hundred planters from Barbadoes had preceded him by a few days, and he was accompanied by two hundred others. Soon after his arrival he issued writs calling a general assembly, but unfortunately its meetings were not characterized by the same spirit of unanimity as the former one. From this period must be dated the commencement of the incessant struggles between the assembly and council on questions of privilege and the limits of their respective powers. The earliest quarrel was so severe as to result in

bloodshed, Major Joy, of the council, being killed by Captain Abraham Rutter, of the assembly. Early in 1665, the first assembly having been dismissed, a second was convened by the new governor, but party feeling again ran so high that it was soon dissolved, and Sir Thomas did not venture to convene another.

Setting aside all the unworthy personal animosities that prevailed, it appears that the point aimed at by a considerable party in the assembly was to exclude the name of the king from money bills, on the ground that they took immediate effect, and ought not to await his sanction like other acts. This, not without reason, was regarded as simply a step towards asserting that the governor, being the representative of the king, could by his acts bind the crown, and thus all laws might ultimately be put into operation irrespective of the king's consent. In the absence of an assembly, Sir Thomas Modyford and his council appear to have issued several ordinances which had all the force of law, provision being made that they should only continue in operation until another assembly was convened, when they might be either confirmed or annulled.<sup>1</sup>

It is very probable that the colonists would not have submitted so quietly to this suspension of the sittings of the popular branch of the legislature had the time been one of adversity. But the planters prospered, and Port Royal was crowded with ships; gold poured into the coffers of the leading settlers, and patriotism was in consequence at a low ebb. Sir Thomas inaugurated some active measures during 1665 against the Dutch, and the whole of his administration was marked by a series of depredations against the Spaniards. This, it is true, was quite contrary to the letter of his instructions. In these the king enjoined "the inhibition of all commissions granted to private ships and frigates preying upon the neighbouring territories and making prizes at sea."<sup>2</sup> Trade with these colonies was to be encouraged, and Modyford was instructed to make it known that a British ambassador resided at the Spanish court. In spite of all this, the buccaneers pursued their avocation without material interruption during this and many

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<sup>1</sup> "Journals of Assembly," vol. xii. p. 167.

<sup>2</sup> "Instructions, Appendix to Journals," vol. i. p. 10.

<sup>1</sup> Long, vol. i. p. 626.

<sup>2</sup> Beeston's "Journal in Lunan's Jamaica Tracts," p. 284.

succeeding governments, and helped to make Port Royal the most wealthy city then in the West Indies. There seems no reason to doubt that Modyford perfectly understood the wishes of Charles II. in this business. Long, who had ample means of arriving at the truth, declares there was actually a kind of partnership entered into between the king and the governor.<sup>1</sup> Beeston goes even further, and says that the king gave Modyford authority to prey upon the Spaniards, and “to commission whatever persons he thought good to be partners with his majesty in the plunder, they finding victuals, wear and tear.”<sup>2</sup>

There could be no difficulty in communicating to Modyford the real wishes of the king in this profitable but unholy business. Though Modyford, originally a barrister of Lincoln’s Inn, had acquired a fortune as a planter in Barbadoes, of which island he was once governor, he owed his title to the influence of his second cousin, Monk, Duke of Albemarle. Charles was not only grateful to the duke for the important part he had taken in the Restoration, but found in him a safe vehicle of communication with the new baronet. Possibly Monk shared in the spoils.

The commencement of the operations of the buccaneers dates back to the middle of the sixteenth century. Spain had claimed the exclusive right of trade with the West Indies, a right which other maritime nations were not at all disposed to pass unquestioned. Desperate adventurers consequently resorted to those parts, and as Spain was a common enemy, all other national animosities were forgotten in one general alliance; hence the term *brethren* of the coast, by which they were frequently known. As it was absolutely necessary that these men should find some means of victualling their ships, they took possession of an extensive district on the coast of Hayti, well filled with wild cattle. Comparatively secure from interruption, they lived there a wild but jovial life, exchanging it as inclination or necessity prompted for the adventures of the ocean. While on shore they employed a good deal of their time in hunting down the wild cattle. These, when killed, were skinned, and the bones carefully extracted for the sake of the marrow. The flesh was then salted and seasoned, placed on large wooden grates over a slow fire, and deposited, when properly dried, in large sheds, called by the Indians *boucans*: and hence the term buccaneers, applied not only to the hunters on shore, but ultimately to the rovers at sea. The French adventurers were frequently called

filibusters, which was most likely a corruption of the English word freebooter.

These men were rarely known among their companions by their true name; an alias was almost always adopted if they belonged to a good family, as was frequently the case. Regard for the ancient reputation of their house was often mingled with a rough sort of religious feeling. A commander, known by the name of Daniel, shot one of his sailors in church, for misbehaviour during mass. And others exhibited their piety, such as it was, by having prayers daily when at sea.

After a time Hayti became less desirable as a settlement, owing to frequent attacks by the Spaniards. The island of Tortuga was then selected, and though the buccaneers were after a while expelled by the Spaniards, they soon returned to it in greater force, and it continued a favourite rendezvous until the capture of Jamaica by Cromwell. The buccaneers were too acute not to perceive the magnificent market they might here find for their spoil, and the facilities it afforded for repairing their ships and obtaining supplies. Their operations soon began to assume more formidable proportions, and powerful fleets sailed on their work of plunder. Pierre le Grand, Mansfelt, D'Olonnois, and Morgan, are all well-known names among the leaders of these expeditions. Their adventures can be read in other pages; they need not be recorded here. The Spaniards had acted cruelly and selfishly in the days of their early power, but the retaliation of the buccaneers was often absolutely devilish in its character. It is impossible for a man possessed of the strongest nerves to read without horror the account given by Esquimelling of the proceedings of Morgan, who was perhaps less brutish than many others.<sup>1</sup>

The courage of these men was unquestionable; their brutality was utterly indefensible. Mutilations of the person and roasting over slow fires were even light tortures compared with some they inflicted, to extort from captives the secret hoard, which in many cases had no existence except in the avaricious imagination of the conquerors. On the return of these adventurers from a successful foray, Port Royal became a scene of unbridled lust and dissipation.

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<sup>1</sup> The quaint book of Esquimelling should be read by those who wish to obtain an insight into the habits and customs of these people.



A portion of the proceeds of their spoil would be expended on arms, ammunition, provisions, and other necessities, but the bulk was devoted to purposes of debauchery. In a few weeks heaps of treasure would be expended. The ingenuity which was displayed in spending money on purposes of sensuality and folly was remarkable, and as an illustration that may be reproduced in print of the minor follies of the time, it may be noted that Esquimelling tells of his own master broaching a cask of wine in a street in Port Royal, and, pistol in hand, threatening to shoot every passer-by who would not stop to drink with him.

These men found a patron in Modyford, who obtained a share of their gains. During the latter period of Modyford's administration, the king's brother, the Duke of York, who was lord high admiral, established a court here. It simply legalised piracy and prevented unlicensed pirates, for none might murder or plunder "but such as were authorised by powers from our dearest brother, the Duke of York."

In June, 1671, a treaty of peace being signed with Spain, it was thought desirable to recall Modyford. He was actually sent home as a prisoner and cast into the Tower, but this was simply a blind. In 1675 he was back again in Jamaica, and was appointed chief justice. Four years after he died, and his monument in Spanish Town church declares that he was "the soule and life of all Jamaica, who first made it what it now is;...the best and longest governor, the most considerable planter, the ablest and most upright judge this island ever enjoyed." In Lunan's tracts a contemporary describes him as "the openest atheist and most profest immoral liver in the world."<sup>1</sup> Setting aside his moral character, and his complicity with buccaneers, not then regarded as a crime, he appears to have been a really good friend to the island. The testimony of Oldmixon,<sup>1</sup> Leslie,<sup>2</sup> and Poyer,<sup>3</sup> all tend to prove this. He encouraged others by his example in establishing salt works; the ponds still remain in St. Catherine's. He planted cocoagroves; he also paid great attention to the cultivation of the sugar-cane, and to the management of pimento groves. "There was no one," says Leslie, "that ever contributed so much to reduce the island to good order, or improved an estate to better advantage." The improved condition of the island was not, however, effected

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<sup>1</sup> Lunan's "Tracts," p. 112.

without an immense influx of African slaves. It is from the period of Modyford's administration that the slave trade assumed a prominent position in the affairs of the colony. Seventy sugar works were in operation in 1670, and their demands for more labourers were incessant. England still continued to send forth to the colony a considerable number of bond servants.

Modyford was superseded by Sir Thomas Lynch, who, in compliance with the instructions he had received, soon called a meeting of the assembly. On the 8th of January, 1672, the newly elected members met, and sat until June. Several laws were passed and approved of by the governor, but their duration was by his instructions limited to two years. Among the provisions for raising a revenue was one laying a tax on savannah and cleared land of one penny per acre, and a halfpenny per foot on land at Port Royal. A license to sell liquor cost forty shillings. The tonnage dues on English ships were fixed at one shilling a ton, foreign vessels paying double. An effort was made to induce the men engaged in privateers to settle, by offering them a free gift of thirty-five acres of land. This was not much of a temptation, for war was now raging with Holland. Valuable prizes were in consequence brought into Port Royal; one of these contained six hundred negro slaves.

In May next year the assembly again met, but not in an amiable mood. The king's assent to the laws passed in the former session had been withheld, and they now refused to vote money that was urgently required for fortifications.<sup>1</sup> In February, 1674, a new assembly was called together; they worked steadily and hopefully, but though in about a month they framed and passed a useful body of laws, the assent of the king was not obtained, and so in two years they expired. Whether the merry monarch was indifferent to the welfare of the infant colony, or whether there were reasons that seemed to justify the withholding of the royal sanction, is not quite clear; but though for a time the uncertainty relative to the duration of existing laws kept the country in subjection to the imperial will, the day was not very far distant when the lesson thus taught was turned to good account by the colonists, who often

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<sup>1</sup> "History of British Empire in America."

<sup>2</sup> "History of Jamaica."

<sup>3</sup> "History of Barbadoes."

gained their purposes by limiting to short periods the duration of their money bills.

During Lynch's administration the colony continued to prosper. Early in 1673 an official letter to the secretary of state, Lord Arlington, described it as containing upwards of 7700 whites; of these, 4050 were men, as many indeed as there are *now* in the island. There were also rather more than 2000 women and 1712 children. In addition to these it was reckoned that 800 seamen belonged to the ports. The slaves numbered 9504. Only 611 of all classes lived on the north side of the island. St. Catherine's contained upwards of 4000 inhabitants, nearly a fourth of the whole island. St. Andrews, including the little village of Kingston, was next in point of population, containing 2677 bond and free. St. Thomas, in the east, numbered some 400 less; while Clarendon and Port Royal contained each about 2000 inhabitants. In the estimate of the latter, the sea-going portion is not included. With this account of the population of Port Royal it is somewhat difficult to receive the statement that it contained 800 houses: this number, if correct, must have included workshops, stores, &c. That the buildings were not in excess of the demand seems to be proved by the fact that rents were as high as in London.

It seems a strange commentary on the professed desire of the imperial government to put down piracy, to find that when in 1675 Sir Thomas Lynch retired from the government, he was succeeded as lieutenant-governor by Morgan, who, having been knighted, was now known as Sir Henry Morgan, and who, during this and two other brief periods of administration, had to inflict the death penalty on some of his old companions in arms. On this first occasion he was soon set aside by the arrival of Lord Vaughan. His lordship brought instructions somewhat different in their character to those of his predecessors. The council of twelve persons by whom he was to be assisted were all named, but he had full power to suspend or expel. No change was made in the constitution or powers of the assembly, but all laws were to be assimilated as far as possible to those of England, yet they were only to be in force for two years, unless specially sanctioned by the king; they might, however, be disallowed at any time.<sup>1</sup> Lord Vaughan, when he opened the assembly on the 26th of April,

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. i. p. 6.

declared "that he should guide himself according to the usage and custom of parliaments in England." One of those disputes between the assembly and the council, which soon became chronic in their character, gave him an opportunity of proving that he was sincere. The assembly wished to adopt a plan of reading their bills twice, and then sending them on to the council, and when returned by that body they would read them the third time. To this novel innovation Lord Vaughan replied that it was not so done in the British parliament, and the idea was at once abandoned.<sup>2</sup> But none of the laws passed during his administration received the royal assent. It is, however, quite impossible to examine the public records of this period without perceiving that, whatever mistakes may have been committed by imperfectly trained legislators, governor, council, and assembly were all alike anxious to act upon English precedents, and to respect the rights of each other while maintaining their own. If Jamaica has a constitutional history, this period may be cited as the proper date of its true commencement.

In the peace which had been made with the Dutch it was arranged that the colony of Surinam should be restored to the Dutch in exchange for the province of New York, which the latter had captured in 1673. The question naturally arose, what should be done with the Surinam settlers who might wish to remove? Jamaica appeared to offer a suitable home. Lord Vaughan was accordingly instructed to prepare for their arrival, and to allot them double the quantity of land apportioned to other settlers.<sup>1</sup> During the latter part of 1675 twelve hundred of these people arrived, and settled, for the most part, in St. Elizabeth. For a long time the selected district was known as the Surinam quarters. Some years later, the settlers from Darien found a home in the same part of the island. The prevalence of Scottish names, both of proprietors and properties, still indicate how many of these must have claimed that nationality. The tide of emigration, from several quarters. was at this time considerable. Bond servants from Bristol, and settlers of a higher social class, alike contributed to swell the ranks of the colonists. About the end of Lord Vaughan's administration there were 4526 persons enrolled in the militia, which included, as we are told, "none of the blacks." The taxes

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. xii, p. 167.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol, i, p. 12.

were not burdensome, and justice appears to have been fairly administered (to the whites). There was at Spanish Town a supreme court, and also quarter sessions in other places. The English settlers, who even yet formed the largest half of the population, seem to have been anxious to establish all they regarded as valuable in British laws and customs.

The chief revenue of the Crown arose from quit rents, and was in all a little under £2000 per annum. Export duties were unknown, those on imports were confined, with some trivial exceptions, to wine and spirits; but parochial taxes were levied to provide and maintain roads and public buildings. The cultivation of sugar was increasing rapidly: during four years, commencing with Vaughan's administration, the produce was from three to four times as great as during the preceding four years. In March, 1678, Lord Vaughan left the island. His administration had been a prosperous one. Referring to his private character, it would seem that he was possessed of considerable literary ability. The poet Dryden found in him an early patron, and the Royal Society subsequently chose him as its president. This distinguished position he occupied from 1686 to 1689. He is also remembered as a member of the celebrated Kit-cat Club. Though twice married, there is reason to fear that his example was not at all calculated to improve the morals of the island he governed. A friend of Pepys, "an understanding gentleman," described him as "one of the lewdest fellows of the age."<sup>1</sup> Hewas afterwards known as Earl of Carberry, having succeeded to that title on the death of his father.

The government of Lord Vaughan lasted exactly one year, and on his departure Sir Henry Morgan was reinstated as lieutenant-governor for another period of four months. The differences between the French and English governments led to serious apprehensions of invasion. Morgan lost no time in proclaiming martial law; negroes were impressed from the different parishes; fortifications were improved, and others commenced: nor did the alarm subside until tidings reached the colony that eleven ships belonging to the French fleet had been lost in a hurricane. The alarm was repeated during the following year, but no invasion was attempted.

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. i. app. pp. 19, 20,

On the 19th of July, 1678, the Earl of Carlisle arrived in Jamaica. The government of this nobleman is chiefly remarkable in consequence of the commission with which he was charged to change the system of making laws which had hitherto prevailed, and to assimilate the practice to that which was in force in Ireland, under what was called "Poyning's Act." The history of the struggle which ensued is of less practical importance at the present time than it would be had the colonial legislature of 1865 not relinquished all their ancient rights and privileges. The constitutional government which preceding generations had sought to preserve was then tamely surrendered, and whenever the inhabitants of Jamaica shall regain the right of choosing their own representatives, the new charter will be independent no doubt of old prescriptive forms, however important such forms may once have been.

Those who may now, or hereafter, be anxious to study in all its details the patriotic struggle which commenced at the period under review, will find the information they require in the first volume of Edwards's "History of the West Indies," where many of the records of the home government are preserved, and also in the pages of Long, and in the first volume of the Journals of the Assembly.<sup>2</sup> Most readers will probably be satisfied with the statement that, for some cause not very intelligible, the lords of the committee for trades and plantations advised the king to restrain the powers of the Jamaica assembly; so that instead of their making and enacting laws, and then submitting them for royal approval, the governor and council should prepare such drafts of laws as they might deem desirable, forward them to his majesty, and when they were returned with his approbation, then they were to be submitted to an assembly convened for the purpose for their assent. As an appropriate introduction to this wonderful legislative contrivance, a body of laws framed in accordance with some formerly sent home, and amended and altered by the king's privy council, were handed to the earl to be submitted by him to the first assembly for their consent, as acts "originally coming from us."<sup>1</sup> The earl obeyed orders, but the assembly refused to do as they were required, and with due respect, but with firmness, remonstrated.

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<sup>1</sup> Diary, p. 460.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 23–56.

The earl at once acquainted the British Government with the dilemma in which he found himself, and urged a more conciliatory policy; still in his intercourse with the assembly he acted with very little forbearance. Conference after conference followed, as recorded in the journals. Private interviews were also sought with the representatives of the people. Writing to Mr. Secretary Coventry, who, according to Pepys, had been taught by Sir W. Penn to understand the map of Jamaica,<sup>2</sup> Carlisle says that he asked the members, most of them being in military trusts, "Do you submit to this form of government which his majesty has been pleased to order for this island of Jamaica?" The replies were not generally satisfactory. "Several of them neither gave me a dutiful nor a cheerful answer; some did, and at this some are dissatisfied." Beeston says that the earl called the troublesome members, "fools, asses, beggars, cowards," and as speaker of the house, he probably knew all that transpired. The earl in his indignation spared no one. Long was deposed from his seat as chief justice, and suspended from his place in the council. He would, no doubt, have been returned as member for the assembly on the first opportunity, but provision had been made for such a contingency by providing that no one excluded from the council could be returned to the lower house.

Neither threats nor promises could move the assembly from the patriotic position it had taken. Revenue bills for short periods to provide for pressing emergencies were passed, but the proffered body of laws remained untouched. At length the assembly was dismissed; and in 1680, Long, who had been imprisoned, and Beeston, were sent to England, the former under bond to the amount of £10,000 to appear before his majesty's council. Carlisle also returned home, and preferred a series of charges against Long. The latter, who had been at the age of seventeen secretary to Cromwell's commissioners, Serle and Butler, and was well acquainted with public business, rejoiced in the opportunity now afforded of defending the cause of his adopted country: he not only answered the charges brought against himself, but presented a series of counter charges against the earl. With such power also did he plead the cause of the colonists, that after repeated meetings,

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<sup>1</sup> King Charles II. Instructions to Earl of Carlisle.

<sup>2</sup> Diary, p. 69.

the points at issue were referred to the opinion of the lord chief justice and the other judges, especially in relation to the power of the crown. The opinion pronounced was not made public, but it was evidently favourable to the colonists, for "Colonel Long and the other gentlemen of Jamaica" were called into the council chamber at Whitehall, on the 30th of October, 1680, and in the presence of Prince Rupert, the Duke of Albemarle (afterwards governor of Jamaica), and others, were "acquainted with the resolution of the committee to report to his majesty that they may enjoy the same method of making laws as is now appointed for Barbadoes, with which the gentlemen express themselves very well satisfied." Three days later Charles II. issued the necessary instructions to the Earl of Carlisle,<sup>1</sup> providing for the election by the freeholders of representatives to sit in a general assembly, who having taken the oaths of supremacy and allegiance, should have full power, with the advice and consent of the governor and council, to make, constitute, and ordain laws, statutes, and ordinances, which, however, were to be as nearly agreeable as possible to the laws of England; such enactments to be forwarded within three months to England for the royal approval, but until expressly disallowed they were to have the effect of law.

No change was made in these privileges till 1716, when instructions were forwarded that the governor was not to agree to any law repealing one previously confirmed by the crown, unless it contained a clause suspending its operation until his majesty's pleasure was known. This was only reasonable. Some eighteen years later the same rule was rather arbitrarily extended to all laws repealing others, even if not confirmed.

Such was the struggle by which the members of the house of assembly secured the privileges which belonged to them as British subjects. Earnestly they had contended for "a deliberative power in the making of laws; the negative and barely resolving power being not according to the rights of Englishmen." The justice of the plea was conceded. These men, with all their faults (and they were by no means untainted by the vices of the age and of the colony), clearly understood what was meant by the liberty of the subject. The barons of Runnymede, the warriors of Marston Moor, had

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<sup>1</sup> This is the last of the collection of documents on this subject preserved by Bryan Edwards.



true descendants in the Jamaica legislature of that day. The idea of relinquishing their legitimate privileges as the representatives of the people never for one moment occurred to them. It would have been impossible to persuade such men that by doing so they would only “immolate themselves on the altar of patriotism.” Such delusions were left for men of another order and a later age. The senators of 1680, in refusing to surrender their undoubted rights, afforded indubitable proof that they were not unworthy to enjoy them.

Carlisle did not return to Jamaica, and after a brief period, during which Morgan again acted as lieutenantgovernor, Sir Thomas Lynch, who had previously administered the government, was once more called to office. One of the first acts of the assembly was to pass a revenue bill of seven years’ duration, and also a number of other laws. Most of these were confirmed by the king, but some were disallowed, and among them one declaring the laws of England to be in force here. For nearly fifty years the disallowance of this was the source of continual irritation between the assembly and the home government. The latter had obtained from the legislature at Barbadoes an act securing a perpetual revenue to the crown; this the assembly of Jamaica hesitated to grant, nor was it until the year 1728 that it yielded the point by securing the sum of £8,000 per annum to the imperial government; then, and not till then, were the laws of England admitted to be in force in the colony.

Sir Thomas was, however, much pleased with the first meeting of the assembly; indeed, his delight was hardly kept within reasonable bounds. “Surely,” said he, “since heaven is best described by saying it is the place of perfect peace and union, you that have brought down and fixed such a resemblance of it here, ought to expect and have all our praises, all our thanks.”<sup>1</sup> The earthly paradise was not left without suitable oversight, for when the house next met, the governor assured the members that the English rulers were kind to them as “guardian angels.” But this was not all; he went on to exclaim: “See, heaven seems pleased as well as the king; for if the last year it appeared brass, this, it melts into showers to rain blessings upon us; for who has ever seen Port Royal so full of ships, or known the planters sell their goods so dear? Within these fifteen months every man’s freehold is almost risen in value from 50 to 200 per cent.”<sup>2</sup> This was true in a certain degree, but it must be borne in mind that the attempt to subvert

the constitution of the island had led to a great depreciation in the value of property, from which it was now recovering. Though there were those who, in the days of Albemarle, endeavoured to asperse the government of Sir Thomas, and even to cast reflections upon his character,<sup>3</sup> there is no doubt that he diligently sought to discharge with faithfulness the duties of his office, and we have the testimony of Long<sup>4</sup> that he was much respected by his fellow colonists, who deeply sympathised with him under the afflictions which cast a shadow over the closing scenes of his life. His wife, Lady Vere Lynch (from whom one of the lowland parishes derived its name), was lost with her two young sons on their passage from England in 1683. Sir Thomas did not long survive; he died on the 24th of August in the following year, and in the church at Spanish Town it is recorded—

“Here lyes Sir THOMAS LYNCH in Peace, at Ease, and Blest.  
Would you know more, the World will speak ye Rest.”

But the world can tell little now. He was to a great extent the architect of his own fortunes. As provostmarshal, general, and member of council, he served the island many years, and was knighted in 1670. As lieutenant-governor and governor his name appears in these pages. His wife, who was so suddenly taken away, belonged to a family of historic renown: her father, Sir Henry Herbert, was attorney-general to Charles I., and cousin to Lord Herbert of Cherbury. One brother, as lord chief justice, presided at the trial of the seven bishops. Another brother, subsequently known as Earl Torrington, commanded the fleet which brought William III. to England. The West Indies in those days were to England what the East Indies subsequently became, and still are. Members of the most illustrious families sought fame or fortune in the plantations, as they were long called; and where fortunes were achieved, the daughters of the successful planters were regarded as suitable wives for men with time-honoured

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. i. p. 63,

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. i. p. 65.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., vol. i. p. 132.

<sup>4</sup> “History” vol. i. p. 612,

names. The history of old creole families is far more closely connected with that of the English aristocracy than many suppose. A surviving daughter of Sir Thomas and Lady Lynch married the second baron of Combermere; from her descended two whose names were not unknown in later years, Sir Willoughby Cotton, who commanded the troops in the rebellion of 1832, and the renowned veteran, Stapleton Cotton, Viscount Combermere. Many other and far more striking illustrations could easily be given.

When Sir Thomas Lynch died, Morgan was not in the island to resume the reins of power. The sturdy buc-caneer was in trouble. He had bought and improved an estate in Clarendon, which still bears his name. In the midst of the most delightful scenery he possibly anticipated years of quiet rest. But the Spaniards demanded his arrest and imprisonment, and it suited the government of the day to yield to their wish; but prison was insupportable after the free life of the ocean and the plantations, and he died soon after his removal to England. Colonel Hender Molesworth was in consequence the person upon whom the temporary guidance of affairs devolved. He does not appear to advantage in the records of the assembly. He not only dictated to the members what bills they ought to pass on general topics of legislation, and the form in which they should be prepared, but even proceeded to deal with money bills in the same manner.<sup>1</sup> Continual altercation was the inevitable result.

On the 13th of April, 1685, the news of the death of Charles II. was communicated to the council. The assembly was in consequence dissolved, and the inhabitants waited with some anxiety to learn into whose hands the management of affairs would be committed by the new sovereign. In the meantime there was trouble in the colony; in 1684 the first outbreak of any importance happened among the negro slaves; it was soon suppressed, but in 1686 one of a more sanguinary character occurred in Clarendon.

James II. had no sooner ascended the throne of England than he manifested his attachment to the Church of Rome. While evidently anxious to bring England back to what he believed to be the true faith, he did not regard Jamaica as too insignificant a colony to be won over to the all embracing arms of the pope. He had little difficulty in finding a governor sufficiently unscrupulous to attempt the task. General Monk, subsequently Duke of Albemarle,

had left an only son, who had not only wasted his fortune, but seriously impaired his health by vicious practices. A colonial government seemed the most convenient way of rescuing him from his distresses, and James could hardly refuse this to the son of the man who had restored the Stuart dynasty to the throne. Possessed, moreover, of no religious principles whatever, he was quite ready to attempt the propagation of that religion to which James sought to bend the necks of the people in Great Britain. Albemarle came to Jamaica in 1687. He was accompanied by a goodly retinue, and among others were two men widely differing in character and pursuits. The one was Father Churchill, a most devoted and self-denying Romish priest; the other was Dr. Sloane, better known as Sir Hans Sloane, the founder of the British Museum.

The Duke was accompanied also by the Duchess of Albemarle. The arrival of two persons so exalted in rank fairly turned the heads of the colonists. The house of assembly in an address to the duchess, declared through its speaker that it was "an honour which the opulent kingdoms of Mexico and Peru could never arrive at; and even Columbus's ghost would be appeased for all the indignities he endured of the Spaniards could he but know that his own beloved soil was hallowed by such footsteps."<sup>1</sup>

But if ghosts might be appeased, it was soon found that even a duke, though highly belauded, could not mould the independent members of the assembly into any shape he wished. It is rather remarkable that the house commenced proceedings by voting a sum of money to its chaplain for his sermon preached at its opening, as if to testify its approval of Protestant teaching; £30 was awarded at the first session, and £31 at the second. The arbitrary proceedings of the duke disgusted every honest man. Soon after the opening of the first assembly, Mr. Towers, member for Clarendon, quoted the words: "*Salus populi est suprema lex*" The matter under discussion was simply a horse race; but Colonel George Nedham, who probably was anxious to display his loyalty, as his sister had been mistress to the Duke of Monmouth, objected to the words on the ground that they were only suited for a commonwealth, and not for a monarchy. Some debate ensued, and Nedham appealed to the governor and council. For this he was

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. i. pp. 94-101.

reprimanded by the speaker. The governor immediately called him to the council, caused Towers to be arrested and tried, and he was ultimately fined £600, having previously had to enter into recognizances for £4000.

The house protested against these arbitrary proceedings, and was dissolved.<sup>2</sup> The provost-marshal and some of the judges, Colonel Bourden of the council, and others were dismissed, while the creatures of the duke were put into their places. The events which attended the election for members of the assembly were scandalous even for those times. Legal voters were imprisoned, and two gentlemen who endeavoured to obtain a writ of *habeas corpus* on behalf of some of their friends so treated, were threatened with a whipping. Discharged seamen, soldiers, and indented servants, destitute of any legal qualification, were taken to the poll as voters, and in some places carried from one parish to another. But though Albemarle could pack a house he could not destroy the spirit of the people. Some, it is true, left the colony, alarmed at the spread of despotism; but others protested against the arbitrary proceedings of the duke, and laid their grievances at the foot of the throne.

James would not have paid much attention to their complaints, but his days were numbered, and William III. had taken his place. The abdication of the last of the Stuarts led to the dissolution of the packed assembly, and the laws they had passed, and which had been sent home for the approval of James II., were laid before his successor. William III. withheld his consent until he had heard the representations of persons who were either interested in, or had lately arrived from Jamaica. And as soon as he was made acquainted through their council of the manner in which the elections had been tampered with, and the objectionable character of the laws which had been passed, he ordered the whole to be remitted back for the consideration of a legislature legally convened. At the same time he directed all fines unjustly imposed to be remitted, and restored to office all who had been unjustly removed.<sup>1</sup> The feelings of a great majority of the colonists were some time after well expressed by the grand jury at Spanish Town, who in reference to the past events declared, "All hopes of

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. i, p. 105.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. i. p. no, &c.

enjoying any longer our religion, laws, and liberties were taken from us,” when God “was pleased in our utmost distress to show His miraculous power in raising your majesty to be the glorious instrument of our deliverance from that Philistine bondage which had extended itself to these remotest parts of your majesty’s dominions.” <sup>2</sup>

Albemarle died in 1688, and Sir Francis Watson, who was a wealthy planter residing at Seven Plantations, in Clarendon, succeeded him as lieutenant-governor. Before death the duke had given proof that he was as mindful of his own interests as those of his royal master. So far back as 1659 a richly laden Spanish galleon had been wrecked on a shoal lying to the north-east of Hayti. The duke determined if possible to recover the treasure. He accordingly entered into partnership with Sir William Phipps, who, aided by divers, recovered some twenty-six tons of silver and other treasure, valued in all at nearly £300,000. What share fell to the sailors and subordinate officers is not known; the greater part was divided between the two principals, and with his portion Phipps laid the foundation of the fortunes of the house of Mulgrave.<sup>1</sup> Little remains to be recorded of the other events which marked the government of the Duke of Albemarle beyond the fact that a post-office was established in the colony, and that numerous exiles reserved for transportation by Jefferies after Monmouth’s rebellion were sent here. The king had expressed his desire to bestow a thousand of these convicts on certain of his courtiers, and one or two hundred on a favourite of the queen, provided security was given that they were enslaved in some West Indian colony for ten years. The exact number sent to Jamaica is not known, but it was considerable, probably the larger portion of the eight hundred and forty who were actually transported. In dealing with the condition of the people at this period, their fate will be more particularly described. At present it need only be said that under Albemarle they could expect little mercy, as he had been among the first to gather together the militia of the western counties to oppose Monmouth, by whom he had been proclaimed a rebel.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Communication from the King. Journals, vol. i. p. 135, dated the 22nd of February, 1688–89.

<sup>2</sup> Long, vol. i. p, 595.

In the excited state of public feeling in the colony, it can hardly be a matter of surprise that reports were circulated to the effect that Albemarle had met his death by poison.<sup>3</sup> Inquiry was instituted, and it was made clear that there was no foundation whatever for the charge, and the body having been embalmed, was sent to England. In May, 1690, the Earl of Inchiquin arrived as governor; he was hasty and ill-tempered to an immoderate degree. Among his instructions was one directing him to send back to England the bondsmen who had been condemned for complicity in Monmouth's rebellion; but all of the very first party of these men who appeared before him were flogged by his order, nor was it until after some days that he discovered the injustice of which he had been guilty, for he had taken no pains to ascertain the merits of the case laid before him. To the assembly he was equally arrogant. That body had commenced proceedings by framing a bill annulling the laws passed by the former illegal assembly, and soon after they presented an address to the governor. He replied in language as little worthy of his own position as it was in accordance with the courtesy due to a legislative body, and then contemptuously tossed back the address.<sup>1</sup> His administration was brief, for on the 16th of January, 1692, he died, and Mr. John White, president of the council, was called, according to colonial precedent, to direct the affairs of the island.

They were sufficiently embarrassing, but White was a man who not only enjoyed the esteem of his fellowcolonists, but was endowed with a remarkable degree of self-possession. During the great earthquake which happened during his administration, the rector of Port Royal, who was dining with him, hurriedly exclaimed, as the earth began to tremble, "Lord, sir, what is this!" With the utmost composure White replied, "It is an earthquake, be not afraid, it will soon be over," and it was only when the church fell that he sought safety in flight.<sup>2</sup>

From the time of Albemarle a variety of events, disastrous in their character, had followed one another in swift succession. In 1689 a violent hurricane did great damage to houses, ships, and growing crops. This was the first of a serious character after the

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<sup>1</sup> Hill's "Picaroons," p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Letter in British Museum, published in Sir Henry Ellis' Collection.

<sup>3</sup> Journals, vol. i. p. 132. Sir H. Sloane's "History," vol. i.

British occupation, but it was the precursor of many others far more violent.

The island contained within itself elements of a far more dangerous and destructive kind. The negro slaves had for some time past been increasing rapidly in number. The first parliament of William and Mary had, by the Declaration of Rights, opened the trade in slaves to private enterprise, and thus it developed itself with great rapidity. The cargoes now brought in did not consist almost exclusively of children and young persons, as in former years, but included many adults taken prisoners in battle, some of whom had enjoyed considerable power in their native land, and could not therefore submit patiently to the thralldom and cruelty of the plantations. In 1690 the first really dangerous outbreak occurred.

About a mile below the pleasantly situated village of Chapelton is an estate called Suttons. It was among the first settled of all the sugar estates in the interior of the island, and was then the residence of the gentleman whose name it still bears. At the moment of revolt he was absent, and only a single white man was in charge. Suddenly this man was assailed and killed by a body of between three and four hundred slaves, and the arms and ammunition immediately seized. As a rule these distant plantations were well provided with weapons, as a means of defence against the incursions of the Maroons, and it was the careless manner in which, as in this instance, they were guarded, that led to some legal enactments of a precautionary character in 1730 and 1744. At Suttons the rebels obtained not only firearms, powder and shot, but four small cannons. After securing these prizes they proceeded to the next plantation, but there fortunately the slaves were terrified, and instead of joining the rebels they fled into the woods. The overseer, however, fell into their hands, and was murdered. The party now returned to Suttons, and prepared to defend the house against the whites, who to the number of fifty, some on foot, some on horses, were rapidly assembling. Next day, having been joined by others from a distance, the whites commenced an attack. After an ineffectual attempt to hold the house, the rebels retreated,

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. i. p. 141.

<sup>2</sup> "Gentleman's Magazine," May, 1750.



setting fire to the cane pieces as they did so. The militia now ventured to spread themselves out over a large space of country, and attacked the rebels, not only in front but on either flank. A hasty flight was the consequence, many were killed, two hundred threw down their arms and begged for mercy. Most of the others were taken prisoners, and the ringleaders executed.<sup>1</sup>

Though after this no outbreak of any importance occurred for some years, considerable numbers of slaves from time to time made good their escape to the mountains, where they joined the Maroons.

While the colony was endangered by the foe within, a restless enemy prowled along its shores. Soon after the accession of William and Mary war was commenced with France, and the cruisers of that nation at once commenced a series of predatory attacks on the seaside plantations, exceedingly harassing in their character. They were all the more dangerous in consequence of many in the island siding with the French and giving them secret information; this was clearly proved by intercepted letters. These traitors justified their conduct on the plea that the French were anxious to restore James II., who they asserted was England's rightful king, and that they were not bound to any allegiance to the ruling monarch.

It soon became evident that the buccaneers were prepared to take advantage of this state of things, and a party of these men, under the command of a noted leader called Daviot, was actually engaged in plundering on the north side when the earthquake occurred. Fifty-two slaves had been seized, but the captors were detained on shore, as a storm had blown their vessel off the coast. The first shock of the earthquake so alarmed them that they took to their boats, but succeeding shocks created so much commotion in the water, that some were swamped, and fifty-three out of one hundred and thirty-five buccaneers perished. Those who escaped were nearly all destroyed by the cruisers<sup>1</sup> soon after.

The great earthquake, as it has just been termed, occurred on the 7th of June, 1692. The day was exceedingly sultry, the sky glowed like a furnace, and the ocean was unruffled by a single breath of air. The harbour was well filled with ships, and among them were two vessels just returned from plundering the French settlements in

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<sup>1</sup> Long's "History."

Hayti, and which had thus made some considerable additions to the wealth stored in the city. Long before twelve o'clock the legislative council had met for the despatch of business, and then adjourned. Early hours were the rule, and many even of the higher classes had gathered around the dinner table, or, as in the house of the president, had alread despatched that meal. At twenty minutes to twelve o'clock a noise not unlike thunder was heard in the hills of St. Andrews, to the north of Port Royal. Then three shocks were felt: the first comparatively gentle, the next more severe, the last so violent as to fill all with alarm, and only too plainly showing the true character of the calamity. Not only did the earth tremble, and in some parts open beneath the feet of the terror-stricken inhabitants, but the horrors of the event were intensified by the mysterious, awful sounds, that one moment appeared to be in the air, and then in the ground. Houses built by the seaside were the first to fall; then the church and tower. Morgan's Fort, to which many fled as to a place of security, was next observed to disappear, the sea rolling completely over the place where it stood. And now on every hand nothing was to been seen or heard but the crash of falling houses and walls. The earth still continued to tremble, and places partly injured continued to fall. The wharfs loaded with merchandise, and most of the fortifications, together with all the streets near the shore, sunk into the harbour and were completely overwhelmed. The situation of the town added to the fearful nature of the calamity. The part which suffered most severely was built upon a spit of sand thrown up by the sea. When Jackson invaded the island, little more than fifty years previously, the point on which this portion of the town stood was an island: when Venables landed, the sand was only just showing through the waves. This fact, while explaining the fearful character of the calamity, and especially the submerging of so large a portion of the city, does not in any way support the assertion that the violence of the earthquake has been overrated. Though there was no breeze the sea rose in mighty waves, tearing ships from their anchorage, and sweeping them over the sunken ruins of the town. Some of these were utterly destroyed, while others were saved, and proved the means of rescuing many that were struggling in the waves. In places the earth opened, swallowing up many hapless creatures; but

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<sup>1</sup> Hill's "Picaroons," p. 13.

in some cases persons were seen only partially covered, with dogs feasting on the parts left exposed. Not two hundred houses were left, and in all it was computed that nearly two thousand persons had perished. As Port Royal was the residence of many of the principal inhabitants, a very considerable proportion of those who perished belonged to families of influence in the colony.

For days after the harbour was covered with dead bodies floating up and down, and the noxious exhalations from these and others unburied on shore soon added the horrors of a pestilence to that of the earthquake. For three weeks successive shocks were felt and sulphurous vapours issued from the fissures of the rocks. The heat was insupportable; for many days no welcome sea breeze fanned the plague-stricken shore. Thunder and lightning added to the terrors of the scene, and the pastures on the savannahs near the shore were scorched as if a fire had passed over them, so intense was the heat. In the pestilence that followed the mortality could have been little less than by the earthquake. Temporary huts had been hastily constructed where Kingston now stands, and here it is asserted five hundred graves were dug in a single month, two or three bodies being in many cases laid together.

The night that followed the earthquake in Port Royal was in some of its aspects more terrible than the day had been. Esquimelling has left a fearful description of the lewdness and corruption of the doomed city. When night came a number of the most abandoned creatures, men and women, inflamed with drink, poured forth to plunder what yet remained. It is feared that they did not scruple to murder any who opposed them. They were reckless also of their own lives, for the ruins were falling around them on every side.

That the shock was one of extreme severity, apart from the unfortunate location of the town, is evident from the destruction that visited every part of the island. At Passage Fort not a house was left uninjured; in all the district of Liguany (now St. Andrews) only one. The residences of the planters and their sugar works in every parish sustained injury: on the north side local tradition told for generations of a plot of nearly a thousand acres submerged, with thirteen residents. Rocks were rent on every hand, and immense blocks hurled down from the hills on to the plantations below. Between Spanish Town and Sixteen Mile Walk the course of the river was dammed up by the fallen masses from the hills, until

at last the river became a lake: the force of the water ultimately swept all before it.

In St. David's a portion of a mountain was torn away, and covered a house and plantation at its foot. The bare hill side is still pointed out, and is called Judgment Hill, for local tradition tells a sad story of incest and other crimes of which the inhabitants were guilty. It was remarked that in Spanish Town the houses erected by the Spaniards, though shaken and split, were not destroyed to the same extent as the more recent buildings of the English. The courses of rivers were changed, in some places old springs disappeared, in others new fountains burst forth. The aspect of the country was in places materially altered, and throughout it there was one loud wail of desolation and woe. There were many instances of hair-breadth escapes, of deliverance when death seemed inevitable. One case has been so often recorded that it is never likely to be forgotten: indeed its record still remains at Green Bay, to the westward of Port Royal, on the opposite shore.

There lies the body of Lewis Galdy, who died on the 22nd of December, 1739, forty-seven years after the earthquake, eighty years of age. He was a native of Montpelier in France, but being a Protestant, had left that country and sought a home in Jamaica. The inscription on his tomb tells us that he was swallowed up by the earthquake, then by another shock cast into the sea, whence he escaped by swimming to a boat. After this he flourished as a merchant in Port Royal, represented four parishes in successive assemblies, and seems to have been generally loved and respected.<sup>1</sup>



## CHAPTER II

# COMMERCE AND AGRICULTURE

The best illustration of the condition of the island when occupied by the English is furnished by the fact that hides formed the first article of export. Cocoa and a few other minor articles had been cultivated by the Spaniards, but the vast plains in the lowlands were for the most part covered with herds of cattle; while not only on the plains, but in the mountains, innumerable quantities of hogs were found. The reckless manner in which the horned cattle were destroyed by the first soldiers soon diminished the supply of food; and hides, though long after spoken of as large and good,<sup>1</sup> were not exported in any considerable quantity after the first few years. As soon as the government of the island was established on a firm basis, attention was drawn to the excellent quality of the pasturage, and cattle soon received a proper share of attention from the early settlers, who were not long in discovering that they not only thrive better, but were larger than in the plantations of North America.<sup>2</sup> One thousand to twelve hundred pounds is mentioned as the common weight of a full grown ox.<sup>3</sup> Modyford was somewhat extravagant when, in his "View of the Condition of Jamaica," published in the appendix to the first volume of the "Journals of the Assembly," he refers to the cattle as being numerous, but adds that they are "not enough by millions." Still, as the interior forests were then undisturbed, and rain was consequently far more abundant than now, the lowland pastures must have conveyed the impression of inexhaustible fertility. The hogs were highly valued, as being better tasted and more digestible than those in the mother country.<sup>4</sup> They were kept on plantations, but far more were wild in the woods. Numbers of old soldiers

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<sup>1</sup> This sketch of the earthquake is drawn from Sloane's account in the "Philosophical Transactions," vol. ii.; his History, vol. i.; Long's "History," vol. ii.; and sundry other publications, especially Letters of Rector of Port Royal, preserved in "Gentleman's Magazine" for 1750.

found a congenial occupation, after their discharge, in hunting them.<sup>5</sup> The sport was sufficiently exciting, for when unable to evade the hunters and their dogs, the hogs were accustomed to come to bay, with their rear well protected by a rock or large forest tree, and could only be destroyed by lances or a well-directed shot. The animal was then cut open, the bones and entrails removed, and the flesh, being gashed in several places, was well salted, and either dried in the sun or over a slow fire, as was the custom of the buccaneers. Occasionally horned cattle in a wild state were found in the woods: these were similarly treated. Sheep soon began to multiply, though it was observed that their fleece was of little value.<sup>1</sup> Goats were still more abundant. Almost every kind of domestic fowl increased abundantly, especially in the little farms, called palenques. Guinea hens, and a great variety of ducks, teal, pigeons, &c., filled the woods.<sup>2</sup> At Pigeon Island, in Old Harbour Bay, the birds were so abundant that a couple of men in a canoe were able in a few hours to load it to the water edge with those they knocked down. These primitive *battues* soon exhausted the supply.<sup>3</sup> But the interior woods and the lagoons long continued to furnish game, nor is the supply, though diminished, yet exhausted. The fish, which through the neglect of any means for preserving it, is now failing in all but a few interior mountain streams, was in those early days abundant. A very striking illustration of this is given by Sir Hans Sloane. Visiting Sir Francis Watson, at Seven Plantations, by the banks of the Rio Minho, below the spot where in dry seasons the river is lost beneath the sand, he found that in the rainy weather immense numbers of mullet and other fishes were swept down. As the river again sunk, these were left in the little pools, and though immense numbers were taken by the people around, or devoured by birds, enough

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Blome's "Description of Jamaica." London, 1678.

<sup>2</sup> Ogilby. (This writer, John Ogilby, was master of the revels in Ireland in 1671. He published "An Account of America, or the New World." It is very scarce, but from a copy found in Yale College Library, Mr. W.W.Anderson, of Kingston, made an abstract of all relating to Jamaica, which he published.)

<sup>3</sup> Cranfield. App. to Journals, vol. i. p. 42.

<sup>4</sup> Ogilby.

<sup>5</sup> Modyford's "View," &c. Appendix to "Journals of Assembly," vol. i.

would remain to taint the air as the pools dried up. "I was sensible of this corrupted air when I was here," is the assertion of this great naturalist.

Fish of the finest description, and turtle, abounded in the ocean. These last, though captured on the sandy keys near the coast, were also brought in immense numbers from the Cuban cays and the Caymanas.<sup>4</sup> Sloane states that forty sloops belonging to Port Royal were engaged in this business. As a branch of commerce he was not insensible of the value of the turtle, as an article of food he detested it. His denunciation of this magnificent soup-producing animal is most amusing. He says: "They infect the blood of those feeding upon them, whence their shirts are yellow, their skin and faces of the same colour, and their shirts under the arm-pits stained prodigiously." The shell appears among the earliest lists of exported articles.

The tables of the early settlers were well supplied with fruits, but of these the pine-apple was most highly valued. Ogilby says it exceeds all other dainties. Sweet potatoes and cassava, which was then used by all classes as bread, were largely cultivated. The sailors, encouraged by Goodson, had raised all kinds of English garden herbs and roots near Passage Fort, and the lesson thus taught was not forgotten by succeeding settlers.<sup>1</sup> Harrison's garden on the hills behind Kingston contained all kinds of English flowers and garden produce. The island was found not only to be admirably supplied with food, but to the indigenous products it was thus seen could be added many of the articles of consumption most valued in England. Nor were the inhabitants willing that in such a fruitful land too much should be charged for its productions; for when the farmers of Luidas Vale exacted high prices for their veal, the legislature, after the fashion of those times, interposed, and fixed one shilling a pound as the maximum price. Horses, though so foolishly destroyed by the invading soldiery, soon began to multiply. At first some were brought over from New England, and though costing but five pounds there, sold for three times as much in Jamaica. In time the great increase in

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<sup>1</sup> Ogilby.

<sup>2</sup> Ogilby, Sloane, &c.

<sup>3</sup> Sloane.

<sup>4</sup> Ogilby, Blome, Sloane, &c.



number reduced prices so much, that forty shillings is quoted as a common sum for a decent hack.

The earliest settlers seemed to have been far more alive than those of later days to the importance of preserving for use the numerous articles of food with which the island and the seas surrounding it abounded; and, moreover, they did not at first discover the adaptation of the soil for the cultivation of sugar. Perhaps, had they even done so, they would not have expended all their energies in the production of this single staple to the almost utter neglect of the other gifts of a gracious Providence so abundantly scattered on every hand. This was the folly of a later age. To preserve for use such food as it was not necessary or desirable to consume at once, salt was requisite. This article is now imported: the first settlers prepared it themselves. The traveller to the eastern parishes will notice by the side of the main road beyond Yallahs, three ponds or lagoons, one upwards of two miles in length, and from half to three quarters of a mile in width, and the other two about a mile long. Earthquakes, inundations, and neglect are fast converting them into unwholesome mangrove swamps. But they were once the salt ponds of Captain Joseph Noyes, one of the earliest settlers; here he made ten thousand bushels of salt in a single year (1670), and declared he could make as many tons if he could only find a market.<sup>1</sup> The salt ponds of St. Catherine's were contrived by Modyford.<sup>2</sup>

It is evident from the foregoing statements that the island was, as it still is, capable of yielding an abundant supply for the necessities of its inhabitants. Yet articles of food were largely imported when Sloane wrote, for sugar cultivation had then become the leading idea with men of substance. Wheaten flour is better for many purposes than maize, and much more palatable than cassava, however well prepared. Its importation need not therefore excite surprise. But that salt beef and pork, salt fish and mackerel, should be then, as now, imported largely, can only be regarded in the light of a contribution to the history of human folly. Spirits and wine, particularly Madeira, early appear among the list of imports. A considerable proportion of articles brought from England, both food and wearing apparel, were re-exported. A trade half contraband in its character early sprang up with some of the

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<sup>1</sup> Ogilby, Sloane, &c,

surrounding Spanish possessions. Small vessels (Sloane speaks of one hundred and eighty belonging to Port Royal) carried over English goods in exchange for cocoa, cochineal, sarsaparilla, hides, mules, precious stones, bullion, &c. The trade was lucrative, but attended with considerable risk, and it was a generally understood thing that the merchant should share his profits with the owner and master of the vessel. Some trade was also done with the Dutch at Corosal, provisions being taken in exchange for such productions as the Dutch had obtained in their dealings with the Spaniards. As nearly all articles of clothing were imported, there was no attempt at manufactures properly so called. Shoemakers, tailors, hammock-makers, coopers, together with masons and carpenters, almost exhaust the list of artisans.

It is now time to turn attention to the exportable produce of the island. Cocoa had received a good deal of attention from the Spaniards, and some of the earliest English settlers continued its cultivation. The district of Guanaboa was the chief scene of this branch of industry. Sanguine expectations of success were felt but never fully realised. In 1670 there were no less than forty-seven plantations. Modyford was one of the proprietors, and in an official report he estimated the yield at 188,000 pounds of nuts.<sup>1</sup> A few years later Blome speaks of sixty plantations, and proceeds to give directions for planting a cocoa walk, and calculations as to the profit, which would make it appear as one of the most pleasant and lucrative of all agricultural operations; but somehow the plantations failed, why, is by no means clear. Explanations were offered at the time, but they are not satisfactory. Beeston said it was the comet of 1664 that did the mischief. The Spaniards said the English were heretics, and omitted the religious services that had made their efforts succeed. Others with greater probability suggested that the English were ignorant of some important point in managing the plantations, without which full success was impossible. Some attempts on the north side seemed more successful at first, but soon shared the same fate as in Guanaboa. Another branch of industry ultimately abandoned was the cultivation and manufacture of indigo. Forty-nine plantations are

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<sup>1</sup> Long, Blome.

<sup>2</sup> Oldmixon.

reported in 1670. Blome, eight years later, speaks of sixty. A few years later still it would seem that there were no less than seventy indigo planters in Vere alone. This profitable branch of industry continued to flourish beyond the period under review.

Tobacco was cultivated in small patches, and was considered inferior to Spanish, but superior in quality to that grown in Barbadoes. It was readily bought at sixpence per pound, but the supply was not equal to the demand.<sup>2</sup> Some little cotton was planted, and esteemed as excellent in quality. Ginger was also very early cultivated, but no statistics relative to the amount of produce are available. The minor products of the island were by no means neglected. Dyewoods, such as *brasiletto* and *fustic*, are enumerated, but Blome was in error when he included *logwood*. Rich woods for the cabinet-maker, such as cedar, mahogany, *lignum-vitæ*, and ebony, abounded. And according to the statement of Blome, Sloane was anticipated in his valuable researches into the medicinal productions of the island by a doctor, whose list of discoveries would go far to exhaust the list of the most important drugs in the pharmacopoeia. The magnificent pimento groves could not be overlooked, though it was only gradually that this berry assumed a prominent position among the exports of the colony.

*Logwood* has been alluded to; the error of Blome may arise from the fact that it was an export, though not then a product of Jamaica. About two hundred adventurous Englishmen had settled in *Campeachey* before the close of the seventeenth century, and maintained their position by force. This valuable wood they cut down,<sup>1</sup> and sold to traders from Jamaica for £3 a ton, and the latter disposed of it in Port Royal for exportation at double that price. Money was rarely given to the *Campeachey* settlers, who were more desirous to obtain its value in clothes, beef, pork, rum, and sugar. Other traders brought tortoiseshell from the Mosquito Coast, and hides and tallow from Hayti.<sup>2</sup>

The treaty of 1671, by which Spain yielded up all claim to Jamaica, had not been signed before the initiatory steps had been taken by which the island became for a long series of years the finest sugar colony in the world. It is idle to mourn over the events

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix to Journals, vol. i. p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Blome, Ogilby, Sloane.

of the irrevocable past, but it is impossible to overlook the fact that, if sugar had not become the chief staple of this magnificent island, it would in all probability have become the home of hundreds of thousands of Englishmen and men of English ancestry, who in farming occupations, and the cultivation of what are now called minor products, would have founded a colony almost if not quite equal to those on the northern continent. The glorious mountain districts would gradually have been penetrated, and in such climates as that of the Pedros, the highlands of Manchester, Clarendon, St. Elizabeth, and the corresponding elevations of the north, the English settlers would have found a healthy, pleasant home. With a few needful precautions, and regular, temperate habits, an English colony would then have flourished. To some the idea may seem fallacious. The experience of many who have sought a home in such districts may be cited, but the supposed conditions are now to a very great extent impossible. The picture of "what might have been" is not that of a few white settlers surrounded by multitudes belonging to a different race and country. It is one of English towns and villages, only changed so far as is requisite in semi-tropical climates, and of farms and gardens covering the country, occupied by men to whom occupation is a necessity, and who to their gorgeous island home would have brought those qualities which have placed Britain foremost among the nations of the earth. Imperfect as the records of the first twenty years of our history are, enough remains to show that when the scum which floated on the surface of the first tide of conquest and emigration had drifted away, a large body of colonists remained, whose ranks were continually augmented, who sought to bring with them all that was precious in the social life of the country whence they came, and who would in time have made Jamaica what their countrymen were making the New England states of America. This was not to be: colonists gave place to sugar planters, sugar planters required slaves, and gradually the island became a mighty aggregation of cane-fields, in which negroes toiled and white men were the taskmasters.

The cane is indigenous to the island, but the native plant was of inferior quality. In 1668 some far superior was introduced from

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix to Journals, vol. i. p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

Barbadoes. Three years later Ogilby wrote that the sugars of Jamaica were worth five shillings a hundred-weight more than those of Barbadoes, so greatly had the soil improved the plant. Seven years later Blome made the same statement as to their relative value. Seventy sugar works, yielding upwards of 800 tons of sugar, were then in existence, and the number was rapidly increasing. In 1675 Mr. Cranfield stated that there were twenty sugar works, each making 150,000 lbs. to 200,000 lbs. of sugar, fifty that made 100,000 lbs., and forty others in a state of forwardness, some ready to grind; and he adds that as the soil is rich and new, sixty negroes can raise as much sugar as one hundred can in the Carribean Islands. The price he states at 18s. to 20s. per hundred-weight.<sup>1</sup> With such a fruitful soil, and with negroes so plentiful whenever there was a market for them, it is not surprising that sugar cultivation rapidly increased. It has been seen how a few favoured persons obtained grants of large districts of country. It was not long before small farms were for the most part swallowed up by their gigantic neighbours, and the sugar estate, with its thousands of acres, the greater portion in woodland, and uncultivated, became the prominent feature in the landscape.

Dr. Trapham, who came to the island in 1676 as physician to Lord Vaughan, and remained for upwards of a quarter of a century, describes a sugar estate. The description applies in most particulars till the abolition of slavery. He says: "The stranger is apt to ask what village it is?—for every completed sugar works is no less, the various and many buildings bespeaking as much at first sight; for beside the large mansion house, with its offices, the works, such as the well-contrived mill, the spacious boiling house, the large receptive curing houses, still house, commodious stables for the grinding cattle, lodging for the overseer, the white servants, working shops for the necessary smiths, others for the framing carpenters and coopers; to all which, when we add the streets of negro houses, no one will question to call such complicated sugar works a small town or village."

Trapham had no doubt one of the most perfect establishments before his mind, and it should also be noted that, in describing the character of the different erections he would compare them with the farm buildings of his day. Cattle, either oxen or mules, were almost invariably then used to turn the ponderous mills for expressing the juice from the cane. Occasionally, but very seldom according to Sloane, was the plough used. The richness of the soil

he says made it unnecessary, and that was thought a poor soil that did not yield at least a ton for each acre in cultivation. Double this quantity he asserts was often produced.

In 1690 there were two sugar refineries in the island, one at Seven Plantations, and one at the Angels near Spanish Town. A small quantity of refined sugar was exported, but the greater part was consumed in the island. Just in proportion to the extension of sugar cultivation was the activity of trade in slaves. Chartered companies and private enterprise united in supplying the necessities of the colony. More were brought to the island than were required for its immediate wants, and hence a considerable export trade was carried on. To those brought here as to a *dépôt*, and ultimately shipped to other colonies, must be added such as were unmanageable on the plantations, and were therefore, as a measure both of safety and of punishment, shipped off to other colonies, chiefly to those in the possession of the Spaniards. Negroes were not the only slaves. The white bond-servants were numerous, and few ships arrived from England without some of this class on board.

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix to Journals, vol. i.



## CHAPTER III

### RELIGION AND EDUCATION

The military force by which Jamaica was conquered was accompanied by seven chaplains. Men like Baxter, the author of the "Saints' Rest," had occupied a similar position in the English army, and there seems reason to suppose that those who came to the island were worthy, earnest men. Cromwell manifested great concern for the religious interests of the men he had sent forth. In one letter to his commanders he writes: "The Lord Himself hath a controversy with your enemies, even with that Roman Babylon of which the Spaniard is the great underpropper." After the defeat at Hayti he wrote: "We have cause to be humbled for the reproof God gave us at St. Domingo, upon the account of our sins as well as others."

The Protector was even more humbled on account of the disorders among the soldiers. He refers to the "extreme avarice, pride and confidence, disorders and debaucheries, profaneness and wickedness, commonly practised among the army;" and adds: "We can not only bewail the same, but desire that all with you do so, and that a very special regard may be had so to govern for time to come, as that all manner of vice may be discountenanced and severely punished; and that such a frame of government may be exercised that virtue and godliness may receive due encouragement."

The chaplains who came with the army all died within a few months, according to Long. Other nonconforming clergy followed, but the records of the period are very imperfect. In June, 1655, an officer of the army named Daniel How wrote a letter to a brother in London, in which he says: "In our poor army we have but few that either fear God or reverence man. But, blessed be God, those that are in the chief place are godly men, and we have teachers amongst us, so that I hope God will carry on His work amongst us."

In 1662 the Act of Uniformity not only ejected 2000 clergymen from their livings in England, but affected the religious life of the



infant colony in Jamaica. It was only gradually, for at first the government of Charles II. seemed disposed to allow liberty of conscience to all who would resort to the plantations in the West Indies. In February, 1664, Colonel Modyford, the governor, received instructions from the king to the following effect: "Because we are content, in the infancy of that our plantation, to give all possible encouragement to persons of all opinions and parties to transport themselves hither with their stocks, for the benefit thereof, that they may not under pretence of scruples of conscience receive any discouragements there, you shall dispense with the taking of oaths of allegiance and supremacy to those which bear any part of the government, except the members and officers of the council, to whom you are hereby particularly directed to administer the same."<sup>1</sup> These instructions were repeated to Sir Thomas Lynch seven years later,<sup>2</sup> and again to Lord Vaughan in 1674.<sup>3</sup> It was not until 1677 that the oath of supremacy was taken by members of the assembly,<sup>4</sup> Sir Thomas Lynch testified that nonconformists made a "modest use" of these privileges, "being respectful to the government, and ready to comply with all civil or military duties."

It is thus evident that the bigotry which at this period cast such a shade over English life was unknown in the colony. Still it was thought desirable to prevent the spread of doctrines adverse to those of the Established Church. In 1675 the appointment of conforming ministers in the colony was urged upon the governor, that they might "convert sectaries and suppress atheism and irreligion which people in these parts much incline to." Atheism and irreligion had far more power in succeeding years than conforming or nonconforming clergy. Buccaneering and slaveholding are alike incompatible with true religion; and any religious observances for the next century or more were, with few exceptions, of a very formal character. A Mr. Hanson, writing in 1682, says: "We have very few papists or sectaries, for neither Jesuits or nonconforming parsons do or can live amongst us: some few have attempted, but never could gain proselytes enough to

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix to "Journals of Assembly," vol. i. p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. II.

afford them sustenance." This was not quite true; one exception at least can be found. The public opinion of the colony had constrained two ministers, whose views were in harmony with those ejected on St. Bartholomew's Day, to resign their livings. These were Mr. Bridges and Mr. Robert Spere. Mr. Bridges left the island and went to the Bahamas. Mr. Spere became the pastor of a congregational church in St. Thomas in the East.

Among the convicts sent to the island in consequence of Monmouth's rebellion was a carpenter named John Coad, whose journal has been preserved. Coad had no sooner landed at Port Royal, worn out by fatigue and ill-treatment from which nearly a fourth of his fellow-sufferers had perished, than he met with Mr. Spere. This good man did all in his power to assist him and his companions. At the sale of convicts which followed, Coad, by the kind arrangement of a friend, passed into the hands of a man favourably disposed towards the exiles, and who was then the attorney or manager of four estates in St. Thomas in the East. On reaching his destination he described himself as "cast into a remote and dark place, a barren wilderness, where there was spiritually no water." There were six other servants, and these he induced to meet with him for prayers morning and evening. His efforts to keep the Sabbath from desecration, and to bring about a better state of things in the household, were so successful, that Mr. Hawkes Gabrand, who had come to the island as an officer in Cromwell's army, and who resided on an estate which still bears his name, induced him to undertake more public services. Several persons were in consequence gathered into Christian fellowship, and Mr. Spere being now removed from Port Royal, was invited to become the pastor of this little flock. The four largest proprietors of estates in the district subscribed ten pounds a year each, and during the remainder of Coad's servitude we hear of the progress of these simple but earnest worshippers. That this infant community ultimately ceased to exist is not surprising, but as a congregational church its establishment in the colony at such a time is an interesting fact.

At this early period several Quakers were found settled in the island. They came originally from Barbadoes, and were kindly treated by D'Oyley and other governors. In 1671, George Fox being at Barbadoes, "found drawings to Jamaica." He reached the island in November, and spent seven weeks: some friends accompanied him, and he found three others who had been

labouring, as he expresses it, in the service of truth. He travelled up and down the island, which he describes as large and "brave," but the people generally as debauched and wicked. Still "there was a great conviction, and many received the truth, some of which were people of account in the world." The meetings were large and quiet, the people civil, and he met with no opposition. Fox was twice with the governor and some other persons of importance, all of whom were kind to him. One aged companion in travel, Elizabeth Hooton, died while he was engaged in his visitation. Before Fox and his companions had left the island things had been brought into good order, "friends and truth prosperous," as there is reason to believe they continued to be. But gradually one after the other they left the island, though enough remained to render necessary a special enactment in their favour half a century later. And Lascelles Winn, it will be seen, more than a hundred years after, laid the foundations of the flourishing Baptist churches in the northern and western parishes, by the introduction of Moses Baker as a pastor among his bondsmen. The good seed planted thus early brought forth fruit after many days.

Many Jews returned to the colony soon after the British occupation. It is currently reported, and even recorded in the pages of Long and Bridges, that they obtained permission on the plea of pointing out certain mines in the Healthshire Hills. Walton and some others were naturalized in 1663, and twenty-one years later they obtained permission to erect a synagogue. Only six are known to have possessed landed estates: then as now they were engaged in good retail trades, and gradually assumed the position many still hold as merchants and importers. For a great number of years a tribute was demanded from them: in 1682 it was seven hundred and fifty pounds, and afterwards it was increased to a higher sum.

Returning to the early records of Protestantism, it will be found that though "sectaries" did not long flourish, the efforts made to supply conforming ministers were not successful. Twenty years after the conquest there were only four in the island: two of these were Swiss. In the valuable and interesting appendix to the first volume of the "Journals of the House of Assembly" is a full account of these clergymen, written in May, 1675. The minister at Port Royal, the predecessor of Mr. Spere before alluded to, was Mr. Hayne, who was a good scholar and orthodox preacher. At Spanish Town there was Mr. Hausyer, one of the Swiss noticed above: he is described as "a honest man, a good liver, and

reasonable preacher." In St. John's, Guanaboa, was Mr. Lemon, "a sober young man and a very good preacher." He it seems doubled his income of £100 by keeping a free school erected by Colonel Coape, but to which no later allusion is made in the records of the colony. Mr. Zeller, the other native of Switzerland, was in St. Andrews, where he was esteemed as a sober, honest man. This early record supplies almost the only insight we have into the character of the clergy in those days.

After Mr. Spere retired from Port Royal a clergyman from Ireland, Mr. John Crow, took his place. He was a time-serving man. On the arrival of John Coad and his companions he preached a sermon of which that good man sorely complained. He says that, "instead of showing them (their masters), like Obadiah, their pride, cruelty, and wrong, and what a cursed thing it was to separate men from wives and children," he exhorted the captives to serve as those who had neither remedy nor hope. This clergyman could not very long have retained his incumbency for a man of very different spirit was the rector of Por Royal at the time of the great earthquake. The revocation of the Edict of Nantes brought many Huguenots to the island. Among these men were Calvin Galpiné, who was, after Mr. Lemon, rector of St. Johns; Mr. Gaultier, who left lands to endow a school; and Lewis Galdy, so strangely preserved in the great earthquake.

Churches had been erected at Witherwood and Yallahs, but were for a long time without pastors. At first the stipends of the clergy depended entirely upon the pleasure of the vestry, but in time a law passed making £100 per annum the lowest they could offer, The king was recognised as the head of the church, but the governor really nominated to the livings, though a license was required from the Bishop of London. In thirty years after English occupation nine churches had been built; and the clergy wherever appointed were made members of parochial vestries and surveyors of highways. Their registries of births, marriages, and deaths were the only legal records of such events, and where no clergyman had been located, the churchwardens of the parish were charged with the duty,

The stipends secured by the parish clergymen were not inconsiderable, regard being had to the value of money at that time; but they were supplemented by the fees given for the celebration of the above services, and in many cases private schools were kept. Endowments were far more common in the early days of the colony than later. Their misapplication in so

many cases deterred others from posthumous liberality. A house and sixty acres of land was one of the earliest legacies to the church at Spanish Town.

Had James II. been able to carry out his plans, there would have been much trouble among the few devout Protestants in the island. In 1685 he appointed Sir Philip Howard governor, but this gentleman never came. He was to have entrusted the clergy with great powers, but at the price of entire subserviency to his will. The Duke of Albemarle came instead; he had less earnestness of any kind about him. But Father Churchill spared no pains, as "chief pastor of his majesty's Catholic subjects in Jamaica," to effect the subjugation of the people. Happily his time was short, and the Toleration Act of 1688 was welcomed here as at home. A proclamation from William and Mary followed it, affording "liberty of conscience to all persons except papists."

It was unfortunate for the proper position of the clergy that so many secular duties were thrust upon them. Every parish vestry and local board was more or less under their influence. The right discharge of their spiritual duties was in consequence impeded.

An attempt was made to bring all educational efforts in the colony under the control of the clergy. James II. ordered that no person coming from England without the license of the Bishop of London, should keep a school; and Sir Philip Howard was charged on his arrival to see that no person then in the island continued to keep one without his license. These laws were not enforced, but few beside the clergy were employed in education. There is ample proof that many legacies were left both for religious and educational purposes, though in very few cases were the wishes of the testators carried out.

## CHAPTER IV

### MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

The first English occupants brought with them the habits and tastes peculiar to military men of the age to which they belonged; and as the capture of the island was easy, and no formidable foe remained to test the prowess of the British forces, inactivity, so dreaded by wise captains, soon told with fearful effect on the *morale* of the army. The greater number were swept away by sickness and famine, but gradually other men, willing and anxious to cultivate the soil, took their place, and laboured with that steady industry so essential to successful colonisation.

In dealing with the manners and customs of the inhabitants of the island, several classes must pass under review. The planters, free white servants, white bondservants, and negroes, are found thus early. Other classes soon mingled with them, or sprung from their combination.

As far as possible the white inhabitants conformed to the habits of the same classes in England. Early rising was general, and meals were taken at hours which would now seem ridiculously early. The intercourse of planters and merchants with buccaneers and seafaring men, and not unfrequently the interchange of occupations, gave a peculiar character to the style of conversation. Plantations stocked with servants or slaves would be called well-handed; if otherwise, it would be said to want hands; a kitchen would be called the cookroom; a pantry or cellar a storeroom. The eastern and western extremities of the island were spoken of as “to windward” or “leeward,” according to the prevailing wind, and so with many other terms.

It will be remembered that in England, after the Restoration, the puritanical rules of the former age were exchanged for the reign of freedom and licentiousness. In inquiring into the manners of the English in Jamaica, during this or any subsequent period, regard should be had to those of the same classes at home: they will as a consequence appear in a more favourable light than if contrasted

with those of the present day. If at this time the English in Jamaica exhibited considerable energy and enterprise, it is equally true that in many cases they were grossly immoral.

With a few exceptions in Port Royal and Spanish Town, the houses of the best settlers were of a very rough and homely description. The heavy pointed roof, with massive, rough-hewn beams exposed to view, the apartments being merely separated by partitions a few feet high, and which is still sometimes seen in country parts, was then the common style of architecture; but the sideboards would often be loaded with massive plate, and other indications of rude wealth were frequently seen. The tables were liberally supplied with food. Madeira was the favourite wine, and brandy was esteemed more highly than rum. Sloane gives a description of a variety of beverages, highly valued in his day, but now almost unknown. Coffee was not then introduced into the colony; chocolate was the article most used at breakfast. For sleeping, hammocks were preferred to beds, being cooler: little covering was required, but mosquito-nets were thus early highly valued.

Among the poorer white inhabitants may be enumerated the tradesmen or artisans in the towns, overseers and others on estates. Not a few of those gradually worked themselves up to high positions in the colony. These men being free, were at liberty to avail themselves of any opening that afforded promise of success. Little in any way remarkable can be recorded of this class. The white bond-servants were in a position altogether peculiar; some had come under indentures to serve a certain time, while others had been transported for vagrancy, or for political and other offences. In either case their condition was deplorable. In the pages of Esquimelling,<sup>1</sup> who was once a bond-servant under indentures to a French master, there is a pitiful account of the sufferings to which these people were exposed. A variety of painful examples given in detail fully bears out his statement that not only did persons in England and continental countries induce young men and boys to transport themselves under indenture by fair promises, but "having once allured and conveyed them into the islands, they were forced to work like horses, the toil they impose upon them being much harder than what they usually enjoin upon the negroes, their slaves. For these they endeavour in some measure to preserve, as being their perpetual bondmen; but as for their white servants,

they care not whether they live or die, seeing they are to continue no longer than three years in their service.”<sup>2</sup> Some contracts were, however, for seven years; not less than ten years was named by James II. as the term for which those spared from the bloody assize were to be transported.

It may at first sight appear as if there was a wide difference between the indentured and the transported servants. There was, however, hardly any in the treatment they received, and little in their character. Lord Vaughan once wrote relative to servants who had crept up to estates, and says there were, “among others, some who chose transporting rather than hanging.” But men were hung for very trivial offences in those days; and it is not easy to regard the victims of the Rye House Plot, or of Jeffreys’ bloody assize, as moral offenders. Specimens of the “rogue and vagabond class”<sup>1</sup> did come; but as many or more whose only crime was poverty, or political adherence to the losing side.

In the laws of Jamaica <sup>2</sup> may still be seen a very suggestive enactment for the regulation of bond-servants. It is the second act of the newly-elected assembly. It indeed provides for the supply of food and clothing to the servant, and also that no servant be whipped naked without an order of a justice of the peace, but it provides for many years of extra service as the punishment for very minor offences. Moreover, if a servant married without his master’s consent, he must serve two years longer; but if he was the parent of a child without marriage, he must serve twice as long as the woman had to do at the time of the offence.<sup>3</sup> In cases where there was no indenture made before arriving in the island, seven years was fixed as the period of service if the servant was under eighteen, and four years if over that age. These people were shipped from England like so much merchandise, bills of lading being given just as if they were barrels of pork instead of human beings, and great numbers constantly perished on the voyage. Leslie describes a visit to one of these ships: “We went on board, when he (the consignee) viewed the servants, gave them clothes, and ordered them to be well cared for till they were disposed of. It was diverting to see the shoal of buyers. The poor fellows were

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<sup>1</sup> “The History of the Buccaneers of America,” by John Esquimelling. London, 1695.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.



made to pass in review before their future tyrants, and looked as if they had been a parcel of horses. Each chose whom he liked best: a good tradesman went off at about £40, and others at £20 per head." With such a commencement of the servitude we can readily credit Esquimelling's assertion, that masters were accustomed towards the close of the allotted time so to ill-treat their servants, as to lead them to beg that they might be sold to another master for a renewed term of service. "Thus," says he, "many served for fifteen or twenty years." The food and clothing of these people was little superior to that of negroes; their only bed was a mat. Sloane observes that they did not speak of going to bed, but "to sleep."

Indians, though few in number, were also found among the bondsmen. They were occasionally imported, but some were taken from the Spaniards in the forays on their possessions. They were of little value except as hunters or fishermen. As a rule they were well treated, for if whipped they became so despondent as to become useless, if they did not commit suicide.

Negro slaves were rapidly increasing in numbers: like Israel in Egypt, all their service was with rigour. They came from different parts of the African coast, principally from Guinea. Some were brought from Madagascar, but were not so valuable as those from the west coast, not being so hardy in person, besides being choice about food. The term Madagass is still applied to certain light-complexioned negroes, especially those whose hair is less woolly than common. These are found in families where there is just a very slight mingling of European blood; and the name therefore only indicates that there was a period when people light in complexion and possessing rather straight hair were known in the colony by that term. Slaves born in the island were more highly esteemed than such as were imported. Those of mixed blood were generally employed as assistant tradesmen, or in domestic occupations. Though Sloane's visit to the island only dates a little more than forty years after the British conquest, it is remarkable that the different varieties of coloured people were well known. He speaks of mulattoes (the offspring of whites and blacks); of quadroons

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<sup>1</sup> "Cromwell's Letters," &c. (Carlyle), vol. iii. letter 206.

<sup>2</sup> "Acts of Assembly," from the year 1681 to 1768, in two vols. published in St. Jago de la Vega, in 1769, pp. 1-5.

<sup>3</sup> Clauses 9, 10.

(the offspring of mulattoes and whites); and even of mustees (the offspring of whites and quadroons).

The usual habitation of the slaves was a small thatched hut; its only furniture a mat, a pot for cooking, and a few vessels made out of the calabash. They had a yearly allowance of clothing, but at work in the fields they went nearly naked. It has been said that they were better treated as slaves in the British colony than they had been in the same capacity in their own country. It is quite true that slavery is a very ancient institution in Africa, and its miseries there may have equalled anything known in the plantations. But it is equally true that the European slave trade added intensity to that of Africa; and, by leading to internal wars, occasioned the slavery of multitudes who would otherwise have remained free. These could not fail to feel most acutely the misery of their lot.

To Sloane, who is the only writer of the period who has fully described the discipline of the estates, reference must be made for illustrations. For negligence, he says they were "whipped by the overseer with lancewood switches till they be bloody, and several of the switches broken" Formerly, straps made of the hide of the manati, or sea cow, were used: these, it was said, were abandoned because they were too cruel. A more probable reason is that the marks they made remained for life; and as the slave market was well supplied, it was thought best to transport those who were too troublesome, but the Spaniards would not buy them if marked with the whip, as it indicated their character. The switching was not always the termination of the punishment. Sloane continues: "After they are whipped till they are raw, some put on their skins pepper and salt to make them smart; at other times their masters will drop melted wax on their skins, and use several very exquisite tortures." All this for negligence! For running away, we are told by the same authority that "they put iron rings of great weight upon their ankles, or pothooks about their necks, which are iron rings with two long rods riveted to them, or a spur in the mouth." This last was probably a gag. Sometimes half the foot was cut off by an axe. Rebellion was a capital offence: burning rather than hanging was the punishment. The poor wretch was fastened "down on the ground with crooked sticks on every limb; they then applied the fire by degrees, from the feet and hands, burning them gradually up to the head, whereby their pains are extravagant."

If any one looks for some expression of compassion from the founder of the British Museum, it will be in vain. He adds: "These punishments are sometimes merited by the blacks, who are a very perverse generation of people; and though they appear harsh, yet are scarce equal to some of their crimes, and inferior to what punishments other European nations inflict on their slaves in the East Indies." He might have added that tortures quite as exquisite were inflicted by English on Spaniards, and by Spaniards on English; or he might have cited the whippings and burnings in the west of England not long before.

Slavery had its brighter aspects. Not only were some raised to lighter occupations, as domestics, but even negroes thus early were made overseers. It does not appear that the race had cause to rejoice in the honour thus conferred on a few. To be a servant of servants is to drink the dregs of human misery. Sloane cites the case of two black overseers he attended professionally, at the request of their masters, and he notes that they had used their position to commit unbridled licentiousness. Some of these people were rather famed as doctors, and consulted even by the whites; they had some knowledge, not always lawfully used, of plants and herbs.

To these slaves, upon whose minds no ray of Christian truth was ever shed, death had few terrors. It would only take them across the ocean to their own country: hence suicide was not unfrequent; it was especially common with the negroes from Angola, if ill-treated. Still great lamentation was made over the graves of the departed, and as the spirit, or "duppy," was supposed to hover for some days about the spot before it took its final departure for Africa, food and rum was placed upon the grave, and the supply renewed from day to day.

According to the usual routine of the plantations, the slaves were called at daylight, in the busy seasons one or two hours before; a conch shell, or on large properties a bell, was the signal. At twelve o'clock they went to dinner, when they were expected to carry to the great house a bundle of wood or grass. At one o'clock they returned to labour, and continued until nightfall, often carrying in another load. Infants were carried to the field, secured to the back of the mother. Sloane attributes the flattened nose of the negro to this custom. When able to walk they ran about at liberty for a time, but at an early age were put to weed paths and

other trifling jobs, under the care of an old woman, who rarely failed to use her switch with tolerable freedom.

Sundays and half of Saturday were accounted holidays, but the negroes had at these times to cultivate their own grounds, for they were expected to raise all the native food they required. Two or three days were given at Christmas and also at Easter, which the slaves called pickaninny Christmas. What holidays they had were usually spent in dancing. These dances were almost invariably of a licentious character. The music was produced by small, hollow gourds, across which were laid strings of horsehair, and some of the dancers had a kind of rattle fastened to their wrists and legs. The favourite instrument was a drum, made of a skin stretched tightly over a hollow piece of timber; but as this was the war drum of Africa, it was long prohibited, from the fear it might be employed for a similar purpose here. The dances, though not graceful, were energetic; at times they assumed a fancy dress character. No appendage was too preposterous, but the most correct style of thing was to affix the tail of a cow to that part of the human frame where in tailed animals that appendage invariably grows.



# PERIOD III

## FROM THE EARTHQUAKE TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE ANTI-SLAVERY STRUGGLE, 1782

### CHAPTER I HISTORICAL EVENTS

WHEN the alarm occasioned by the earthquake had a little subsided, the legislature was convened, and almost its first act was to appoint the anniversary of that eventful day as a solemn fast. Kingston, to which considerable numbers were now flocking, was constituted a parish, and a new city laid out by Colonel Lilly, an engineer of considerable ability. The defenceless state into which the whole colony was thrown afforded great facilities to filibustering attacks, and they were of frequent occurrence throughout the whole of the following year.<sup>1</sup> In May, 1694, the safety of the island generally was imperilled by an expedition of a really formidable character, of which a full account has been preserved from the pen of Sir William Beeston, who at the time administered the government. White, who was president and acting governor during the earthquake, died on the 22nd of August following, as appears by the registry of burials in St. Andrews. John Bourden succeeded him for a short time; then Beeston commenced his career, which lasted for about nine years. He was descended from an ancient English family, long settled at Beeston Castle, in Cheshire, and emigrated to Jamaica in 1660. He became a member of the assembly, of which he was for some time speaker, and greatly distinguished himself in opposition to Poyning's Act. He enjoyed not only the confidence of the people

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. i. pp. 144–146.

generally, but had been greatly esteemed by some previous governors. Sir Thomas Modyford had officially described him as a “good, discreete person;” and Sir Thomas Lynch had spoken highly of his “courage and conduct.” All these qualities were soon put to the test. There was at this time in the island a considerable number of Roman Catholics, chiefly Irishmen, who were anxious if possible to create a diversion in favour of James II. There were many others ready for any desperate enterprise, and who, prohibited from buccaneering by Jamaica law, found the desired liberty with the French in Hayti. These uniting together, formed a really dangerous confederacy. Among the desperadoes thus brought together, one named Grublien was much dreaded on account of the frequency and success with which he landed at sea-side plantations, and carried off negroes and other plunder. Among his exploits was the capture, not only of all the slaves of a Mrs. Barrow, a minister’s widow, residing in St. Elizabeths, but of her daughter Rachel. But an enterprise far more serious than these sudden raids was in contemplation, though happily discovered in time for plans to be organised for defence. A Captain Elliot, whose ship contained a valuable cargo, was captured and carried into Petit Grave. There he picked up some valuable information, and then managed to effect his escape in a small canoe, and after five days and nights at sea, reached Jamaica. He hastened to inform the governor that Stapleton and Lynch, two Irishmen, had given information that Port Royal was almost defenceless, and that five hundred men favourable to King James would at once join an invading force. Twenty ships and some three thousand men had been prepared to effect a landing, under the command of Ducasse. This intelligence was communicated by Elliot on the 31st of May, at nine o’clock. That night the council was convened, and martial law proclaimed.<sup>1</sup>

The fortifications at Port Royal were repaired, and some new ones extemporised. The narrow pass east of Kingston, where Rock Fort now stands, was defended, some outlying and indefensible places abandoned, and Old Harbour and Carlisle Bay hastily fortified. On Sunday, the 17th of June, the expected fleet appeared, but instead of making Port Royal, one portion anchored at Port Morant and the other in Cow Bay. This circumstance, combined with subsequent operations, has led some to assert that

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. i. pp. 148, 149.

plunder was the only object of the expedition.<sup>1</sup> The fact seems to be that information of Elliot's arrival, and of the preparations made to receive him, had been communicated to Ducasse on reaching the coast, and led to a change of plan.

It was thought that if Port Royal could not be sacked, booty might at least be obtained from the sea-side plantations. For nearly a month the work of plunder went on, not only on the east coast, but on the north side, to which ships were despatched. These parts were almost defenceless, for the militia had been withdrawn to defend Port Royal. Prisoners were tortured, women were violated, plantations fired, and in all some thirteen hundred negroes taken. At last, after a feint before Port Royal, some ships were left in Cow Bay to divert the attention of the inhabitants, and the greater part of the fleet ran down to Carlisle Bay before the breeze. Here, on the 19th of July, a body of 1500 French landed. They were opposed by about two hundred militia and a few negroes. After a gallant resistance, in which Colonel Clayborn, Lieutenant-Colonel Smart, Captain Vassell, and Lieutenant Dawkins were killed, and many others wounded, together with large numbers of men, it became necessary to retreat across the Minho. Many were drowned in the passage, but at this critical moment five companies arrived from Spanish Town. They had marched thirty miles without refreshment, but at once fell with such fury on the foe, that they in turn were compelled to fall back. For three days skirmishing continued; but at last the English, having gathered some seven hundred men, appointed a new commander, Major Lloyd, and an express was sent to obtain the governor's concurrence. This obtained, Lloyd made an admirable disposition of his forces, and drove the French, with considerable loss, to their ships, but not until they had secured their booty. The colonists lost in all upwards of one hundred killed and wounded. The loss of the French was stated at seven hundred, but this is a palpable exaggeration.<sup>2</sup>

The plunder was valuable; including negroes, it must have been worth more than £60,000; De Graffe, a notorious pirate, was second in command. Ducasse was accused of keeping too large a share of plunder for himself and officers. However, he had the

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<sup>1</sup> Hill's "Lights and Shadows," pp. 50, 51.

<sup>2</sup> Long, Edwards, Beeston's Despatch, "Journal of Assoc." vol. i.



approval of his government, who gave him a pension of one hundred pistoles per annum. Fifty sugar estates and as many plantations were destroyed, and 2006 negroes were reported as missing.<sup>1</sup> Captain Elliot was rewarded for his timely information by a grant of £500, and the men who accompanied him in the canoe were not forgotten; but the assembly did not display that zeal in providing for the future defence of the island that might have been expected.<sup>2</sup> More energy was displayed in preparing armaments for purposes of retaliation. In October five ships sailed for St. Domingo, and bombarded the town of Esterre for seven hours, and burnt a ship. Next year a more formidable fleet, under Commodore Wilmot, together with 1200 men under Colonel Lillingston, sailed for the same quarter. It did a good deal of damage, captured in all one hundred and twenty cannon, and secured among other prisoners the wife and children of De Graffe. She was treated with respect by her captors, and knew how to obtain it, for De Graffe had married her in admiration of her spirit, she having once pointed a pistol at his head when he offered her an insult.

The dangers by which the island was beset did not teach the colonists the necessity of mutual forbearance with each other. The whole of Beeston's administration was marked by quarrels between the two legislative bodies. Personalities were freely indulged in, and much time lost in dealing with the guilty parties. The council claimed the right not only of rejecting but amending money bills, a right never conceded by the assembly. The British government still sought to obtain the grant of a perpetual revenue, and Beeston, whose duty it was to support the claims of the crown, was exposed to much ill-will in consequence. It is not unreasonable to attribute to this fact the imputations of dishonesty by which he was assailed. £4000 had been granted as a royal bounty after Ducasse's visit: this it was said Beeston had not properly distributed. It was also alleged that booty taken from pirates, and property recovered after the earthquake, had not been accounted for. There charges were not made until Beeston had come into personal collision with the assembly. They were, however, persisted in, though his death not long after they were

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. i. p. 203.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 151-171.

first made prevented the explanations he might have been able to offer. He had incurred suspicion by the haste with which he withdrew from the island, in spite of some efforts made to prevent him.<sup>1</sup>

He was superseded by Major-General Selwyn on the 21st of January, 1702, and died in London early in the following November. Selwyn had, however, preceded him to the tomb: this general had passed unscathed through the siege of Namur, to perish of Jamaica fever: his administration only lasted seventy-four days. Little remains to indicate that he was ever governor of the island but his monument in Spanish Town cathedral, and a record in the "Journals of the Assembly," that in respect to his memory £2000 had been voted to his heir-at-law. Had he lived he probably would have rendered good service, for he commenced some important additions to the means of defence, and also reviewed and improved the troops. After his death Colonel Beckford became lieutenant-governor by virtue of a dormant commission he had held for some time. Beckford told the legislature in his opening speech that he had passed through most of the public offices in the island, "with no great applause yet without complaint;" and this humble praise which he claimed for himself may be fairly awarded him in the higher position he now filled, but in which he was soon succeeded by Mr. T.Handasyd. For nine years this gentleman presided with considerable success over the affairs of the colony. Yet his first appointment was only designed to fill up the time until the Earl of Peterborough arrived. But this nobleman never came, and some few years later gained more renown at the siege of Barcelona<sup>2</sup> than he could have done in Jamaica.

On the 24th of June, 1702, Queen Anne was proclaimed in Jamaica. The early part of the eighteenth century is memorable as the date of the arrival of a number of energetic colonists from the unfortunate colony of Darien. The record of that enterprise belongs to British rather than to colonial history.<sup>1</sup> Paterson, the founder of the bank of England, had so far turned to account the knowledge he had picked up among the buccaneers, as to persuade the cautious Scots that an El Dorado was after all waiting for their occupancy in the West Indies. Goodly fleets, with some thousands

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. i. pp. 145-224.

<sup>2</sup> "Pictorial History of England," vol. iv, pp. 179, 180. Burnet. &c.

in all, sailed for the land of promise, and all would have been well but for the jealousy of the East India Company and the too ready assent of King William to the assertion of the Spaniards, that they had a prior claim to the country Paterson sought to colonise.

The emigrants were accordingly proscribed. Beeston, in 1699, was instructed to forbid all communication with the unfortunate adventurers, and the result was that many perished. It was not till the horrors of famine and the effects of climate had swept many to a premature grave, that the survivors were permitted to remove to Jamaica, and settle near those who had formerly come from Surinam. Paterson was in advance of his age: he saw the importance of communication between the Atlantic and Pacific. It was left for the nineteenth century to execute this portion of his plan. The merchants in Port Royal and Kingston were not insensible to the value of the projected colony, and several among them, Sir James de Castillo, in particular, were involved in considerable trouble through sending help to the colonists.

The war with France gave rise to a system of privateering which soon poured treasures into Port Royal surpassing even the days of the buccaneers; while the victory of Benbow over Ducasse (whose predatory visit to Jamaica has been related) filled the colonists with delight. It was on the 11th of July, 1702, that the brave admiral, the hero of so many sailors' songs, left Port Royal. On the 19th of August he fell in with the French fleet of which he was in search. Benbow's ships were inferior in number and weight of metal, but he immediately engaged the enemy, and kept up for some days a running fight. On the fifth day his leg was broken by a chain-shot: still he remained on deck, supported in a cot placed on the quarter-deck. He continued the battle till night, when Kirby and Wood, two of his captains, persuaded the rest to withdraw, Benbow was more troubled by the "villanous treachery of his captains" than by the loss of his leg. On returning to Port Royal a court-martial was assembled. Kirby and Wood were shot, and others punished less severely. Benbow lingered long enough to know that his conduct was applauded at home, and died on the 4th of November. Next day his remains were laid in the parish church of Kingston, where his grave may still be seen beneath the pews. The local poet of the period immortalizes the fact that—

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<sup>1</sup> See Dalrymple, and "Pictorial History of England," book ix. chap. 1.

“The Kingston town folk with sorrow did go  
To see the last of brave old Benbow.”

Ducasse was thankful for his escape, and wrote to tell Benbow so, and to advise him to hang up his rascally captains. People had not ceased talking of the naval hero whose form was so familiar in Port Royal, when that town, which had been steadily recovering from the effects of the earthquake, was nearly destroyed by fire. On the 9th of January, 1703, it broke out among warehouses, some of which contained gunpowder. As they were covered with shingles the flames spread rapidly, and in a short time scarcely a place except the forts was left. Kingston, in consequence of this calamity, increased in importance, and to encourage persons to settle there, taxes were remitted for seven years, while a law was passed prohibiting the use of American shingles in Port Royal.

Kingston soon required a court of quarter sessions and of common pleas. The house of assembly was convened there occasionally. In fact, the legislators of those days were not very particular where they met. When the supreme court was sitting in Spanish Town they often assembled in the parish church, as numerous entries in their journals show.<sup>1</sup> Committees were convened in taverns, coffee-houses, and even at private residences. Spanish Town also profited by the desolation of Port Royal. It had a stand of coaches in the great square. Vehicles plied for hire between it and the now forsaken town at Passage Fort, which had then two hundred houses, and was a favourite resort of seamen.

The records of legislative proceedings throughout Han dasyd's government are marred by fierce party contentions. Queen Anne, like former monarchs, demanded a perpetual revenue, but this the assembly would not give. A question which had been raised relative to the support of troops, complicated the difficulty, so that when Admiral Groydon arrived to succeed Benbow he was not allowed to land some soldiers he brought. The order was not rescinded until sickness and death had commenced their ravages.

As the assembly refused to make what was considered an adequate provision, only one regiment was left in the island, and in consequence of its undefended state, French cruisers and privateers

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, pp. 41, 265, 340, 357, 389, &c.

greatly harassed the outlying plantations, and did so much damage to the coasting trade that two small vessels were subsequently fitted out for its defence. Ducasse again alarmed the colony, and later still, in 1709, it was thought that the presence of Commodore Wager alone averted an invasion.

At all times the Maroons continued their harassing attacks, and the legislature found no relief from its intestine feuds. There were eight general elections and fifteen sessions in nine years. The speaker's post was no sinecure, his authority was openly defied. Occasionally members were expelled, but their constituencies seemed to feel it a point of honour to send them back. One night the place of meeting was entered by stealth, and the journals torn and cast into the street. Five hundred pounds were offered for the detection of the offenders, but they were never discovered, and the members in succession swore that they were innocent of the outrage.

In one thing the council and assembly agreed, namely—that the laws of England were in force in the colony, and had always been observed.<sup>1</sup> At one here, they were at variance on most other points. Personal disputes in the assembly ran high. A question had been raised whether the house had a right to adjourn longer than from day to day.<sup>2</sup> This had blown over for a time, but in the last year of Handasyd's government it was revived. The discussion waxed so furious that the governor, in proroguing the house, frankly told the members that their conduct reminded him of "a party of barbarous people who took off the head of Charles II. of ever blessed memory." There was no king to decapitate, but the richest subject of the queen (according to the statement of a contemporary writer) was killed through excitement. This was old Beckford, the father of Peter Beckford, the speaker. He was in the council chamber, and heard his son calling for help. Help was needed, for when Peter Beckford, having sought in vain to restore order, attempted to adjourn the house, some of the members barred the doors, while others drew their swords and forced him to re-occupy the chair. His father, alarmed by his cry for help, hastened to the governor, who was quite equal to the emergency; for drawing his sword, he called a few soldiers around him, and

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. ii. pp. 29, 30.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. i. pp. 408, 409.

causing the doors of the assembly chamber to be broken open, dissolved the house with the caustic reproof quoted above.<sup>1</sup> Greatly as the governor revered the blessed memory of the king, he seems to have been quite willing to follow the example of Cromwell. In the midst of the excitement the elder Beckford fell, the shock was too much for him, and he soon after died. He had twenty-two plantations, and nearly four thousand slaves. His personal property was immense, and was computed at the time at not far short of a million sterling; one account mentions a still higher sum.

In the middle of 1711 Lord Hamilton arrived as governor. The assembly still claimed as a right the declaration that the laws of England were in force, but were not yet willing to purchase the acknowledgment of this by the grant of a perpetual revenue to the crown, and so the wordy warfare continued. This was the real grievance that lay at the root of nearly all the troubles in the assembly. Lord Hamilton found they were determined to carry their point. He had been instructed to pass no money bill for a shorter period than a year, but he was compelled to accept one for three months only or to be left without means. So making a grace of necessity, he signed the bill, remarking that it must not be drawn into a precedent.<sup>2</sup> There can be no doubt that he made at first a favourable impression upon the members, and he told them he should cast a veil over the late transactions. But their feeling of wrong was too deep to secure more than a transient peace; and though next session they passed a revenue bill for the usual time, and in 1712 supported the governor in a dispute he had with Admiral Walker, he had next year to dismiss them without any provision being made for the support of the troops. In this emergency he did, in concurrence with the council, an unconstitutional though a humane act. The troops could not be allowed to starve, so money was found to pay them. These advances the next assembly refused to recognise. "They were disbursed without a law, or the public faith given for reimbursing the same;" and therefore could not be discharged without "infringing the liberties of subjects of this island, and betraying the trust reposed in them." They never were discharged by this or any

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. ii. p. 42. Bridges, vol. i. pp. 338, 339.

<sup>2</sup> journals, vol. ii. p. 42.

succeeding assembly, though a recommendation to that effect came signed by the king,<sup>1</sup> for George I. was now on the throne of England.

The quarrel soon became more serious. In October, 1715, the legislature was convened by express command of the king, who deplored the low state into which the island was sinking, for the ravages of war had been followed by a fearful hurricane in August, 1712. The house now turned round on the governor and presented a long string of complaints against him, the attorney-general, and some others. The governor reminded them how harmoniously former houses had worked with the other branches of the executive, but ill feelings were aroused. The assembly sat on Christmas Eve, met again on the 26th, and then only adjourned for the New Year's Day; but no good coming of this relinquishment of the holiday season, the governor adjourned them on the 6th of January, telling them that they were attempting to usurp the executive part of the government. When, on the 16th, he called them together again he said that if they "did not provide for his majesty's government, measures would be taken elsewhere to do it."<sup>2</sup>

Lord Hamilton left in the middle of the year, and Mr. Heywood, a large planter, much respected, succeeded him. The disputes continued, and the house, while not neglecting absolutely necessary legislation, was much employed in preparing long memorials relative to its grievances. Practically it carried out the old claim of a right to adjourn at will. Heywood said the members might as well claim a right to meet when they pleased.

Sir Nicholas Lawes succeeded Heywood. He it was who in 1728 had introduced the coffee plant to Jamaica. Seven berries were brought from St. Domingo and planted at his estate at Temple Hall, in St Andrews.<sup>1</sup> He had come to Jamaica soon after the conquest, with his mother, who married a second time, and being again left a widow was subsequently united to Colonel Archbould, formerly an officer in Venables' army, and who has been mentioned as one of three who divided the Liguany district between them. Of Sir Nicholas the remarkable fact may be recorded that he married no less than five times. On each occasion

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. xii. p. 169.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. ii. p. 187.

he chose a widow, and thus he became connected with many of the most influential families in Jamaica and with some in England.<sup>2</sup> The task of government was in consequence comparatively easy, though it must have been to some extent that of a family clique.

During the early part of the eighteenth century the outlying plantations, the coasting and other vessels, were much annoyed by pirates. Among the most notorious of these was Tench, popularly called Blackbeard; another celebrated pirate was named Martel. The Bahamas had become the resort of great numbers of these men. Three ships were sent against them. Vane, the leader, with about fifty desperadoes, escaped, but was soon after seized and executed in Jamaica. After this two or three hundred pirates remaining in the Bahamas surrendered and took the oath of allegiance and became for the most part quiet and reputable inhabitants. A love of adventure rather than innate villany, seems to have influenced the majority of these men.<sup>3</sup> In the vessel in which Vane escaped a man named Rackam was second in command. He subsequently assumed the supreme direction of affairs, Vane, with some sixteen others, having been turned adrift for refusing to fight a French vessel. For two years Rackam and his crew were a perfect terror to seamen, constantly turning up where least expected. During August and September, 1720, he hovered about the north-western coast of Jamaica, occasionally running over to Cuba and Hayti. In October Sir Nicholas Lawes, who had heard of his whereabouts, sent round a small armed vessel, under Captain Barnet, who found him in Negril Bay. He attempted to escape, but was taken, with the small crew yet remaining faithful to him, and brought round to Port Royal, where they were tried and executed.<sup>1</sup> Rackam was gibbeted at a place near Port Royal, still marked on the charts as Rackam Bay.

When sentence of death was passed on the pirates two pleaded for exemption on the ground that they were women and with child. This was found to be the case. Though they had been the most desperate of the band, they were reprieved. Mary Read, however,

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<sup>1</sup> Lunan's "Hort. Jamacensis," vol. i. p. 226.

<sup>2</sup> One granddaughter was married in 1771 to the Duke of Cumberland, brother of George III.

<sup>3</sup> "History of Pirates." Atkins's "Voyage to West Indies," p. 249. Southey's "Chronological History," vol. ii. pp. 212-219.



died in her cell; the other, Anne Bonny, was set at liberty.<sup>2</sup> Two other adventurers, Brown and Wynter, still managed to elude all search, though a reward of £500 was offered for the latter, dead or alive, and £300 for Brown.<sup>3</sup> They were infamous characters. On one occasion they surrounded with their party a house in St. Anns, near the shore, and burnt it, with all its inmates, sixteen in number.

On the 28th of August, 1712, a terrible hurricane had burst over part of the island, and on the same day, 1722, another fearful storm devastated the island generally. Houses and sugar works were thrown down, plantations seriously damaged, and in some instances destroyed. As usual, Port Royal suffered most. A naval officer stated that for forty-eight hours before the storm the waves broke with much noise on the cays outside the harbour, and the sea generally was disturbed in a manner altogether disproportioned to the breeze. There was also much thunder and lightning. Early on the morning of the 28th the storm burst in all its fury and veered round to every part of the compass. In Port Royal the water rose sixteen feet above the usual mark; two lines of houses near the sea fell in consequence of being undermined; a battery of twenty-one guns was also thrown down, and twenty seamen at work at Gun Quay were washed off and drowned. The gallant fellows had motioned back boats that were coming to fetch them away when the storm began, seeing too plainly that no boat could reach them safely. Out of fifty sail only four men-of-war and two merchantmen were saved, and these only with the loss of all their masts. The greater part of the squadron was fortunately at sea.

Wrecks and drowned men covered the shores, and when at ten o'clock at night the hurricane ceased, there was a fearful stillness in the air. For many days the calm continued, and in the absence of the sea breeze the air seemed to become poisoned, the smell of stagnant water was most oppressive, the insects became a perfect plague, and soon a destructive epidemic spread through the island.

<sup>1</sup> At least four hundred persons are known to have perished, and the legislature at its first meeting appointed the anniversary of these two visitations as a solemn fast.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. ii. pp. 346–500.

<sup>2</sup> A full but rather too favourable account of these women may be seen in the “Picaroons,” by the Hon. R. Hill, pp. 30–48.

<sup>3</sup> Journals, vol. ii. p. 338.

In that wonderful scene in Old Testament history, when Elijah hid himself on Horeb, there was a wind, an earthquake, a fire. In none of these, but in the calm which followed, the prophet heard the still small voice. Here, too, there was the earthquake, the fire, the wind. But, alas! the inhabitants seemed to hear no still voice from heaven succeeding. The land was almost entirely given up to iniquity, for few indications of piety or of virtue can be traced during this period of Jamaica history.

Sir Nicholas Lawes did not retire from the government until the way had been prepared for settling the longstanding dispute relative to the revenue bill. "An Act for making the revenue of the island perpetual, and ascertaining the rights and liberties of the subjects of this island," &c., had passed the lower house, but while pending a conference with the council relative to some of its provisions, an adjournment was rendered necessary in consequence of the prevailing sickness.<sup>3</sup> Lawes was quite paternal in his closing address: he reminded the assembled legislators that he was not only personally acquainted with them, but had been with most of their fathers before them, and affectionately urged them to set aside those animosities which hindered the general prosperity.

The Duke of Portland, who had long been expected as governor, arrived in December, 1722. He was accompanied by Colonel Dubourgay as lieutenant-governor, to whom a salary of £1000 a year had been promised; but this was an innovation, as no salary had previously been given during the administration of the governor. The house of assembly refused to grant it except for one year, and then only to defray his return passage to England,<sup>1</sup> The duke was, however, well received, and his stipend fixed at £5000 per annum,<sup>2</sup> double what had formerly been given. He probably spent far more. His hospitality was unbounded, and it was remarked that the requirements of his table raised the price of fowls fifty per cent.<sup>3</sup> His first assembly was harmonious, but the old question about the revenue bill soon gave trouble, for each session the struggle was revived with increasing intensity, The duke, though often compelled to censure the course taken by the

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<sup>1</sup> Atkins's "Voyage to West Indies," p. 240, &c.

<sup>2</sup> Journals, vol. ii.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., vol. ii. p. 449.

assembly, was invariably courteous and dignified in his reproofs. He had cause also to complain of the time that elapsed before his letters were answered by the home government, even though important matters were left unsettled in consequence.

The inhabitants of Jamaica have always been partial to dukes, though the Duke of Portland alone seems to have deserved their respect. It was therefore not surprising that they should spend some thousands of pounds in improving the house he occupied, but they were equally liberal with respect to other public buildings and fortifications.

It is highly probable that to the Duke of Portland would have belonged the honour of settling the long disputed question of revenue, and reconciling the local legislature to the home government, had he not died suddenly in July, 1726. The island was not ungrateful for his services. His widow was maintained while she remained in the colony, and when she left it was in a vessel specially provided for the purpose, while a handsome present testified the kindly feeling of the inhabitants.<sup>4</sup> The name is still prepetuated in the parish of Portland, which was settled during the administration of the duke, and the chief village, Titchfield, was named after his family seat.

For a few months the government devolved on John Ayscough, president of the council. He attempted to compel newly-elected members of the assembly to attend him in the council chamber to be sworn in, but this was very properly declared to be a violation of the undoubted privileges of the lower house. He soon widened the breach by complaining that the assembly, in not dealing with certain bills, were evading his majesty's *commands*. They reminded him that this was not the way in which the king's *recommendations* should be spoken of to a free legislature, and refused to do any further business until reparation was made.<sup>1</sup> Ayscough was not the man to do this, and the assembly accordingly adjourned from day to day for three weeks. A new assembly was equally determined,<sup>2</sup> and nothing more was done until Ayscough was superseded: and

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. ii. pp. 456–461.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. ii. p. 460.

<sup>3</sup> Atkins's "Voyage to West Indies," p. 246.

<sup>4</sup> Long's "History."

he was then impeached, on the ground that he had “perverted justice while president and chancellor.”

On the 22nd of October, 1726, another hurricane did considerable damage. It only lasted three hours and a half, but in that short time many houses in Kingston, Spanish Town, and Port Royal, were injured, and some thrown down. The east end of the island also suffered, but the western half was almost untouched. In all, about fifty vessels were cast on shore or sunk.

In the middle of 1727, Major-General Hunter, who had been governor at New York, arrived. He was well received by the colonists, and next year the long-disputed revenue bill passed through its several stages. The measure, as finally adopted, secured to the crown the sum of £8000 per annum. This was contributed, in part, from quit-rents, then amounting to nearly £1500 a year, and the remainder was raised by duties on articles of foreign growth and manufacture, foreign wines, liquors, &c. To these items were added sums arising from fines, forfeitures, escheats, &c. Out of this money £2500 was appropriated towards payment of the governor’s salary, about £2000 more to forts, fortifications, and other defensive purposes; and the balance was to be paid to certain officials. All was to be spent in the colony. In consideration of this act, the body of Jamaica laws received the royal assent, and it was moreover declared that—

*“All such laws and statutes as have been at any time esteemed. introuced used accepted or received as laws of this island, shall, and are hereby declared to be and continue laws of this his majesty’s island of jamaica for ever.”*

The royal approval of the bill was given on the 29th of May, 1729, and made known to the legislature in a speech from the governor, on the 12th of May, 1730.

It may not unreasonably be asked why a settlement, apparently of such a simple character, had been so long delayed?<sup>1</sup> The legislators objected, on two grounds, to the grant of a perpetual revenue. They were unwilling to commit themselves to an irrevocable act involving annual expenditure, for they asserted that in Barbadoes such a revenue had been appropriated to other than its legitimate purposes; while the crown, wishing to secure its

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. ii. pp. 587, 588.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. ii. pp. 607–611.

servants from a capricious withholding of stipends on the part of the assembly, declined to confirm the laws passed in the island till a fixed revenue was granted. The results of the protracted controversy were serious in the extreme. The administration of justice and the titles upon which some of the best estates in the island were held, had been open to question. All this was now adjusted. It should be observed that, though the first settlers had an undisputed right to any British statutes in force at the conquest of the island, they were not held to have a right to any passed subsequently to it, unless Jamaica was specially mentioned. The act of 1728 put an end to this anomaly.

For years past the island had been kept in a state of alarm by the guerilla warfare and system of plunder maintained by the Maroons. Indians had been brought from the Mosquito Coast to hunt them in their mountain fastnesses. Barracks were erected in the mountains of Clarendon, St. Elizabeth, and elsewhere; packs of dogs had been procured; but still five hundred mountain negroes kept the colony in alarm. The "Journals of Assembly" are occupied for hundreds of pages, particularly from 1728 to 1739, with references to inquiries, reports, and plans for capturing them. Only during the latter year was the task completed, but a few details of the closing struggle will satisfy most readers.

The chief seat of Maroon depredations was in Portland and its neighbourhood, but it was by no means confined to that district. Planters on the north side generally are described as being in despair. Many plantations were abandoned, and the commencement of a new one in the disturbed districts was looked upon as an act of folly. The facilities for escape and the certainty of welcome led numbers of slaves to run away, while those who remained were becoming increasingly dissatisfied. There were at this time 80,000 negroes in the island, and only 8000 whites. Few of these were really reliable; about one thousand were heads of families, or masters. A large proportion of the remainder were indentured servants, who felt little inclination to risk their lives in warfare among the mountain fastnesses. Parties of armed men were fitted out from time to time, and liberally rewarded if they met with success. One of the most successful of these was engaged at Porus. The fertile and prosperous parish of Manchester was at

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<sup>1</sup> Bridges' "Annals," vol. 1.

this time almost unexplored, and the large village of Porus was a desert. In former ages the Indians had a large settlement there, and more recently a Spanish hacienda had been established; but all through the period of English conquest it had been neglected, except by a gang of runaway negroes, who could hide securely in the mountain fastnesses. Against these a party went, and several of the gang were killed and others captured. A grant of £650 was made to the party for their exertions.

Such occasional successes as these could never check the evil, and a regiment of soldiers was sent out from home in 1730, the assembly pledging itself to allow twenty shillings a week subsistence money to officers, and five shillings to the men. These were soon after recalled; in a year or two others were sent out, but the house of assembly complained of the expense.<sup>1</sup> The fact was, such troops were not suited for the work required. A party sent out in 1730, under Captain de Lemelia, was defeated with loss. Many reverses, or very partial successes, were recorded in succeeding years; but no triumph until 1734, when Captain Stoddart and a body of determined men penetrated the deep recesses of the Blue Mountains, beneath the Carrion Peak. Here the Maroons had a village called Nanny Town. Silently and unnoticed the party reached a commanding height, and though only able to go one or at most two abreast, they dragged up a few swivel guns. These they soon brought to bear upon the huts of the Maroons. Many were slain, the rest fled, and in the pursuit some threw themselves over the precipices, and others were made prisoners. The settlement was destroyed by the captors. The spot is now, and has been ever since, a scene of superstitious awe to the Maroons: it is difficult, if not impossible, to persuade one to guide a traveller to the place. The spirits of those slain in the battle are said to linger there; while it is a fact that men whose personal courage is unquestionable, have been bewildered by the strange, mysterious noises they hear when camping down for a night. The fears of the Maroons have affected their own spirits, for the falling stones are no doubt occasioned by the wild hogs rooting among the hills; and the flapping of the wings of strange low-flying

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. iii. p. 255, &c.

creatures is occasioned by sea-going birds who roost among these mighty heights, and ere dawn hasten away to the ocean below.<sup>1</sup>

Renewed efforts were made to suppress the rebels in following years; parties called white and black shot were formed; expeditions were sent out, and Lynch or Navy Island, in Port Antonio, being fortified and made a naval station, a feeling of security was imparted to those who settled in the neighbourhood. Sir Chaloner Ogle, the admiral in command, rendered great assistance to the local authorities. On one occasion he sent a party of two hundred seamen, who, in company with three or four hundred militia, penetrated almost to the new Maroon town; but for forty-eight hours they were exposed to a tropical rain, and the rivers were so swollen that for a time both advance and retreat seemed equally impossible. In this state, wet, weary, and perplexed, they were attacked by invisible foes, about twenty were killed, many wounded, and when they made good their retreat, a considerable number were prostrated by sickness.<sup>2</sup> In 1738 renewed efforts were put forth to bring the Maroons to terms. Mosquito Indians, militia, volunteers, all united in their efforts. Guthrie, one of the Darien settlers, rendered valuable assistance. He penetrated the wilds in which the Maroons lived, and conceived the idea of bringing them to terms by engaging them in a treaty to serve as a kind of mountain police. On the 1st of March, 1738, the treaty was made, and in May next year, 1739, it was confirmed by the legislature; the contracting parties on the one hand being Colonel Guthrie and Captain Sadler, and on the other, Accompong, Johnny, Cuffee, and Quacco. To these persons, and all their followers who had joined them, perfect freedom was assured. One thousand five hundred acres of land in Trelawny were assigned them, and they were pledged to assist the government in case of war and rebellion, and to capture and deliver up all runaway slaves. Cudjoe and his successors were to have power to deal with offenders, and inflict any punishment not extending to death upon their followers. Only, two white men were to live among them, as representatives of the governor in the settlement.<sup>1</sup> Next year a similar, though in some respects better treaty was made between Colonel Bennett and Quao, the leader in the Portland district, and

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<sup>1</sup> A graphic account of a visit to this place has been lately written by Mr. Harrison, the crown surveyor, whose explanation of the mysterious noises is given above.

<sup>2</sup> Journals, vol. iii. p. 267.

thus Accompong Town in Trelawny, Scot's Hall in St. Mary's, Moore Town in Portland, and Charles Town in St. George's, were recognised as Maroon settlements.

The assembly was liberal in its rewards. One thousand pounds was voted to Guthrie, the same to Bennet, six hundred pounds to Sadler, and from five to six thousand pounds to their men. Several negroes who had rendered special service were made free. Guthrie dying soon after, the money awarded him fell into the hands of his creditors, but a pension of a hundred pounds per annum was granted to his widow.<sup>2</sup> Soon after this business was settled the Maroons were called upon to capture some negroes who had absconded from a plantation and joined some Coromantyns still at large. Cudjoe pursued them, captured some, killed others, and so gave an earnest of his fidelity.<sup>3</sup>

One advantage arose out of this long war: it brought to the knowledge of settlers large tracts of fertile country which could now be safely cultivated. During the eight years of Maroon war, several changes had taken place in the government. Major-General Hunter died in 1734, and Ayscough had another short but troubled lease of power. He also died, and Mr. Gregory succeeded him for a brief term, when Henry Cunningham, a personal friend of Sir Robert Walpole, arrived. In a few weeks he too was numbered with the dead, and Mr. Gregory resumed office as lieutenant-governor: he was not again superseded until 1738, when Governor Trelawny arrived.

Gregory's administration deserves special notice from the fact that he brought forcibly to the notice of the legislature the fact that though the land was capable of yielding abundance of food, its inhabitants were largely dependent on other countries for supplies. He advised that efforts should be made to convert Jamaica into a "good poor man's country," by encouraging white settlers, who should grow cotton, coffee, and articles of food. He wished also to suppress negro tradesmen, boatmen, and others of a similar class, that poor whites might have abundant occupation.<sup>1</sup> The last idea was not very feasible, and it was after a bungling fashion that

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. iii. p. 458; Dallas's "History of the Maroons."

<sup>2</sup> Journals, vol. iii. p. 513.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., vol. iii. p. 594.



some laws were framed to encourage small settlers. In 1736 a bill was passed, appropriating 15,000 acres in and about Manchioneel, and the same quantity at Norman's Valley, in St. James's. Passages were provided for the emigrant, his family, and slaves, the latter not to exceed twenty, An ample supply of beef, fish, and biscuit was allowed for each person for one year, with fifty acres of land for the head of the family, the same for his wife, twenty for each child, and ten for each slave, but not to exceed three hundred in all. The land was free, but passage and subsistence were to be repaid in seven years. No taxes were payable for five years, but the land could only be disposed of by will—not sold.

This was liberal enough, much more so than a measure adopted in 1723. Some families with slaves came to Manchioneel, and a few to St. James's; but in 1749 they petitioned for relief from the payments for which they were liable. Seven years more were allowed them, but the amount was never recovered. The different cases may be seen in detail in the records of the assembly. The scheme was for all practical purposes a failure. The dearth of food, the number of negroes learning trades, and so excluding the more expensive white artisan, and the want of schools, were mentioned as chief causes of ill-success. There might have been schools, however, as Mr. Gregory said, if bequests for such purposes had been properly applied, which, however, was not the case.

The administration of Governor Trelawny is one of the longest on record. His earlier efforts had been directed to the settlement of the Maroon business, and he was equally energetic in his efforts to reconcile contending factions, and bring the council and assembly into greater harmony of action.

In April and May of 1739, the latter body devoted a good deal of time to listening to a number of very disgusting details, and then vindicated its morality by expelling one of its members, Mr. Ballard Beckford. This gentleman had committed adultery with a Mrs. Manning, whose husband appealed to the house, and not only obtained the exclusion of the transgressor, but also a bill of divorce. The council wished to secure the insertion of a clause suspending the operation of the bill till the royal pleasure was

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. iii. pp. 402, 403.

ascertained, but the house felt quite competent to settle the matter at once, and the bill passed.<sup>1</sup>

Next year some legal reforms were effected, and many complaints heard relative to the assize courts.<sup>2</sup> Local events for some years appear to have been less thought of than usual on account of the war in which the British nation was now plunged with Spain, and which was waged in these seas, costing not only much treasure, but thousands of lives—lost not so much in conflict with the enemy as by yellow fever. The detailed account of these transactions may be best read in connection with English history, and will only be recorded here so far as Jamaica was specially interested in them.

By the treaty of Seville, signed in 1729, Spain conceded to England the right of selling slaves in her colonial possessions, and of sending one ship annually to them. If British ministers intended to observe this treaty, British seamen did not, and felt that its acceptance was a national disgrace. If Spain would not have free trade, they were determined it should be contraband. The latter might be perilous, but it was profitable. It was true that from the peace of Utrecht, in 1713, down to 1726, forty-seven English vessels were captured by the Spaniards, worth on an average three thousand pounds a-piece; but the profit and loss account was in favour of the English. Some dozen years later the guarda-costas became more vigilant, and, it was said, treated English sailors who fell into their hands with great cruelty, but no story stirred the great heart of the British nation like that of Captain Jenkins. His ear had been cut or torn off by the Spaniards, as he asserted; and the dismembered organ, properly preserved, was displayed before the imperial parliament. When Jenkins was asked what he felt when suffering the cruel indignity, he said (surely some one skilled in oratorical claptrap prompted him), "I recommended my soul to God and my cause to my country." The country accordingly loaded the tables of the House of Commons with petitions for vengeance on the Spaniards, and war soon followed. Some, it is true, asked if Jenkins had really lost his ear, or supposing he had, if the Spaniards were guilty of its abstraction?

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. iii. pp. 478–499, &c.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. iii. pp. 520–538.

In Jamaica, where Jenkins had inherited an estate, he was known for his efforts in seizing treasure from a lost galleon which the Spaniards were themselves endeavouring to recover. Jenkins drove away the Spaniards and plundered their effects, and then captured one of their vessels. Complaint was made to the governor of Jamaica, and a warrant was issued for the apprehension of this unscrupulous treasure-seeker, who without loss of time made good his escape.<sup>1</sup>

If Jenkins's story was doubtful, it is nevertheless true that the English generally had just cause of complaint. Spain virtually admitted this; for alarmed by the attitude of the British nation, and the despatch of ships to the Mediterranean and the West Indies, she released some prizes and sent home a number of prisoners. But Walpole, urged on by the nation, demanded a renunciation of the right of search for ever, and proposed sundry other stipulations relative to our trade in America.

War was now inevitable, and while the people rejoiced, and bells rang, and even the Prince of Wales drank success to the war at a tavern in Temple Bar, Walpole saw too clearly how France would take advantage of the war to attempt the restoration of the Stuart dynasty by means of the disaffected in Scotland.

The waters round the West Indian islands were soon filled with war ships and privateers of both nations. If prizes were brought into Port Royal and other ports, Spanish ports received captured English ships. By the end of 1739 Admiral Vernon arrived at Port Royal, having captured Portobello, with the loss of twenty men killed and wounded. England went mad with joy at the easy victory, and thought not of the sailors who day by day were carried from the naval hospital to feed the crabs on the Port Royal palisades. And yet they might have known what West Indian expeditions cost. Some ten years before a fleet had been sent out under Admiral Hosier, and in a couple of years two admirals, ten captains, fifty lieutenants, and four thousand men had perished. Far worse than this was soon to be recorded. In 1740 Vernon bombarded Carthage, and Captain Knowles captured the little town of Chagres. January, 1741, arrived, and with it Sir Chaloner Ogle and a splendid fleet. Ogle and Vernon now joined their forces, and the harbour of Port Royal was crowded with twenty-

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<sup>1</sup> "Gentleman's Magazine" for 1739, p. 121.

nine line-of-battle ships, and a great number of frigates, sloops, and transports. In all, fifteen thousand sailors and twelve thousand soldiers, with few exceptions, doomed never to cross the threshold of an English home again! Governor Trelawny added a negro contingent, and at the end of January the armada sailed.

The sickening story of what followed has been told by others. Councils of war were held. Vernon and Wentworth, the military commander, quarrelled. Carthagená was approached, and after some days of delay, which the enemy turned to good account, the fortifications of Boca Chica, or little mouth, at the entrance of the magnificent harbour, were attacked, and after a vigorous defence, taken. Vernon was in ecstasies, and sent home a despatch on the first of April, in which he said: "The wonderful success of this evening and night is so astonishing that one cannot but cry out with the psalmist, it is the Lord's doing, and seems marvellous in our eyes." But the attack upon the city failed. The troops were landed, and behaved well; they fought till half the storming party lay dead beneath the ramparts. Vernon pretended he could not get near enough to render assistance, which was untrue, and so the captured fortifications were destroyed, the troops were re-embarked, and the fleet returned to Jamaica.

The sharks followed in its wake, for while numbers had died on shore by sleeping on the bare ground, in an atmosphere impregnated with malaria, thousands of others perished at sea. Incompetence had not yet done its worst: the surviving troops were landed and encamped at Greenwich, a mile or two to the west of Kingston. Here the Rio Cobre and other streams discharge themselves into the shallow, muddy waters of Hunt's Bay, and all around are swamps. It was May; the usual rains were very heavy, the ground at Greenwich was a bog; and here, as if British soldiers were worthless chattels, they were left to gaze upon the glorious healthy mountains but a morning's march to their rear, to listen to the ripple of the waves on the muddy shore, until sight and hearing failed, and death released the sufferers. When Vernon again sailed in July, three thousand out of twelve remained alive and fit for duty! The mortality among seamen, though less in proportion, was very great. The fleet anchored in the harbour of El Guantánamo; the troops were landed in August; they marched twenty miles up the river toward St. Jago de Cuba, and found it well fortified. The naval and military commanders quarrelled as before, and nothing was done except to expose the men to malaria, and help its

ravages with bad food. In November they were reembarked, one thousand being left in their graves. By this time two-thirds of the seamen and soldiers who had arrived eleven months before were dead. The fever which prevailed was of a most deadly character, and had spread from Greenwich to Kingston; its ravages were unparalleled. Mr. Long mentions that a merchant of his acquaintance dined with a friend who appeared in perfect health; next day he was summoned to the funeral of that friend, and with five others bore him to the grave: in a few days all the bearers save himself were dead.

In January, 1742, three thousand more soldiers arrived from England, and now it was arranged that Panama should be taken. Governor Trelawny determined to accompany the expedition, and raised a regiment in the island, of which he took the command. It was resolved to sail for Portobello, land the troops, who were to march across the Isthmus of Darien, and capture the coveted city. Portobello was reached, a council of war was held, and the project declared impracticable; for nine hundred and thirty-five more men were dead, only two thousand were available, and that was considered too small a force. In September Vernon and Wentworth returned home; and after having wasted millions of treasure, and lost twenty thousand men—to a great extent from preventible causes—they found some friends who extolled them as heroes.<sup>1</sup>

During the war a small settlement had been formed on the island of Rattan or Ruatan, but this, the only accession to the crown during all these transactions, was nearly lost by a mutiny. In four months forty-four courts-martial were held. It was only by shooting or flogging the malcontents to the extent of five or six hundred lashes that order was preserved, and logwood-cutters at last induced to settle.

Once more, in quick succession, the hurricane, the earthquake, and the pestilence visited Jamaica. On the 20th of October, 1744, there was a dreadful storm, accompanied by an earthquake. Its horrors were aggravated by darkness, for it commenced at six o'clock in the evening, and continued until the same hour next morning. Port Royal, again, suffered most; all its fortifications were injured, and that at Mosquito Point destroyed. The streets of the town were deluged with water, and the inhabitants all through the dreary night were looking for instant death. The wharves and warehouses there and at Kingston, Old Harbour, and Passage Fort were swept away or greatly damaged. Out of one hundred and five

ships in harbour, only one, his Majesty's ship *Ripon*, was saved, with the loss of all her masts. Hundreds perished by the storm, but far more by the pestilence that followed. Stores were thrown open, and temporary houses erected for the homeless. Food and medicine were also supplied, free of cost, but the mortality was very great.

Nothing of importance relative to the closing years of Mr. Lyttleton's administration remains to be mentioned, except the frequent alarms of insurrection among the slaves. Their number was rapidly increasing, and the superior strength of the fierce and warlike Coromantyns led to the introduction of numbers of that formidable race. The measures adopted to enforce subjection were harsh in the extreme. The planters defended them on the plea of necessity. In 1748 a bill was introduced into the assembly to prevent owners from mutilating or dismembering their slaves without the authority of the magistrates, but it was rejected.<sup>1</sup> Next year these cruel slave laws were increased in severity.

A number of bills had been passed in former years providing that a stipulated number of white persons should be kept on every estate in proportion to the number of negroes. The legislature endeavoured to alter these laws so as to require a greater number of whites on estates where the proprietor was an absentee. The governor approved of the reasons assigned by the assembly, but the alteration was not sanctioned by the home government.

The arguments of the Jamaica legislature on this subject were powerful, and the facts urged in illustration striking. It was said that owners were, as a rule, kinder to slaves than mere agents, and in all cases they had far more influence over them. One master, they asserted, had more real power than twenty or thirty white servants without him.<sup>2</sup> They attributed the Maroon war to the vast accessions to their number of the slaves of absentees, especially from one estate, where, there being no owner to appeal to, the overseer perpetrated unheard-of cruelties, until the negroes rose, killed him, and fled to the woods.

The conspiracy of 1745 may be traced to the same source. In this case some nine hundred negroes had planned a rising on a

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<sup>1</sup> "Gentleman's magazine" for 1739-40-41; Long's "History;" Smollett's "History of England," vol. ii.; "Pictorial History;" Memoir of Sir C. Knowles, "Naval Chonoicles," vol., &c. &c.

certain day, when all the whites were to be murdered. The affection negro nurses so generally feel for the children entrusted to their care alone prevented the execution of the plot. A woman stipulated that the child she nursed should be spared; the boon was not granted, and she betrayed the scheme. About ten of the ringleaders were executed and a few transported.<sup>1</sup> In connection with this plot a party of slaves killed a man and four women at Bull Bay. Being pursued, they retreated towards Yallahs, where they committed another murder, and retiring to the hills, defeated two parties sent against them. They were at length overcome by Colonel Bennett, who killed some, took a few prisoners, and dispersed the rest. It was quite in accordance with the customs of those times for Bennett to cut off the heads of the slain, and expose them in Kingston. He received £750 for his exploit, and others who accompanied him were rewarded.<sup>2</sup> The story of the conspiracy is told on the authority of contemporary writers, and of official documents. It is noteworthy that while the testimony of any number of slaves was not admissible against a white man, the testimony of *one* slave, unsupported by any other evidence, was enough to lead to the execution of many others. A slave woman named Deborah gave evidence which led to the execution of three persons, and the transportation of eleven more.<sup>3</sup> So late as the year 1825 eight persons were hung on the unsupported evidence of a slave who had been threatened with a whipping.

In November, 1751, Governor Trelawny retired from the colony. His official duties appear to have been discharged with firmness and discretion. His name is perpetuated in that of one of the most beautiful and flourishing of the north side parishes.

Admiral Knowles now assumed the government: he was no stranger to the colony. The inhabitants of Port Royal and Kingston looked upon him as one of the greatest naval heroes of the day; and it seems very likely that with Vernon's opportunities he would have added a very different page to the naval history of his country. To his zeal and energy it was mainly owing that Kingston and Port Royal were, after the last hurricane, placed in such an excellent state of defence. He had been on the station for many years, and loved the place and people.

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. iv. 119–121.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. iv. p. 181.

Twelve years before he became governor he had brought into Port Royal two Spanish prizes, with 120,000 pieces of eight, and clothing for six thousand men.<sup>1</sup> To him had been entrusted the work of destroying the fortifications of Portobello after its capture. He had distinguished himself at Chagres, and had done the greater part of what was accomplished at the Boca Chica.<sup>2</sup> It is true he was unsuccessful with the squadron he commanded in an attack on La Guira;<sup>3</sup> but the strength of the place had been underrated. Smollett, who was in the ship commanded by Knowles on this occasion, made some statements on his return home which led to an action for libel, when, it being proved that he had misrepresented the actions of Knowles, he was fined £100, and imprisoned for one year in the Marshalsea prison. Smollett, though not on this account an impartial historian of the services of his former commander, has given in his history, and also in "Roderick Random," a fair insight into the treatment and sufferings of British seamen in those days.<sup>4</sup> But Knowles had other enemies beside Smollett. The historian Long was greatly influenced in his judgment by his dislike to the scheme of removing the seat of government from Spanish Town to Kingston. The attempt to carry this project into effect is the chief event which marked the administration of Knowles. It was approved of by all who resided in Kingston and the eastern parishes, at that time a far larger proportion of the inhabitants than now. It was opposed by nearly all living in Spanish Town and in the parishes to the west. The bitterness of feeling it excited was very great; no such controversy has either before or since agitated the inhabitants of the island. Under such circumstances it cannot be a matter of surprise that both parties exchanged accusations and recriminations. The journals of the assembly are full of them ; the few periodicals of the day furnished them more abundantly. Knowles said some very bitter things, and on one of the frequent prorogations of the assembly, asserted that

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. iv. pp. 27, 43, 44.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. iv. pp. 19, 20, 38, 39.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., vol. iv. pp. 43, 44.



there was a wicked secret association which sought to invade the royal prerogatives and the liberty of the people; and that to bribe others to help in this project, it had spent £90,000 professedly on fortifications, but mostly in jobbery. He would ask the people to send better men.<sup>1</sup> The new house was not less objectionable<sup>2</sup> to Knowles, and another was convened. By this assembly the bill authorising the desired removal was passed. It is said that the most disreputable tactics, combined with intimidation, characterised the elections. If so, it only proves that the colonists were not better than English politicians at the same period.

Apart from the means employed to secure the desired end, it must be admitted that the change was a most desirable one. Spanish Town had then no building suited for the residence of a governor, or convenient for legislative purposes. These the inhabitants of Kingston offered to erect, and they also offered compensation to any who suffered by the change. It was maintained that Spanish Town was indefensible, but that Kingston was defended both by swamps, mountains, and excellent fortifications. The wealth and commerce of Kingston pointed it out as the proper seat of government. Two-thirds of all civil actions in the island originated in Kingston, and half the jurors were found among its inhabitants. In fact, Kingston, and not Spanish Town, was the proper place. Knowles gave his assent to the bill on the 7th of May, 1755, and a week after the house agreed to an address to the king in support of it, in which the reasons given above were urged.<sup>3</sup>

Many petitions were sent home, praying that the bill might be disallowed, but steps were at once taken to carry it into effect, and the public records were brought over to Kingston. The bill was not sanctioned by the king, but Knowles had left the colony before the fact was officially made known. Only two members of the legislative council disapproved of the measure.<sup>4</sup> This body estimated aright the advantages of Kingston as the seat of government.

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<sup>1</sup> Southey's "Chronological History of West Indies," vol. ii. p. 273.

<sup>2</sup> "Naval Chronicles," Biographical Memoir, vol. i, pp. 95-98.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 101, &c.

<sup>4</sup> Smollett resided in different parts of Jamaica, and for some time in Kingston, where he lodged in a house now occupied as a store in Harbour Street. Dr. Wolcott (Peter Pindar) once lodged nearly opposite, but the house has long been burnt down.

Admiral Knowles was succeeded by Lieutenant-Governor Moore: his private secretary was Edward Long, the historian, whose sister he had married. It was this lady who was the first of her sex to ascend the highest peak in St. Andrews, called after her Catherine's Peak. On the 3rd of October, 1758, Moore issued the royal command which restored Spanish Town to metropolitan dignity. Four days later, thirty waggons containing the records and other official documents filed out of Kingston, escorted by a detachment of soldiers. At the Ferry they were met by another detachment, who escorted the waggons to Spanish Town. The good people at the ancient little city became well-nigh delirious with joy. They illuminated, displayed flags and banners, had a grand exhibition of fireworks, and gave some splendid entertainments. But in the midst of their joy they displayed very bad taste, for they burnt the ship which Knowles had recently commanded, in effigy. The assembly met on the same day, and formally thanked his majesty for having disallowed the bill. They sought to secure the assent of the council to their address, but that body was not so willing to stultify itself, and refused. Six members of the lower house refused also, and five others absented themselves.

But the matter was not quite over yet: on the 14th of October the "Kingston Journal" published a well-written and really sensible article, commenting on the burning in effigy of the *Cornwall*. It was, the writer observed, an insult to the king, whose ship the *Cornwall* was; and the flag which had been ignominiously struck was that of the British nation; and, moreover, the act was not calculated to restore peace and good-will to the distracted community. Why the house should choose to identify itself with such a childish affair is not clear, but it ordered the printer of this document into custody, and he being sadly wanting in chivalry, gave up the name of the writer, a lady whose signature was Theresa Constantia Montgomery. She was forthwith ordered into custody, while Woolard the printer was discharged. The house, on calmer reflection, wisely decided to leave the lady alone. Her name

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. iv. p. 485.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. iv. p. 492.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., vol. iv. pp. 526, 527.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., vol. iv. pp. 607-609.

just then was Lantiniac, though better known as Constantia Phillips. Of her something more will be said in connection with the habits and customs of those days. After all, something was gained by the struggle: shipmasters had no longer to go to Spanish Town to enter and clear their ships, as formerly. Not only Kingston, but Savannah la Mar, Montego Bay, and Port Antonio, were made ports of entry and clearance. An assize and other legal courts were established in Kingston, though previously all causes over forty shillings were tried in Spanish Town.

It was now resolved to erect in Spanish Town a group of spacious buildings around the central square, comprising a residence for the governor, a hall and suitable apartments for the house of assembly, and sundry public offices, together with assize courts. Thirty years, however, passed away before all were completed.

The colonists cooled down at last, and then got excited once more in consequence of martial law, owing to the war with France. The council refused to sit during its continuance, but it was officially declared, on behalf of the crown, that "The ordinary course of law and justice is not suspended or stopped (by martial law) any further than is absolutely necessary to answer the then military service of the public and the exigencies of the province." This was forgotten in 1865.

Another constitutional question was settled about this time. In 1753 the assembly in a money bill appointed an officer of its own to receive and issue the public money instead of the receiver-general nominated by the crown, and on Governor Knowles refusing to assent to this bill, and some others in which a clause suspending operation till the king's pleasure was known had been omitted, it passed a string of resolutions asserting its right to raise and expend money, and questioning the necessity of the suspending clause in the other cases. The matter came at last before the House of Commons, where it was decided that the implied claim of the assembly to raise and expend money without the consent of the governor and council was illegal, and so also was their appointment of a receiver-general. As for the suspending clause, it was explained that it need only be inserted in bills which affected his majesty's prerogative, the property of his subjects, or the trade and shipping of the kingdom.<sup>1</sup>

A brief suspension of Mr. Moore's duties occurred in 1759. Mr. Haldane was appointed governor. The house voted him a salary of

£5000 a year, and appropriated £12,000 to purchase and stock with negroes, &c., a pen in the hills of St. Catherine's. The council suggested that an additional stipend of £2000 a year would have been better, but assented to the measure. Haldane was not destined to enjoy this liberality: in a few weeks more he was numbered with the dead. Mr. Moore again resumed the government of the colony, and next year was called upon to deal with a formidable rebellion. Great numbers of negro slaves were now constantly imported from Africa, representing tribes as diverse in character as different European nations. Among these the fierce Coromantyns occupied a very prominent place, but though their dangerous character was so well known, their superior strength was so highly valued as to lead to the rejection of all measures proposed to check their importation. It was by men of this race, Fans, Akims, and Ashantees, that the insurrection of 1760 was conducted. The conspiracy extended throughout the island, and, aided by the mysterious terrors of Obeah, was hatched with the greatest secrecy.

St. Mary's was the place fixed upon for the commencement: the whites there were few in number, the prospects of success therefore greater. These rude savages seemed in some fashion to have understood that it is the first few hours that usually decide the fate of a revolution. Moreover, if they failed, there were vast mountain tracts behind them to which they could retire. The name of the leader was Tacky, who claimed to have been a chieftain in Africa. On two estates, Trinity and Frontier, he had one hundred countrymen on whom he could implicitly rely. Easter Monday was fixed upon for the outbreak, and in the dead of the preceding night a party of slaves marched down to Port Maria, and murdering the solitary storekeeper in charge of the fort and magazine, possessed themselves of four barrels of gunpowder, forty muskets, and some bullets. Reinforced towards morning by other parties of insurgents, they marched towards the interior. Heywood Hall, Esher, and other properties fell into their hands. The whites were for the most part murdered, and not only women, but children at the breast, shared the same fate.

Flushed with victory, and with numbers now augmented to four hundred, the insurgents returned to Ballard's Valley, and with that recklessness which has rendered so many negro rebellions failures,

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. v. p. 28.

began to carouse as if their work was accomplished. But a faithful slave named Yankee had fled from Esher to arouse the whites on other estates in the parish to a sense of their danger; and two other slaves made the best of their way over wretched roads to inform the governor in Spanish Town of what was taking place.

Seventy or eighty horsemen were soon got together in consequence of the zeal of Yankee, and rode in upon the party of revellers at Ballard's Valley. The rebels poured in an irregular fire. It was not returned by the militia, for they had only one charge of ammunition per man, but a flank movement so disconcerted the rebels that they hastily retired into the woods. The governor lost no time in sending by different routes two parties of soldiers, each accompanied by a troop of the mounted militia. Orders were also sent to the Scott's Hall Maroons to advance from the east, and thus it was hoped to surround the rebels. The Maroons behaved badly; they marched to the rendezvous appointed, but refused to act unless certain arrears they claimed were paid.

The insurgents displayed considerable valour. Some engagements in which they took part might almost be dignified by the name of battles. On one occasion they attacked a house in which a party of the 74th Regiment was quartered, killed the sentinel, poured in repeated volleys of musketry, and at length retired uninjured. For some time the rebellion seemed to gain ground and spread to other parishes. The negroes were greatly stimulated by their confidence in the powers of the Obeah men; a powder was distributed by these impostors which was said to make its possessor invulnerable. Tacky, it was asserted, could even catch the bullets of the soldiers and throw them back among them. At last an Obeah man was captured, dressed up in all the grotesque costume of his craft, and hung in a public place. His death did something to convince the negroes of the falseness of his pretensions. As the colonial forces began now to muster in greater strength, the rebels retired to a valley surrounded by rocks, among which they concealed themselves, and fired in ambush on the troops; but here they were overcome, many were killed, and others taken prisoners. Still Tacky was at large with a number of adherents. At length he was seen by Davy, a Maroon; a chase followed; it seemed as if the African leader would escape, when Davy raised his piece, aimed while both were running at full speed, and the rebel leader fell dead. It was asserted by numbers of white people, and never denied by the Maroons, that the latter roasted

and devoured the head, heart, and other portions of the body of Tacky. Twenty-five of his more immediate followers now retired to a cave, where they committed suicide. The Maroons falsely asserted that they had killed them, and, presenting their ears, claimed the stipulated reward. This trick of cutting ears from dead bodies had, it was asserted, been before practised on those killed by the soldiers.

While these events had been transpiring in St. Mary's, Westmoreland was the scene of an outbreak that at one time threatened to be even more serious in its character. On Captain Forest's plantation a party at supper was surrounded, and nearly all slain. Tidings of the outbreak soon spread, and one gentleman, too confident of the fidelity of his negroes, armed about twenty Coromantyns, who then saluted him with great respect, assured him he should not be injured, and quietly marched off to join the insurgents. A number of negroes, taken a little before from the French, when Guadaloupe was captured, and well trained in the use of arms, also joined the party. Thus reinforced, the insurgents took up a strong position among the hills, and built temporary huts. Here they were attacked by a party of militia. But the negroes were too powerful to be overcome by such opponents. The fire of the attacking party was so ill-directed that the officer in command had to implore them not to shoot one another. They soon broke and fled, some being shot down by the rebels, and others fell over precipices. This repulse brought every Coromantyn in the district under arms, and the rebel encampment numbered a thousand men and women.

Martial law, which had expired, was now once more proclaimed by request of the assembly.<sup>1</sup> A large body of militia was collected, the 49th regiment sent down, and the Trelawny Maroons called out. The latter marched through the woods to the rear of the position taken by the rebels. The troops who were to attack in front did so before the appointed time, and having driven the rebels from their position with considerable loss, stopped in their deserted huts for shelter, and to partake of the food stored up in large quantities. The rebels at once took advantage of this indiscretion, and fired down from the rocks above. The result would have been disastrous had not the Maroons now appeared

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. v. p. 164.

on the scene, and driven in the rebels with loss from their ambushade.

No other engagement of importance happened after this, but there were frequent skirmishes. For some months after a Captain Hynes with a party of free mulattoes scoured the woods, in conjunction with the Maroons, capturing runaways. They frequently came on parties of several men hung by withs to the trees, for the Coromantyns sought rather by suicide to secure as they thought a return to the land of their fathers, than to be brought back again to bondage.

In other parishes conspiracies were detected; in most cases by the treachery of those privy to the plot. In St. Thomas, in the east, a slave named Cuffee betrayed the plans of his comrades. In St. John's three negroes divulged a plan to murder all whites, and to burn their houses and cane pieces. In Kingston a woman named Cuba presided at the meetings of conspirators, attired in what were supposed to be royal garments. She was transported. In St. James's an outbreak occurred, but was soon suppressed, though for a long time stragglers gave trouble in the Carpenters Mountains, and one party long evaded pursuit in the Mile Gully Hills.

During the whole of this really formidable outbreak about sixty white people were killed, and from three to four hundred slaves, the latter number including those killed in battle, those who committed suicide, and all who were executed. About six hundred others were transported to the Bay of Honduras, and sold to the logwood cutters. The atrocities committed by the rebels were great; but if they drank the blood of their victims mixed with rum, and perpetrated other savage deeds learnt in Africa, their conquerors do not show to greater advantage. Bryan Edwards tells how one was burnt to death by the slow process described on a former page from the statements of Sloane, and on the parade of Kingston two men were hung up in iron frames and left to starve to death, one living for seven and the other for nine days. The loss to the colony was upwards of £100,000, but when tranquillity was restored no steps were taken to improve the condition of the slaves, and so make them better contented with their lot. Instead of this, the slave laws were made more severe. Fourteen slaves who had betrayed or rendered service against the rebels were set free and pensioned, and about twenty others rewarded.<sup>1</sup>

Many laws in old statute books and entries in the journals have reference during this century to services rendered by slaves. Just before this outbreak the legislature was called on to reward two women, Sarah and Mimba. Sarah had been carried away into the woods by Ancouma, a noted outlaw, with whom she lived, but not contentedly. Whether her heart yearned for some one on the plantation from which she was taken, or whether she was jealous, does not appear; but Ancouma had another companion, Mimba, a Maroon. The two women made common cause, and one night Sarah slew her sleeping paramour by a blow with an axe. The assembly not only paid for the freedom of this African Jael, but secured her a pension of £5 a year, while to Mimba, already free, they gave a pension of £10.<sup>2</sup>

Nothing of importance remains to be noted of the remaining period of Moore's administration. The death of George II., in 1760, led to no important change in colonial affairs. In February, 1762, William Henry Lyttleton, Esq., late governor of South Carolina, and brother to the poet of that name, assumed the government of the colony. He was the grandson of Sir Charles Lyttleton, who had governed the colony from 1662 to 1664.

Lyttleton arrived in Jamaica at a critical period. War was declared with Spain early in the year, and on the 5th of March, 1762, a formidable expedition, under the command of Lord Albemarle and Admiral Pococke, was fitted out against Havannah. Sir James Douglas joined it with the Jamaica fleet, having on board great numbers of negroes, granted by the legislature in answer to an application from the imperial government.<sup>3</sup> The fleet now consisted of nineteen ships of the line, as many frigates, and one hundred and fifty transports, with some ten thousand soldiers. The Moro at the entrance of the harbour of Havannah, hitherto imputed impregnable, was attacked, and notwithstanding the valour of the Spanish defenders, stormed on the forty-fourth day of the siege. The city held out a fortnight longer, and then capitulated. A large district of country around was also surrendered; nine ships of the line, besides frigates, were captured;

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<sup>1</sup> Long's "History"; Bryan Edwards' "History"; Smollett, vol. xv.; "Journals of Assembly," vol. v., &c.

<sup>2</sup> Journals, vol. v. p. 149.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., vol. v.



others were destroyed; and booty to the value of three millions sterling fell into the hands of the conquerors. The loss to the English was rather under eighteen hundred men, and, as usual in the tropics, most of these perished of fever.

A great deal of the prize money, which was most unfairly distributed,<sup>1</sup> was spent in Port Royal; and as this, with the succeeding victories of Rodney, placed the West Indian seas in possession of British ships, many very valuable prizes were brought into the harbours of the island. At the peace which soon followed, Havannah was restored to Spain; other possessions taken from both France and Spain were returned; but the latter power conceded to the British government the long disputed right of cutting logwood in the Bay of Honduras.

The year 1763 opened with many indications of increasing prosperity. The residence of the governor was completed and furnished, at a cost of £18,000 sterling, and many pleasant residences were built along the banks of the Rio Cobre. But a frightful accident happened on the 14th of September. Fort Augusta was struck by lightning. The officers' apartments were entirely destroyed, and those of the men greatly injured. Forty men were killed, and great numbers injured. The magazine, at the time of the explosion, contained upwards of two thousand barrels of powder.<sup>2</sup>

Serious altercations between the governor and the assembly characterised the next two or three years. Mr. Lyttleton is condemned in strong terms by Mr. Bridges, in the "Annals of Jamaica;"<sup>3</sup> and Mr. Bryan Edwards, while speaking of him as an able and accomplished man, laments that he should have written approvingly of those who in 1680 sought to limit the powers of the Jamaica assembly.<sup>1</sup> In a historical account of the constitution of Jamaica, drawn up in 1764 for the information of his majesty's government, Mr. Lyttleton ably reviewed the past history of the colony, and in the concluding paragraph clearly conveyed his approbation of what the colonists had always regarded as a most arbitrary form of government.<sup>2</sup> Some allowance must be made for

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<sup>1</sup> "Pictorial History of England," vol. v. p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Journals, vol. v. pp. 404, 405.

<sup>3</sup> "Annals," vol. ii. pp. 108, 109.

the trying ordeal through which he had passed before he was guilty of this indiscretion.

On the 2nd of October, 1762, he sent a message to the assembly concerning a long report from the lords commissioners of trades and plantations, relative to certain acts which had been passed in 1761. These acts related first to the regulation of prize ships and goods, and next to the prohibition of any importation of rum, sugar, and molasses of foreign production into the colony. They were highly objectionable; the regulations relating to prizes were not only oppressive in their character as they affected British subjects, but infringed on the recognised rights of neutral powers, and assumed a right on the part of a colonial parliament to deal with questions which could only properly become a subject for imperial legislation. Moreover, the person who imported foreign rum, sugar, or molasses into Jamaica was to suffer the penalty of death! and the informer to receive a reward of £500!! The lords commissioners recommended that these acts should be disallowed, which was formally done at a royal council attended by many of the first statesmen in the kingdom.<sup>3</sup>

The governor in his message recommended the assembly to enact other laws, which, while meeting the necessities of the case, should not be in opposition to those of Great Britain. This they refused to do, as they could not admit the force of the objections urged, or suffer the commissioners to influence their proceedings by any objections whatever.<sup>4</sup> The governor expressed his astonishment at their decision, and reminded them that the opinion of the commissioners had been confirmed by the king in council. The assembly then asserted its inviolable attachment to the king, but persisted that its action had been misrepresented by the commissioners,<sup>1</sup>

The assembly was prorogued, and when next session it resumed its sittings, a string of resolutions was adopted recounting its rights and liberties, condemning the commissioners, and virtually asserting that it could supersede perpetual laws.<sup>2</sup> The session was allowed to continue, the governor observing in his speech, when the

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<sup>1</sup> Edwards' "History," book ii., appendix.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., book ii., appendix; Journals, vol. i., appendix.

<sup>3</sup> Journals, vol. v. pp, 346–350.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., vol. v. p. 352.

business was concluded, that he had not permitted a faction to prevent the passing of such bills as were necessary for the support of his majesty's government.<sup>3</sup> The faction, however, drew up an address to the king, asking for the removal of Lyttleton on the ground of exacting unusual fees on commissions, general neglect of duty, and want of due respect to the naval officer in command.<sup>4</sup>

Thus far the governor was right in the course he pursued: his next step was unfortunate. In December, 1764, two bailiffs were committed to prison for an alleged breach of the privileges of the assembly then sitting, in seizing the property of a member. They appealed to the governor, and he as chancellor released them by a writ of *habeas corpus*. The excitement which followed this act was intense, and the assembly declared, in a series of resolutions, that the act of the governor was a flagrant breach and contempt of the privileges of the house—that it would proceed with no other business till satisfaction was given, and drew up an address to the king, setting forth the misconduct of the governor in pronouncing the committal of the speaker illegal. Fresh warrants for the arrest and recommittal of the two men were ordered to be issued.<sup>5</sup>

The house was at once dissolved by proclamation; but when a new assembly met in March, 1765, almost its first act was to prepare another address to the king, praying that the objectionable record in chancery might be expunged. In reply to the governor's speech, the assembly repeated that it could proceed with no business until reparation was made.<sup>6</sup> Another dissolution followed, but matters were becoming serious. No supplies had been voted, and to save the troops from privation Lyttleton obtained permission to draw upon the imperial treasury for considerable sums,

On the 14th of August another assembly met. The governor made a speech, but the speaker did not ask as usual for the customary privileges. On the 16th, the house was called into the

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. v. pp. 352, 353.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. v. p. 359,

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., vol. v. p. 384.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., vol. v. p. 382.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., vol. v. p. 523.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., vol. v. p. 528; Edwards' "History," book vi. chap. 2, on whole question at issue.

council chamber, when the governor, addressing the speaker, reminded him that he had not made the usual demands when his choice by the house had been approved of, and he therefore wished to know if he (the speaker) intended now to do so. The speaker replied in the negative. Once again the governor asked if he would not make application. "I shall not," was the curt reply. The governor, observing that it was his duty to preserve the privileges of the house as well as the royal prerogative, once more dismissed the assembly.

Next year Lyttleton was recalled, and Mr. Elletson met the assembly in June, as lieutenant-governor. The matter in dispute was now still more complicated in consequence of one of the two bailiffs who had been committed to prison having taken legal proceedings against the messenger of the house by whom he had been arrested. The house ordered the bailiff and his solicitor into custody, and declared it would hold its messenger harmless.<sup>1</sup> To Mr. Charles Price, its late speaker, it voted £300 for a service of plate; and on the 2nd of July it presented a long address to the lieutenant-governor, setting forth its grievances, claiming the same powers of commitment possessed by the House of Commons, and again asking that the record in chancery should be expunged. The council also addressed the governor in a similar spirit; and on the 4th, Elletson set the matter at rest, as far as he was able, by drawing a line through the hated record, and entering a *vacatur* in the margin.<sup>2</sup>

But the house had not forgiven Lyttleton. Twenty-five folio pages of its journals were occupied with allegations of misgovernment and treachery.<sup>3</sup> Then followed a string of thirty resolutions embodying these charges, and denouncing him as "a disturber of the public peace, and an enemy to the commerce, interest, welfare, and prosperity of the island."<sup>4</sup> The legislators got violent, as was too common when excited, and Elletson, whose policy was one of conciliation, had nevertheless to prorogue them for a day, for they were fast infringing on the royal prerogative. Next day they sought to free themselves from the

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. v. p. 537.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. v. p. 544.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., vol. v. pp. 609–634.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., vol. v. pp. 638–643.

imputation of disloyalty. And yet when the king issued an instruction exempting the equipages, as well as the persons of members of the council and assembly from arrest for six days before and after, as well as during the sitting of the legislature, the assembly declared that it had all the privileges of the House of Commons, and that no instruction could abridge or annihilate them.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Elletson failed in his efforts to get the assembly to reimburse the moneys Lyttleton had drawn from the imperial treasury. The amount was between £11,000 and £12,000, and was never repaid: it was drawn, these sturdy legislators asserted, to subvert their liberties.<sup>2</sup>

While these matters were in progress the safety of the island was again imperilled by the Coromantyns. Several of the leaders met in St. Mary's in July, 1765, when the solemn fetish oath was administered. Into a quantity of rum, with which some gunpowder and dirt taken from a grave had been mingled, blood was put, drawn in succession from the arm of each confederate. With certain horrid ceremonies this cup was drunk from by each person, and then came the council. It was agreed that during the ensuing Christmas holidays the rising should take place, and in the meantime all were to obtain companions. Among these men was one Blackwall: he had been tried but acquitted for complicity in the rising of 1760; his impetuosity now frustrated the plans of his associates. On the 23rd of November, with a few others, he set fire to the works and trash-houses on Whitehall estate. One white man was killed, the rest escaped to Ballard's Valley, and a lady was saved through the fidelity of two of her slaves. The party at Ballard's Valley was besieged by the insurgents, but a negro attempting to set fire to the roof was shot down; his fall occasioned a momentary panic among his followers, during which the little garrison made a sally, killed several, and drove the rest to the woods, where they were soon captured.

The plan for the rising appears to have been well laid, but this premature action frustrated it. A good deal of alarm was occasioned by the statements of some of the prisoners, that the Maroons were to have joined them and divided the country with

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. vi. p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. vi. pp. 35, 36.

them. Some thought this was only designed to destroy confidence in these uncertain allies, but the matter was never properly investigated.<sup>1</sup> Of the prisoners taken, thirteen were executed and thirty-three transported.

Next year thirty-three Coromantyns in Westmoreland suddenly arose, and within an hour or two killed and wounded nineteen black and white persons who opposed them. The party was soon afterwards overcome, and those not killed at the time were executed. Some three years later a negro damsel belonging to a Jew in Kingston gave information of a conspiracy hatching in that place to burn it, and kill the inhabitants. A large body of armed men were seized in consequence, but the records of the transaction are too imperfect to show the real character of the movement.

The question of patent offices was now engaging attention. So far back as 1699 a law had been enacted "to oblige patentees of offices to reside in the colony." In 1711 another was passed to prevent any person from holding two or more offices of profit, and in 1715 another to the same effect, but all these were disallowed by the crown. In fact, the imperial government always sided with the patentees. Their appointment was one mode by which political adherents were purchased, or opponents bribed to silence. The working of the system was very bad, for the most lucrative posts in the island were held by persons who were total strangers. These men, residing in England, appointed deputies to do the work, these substitutes promising to pay a stipulated sum per annum. To raise this, to remunerate themselves in a manner they thought adequate, and to pay their own clerks, was often no easy task; and thus the temptation arose to demand more than the legal fees for the work done. In 1765 the assembly asserted that the fees amounted to four times the legal rate. This was not denied, but defended on the ground that living was more expensive than when the fees were first fixed. But the business was far greater, and often a patentee put up the post of deputy to auction: the highest bidder obtained it, and came out to Jamaica determined to make the most he could of his bargain. One gentleman held nine offices which had been combined in the early days of the colony for convenience. He was island secretary, clerk of the records, clerk of the council, clerk of court of errors, clerk of court of ordinary, clerk of committee of

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. v. pp. 592–596.

correspondence, associate judge on trials for piracy, commissary-general, and notary public. This fortunate patentee resided in England, and received £1500 sterling per annum. His first deputy, who was also often in England, received about £1120 per annum, and two assistant deputies still managed to get about £500 per annum each.

The office of the provost-marshal was in a very disreputable state. In three years £30,000 was received for levies but never accounted for. Goods seized for debt were often sold at less than half their value to agents of deputies and their assistants. The comptroller of customs of course was an absentee: he had sixteen deputies in forty years, from 1725 to 1765. Each did all he could for himself, and as an illustration of the result of their united efforts it was noted that fees on shipping were five times higher in Kingston than in most North American ports. In the secretary's office eighteen thousand judgments lay unrecorded, and great numbers had been lost by carelessness. But the complaints of the assembly and the expose of Mr. Long in his history were alike unheeded;<sup>1</sup> for nearly two generations longer favouritism triumphed, and official neglect and jobbery continued to enjoy protection.

When Sir William Trelawny arrived in October, 1768, he found that though a good understanding had existed between Mr. Elletson and the late house of assembly, that gentleman had been obliged to dissolve it, for it was impossible to induce the members to refund the money Lyttleton had drawn from home for the troops. The new assembly met in November, but Trelawny soon found that he could not move the house from the position it had taken. Some other difficulties arose about revenue bills; the council could not pass them in the form they were sent up, and at the prorogation the governor remonstrated with the assembly. When they next met the inevitable string of resolutions, justifying their course and blaming the governor, followed. But Sir William, defending his course and that of the council, dissolved the house.<sup>1</sup> This was for many years the last struggle of any importance between the different branches of the legislature. The next assembly speedily despatched the necessary business in a manner

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. v.; Long's "History."

which was in perfect accordance with their own undoubted privileges, and in no way violated those of others.<sup>2</sup>

The remaining years of this governor's administration were peaceful. Possessed of an ample fortune, he exercised a somewhat profuse hospitality, and when on the 11th of December, 1772, he died, after a lingering illness, the assembly, to testify its respect to his memory, voted a thousand guineas to defray the cost of a public funeral.

Colonel Dalling now became lieutenant-governor. He retained office until the arrival of Sir Basil Keith in 1773, and resumed it again in 1777, when the office of governor was once more left vacant by the death of Keith. Dalling had by this time attained the rank of major-general, and ruled the island until the year 1782. During this period the American colonies were engaged in the struggle for independence. The inhabitants of Jamaica had also cause to complain of some of those unwise acts which had driven the northern states into rebellion.

Throughout the island there was much uneasiness in consequence of the hostile attitude of Spain and France. Taxes were heavy, and insurances on homeward-bound ships ranged from twenty to twenty-five per cent. Serious fears were expressed by many colonists as to the consequences of the great influx of negroes. In 1775 there were no less than 200,000 in the colony, and only 12,737 whites. The assembly passed two bills restricting the traffic. They were disallowed at home. Bristol and Liverpool petitioned against them, and Lord Dartmouth, as President of the Board of Trade, declared they could not "allow the colonies to check or discourage in any degree a traffic so beneficial to the nation." Strange to say, that very year, in Kingston, a debating club, composed largely of slaveholders, had decided that the slave trade "was neither consistent with sound policy, the laws of nature, nor morality."<sup>1</sup>

The war with the North American states met with little sympathy in the West Indies. The assembly of Jamaica petitioned the sovereign to interpose and prevent free colonies from being reduced to a state of slavish dependence on the mother country; and maintained that all colonial legislatures were free and

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. vi. pp. 250-264.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. vi. p. 276.



independent bodies. The isolation of the sugar colonies, and the overwhelming proportion of the slave population, alone prevented more tangible co-operation with the struggling colonists of the American states,

Maroons and slaves were alike a source of uneasiness. It was only with the greatest difficulty, and after what threatened to be a serious mutiny, that the Maroons at Moore Town were induced by the superintendent to give up one of their number who had been guilty of a double murder at Old Harbour.<sup>2</sup> Soon after this affair there was an outbreak among the slaves in Hanover and St. James's. Thirty of the ringleaders were executed, but so great was the consternation, that a large homeward-bound fleet of more than one hundred ships was detained for some days.

At this time two culprits of very different nationalities greatly troubled the colony. One was a Scotchman, the other a runaway negro. The former, Hutchinson, resided at Pedro Vale, in St. Anns: he occupied a lonely house, and was singularly morose in his habits. The murder of a neighbouring overseer by his hand having become known, he fled, and was picked up at sea in a canoe by a vessel sent in search of him by Lord Rodney. A number of human bodies were discovered cast into a cockpit near his house, and several watches were found in his possession; hence it is probable that, as asserted by Bridges,<sup>3</sup> he was guilty of many murders besides that for which he suffered. Local tradition asserts that he was a friend of Burns, whom he endeavoured to persuade to come to Jamaica; but the letters of the Hutchinson who was a correspondent of the poet are dated some years after the execution of the St. Anns' ogre.

The other culprit is well known, not only in the nursery tales of Jamaica, but in melodramatic literature as Three-fingered Jack. His great haunt was in St. David's, among the hills near the Falls, nine miles to the windward of Kingston. He was the Turpin of the Windward Road, but was really more dreaded than might have been expected. Readu, a Maroon, killed him at last, and produced the three-fingered hand as evidence of the fact. Readu had no cause to complain of an ungrateful government: for forty years he enjoyed a pension of £20 for his exploit. Others who assisted him

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<sup>1</sup> Southey's "Chronological History of West Indies," vol. ii. pp. 420, 421.

<sup>2</sup> Journals, vol. viii. p. 512. <sup>3</sup> "Annals," vol. ii. pp. 161-165.

were rewarded with corresponding liberality, and a lad who accompanied the party received an allowance to a very great old age. Negro stealers and small piratical gangs figure in the criminal records of this period.

In March, 1778, the French recognised the independence of the United States, and war was declared. The West Indies suffered greatly in the conflict; Dominica and St. Lucia were speedily captured by the French. D'Estaing, with a fleet of twenty-six ships of the line, boasted that before a year had passed away he would capture every British island in the West Indies. Grenada and St. Vincent were taken, but the undecisive engagement of Byron, who with vastly inferior force attacked the fleet of D'Estaing, stopped him in his career; and the colonists were able to breathe more freely when they heard he had sailed for the coast of Georgia. The Kingston papers of 1779 give a lively picture of the excitement that prevailed in that city, Ships were continually coming in with reports that D'Estaing's fleet had been seen at sea approaching the island. Vessels arriving to reinforce the fleet were often mistaken for the frigates of the French.

Dalling was calm and collected. Additional fortifications were thrown up on all sides. All the prisoners and a thousand slaves were employed in entrenching Spanish Town, or on other military works. The militia displayed great enthusiasm, and was brought by the governor into good order. There was an encampment near Rock Fort, and Port Royal was greatly strengthened. The people generally bore the burdens imposed by this state of things with cheerfulness, but bad food supplied by contractors nearly occasioned a mutiny among the troops. Nelson, who was then on the station, was appointed commander of Fort Charles. He was so impressed with the danger by which the island was threatened, that he warned his English friends of the possibility of his next visiting Europe as a prisoner of war. However, the gathering storm was averted. D'Estaing was heard of soon after as helping the republicans in North America, and large naval and military reinforcements arrived from England.<sup>1</sup>

As soon as the immediate danger had passed away, General Dalling proceeded to carry out a projected plan of attack on the Spanish possessions. Fort St. Juan, on the river Nicaragua, was to be captured, and the expedition was afterwards to take possession of the cities Leon and Granada. This would have been done if Nelson had been in supreme command, but time was wasted on

the unhealthy coast. When the party at length moved up the river, Nelson was not allowed to storm the castle of St. Juan, as he had done the intervening batteries. It was taken, but only after a formal siege. The climate helped the foe, and at last men were not left in sufficient numbers to bury the dead. Out of 1800 men, 1300 of whom came from Jamaica, only 380 survived, and Nelson, half-poisoned by manchioneel and prostrated by fever, was carried ashore at Port Royal in his cot, and narrowly escaped death.<sup>2</sup>

Sir George Rodney was now in the West Indies with a powerful fleet, and in April of 1780 engaged that of France. The action was not decisive; the British fleet was not sufficiently compact. Soon after the Spanish fleet joined the French, and the combined armament was too great for the force at Rodney's command. Circumstances favoured the British: the allied transports were too crowded, and sickness made great havoc among the troops, who were in consequence landed at Martinique. The French and Spanish commanders could not agree on a joint plan of action, but sailed together as far as Hayti. Once more the inhabitants of Jamaica trembled at the tidings that reached them, but at Hayti the combined fleets separated. The French convoyed home the sugar ships from the colonies in their possession. The Spaniards put into Havannah, and Rodney, unable to discover the end they had in view, sailed to the northward. It was well he did so, for he thus escaped the most terrible hurricane which ever spread death and destruction even in West Indian seas.

On the 3rd of October the storm occurred by which part of Jamaica was devastated. Seven days later there was another at Barbadoes and the neighbouring islands. The morning of the 3rd was comparatively fine, little wind, and now and then a light, drizzling rain; but towards noon the wind became very violent, and the roar of the sea was most unusually loud. Slightly-built buildings now began to totter and fall; still it was not until 4 p.m. that the hurricane really began. The wind, which had hitherto come from the north and east, then veered to the south, and blew with unparalleled violence. Fortunately the severity of the storm was limited to the south-western portion of the island, but by

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<sup>1</sup> "Journals of Assembly," vol. vii.; Bridges' "Annals," vol. ii.; "Kingston Mercury," 1779.

<sup>2</sup> Southey's "Life of Nelson"; Journals, vol. vii. pp. 315-336.

nightfall not a building of any description was left standing in the town of Savannah la Mar, or for thirty to forty miles on either side of it. The face of the country was changed: valleys and mountains were alike stripped of verdure; all the sugar canes but the very youngest plants were entirely destroyed, and these suffered greatly. Rivers were running through new channels; large lakes were seen in districts which a day before had been covered with cane-fields; huge rocks were hurled down from the highest mountains; deep ravines formed across the roads, which were everywhere impassable. In many cases it was quite impossible for proprietors to point out the bounds of their respective estates. Without exception, every negro ground was utterly destroyed, plantains and fruit trees thrown down, and hardly a yam hill left uninjured.

At Savannah la Mar the waves, rolling in upon the place, swept away the very materials of which the houses had been built. The loss of life, even on shore, it was impossible to estimate: in one strong building forty persons had congregated in the hope of safety, and were all killed. It seemed as if no circumstance of horror was wanting to add to the terrors of the scene. A fire broke out, occasioned by the violence of the wind, and was raging furiously when the full fury of the hurricane commenced. In the midst of the desolation that followed a succession of earthquakes were felt. Then the sea rose, a mighty wave swept up the beach for nearly a mile, and as it retired, left two ships and a schooner stranded among the trees.

The morning of the next day presented a scene of misery and despair. Husbands were searching among the ruins for their wives, mothers for their children. And here, as after the earthquake at Port Royal, the villainy of the colony, whether clothed in white skins or black, saw in the ruin an opportunity for plunder. Bodies lay unburied, and horrid stench filled the air. As usual, after such visitations in the tropics, pestilence raged in so malignant a form that death frequently occurred within an hour of the first attack.<sup>1</sup> Famine followed; flour rose to a fabulous price; £10 sterling was demanded for a barrel of less than two hundred pounds in weight, and of an inferior quality, nor could supplies be obtained from North America, owing to the war. The British government, when it heard of the calamity, permitted free trade with Ireland for a season; but till then little imported food could be obtained, except from the prizes brought in from time to time.

£ 10,000 was subscribed in a few days by the inhabitants of Kingston to relieve the distress, and £40,000 was sent by the British Government. But a report of the House of Assembly described the relief given as like a drop in the ocean when compared with the distress. This must be regarded as extravagance, but the country not only sustained incalculable loss, but was put to heavy charges to replace the barracks and other public buildings destroyed. Barbadoes was by far the greatest sufferer: there 4326 of the inhabitants perished, and the loss of property was estimated at £1,320,000. In Martinico, in one of the series of hurricanes which happened in the first days of October, seven thousand people were killed, sixteen hundred being patients and nurses in the hospital of Notre Dame.<sup>2</sup> The shores of the West Indian Islands were strewn with wrecks: English, French, and Spanish navies suffered alike.

When the year 1781 commenced, another foe was added to the list of nations with whom England was at war. Unfortunately for themselves, the Dutch joined the French and Spaniards. Rodney, who was still in command, captured St. Eustacia, with nearly two hundred ships, and booty valued at three millions sterling. Saba and St. Bartholomew soon followed, and then Berbice and Demerara. Prizes began to fill the harbour of Port Royal once more: those were the most welcome that contained food.

On the 1st of August another hurricane, only less disastrous than that of the former year, damaged property and destroyed the newly-planted provision grounds of the negroes. Nearly one hundred vessels were driven on shore, and several men-of-war totally lost.

Governor Dalling having left the island, General Campbell, who was in command of the forces, assumed the government; and as a powerful fleet was known to be under the command of Count de Grasse, preparing for the invasion of Jamaica, he was soon busily engaged in providing for its defence. While thus employed another calamity befel the afflicted colony: a fire broke out in Kingston.<sup>1</sup> In seven hours valuable stores were destroyed, and property to the value of £300,000 sterling. A change in the wind alone prevented further damage. As illustrative of the character of the times, it is

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<sup>1</sup> Beckford's "Account of Jamaica," vol. i. pp. 90–140; "Annual Register," 1781; Edwards' "History of West Indies."

<sup>2</sup> Southey's "Chronological History," vol. ii. 475, 476.

mentioned that a negro girl perished in the flames through being chained to a heavy weight which retarded her flight.

The gallant Rodney, with Hood as second in command, was determined, if possible, to frustrate the designs of De Grasse, who on the 5th of April received on board, at Martinique, the troops designed for the invasion of Jamaica. On the 8th Rodney learned from his frigates that the French fleet had sailed for Guadaloupe. It was clearly no part of their plan to come to an engagement with Rodney. De Grasse wished to effect a junction with a Spanish fleet off Hayti, which would have increased his strength to sixty ships of the line. To prevent this was of course the object Rodney had in view. He immediately left his anchorage at St. Lucia, and on the 9th both fleets lay becalmed off Dominica. As the breeze sprung up, the French made for Guadaloupe. That morning the wind favoured the French; it only reached the van of the British line, but Hood lost no time in following with such ships as were able. The British centre and rear still lay becalmed, and De Grasse, believing that the daring of Hood had placed him in his power, bore down upon him with his whole fleet. By 9 a.m. Hood's ship was engaged with three of the enemy, and the other ships with him were in a similar predicament. De Grasse was anxious to secure a victory before the freshening breeze could bring down assistance, but no heart in Hood's gallant van failed; all fought like those old Vikings whose blood still flows in British veins. Terrible loss was inflicted on the crowded crews of the French ships, and presently the steady trade wind brought down the whole of Rodney's fleet.

No effort was spared to bring on a general engagement, but the French had the advantage of the wind, and got away. Three of the English ships were damaged, and the fleet lay to while they were repaired. Admiral Drake now took the van, while Hood's ships fell back to the rear of the line. Next day the French were still in sight, but on the 11th they were hardly visible; it seemed as if the junction with the Spanish fleet would now be effected. At midday two of their ships, crippled in the late action, fell astern; an attempt was at once made by the British fleet to cut them off, and the movement led De Grasse, with his whole fleet, to bear down to

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<sup>1</sup> February 3.

their assistance. This brought him so far to leeward that Rodney at length saw that his hour was come.

Both fleets lay in close order all night, and with the morning of the 12th a general engagement began. By noon the breeze, which had been light, freshened, and the British admiral perceived that a plan over which he had meditated for years was now practicable. He made signals *to break the line* of the enemy. In the *Formidable*, followed by the *Namur* and *Canada*, he sailed through the French centre, the ships in his rear followed, and the enemy was thrown into the utmost confusion. Unfortunately, Hood was too far in the rear to render efficient help. The French made a desperate resistance, but it was in vain. When night fell five of their ships were in the possession of the English; another had been sunk in the action. The carnage had been fearful; the 6000 men destined for the invasion of Jamaica only crowded the ships, but were useless in the fight. Some 3000 were killed and wounded. Seven days after Hood captured four more ships in the Mona Passage; nearly all the rest were damaged.

Thus was Jamaica saved. The battering cannon intended for the attack on her fortifications were on board the captured ships, and Count De Grass was among the prisoners. As Rodney brought his prizes into Port Royal, the inhabitants were filled with delight, and throughout the island men once more breathed freely. England rewarded Rodney with a peerage, and an addition of £2000 per annum to the pension he had previously received. In Jamaica a marble statue by Bacon, costing £3000, commemorates the event. A picture of Rodney breaking through the French line is in the commodore's residence at Port Royal. The intrepidity of this renowned naval commander and of his fleet, alone, under God, preserved Jamaica from the horrors of invasion.

## CHAPTER II

# COMMERCE AND AGRICULTURE

The traffic in human flesh was the most lucrative of all the commercial interests in which Jamaica was concerned; its agricultural operations depended on it. The constant increase in the number of sugar plantations gave a tremendous impetus to the slave trade, and owing to the demands made on the African market, the price of negroes increased rapidly. It was repeatedly asserted that the West Indian planters were not responsible for the existence of West Indian slavery—that they found the system in existence, and that British, not colonial merchants, were chiefly engaged in the traffic. But it must be obvious that if there had been no demand the supply would have soon ceased. The attempt to place the guilt of slavery on any one class of people is unjust. Both the slave trade and slavery may be charged to several European nations, and to the colonists simply as parts of those nations. English participation in the traffic dates back to the days of Queen Elizabeth. She knighted Hawkins, the first British slave dealer, and made him treasurer of the navy, though she condemned the system at one time. A century before this, in 1442, Anthony Gonzales had brought ten negro slaves to Lisbon. Immediately expeditions to the African coast for slaves became the order of the day among his countrymen. Two generations later the benevolent Las Casas made the great blunder of his life. Filled with sympathy for the Indians who pined away under the privations of bondage, he saw in the African negro a powerful race, capable as he conceived of enduring captivity, and performing an amount of labour far beyond the ability of the Indian. Little dreaming of the misery he would occasion, he suggested the employment of Africans in the Spanish colonies, and so prepared the way for the most iniquitous system the world has ever seen.

In 1517 Charles V. granted a patent to certain favoured individuals to export four thousand slaves into Cuba, Porto Rico, and Jamaica. Forty-five years after, Hawkins sailed to Sierra



Leone, whence he carried three hundred negroes to Hayti, and sold them at highly remunerative prices. The trade now commenced in good earnest, and church-going men and women pocketed its proceeds and felt no pangs of conscience. Chartered companies with exclusive rights, after the fashion of those days, soon monopolised the traffic. The first charter was granted by James I. in 1618. This company failing, Charles I. granted a second charter in 1631. And in 1662 we find a third charter granted by Charles II. to an association, with the Duke of York, his brother, at its head. Ten years later a fourth charter was bestowed, and not only the duke, but the king himself, was connected with the new partnership. In 1688 this and other companies not authorised by parliament were deprived of their exclusive rights. The African Company still continued in existence, though the trade became more open; but it was not until the passing of an act in 1750, for extending and improving the trade to Africa, that the traffic in slaves could be called free.

The exact number of slaves brought to Jamaica from 1680 to 1700 it is impossible to say, but during that period three hundred thousand had been taken from the coast to different colonies. From 1700 to 1786, six hundred and ten thousand slaves were landed in Jamaica, of whom about one hundred and sixty thousand were re-exported. This gives an average of rather more than five thousand per annum retained in the colony. The number varied very greatly in different years. In 1732 more than thirteen thousand were imported; in 1767 only a fourth of that number.

Kingston was for a long period the seat of the operations of the Assiento Company. Sir John Castello, the great leader in the traffic, was a merchant prince in the estimation of its inhabitants. The business was lucrative in the extreme, and anything that affected it was viewed with great alarm by the legislature.<sup>1</sup> More than half the ships engaged in the slave trade sailed from Liverpool, rather more than a fourth from London, and the great proportion of the remainder from Bristol. Montego Bay was next to Kingston the chief port of disembarkation, as sugar estates began to multiply in the western parishes. One merchant sent home £50,000 in 1771 for slaves he had sold in that rising seaport.

Commerce of a more legitimate character was greatly hampered by the restrictions imposed upon it by the parent state. The colonies (those in North America not excepted) were looked upon as appropriate spheres for commercial monopoly. Foreign shipping

was excluded from all share in the trade of the plantations. Great Britain received the articles they could export, and supplied them with nearly all that was required in exchange. Trade between colonies of the same nation could not be prohibited, and a considerable amount of intercourse therefore existed between Jamaica and the North American states, previous to the war of independence. The average value of the goods imported from those states to the British West Indies, for four years before the commencement of hostilities, exceeded £700,000 sterling per annum. For a hundred and twenty years this trade had been a source of great advantage to all the colonies, and its suspension, on more than one occasion, brought Jamaica to the verge of famine. Necessaries, rather than luxuries, were imported from New England. Corn, flour, rice, beef, pork, and fish were exchanged for sugar, rum, and other tropical products.

A good deal of intercourse was maintained with the Spanish colonies. At Honduras three thousand British subjects found employment as logwood cutters. Though often in a chronic state of warfare with the Spaniards, they exported to the value of £80,000 per annum. A little trade was also done with the Mosquito Coast Indians, in hides, dyewoods, and cochineal. One enterprising man from Jamaica, Mr. Corrin, sailed up a river on the coast far into the interior, and did quite a thriving trade with the Indians.

The value of Jamaica exports in 1734 was a little short of £540,000.<sup>1</sup> In less than thirty years the amount was all but doubled, having reached £1,076,155.<sup>2</sup> But seven years later (1770) it was £1,538,730.<sup>3</sup> At the last-named period freight to London was quoted at three shillings and ninepence a hundred-weight for sugar; sixpence a gallon for rum; coffee, ginger, tortoiseshell, and cocoa, one penny a pound; pimento, cotton, and indigo, one penny-halfpenny. Dyewoods, being packed amongst the hogsheads, were carried at thirty shillings a ton. A shilling a cubic foot was a common rate for other goods. But this was in times of peace. During war higher rates were demanded.

The legal rate of interest on money was gradually reduced. It was fixed at 10 per cent. in 1681, at 8 per cent. in 1739, and at 6 per cent. in 1752. These rates were merely nominal; needy men

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. iii. p. 302.

paid 5 to 15 per cent. additional in the way of premiums; and as the merchants to whom planters were indebted required all produce to be consigned to themselves or their agents, other disadvantages were incurred, and many estates hopelessly involved thus passed into the hands of commercial houses.

English and several Spanish coins passed current in the island, but none of smaller value than threepence. This was regarded as a halfpenny would be in England, and improvidence was thus taught to those who had much need of economy.

Sugar was now recognised as the great staple of the colony. The rapid increase of production was marvellous. In 1675 seventy small plantations were reported, but the average production of each was inconsiderable. In 1739 there were 429 estates, yielding 33,000 hogsheads of sugar and 13,200 puncheons of rum. In a little more than twenty years after the estates had increased to 640, and the production was close upon 45,000 hogsheads of sugar and 22,400 puncheons of rum. In 1772 as much as 75,000 hogsheads were produced by about 700 estates.

The fluctuations in prices during this period were considerable. In 1760 the price of Muscovado sugar in the London market ranged from 32s. to 47s. per hundredweight. In 1782 the quotations were from 40s. to 73s., according to quality. Seven years before they had been as low as 25s. to 39s., and immediately after the peace they again fell to from 26s. to 46s.

The character of the stimulus given by high prices was not altogether unhealthy. Though in some localities it led to the opening up of estates which could only be made to pay under the system of protection and slave labour, and which were abandoned in many cases on the abolition of slavery, and in others on the abolition of protective duties, yet in some particular instances an impetus was given to cultivation where only capital and enterprise were required to overcome some natural obstacles and secure an ample reward for years to come. The Plantain Garden district furnishes the most striking illustration of this. The whole of the eastern extremity of the island had been pronounced unhealthy by the Spaniards, and so indeed Governor Stokes and his eleven hundred followers had found it. Still the soil was fertile. On either

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<sup>1</sup> Edwards' "History," vol. i. p. 235.

<sup>2</sup> Campbell's "Political Survey of Great Britain." 3 Ibid.

side of the Plantain Garden river lay eight thousand acres of rich but swampy land. The first sugar property was established here about the middle of the century, and a system of judicious drainage so augmented the value of the land, that a few years after its settlement the estate, with buildings and slaves, was sold for £105,000. The whole valley was soon after brought into cultivation, and is still one of the best cultivated and most remunerative portions of the island.

£30,000 to £40,000 was regarded as a fair price for a sugar estate yielding from two hundred to two hundred and fifty hogsheads of sugar, and rather more than half that number of puncheons of rum; the negroes, numbering from two hundred and fifty to three hundred, being included, as constituting one half the value of the whole. The annual income derived from such a property has been variously stated. Much would necessarily depend on soil, situation, and management. Mr. Beckford, who owned properties in several districts, on which he had three thousand five hundred slaves, estimated his profits at £10 sterling per annum for each. As only about a third of the whole number would be really effective, the amount seems large,<sup>1</sup> and yet it would be only some seven per cent. on his reputed capital. Ten per cent. has been stated as an average return on capital invested in sugar plantations a century ago. Mr. Long estimated £11 a hogshead for sugar, and £6 a puncheon for rum, as a fair rate of profit. On an estate selling for £30,000 or £40,000, this would give £3000 to £4000 per annum, or £12 to £14 for each slave. As Mr. Long further adds that an estate usually sold for about ten years' purchase, the general accuracy of the estimate seems confirmed. In Mr. Beckford's lower estimate allowance is probably made for losses by hurricanes and floods, which ought to be allowed for in calculations extending over a series of years. The profits of one year would often be a very unsafe criterion for those of another.

A great difference existed in the case of the active, intelligent proprietor superintending his own affairs and free from pecuniary embarrassments, and that of the man who, borrowing from the merchants, had large sums to pay for interest and premiums, and could neither buy nor sell at his own discretion. No property, however productive, could long withstand such drains as these, above all where economy in domestic expenditure was entirely disregarded.

The case of the absentee proprietor was in some cases as bad as that of the involved resident. True he had usually the command of capital, but its wise and careful employment depended on the character of his representative or attorney. Among negro proverbs, not of African origin, is the one that "Massa's eye makes the horse grow fat." Some shrewd old slave surely uttered this as the result of long observation of the comparative condition of estates belonging to resident or absentee proprietors. The commission paid the planting attorney (as the representative of the absentee was called) was six per cent. on the proceeds, no small tax in itself. But these gentlemen had often several estates under their care: their visits to each were in consequence brief, and often at long intervals;<sup>1</sup> their supervision was in consequence only nominal.

A strange traffic sprung up in slaves as the result of the pecuniary embarrassments of many proprietors. The merchants would no longer sell such men slaves for a long term of credit as they had previously done, but commenced a system of hiring. Eight pounds to twelve pounds per annum was the sum charged for a newly-imported African leased or hired for a term of seven years, with the proviso that in the event of death the hirer was responsible for the full value of the slave. At the end of the term the merchant received back his living chattel, fully acclimatized and trained for labour, and thus worth at least a third more than when he was imported. As the owner had paid nothing for his food and clothing, he had reaped a profit on his original outlay of fifteen to twenty per cent. per annum for the seven years of hiring, in addition to the improvement in value.

This system was distinct from that of the "jobbing gangs." Persons who had negroes they could not employ on their own lands were accustomed to hire them out to planters, by whom they were employed on the heavy work of the estate. For digging cane holes and planting, £6<sup>2</sup> currency per acre seems to have been a common price. As fifty of such slaves were expected to do an acre and a half per day, about two shillings and twopence sterling would appear to have been the value of a day's labour a century ago.<sup>3</sup>

As agriculture was not then studied as now, even in England, the crude notions that prevailed in the colonies ought not to be severely censured. The old cattle mill described by Trapham was

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1 Edwards' "History," vol. p. 120.

still common, and often where water-power could have been made available. Even at the close of the century the plough was in very partial use. Whatever trifling improvements in agriculture were effected emanated from resident proprietors. In 1769 an attempt was made to form an agricultural society, but it soon failed. A few works on the cultivation of the sugar-cane were written by experienced planters. Mr. Sainthill made some improvements in the construction of cattle mills, hanging coppers, and purifying the cane liquor, which were generally recognised.<sup>1</sup> Some years later Mr. Bousie received £1000 from the house of assembly for improvements in the art of sugar boiling; and later still Mr. Baker contributed some important suggestions in the same direction.

Cotton was cultivated with partial success, the crops ranging from five hundred to two thousand bags, according to the season. The green seed and shrub cotton were most cultivated. In 1780, one shilling and sevenpence per pound was obtained in London for Jamaica cotton, from twopence to sixpence per pound less than that brought from Berbice and Demerara. The climate of the West Indies is far too variable for successful cotton cultivation. The immense impetus given to the cotton manufacture by the introduction of machinery, had no effect in increasing the supply from these islands.

The failure of indigo plantations was a fact more to be regretted. Still it was only by means of a protective duty they were kept in existence, and when this was withdrawn they failed; nor have succeeding attempts to revive this branch of industry been successful. The undertaking was one well suited to men of moderate means. In the days of protection twenty negroes were found sufficient for a plantation yielding on an average £600 per annum to its owner. Withywood in Vere, now almost a desert, was at one time a scene of great prosperity. As an illustration of this it was recorded that seventy carriages were kept by the resident proprietors of the compact and well cultivated cotton and indigo plantations which lay on either side of the banks of the Minho.

The cultivation of cocoa is another branch of industry which passed out of existence during this period. In 1672 there were sixty

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<sup>1</sup> Long's "History," &c.

<sup>2</sup> About £3 12s. sterling money.

<sup>3</sup> Edwards' "History."

plantations, in 1772 not one. There had been failures in the crops, but English legislation did far more to check the cultivation of this wholesome berry. The duties levied on it raised its cost to six times its original value. It is a matter of congratulation that the cultivation of coffee was not checked by the same folly. The production reached 735,392 pounds in 1780.

Little can be said of the minor products of the island. The land was to an injurious extent in the hands of large proprietors, and immense tracts were uncultivated. There was indeed a law requiring patentees of land to open up five acres every year, and from 1739 to 1760 fifty-five thousand acres were forfeited either for neglect of this provision or for the non-payment of quit-rent. But as a rule quit-rents were most irregularly collected. From 1756 to 1760 only £1100 per annum was paid on this account: at a halfpenny an acre it ought to have been four times as much. In spite of legislation, which was never very earnest in the matter, a few individuals monopolized land which they did not and could not properly cultivate. The parish of St. James contains only one hundred and twenty acres less than the island of Barbadoes; yet in 1765 there were one hundred and thirty-two landed proprietors only in that large parish, and nearly four thousand in Barbadoes.

Attempts, it is true, were made to introduce a middle or secondary class of planters, and also skilled artisans. During 1750 and some succeeding years a hundred and eight families were introduced, at an average cost to the colony of £160 each; but the scheme was a failure, like all others having reference to white emigration subsequently attempted. Had the mountain districts been as accessible then as they are now, the result might have been different; but to place white labourers in the lowland districts of Jamaica is simply to consign them to a premature grave.

The life of a tolerably successful pen-keeper was at this period, as it is now, the most enviable to be found in the colony. Cattle thrive well, and few servants are required when once a pen is well established. Before 1750 or 1760 Scotch grass was the favourite fodder; it grew best in marshy places. Dr. Patrick Brown estimated the annual value of a single acre of this grass at £120, and asserted that five horses could be maintained upon it.<sup>1</sup> If so, it is indeed surprising that it should have been so easily superseded by Guinea

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<sup>1</sup> "Journals of Assembly," vol. iii. p. 384, &c.

grass, even in places where swampy ground, useless for any other purpose, abounds. The introduction of guinea grass dates back to 1745. The captain of a slave ship had brought to Mr. Ellis, the chief justice, some rare African birds, and also a bag of the seed on which they fed. The birds soon died, and the bag containing the seed was shaken out, and almost forgotten. Soon after the cattle were observed to gather on a certain spot, feeding with apparent relish on some unknown grass. The African seed was remembered, and the place carefully fenced in. From this time the grass has continued to spread, and is now found in all parts of the island. It was soon extensively cultivated in the Pedro district, lying between St. Anns and Clarendon. Here one enterprising proprietor cleared on an average £1200 per annum for a long series of years, by buying lean stock from the estates, and fattening them for market on the newly-found herbage. Soon after its introduction a good deal of hay was made from it, but few care for this as a food for cattle when green fodder is available all the year round.

Taking a general view of the extent of cultivation to wards the close of the period under review, it appears that rather less than half of the four millions of acres in Jamaica had in 1780 been patented from the crown, but a very large proportion of the unpatented land was rocky, mountainous, and of little value. Upwards of seven hundred sugar estates occupied on an average one thousand acres each. There were about four hundred breeding pens; some six hundred plantations of provisions, such as yams, potatoes, corn, &c.; about one hundred cotton plantations;<sup>1</sup> as many pimento walks; eight indigo farms, though these were all soon abandoned; and one hundred and fifty coffee plantations, these last rapidly increasing in number and power of production.

Logwood, which was introduced in 1715, and spread rapidly, soon became an important article of export; but mahogany was becoming scarce, and only found in the mountain districts, from which carriage was almost impossible. In those higher districts which were as yet opened for cultivation, fruits and vegetables were produced in considerable quantities, many new varieties being occasionally introduced from other countries. Mr. Hinton East, at what is still known as the Botanic Garden, a few miles

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Brown's "History."



from Kingston, had a fine collection of native and exotic plants, of which a catalogue is given by Edwards in his "History of the West Indies." In 1773 the house of assembly established gardens, of which Dr. Dancer was the first curator. Soon after they were planted they were greatly enriched by a collection of plants presented by Lord Rodney, who had seized a French ship sailing to St. Domingo with botanical specimens from Bourbon. The mango, the cinnamon, and some other plants, now widely diffused, were among them.

With a soil so luxuriant, it ought not to be a matter for surprise that any mineral treasures Jamaica was supposed to possess should be almost disregarded. The Rio Minho had been searched for gold in the days of the Spaniards, and the basins which had been constructed for washing the sand were to be traced near Longville estate, in Clarendon, for many years after the British occupation. But Mr. Beckford, who inherited this property, cared nothing for the wealth it was supposed to contain. A piece of gold found in the river did not induce him to institute a proper investigation. He simply pointed to the cane fields, and observed, that with such a mine of wealth on the surface, it would be idle to search for one beneath it. Silver, though sought for in the Healthshire Hills, was never found. Copper was obtained in small quantities. Two mines opened in hills near Kingston were not remunerative, and though Sir Simon Clark spent a considerable sum in mining operations in St. Johns, the attempt was ultimately abandoned. A good copper mine would have been a great boon to the island: the metal is largely used in sugar works, and from £30,000 to £40,000 were sent home annually in payment for it during the flourishing days of sugar cultivation.

Manufactures could hardly be said to exist. One of the most successful enterprises of this description was that of Mr. John Reeder, who, in 1771, established a foundry in Kingston, and was chiefly employed in casting the various utensils required on sugar estates. Ten years after, it produced a clear annual income to its proprietor of £4000. In 1782 it was considered advisable to dismantle the foundry, lest it should prove serviceable to the enemy then daily expected. Mr. Reeder received £2000 from the house of assembly as indemnity for the losses he sustained in

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<sup>1</sup> The return of cotton plantations was made in 1773.

consequence, and the home government was recommended, though in vain, further to recompense him; especially as Admirals Rowley and Parker both testified that he had assisted in repairing ships of war, which, but for his establishment, would have lain useless in the harbour till supplies could have been obtained from home.<sup>1</sup> Some years later, Reeder, whose foundry was again at work, obtained a patent for a new mode of erecting and preserving coppers from rust.

The business done by the merchants was as a rule of an extensive character, but retail shops were almost unknown. Drapery goods could only be bought by the piece from the stores. Pedlars travelling on their own account, or as the slaves or servants of free coloured people, did almost the only retail business then transacted. The proprietors of estates procured most of the articles required by their families or slaves direct from England. Provision stores and spirit shops were more common. From 1770 to 1780 the sum paid for licenses to retail spirits averaged £8000 per annum, of which three-fourths came from Kingston.

Kingston, which was a mere hamlet at the time of the earthquake, had grown by the year 1780 into a goodly-sized town. Spanish Town was a thriving place, containing about four thousand inhabitants, of whom half were slaves, a fourth, free people of colour, and the remainder whites. A good deal of business was done in this place. Many visitors from the western parishes did not extend their journey to Kingston, as since the opening of the railway is almost always the custom. Port Royal had dwindled into a collection of two hundred houses. Its only importance arose from its being the station of the royal navy. Savannah la Mar, during the first half of the century, seemed likely to become a place of considerable importance; but the hurricane of 1780 almost completed its decay. On the north side two new towns rose rapidly. Montego Bay, by the close of the century, contained six hundred white inhabitants. Falmouth, which in 1771 contained only thirty houses, had seven times that number in 1790.

Most persons of any position kept their own conveyances; about five hundred carriages were counted in Kingston, and double the number in other parts of the island. A rather clumsy covered gig, made at Kettering in Northamptonshire, and called a kitureen, was

the most common vehicle. The post went once a week, it took twelve days to get an answer in Kingston from Savannah la Mar. There were public conveyances between Kingston and Spanish Town, and also between Spanish Town and Passage Fort, six miles distant. The fare to the latter place was twelve shillings sterling.

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. viii. p. 344.

### CHAPTER III

## MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE INHABITANTS

The inhabitants of the island at this time may be divided into three general classes—whites, and creole whites, freedmen, and slaves. These again occupied positions very different in their character. The ruling class was composed of natives of Great Britain and their descendants born in the island. In the middle of the eighteenth century it was ascertained that about one-third of those of European birth were natives of Scotland. One hundred of the name of Campbell were counted. The native-born descendants of British settlers did not present any very marked difference to their parents. They were alike distinguished for hospitality; the former were, perhaps, least careful to keep their expenditure within their income. A fondness for luxuriant living, and improvident habits generally, involved many of both classes in difficulties that might easily have been avoided. The desire to be accounted large landed proprietors often resulted in money being borrowed at a high rate of interest to purchase and cultivate several estates; and when the unhappy speculator was thus involved, it was rarely that he ever succeeded in extricating himself.

Gambling was carried to a great extent, and cases were not infrequent, when all the money in possession being lost, the carriage and horses standing before the door would be staked and lost also, and the former proprietor compelled to go home on foot. Duelling was perhaps even more common than in England or Ireland at the same period. Whether conjugal unfaithfulness on the part of husbands was more common than in England at the same time, is questionable, but where it existed it was certainly more generally known. Bachelors did not regard it as at all reprehensible to live in undisguised relationship with some negro or mulatto slave; and Long speaks of the shock to the feelings of those newly arrived in the colony when they saw white legitimate and coloured illegitimate children living beneath the same roof. As a rule, the

coloured offspring of the more respectable classes were well cared for.

English ladies were comparatively few in number, out of all proportion to the men. The white creole ladies were, and are still, remarkable for their fine figures. The light clothing they wear as children, and the use of mattresses instead of feather beds, may be among the causes of this. In the towns, or their immediate neighbourhood, their manners were substantially those of English gentlewomen of the period; but in the country districts a degree of languor and lassitude was remarkable in almost every action, and was only cast off when an opportunity was afforded of dancing, from which amusement no elevation of temperature was sufficient to deter them. As a class they were affable, cheerful, and kindly disposed; faithful as wives, affectionate as mothers, and sincere in the friendships they formed.

The houses occupied by the more wealthy differed greatly in their character. In Kingston some were tolerably stately, but sanitary arrangements were unknown, dunghills abounded, and from these the ruts in the streets and lanes were filled up after every heavy rain. In the early morning negro slaves might be seen bearing open tubs from the various dwellings, and emptying their indescribable contents into the sea. The churches were for a long time used as places of sepulture; the marshes around the city were undrained; the jungle was in many places uncleared; and the inhabitants generally set at defiance every law of health, and paid the penalty. In 1771, 988 children of all colours were born, while 2085 persons died.

In the country it was by no means uncommon to see a barn-like dwelling, occupied by the proprietor of a magnificent estate, surrounded by extensive and strongly-built works. In other cases, really stately mansions were provided. Teak Pen, in Clarendon, had a building of this description, situated in the midst of the most beautiful scenery in Jamaica. One of its occupants, Chief Justice Fearon, had never been off the island, and yet was a gentleman of superior education and a great reader. About one hundred yards from his residence he erected a handsome building, approached by a portico, supported on massive pillars of the Tuscan order of architecture. This led into a spacious hall, on one side of which was an extensive library, and galleries so arranged as to afford a succession of views of the most romantic character.

Sir Charles Price, another tife, though educated in Europe, had adorned his residence—the Decoy, in St. Mary’s—with considerable skill and taste; the gardens and surrounding grounds were truly beautiful. Here, too, he had succeeded in naturalising many of the animals and birds of foreign climates.<sup>1</sup> It was a truly hospitable home; few persons of any position in society left the island without being invited to visit it. In the neighbour-hood of Montego Bay was the splendid residence of Mr. Palmer, said to have cost £60,000, and containing some remarkable specimens of choice wood-work. This place has a weird ghost story connected with it that might not inappropriately be related of an ancient tower on the Rhine, or of some feudal keep. It has lately appeared in an English periodical,<sup>2</sup> but names are changed, and the wildest pieces of romance are omitted.

Any dwelling of importance was attended by a numerous retinue of servants; twenty to forty was not unusual where there were children, for each had a nurse, and most nurses an assistant; butlers, grooms, cooks, and at least half-a-dozen housemaids completed the establishment. The tables were well supplied with English and colonial viands. In addition to fresh meat, there was turtle and many kinds of excellent fish. Beautiful varieties, now scarce, owing to the reckless manner in which the supply has been exhausted, were then abundantly supplied from the mountain streams. Near the coast, Jew fish, calapever, mullet, king fish, and other kinds are easily procured; to say nothing of the black crab, the *bon bouche* of epicures, or the native oyster, gathered from the branches of the swamp mangrove tree. By the creole nothing was considered more desirable than the pepper-pot, that strange compound, possible only to a native cook, of fresh fish, shrimps, plantains, ockro, and a variety of vegetables unknown in Europe, all strongly seasoned by the condiment which gives it its name, but which can only be enjoyed by those who are well acclimatised. Madeira was the favourite wine, but many preferred very old rum to any other beverage.

The duties of hospitality were so generally observed by planters, that taverns were almost unknown out of the towns. The charges at these could hardly be called exorbitant. A bill rendered at a

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<sup>1</sup> Long’s “History”; Gosse’s “Naturalist’s Sojourn in Jamaica.”

<sup>2</sup> “Leisure Hour,” 1870.

respectable place in Kingston, in the year 1716, gives the following items:—Dinner, five bitts; small beer, one bitt: a bottle of ale, four bitts; a jorum of rum punch (one quart), four bitts; bed, eight bitts; coffee in the morning, one bitt. A bitt, it must be explained, was fourpence-halfpenny sterling. The morning coffee is still a Jamaica institution, and a very excellent one. A sable handmaid will present herself soon after daybreak with a cup of steaming coffee, always most refreshing after the broken night's repose, inevitable when prickly heat torments and mosquitoes wage unceasing war. Legislators dined in more substantial fashion than the above quoted tavern bill would indicate. A person at Port Royal received for a number of years £60 sterling to supply a dinner to the people's representatives when they came over once in the year to inspect the fortifications. It is not said if the inspection was post-prandial.

The grandest festivities in Jamaica were those attending the arrival of a new governor. For three days he was feasted in Spanish Town, and on two in Kingston, first by the custos and then by the chief inhabitants. The entertainment given by the council was a costly one. At length the assembly refused to sanction the expense; it voted £3865 for 1781, 1784, and 1790, and then intimated that such expenditure must cease.<sup>1</sup> From October to Christmas, when the legislature was sitting, Spanish Town was usually very gay: routs, balls, and concerts followed one another in quick succession. £3000 to £4000 were frequently spent in connection with the governor's grand ball.

Places of public amusement were to be found in both the chief towns. In addition to a theatre, where performances were well sustained, Kingston had two places of public resort, called Ranelagh and Vauxhall, after well-known taverns in London. The former, which was so situated as to command an extensive view of the town and harbour, had a fine room, much used for balls and concerts. Some country places had their assemblies: those at Halfway Tree and Clarendon were the most celebrated.

The office of master of the revels is alluded to in old publications. The last to hold it was Thomas Dennis, clerk of the peace in Kingston and major-general of militia. He died in 1822. The duties of this appointment included authority over theatrical

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. iv. pp. 162–176.

performances, and the direction of all balls and entertainments given by the governor. A vivid, but painful view of the state of society in the middle of the last century, is afforded in a sketch preserved in the "Gentleman's Magazine,"<sup>1</sup> of Teresa Constantia Williams, who for many years held office as *mistress* of the revels. After a career of fashionable dissipation, which included two Fleet marriages, she came to Jamaica in 1738 as the mistress of Mr. Nedham, a very wealthy planter, and a legislator of some celebrity. In a few years she returned to England, but again appeared in Jamaica as the wife of a prosperous land-surveyor. Her husbands never lived long, and this gentleman soon died, leaving her considerable property. Again she was induced to put her weeds aside, and was almost as soon left a widow, once more with an additional fortune. She now set up a splendid equipage, lived in great style, and again endured the bonds of matrimony. What became of her fifth husband is not known. In 1757 she was appointed mistress of the revels. By this time she had got through her money, and was deeply in debt; her carriage was often seized, and as often redeemed by her friends. The hundred guineas which she annually received, as the proceeds of a benefit at the theatre, became an important matter to her.

At length her friends got weary, and in 1765 she died. She had just before exclaimed, "Alas! what is beauty? I, who was once the pride of England, am become an ugly object." She was highly accomplished, after the fashion of those days. Lord Chesterfield, who knew her, appreciated her talents; and a letter written under the name of Montgomery, during the controversy as to the seat of government, indicates considerable shrewdness and ability. Yet at last she had no higher wish than that she might die on Saturday night, so that by being buried on a Sunday, her corpse might not be arrested for her debts, according to the horrid custom of the times. Her wish was granted, but not one of either sex followed her to the grave. This was a posthumous insult in a land where a large number of persons attend almost every funeral.

The higher classes in Jamaica, like those in England, had their watering place. The favoured spot was Bath, at St. Thomas in the East. About the close of the seventeenth century Colonel Stanton, a landed proprietor in this locality, discovered a valuable medicinal

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<sup>1</sup> February, 1766.



spring on his estate. Soon after, two persons, afflicted by a painful malady, were healed through using the waters, and the assembly in consequence were induced to pay the colonel a considerable sum for the place. A grant from the legislature, aided by public subscriptions, secured a fine road from Kingston; houses were erected, and visitors flocked from all parts of the island. Pleasure perhaps more than health attracted the majority. A billiard table was established; musical parties, dances, and card tables were plentiful; and Bath was soon distinguished, on a small scale, for all the dissipation that marked its English namesake. After the disputes in the time of Knowles the place was deserted; society was too much divided to mingle as before. The poor, however, were cared for through the liberality of a Mr. Villette and annual grants from the legislature.

It was observed that profligacy among the higher classes was more frequent in the case of the recent settlers. The descendants of the early proprietors retained some of the old puritan ideas of morality. Five baronets of the Modyford family are buried in St. Catherines. Their marriages can all be traced—some of the males at the early age of eighteen or nineteen, and females at twelve or thirteen. Early marriages appear to have been encouraged by parents aware of the temptations of the plantations. The average longevity of those families where marriage was the rule presents a remarkable contrast to that of most others.

Of the less wealthy white inhabitants, some were small landed proprietors employing a few slaves, and cases were not unfrequent where such men rose to be large proprietors. Others were employed as overseers, book-keepers, and mechanics on estates, or as clerks in mercantile houses. The salaries of this class were liberal, and many became partners in process of time.

The deficiency law, which required a certain number of white men to be kept on each estate in proportion to the number of slaves, was strictly enforced. The efforts employed to obtain them were often of a very questionable character. In a former chapter it has been seen how the earlier bondsmen were obtained, and soon after kidnapping was a very common mode in Scotland of supplying the wants of the West Indian colonies. In 1703 a law was passed, exempting from port charges all ships that brought thirty white servants. These people, as they arrived, were arranged in a line like negro slaves, for the planters to pick from. If any remained undisposed of they were sent on to the custodes of the

parishes where there was the greatest deficiency. English, Welsh, and Scotch servants cost about £18 currency, Irish, about £15; but in war time they realised twenty to twenty-five per cent. more. Such a system could not last, and a little later in the century arrangements were made by leading planters with persons in Great Britain to come out for a term, generally of four years, at a salary of from £35 to £40 per annum.

In 1736 a law was passed regulating the conduct of such servants. Justices of the peace were to adjust disputes between them and their masters, but they could no longer inflict the severe punishments of the former code. Still their position was often painful, little better than that of slaves. They had to take watch with the negroes in the boiling house at night, and go forth by day to superintend them in the fields, amid the alternations of the heavy dew, the burning sun, and the drenching shower. Their habits were, with rare exceptions, dissipated, as the consequence of their wretched accommodation, and this combined with exposure occasioned a very high rate of mortality. Marriage was, as a rule, peremptorily forbidden, not only to them, but also to the overseers, and hence the frequent connection with slaves.

The condition of the white soldiers located in the island was deplorable. Their general treatment was harsh and cruel everywhere, but in the tropics their sufferings were intensified by the climate, and the absence of any correct ideas as to the sanitary arrangements required. The mortality in some years was frightful. The legislature, as a rule, contributed fairly for their support and for barrack accommodation, but much of the money was squandered, or misapplied by the jobbing contractors.

There was now a steadily increasing class of free black and coloured people in the colony, whose condition demands special notice. Those who stood highest in the social scale were such as had been manumitted by private acts of the assembly; they were entitled to the rights and privileges of white people, with this exception—they could not be members of either branch of the legislature, nor could they act as justices or jurymen. Some were allowed to vote at elections, if possessing the necessary qualifications. The number who enjoyed these privileges was small, and consisted chiefly of those to whom estates had been left by white fathers.

There were others occupying a lower social position, who had been manumitted by their owner in his lifetime, or by will, and

their descendants would in consequence be counted as free born. The civil rights of freed slaves and of those born free at one time greatly differed. Those who were free born were allowed trial by jury, but their evidence could not be taken against a white person, nor could they vote at elections or hold a commission in the militia: they laid also under some other disabilities. Those who had simply been made free by their owners were liable to trial and punishment in the same way as slaves, before two justices and three freeholders. Sentences of mutilation inflicted on such persons may be seen in the St. Anns' Bay parish records so late as 1780. These people were, in fact, but a single step removed from the condition of the slave: freedom had merely released them from the proprietorship of their former owner, but it conferred no civil or political rights. In 1748 an act was passed which permitted those who had been free not less than six months to give evidence against free people of colour, except the first class, which had been exempted by a special act. It must be understood that slave evidence was not admissible against white persons or the highest class of freed men. A hundred slaves might see a felony or murder committed by such persons, but their testimony could not be received.

In 1763 the assembly instituted an inquiry into the amount of property left to coloured children, when it was found to amount to between two and three hundred thousand pounds, including both real and personal property. Amongst the former were four sugar estates and thirteen pens. Fear was expressed lest the colony should be injured by the accumulation of so much property in such hands, and a bill was passed, declaring that a devise from a white person to a negro or a mulatto exceeding in value £1200 sterling should be void. Nevertheless private bills were passed occasionally, enabling gentlemen to bequeath their property free from such limitations, though only where the legatee had been baptized and fairly educated.

The result of this class legislation was to lead even the poorest and most dissipated white person to look down on the free coloured people, however respectable or superior to himself in manners or morals. The position of such of these ostracised classes as had been educated in England was the most painful of all. A wealthy planter or merchant, strongly attached to the coloured mistress he had selected, would determine to give her children every advantage. They would be sent home to receive a first-class

education, over which no expense was spared. On returning to the colony, their treatment contrasted most unfavourably with that they had received in England.

Whether it was well for English gentlemen to form the connections they did, is a question to which but one answer can be given. They did not *then marry* coloured women, and therefore their offspring were illegitimate. But when they made the only atonement in their power, by educating and providing for these children, it was cruel to visit those who were innocent with a social ban. Mr. Long affirms that almost without exception these mistresses were unfaithful;<sup>1</sup> Mr. Edwards, with far more truth, asserts the contrary.<sup>1</sup> "In their dress and carriage," he says, "they are modest, in conversation reserved; and they very frequently manifest a fidelity and attachment towards their keepers, which, if not virtue, is something very like it. The terms and manner of their compliance therefore are commonly as decent, though perhaps not as solemn, as those of marriage; and the agreement they consider as equally innocent, giving themselves up to the husband (for so he is called) with faith plighted, with sentiment, and with affection." It would be difficult to show wherein many of these unions differed from certain Scottish marriages, except in legal status. As nurses to the sick, these women were remarkable for their skill and kindness; and when the cruel disabilities under which they laboured were considered, their forbearance and gentleness is remarkable.

In 1761 an act was passed, requiring all free persons to take out a certificate of freedom, and as the result of this legislation, it was found next year that there were 3408 in all, black and coloured. Of these 1093 were in Kingston, and 872 in the parish of Saint Catherine, mostly in Spanish Town.

Another class of free people was constituted by the Maroons. After peace had been concluded between them and the colonists, they were located in three or four interior towns. Surrounded by vast mountain forests, and away from all civilising influences, destitute of education or religious teaching, they maintained a savage independence. The public duties they were required to discharge were calculated to keep them fierce and unfeeling. Obeahism in its worst forms was rampant, virtue was unknown,

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<sup>1</sup> Long's "History."

and the more pleasing among the younger women were offered as a simple act of rude hospitality to any whites who happened to visit their settlements. Polygamy was common among the chiefs. At first they received £3 head money for every runaway slave they captured or killed. This was subsequently reduced to £2, but mile money was afterwards allowed in addition, for every slave led back to his plantation; for it had been found that, the fee being the same whether the slave was brought in alive or killed, the easier mode was adopted, and the ears being cut off, were presented with the claim for payment.<sup>1</sup>

In 1764 Governor Trelawny, during a tour round the island, was met at Montego Bay by a party of eighty-four of these people, anxious to display their tactics. A horn or shell was sounded, and the whole party, joining in a fearful yell, fired their muskets, and then, falling on the ground, rolled in all directions, to escape the fire of the enemy, who was supposed to be aiming in the direction of the flash. After many other volleys had been fired, the horn again sounded, and the entire party drew their swords, and, with well assumed looks of demoniacal fury and fantastic capers, rushed upon the governor. Some flourished their swords over his head, some laid their naked blades upon it, others clashed their swords together to increase the din: then they fetched their muskets and laid them at the governor's feet, which they kissed with every appearance of abject humility. The chief captain then made a speech, to which he obtained a reply, together with a dinner to the whole party.

Once a year the officers of all the clans were accustomed to present themselves to the governor, and presents of swords or of old laced coats or vests were made to some of them. These were highly valued, and worn on all great occasions. In 1779, during martial law, a party was brought into Kingston and quartered at the theatre. While there a striking illustration of their savage character was given: for some unknown reason, one of the men shot himself. The chief declared he was a worthless fellow, and was only restrained by the intercession of his brother and some other of the dead man's relatives from cutting the body in pieces and giving it to the pigs.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Edwards' "History," book iv. chap. 1.

About the year 1750 it was ascertained that the number of these people in the Maroon towns was under seven hundred. The men were in excess of the women. This, together with the existence of polygamy, led many to cohabit with female slaves on estates. As the child followed the fortunes of the mother, it happened that many of the children of Maroon fathers continued slaves.

The condition of the slaves, by far the most numerous portion of the community, now demands attention. Many of these were native Africans, the rest were their creole descendants. Several parts of the African coast and of interior districts helped to keep up the supply. Coromantyns, Mandingoes, and Eboes were the most numerous. Of these, about a fourth had been free in their native land, some even chiefs; the remainder had been slaves.

The Mandingoes came from that part of the coast lying north of Sierra Leone. They were Mahomedans, but as they were mostly brought away very young, their religious knowledge was imperfect, consisting of little more than an acquaintance with a few Arabic prayers. Some, however, had learnt to read and write, were not ignorant of the Koran, and were very strict in their observance of Friday. The superstitious regard which so many of the earlier Christian converts had for that day, and which the native Baptists in some places still retain, may be traced to the influence of these people. In general appearance and habits they were superior in many respects to other negroes, but they had the reputation of being more addicted to stealing.

The negroes from the Gold Coast were known generally as Coromantyns. The Ashantees and the Fans described by Chaillu were included in this term. They were strong and active, and on this account valued by the planters. The Spanish and French colonists shunned them on account of their ferocious tendencies; but attempts to prohibit their importation into Jamaica failed, though they were the instigators and leaders of every rebellion.

In direct contrast to these savage races were the Papaws, who came from Whiddah, and who were remarkable for their docility.

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<sup>1</sup> Long's "History," chapter on Maroons; Edwards, vol. i., fifth edition, pp. 541-545; Stewart, pp. 313, 314.

<sup>2</sup> "Jamaica Mercury," August, 1779.

The Eboes, from the Bight of Benin, were also highly valued, especially the women, who, from the state of subjection in which they were kept in Africa, proved the best field labourers. The men if at all ill-treated were much given to commit suicide. Other slaves were brought from Congo and Angola. They were as docile as the Papaws, more intelligent, and better suited for domestic service or mechanical arts than for the field. They were also considered more honest than any of the other tribes.

In course of time these races naturally intermingled with one another, and distinctive features were to some extent lost. Still traces may be observed of the original stock; and the traveller in Jamaica will often be struck with the difference observable in the negro settlers in neighbouring districts and parishes, indicating the preponderance of some particular race in former days. In many respects the creole negroes were superior to their African parents, they in fact regarded themselves as a higher order of beings; and though they never forgot the respect due to their own father or mother, did not hesitate to speak of Africans generally as "Guinea birds," "Salt water nagurs," &c.

In the field the slaves were divided into three gangs. The first consisted of the stronger men and women: their duty was to clear the land, dig and plant the cane holes, and in crop time cut the canes and attend the mill-house. The second gang was chiefly composed of the bigger boys and girls, pregnant women, and others who from age or infirmity were unequal to heavy work: they had to weed the canes and attend to duties not requiring great strength. A third gang, composed of young children, weeded the gardens, collected fodder or food for pigs, and performed other trivial duties. The two first gangs were under the care of male drivers always armed with a whip. The third gang was entrusted to an old woman, whose long switch was no mere emblem of authority.

At daybreak, or even before, the slaves were called to work by the ringing of a bell or the blowing of a horn or conch shell. Those who were late rarely escaped the driver's whip. After three or four hours' labour, half an hour was allowed for breakfast, always a substantial meal, chiefly of vegetables from the grounds of the slaves. Soon after noon two hours more were allowed for dinner. Some would then take a meal; others preferred to wait till evening, when they would enjoy a plentiful, and in many cases an enormous repast. The midday recess was by such persons spent

either in sleep, or by the more diligent in attending to their pigs, poultry, or provision grounds. The work of the field when resumed continued till nightfall, and on estates not well managed was often protracted on moonlight nights for some time longer. During crop time gangs of negroes worked all night, but this was not regarded as the hardship it might appear, as they had free access to the ripe cane and syrup: at no time were they more robust or healthy.

A number of the more intelligent slaves were trained as carpenters, blacksmiths, masons, coopers, &c.: they had more comforts and privileges than those in the field, who were anxious to get their sons apprenticed, after a rude but well understood manner, to the artisans. Such lads had usually to submit to harsh treatment from their work-masters, but were sustained by the prospect of reaching a higher social grade.

In addition to these there were considerable numbers of domestic servants, male and female. Their food and treatment was as a rule better than that of the field hands. In some families the position of a favoured domestic was in all but the name superior to that of servants in England. Nurses and many other old slaves were treated with a degree of kindness and consideration surprising to any one who supposed that serfdom had no alleviations. As a general rule the old white creole families were more indulgent to their negroes than those newly arrived from England; and of the latter, those who resided long in the colony became gradually more lenient. The greatest cruelty was found, with rare exceptions, where an estate was left for a lengthened period without the supervision of the proprietor. The attorney might be a humane man, ever ready to listen to complaints, but having many properties under his care, the condition of the slaves depended very much on the temper of the overseer, who was expected to make good crops: his character, his situation depended on this. What wonder if he used coercion? Throughout the colony field negroes were looked upon in the light of beasts of burden, and as such, might be goaded to excessive toil if the case seemed to require it. The proprietor, far away amidst the quietude of an English home, or enjoying the pleasures of the capital, received with gladness the proceeds of the plantation, nor looked to see if his gold was defiled with human blood.

The free use of the whip was perfectly legal. The slave code was cruel in the extreme; it gave the master almost unlimited power, and sanctioned some of the most horrid enormities ever tolerated



by law. It was passed in 1696, and continued in force until some time after the period now under review. Striking a white person, having stolen goods in possession, and many other offences, were punishable either with death or any other punishment the judges might wish to inflict, dismemberment being particularly specified. And when in 1748 an effort was made to abolish this latter punishment, petitions were presented against any alteration being made. Mr. Long, in his history, justly calls it an “inhuman penalty,” but says it was obsolete. Reference to the records of the slave courts of St. Anns’ Bay, and of St. Thomas in the East, prove that it was not so. Such punishments were inflicted while Mr. Long was in the island, and for a quarter of a century after.

Passing by tortures which must be nameless, legs were cut off, or one or both ears; noses were split or otherwise mutilated; branding on the forehead and cheeks was common, and cases are on record where two or more of these punishments were inflicted on the same person for the same offence. Flogging was often added. Three men at St. Anns had their ears and noses cut off, and received thirty-nine lashes every Sunday for three weeks. Another wretch was put to death by a mode of torture too horrible to relate or to read of without a shudder. Some one, evidently at a much later period, has tried to erase the record, but in vain.<sup>1</sup>

In St. Thomas in the East, in 1783, a slave named Mercury was found with ten pounds of fresh veal in his possession. No proof is given that he came dishonestly by it, but he had his right ear cut off; fifty lashes were inflicted at the same time, and he received fifty more twice a month for six months, and during that period was worked in chains. Two women ran away: they were branded on both cheeks, and received thirty-nine lashes once a week for a month, and worked in chains. But poor Priscilla fared far worse in 1783 and 1784. She too had made an effort to escape. Both ears were cut off. She was placed in chains, and sentenced to receive thirty-nine lashes on the first Monday in each month for a whole year.<sup>2</sup> These are only specimens of what two planter magistrates sitting in a slave court might do. They could also put to death by hanging or burning, or if they hung, they could burn afterwards,

or else expose the body. In fact, all kinds of demoniacal cruelty came within the scope of "death or any other punishment."

Another species of cruelty to which the slaves were subjected, was the liability to be seized for their master's debts. The guilt of this lay at the door of the British legislature. In the fifth year of the reign of George II., an act was passed to provide for the more easy recovery of debts in his majesty's plantations. It made slaves liable to be seized like other goods and chattels. The colonists protested against it, but in vain. On an average it led to some four hundred slaves being sold from the estates to which they were attached every year. At first sight it might appear that a change of masters could make little difference to people in a servile state. But the slaves formed friendships like other people, and they had their allotted plantations and houses. Their love to parents and old shipmates was great; and, moreover, if there was no wedded bond, there were relationships held by many of them as sacred. When thus torn away from all that was dear to them they became morose and sullen, while many pined and died. Moreover, health would often be affected by the change. The negro, whether born or acclimatized in a mountain or a lowland district, suffered when removed from one to the other.

It is not, however, just to attribute solely to any or all of the causes named the fact that the slave population would have rapidly declined but for the continued importations from Africa. The disproportion of the sexes was one cause; only about one-third of the negroes introduced into the island were females. So late as 1789 there were thirty thousand male slaves in excess of the number of females; but in the middle of the century it was no uncommon thing to find four or five males for each female on a sugar estate. When to this disproportion of sexes is added the practice of polygamy among the negro drivers and tradesmen, no surprise can be felt if the number of slaves could only be kept up by fresh drafts on the African barracoons. Still, hard labour most undoubtedly affected the natural increase; women on sugar estates had less children than those employed on pens or in domestic service; and the greater the produce of sugar in proportion to the number of slaves, the less the increase in their numbers. On estates

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<sup>1</sup> "Records of St. Anns' Bay Slave Court," MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Hill's "Lights and Shadows of Jamaica History," pp. 147-150.

where the negroes were pressed, sufficient time was not allowed to the mothers to suckle their children, who were early committed in numbers to the care of a woman appointed for the purpose, to look after them as she might do after a litter of pigs.

Each estate was provided with a hospital, or, as it was more generally termed, hothouse. Medical men were paid so much a head for attending these places. The remuneration ought to have secured a better class of men than were usually found out of the large towns. Slaves afflicted with ulcers or sore legs were usually put in the stocks, to prevent them retarding recovery by walking about. Yaws and smallpox made fearful havoc on some plantations, the latter often spreading through the whole island. Dirt-eating was generally treated as a crime, but was in reality a disease: cases have been known where half the negroes on a plantation have been swept away by it. Dissatisfaction or fear of Obeah seems to have induced it in many cases, but it may be traced also to a disordered state of the system, such as leads young girls sometimes to eat chalk, slate-pencils, and other substances. Dr. Dancer has entered into a lengthy inquiry into its causes and cure in his work on Jamaica maladies.<sup>1</sup> During slavery, lockjaw carried off great numbers of children between the seventh and tenth day after birth.

The houses or huts occupied by the slaves were usually found in close proximity to the works. The mode of construction was simple: a few posts were put into the ground, three or four feet apart; the intervening space was wattled, and then plastered with clay; the floor of bare earth was beaten hard, and the roof thatched with grass or palm fronds, but sometimes with nothing better than cocoa-nut leaves. A platform of boards, on which a rush mat was laid, served for a bed. Two rooms was the extent of the accommodation, while the furniture consisted of little more than a table, a stool or two, a few yabbas or earthen pans, an iron pot, and perhaps a few rough vessels made of the calabash. Cooking was performed out of doors, or beneath a rude shed. The tradesmen and drivers had houses of a superior class, with boarded floors, better furniture, and generally a sideboard, covered with glass and crockery, intended more for ornament than use.

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Dancer's "Medical Assistant; or, Jamaica Practice of Physic," pp. 170-178.

Rough as these negro villages were, they presented a pretty aspect, being surrounded by dense groves of fruit trees and plantains.

Other grounds were also assigned the slaves at some distance from the plantation; the produce of these supplied them with nearly all the food they required, and enabled the industrious to acquire property. No attempt was made to interfere with what was thus accumulated, and at death the owner willed it as he pleased. Pigs and poultry, clothes, furniture, and money, were often devised by word of mouth as safely as by the more elaborate documents of the wealthy.

The Sunday markets, at which the slaves sold their surplus produce, were quite a carnival. As many as ten thousand people were often seen in Kingston on what ought to have been a day of rest. Here, in the midst of indescribable noise and merriment, pigs, goats, fowls, yams, and vegetables were disposed of. Such small manufactures as mats, baskets, bark ropes, yabbas, jars, &c., were also to be obtained. The proceeds were as a rule carefully put up to swell the little hoard of money concealed at home, a small portion being reserved to purchase an article of clothing, a trinket, or some coveted delicacy. All that was irksome in their lot would for a few hours be forgotten, as with pleasant talk and laughter they returned to their huts to a supper more varied than usual, followed by a sound sleep, too soon to be disturbed by the blast of the horn, or the warning crack of the driver's whip, calling them to another week of toil.

Sixteen or twenty hours' work in the month was sufficient to supply their wants; nearly all they required was produced in their allotments. The tendency to grow plantains rather than ground provisions had, however, occasioned so much misery when hurricanes were frequent, that of late it was made compulsory on all planters to cultivate one acre of yams for every ten slaves. A small supply of salt fish, herrings, &c., was periodically distributed by the owner, and from time to time pork and fresh fish could be obtained by such as cared for it. Some slaves, especially Africans, had singular tastes: the rats which fed in great numbers among the canes were regarded as great delicacies. These may have been palatable enough, but cats seem a less desirable dish; yet there were some who enjoyed them, and fully believed that those who ate cat's flesh would acquire, not only the activity, but the endurance of that animal. The domestic servants were more dependent on their owners for food and clothing, and in

respectable families they had no just ground for complaining that they were not well supplied. The field hands had to be content with a few yards of osnaburg, some coarse woollen baize, a handkerchief or two, and some needles and thread, distributed once a year. Gayer garments, reserved for Sundays and holidays, were purchased from their little savings.

Some interesting facts present themselves to notice when an attempt is made to understand what, in the absence of a less imposing term, must be called the social life of the slaves. When a Guinea ship arrived, the slaves were exposed for sale, and care was taken not to separate the families who were on board. This, which was long a custom, became a law, through the exertions of Mr. Bryan Edwards. When the newly-purchased slaves were brought to the estate, they were generally quartered on some of the older Africans. This may appear a hardship inflicted on the latter, but they did not regard it as such; they were glad to revive old memories by converse with these strangers. Some wished to fill up a gap made by the death of a son or daughter, and the strangers would almost always look upon their hosts as parents, and address them as such.

The new arrivals frequently found aged couples living together as faithfully as if united by marriage, for advancing age in numerous cases led to a relinquishment of the laxity so common in earlier life. Where a couple were anxious to enter upon a more permanent union than ordinary, some little ceremony attended the event. The act of separation was more marked. The immense loads the negroes carry on their heads are supported by what is called a *cotta*, a rough pad made of plantain leaves or some other tough fibrous substance. When a couple disagreed, this was taken, cut in twain, and then each party retained a half as a sign of separation—a bill of divorcement.

As a rule, a good deal of affection was shown to children, and sacrifices made to promote their comfort, though strict parental authority was maintained and personal chastisement occasionally inflicted when the days of childhood had long passed by. Children were very frequently named according to the days on which they were born. Those negro names so often the cause of merriment, have, like scriptural names, a signification, as the following list will show :—

MALE NAME.	FEMALE NAME.	DAY OF BIRTH.
Cudjoe	Juba	Monday.
Cubbenah	Beneba	Tuesday.
Quaco	Cuba	Wednesday.
Quao	Abba	Thursday.
Cuffee	Phibba	Friday.
Quamin	Mimba	Saturday.
Quashie	Quasheba	Sunday.

The respect paid by children to their parents was to some extent exhibited to all aged persons. Ta and Ma were terms of homage freely given.

The negro village was not without its sources of amusement. Music was one of the great attractions. In one sense the negro has an ear for music ; a new tune is quickly acquired, but their ideas of time and expression are sadly at fault. Music of some sort they must have ; no festival could be complete without it, but horrible instruments were used for the purpose. Among these were the goombah, a hollow block of wood covered with a sheep or goat skin, and which, when struck with a stick, emits the most terrific sounds. The merry-wang was a variety of banjo or rude guitar, capable of producing four notes; and the dundo may be described as a kind of tabor. Their songs were impromptu, and it is simple justice to the rude bards to say that they rarely indulged in the panegyric so common among their more civilized brethren of the same age; for they contrived to ridicule very effectively any one, white or black, who had incurred their displeasure. Any mental or physical peculiarity of a bookkeeper or overseer was sure to be noticed, and if he was at all obnoxious, severely satirised. The song usually consisted of a solo part or recitative, in which the key was varied; this was followed by a chorus. The strains of the Coromantyns rarely descended to satire; they were fierce and warlike. To beat the goombah all night, or in lieu of it a flat board, and to sing in accompaniment, was not uncommon among the slaves. They were also fond of dancing; and it is impossible to deny the vivacity with which they pursued this amusement, or to refrain from denouncing the lascivious attitudes with which the greatest favourites were characterised.

The rough Merry-Andrew festivities, alluded to in a former chapter on manners and customs, were now improved upon. About 1720 there was a noted personage on the Guinea coast, called John Connu. In what way he got associated with such festivities is not very clear; but about Christmas-time crowds of men dressed up in a fantastic manner, with cows' horns on their heads, horrid masks and boars' tusks on their faces, and followed by numbers of excited women, danced through the streets and lanes, yelling at every door—"John Connu, John Connu!" About fifty years after the introduction of this custom a number of new devices were introduced, and gradually the more elaborate spectacles called "Sets" came into vogue.

Little can be said with confidence as to the religious beliefs of these people. The influence of the Coromantyns seems to have modified, if not entirely obliterated, whatever was introduced by other tribes. They recognised, in a being called Accompong, the creator and preserver of mankind: to him praise, but never sacrifice, was offered. Assaici was another being: to him they offered first-fruits, and the festival of the new year was kept in his honour. Ipboa was god of the sea. The devil was represented by Obbone, a malicious being. It is said that human sacrifices were sometimes offered to appease him; no Jamaica records, however, allude to such an event. The tutelary deities included the departed heads of families, and the worship of such was almost the only one observed to any great extent by Africans or their descendants in Jamaica.

It is and ever has been very difficult to extract from an old negro what his religious belief really was, but it seems probable that there was some idea that departed parents had influence with the supposed rulers of the world beyond the grave, and that prayers were offered to them in some such spirit as that of the Roman Catholic who appeals to the saints in his calendar. At certain times, and often at the festival of the new yam, a family of two or three successive generations would gather around the grave of a departed ancestor; a sacrifice of a cock or a goat was offered, and the blood poured upon the grave. Each head of a household then offered another fowl in the same manner, and when this had been done the animals were cooked and eaten. Occasionally these acts of worship assumed a form of intense melancholy. Death had been busy in the family; one and another, perhaps the young and strong, had passed away, and just as the savage tribes in Africa

sacrifice hundreds of slaves at the death of a chief, that they may serve him in the world to which he has gone, so in Jamaica families the idea prevailed that the dead ancestor might wish some of his descendants to be with him in the next world, and the death of relatives was frequently attributed to his influence. In these cases earnest supplications were offered that those taken might suffice, and such as remained on earth be spared. More solemn and affecting were those occasions when a mother bereaved of some of her children went at the midnight hour to the grave of their dead father, taking the living children by the hand; and then, while gently reproving him for what he was supposed to have done, earnestly entreated him not to take from her those who yet remained.

Not only were oaths administered in the horrid manner alluded to in the account of the rebellions of 1760 and 1765, but sometimes the mixture of human blood, grave dirt, and other abominations, was administered to a woman whose fidelity was questioned; and who on taking it was required to express a wish that her belly might rot, and other evils come upon her, if she had not been faithful. The Bible reader will at once perceive the similarity of this custom to that commanded in the fifth chapter of the Book of Numbers. Nor will the reader of modern African travels fail to note the resemblance of the custom to that described by Chaillu.<sup>1</sup>

Among the Africans there was a wide-spread fear of charms and incantations, and the creole negroes, though not superior to the same kind of superstition, sought to preserve their property by hanging cats' teeth, feathers, and other Obeah signs about.

The funeral ceremonies bore some resemblance to Irish wakes. A feast was provided, at which there was singing, drumming, and dancing. When at length it was time to carry the coffin to the grave, it was borne more frequently on the heads than on the shoulders of the bearers. After a little progress had been made a sudden stop was almost sure to take place: the corpse, it was said, was obstinate, and would not go on; something was surely the matter. Presently the cause would be explained. Perhaps, just by, a man lived who had been at variance with the dead: he must be visited and soundly scolded, and then the departed spirit would

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<sup>1</sup> "Adventures in Equatorial Africa," pp. 302-442.



rest. Quietude seemed to come much quicker if the accused person was liberal in his offers of rum.

Occasionally the corpse was displeased with the mode of conveyance, and this had to be changed. When at length the grave was reached and the coffin was lowered, cooked food, in which no salt had been put, was placed upon it; and in covering up the grave the attendants often turned their backs to it and threw the earth in from between their legs. This was an infallible way of preventing the spirit of the departed from returning with them to their homes. Sometimes the spirit was caught with many ceremonies in a box provided for that purpose, and then the box was carefully buried. The surviving widow of the departed was expected to go more careless in dress than usual for some few weeks; but when tired of the single state she cooked a fowl, and carried it, with the broth, to the grave, accompanied by friends who either sympathised with her or perhaps merely wished to spend a pleasant evening. A song was sung expressive of confidence in the happiness of the departed, fresh earth was piled upon the grave, some of the viands were cast upon it, and the rest eaten. More singing, and also dancing followed, and the party, returning home, left the bereaved one to select another companion. No propitiatory offerings could, however, keep the departed from occasionally breaking bounds. Hence every negro trembled at the mention of duppies; these are the ghosts of northern climes. Even now, among the ignorant, when a corpse is prepared for the grave, dressed, as is not unusual, in a full suit of clothes, the pockets are often cut away, lest the duppy should fill them with stones and annoy the living on his return. For nine days the room in which death took place was undisturbed, and a light left burning at night; nor were little conveniences to which the departed was accustomed, as water to bathe the feet, &c., omitted. Food was often prepared, and if a bold-hearted but hungry member of the household consumed it in secret, the appetite of the duppy became the occasion of remark.

Of all powers, temporal or spiritual, the one of whom the negroes stood most in awe was that of the Obeah man. The word was sometimes spelt Obia or Obi; the latter term refers rather to the practice of the art than to the practiser. This dread superstition is evidently a perverted form of one far more ancient, and may probably be traced back to Egypt. There the name of a serpent was Ob, Oub, or Obion. The Israelites were commanded not to inquire of Ob; and accomplished Hebrew scholars state that the literal

translation of the words in 1 Sam. xxviii. 7, rendered in the English Bible “a woman that hath a familiar spirit” is “a mistress of the Ob.”<sup>1</sup> In the transmission of this very ancient form of superstition across the continent of Africa, and thence to Jamaica, it would naturally assume new forms, and ultimately shape itself into that by which it became so familiarly known.

The professors of this art were almost exclusively native Africans, and were consequently more numerous when the importations from Africa were most abundant. Women occasionally practised, in which case age and ugliness were great recommendations. The power these people possessed was almost unlimited. It was believed that they could cause disease or cure it, and by their mystic rites punish an enemy, or, if it was desired, win his favour. They could not only detect a thief, a murderer, or an adulterer, but by incantations bring down the most fearful judgments upon them. They could make men impervious to bullets, or restore them to life if by some chance they had been killed. Implicit confidence being given to their pretensions, what wonder if a people untaught in the simplest elementary truths of Christianity regarded the Obeah men as gods, who could kill or make alive! The temple of the Obeah man was a secluded hut, the time usually selected for his incantations the midnight hour. The charm used was a strange mixture of heterogeneous matters. A quotation from the records of a trial held in 1776, at Morant Bay, will illustrate it: “Deponent, on searching prisoner’s house, found sundry matters, such as egg-shells tied up in plantain trash, fowls’ feet, fish-bones, feathers, and sundry other matters in a basket; also a coney-skin, or some such thing, stuffed in a bottle, which those who practise Obeah commonly make use of.”<sup>1</sup> The teeth of dogs, cats, alligators, and sharks, together with grave dirt, parrots’ beaks, blood, &c., might be added to the above inventory.

So late as 1861, during the revival, as it was termed, a party of young women, in a state of religious excitement, went to the house of a reputed Obeah man, residing in one of the suburbs of Kingston, and brought him, with all the implements of his art, to the parade. His box contained not only nearly all the abominations mentioned, but several lizard and snake-skins. There

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<sup>1</sup> Articles on Witchcraft and the Serpent, in Kitto’s “Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature.”

was also a bell, said to be used to summon a sort of familiar spirit, and a pack of cards. In the midst of all, sad to say, was a number of class tickets, indicating that he had been a member of a religious body for a great number of years.<sup>2</sup>

When Obi was set for a suspected thief, the magic charm was usually buried at his gate, or in some place over which he was accustomed to walk. The tale of what had been done reached his ears. He could no longer rest, for the mighty power was at work! The first pain he felt was an intimation that the work of retribution had commenced. Every symptom was magnified, and not unfrequently he would pine away and die. The same results often followed a quarrel, when one or other of the contending parties sought the aid of the Obeah man to revenge his real or supposed injuries. Sometimes it would happen that counter spells were used, and the services of another Obeah man secured to counteract the evil the other was working, and if possible make it to recoil upon the head of the first mover in the business. The attempt rarely succeeded. Superstition cannot be cured by stratagem, for had not the spell been buried? It was now too late: the mysterious power was even now acting in the body of the offender, and there could no longer be any hope.

Sickness was rarely attributed to natural causes, if at all unusual in its character. The Obeah man would therefore be consulted; and with the knowledge he possessed of all the little bickerings and jealousies on the estate, he was seldom at a loss to ascribe it, with great appearance of plausibility, to some particular person, who might be expected to have no good feeling towards the sufferer. If with the rude knowledge of medicine he usually possessed he saw hope of recovery, he would propose counteracting spells, and gain great glory from the result of his supposed skill. In those cases where the sufferer gradually got worse and died, the power of

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<sup>1</sup> Session Book of St. Thomas in the East, quoted in Hill's "Lights and Shadows," p. 148.

<sup>2</sup> It is a remarkable fact that under the influence of strong, though ill-directed religious feeling, the women who captured this old man did not hesitate to handle these articles, taking them out one by one, and explaining their nature to the writer: all fear was gone. Yet when a few years before he had obtained possession of a parcel of Obeah trash, a promise of money to any lad in a large school who would step over it when laid on the floor, failed to secure more than one volunteer.

Obeah was magnified more than ever. Sometimes by a little clumsy jugglery the practitioner appeared to extract all sorts of rubbish, or even living things, such as frogs and lizards, from the body of the sufferer. The arms, the legs, the head, or the stomach of the patient was manipulated upon, and presently the cause, or one of the causes of the painful symptoms, fell out upon the floor! For a long time planters and men in authority ridiculed the thing as an idle, senseless superstition, and regarded Obeah spells in much the same light as the scarecrows of English cornfields; but the rebellion of 1760, and some extraordinary facts that soon after came to light, disclosed the deadly character of the superstition.

In Bryan Edwards' "History of the West Indies,"<sup>1</sup> copious extracts are given from a document forwarded from Jamaica to the privy council, and illustrating the evils of this terrible superstition. A striking instance is added of a plantation on which great numbers died in consequence of the dread inspired by a female practitioner of the art over eighty years of age. One hundred negroes are reported to have perished through fear in fifteen years. When the cause of the mortality was discovered, her cottage, with all its disgusting contents, was burnt down, and the old woman sent away to Cuba. From that moment the sick began to recover, and no fresh cases appeared. It is remarkable how leniently the owner of this estate dealt with the culprit. It appears also, from records of slave trials, that though sentences of pitiless floggings, mutilations, and even death, were passed on runaways and others guilty of venial transgressions, those found guilty of Obeah practices rarely suffered the extreme penalty of the law. Two cases are on record where actual poisoning was proved, and yet the culprits were only transported. This unaccountable lenity had the tendency of making the negroes believe more implicitly the assertion that "Buckra could not kill Obeah man."

The Obeah men were commonly reputed to be skilled poisoners: their ability in this respect has been greatly exaggerated. Tales were at one time current, and are still repeated, of a knowledge and use of poisons so potent, that sufficient to destroy life could be concealed beneath the finger nail, and so be quietly dropped into a glass of rum or a cup of coffee. Other poisons were supposed to cause insanity, or a slow, lingering death. It is quite possible that

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<sup>1</sup> Book iv. chap. 3.

some Africans, like savages of other countries, had a knowledge of vegetable poisons beyond what most are disposed to give them credit for. Yet, in nearly every case of known poisoning in Jamaica, the crime has been committed in the most clumsy manner; arsenic, rat poisons, or some other well-known compounds being employed. A very common method of revenge has been to put powdered glass in the food offered, but the effect of this is of course only mechanical.

Sir Hans Sloane, in his history, mentions two cases, proving that poisoning was practised by negroes in his time. Dr. Brown also speaks of the savannah flower as frequently used, and Barham says that two drachms of expressed juice killed a dog in eight minutes. This writer quite believed in the possibility of its being so administered as to delay death for days, weeks, and even years. He gives a case in point. "Some years past a practitioner of physic was poisoned with this plant by his negro \ woman, who had so contrived it that it did not despatch him quickly, but he was seized by violent gripings, inclination to vomit, loss of appetite, and afterwards small convulsions in several parts of his body, a hectic fever, and continual wasting of his flesh." At length he was cured, but it was some time before the convulsive symptoms left him. This narrative, founded on some misapprehension of the case, may have given rise to the exaggerated notions which prevailed as to the power of the negro poisoner. The stipendiary magistrate, Madden, during his short residence in Jamaica, collected some curious statements on these points.<sup>1</sup>

Of late years Myalism has generally been regarded as an art by which that of the Obeah man could be counteracted. Its first mode of development was as a branch of Obeah practice. The Obeah men introduced a dance called the Myal dance, and formed a secret society, the members of which were to be made invulnerable, or if they died, life was to be restored. Belief in this miracle was secured by a trick. A mixture was given in rum, of a character which presently induced sleep so profound, as, by the uninitiated and alarmed, to be mistaken for death. After this had been administered to some one chosen for the purpose, the Myal dance began, and presently the victim staggered and fell, to all appearance dead. Mystic charms were then used; the body was rubbed with some infusion; and in process of time, the narcotic having lost its power, the subject of the experiment rose up as one restored to life, a fact for which the Obeah man claimed all the

merit. The plant said to be used was the branched calalue, or solanum. If so, it can only be the cold infusion which has the narcotic power, and which is stated to belong to the European variety; for when boiled it is harmless. It is commonly used in Jamaica as a substitute for spinach, and enters largely into the composition of the famous pepper-pot.

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<sup>1</sup> Madden's "Letters," vol. ii. pp. 75-80, 92-106.



## CHAPTER IV

### RELIGION AND EDUCATION

It is no easy task to pourtray the religious history of the colony during the period now under review. With the exception of some letters written by the rector of Port Royal, immediately after the earthquake,<sup>1</sup> there appears to be no document in existence which in any way illustrates the spiritual labours of the clergy. From Mr. Bridges, as a clergyman, we might have expected some account of the labours of his brethren; but though he devotes considerable space to the history of the established church, it is only so far as the emoluments and status of its clergy were concerned.

Amidst this dearth of information, the letters of the Port Royal rector are of peculiar interest. Writing of the day of the earthquake, he says: "On Wednesday, the 7th, I had been at prayers, which I did every day since I was rector of Port Royal, to keep up some show of religion amongst a most ungodly and debauched people." This description of the general character of the population applies, it is to be feared, to the whole island; but it is questionable whether the incumbent of the doomed city was not almost singular in his zeal. Having escaped from the falling houses, he says: "The people seeing me, cry'd out to come and pray with them. When I came into the street, every one laid hold of my clothes, and embraced me, so that I was almost stifled with their kindness. I persuaded them at last to kneel down, and make a large ring, which they did. I pray'd with them near an hour, when I was almost spent with the sun and the exercise. They then brought me a chair; the earth working all the while with new motions and tremblings, like the rolling of the sea, insomuch that sometimes when I was at prayers I could hardly keep upon my knees. By that time I had been half an hour longer with them, in setting before them their sins and heinous provocations, and seriously exhorting them to repentance."

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<sup>1</sup> Preserved in "Gentleman's Magazine."



He then went on board a vessel which had escaped, where he found the president of the council, and remained the night. Of the next day he writes: "I went from ship to ship, to visit those who were bruised and dying; likewise to do the last office at the sinking of several corpses which came floating from the Point.... I have been twice on shore, to pray with bruised and dying people, where I met too many drunk and swearing. I did not spare them, nor the magistrates neither, who have suffered wickedness to grow to such a height. I have, I bless God, to the best of my skill and power, discharged my duty in this place. In the last sermon I delivered in the church, I set before them what would be the issue of their impenitence and wickedness so clearly, that they have since acknowledged it was more like a prophecy than a sermon. I had, I confess, an impulse on me to do it: and many times I have preached in the pulpit things which I never premeditated at home, and could not, methought, do otherwise." Soon after we find the worthy rector preaching in a tent. The people, he wrote, "are overjoyed to see me among them, and wept bitterly as I preached. I hope by this terrible judgment God will make them reform their lives, for there was not a more ungodly people on the face of the earth."

For more than two generations we shall search in vain among the records of the colony for any other illustration of ministerial zeal and fidelity. Still it need not be inferred that such cases were quite unknown. The first law passed after the earthquake was one establishing a perpetual fast on the anniversary of its occurrence; the preamble to the bill declaring that it had pleased Almighty God "justly to punish the inhabitants of this island for the manifold sins and wickedness committed against His Divine Majesty."<sup>1</sup>

In 1706-07 an Act was passed "for the encouragement of good and able ministers to come to the island." Persons who had previously laid themselves under obligation to supplement the salaries formerly allowed by law, were released from their engagements, and the stipends of the clergy increased; in St. Catherines, from £150 to £250 sterling per annum; in other parishes to £100 or £150 per annum, to which the justices and vestry might add another £50 if they thought fit. It will be obvious that this latter arrangement was objectionable, as it put the clergy too much under the power of the vestries, and was calculated to prevent any effective interposition between the master and slave in

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<sup>1</sup> "Laws of Jamaica," vol. i.

cases of injustice. But little regard was paid to the wants of the bondsmen. £1 3s. 9d. was the fee payable by law for the simple ceremony of baptism in the case of a slave, a sum few owners would afford for such a purpose.

Mr. Wood, in his preface to the "Laws of Jamaica," written in 1716, speaks of some benefices as worth £400, while others, he adds, were worth less than £100. In the cases last referred to, the grants from the assembly and vestry could not have been paid, while in more favoured parishes glebe lands and fees made up the sum mentioned. The same writer speaks of the king as head of the church, and of the governor as his substitute, appointing the clergy.

In 1722 the assembly appointed another fast for the 29th of August, in commemoration of the great storms of that year and of 1712. Seven years later the same body was led to manifest wonderful zeal on behalf of protestantism, and passed a law to prevent dangers which might arise from the presence of disguised papists. Long asserts that this was done to annoy an obnoxious member of the house, but the practical working of the measure was found so objectionable that next year it was repealed.

In 1748 it was thought that the provision made for the clergy was "too scanty for a proper and suitable maintenance"; and that as part of it depended on the pleasure of vestries, the clergy were placed in "an improper state of dependence." It was accordingly arranged that the vestries should be relieved, and the salaries of clergymen augmented, and paid from the colonial funds. Vestries, however, were either to pay £50 per annum as rent for a rectory, or erect one at a cost not exceeding £500. Though £300 per annum is the highest stipend mentioned in the act, some benefices were worth far more. In 1745, a bill had been passed, empowering the rector of St. Andrews to lease some six hundred acres of land bequeathed to the church. Some years later this living was said to be worth upwards of a thousand pounds a year.<sup>1</sup>

The Bishop of London had always claimed spiritual jurisdiction in the colony, but the act of 1748 is the first in which it was recognised. The distant supervision was of little value; even the more public duties of the sacred office were frequently grossly

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<sup>1</sup> Edwards' "History," vol. i. p. 206.

neglected, and in 1773 a law was passed allowing a clergyman to be absent from his parish one month at a time, or two months in a year, but imposing a fine of £50 on all who, being in health, drew their stipend and (with the above exceptions) failed to officiate.

In 1773, parishes were empowered to raise £5000 for a church and burial-ground where none had as yet been provided. Some of the existing churches were good buildings: that in Spanish Town, repaired in 1762, was the best; it was also provided with a superior organ. In Hanover, £7000 was expended on the church, but in some parishes Divine service, where held, was conducted in private dwellings, notwithstanding the authority bestowed upon the vestries. Gradually we find the incomes of the clergy improving. Surplice fees, of the most exorbitant character, for marriages, baptisms, and burials; glebe lands, and the produce of slave labour, all combined to improve their worldly position. One rectory was endowed with twelve slaves, and another with twenty.

There is happily no necessary connection between augmented worldly resources and diminished spiritual power; nevertheless the two kept company in the church of Jamaica. The clergy seem gradually to have become less worthy of their position. In 1722, men like Galpin, Johnston, and May could be referred to as men of unblemished lives. But of the rest it was said by a contemporary writer that they were "of a character so vile, that I do not care to mention it; for except a few, they are generally the most finished of all debauchees."<sup>1</sup> It was added that their churches were seldom opened.

Some forty years later Mr. Long drew a picture equally dark. There were, he says, some equally respectable for learning, piety, and exemplary good behaviour; while others "have been detestable for their addiction to lewdness, drinking, gambling, and iniquity." Some, he declares, were better qualified "to be retailers of salt fish, or boatswains of privateers, than ministers of the gospel." He gives illustrations of his statement, and records the particulars of a fight between a rector, his clerk, and some others, and a party of sailors who objected to the hasty manner in which the rector desired to commit the bodies of three of their comrades to the grave.<sup>1</sup>

The life of Dr. John Wolcot (Peter Pindar) furnishes another illustration of the reckless manner in which the pulpits of the

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1 "New History of Jamaica," p. 303.

colony were supplied. He accompanied Sir W. Trelawny to Jamaica, in 1762, as medical attendant. His social qualities made him quite a favourite, and he soon received as a reward an appointment to a vacant church. In some way not clearly explained, he obtained a license from the Bishop of London, and entered upon his duties. It was rarely that any person entered his church, and after waiting a few minutes, Wolcot and his clerk were accustomed to spend the rest of the holy day in pigeon shooting!<sup>2</sup> Happily his residence was not prolonged, but others little better qualified continued for many years to hold the highest offices in the church.

Neglect of religious duty is frequently accompanied by a persecuting spirit towards those who differ, and the treatment of the Jews in the colony is an illustration in point. They were tolerated, but that was all. So far back as the time of Governor Molesworth they obtained permission to build a synagogue. One was erected in Spanish Town, and another, far more elegant, in Kingston. In each town they had commodious burying-places. A sect of Spanish and Portuguese Jews, which subsequently became very numerous, at first met in a private dwelling. They were accused by the more orthodox party of having departed from some important points in the ritual during the persecutions they had endured from the Inquisition. Too little allowance was made by their co-religionists for the trials and temptations they had undergone.

With all their disabilities these people regarded Jamaica as their home far more commonly than most other colonists. They were, generally speaking, very successful in business. Some, indeed, were in a small way as retail traders. Others were connected with large English houses, and a great portion of the trade with the Spanish Main was in their hands. Temperate in their habits, they enjoyed better health than most of their neighbours, and their national shrewdness and activity more than counterbalanced the disadvantages of their position.

In the early days of the colony the king had been petitioned to sanction their expulsion, on the ground "that they descended from the crucifiers of the blessed Jesus!" This absurdity was one which would not bear repetition; but laws were passed early in the

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<sup>1</sup> Long's "History of Jamaica."

<sup>2</sup> Chambers's "Cyclopædia of English Literature," Art. "Wolcot."

eighteenth century prohibiting their employment in any public office, and they were debarred from many of the rights and privileges of other white subjects. Moreover, they were subjected to special taxation, large sums being imposed on them as a people. This act of injustice was defended on the ground that they did not perform the same duties as other citizens—duties which were expressly denied them by law. In 1736 they were so impressed by a sense of the injustice with which they were treated, that they sent a petition to the king on the subject. They denied the charges made by the assembly, that they were in the habit of falsifying their accounts and of carrying on treasonable dealings with the Spaniards. They asserted that they paid taxes like others, and as for the plea that a special tax was just, inasmuch as they were free from public duties, they declared that it was only from honourable offices they were exempt. If there was a deficiency in the number of whites in their employ, they could not secure emigrants or convicts like others, but must hire at great expense; and in every way they complained that they were exposed to disabilities which were in express violation of the rights conceded by royal charter to British subjects.<sup>1</sup>

In consequence of these representations the governor received instructions not to assent to any bill in which Jews were taxed as such.<sup>2</sup> The assembly was obstinate, and soon after was prorogued on three several occasions before the objectionable clauses were omitted from a bill. It yielded at last, but not without assigning reasons why the Jews were unworthy of such considerate treatment. It is not easy to realise in these days the spirit of intolerance which could dictate such a production. Jewish enterprise was pronounced a crime. They sold articles of clothing, and so induced people to dress above their means. They lent out money at interest. They did not consume spirituous liquors, the chief source of revenue in the colony. The dry goods they sold were not liable to duty, and they smuggled cocoa and indigo which were dutiable. They were liable, it was true, for their share in the general taxation, but surely they ought to pay a special tax when they were exempt from civil and military duties, &c. Moreover, the assembly had a right to make what laws it liked, and the king

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. iii. pp. 460, 461.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. iii. p. 508.

could never have sent out the instructions he had unless the truth had been misrepresented. Finally, there was no injustice in the mode of raising the special tax: a round sum was fixed, and the heads of synagogues, who surely ought to know the circumstances of their coreligionists, distributed the burden among the different families. Of late, too, the amount was not so large as in former years, when the Jews were poorer.<sup>1</sup> Such is an abstract of this extraordinary document.

Some years later a Jew named Sanches attempted to vote at an election in Kingston. The vote was of course refused, and he petitioned the assembly on the subject. Counter-petitions poured in from all sides. One of these recounted all the real and supposed transgressions of the race "since they renounced the right of government to Pontius Pilate in order to destroy and put to the most cruel and ignominious death the Lord and Saviour of the world."<sup>2</sup> The very persecutions they had endured were quoted as proofs of their unfitness for political rights.<sup>3</sup> The Jews in answer expressed their hope that the days of persecution had now terminated<sup>4</sup> But the assembly decided that Jews were debarred from all civil and judicial authority, and it would be dangerous to the religion and constitution of the island if the law was changed.<sup>5</sup>

Though now free from special taxation, the Jews thought it desirable, for many years, to present a handsome gift to a newly-appointed governor. About two hundred doubloons was the amount usually given; about one hundred or one hundred and fifty doubloons was the amount presented to a lieutenant-governor; and fifty doubloons were sent to the governor's secretary. From Long, who in the last-named capacity had received the gift, we learn that the governor's purse was called a pie, his lieutenant's a tart, while the secretary's portion was denominated a tartlet. There were others beside Jews who made tartlets. Posts in the militia and other coveted appointments were thus obtained; Jews, in their bribes, simply followed Christian example.

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. iii. pp. 570–572.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. iv. p. 246.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., vol. iv. p. 247.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., vol. iv. p. 249.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., vol. iv. p. 250.

A few Quakers still resided in the colony, but their numbers were rapidly decreasing. The last public reference to them is found in a law passed in 1732, by which their affirmation was declared to be equivalent to an oath.

If any other dissenters remained in the island, their meetings were held in private houses. No reference of any kind to such assemblies can be traced after the commencement of the 18th century.

The slaves, with very few exceptions, were left in heathen darkness. Here and there some member of a planter's family might be found labouring to impart religious instruction to a few favoured domestics, but such cases were rare. Though so little can be traced of Christian effort, better days were at hand. Towards the close of the century the missionary spirit was revived in the churches, and Jamaica became a scene of anxious solicitude to many.

The Moravians were first in the field, and the West Indies attracted their attention at an early period. Four sugar estates in the parish of St. Elizabeths belonged to the Fosters and Barhams, families honourably known in early Moravian history. Through their influence four missionaries were sent out, and landed on the 7th of December, 1754. They were located on the Bogue, a magnificent estate for sugar cultivation, but very unhealthy. Here they at once entered upon a career of Christian devotedness unsurpassed even in the records of Moravian missions.

Among the Mandingo slaves they found a few Mohammedans, who recited prayers in Arabic: all beside were sunk in the grossest idolatry. The fear of Obeah and the practice of Fetish worship were universal. The slave gangs, almost in a state of nudity, toiled from sunrise to sunset, often longer on moonlight nights, and the Sundays were spent in the cultivation of their own allotments, or in disposing of their surplus products in the markets. How could missionaries instruct slaves whose time was so fully occupied, and to whom a season of repose was almost unknown? The little time the overseers were at first disposed to allow was soon refused when it was discovered that the missionaries were not willing to submit to the dictation of those who wished them merely to lecture the slaves on idleness, deception, and other such vices, to the exclusion of the cheering and elevating promises of the gospel.

But the boundless love which is taught by the Saviour's sacrifice is ever fertile in expedients. There was a short period every day

when the slave families gathered together to prepare and eat their evening meal. Then would the zealous missionaries go from hut to hut, and sitting down on a rude block of wood, often half blinded by the smoke of the fire the negro delights to kindle, tell in simple words the wondrous story of redeeming love, and assure the wretched bondsmen that they were the objects of Divine compassion. The tired slaves, when their supper was eaten, were only too ready to sleep; but these words of tenderness mingled with their dreams, cheered them in their daily toil, and in some instances changed their hearts and lives.

More might have been willing to listen to the teaching of the Moravians had their influence with the overseers been greater; but too often, when some terrified slave entreated the missionary to plead on his behalf, and save him from a threatened punishment, the plea was disregarded, and the stripes were inflicted with augmented severity. Yet there were those whose desire for instruction was so great that they would work on their grounds during the Saturday night, that they might attend the Sabbath services.

The managers of the Barham estates were restrained from the more open forms of opposition by the express wish of the proprietors that facilities should be afforded for the instruction of the slaves. These were virtually disregarded, but other managers could go to greater lengths. Loud murmurs were heard, and when in 1763 the missionaries pleaded exemption from militia duties, the legislature was petitioned by their enemies, but that body declined to interfere. The gentlemen at whose request the missionaries were sent out were, on the other hand, dissatisfied with the conduct of their agents in the colony, and sent out a Moravian to act as attorney on the plantations. He remained seventeen years, but in 1780 he left, and no one of similar sentiments was appointed in his place.

During the first year of missionary labour twenty-six slaves were baptized, and about double that number during the following year. There were also about four hundred catechumens under instruction, and as many more attended the public services. It is often the case that the later arrivals at a field of missionary enterprise are apt to think that the first labourers have manifested undue haste in the admission of professed converts to Christian ordinances. It is difficult for those who have been accustomed to that civilization and Christianity which is the growth of ages to



estimate aright the statements of those who dwell in the midst of heathen darkness, and to whom the most imperfect manifestations of Christian life and love are exceedingly encouraging. Moreover, the missionary, long absent from his early home and all its sweet Christian associations, is apt to contrast the converts he has gathered around him with the heathenism they have forsaken, but by which they are still surrounded; while those newly arrived are apt to compare the same people with the Christians from whom they have lately parted.

To some extent this may explain the fact that Rauch, a missionary who arrived at the close of 1756, was of opinion that sufficient care had not been exercised in the case of those who had been baptized. Henceforth the rite was less frequently administered, and the attendance at the religious services declined in consequence.

For some years after the arrival of Rauch little could be reported in the way of additions to the church. Yet the instruction given was so practical in its character that not one member of the Moravian congregations was implicated in the wide-spread rebellion of 1760. Other facts tend to show that if the knowledge of the early converts was defective, their hearts were sincere and their consciences tender. In 1764 a most devoted man named Schlegel joined the mission. The good seed which years of diligent teaching had planted in the hearts of many seems to have yielded fruit. He infused new life into the mission, and in 1767 and 1768 two hundred and sixty persons were baptized. These were exceptional years, for during the first half-century of missionary labour the number who received this initiatory rite was under one thousand.

The manner in which these missionary pioneers laboured is of more importance than the numerical results. Statistics rarely disclose the whole truth on any subject, none more imperfectly than religious statistics. The Moravians, soon after their settlement, established five regular preaching stations. They also preached by invitation on several other estates than those to which they were specially sent; and by visitation of the sick, and in a variety of other ways, they sought to accomplish the great end of their mission. In addition to their spiritual duties they had to make provision for their temporal necessities. Some few perquisites were allowed by the Fosters and Barhams, but not enough to support them. They had to wash their own clothes, and perform a variety

of other duties regarded as menial by the slaves. After a few years they acquired seven hundred acres of land, but more than half of it was a swamp. On the best part they built a large house, at the station now called Old Carmel, in the centre of which was a large preaching hall. They attempted to cultivate the land, but finding themselves unequal to the toil, they had recourse to the labour of slaves.

It must be remembered that even the Quakers were at this time only beginning to see the sinfulness of slavery. The Moravians equally detested the cruelties which attended it, though not protesting against it as a system. The diaries kept by the missionaries display their anxiety to treat their slaves with kindness; if they wrote of offences which must be punished, it is clear that they regarded such a necessity as an evil to be deplored. Each missionary worked at some trade or calling, and so set an example of industrious habits; and each was laborious in teaching those truths which were so precious to his own soul.<sup>1</sup>

The white settlers in Jamaica were given to the practice of posthumous charity, but it appears that executors and trustees were seldom disposed to carry out their intentions. The list of charitable bequests actually appropriated is strangely disproportionate to those bequeathed. In the third volume of the "Journals of the Assembly" <sup>1</sup> is a return of no less than two hundred and eighteen legacies to churches, the poor, and for education, made between 1667 and 1736. There is no evidence to show that even a moiety of these were appropriated to the proper purpose. Some parishes were richly provided for. In St. Catherine's forty bequests had been made; in Port Royal nearly as many.

A few of the more important made available for educational purposes, before and after 1736, can be noted. In 1710 Mr. Thomas Manning left property with which to endow a school in Westmoreland. In 1738 a law was passed to carry his intentions into effect. In addition to land, we read of upwards of one hundred head of cattle, thirteen negroes, and one Indian slave. In 1730 Mr. Peter Beckford provided for the endowment of a free school in Spanish Town; fifteen years later the legislature gave a corporate character to the trust. In 1736 a bill was passed giving effect to the will of John Wolmer, a goldsmith, of Kingston, who died in 1729,

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<sup>1</sup> Buchner's "History of Moravian Missions."

and who left the bulk of his property to endow a free school. Perhaps no trust has on the whole been so well administered, or effected so much good in Jamaica, as this.

It is painful to think that these are almost the only cases in which educational trusts were administered with even some degree of faithfulness and discretion. As examples of neglect or dishonesty, many cases might be cited. Sir Nicholas Lawes left a fine dwelling-house and nearly three acres of land, in St. Andrews, for a free school. In 1695 a bill was passed constituting a trust and granting a seal, but no school was ever established, and the property was subsequently attached to the rectory. The history of another legacy left about the same time, but never appropriated, was investigated about a hundred years after, when it was found that principal and interest amounted to £15,000, but not one penny was ever recovered. In Clarendon, public subscription, added to a bequest of Mr. Pennant, led to the establishment of a school, which was soon allowed to decay, and passed out of existence. In other cases, after long years of delay, effect was given to the wishes of testators. Martin Rusea left property in 1764; yet eleven years elapsed before proceedings in chancery led to the establishment of what is known as Rusea's free school.

Schools, when established, did little to meet the educational wants of the colony. The different endowments made available produced, on an average, £1100 per annum, between 1760 and 1770, and only provided for the education of some forty boys. There were a few private schools, but their character was seldom of a high order. Every man whose means would allow the expenditure sent his children to England for education. Contemporary writers, such as Long, draw mournful pictures of the consequences which in too many cases followed. Shipwrecks were more frequent then than now, and in the almost perpetual state of war then prevailing, not a few were made captives, or suffered at the hands of pirates. At one time many of the first families in the colony were bereaved by an explosion at sea. It not unfrequently happened that men who made a great effort to send home their children found themselves unable to continue the payments for their education, and their unfortunate offspring then experienced the treatment of charity children of a century ago.

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. iii. pp. 417–420; vol. xi. p. 479.

Payment did not always secure kind treatment, for school discipline in those days was generally barbarous, and youths whose parents were five thousand miles away would assuredly suffer most at the hand of petty tyrants. There was a greater evil, in many cases, than this. Remittances were often lavish, and the sons and daughters of West Indian nabobs must have every indulgence; their fancies were studied, their whims consulted, and the seeds of vicious habits implanted.

Girls were more frequently retained in the colony than boys. In a few families governesses were kept; in others, reading and writing were taught by some domestic arrangement, and itinerant dancing and music-masters supplied the accomplishments, especially the former. Those young ladies who did not acquire the *patois*, or any of the habits of the domestic slaves around them, might be esteemed as fortunate.

When such was the state of education, it is obvious that literary pursuits would be rare. With a few exceptions, those who resided in the island wrote little except occasional political pamphlets. Two newspapers were published in Kingston, and in the days of Admiral Knowles a weekly paper, defending the claims of Spanish Town, was commenced there. About the middle of the century, a well-printed and creditable journal was published at Montego Bay. The journals of the council were printed in Kingston, those of the assembly in Spanish Town. The local papers did not give much information; English and foreign news, with advertisements, filled the greater part of their columns. Vestry boards were private cliques and the legislature was too tenacious of its privileges to allow free discussion on its proceedings.

A few literary characters were connected with the island. In the year 1725 Sir Hans Sloane, the founder of the British Museum, published his magnificent work on Jamaica. Though principally devoted to the natural history of the island, it contains much valuable information relative to its settlement and early progress, and also of the manners and customs of the inhabitants. Sloane was physician to the Duke of Albemarle, and though only fifteen months in the island, he collected a wonderful amount of information.

Another physician—Dr. Patrick Brown—also produced a very useful work. His “Civil and Natural History of Jamaica” describes briefly the situation, soil, government, revenues, and trade of the island. This is compressed into twenty-seven folio pages; about

three hundred and fifty more are devoted to its botanical and zoological productions. There are nearly fifty well-executed plates, though hardly equal to those in Sloane's volumes. It must have passed through more than one edition. The copy used in writing these pages is dated 1789. Dr. Brown was born in 1720, and came to Jamaica when he was about thirty years of age. He resided in Kingston until his death, in 1790. He was so fond of this city as to recommend it as the seat of government; and to him in no small degree is to be attributed the effort which was made in the time of Knowles to remove the public offices from Spanish Town.

The writer whose labours shed most light on the history of the island down to the year 1770 is Mr. Edward Long. His comprehensive volumes were printed in London, in 1774, in three quarto volumes, and illustrated with maps and plates, under the title of "The History of Jamaica; or a General Survey of the Ancient and Modern State of that Island, with Reflections on its Situation, Settlements, Inhabitants, Climate, Products, Commerce, Laws, and Government." It is not a continuous history, but various matters relating to the island are discussed in separate books and chapters. The description of the several parishes, the account of the capture and settlement of the island, of its early constitutional struggles, together with the sketches of manners and customs, are very instructive.

The author belonged to a family rather celebrated in the island. Samuel Long arrived with Cromwell's fleet, and obtained extensive grants of land: he first settled the once magnificent estate of Longville, in Clarendon. The historian, who was his great-grandson, was born in England, at Rosilian, in the county of Cornwall, on the 23rd of August, 1734. Having completed his studies at Gray's Inn, he came to Jamaica in 1756, as secretary to his brother-in-law, Governor Moore. Two years later he married Mary, the heiress of Thomas Beckford. In 1765 he was returned as member of the house of assembly, of which body he was chosen speaker in 1768, but he soon after left the island. On the 13th of March, 1813, he died at Arundel Park, Sussex. He wrote other works besides his history; on the sugar cane, and the colonies, and also contributed to the lighter literature of the day.

Peter Pindar, Dr. Smollett, and other literary celebrities, also resided for some time in the island. To these men of English birth must be added one who was a native of the soil, and of unmixed negro blood. This remarkable person was named Francis Williams,

the son of John and Dorothy Williams, free negroes. Of the parents very little is known, beyond the fact that they were among the first negroes in Jamaica who were freed from some of the civil disabilities to which even free men of colour were exposed. In the old statute books of the island may be seen the law passed in 1708 (the first of its kind), to prevent slave testimony being received in evidence against Manuel Bartholomew and John Williams: this accorded to them one of the privileges hitherto confined to white people.

Williams soon after nearly lost the social status he thus acquired, through having incurred the displeasure of a member of the house of assembly. The latter had called him a "black negro." Williams, who it would appear was not original in his ideas, simply retorted by calling his antagonist a "white negro." Still, the retort was thought of sufficient importance to engage the attention of the learned legislators, by some of whom it was proposed to revoke the act of 1708, so far as it related to the culprit. The matter was at length allowed to drop, and in 1716 another act was passed, conferring the same privileges on Dorothy his wife, and their sons John, Thomas, and Francis. The last of these was a scholar and poet.

It is to be deplored that Mr. Long's history is almost the only source of information relative to the career of Williams, for his prejudices arouse the suspicion that a black man would not receive impartial justice at his hands. It appears that the Duke of Montague was anxious to know whether a negro lad, trained at a grammar school and then at a university, would be found equal in literary attainments to a white man. Francis, who was a lively, intelligent lad, was selected as the subject of the experiment. After the necessary preliminary training at an English school, he was sent to Cambridge University, and, having completed his studies, returned to Jamaica. The duke, anxious that his protégé should display his abilities to the best advantage, endeavoured to obtain for him a seat in the council, but Governor Trelawny strongly opposed this project, urging that the slaves would not tamely submit to bondage if one of their own colour was so exalted.

Mr. Williams then opened a school in Spanish Town, where he imparted a classical and mathematical education. The picture drawn of him at this time by Mr. Long is not flattering. He writes: "In regard to the general character of the man, he was haughty, opinionated, looked down with sovereign contempt on his fellow

blacks, entertained the highest opinion of his own knowledge, treated his parents with much disdain, and behaved towards his own children and slaves with a severity bordering on cruelty. He was fond of having great deference paid to him, and exacted it in the utmost degree from the negroes about him. He affected a singularity of dress and a particularly grave cast of countenance, to impart an idea of his wisdom and learning; and to second this view, he wore in common a huge wig, which made a very venerable figure.”<sup>1</sup>

If, however, Williams looked with contempt on the blacks, he had even less regard for a mulatto. His argument was thus stated: “A simple white or a simple black complexion is respectively perfect; but a mulatto, being a heterogeneous medley of both, is imperfect—*ergo*, inferior.” Yet he was fond of saying, “Show me a negro, and I will show you a thief.” He was anxious to prove that he had a white man’s feelings though his skin was black: hence the line—

*“Candida quod nigrâ corpora pelle geris.”*

In estimating (so far as imperfect information will permit) the character of this man, the prejudices of the times in which he lived must be taken into consideration. The race to which he belonged was then almost universally despised, and the temptation to curry favour with the whites by denouncing the negroes was too great for him to resist. He was simply tolerated, and even if he had possessed that nobility of character which constitutes the patriot, by making him willing to suffer for a proscribed people or cause, his career would soon have been cut short. His disposition, too, was soured by the contemptuous way in which his abilities were spoken of, even by men removed from the influence of colonial prejudices, as well as by those who were personally acquainted with him. Self assertion may have seemed to him the only way by which to meet the unfair depreciation of his real ability. Compared with his own race, he was unmeasurably the intellectual superior of any who then lived in the island. Hume, the historian, wrote disparagingly of his attainments, but he was not personally acquainted with him, or he would hardly have said, “If is likely he is admired for very slender accomplishments, like a parrot who speaks a few words plainly.”

Mr. Long has preserved a poem he presented to Governor Haldane on his arrival in the colony. In examining it, it should be remembered that extravagant panegyric was one of the vices of the age. It is copied entire from the pages of Long.

Integerrimo et Fortissimo  
Viro  
Georgio Haldano, Armigero,  
Insulae Jamaicensis Gubernatori;  
Cui, omnes morum, virtutumque dotes bellicarum  
In cumulum accesserunt,  
Carmen.

DENIQUE venturum fatis volentibus annum  
Cuncta per extensum læta videnda diem  
Excussis adsunt curis, sub imagine clarâ  
Felices populi, terraque lege virens.  
Te duce quæ fuerant malesuadâ mente peracta  
Irrita, conspectu non reditura tuo.  
Ergo omnes populus, nec non plebecula cernit  
Hæsurum colo te relegasse Jugum,  
Et mala, quæ diris quondam cruciatibus insons  
Insula passa fuit; condoluisset onus.  
Ni victrix tua Marte manus prius inclyta, nostris  
Sponte ruinosis rebus adesse velit.  
Optimus es servus Regi servire *Britanno*  
Dum guadet genio Scotica terra tuo:  
Optimus herôum populi fulcire ruinam;  
Insula dum superest ipse superstes eris.  
Victorem agnoscat te *Guadaloupa* suorum  
Despiciet merito diruta castra ducum.  
Aurea vexillis flebit jactantibus *Iris*,  
Cumque suis populis, oppida victa gemet.  
Crede, meum non est, vir *Marti* care! Minerva  
Denegat Æthiopi bella sonare ducum.  
Concilio, caneret te Buchananus et armis,  
Carminè Peleidæ scriberet ille parem.

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<sup>1</sup> Long's "History of Jamaica."



Ille poeta, decus patriæ tua facta referre  
 Dignior altisono vixque *Marone* minor.  
 Flammiferos agitante suos sub sole *jugales*  
 Vivimus; eloquium deficit omne furcis.  
 Hoc demum accipias, multâ fuligine fusum  
 Ore sonaturo, non cute, corde valet.  
 Pollenti stabilita manu, Deus almus, eandem  
 Omnigenis animam, nil prohibente dedit.  
 Ipsa coloris egens virtus, prudentia; honesto  
 Nullus inest animo, nullus in arte color.  
 Cur timeas, quamvis, dubitesne nigerrima celsam  
*Cæsaris occidui*, scandere *Musa* domum?  
 Vade salutatum, nec sit tibi causa pudoris,  
*Candida quod nigrâ corpora pelle geris*.  
 Integritas morum *Maurum* magis ornat, et ardor  
 Ingenii, et *docto dulcis in ore decor*;  
 Hunc, magè *cor sapiens*, patriæ virtutis amorque,  
 Eximit è sociis, conspicuumque facit.  
 Insula me genuit, celebres aluere Britanni,  
 Insula, te salvo non dolitura patre,  
 Hoc precor; o nullo videant te fine, regentem  
 Florentes populos, terra, Deique locus!<sup>1</sup>

FRANCISCUS WILLIAMS.

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<sup>1</sup> A translation of this poem will be found in the Appendix.

# PERIOD IV

## FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE ANTISLAVERY STRUGGLE TO EMANCIPATION

### CHAPTER I HISTORICAL EVENTS

THE exultation of the colonists at the victory of Lord Rodney was somewhat abated when the heavy taxation, rendered necessary by martial law, was announced: some consolation was, however, found in the high prices obtained for sugar and rum. Considerable accessions were also made to the material strength of the colony by the introduction of emigrants from Honduras and the United States of America. In January, 1783, a large convoy arrived from Charleston with sixteen hundred troops, four hundred white families, and four thousand five hundred slaves.<sup>1</sup>

A considerable number of these persons settled in Kingston, and succeeded so well in business as to call forth loud complaints at their exemption from taxation for a term of years. Others, however, were poor, and some thousands of pounds were contributed, by private subscription and parochial funds, for their support. Others again became planters, and were exposed to the same misfortunes as attended large bodies of white emigrants in former days. A list is still in existence of 183 heads of families to whom grants of land were made in St. Elizabeths. This land was little better than morass, and a claim for the payment of £4696, by the gentleman who surveyed the spot and apportioned it, led to an inquiry on the part of the house of assembly, when it was stated in evidence that none but amphibious creatures, such as fishes, frogs, and “Dutchmen,” could live there. One poor gentleman, named

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<sup>1</sup> Southey's “History,” vol. ii. p. 540.

Frogge, said he had tried the experiment, and buried most of his family, and that his case was only one of many.<sup>1</sup>

Next year General Campbell relinquished the government. He appears to have gained the esteem of all classes of the community, for while diligent in preparing for the defence of the colony at a most dangerous crisis, he had not neglected the other duties of a governor. A service of plate, valued at £1000 sterling, was voted to him by the assembly. During his administration the long disputed right of cutting logwood and mahogany at Belize was conceded by Spain.

Brigadier-General Clark succeeded to the government. The first years of his residence were marked by a succession of hurricanes, the last by bountiful crops. The storms were on the 30th of July, 1784, 27th of August, 1785, and 20th of October, 1786. The first was the most destructive. Every vessel in Kingston harbour was either sunk, driven ashore, or dismasted. The barracks at Up Park Camp and the workhouse were blown down. Many lives were lost, and two shocks of earthquake added to the general alarm.

In these days of free trade, when the necessities of one country can be readily supplied from the abundance of another, it seems almost incredible that thousands of slaves should at this time have perished, and many of all classes have suffered considerable privations, in consequence of the commercial regulations of the parent state. The famine which followed the hurricanes of 1780 and 1781 was partly owing to the war of independence. But now, though peace had been proclaimed, the trade with the States was restricted by the imperial government. On the 2nd of July, 1783, an order in council was promulgated, and for some time annually renewed, limiting the importation of American lumber, grain, live stock, &c., into the West Indies, to British ships; while salt beef, pork, and fish were entirely prohibited.

In 1784 nearly every island sent remonstrances and petitions to the British parliament, showing how dependent they were on America for supplies. The legislature of Jamaica declared that free trade with America was absolutely necessary to “afford a chance of carrying on our estates, or of supplying our families with bread. We claim it (said they) as the birthright of every member of the

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<sup>1</sup> “Journals of Assembly,” vol. viii.

empire; we demand it as one of the gifts of nature, to enable us to avert impending ruin." These gentlemen were not free traders in respect to sugar, coffee, and rum; and they were told that their request could not be granted without material injury to the commercial interests of Great Britain. The inhabitants of Canada and Nova Scotia were very jubilant, declaring that they could supply all the sugar the islands needed; and if prices were high, the planters, who were "wallowing in wealth," could afford to pay them.

August, 1784, however, saw Jamaica on the brink of famine, On the 7th of that month, the lieutenant-governor, who was vested with some discretionary powers for such an emergency, issued a proclamation, with the advice of the council, permitting the importation of provisions, in foreign bottoms, for four months. This period was, soon after, extended for two months longer. The planters paid increased attention to the cultivation of corn and other ground provisions, which were, providentially, harvested before the storm of 1785 again spread desolation over the land. After this new calamity, General Clark prohibited the exportation of provisions to other suffering colonies, but, under pressure from home, refused again to open the ports to American ships. All through the remainder of the year there was much scarcity, but the climax of misery seemed to be reached when the storm of 1786 burst upon the land.

Good resulted from these visitations. Far more attention was paid to the cultivation of yams, cocoas, and such provisions as, unlike the plantain, are not readily destroyed by storms; but the West Indies must ever be, to some extent, as dependent on temperate climes for many of the necessities of life as such countries are on tropic climes for many luxuries. 1787 was a year of anxiety, but the average sugar crops of the three next years exceeded ninety thousand hogsheads. The coffee crops were far in excess of all former years, though inferior to what they subsequently reached. From this time the wonderful increase in the production of that staple article may be dated.

In December, 1784, the assembly prayed that General Clark might be confirmed in the government of the island. He accordingly remained six years longer, and had cause to rejoice in an immunity from those legislative contests by which others had and have since been tried. Only two events of this character occurred. In 1786 a Mr. Kenreys brought serious charges reflecting

on the governor's conduct as chancellor: he included the judges, the provostmarshal, and the clerk of court in his complaints; but the assembly, after a patient investigation, declared all the charges entirely groundless. Three years later the council and assembly again quarrelled on the old question of privileges. The former body sought to amend the poll-tax bill. This, being a money bill, the assembly denied their right to do. The governor interposed by an adjournment of the house; but both parties being obstinate, a dissolution was the only course open for the adoption of the governor, who courteously informed the legislature that he was unwilling to embarrass his successor, who had then been appointed.<sup>1</sup>

In 1790 the Earl of Effingham arrived in the colony as governor. He had been a soldier, but as a civil administrator soon obtained a very enviable degree of respect and confidence. Reserved in manner, he was calm and prudent in council, and determined in action. His stay was, however, short. The countess was first seized by a severe illness. A voyage in one of the cruisers failed to restore her health, for she died on the 13th of October, and her remains were brought back to the island for interment. On the 19th of November the earl also died. In each case the legislature decreed a public funeral, no expense was spared, nor was any mark of respect wanting. £1000 was also voted for a monument in Spanish Town cathedral. A bill had subsequently to be passed to indemnify the rector for allowing the bodies to be interred within the walls of the sacred edifice.

Two events were now seriously engaging the attention of the colonists: the revolution in Hayti and the agitation in England respecting the slave trade. The year 1789 saw the commencement of the French revolution. There were many republicans in Hayti, and forgetting the volcano on which they lived, they freely expressed their sympathy with the cry for human freedom. Men of

African race heard of this declaration of human rights, and no sooner had they realised its significance than they also declared that freedom was their birthright. Except so far as the revolt in Hayti affected Jamaica, it is unnecessary to record its progress. The sad baptism of blood, the cruelty and self-sacrifice, the patriotism

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<sup>1</sup> "Journals of Assembly," vol. viii. p. 558.

and savagery so strangely blended in Hayti, belongs not to the history of this colony.

It is more important to record the leading events of that social revolution by which freedom was ultimately secured for the bondsmen here; for though it gave birth to no such characters as Touissant la Overture, Christophé, Petion, Geffrard, and others, it has at least preserved us from the domination of such odious characters as Soulouque.

In styling the period under review that of the anti-slavery struggle, it is admitted that the term is only approximately correct. That struggle really commenced a generation before. Thoughts that afterwards possessed the minds of millions, had at even an earlier period found utterance. Baxter, the nonconforming divine, in his "Christian Directory," printed eighteen years after the capture of Jamaica, had written: "They who go out as pirates and take away poor Africans, and make them slaves and sell them, are the worst of robbers, and ought to be considered the common enemies of mankind; and they who buy them and make use of them as beasts of burden, are fitter to be called demons than Christians." Still earlier, Pope Leo X. and Queen Elizabeth had protested against slavery. The former said that "not only the Christian religion, but nature itself, cried out against slavery;" while the British queen stigmatised the kidnapping of negroes "as a detestable act, which would call down the vengeance of heaven upon the undertakers."

The legal question of man's right to property in his fellow-man was first judicially raised in England in the days of William and Mary. Chief Justice Holt then decided that a negro coming to England was free: for "one may be a villeyn in England, but not a slave."<sup>1</sup> Unhappily this decision was suffered to fall into abeyance. Men did not then think sufficiently of rights other than their own, still less could they see the logical deduction that might be drawn from such a decision. It was nearly a century before men said: "We have no slaves at home; then why abroad?" The decision of Holt was called into question about forty years after he uttered it. In 1729, the opinion of Attorney-General York and Solicitor-General Talbot was obtained by some interested parties. They said it was a mistake "that slaves became free by their being in England,

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<sup>1</sup> Salkeld's "Reports," vol. ii. p. 666.

or by being baptized." This opinion was not considered final, and three years, and again ten years later, verdicts contrary to it were given. No public interest was displayed, and soon after there were as many negro slaves in London and the larger seaport towns as in many of the less important West Indian islands. Advertisements respecting them appeared in English papers, of a character similar to those so familiar in slave colonies. For example. On the 16th of May, 1768, the well-known Jamaica name of Beckford appears in an advertisement in the London "Daily Advertiser:" his negro boy had absconded. Next year, April 18th, the "Gazetteer" announced a sale at an inn in Holborn, of "A chestnut gelding, and a well-made, good-tempered black boy."

In 1754 the Quakers in America issued their first protest against the iniquity of the system, and shortly after, with their accustomed consistency, liberated their slaves; Mr. Anthony Benezet, of Philadelphia, becoming an earnest champion in the cause of freedom. In 1765 Mr. Granville Sharpe's efforts in the same direction commenced. He providentially became acquainted with a negro named Jonathan Strong, who had been beaten on the head with a pistol by his master. As a serious illness resulted, he was turned out of doors, and was met by Mr. Sharpe. When the poor fellow had regained his health a situation was obtained for him, in which he remained two years. At the expiration of this period he was seen by his old master, who at once claimed him. Mr. Sharpe heard of it, and instantly brought him before the lord mayor, by means of a writ of *habeas corpus*. By this time his master had sold him for £30 to a Mr. James Kerr, of Jamaica, and the bill of sale was produced in court. The lord mayor refused to recognise the claim, and an attempt to carry Strong on board a ship bound for Jamaica having been frustrated, legal proceedings were commenced against Mr. Sharpe for robbing Lisle (the original owner) of a negro slave. This suit, for prudential reasons, was soon dropped.

Two other bondsmen, Hylas and Lewis, next benefited by Mr. Sharpe's philanthropy. The latter had actually been bound, gagged, and conveyed on board a vessel which lay in the Downs, ready to sail for Jamaica, when the officer boarded her, armed with the writ of *habeas corpus* procured by Mr. Sharpe. On the 22nd of June, 1772, the question as to whether slavery could exist in England was set at rest. The case was that of Somerset. The first volume of the life of Granville Sharpe records the details of the memorable trial. This man, like Lewis, had also been taken from a vessel

about to bear him back to slavery in Jamaica. Lord Mansfield, assisted by other learned judges, presided at the trial, and after a protracted hearing the chief justice pronounced the decision which set the man at liberty, and clearly established the axiom proposed by one of the counsel, Serjeant Davy, that "As soon as any slave sets his foot on English ground he becomes free." The first grand point was settled, the next was to abolish the traffic in slaves.

Four years later, Mr. Hartly, member of parliament for Hull, and a son of the celebrated metaphysician, made a motion that "The slave trade was contrary to the laws of God and to the rights of men." Sir George Saville seconded the motion, but it was not supported. Different states in America sent petitions and remonstrances on the subject, and in England thoughtful men sought to awaken the national conscience. It will be remarked how prominently Jamaica was brought forward in the trials already noted, and in 1781 a fearful tragedy occurred off its coasts which could not fail to leave lasting impressions of the iniquity connected with the slave trade. A vessel called the *Zong* left Africa on the 6th of September with four hundred and forty slaves on board, bound for Jamaica. By the 29th of November she had lost sixty slaves by death, and a very large number of the survivors were sick, and not likely to live. On this day the captain spoke to the mate, and pointed out that, if the sick slaves died a natural death, the loss would fall on the owners, but if they were thrown overboard the loss would be that of the underwriters. Want of water, and the comparative humanity of putting an end to the misery of the "poor sick wretches," were reasons assigned for this step.

The mate, who afterwards gave his consent to the murderous deed, at first pleaded that no one had then been placed upon a short allowance of water, and in point of fact Jamaica had been sighted two days before; but the captain, asserting that he believed it to be Hayti, went to leeward. That evening fifty-four negroes were cast into the ocean. On the 1st of December forty-two more shared the same fate, though there was still some of the old supply of water on board, and heavy rain had that day fallen, affording eleven days of full allowance for all on board. On the 9th of December, Jamaica being only two to three leagues distant, twenty-six more were thrown overboard, while ten others, driven to desperation by what they saw, leaped over and were drowned. One hundred and thirty-two were thus disposed of.<sup>1</sup>



The owners claimed £30 for each slave from the underwriters. The claim was disputed, but after a trial the verdict was given in favour of the owners. When a prosecution for murder was not unnaturally suggested by Mr. Sharpe, it was spoken of as "madness; the blacks were property."

While these and other disclosures were producing their effect upon the public mind, Mr. Ramsey, who had resided for some years in St. Kitts, published a work on the treatment of, and the traffic in slaves. Mr. Thomas Clarkson also wrote an "Essay on the Slavery of the Human Species;" and in 1787 the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade was formed. On the 9th of May, Mr. Pitt, anticipating the action of the abolitionists, moved for a parliamentary committee to inquire into the actual character of the slave trade, but cautiously refrained from any expression of his own sentiments on the subject. Many were much displeased at this tame method of procedure, and Sir William Dolben introduced and carried a measure calculated at once to lessen the horrors of the traffic, so far as they arose from overcrowding.

In 1789, Mr. Wilberforce moved a series of twelve resolutions bearing on the abolition of the trade, but immediate success was impossible in the face of the tremendous opposition he had to endure. The slaves in the British West Indies were estimated at 450,000, and valued at £50 a piece, while the value of property of all sorts was put down at seventy millions. The West Indian interest was very powerful in those days.

On the 18th of April, 1791, Mr. Wilberforce moved for leave to bring in a bill to prevent any further importation of slaves to the West Indies. In depicting the horrors of the traffic, he also pointed out the fearful penalty paid by those directly engaged in it. Two thousand six hundred and forty-five British seamen had died in one year, or nearly twenty-two per cent. of those employed. He closed a powerful speech by observing that "it became Great Britain to be foremost in this work. One half of this guilty traffic (he observed) has been conducted by her subjects; and as we have been great in crime, let us be early in repentance.... Let it not appear that our superior power has been employed to oppress our fellow creatures, and our superior light to darken the creation of

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<sup>1</sup> About this time it was stated in Jamaica that the deaths among negroes, after arriving in harbour but before distribution, were five per cent.

our God.” Though both Fox and Pitt supported the motion, it was lost by a majority of seventy-five in a house of two hundred and fifty-one members.

The professed sympathy of Mr. Clarkson and some other leading abolitionists with the French revolutionary party, taken in connection with the events transpiring in Hayti, had an adverse influence on the cause of freedom. William IV., then Duke of Clarence, was a devoted friend of the slaveholding interest, and as he had been in Jamaica, his opinions had great weight; nor were the inhabitants of the island ungrateful to their royal patron. Addresses had been presented to him, together with a star set in diamonds.<sup>1</sup> Some years later the assembly voted him a service of plate worth three thousand guineas.<sup>2</sup>

But royal favour and personal interests were alike unable to check the growth of public opinion. The evidence laid before parliament was abridged and widely circulated. Mr. Clarkson traversed the country, addressing public meetings, and at one time no less than 300,000 persons abstained from the use of sugar, because it was the produce of slave labour. Five hundred and seventeen petitions were in one year sent to parliament by abolitionists, and among these were petitions from the city of London and other corporate bodies. Each year brought greater prospects of success.

In 1806, Mr. Pitt died, and Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox being called to the cabinet, at once espoused the cause they had supported in opposition. Fox was in earnest: on his deathbed, soon after, he spoke of “peace with Europe and the abolition of the slave trade” as two things he earnestly desired.<sup>1</sup> The surviving ministers were equally zealous. In 1807, Lord Grenville introduced a measure into the House of Lords, providing for the total abolition of the slave trade. Many thought that to Wilberforce should have been assigned the honour of thus completing the work; but he shared the fate and enjoyed the distinction belonging to all great benefactors of mankind. Pioneers in the race of social progress must ever expect long years of misrepresentation and opposition; then at length others find that it will be to their honour to take up the work and achieve the crowning triumph.

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. viii. p. 466.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. x. p. 636,

Posterity will, however, do justice. Grenville is remembered by few, while the names of Clarkson and Wilberforce are household words. Not the men who completed Solomon's glorious temple, but those who commenced the work in the solitude of the forest, are commemorated in sacred song. "In those days a man was famous who lifted up axes against the thick trees."

When Lord Grenville's measure was before the house, counsel for four days argued the case of the West Indian planters. One of the most memorable debates in English history followed, but the bill was carried by a majority of one hundred against thirty-six. In the Commons the majority was even more overwhelming. On the 25th of March, the royal assent was given, and a few minutes after the ministry retired from office. It was now decreed that no vessel should clear out of any British port for slaves after the 1st of May, and that no slave could be landed in the colonies after the first of March, 1808.<sup>2</sup>

Though these proceedings were vehemently opposed by the colonists, they did not altogether overlook the necessity of some measures by which the condition of the slave population could be improved. In November, 1788, an elaborate report was presented to the house of assembly by a committee which had been appointed to examine into and report upon the statements which had been made in Great Britain relative to the slave trade and the treatment of slaves. The report which was adopted and forwarded to England laid great stress on the ameliorating measures which had from time to time been adopted. In 1781 a law was passed inflicting a heavy penalty on any one who mutilated his slave, or who flogged or mutilated the slave of another. In 1787 a consolidated slave law was passed, and in 1792 another, which contained some further modifications, and which may be seen in Edwards' "History of the West Indies." So long as slave evidence was not received against a white man, these laws could do little real good; and cruel floggings and horrid mutilations could still be inflicted by the slave courts of the colony.

Bad as these things were, those who ordered their infliction pleaded they were not so severe as were inflicted on British

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<sup>1</sup> Clarkson's "Abolition of the Slave Trade," vol. ii. p. 567.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.; "Lives of Granville Sharp and Wilberforce;" Bandinel's "Account of the Trade in Slaves from Africa," &c.

soldiers. Sir Charles Napier, in his remarks on "Military Law," writing of the close of this century, observes, that he had seen six hundred to one thousand lashes inflicted on the sentence of a regimental court-martial. Slave courts ordered two or three up to a dozen or thirteen whippings, but thirty-nine or fifty lashes was the extent of each at one time.

The laws limited an overseer to one punishment for an offence, and that not exceeding thirty-nine stripes; but this was often a dead letter. Who was to say how many stripes were inflicted if no white person was present to give evidence except the one who ordered the punishment? So far as the general treatment of the slaves was concerned, it was assumed, as some safeguard, that the doctor in attendance had to report annually the increase or decrease among the negroes; but he was the paid officer of the estate, not of the government.

The returns of death punishments were favourable in comparison with those at the same period in England. There were from 220,000 to 240,000 slaves in the island in the year 1785; but it appears that from the 1st of January, 1784, to the 30th of September, 1788, only fifty-two executions had taken place, rather more than eleven a year. During four years, from 1792 to 1796, ninety-three slaves were transported, the owners being paid their computed value.

General Adam Williamson succeeded the Earl of Effingham in the duties of government. His name is chiefly associated with the revolutionary war in Hayti, and in connection with the affairs of that island. He was soon embarrassed by proceedings in the assembly.

In September, 1791, two gentlemen arrived as commissioners from Hayti, soliciting aid. Three or four vessels of war were sent to assist the terror-stricken white inhabitants, but troops and money were also asked for. A loan of £180,000 was solicited, for which the plantations in the island and the duties on exports were offered as security. At first the assembly, to whom the proposal was made, declared that it could not pledge the public credit for such a purpose. A few days later this line of policy was abandoned, and a clause inserted in the polltax bill empowering the receiver-general to issue certificates for a small portion of the sum required. This was objected to by the council as an appropriation of money not justified by any powers possessed by the legislature. The assembly retorted by declaring the action of the council to be "officious,

indecent, assuming, and irregular; “it adhered to its resolution, and in consequence the upper chamber rejected the bill.

A brief prorogation followed, and when General Williamson convened the legislature once more, he expressed himself in a way which was regarded as a censure on the assembly. The offended legislators agreed to thirteen resolutions, in which, among other things, the right of the council to interfere in any way with the appropriation of public money was denied, and astonishment and grief expressed that the lieutenant-governor should have sustained them by his opinion. An address to the king followed, in which his majesty was told that the union of the functions of a privy and an executive council in one body was productive of great inconvenience, and the never-failing source of discord and distrust between that house and the king’s representative.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately the commissioners declined to accept the £ 10,000 it had been proposed to raise, as altogether inadequate, but the Kingston merchants gave them credit to a very considerable amount.

About this time it was felt that the troops in the island, amounting to about two thousand men, were inadequate to its defence at such an emergency. The home government was accordingly requested to augment the force of the several regiments from four hundred to seven hundred men, and to send out a regiment of light cavalry. The usual island subsistence was promised, together with the requisite barrack accommodation, and the estimates for military expenditure were raised from about £40,000 to £70,000 for 1792. This did not satisfy the English government, who demanded that the whole of the extra cost of the establishment should be paid by the colony. The demand was resisted, on the ground that colonial produce yielded a large revenue to the imperial government, and that the colonies were therefore entitled to the protection of the troops. At first the assembly declined to receive the troops on such terms, but ultimately yielded the point. An addition was made to the poll-tax, and very soon after the army cost the colony £120,000 a year.

The arrival of refugees from Hayti was closely watched; some were arrested as suspicious characters—a step which subsequent disclosures fully justified. But where inquiry proved that no danger was to be apprehended, but that the refugees were really peaceful

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. ix. p. 108, &c.

people, needing help, there was no want of hospitality and kindness. The assembly granted considerable sums for their temporary support, and private liberality was even more munificent.

<sup>1</sup> But the fears which many entertained of dangerous political opinions being introduced into the island, and thus causing the scenes which were desolating Hayti to be repeated here, were intensified by the fact that large numbers of French prisoners had been brought to the island in consequence of the successful operations of the squadron. Martinique and Guadeloupe had been captured, and many prizes taken at sea.

At this juncture the governor received orders to despatch what troops he could spare to Hayti, to co-operate with others to be sent from Great Britain. Like most tropical expeditions of the same character, sickness speedily decimated the ranks of the hapless men. Their commanders were unequal to the task, and Whitelock, who commanded the force sent from Jamaica, was greatly blamed. His conduct at Buenos Ayres, some years later, afforded strong proof of his incapacity as a commander. The first detachment under this general consisted of less than seven hundred men. It sailed from Port Royal on the 9th of September, 1793, and captured the town and fort of Jeremie without difficulty ten days after. Being reinforced by about two hundred negro soldiers, St. Nicholas was seized, and, encouraged by success, the expedition sailed for Tiburon Bay, where the first disaster occurred.

Williamson sent over seven hundred soldiers more from Jamaica, leaving only about four hundred regulars to defend the colony. Thus reinforced, Cape Tiburon was captured with but little loss to the English. Some slight engagements followed, but the promised troops from England did not arrive until May next year, by which time yellow fever had reduced the Jamaica contingent to nine hundred men. On the 4th of June Port au Prince was captured, with booty amounting to £400,000, but it was a dearly bought victory, for the enemy still occupied the heights commanding the town, and thus compelled the conquerors to strengthen the fortifications on the land side. The labour of digging trenches at such a season told fearfully on the troops. Immense numbers perished, and convalescent patients had to be withdrawn from the hospitals to discharge the duties of sentinels.

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. ix. pp. 235–242.

Five to six hundred men were hurried from the Windward Islands to assist the plague-stricken garrison, but the deadly fever did not await their arrival. One hundred died on the voyage from Guadaloupe to Jamaica, one hundred and fifty were left in hospital at Port Royal. Few of the remainder ever left Hayti. In two months forty officers and six hundred soldiers out of the small force at Port au Prince died. During the remainder of the year the frightful mortality continued. Brigadier Horneck, with fifty men, all that could be spared, went over from Jamaica, and in May, 1795, Major-General Williamson followed, with the title of Governor-General of St. Domingo.

During the remainder of that and the following year reinforcements were poured into the colony, to the extent of 18,000 men. They came to die; by the end of September 7530 were in their graves; 5000 more followed by the end of the next year. The 82nd regiment, numbering 880 men, landed in August, the most unhealthy time, and lost all but fifty in ten weeks. Another regiment in the same time lost seven hundred out of a thousand. It is stated that the 96th regiment perished to a man.<sup>1</sup> Williamson now proceeded to organise large bodies of negro troops, great numbers of slaves being sent from Jamaica; but all was in vain, and at the close of 1798, General Maitland, who had succeeded to the command, left the colony. Millions of treasure had been wasted, twenty thousand soldiers and sailors had perished, but there never had been any reasonable prospect of conquering the island.

When the project was finally abandoned, Williamson's negro regiments were disbanded, and numbers of them joined the enemy. About one thousand white soldiers who survived were brought to Jamaica. If Williamson was the party mainly responsible for this gloomy episode in British history, it may be pleaded that he was grossly misled by adventurers from Hayti, and lost health, and what fortune he possessed, in the struggle. He now left the island, but before doing so he received several proofs of the respect in which he was held by the leading colonists. His wife, who died in 1794, was buried within the walls of the cathedral, and a monument erected to her memory by the assembly. The same body voted a splendid service of plate at his departure. He had received the honour of knighthood shortly before he sailed for Hayti.

The Earl of Balcarras succeeded him. On arriving in the island, he found that difficulties had arisen with the Maroons of Trelawny. These people complained of not being well treated. A

white superintendent, to whom they were much attached, had been removed against their will, chiefly, it would appear, because he had suffered them to roam about the country as pedlars, and to form alliances with slave women on the estates. The new superintendent was, unfortunately, lamentably deficient in personal courage, and when the wild young men in the Maroon village fell out and fought, he was accustomed to hide himself until the affray was over. Influential magistrates in the neighbourhood did not hesitate to declare that he was unfit for his office, for, as one truly observed, the Maroons, above all other negroes, required a leader of undoubted firmness and courage.

A far more serious complaint, on the part of these independent mountaineers, was that two of their number had been flogged in a workhouse, by a slave-driver, in the presence of other slaves, some of whom had been captured and brought in as runaways by the Maroons. The indignity was aggravated by the taunts of these slaves while the punishment was being inflicted. Had the culprits been handed over, as usual, to be dealt with according to Maroon law, they would have been even more severely punished for their offence, but such a violation of their privileges awakened their most bitter feelings. There was an older but comparatively trivial grievance still unredressed: three years before, they had petitioned the assembly to grant them more land, as the original location was becoming unproductive; but no notice was taken of the application.

Threatening as the aspect of affairs really was, with the colony almost denuded of troops, and the secret agents of the infamous Victor Hugues at work, seeking to fill the West Indies with insurrectionary ideas and bloodshed; a little quiet firmness, mingled with judicious conciliation, would have calmed the agitation. Unfortunately, the governor was altogether unfit for his position, and his integrity of purpose was very questionable. Mr. Bridges does not hesitate to say that he was induced to take extreme measures in consideration of the additional £20 a day to which he was entitled during the existence of martial law.<sup>1</sup> In September, 1795, the earl, in addressing the legislature, took great credit for having availed himself of the impetuosity of the Maroons to begin active measures, and pen them up in a confined district of country,

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<sup>1</sup> Bryan Edwards' "History," vol. iii. p. 411.



where, their villages being destroyed, they could only exist as a band of robbers. The documents he laid before the house fail to justify the statements he made relative to the conduct of these people, or those respecting the triumphant results of his strategy. Gentlemen trained in the colony were surely more competent to give an opinion than one who had resided in it for a few weeks, and almost all who occupied important positions in the locality recommended conciliation. The custodes of St. James and Trelawny, with other magistrates in those parishes, some of whom visited the Maroons, declared that they were willing to listen to reason. Tales, it is true, were in circulation, that they had threatened to kill the obnoxious superintendent, to repeat in Jamaica the doings in Hayti, and that they had boasted of the hosts of slaves who would follow their lead. But all this was slave evidence, never received against a white man; and with respect to one white person who was industrious in circulating such evil reports of the Maroons, Mr. Lascelles Winn, a Quaker, so far forgot the gentle language of his people in his righteous indignation, as to say that "he was an ignorant, credulous, babbling creature! "

Mr. Thorp, the custos of Trelawny, and the other gentlemen who went up to the chief Maroon settlement, had no reason to complain of their conduct. True, they once said they wanted "nothing but battle," but they added they did not want Mr. Craskell again—this was the hated superintendent; and thus it seems that, like most uneducated negroes, their big words meant nothing but annoyance at a personal grievance. It was Balcarras who wanted battle, and he took steps which made it inevitable. He began by sending for six leading Maroons to meet him at Spanish Town. The letter was not sent by post, but by a private messenger, who arrived twenty-four hours after the post. The return mail bringing no reply, the hotheaded ruler set off for the scene of action, met the six Maroons at St. Anns Bay, where the authorities had detained them, and having put them in irons proceeded on his way.

All the troops he could collect were ordered to the spot; some about to sail for Hayti were brought round by sea to Montego Bay, and the first of several grandiloquent proclamations was issued, It

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<sup>1</sup> Bridges' "Annals," vol. ii.

was on the 8th of August that the Maroons were informed that they were surrounded by thousands of troops, that a price was put upon their heads, but that they would be allowed until the 12th to surrender; and if they were contumacious then, on the 13th the "dreadful command" would be put in force, for they should be put to death, and their town afterwards be destroyed for ever—a loss they would not feel if their lives had been first taken. There was now great controversy in the Maroon settlement. Some, including nearly all the older men, were for surrender, but the majority were for fighting. From childhood up, their parents had told them stories, handed down from a former generation, of the long conflict waged with British and colonial troops, and of terms made at length, not as the result of conquest, but of peaceful treaty. Their forefathers had not been vanquished; why should they be?

On the 11th, the aged chief Montague, with nearly forty men and about as many women and children, surrendered. Those who held out watched their departure with emotion, and would in all probability have followed their example but for the folly, or worse than folly, of the Earl of Balcarras. Maroon spies watched their reception from heights overlooking the English camp, and when they came back with intelligence that all, not excluding the white-haired veteran Montague, had been put in irons and hurried off to prison—perhaps to death—all hesitation was at end, and nothing but resistance to the last was thought of. Five thousand men, more than a third British soldiers, the rest colonial militia, were now placed in the unenviable position of being defied and harassed for months by three hundred half-naked semi-savages.

The 83rd Regiment, consisting of 1000 men, and a party of 130 well-mounted dragoons, had arrived. The local forces were all assembled, and the earl proceeded to execute his threats.

On the 12th of August, a party of 400 men, which had been despatched to destroy some provision grounds, found that the Maroons had anticipated their movements by leaving everything in a state of desolation. The detachment then proceeded to rejoin the main body, and suddenly fell into an ambuscade. Not a Maroon could be seen, so well had they concealed themselves among the rocks and trees, but their fire was deadly. Colonel Sandford, of the dragoons, fell; another officer and fourteen men of the regulars were also killed, together with Colonel Gallimore, of the militia, and many others, some of them connected with leading colonial families. Had the courage of the Maroons been equal to the

secrecy of their movements, few would have escaped, for the soldiers, after looking about in vain for a foe, fled. No advantage was taken of the panic. The Maroons refrained from pursuit.<sup>1</sup>

Next day the governor offered a reward of £20 for each Maroon brought into camp, and £10 for each woman or child. Higher sums were offered for certain leaders, dead or alive. The rains now began to fall with unusual violence; active operations on the part of the troops became impossible, and the Maroons had taken up an inaccessible position a little in the rear of the scene of the late conflict. The earl returned to town to meet the legislators, but before they assembled another disaster had befallen the troops. Colonel Fitch, who had been left in command, opened communications with the foe, and permitted two of them to visit their friends who had previously surrendered: these they found on board a ship, to which they had been removed for security. Both visitors and captives believed that the ship was destined to convey them into banishment. Degraded in many respects, and barbarous as these people were, they had the passionate love for home which characterises all mountaineers. The two messengers returned to their friends still at liberty, and all resolved to struggle to the last in the deep recesses of their native wilds.

Colonel Fitch resolved if possible to penetrate these unknown forests, and assisted by a body of Accompong Maroons, who, contrary to expectation, had remained faithful, commenced the task. The troops again fell into an ambushade. The colonel was first wounded, and presently shot through the brain; Captain Lee and several of the soldiers and Accompongs were killed; two other officers and many men wounded. Safety was only found in retreat; volley after volley was fired by the troops, but all was useless against an unseen foe. Had the commanders in both these engagements been less particular about military forms the result might have been different. Heavy regimentals were ill adapted for climbing precipices, and the drum and fife gave warning to the lurking foe. Wisdom was gained by experience; lighter clothes

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<sup>1</sup> Two remarkable events happened during this affair. A negro servant, with quicker eyes than the rest, saw a Maroon aiming at his master. He at once threw himself before him and received the shot; happily it was not fatal, and he lived to enjoy his master's lasting gratitude. Another person was saved by a bullet being stopped by a volume of Wakes' "Catechism" he had placed in his breast pocket.

were provided for the soldiers, and a thousand slaves collected from the estates, and armed with matchlocks and axes, to fell the forests and open roads. A party of negroes, called the black shot, was formed, and rendered essential service. The English troops were saved by one of these men from another disaster in November. They would have got into an ambuscade had the negro not seen their danger, and led them to more open ground. A conflict, which lasted some hours, ensued. The British were compelled to retreat, but being pursued, drove the enemy back with some loss.

The Maroons now began to harass the outlying estates; many valuable properties were seriously injured. Cadadupa, Lapland, and Mocha, with others, are mentioned in the newspapers of the period. Many skirmishes took place, but the Maroons were still free as the birds in their much-loved woods. Those peculiarly-formed precipitous hollows in the limestone rock, called cockpits, were safe places of retreat, for if driven from one, they had no difficulty in reaching others by paths only known to themselves. Towards Christmas fresh fears possessed the minds of the colonists. The rains had been followed by a protracted period of unclouded sunshine and drying winds. The canefields were ripe for the torch of the incendiary. A midnight sally of Maroons into the plains might do incalculable damage, and it was felt that if they continued much longer in arms the negroes would see that their hour to strike for freedom had come. What plots might not be formed during the fast approaching holidays? The fears of foreign interference continued, and the Governor, at the request of the Assembly, sent off the island all Frenchmen not enrolled in the militia.

It is impossible to approve of another step which had been taken some time previously, and to which many military men and leading colonists were vehemently opposed. This was no other than the importation of bloodhounds from Cuba, to hunt down the Maroons. A militia colonel, named Quarrell, was despatched to that island. He soon succeeded in securing the services of a party of chasseurs and their dogs, and on the 14th of December these strange allies landed at Montego Bay.

They found the town in a state of alarm and excitement. Major-General Walpole had assumed the command, and established a chain of posts along the mountains, from which detachments were sent into the interior woods, but all was in vain. The lightest of all

infantry, these Maroons had only to snatch up their musket and matcheat and retire to another post, more inaccessible perhaps than the one they left. In those woods a negro could live for ever: he found no lack of food, and as for water, he had but to cut a with (*vitus Indica*<sup>1</sup>), and apply the end to his mouth and drink, or where these failed, the wild pine would supply the need.<sup>2</sup>

The day before that on which the chasseurs arrived, a conflict had taken place between a party of soldiers under Captain Drummond and one of Maroons, in which the latter were certainly not beaten. It was generally thought that success was unattainable against these mountain warriors, and soon after it was found that, had the dogs not brought the conflict to a close, it was their intention, when pressed too closely by the troops, to cross over to Clarendon on the other side of the island, where they had many friends, and so compel the army to break up its camp and recommence operations in another part of the colony, which, with their accoutrements, they could only reach by a tedious march or by sea. Such a line of tactics would have been quite practicable when so little of the interior was opened up, and its adoption would have augmented the risk of rebellion among the slaves.

Orders were promptly issued to bring the bloodhounds up the country as quickly as possible. Major-General Walpole went to meet them on their way, and having done so, proceeded to review these strange auxiliaries. There were forty chasseurs and about one hundred dogs. The former were swarthy, active, well-made men, evidently inured to great fatigue, dressed in loose check trousers and shirt, a broad-brimmed straw hat, and shoes of untanned leather. A heavy sword of the old cavalry style, sharpened like a razor, was secured to a stout leather belt, to which also the dogs were fastened by strong cotton ropes. A small crucifix was their only ornament. The dogs were the size of a large hound, the ears erect and cropped at the point, strong, hardy, and broad-chested; but

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<sup>1</sup> This with is not unlike the stem of a grape vine, it hangs from the branches of many forest trees, and is sometimes as thick as a man's wrist. If severed with a knife, and the extremity applied to the mouth, a stream of pure water flows from it.—Gosse's "Naturalist's Sojourn in Jamaica," p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> *Tillandsia lingulata*.—The leaves are long, and shaped like those of the pineapple, but very much larger. The large sheathed bases of the leaves form a natural reservoir, to which birds resort for water.—*Ibid.*, p. 42.

only about half of those brought to the island had been properly broken in.

These men and their dogs were employed to hunt robbers and runaway slaves in Cuba. With a few ounces of salt, they would stay for weeks in the woods; wild hogs were easily run down, and these, with birds and other fare, were found in abundance in the unopened forests. When Walpole met them the chasseurs fired a volley with guns served out to them after their arrival, but of which they afterwards declined the use. The dogs thus incited to fury dashed on towards the general, dragging their masters after them, and compelling that officer to seek safety in his carriage, the horses of which narrowly escaped being torn to pieces. A few hours after, an old woman cooking in the open air was less fortunate. One of the hounds attempted to seize a piece of meat; she imprudently struck him, when he seized her throat, nor was his hold relaxed till his head was cut off—the woman was then dead.

It is to the credit of General Walpole that he endeavoured to make terms with the Maroons instead of employing these brutes against them, for he had heard of the terror occasioned by their arrival. Colonel Hull, with part of the 62nd Foot and 17th Dragoons, was sent on to the neighbourhood of their camp with a flag of truce. The Maroons did not at first understand what it meant, and fired some shots. When its significance was explained they displayed their confidence in the white man's word by approaching the troops and remaining on the other side of the stream, on the bank of which the soldiers encamped at night, and of which both parties partook.

Next day Walpole arrived, and after some discourse, the Maroons proposed and the general agreed to the following terms.<sup>1</sup>

First.—The Maroons would on their knees ask his Majesty's pardon.

Secondly.—They would go to Old Town, Montego Bay, or any other place that might be pointed out, and would settle on whatever lands the governor, council, and assembly might think proper to allot.

Thirdly.—They would deliver up all runaways.

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<sup>1</sup> "Journals of Assembly," vol. ix. p. 437.

These articles, which were agreed to on the 21st of December, were ratified by the governor on the 28th, and before that day there is abundant evidence that the governor knew of a secret article which General Walpole had confirmed by oath, that the Maroons should not be sent off the island. Balcarras fixed the 1st of January following, only three days after that on which he ratified the treaty, as the day on which all Maroons should surrender.

If this was the record of a great continental war, instead of a conflict with three hundred black woodsmen, the question would long be earnestly discussed whether Balcarras did not really design, when he signed the treaty, to occasion the embarrassment which followed. The Maroons were accused soon after of breach of faith, and on this plea were sent from the island. Whether they had no excuse for not immediately surrendering, may be judged from the following facts. At the time Walpole and the Maroons were negotiating, two parties were in the woods searching for them, under the command of Colonel Stevenson and Colonel Skinner. With the latter officer was a detachment of chasseurs, who were very anxious to show what they and their dogs could do, but a timely letter from General Walpole prevented mischief.

It had, however, been foreseen that the Maroons on leaving Walpole, to communicate with their wives and children, hidden safely away, what had been done, would very probably encounter Stevenson's force; and, to prevent bloodshed, they were provided with a letter to that officer. They met, as was anticipated, and a Maroon went on before, holding the letter, fixed in a cleft stick, towards the troops. It was either disregarded or not seen; the soldiers fired, and a battle ensued, in which Captain Dunbar and several of the militia were killed. In the dark recesses of the woods the Maroons kept up their fire, and, as the night was coming on, the militia retreated.

That such an accident should occasion mistrust is surely not to be wondered at, and on the 1st of January only three men and two boys had surrendered. Two days after one of these volunteered to go back and fetch more: he was permitted to do so, and soon returned with thirteen relatives. Nine more followed, and it was then understood that in memory of what had been done to Montague and others who had surrendered themselves in August, there was a desire on the part of many still in the woods to see how those who now gave themselves up were treated before they

followed their example. Still a few stragglers came in, and on the 12th, on Walpole advancing in force, accompanied by the chasseurs, towards the Maroon quarters, he was met before he had marched a quarter of a mile by an assurance that every Maroon would soon be within his lines.

Three days after he officially reported that three hundred and twenty-six Maroons of all ages and of both sexes were in his camp. Others quickly followed; It was stated by these people, among other explanations of delay, that their wives and children were scattered about the hills, as also many men, and that measles had broken out among the children. Many no doubt were reluctant to surrender that liberty they had so long enjoyed, and to leave their mountain home; and such as still held out found, or affected to find, reason for suspecting treachery when they saw the company of their compatriots within the British lines marched off to Montego Bay. But this was clearly within the terms of the covenant they had made. Several parties with dogs were sent after the runaways, but after searching for days in vain, they returned worn out with fatigue. Walpole said that if these people had only had an engineer to direct them, any advance into the wilds would have been impossible. He did by negotiations what he could not accomplish by force, and late in March the last of the Maroons, together with all runaway slaves, were in his camp.

All war, even between civilized nations, is sure to be attended with painful atrocities, and it cannot therefore be a matter of surprise that many tales were in circulation relative to cruelties to the living and post-mortem insults to the dead. It is noteworthy that the copious documents relative to the war in the journals of the assembly contain no proofs—a fact all the more significant, as there was a purpose to serve by making the conduct of the Maroons appear in the worst possible light. Equally questionable are the tales told of newly-buried bodies of Maroons being taken out of their graves and exposed to insult by the militia.

Some very painful events followed the surrender of these people. Notwithstanding the provisions of the secret clause of the treaty, they were sent away from the colony. As soon as a rumour of what was intended reached Walpole he communicated with Earl Balcarras on the subject, who, on his part, contended that the matter must be left to the assembly, who would be quite justified in taking advantage of the Maroons not having surrendered on the 1st of January. The assurance of the general, that they had all



surrendered in full dependence that the promise he made would be kept, was of no effect.

A joint committee of the assembly and council was appointed to consider the best way of disposing of the prisoners. The tendered evidence of General Walpole was refused, though no man was so competent as himself to explain the sense in which the treaty should be understood; and a report was soon adopted and approved of by both branches of the legislature, recommending the transportation of all the Maroons, except the five who surrendered on the 31st of December. These nobly declined to accept the boon, and became exiles with their friends. The entire tribe was thus expatriated. The decision arrived at included the six delegates who were on their way to Spanish Town, and also Montague and his companions, who respected the governor's first proclamation, and surrendered before hostilities began. Against this most iniquitous act the noble-minded general protested with all the earnestness of a true English gentleman. For the Maroons, as such, he had no special regard;<sup>1</sup> but dangerous as they might be, he felt that a treaty even with savages should be observed. He regarded as a mere quibble the argument that they did not surrender before the 1st of January. They had given themselves up to him, he pleaded, in faith that they would not be deported, and without this confidence they would not have come at all. As for conquest, he asserted that treble the number of troops he had could not have brought them in in twelve months. Nor was this his opinion only. Writing under date March 13th, he says on this point: "Your lordship will permit me to observe that the opinions of field-officers on the spot have never differed." He added his conviction that Jamaica had been saved by the terms of surrender.

The country, it must be remembered, had not been opened up as it has since been, and the slave population needed little more to stir up universal rebellion. Walpole felt so keenly the breach of faith that he soon after retired from the army, having first refused a sword, valued at five hundred guineas, voted him by the assembly. Acknowledging a vote of thanks awarded to him, he

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<sup>1</sup> Walpole suggested that the Maroons should be settled near Spanish Town, or some other large town in the lowlands, where they would have access to spirits, the use of which would decrease their numbers, and destroy the hardy constitution gained in the mountains.

called attention to the zeal and gallantry of his officers, and with respect to himself wrote: "As the house has thought fit not to accede to the agreement entered into between me and the Trelawny Maroons, and as their opinion of that treaty stands on their minutes very different to my conception of it, I am compelled to decline the honour they have intended for me." This letter, though at first entered on the minutes of the house, was after ordered to be expunged.

To others rewards were freely given—£700 for a sword to Balcarras, who had also drawn nearly £5000 more for extra pay during martial law; four hundred guineas to Quarrell, for fetching bloodhounds, large sums to their keepers, and compensation to all whose property had been injured. It is not easy to say what this wretched affair really cost: in April, 1796, £372,000 sterling was stated in the assembly as the amount then known. Other bills came in afterwards, and by the end of the year it was found that from a comparatively small amount the island debt had risen to nearly half a million.<sup>1</sup>

The Maroons were shipped on the 6th of July for Nova Scotia. To plead on their behalf was to expose one's self to insult. The Honourable J. Palmer, one of the most influential men in the colony, was rudely snubbed by Balcarras for calling them "poor deluded creatures." An action was commenced at the instance of the assembly against the proprietor of the "New Annual Register," for an alleged libel against Balcarras and the inhabitants of the island.<sup>1</sup>

Walpole did not allow the matter to rest. Returning to England, he obtained a seat in Parliament, where he denounced the conduct of the Jamaica assembly, and asserted that the Maroons had been basely treated, he being made an instrument to entrap them, while his evidence on their behalf had been refused. The ministry sustained the conduct of the local legislature, and opposed Walpole's motion for a committee of the whole house to inquire into all the circumstances of the case. The subject attracted little attention; the house was thinly attended, only five supporting Walpole and thirty-four the ministry. It is more to the credit of the

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<sup>1</sup> See Dallas's "History of Maroons"; Bryan Edwards' "History of West Indies"; Bridges' "Annals"; "Journals of Assembly," vol. ix. pp. 385–606.

British parliament that the use of bloodhounds had been vehemently condemned as soon as the tidings reached England.

Seven to eight hundred Maroons not implicated in these affairs still remained. About a third of these were at Charles Town, and were very nearly the occasion of another struggle. They had been ordered to Spanish Town. The order was obeyed, but soon after a panic seized them, and they hastened back to the mountains. They, however, begged pardon, and took an oath to be faithful to the king and obedient to the governor, and so the trouble passed by.

The subsequent history of the Trelawny Maroons is soon told. £47,000 was expended in providing for their wants for three years after their arrival in Nova Scotia, which was too cold a place for them to live in with any comfort. It seemed as if they would become pensioners for life, and when the assembly refused to pay more for their support, the government of Nova Scotia demanded £10,000 a year from that of Great Britain for their maintenance. After wearisome correspondence, some of which is preserved in the "Journals of Assembly," they were removed to Sierra Leone. To this infant colony many of the slaves made free by Granville Sharpe's efforts in England had been sent, and also some discharged black soldiers who had been located in Nova Scotia at the close of the American war of independence, but who had asked for a warmer climate. These last subsequently rose in rebellion, and the very existence of the colony was imperilled, when the Maroons, to the number of five hundred and fifty, arrived. They at once offered their services to restore order, and under the command of a naval officer soon crushed the rebellion. Lands were assigned to them, on which they settled quietly, and their descendants are now among the most respectable of the negro settlers in Free Town and its neighbourhood.

Returning to Jamaica, it will be found that the Maroon war had not been the only source of trouble in the colony. In 1795, the rising town of Montego Bay was nearly entirely destroyed by fire. More than a hundred houses were burnt, great numbers were left homeless, valuable property on wharfs and in stores was consumed, and a total loss sustained of from £300,000 to £400,000. So rapidly did the flames spread, that three out of the four fire-engines had to be abandoned to their fury.

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. ix. p. 613.

Other events which occupied the attention of the colonists towards the close of the eighteenth century have little interest now, though some of them occasioned much excitement at the time. Another outbreak occurred: hardly a hundred negroes, under the leadership of Cuffee and Polydore, were involved in it, and yet the colony was in a ferment. The presence of more than two thousand soldiers and six thousand militia, three-fourths white men, did not seem enough. A few houses were burnt, and some obnoxious individuals had a narrow escape, but the Accompong Maroons, and some negro militia called black shot, soon hunted the scattered rebels down. In the meantime the governor had convened the legislature to devise measures for the repression of the outbreak.

Though the value of coloured troops had been shown both in this affair and the Maroon war, the legislature poured forth the most prophetic declarations of innumerable evils to come if the British government persisted in its proposal to substitute, even in part, black for white soldiers.<sup>1</sup> Instead of this it was suggested that a thousand men should be raised in England as a Jamaica contingent, and that as a reward lands should be assigned them in the colony at the termination of seven or nine years' service. After much correspondence, it was agreed to send the first and fourth battalions of the 60th Regiment, but the king reserved the right of changing these corps at pleasure, and thus prevented the plan of obtaining a kind of white military militia settled among the hills from the soldiers whose term had expired.

The first two or three years' residence in the West Indies is the most fatal. When once acclimatised, the risk of perishing from the yellow fever is very greatly diminished. The house now commenced the erection of barracks in more healthy localities than had hitherto been selected, and there was at length accommodation for more than three thousand men. Great, however, was the indignation when a negro regiment from St. Domingo was landed, nor was it abated until the governor directed its removal.

Another grievance was the arrival of a number of planters and others from Hayti. They had been under British protection there, but after the evacuation sought it in Jamaica. Lord Balcarras did all in his power to awaken sympathy on behalf of these people, but with little success. Their presence, and especially that of their

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. ix. pp. 647, 648.

slaves, was declared to be dangerous. The latter had been heard to sing Jacobin songs, and were not respectful to white people. Great numbers both of planters and slaves were sent away, and only about two hundred were allowed to settle, and from these some of the most respectable of the families in the island have descended.

The alarm felt at their arrival was not quite without foundation. Early in 1797 a letter had been picked up in the Kingston streets, detailing a plan for invading Jamaica from Hayti.<sup>1</sup> Some regarded it as a hoax, some as a friendly warning, and many, as the name of Santhonax was appended, believed it to be a genuine production. But not long after more authentic information came to hand. Mr. Douglass, the British civil commissioner in Hayti, obtained information of several plots to stir up rebellion among the slaves in Jamaica, and so prepare the way for a French invasion. He also described two spies, then in the island, who had been in communication with prisoners of war and others in Kingston.

These men, Duboisson and Sas Portas, were seized, with all their papers. The former was allowed to become king's evidence, but it was evident that they had met with little success. Sas Portas was hung on the parade, the day before the Christmas of 1799, as a spy. Martial law was once more proclaimed, but a box of arms, hid in the sand near Fort Charles, and another box of cockades, were the only other evidences of conspiracy to be found.

The country soon after began to complain of having too many soldiers to support. In anticipation of increasing trouble with France, the garrison had been raised to five thousand men. It was a common custom to cry out for soldiers, and then to complain of the burden of support; but the complaint made, liberality was usually displayed in framing the estimates. The colony had frequently cause to assert that barracks and other works undertaken at the request of one general officer were objected to by another. A military control department was greatly needed. This, indeed, it was attempted to form, so far as related to the barrack department; but as the commander-in-chief was to be the only authority, the assembly declined to place the funds it raised at his sole disposal.

While the support of troops was yet a question of controversy, Earl Balcarras left the island. A service of plate and a vote of

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. x. p. 320.

thanks was the closing acknowledgment he received of his services from the assembly.

Major-General George Nugent succeeded him. He appears to have discharged the duties of his office with discretion, though by no means so popular as many who have occupied the same position. There were two grievances, of which, to some extent, he shared the odium. The dispute with the British government relative to the support of troops still continued,<sup>1</sup> and a good deal of illfeeling existed with regard to the restrictions of trade with the United States.

The danger which now threatened the island allayed, to some extent, the anger of the colonists. On the 1st of April, 1805, a council of war was held in the Court House at Kingston,<sup>2</sup> and martial law proclaimed. The great fleet which Lord Nelson subsequently destroyed at Trafalgar had arrived in West Indian waters. Every port was put in the best possible state of defence, and men waited anxiously for tidings of its destination. They were able to breathe more freely when a British squadron, with troops, anchored at Port Royal; and shortly after news came that the enemy, having ravaged Dominica, had sailed for Europe.

In nineteen days martial law ceased, but in May it was renewed, as seventeen French ships were heard of at Martinique. But Nelson was in pursuit; and though the coasts and the windward passage were long harassed by privateers, it was felt that invasion was no longer very probable. Nearly five thousand regular troops, inclusive of five hundred and fifty of the 2nd West Indian Regiment, were in the island; and General Nugent had been indefatigable in making the militia a more reliable body of men than it had hitherto been. It now numbered nearly ten thousand infantry, beside one thousand who were mounted.

The services of Nugent as a military leader had been gratefully acknowledged, and it seems impossible to account for his being suffered to leave the island without one of those gifts of plate, or other public acknowledgment, which had become quite a Jamaican

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. xi. pp. 135, 155, 280, &c.

<sup>2</sup> In 1802 an Act had passed the legislature making Kingston a corporate city. The royal assent having been given, the first election took place on the 15th of November. The Hon. J. Jaques was the first mayor, and there were twelve aldermen and the same number of councillors.

institution, except on account of some rancorous feeling with respect to the trade with America. In their haste, the colonists seemed to forget that the governor could only obey in this matter the instructions he received from home. He had been expressly ordered not to open the ports for the admission of American vessels except in cases of great necessity.

For some years past, indeed from 1793, the navigation laws had not been enforced in the West Indies, British shipping had been so greatly in demand in the east and elsewhere; but in 1804 British shipowners became anxious to increase their trade in the west, and called the attention of the government to the irregularities which had been permitted. In consequence of this, a proclamation was issued in Jamaica on the 21st of November, 1804, intimating that, at the expiration of six months, the neutral trade would be stopped. The governor was induced, on account of the existence of martial law, and considerable scarcity of food, to extend the time six months longer. But the last session over which he presided was greatly occupied by disputes on the subject. He had received a petition from about fifty Kingston merchants, in which it was stated that if the ports were definitely shut against the United States, they could obtain an abundance of British and Canadian provisions; while four hundred very respectable inhabitants had, at a meeting in the same city, asserted that trade with the United States was indispensable.

There was no free trade principle involved in all this. The greatest colonial advantages were sought. The Kingston merchants had little cause for complaint, though American houses derived some profit, for the harbour was filled with vessels trading with South American ports. The palmy days of Port Royal were altogether surpassed by the more legitimate trade of its younger rival.

In the heat of the controversy General Nugent departed, and was succeeded by Sir Eyre Coote. He brought with him a certain passport to popularity in being able to announce that, in consequence of a bill which had passed the British parliament, the restrictions on American produce had been removed.

There was great rejoicing also on another account. Sir J.T. Duckworth, who had for some time been in command at Port Royal, had greatly gladdened the hearts of the merchants by the prizes his cruisers were continually bringing in. Early in 1806 he encountered the French fleet under Leisseques near Hayti, captured

three ships of the line, and drove two others on shore: only two frigates and a corvette escaped. One of the captured vessels was of one hundred and thirty guns, the largest vessel then afloat.

The assembly had previously given Duckworth a thousand guineas, to buy a sword; three times that amount was now added to procure a service of plate; but the vote was not unanimous: thirteen members wished an address to the king, humbly recommending him to a special mark of royal favour. This would have been better, perhaps, for a colony that had been complaining of the low price of produce, and the high rates of marine insurance, &c.; and so thought many outside the house. In Kingston, a public meeting declared that such a wanton, improvident expenditure of public money had deprived the house of assembly of all claim to public confidence. The very influential gentlemen who composed this meeting might have used milder language than they did; but they were quite as dignified as their law-makers, who altogether forgot their position as representatives of the people, and declared it to be a breach of privilege for "any set of individuals to presume to censure the proceedings of the house."

Four newspapers, the "Daily Advertiser," the "Chronicle," the "Courant," and the "Royal Gazette," had published the resolutions passed at the meeting; and all the editors were arrested for invading the privileges of the house. They made their peace with the irate legislators, after some trouble. The two Aikmans, father and son, had the most to fear, as they were in the receipt of from £7000 to £10,000 currency per annum as public printers. The father pleaded ignorance of publication, the son innocence of any wrong intent. Strupar, of the "Courant," and Lunan, of the "Chronicle," said they would have been ruined if they had refused publicity to the proceedings of such an influential meeting. So Aikman senior was let off on paying his fees, and the rest on doing the same, after a severe reprimand. The widow of a former proprietor who owned the "Advertiser" was not spared, but was punished through her foreman, who was only liberated on paying the heavy fine called fees, though some members were considerate enough to oppose this. Thus ended a most remarkable illustration of the amount of civil and political freedom enjoyed in those days.

Sir Eyre Coote paid great attention to the island defences and militia. Three general officers were now stationed in the colony. £5000 per annum continued to be spent in each county, to improve the roads. Robertson's maps of the counties, at a cost of



£7500, had some time before been completed, and found useful for military and civil purposes.

A good deal of alarm was felt at the close of 1806, by the discovery of a conspiracy in St. George's, though no evidence on record justifies the assertions made by some of its dangerous character. There had been, as usual, a great deal of talk among a few negroes about what they meant to do, but no violence was committed. One slave was executed, one transported, and of six others acquitted at the same time, the governor thought it well to order the deportation of four.

In 1808 Sir Eyre Coote left the colony, and was succeeded by the Duke of Manchester, who arrived in Jamaica early in the year, and remained, with occasional brief visits to England, for twenty years. By some he has been spoken of in terms calculated to convey the idea that his private life was as correct as his inherited title was exalted. Happily, it is only with his public career that the historian has to deal, and it may suffice to express regret that Jamaica should have been so long exposed to the pernicious influence of evil example in high places.

Apart from such considerations, the appointment was one of sound policy. The planters were conciliated by the termination of that somewhat inexplicable policy which for eighteen years, ever since the death of the Earl of Effingham, had committed the administration of affairs to men whose actual position was that of lieutenant-governor; while the slaves, who loved high-sounding titles, were awe-struck and impressed by the fact that they had a real duke to govern them. Was not the Duke of Clarence, of whom all had heard when he visited the island, the king's son? It was no "soldier officer" who reigned at King's House now (they were familiar with such persons), but one of far higher rank, and, according to plantation logic, of far greater power.

On the 1st of March, 1808, the slave trade was at an end. It may excite surprise that the colonists, who in former years had found a grievance in the hordes of savages cast, as they said, upon their shores, should now complain that the traffic in human flesh had terminated. They were never tired of reiterating the statement that not one half of the land was under cultivation, that no new lands could be opened up, and that, in many cases, existing estates must be abandoned. Happily, the rights of the human race have a higher claim than the interests of individuals; and so, as the first step in the path to emancipation, the trade which Spaniards commenced

and Englishmen developed, terminated, so far as the latter were concerned. From the time of the conquest, in 1656, to 1808, upwards of a million slaves had been introduced into the colony. 323,827 negroes, bond and free, were reported as being in it in 1808.

The cessation of the trade produced little apparent effect on the minds of the slaves. To the planters it was most undoubtedly a measure of safety, even though it involved a prospect of pecuniary loss. Native Coromantyns could no more arrive, to foster and take the lead in rebellion, and a creole slave was confessedly of more value than the best of Africans. Long after it was common to say that the cessation of the slave trade was the first step in the decadence of the island. The returns of involved estates, laid before the assembly, and printed in its journals many years before, prove the fallacy of such an assertion.

The intense dislike displayed by the planters to the introduction of black soldiers was, a few months after the arrival of the duke, intensified by an event which happened at Fort Augusta. The 2nd West India Regiment was on parade early in the morning of the 27th of May, and about fifty recruits, Coromantyns and Chambas, were being drilled within the fort. Suddenly, thirty-three of the latter fixed their bayonets, pushed by the sergeant, who sought to restrain them, and yelling furiously, rushed out of the fort, passed the flank companies on parade, and made for the centre, influenced by some wild idea that, if they killed the officers, they would then be able to return to their own country. Adjutant Ellis rode towards them, and was instantly killed. Major Darley followed; but seeing some men breaking ranks to protect him, he ordered them to fall in, and, proceeding alone, was also murdered. The recruits now formed in line, but the old soldiers were faithful, and ammunition being supplied, nearly half the mutineers were shot, and the rest made prisoners. Nine of these were shot, after trial by court-martial, and seven others, who were also condemned, were subsequently reprieved and pardoned.

A few other men accused of connivance in the plot were acquitted for want of evidence, but two of them were sent from the island. The whole affair was one of those outbreaks of sudden desperation not unfrequent among savages, and the older soldiers were in no way implicated. With the military inquiry the affair should have terminated, but the assembly would not let it rest.

The Kingston newspapers told how the soldiers took the bullets from the cartridges before they fired, while the fact was that the officers had difficulty in restraining them from putting the prisoners to death. The white soldiers in the fort were not even called out, and though, as a military precaution, their numbers were increased and some of the blacks removed, inquiry proved that no real necessity for such a step had arisen.

An unfortunate omission on the part of the surviving officers gave occasion for misrepresentation. The coroner, hearing of what had occurred, came to the spot, but was not asked to hold an inquest, and the murdered officers were buried with military honours that evening. Exaggerated accounts of what had really happened were sent through the island; meetings were held in almost every parish, and the assembly urged to make a full inquiry. Of late the smallest outbreak seemed to be perversely used as an opportunity for impressing the negroes with the idea that the whites were in mortal fear of them.

The legislature was convened as usual in October, and called on General Carmichael, who was in command, to furnish copies of the proceedings at the court-martial. This he declined to do, as he did not regard himself as responsible in matters relative to the military except to his superior officers. He also issued an order prohibiting those under his command from giving evidence touching the government or discipline of his Majesty's forces.<sup>1</sup>

The assembly, according to custom, passed a string of resolutions, and then summoned the general to appear before them. He at once wrote to the duke, and said that, without any disrespect to the assembly, he really could not obey the summons without orders from the commander-in-chief. The duke at once sent the letter to the house, with an expression of general approval in the course adopted by the general. The message was immediately voted a breach of privilege, and the house declined to do further business till reparation was made. A prorogation immediately followed, the duke reminding the house that the enforcement of their summons would "tend in fact to devolve the command of any British army in the island upon that house." This was on the 1st of December. Next April, when the duke again convened the legislative bodies, he informed the assembly that his majesty had given the requisite

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. xii. p. 53.

permission, and not only would the minutes of the court-martial be laid before them, but the officers had been directed to obey their summons. Next day the general appeared in custody of the serjeant-at-arms, and assured the house that his former refusal to appear before them had simply been induced by his high sense of military authority, and that now, by his sovereign's command, he was ready to attend them. The condescension of the king, the conciliatory speech of the governor, and the stately courtesy of the general, were ill repaid by the assembly, who complained, in reply to the opening speech, that what they demanded as a right was only conceded as a favour. They then spent much time in an inquiry which elicited the facts above stated. It appeared afterwards that the permission for Carmichael to appear was only granted in the royal council in deference to the opinion of the lord chancellor,

The assembly had hardly disposed of this affair when another alarming discovery was made. A few desperate men had formed a design of setting fire to Kingston in several places, and in the confusion they proposed to murder all the white inhabitants. It is quite clear that no extensive organization existed, and reliance was placed on the co-operation of the slaves when the mischief began. But slaves do not co-operate; they look on, for the most part, as the history of Jamaica abundantly proves. In all parts of the island there had been outbreaks, but always local, and while the great body of slaves were waiting to see what success the actual rebels met with, they were crushed by superior numbers, and the onlookers bent their necks once more to the yoke. A general rising would long before have made Jamaica a second Hayti. Burgess, a discharged soldier of the 2nd West India Regiment, who exposed the plot, was probably the biggest rascal of the lot. He saved his life, which had never been reputable, but two others were hanged and several transported.

The city must have been sadly deficient in all proper police supervision when twenty or thirty so-called negro dukes, generals, &c., could meet in the suburbs to discuss their plans, and practice pistol-shooting at trees every Sunday afternoon.<sup>1</sup> The assembly, in a very unconstitutional manner, attempted to send away from the colony between twenty and thirty slaves who had been arrested, but against whom there was no evidence, offering to indemnify their

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. xii. pp. 224–230, 234, &c.

owners. The council most properly rejected two bills passed for this purpose, when the assembly resorted to the old trick of inserting a grant for the money required in the poll-tax bill, the rejection of which would have left the military without support, and thrown the finances of the colony into confusion.

Legislative proceedings at this time were very pitiable. The duke, in common with all colonial goverrtors, had received instructions not to accede to any law affecting religion, unless it contained a clause suspending its operation until his majesty's pleasure was known. It was explained to the house that this in no way affected the right of debate, but the string, of resolutions could not be omitted; and it was most intemperately resolved that no supplies should be voted for the military after the first of May then following, unless the instructions were revoked. Next day, the 14th of December, 1809, the duke dissolved the house, with a well-merited rebuke.

These infatuated legislators forgot that they trembled when half a dozen slaves broke out in rebellion, though they talked so glibly of not providing for the military. The new assembly, to some extent, sustained the action taken by their predecessors, for they did not provide for the military from May to the end of November, when they met. Conciliation was so far thrown away, for they had been assured by the governor, in his opening speech, that the king did not desire to restrict any privileges they possessed as one branch of the legislature, though he could not relinquish his equally undoubted right to give instructions to the governor, as the branch of the legislature by which he was represented. The house was also made to understand that the promulgation of the instructions had been wholly unauthorised, and was neither sanctioned or approved by his majesty's government.<sup>1</sup>

The island was shortly after left for some time to the care of Lieutenant-General Morison, the Duke of Manchester having visited England during 1811, where he remained until 1813. Morison distinguished himself in a manner hardly to have been expected in a military man. He made an admirable chancellor, and cleared off the arrears of business in the court in a most remarkable and satisfactory manner.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Letter of Lord Liverpool: "Votes of Assembly," 1831-32, PP. 29-31.

In retracing the events of this period one is impressed with the long series of calamities which followed in quick succession. In 1808, Falmouth was only saved from destruction by fire through the efforts of the officers and crew of H.M.ship *Favourite*, then lying in the harbour. The consequences were very lamentable. The exertions put forth by these men resulted in fever; three or four died day after day, and less than a fourth were at last left to bring the ship round to Port Royal, where she was brought to anchor, and her sails furled by men sent from other vessels. Two actions at law, for having impressed the captain of a drogger,<sup>2</sup> who never mentioned his position, was the reward of the quiet heroism of the commander, who, in his plague ship, had escorted a fleet to Negril Bay, and chased off five privateers hovering about the coast.<sup>3</sup> Montego Bay had another narrow escape from destruction; thirty-five of the best houses and wharfs were burnt on the 1st of April, 1812. There were no proper police arrangements, and no ready access to water; plunder was almost unrestrained; and five more incendiary fires followed in two months, prompted by the desire to secure other opportunities for theft.

A storm, later in the year,<sup>4</sup> did great damage to houses, and destroyed immense quantities of growing provisions, a calamity more serious on account of the war with the United States preventing importations from that quarter. Within a month after the storm,<sup>5</sup> four separate shocks of earthquake were felt. The first was at twenty minutes past two o'clock in the morning, and very anxiously the inhabitants waited for daylight. It came, but only to augment the alarm, for before six o'clock there were three other shocks in quick succession. Many buildings were greatly injured, some thrown down. The cause was a terrible volcanic eruption on the Spanish main land; hence Jamaica only felt a small portion of its violence, and the vast tidal wave was almost spent before it rolled upon its shores. Next year there was another and more violent storm.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. xii. p. 485.

<sup>2</sup> Or coasting vessel

<sup>3</sup> "Votes of Assembly" for 1830, pp, 57, 58, 77-180.

<sup>4</sup> October 12, 1812.

<sup>5</sup> November II, 1812,

Port Royal was once more nearly destroyed,<sup>2</sup> and only by blowing up numbers of houses could the flames be arrested before they reached the dockyard. Sailors and soldiers exerted themselves nobly; and when the homeless people could be gathered together, tents were prepared till temporary houses were ready. £11,000 was soon contributed for their relief in Kingston, to which the assembly added £5000 more. In this the distress was local; the eastern portion of the island suffered next.<sup>3</sup> A fearful hurricane and an unprecedented deluge of rain almost changed the aspect of the parishes of St. David's and St. George's. The rivers rose to a height before unknown; not a plantation near the banks of the Yallahs escaped injury; fourteen miles of road were entirely washed away, while the landslips on the mountain sides swept coffee fields and extensive provision grounds into the ravines below. In some places not a quarter of the coffee crop remained, and the works were so injured that what remained could not be prepared. At Annotto Bay many vessels were stranded, while in St. George's cane fields were rooted up, and in some places covered with the debris left by the swollen rivers or washed from the hills.

Three years later the county of Cornwall suffered, but not so severely.<sup>4</sup> The storms were experienced during three days. Public and private buildings were destroyed; great injury was done to provision grounds; and at Lucea the troops had to be removed from their barracks to the church for safety.

The legislative doings of 1814 deserve notice on account of a rigid and greatly needed investigation into the working of what were known as patent offices. The inquiry had indeed begun some years before, with that of the provost-marshal,<sup>5</sup> but reform was prevented by instructions from home, where Lord Braybrooke, the patentee, had influential friends. The office of the registrar of chancery and of the island secretary now came under review. They were both held by gentlemen in England, one of whom obtained his nomination while yet a minor. They stipulated with individuals to act as their deputies, and received from them a certain sum: all

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<sup>1</sup> August 1, 1813.

<sup>2</sup> July 13, 1815.

<sup>3</sup> October 18 and 19, 1815.

<sup>4</sup> November 17, 19, and 20, 1818.

<sup>5</sup> Journals, vol. xii. pp. 187-213.

that could be obtained beyond this the deputy was to regard as his own.

The inquiry disclosed the fact that not only were exorbitant and illegal fees exacted, amounting to several thousand pounds a year, but that this princely recompense did not preserve from neglect important documents upon which the security of property depended. While these Augean stables were being partially cleansed, the post-office received attention. The revenue of this department was considerable; in 1814 it amounted to nearly £8000, and the outlay was little over £5000. But all classes of public officials had pickings, and in this department there was a surcharge of 7½ to 10 per cent. on the postage of all English letters.

For some years past changes had been gradually made in the administration of justice. In the earlier days of the colony, judicial positions, not excepting that of chief justice, were held by gentlemen who had received no special legal training, nor can it be denied that many really adorned the bench by their impartial and sound judgments. As colonial affairs became more complicated, legal training was thought desirable, and in 1804 the salary of the chief justice was increased to £2000 per annum, and only barristers were in future to be appointed. The assistant judges who were not barristers were thus shut out from the prospect of promotion, and became negligent in their attendance, to the great inconvenience of suitors. It became necessary in 1810 to remedy this by the appointment of barristers to the lower office, and thus a more elaborate judicial system was provided.<sup>1</sup>

Still there were complaints, and in 1815 one of those painful circumstances happened which, though at times unavoidable, cannot fail to occasion great regret. For many years much dissatisfaction had been expressed with the decisions of the Chief Justice Lewis. A protracted investigation, prompted by Mr. Stewart, one of the assistant judges, was instituted in the assembly, and some grave charges were clearly proved. Disappointed suitors were not likely to allow such an opportunity to pass of pouring forth their complaints. But all such cases were carefully sifted, and the assembly, in an address to the prince regent, alluded only to

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. xii. pp. 234, 235; Bridges' "Annals," vol. ii. p. 302.



flagrant instances of corrup-tion or incompetence, and on such grounds sought the removal of the offender from office.<sup>1</sup>

Early next session a message was sent to the assembly that the chief justice was anxious to retire from office on account of age and infirmity, and it was agreed to allow him a retiring pension of £1000 per annum. However just and proper the action of the assembly may have been in the conduct of this business, it was followed by evil consequences. Against both of the next holders of the office accusations were made by parties who thought themselves aggrieved; nor was the assembly sufficiently careful to avoid unnecessary interference with important judicial functions. On the 17th of May, 1816, the assembly was dismissed by proclamation. It was remarkable as being the only one dissolved after having fulfilled its full term of seven years during the administration of the governor who convened it.

Its last sitting had been somewhat tumultuous, owing to the indignation and wrath with which the proposal of Mr. Wilberforce to provide for the registration of slaves had , been received. In introducing this measure to the British parliament, it was stated that many slaves were clandestinely imported to British colonies, or removed from one colony to another; and also that many free people, negroes, mulattoes, and mustees, were illegally held in bondage. To prevent this it was proposed to appoint registrars, to be paid by the colonies, and from fees levied on the proprietors.

The treaty obligations upon which England had entered with other powers demanded the most scrupulous activity on her part to prevent illicit importations by her own subjects, but in Jamaica the proposal was only regarded as it affected its leading inhabitants. It was overlooked that a most influential committee of the house of assembly had said, when the abolition of the slave trade was under discussion, that the coasts of the island presented splendid facilities for smuggling cargoes of slaves, and that prevention would be impossible. Now it was maintained that that no precautions were required, and no clandestine trade had been attempted beyond one single importation of five slaves, and that if necessary the legislature of Jamaica would pass the requisite laws to prevent it. It was estimated that the cost of registration would be about £40,000, a tax all the more objectionable, as it would for the most part

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. xii. p. 831,

swell the fees of the island secretary's office, the extravagance and bad management of which was already a source of complaint.

When the newly-elected assembly met in October, 1816, the Duke of Manchester informed it that immediate action on the registration bill had been suspended by the imperial government, in the hope that the colonial legislatures were prepared to pass the necessary laws. Great care was taken to assure the assembly that the measure was not proposed as a step towards emancipation, or from an idea that slaves had been clandestinely imported; though it was pointed out that a time of peace afforded greater facilities for such a trade than one of war. Wearisome debates followed, and it was only through the personal influence of the duke that action on the part of the imperial government was prevented. Two bills were passed to effect the desired registration, and to improve the condition of slaves; and next session the special approval of the prince regent was communicated to the legislature.<sup>1</sup>

When the registration was effected, it was ascertained that there was a far greater number of slaves in the island than had been supposed. Hitherto returns had only been given in of those for whom the poll-tax was paid; but of slaves in the possession of small proprietors who paid no tax, returns were never made. This simple fact disposes of the assertion once made, that the discrepancy of numbers between the old poll-tax and the registration lists, indicated clandestine importations. Had such importations taken place, the discrepancy would of course have been more marked in the great sugar parishes: the very reverse was the case.

In Trelawny, a parish chiefly occupied by large sugar planters, 27,739 slaves were on the poll-tax returns, and but 28,497 were registered; but in Kingston, where few slaves were held by one individual, and concealment of any kind was less easy, a little over eight thousand had been returned as liable to tax, but very nearly eighteen thousand were registered. The total number registered in 1817 was 345,252. The great preponderance in the number of males as compared with females in the days of the slave trade had been corrected by births: there were now seventy-four females more than males,

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. xiii.

Two years later, 2555 runaway slaves were reported to be at large. Some of these managed to pass as free in places distant from those they had lived in as slaves; others were secreted in the woods, and not a few united together and formed dangerous confederacies. A considerable number of these had located themselves in a wild range of mountainous land known as the Healthshire Hills, situated between Kingston Harbour and Old Harbour Bay. Here they had built little villages, whence they now and then descended into the plains to steal cattle and whatever else came handy. In August, 1819, Major-General Marshall, a militia officer, was instructed to take a party of Maroons and hunt out these people. No complaint was ever made of want of zeal or discretion in the way this duty was performed, though Scipio and his gang, a most notorious lot of banditti, escaped; and to secure them, Marshall, on his own responsibility, had called out a party of the militia.

As a rule the country was profoundly grateful to those who signalled themselves in crushing rebellion or catching runaways; but Marshall's bill for £3000, for clearing away several bands, was voted too much. It is a pity that all accounts for public services were not as closely scrutinised. There was £540 to O.D. Pennington, for rations; £70 to a copying clerk; large sums for a quarter-master; rent for head-quarters and temporary prison, &c. O.D. Pennington, it turned out, was a brown woman, holding, according to Jamaica parlance in those days, the position of housekeeper to Marshall. The copying clerk was their daughter, and the quarter-master their son. The head-quarters was the house in which they lived, and the prisons the cellars beneath it.

The assembly, it will be seen, was looking more closely than usual into the items of public expenditure. The public printing was complained of as too expensive. Thirteen volumes of the "Journals of the Assembly," from its commencement, had been reprinted at a cost of nearly £3000 each! Yet when the second volume was again out of print, it was reprinted in London at a fourth of the price. Other printing cost from £3000 to £6000 a year.<sup>1</sup>

The year 1820 had almost expired when an accident, that nearly proved fatal, befel the Duke of Manchester. He was thrown from his carriage and trampled under the feet of the horses, which had

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. xiii. p. 170, &c.

become unmanageable. For a time recovery seemed hopeless; the skull was injured so seriously that a fragment of it was picked up from among the dust on the road. Yet on the 8th of January the duke again met the house, and prorogued them with a few sentences, in which he expressed his sense of the widespread sympathy he had received. Five medical gentlemen who attended him each received a hundred pounds from the public funds, in acknowledgment of their undoubted skill. Soon after the duke left the colony for a season, and Major-General Conran acted as lieutenant-governor.

This gentleman was very unlike the duke in his mode of transacting public business, and consequently had not been long in office before he was beset by opponents, to whom his stately courtesy and military bearing were not so agreeable as the ease and indulgence of his chief. He did not fail to secure the approval of his government and the colonelcy of a regiment when he retired from the colony.

That he was an impartial, upright ruler, was proved by an event which happened during his administration. On the north side of the island a slave had some time before been tried for an offence for which the penalty of death might have been inflicted. His life was spared, but he was transported from the colony. In a short time he returned, and being brought before three magistrates in Hanover, was condemned and executed, in utter disregard of a law lately passed, which required a jury of twelve persons before a capital sentence could be pronounced. The lieutenant-governor immediately deprived the magistrates of their appointment, and also the custos of the parish, and directed the attorney-general to prosecute them for wilful murder. The grand jury threw out the bill as it affected the custos and one of the magistrates; the other two, though tried, were acquitted. All appeals to restore them to office were sternly rejected; but the custos, the Honourable R.O.Vassall, as a connection of Lord Holland, had sufficient influence with the colonial office to secure his restoration in a year after the event. It was pleaded that he was absent from the parish when the event took place. It is clear Conran did not hold him blameless.

The inquiries into the expense and management of the public offices were greatly needed, and it is therefore the more to be deplored that the assembly did not confine itself to constitutional modes of reform. The fees exacted by the customs were

exorbitant; but the council, as a very conservative body, was not inclined to sanction any alteration in the existing laws. The thing was annoying, but the assembly had no patience, and instead of waiting for another opportunity of securing the passage of a law in the usual mode, had recourse, as of old, to the poll-tax bill. By inserting clauses in this, effecting the desired changes, it was hoped to coerce the council, and obtain the desired end. This time the council was firm, and determined to throw upon the lower chamber the responsibility of the loss of revenue. They protested against the insertion of matter in a money bill entirely opposed to its character, and rejected it. Nearly £200,000 of revenue was thus in danger of being lost, for the assembly sent a message to the lieutenant-governor and asked for a recess.

If Conran longed for a little of that despotic power he had seen so much of in his East Indian campaigns, he had such command over himself as not to display his feelings. He blandly prorogued the house until the next day, then made a wonderfully conciliatory speech, and left the members to their devices. The first step was obvious. Resolutions vindicating their conduct and asserting their rights were passed, happily only three in number. They then passed the bill in its original form, and the council, choosing the least of two evils, thought it best to agree to it.

In December, 1822, the Duke of Manchester once more returned to the colony, and was welcomed with the warm congratulations of the legislative bodies. Times of great excitement soon followed; the total abolition of slavery had been proposed by certain influential parties, and the sugar colonies took the alarm. When, thirty years before, the agitation against the slave trade commenced, the leaders of that movement asserted that they did not contemplate the emancipation of the slaves already in the colonies. They were honest in their declaration, but some of the planters shrewdly suspected that if the public voice declared the trade in slaves to be improper, it would soon be impossible to justify the continuance of slavery. Nevertheless, fifteen years passed without any very decided struggle for abolition.

Wilberforce, shortly before he retired from public life, expressed his conviction that emancipation would be found a necessity, inasmuch as no man could righteously hold property in his fellow man. To his friend Buxton he resigned the accomplishment of this great work. On the 15th of May, 1823, the crusade commenced. Mr. Fowell Buxton rose in his place in the House of Commons and

moved the following resolution: "That the state of slavery is repugnant to the principles of the British constitution and of the Christian religion, and that it ought to be gradually abolished throughout the British colonies with as much expedition as may be found consistent with a due regard to the well-being of the parties concerned."

It is clear, from the terms of this motion, that Mr. Buxton had no idea that the cause he espoused would so speedily triumph. Had his plan been accepted and adhered to, some would be in slavery at this hour; for, fearing to injure the cause he had at heart by asking too much, he only proposed the emancipation of all children born after a given day, and the amelioration of the condition of those who would still remain in bondage.

Mr. Canning met this motion by another, to the effect, "That it is expedient to adopt effectual and decisive measures for ameliorating the condition of the slave population in his Majesty's colonies. That through a determined and persevering, but at the same time judicious and temperate enforcement of such measures, this house looks forward to progressive improvements in the character of the slave population, such as may prepare them for a participation in those civil rights and privileges which are enjoyed by other classes of his majesty's subjects.

"That this house is anxious for the accomplishment of this purpose at the earliest period that shall be compatible with the well-being of the slaves themselves, with the safety of the colonies, and with a fair and equitable consideration of the interests of private property."<sup>1</sup>

In advocating these resolutions, Mr. Canning pointed out that if slavery was all that Mr. Buxton had described, it ought to be dealt with by a demand for immediate abolition. But it had existed for ages, and he could not see his way clear to its abolition within any period of time which could be specified; ameliorating measures alone were practicable. These measures included the discontinuance of Sunday markets, the cessation of the practice of carrying a whip in the field, and the exemption of women from corporal punishment under any circumstances whatever.

On the 24th of May was circular was issued from the colonial office, calling upon West Indian governors to carry into effect the

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<sup>1</sup> "Bandinel on Slave Trade," p. 198.

resolutions agreed to in Parliament, and intimating the particulars in which reform was expected. The dire wrath of Achilles, as pourtrayed by Homer, was hardly so terrible as that of the Jamaica assembly when these things were officially brought to their notice. The duke was more than usually bland and conciliatory when, in October, he expressed his conviction that the same liberality of sentiment hitherto displayed by the assembly, in securing so many comforts for the slaves, would now still more fully be shown in securing other ameliorations. The house, in their address, echoed the sentences of the duke, and then prepared for battle.

When the proceedings in the House of Commons had been referred to a committee, an extraordinary course was adopted. Surprise and regret were expressed that his Majesty's ministers had "sanctioned the principles laid down by enemies in the mother country," and had pledged themselves to measures which tended ultimately to abolition, without any pledge to compensate slaveholders for the losses they would sustain. They refused to revise the slave code, as it was "as complete in all its enactments, as the nature of circumstances would admit to render the slave population as happy and comfortable, in every respect, as the labouring class in any part of the world."

In their address to the king, they said it was altogether a false assumption that the slaves were either ill treated or unhappy. They recapitulated their own sufferings, as planters, in consequence of English wars and war duties; said they had never taken an oath of allegiance to the English parliament, and would not submit to the degradation of having their internal affairs regulated by a body whose power in Great Britain was not greater than their own in Jamaica. They prayed the king to reject any measure which assumed such authority; for Jamaica would soon be lost to England, as Hayti was to France, if the negroes were thus taught to look for their protectors in England, and regard their owners, their natural protectors, as foes. "If this island," they added, "is to be the scene of a dreadful experiment, we claim that we may not be involved in the awful consequences. If slavery be an offence to God, so are anarchy, desolation, and blood. Let your royal parliament become the lawful owner of our property by purchase, and we will retire from the island, and leave it a free field for modern philanthropy to work upon. The Deity, who sees into the heart, is not to be propitiated by laying on His shrine the

possessions of our brethren, but only by the sacrifice of what is our own to offer.”<sup>1</sup>

It is clear from these proceedings that the assembly anticipated a course of policy which had not been definitely pronounced, and upon which it would have been more statesmanlike to have remained silent. Apart from this, there was a measure of justice in their demand. Slavery was not a purely colonial institution. It had been established under the sanction of British laws, and the inhabitants of Great Britain could not rightfully demand its abolition at the sole cost of the owners. This fact could not justify the assembly in their refusal to comply with the expressed wishes of parliament with regard to ameliorating measures, and the home government was equally unwilling to have recourse to coercion.

It was thought that, where there were legislative bodies, to these the work of reform should be left, but in crown colonies the necessary provisions were at once made. Earnest abolitionists complained that the three hundred thousand slaves of Jamaica were, in consequence, left in a far worse condition than the thirty thousand in Trinidad.

Another act, or rather series of acts, of egregious folly followed. The planters were unable to conceal their indignation at the course pursued in England. In the presence of slaves, in stores and other public places, at the dinner table, and, in short, wherever they met, they anathematised Wilberforce, Clarkson, Buxton, and others, unmindful of eager listeners, who, with false though not foolish logic, arrived at the conclusion that some great boon, of which the slaves were yet ignorant, had been conferred upon them. When, soon after, a petty rebellion broke out, it was declared that the slaves were “contented and happy till they imbibed the notion that the king and Wilberforce had made them free.” From whom had they derived such impressions but from their own masters? though in Jamaica, and to a more fatal extent in Demerara, it suited these men to put the blame upon the missionaries.

Happily the outbreak was not of a serious character. In St. George’s, for some time before the Christmas of 1823, there had been frequent meetings of the slaves, chiefly on Balcarras estate, and other properties about Buff Bay. If the statement of a runaway slave named Mack, who was in the plot, may be believed, a

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. xiv. p. 230.



general rising was contemplated, involving the destruction of the white inhabitants. The district was carefully guarded, and several persons, said to be leaders, were arrested. Of these, several were capitally convicted early in the following year.

In St. Mary's the same kind of meetings were held, as stated by another conspirator who turned king's evidence. In another part of the island, St. James's, night meetings of slaves were held at Unity Hall, Spring Gardens, and some other estates. Here also there was treachery, and nine slaves were transported, and double the number summarily punished.

About the middle of the following year Hanover was thrown into a state of great excitement, though treachery once more baffled the designs of the conspirators, whatever they may have been. At a given time, it was stated, all the estates were to be set on fire, and the whites murdered as they hastened to extinguish the flames. On the very night fixed for the purpose, a slave named Roach gave information of the plot. The outbreak followed, but it was not of a character to justify the extravagant statements made. At Golden Grove estate, well-affected slaves almost immediately put out the fire that was kindled, and recovered some fire-arms stolen from the overseer's house. At Argyle ten horses were killed, and as many acres of growing crops burned. Elsewhere little damage was done. Six slaves were hung at Argyle, five at Golden Grove, and a number of others transported or flogged. A small band about the same time created alarm between Kingston and Yallahs. Of these, four were hung, and others punished in different ways.

These really petty disturbances cost the colony £15,000. In an address to the king, it was stated that the value of property had deteriorated, in consequence, one half, and indemnity was asked from the British Parliament, whose discussions had stirred up the slaves to rebellion!<sup>1</sup>

The legislature now displayed less inclination than ever to meet the views of the home government with respect to improving the condition of slaves. The orders in council adopted first in Trinidad and subsequently in all the other crown colonies, were commended by the Duke of Manchester as suitable models from which a proper slave code might be drawn, but two more sessions passed away without any action being taken.

A committee was, however, appointed to inquire into the desirability of permitting slave evidence to be received in certain

cases. Some interesting facts were elicited. The Honourable Peter Robertson, the custos of St. Thomas in the East, and who had resided for fifty years in the island, was quite favourable to the proposed measure, and testified to the vast improvement in negro character during the past ten years. The custos of Kingston, a forty years' resident, bore the same testimony. Substantially alike was the opinion of the veteran custos of St. Catherines.

Among clergymen opinion was divided. Some earnest labourers, like Archdeacon Trew, were favourable to it. The rector of Kingston, Mr. Mann, declared that for ten years past the slaves had been rapidly improving in character. The savage music of former days was now unheard on the Sabbath. The Sunday market was declining, and that on the Saturday increasing. The slaves in Kingston, he asserted, were quite as observant of the Sabbath as the lower classes in any large English town, and on Friday nights the parish church was crowded by slaves. On the other hand, men like Bridges and Girod saw little or no improvement, and were unfavourable to any extension of civil rights. From the parish of St Anns, where Mr. Bridges was rector, and also from St. John's, petitions against the proposed bill were presented. It was asserted "that petitioners purchased the rights and privileges which the laws sanctioned in, to, and over their slaves, and not their mere bodies, which would have been useless incumbrances; and the petitioners submit that these rights and privileges are their private property, which ought not to be interfered with without compensation; and that in granting fresh privileges to their slaves the petitioners' privileges are abridged." Again it was maintained: "That if slaves are permitted to give evidence against those in authority over them, there will be an end to all authority;" for "an oath in a court of justice will avail nothing against a compact entered into over the graves of their shipmates and relations, and solemnised with gravedirt and blood."<sup>1</sup> It was forgotten that it was only proposed to extend civil privileges to baptized slaves. It would therefore be the fault of the clergy if they had not been so taught as to hold in abhorrence those heathen practices.

As it appeared only too certain that the existing assembly would never pass any measure satisfactory to the British government, the

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<sup>1</sup> "Buxton's Life," p. 168; "Reports of British Parliament," 1826; "Journals of Assembly," vol. xiv. pp. 324-334.

duke convened a new house in 1826. In his opening speech he made the briefest possible reference to supplies, and occupied the remaining portion of his address by urging the legislature to adopt a code of laws in harmony with the wishes of the imperial parliament. That there might be ample time for discussion, the session was summoned three weeks earlier than usual. Propositions were soon after laid before the assembly, but received with a bad grace. They embodied a plan for the appointment of an officer to be called a protector of slaves, the admission of slave evidence under certain conditions, provisions for the purchase of freedom, for abolishing Sunday markets, establishing savings' banks, and preventing the separation of families. Laws were also proposed for regulating punishments and preventing the whipping of women.

After a great deal of discussion, and many amendments on the part of the council, a bill was passed to which the governor gave his assent, though he must have foreseen its disallowance at home. It was not such a measure as some of the more thoughtful and humane among slaveholders wished. A party led by Mr. Barrett would have prohibited the use of the cattle whip in the field, and the flogging of women under any circumstances, but they were overruled. Even a modified amendment, to substitute the military cat for the atrocious cattle whip, and to prevent unnecessary exposure when women were whipped, was rejected by twenty-four against seventeen.

The act had another grave defect: clauses were introduced which could not fail to ensure its rejection by the king. The trick resorted to was a new variety of the unworthy stratagem by which the council had often been compelled to pass an objectionable clause by its being inserted in a money bill, the loss of which would have thrown the finances of the colony into confusion. Restrictive laws relative to dissenting ministers were introduced, to which it was impossible that any British ministry could agree.

As slaves toiled from sunrise to sunset, they could only have the intervening hours for worship or instruction. During these hours all meetings in nonconforming chapels were prohibited. The plea was that the health of slaves might be injured by being out late at night, or they might concert conspiracies. Church congregations,

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. xiv. pp. 455, &c.

and also those of Jews and Roman Catholics, were exempt from this rule until eight o'clock at night.

Any slave teaching or preaching, whether "Anabaptist" or other denomination, without permission from his owner and from the magistrates at quarter sessions, was liable to whipping and hard labour. To crown all, it was asserted that ample provision having been made for the proper instruction of slaves, it was desirable to prevent "designing men professing to be teachers of religion from practising on the ignorance and superstition of the negroes." Therefore "it shall not be lawful for any dissenting minister, religious teacher, or any person whatsoever, to demand or receive any money or other chattel whatever for affording such slave religious instruction." The penalty for infringing this law was £20, half to the informer, who might be an unbaptized slave, though such evidence would be worthless in any other case: and only one such witness was needed, though two giving corroborative evidence were demanded when a missionary was not the subject of prosecution.

A fresh illustration of human perversity is all that is afforded by such legislation as this. It could not save the slaveholder, it precipitated him into greater trouble. Men that would not have interfered with old-established institutions were aroused by these violations of all justice and natural right.

Mr. (afterwards Lord) Denman had declared some months before in the House of Commons,<sup>1</sup> that oppression in Jamaica had reached the pinnacle of power. He denounced some of the executions in the so-called rebellion of 1824, and asserted (nor was the assertion denied) that the only evidence against eight who were capitally convicted was that of a mere youth, who confessed his knowledge of the plot when laid down to receive a flogging. And yet in face of this ready acceptance of slave testimony against slaves, he quoted many cases where justice had clearly failed in consequence of the inadmissibility of slave evidence against free men. Only four years before, in Kingston, a man chained down a girl nine years old for a criminal purpose. When tried for the rape, his counsel pleaded the girl was a chattel, and that her evidence could not be taken. The case was remitted to the English judges, and they could only decide that, in the existing state of the law, the plea was valid, and so the wretch escaped.

The result of these and other disclosures was the passing of a resolution to the effect that recent trials in Jamaica afforded fresh

evidence of the evils inseparable from a state of slavery, This strengthened the hands of the cabinet, and the new slave code was disallowed. Apart from the sectarian clauses, there were other reasons for the course adopted by the home government. Mr. Huskisson, in his admirable letter to the Duke of Manchester, pointed out some of these. The bill did not provide for a protector of slaves, but for what was called a council of protection, chosen from among the very class slaves would be likely to appeal against; severe punishments of women as well as of men were still permitted; Sunday markets were not at once abolished; while many of the clauses were so ambiguous as to be easily perverted to the disadvantage of the slaves. To this letter a long reply was sent by the assembly, but the course of action required was delayed till its refusal would have entailed the loss of legislative privileges.<sup>1</sup>

Some relief to the sad picture of obstinacy is to be found in the removal of certain disabilities under which the Jews laboured. The bills passed for this purpose were, at first, disallowed on the ground that they legislated with regard to some disabilities that did not actually exist, but after much conference the Jews were placed in precisely the same position as other white persons in the colony. A clause of an act passed in 1711 was also repealed, which prohibited the employment in any public office of Jews, mulattoes, Indians, or negroes. Though the assembly was not yet prepared to render to coloured people generally the same privileges as were accorded to Jews, the fees on private bills, asking the concessions which for many years had been granted by the legislature to more wealthy and influential coloured people, were now frequently remitted, so that many artisans and other respectable persons of colour obtained privileges hitherto confined to the rich. An attempt to confer the franchise on such people, however, failed.<sup>2</sup>

Piracy was now very rarely known in these seas. The capture of the *Zaragoza*,<sup>3</sup> in 1823, and the execution of her crew at Port Royal, struck terror into the hearts of the pirates who had long infested the lagoons of Hayti and Cuba. In 1827, the Duke of Manchester finally left the colony.

Major-General Sir John Keene, an old Peninsular soldier, and commander of the troops in the colony, administered the affairs of the island for some time after the departure of the Duke of

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<sup>1</sup> March 1 1826.

Manchester. He had to meet the legislature at a critical period. The letter of Mr. Huskisson, already described, had arrived, and on the 16th of November, 1827, was sent down to the assembly. It was accompanied by a message from Sir John Keene, in which he assured the house of the regret felt by his Majesty in rejecting the bill, and his hope that another one would be framed, imposing no restraints on religious liberty, which was the right of all his Majesty's subjects. He added, that though the measure they prepared might fall short of the wishes of the English government, yet one which really embodied substantial improvements would be received in a favourable light. Conciliation was in vain. The house appointed a committee to report the names of all "sectarians or dissenters licensed to preach, to ascertain what moneys or other offerings they received from slaves or other persons attending their places of worship; how such offerings were disposed of, and what regulations were necessary in respect to these contributions." They then replied to the lieutenant-governor's message, defending the clauses in the act which had reference to religious worship, and declaring that every real and substantial improvement in the condition of slaves, consistent with the safety of the colony, had been embodied in the act; and that they would not incorporate others inconsistent with such safety, for the purpose of gratifying the parliament and government of Great Britain. They added, that as they were aware that the lieutenant-governor had instructions not to sanction any bill on the subject of religion, without a suspending clause, they would make no deliberate surrender of their undoubted and acknowledged rights by legislating in the manner proposed, and would therefore prepare no other bill respecting the slave population.

Next year they so far revoked their word as to pass a bill similar in all respects to that which had been disallowed, and to which the lieutenant-governor refused his assent. A bill designed to remove civil disabilities under which certain coloured people laboured,

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<sup>1</sup> Huskisson's letter in full in "Barclay's Practical View of Slavery," PP. 433-444; Journals for 1827, pp. 272, and 445-471.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. xiv. pp. 179-182, 194-200, 202.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. xiv. p. 281. Local papers, March, 1823. The account of this affair in "Tom Cringle's Log" "has far less of fiction than might be supposed.

was after much discussion lost A petition from some free black people, asking for an enlargement of their privileges, was referred to a committee, from which no report was ever presented.

The management on many estates was still very improvident, and it is surprising that no more vigorous efforts were put forth to reduce to subjection the bands of runaway slaves. The captain of the Accompong Maroons stated their number as six thousand; one-third being in Kingston and its vicinity, passing as free, a third in country parishes, and the remainder secreted in negro grounds and woods.<sup>1</sup> It does not appear from what source he derived his information, but emancipation proved that his estimate was under the mark. He admitted that the Maroons took bribes, and thus few were caught and returned to their owners.

Now and then a troublesome party was hunted down, but always at great expense to the colony. The Accompong Maroons, in connection with some black shot, had killed or captured eighteen troublesome negroes in Trelawny. They had £50 for each one, and £500 to £600 more was spent in the exploit.

When Sir John Keene retired from the colony, three thousand guineas were voted as a testimonial from the assembly. A stern, uncompromising soldier on the battlefield, he was most luxurious, almost effeminate, in his private habits; and rarely if ever had the hospitalities of the King's House been so lavish as during his brief administration of affairs. Yet he spared not himself when duty required the exercise of his undoubted energy of character.

Inquiries into some needful reduction in public expenditure, commenced long before, were still prosecuted. Salaries were exorbitantly high for a colony which had now begun the cry, perpetuated for forty years, of "ruin." The receiver-general had £7000 a year; the governor's secretary had nominally £3000, though what Bullock, the favoured secretary of the Duke of Manchester, really got, no one knew. Influential as he was, he had to submit to searching inquiry into excessive fees he had exacted, and which he was called upon to refund. The island agent in London was paid £2500 a year. The customs department was perhaps the worst: £26,000 was the cost of collecting duties to the amount of £90,000; but the Earl of Belmore came out with instructions that greatly improved this department. An act was passed providing salaries in lieu of fees, and the work of economical reform gradually progressed.

The Earl of Belmore, who arrived in the year 1829, was early enabled to take a tour of the island, and on the 12th and 13th of September was present at a great cattle fair held on the Pedro Plains. This was a most successful enterprise, originated by Mr. Hamilton Brown, and remarkable as one of the first attempts made in good earnest to develop the vast agricultural resources of the island.<sup>1</sup>

On the 3rd of November the earl met the legislative bodies. Conciliation was the order of the day: he hoped that time had healed the wounds inflicted by former discussions, and observed that the assembly was left entirely to its own judgment in reference to the slave bill. This the members understood to mean that the imperial government would no longer press the improved code upon their attention, an impression the earl took an early opportunity of correcting. The fact was, the British cabinet had imagined that if all appearance of coercion was removed, the Jamaica legislature would quietly adopt some measure that would be satisfactory, an expectation that was not to be realised. At length a bill was passed, altered in many particulars from that of 1826, but still retaining many of the most objectionable features, and prohibiting all meetings of slaves between sunset and sunrise. The governor gave his assent, but expressed his regret that such a clause should have been inserted. The king refused his consent.

The death of George IV. rendered it necessary to call a new assembly. Before this body the question was once more reopened. The governor explained that he had quite anticipated the fate which had befallen the last bill, and had only given his assent to it, that the latest labours of the assembly in the way of amelioration might come fully under the consideration of the ministry at home. Now, however, he had been "expressly instructed to pass no law restraining the liberty of religious worship."<sup>2</sup> An attempt was then made to revive the slave law of 1826, with all its objectionable clauses unexpunged; but, ill-judged as the proceedings of the legislators were, this was too bad to be adopted, and the bill was lost by a majority of eight. A law giving unrestricted liberty to free people of colour was, however, passed.

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<sup>1</sup> 1874 runaways were confined in workhouses on the 28th of September, 1827. Three parishes made no returns, so there were probably more.



Early in 1831 the governor once more convened the assembly. It was at length clear to the most infatuated that the people of Great Britain would tolerate no further trifling with the slave code. It was felt to be an outrage that in Demerara, Trinidad, and other crown colonies, the condition of bondsmen had been improved, while in Jamaica all attempts had failed through the obstinacy of a free assembly. According to a return published at this time, it appeared that there were 307,254 slaves in the island. The island debt was accumulating. It had now reached £882,054, of which £349,205 were treasury certificates, or checks—in other words, inconvertible paper money.<sup>1</sup>

Ruin was not altogether a false cry, for in twenty years 22,661 slaves had been sold under writs of *venditioni exponas*.<sup>2</sup> It was dangerous to go too far in defiance of the loudly-expressed demands from home, and so in February, 1831, a slave code, stripped of sectarian clauses, passed the assembly, and on the 1st of November it came into operation. It was bad enough; it left the whip in the driver's hands, and cruel punishments could still be inflicted by irresponsible men. There were those who sought to make it better, but only three voted for abolishing the flogging of women, only two supported a motion for inquiry into the desirability of allowing slaves to purchase their freedom, and not a few still strove to retain the sectarian clauses. Though too late to preserve the island from the terrible consequences of oppression, the measure passed, and on the 24th of February the earl prorogued the legislature, with warm congratulations on having adopted measures which gave equal liberties with whites to free coloured people, and provided for the better government of slaves.

In the October session a demand was presented from the imperial government for a fixed sum for the support of troops and barrack accommodation. At first it was feared that this would be made a perpetual charge, which the assembly could never modify or abolish, and on this point the long struggle, beginning with the Stuart dynasty and ending in 1728, had made the colony very cautious. It was, however, explained that all the home government really asked was an annual grant, to be appropriated at the discretion of the military authorities. An estimate based on the

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<sup>1</sup> A second fair was held in August of the following year.

<sup>2</sup> Governor's speech, "Votes," 1830, p. 10. See also pp. 27–29.

actual cost of the five preceding years was suggested. At last £111,200 currency was voted for the support of troops, and £10,000 more for barracks, with the understanding that the force should not fall below three thousand white men.

Hitherto the time of the house had been frittered away in discussing little items of military expenditure. Often an outlay of a few pounds, which could have been at once disposed of by a respectable parish vestry, led to long discussions. More serious consequences resulted from the commissioners of public accounts (really a committee of the whole house) spending considerable time in determining the appropriation of the sums voted for general military purposes. Often troops could not be removed from one station to another, though decimated by dysentery or fever, for want of funds, or permission to employ money for the purpose. The barracks were mostly built in unwholesome places, and ill-provided with the comforts required in such a climate. In 1820 and the two following years, one thousand and fifty-seven died out of a force of three thousand.

Officers were generally willing to advance money for necessary purposes in an emergency, but were too often refused repayment. On one occasion a company of British troops was compelled to lie on the ground in Spanish Town for months, because beams and hooks from which to swing their hammocks were refused. One year, while Sir John Keene was in command, the mortality rose to an unprecedented degree. Iron bedsteads were recommended by the medical men instead of hammocks, and the assembly ordered them to be supplied, advancing £1500 to a contractor, who never made them. Sir John Keene procured them himself, but the house refused to refund the cost; nor was the amount paid until the British government ordered the removal of a portion of the troops.

<sup>1</sup> The terms of contract for provisions and other supplies were often grossly violated, while complaints from the military authorities were rarely heeded, for the transgressors had generally friends in the assembly.

The closing days of 1831, and the opening weeks of 1832, were destined to be marked by a series of sad and startling events. A negro rebellion was no novelty in the history of the colony. From

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1831, pp. 120, 121.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1831, pp. 161–163.

the outbreak in Clarendon, towards the close of the seventeenth century, down to 1824, there had been a series of insurrections more or less alarming, but none were really formidable. They were confined to comparatively few active offenders; and though the white inhabitants were often startled by reports that extensive conspiracies had been organised to destroy them all and seize the country, such reports were either found to be greatly exaggerated, or their premature disclosure prevented their execution. The war with the Maroons, terminating with the peace of 1738, and the rebellion of the Trelawny tribe, in 1795, were far more serious than any slave-rising. The outbreak in 1831 was the first really dangerous rebellion, and was alike deplorable both with regard to the properties destroyed, the planters and other persons murdered, and the terrible retaliation with which the deluded rebels were visited.

For some time there had been considerable excitement among the slaves. They could not be unconcerned listeners to the discussions at their masters' tables, and in all places where white men congregated, relative to the doings in the British parliament, nor would they fail to note the terms of condemnation in which they were alluded to. It has been common to attribute the rebellion to the missionaries; some have gone so far as to ascribe it to their direct instigation, chiefly to that of the Baptists. A more unfounded and scandalous libel was never uttered. The very utmost that can be truthfully said on the matter is this:—That a few missionaries, in their sympathy with the slaves, and their enthusiastic but justifiable hopes of their ultimate deliverance, occasionally forgot the volcano on which they lived, and gave utterance to words of encouragement, and offered prayers liable to be misunderstood by their illiterate but excitable auditors. Thus some may have become possessed with the idea that what was only a matter for prayer and hope, was really a boon conferred by the king, but kept back by the planters.

The despatch of Lord Goderich to Earl Belmore, dated March 1st, and written soon after tidings of the rebellion had reached England, assigned very different reasons for the outbreak, reasons which had not escaped the notice of the governor. His lordship

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1830, pp. 22–27.

dwelt upon the fact that nearly eight years had passed since the first communication had been made to the government of Jamaica, urging the amelioration of the condition of the slaves, yet it was not until 1831 that an act was passed to which the royal assent could be given; and that act fell far short of the wishes of the imperial government, and was in some respects less favourable than that of 1826, which was rejected on account of its religious clauses.

In May, 1831, rumours of discontent among the slaves in nearly all the West Indian colonies reached England, and on the 3rd of June a royal proclamation was forwarded to all the governors, declaring that no order had been sent out for the emancipation of the slaves, and enjoining them to render entire submission to the laws, and obedience to their masters. Earl Belmore, for reasons which at the time were approved of by the colonial secretary, did not publish the proclamation. Had he done so, one of the saddest pages in Jamaica history would never have been written. On the 20th of July, on the receipt of the proclamation, Earl Belmore wrote that "the slave population were collectively sound and well disposed." Yet in that very despatch he alluded to numerous parochial meetings then being held among the planters, at which resolutions were passed far more calculated "to disturb the minds of the slaves than any report they may have casually heard of something being intended for their benefit, which their owners endeavour to withhold from them."

On the 6th of September the earl sent home copies of several resolutions which had been passed at these meetings, and published in the newspapers. In some cases the meetings had been presided over by the custos of the parish, but this did not prevent violent and intemperate utterances and resolutions, as the governor truly said. In many cases it was resolved that allegiance was no longer due to the imperial government, that protection from some other power was desirable, and that parliament meditated the subversion of all their rights in property without compensation.<sup>1</sup>

At these meetings delegates were appointed to meet in Spanish Town during the sitting of the legislature, and they met accordingly. The assembly refused to listen to the suggestion that

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<sup>1</sup> Blyth's "Missionary Reminiscences," p. 57; Lord Belmore's despatch.

they should amend the yet imperfect slave code, and rejected resolutions proposed to mitigate some notorious acts of cruelty.<sup>1</sup> While the larger slaveholders were thus proceeding in a manner calculated to plunge the whole colony into disorder, the effects produced were studiously concealed from the governor.

At the end of July he had addressed circulars to the custodes, requesting them to acquaint him with any circumstances which might arise rendering any steps necessary to remove erroneous impressions from the minds of the slaves. Though it afterwards appeared that the idea that the king had made them free was known to be entertained by slaves in St. James's, Trelawny, and other districts, no effort was made by those in authority to remove the misconception. Well might General Sir Willoughby Cotton write, after his arrival at the seat of insurrection:<sup>2</sup> "That the overseers, or attorneys, or magistrates should not have acquainted the executive government with the extent to which the determination of the negroes had gone all around the district, not to work after New Year's day without being made free, is most astonishing; as it would appear to have been known on almost all the estates that these were the sentiments of the negroes."

The Christmas of 1831 fell on a Sunday, and many of the overseers wished to make this day count as one of the three to which slaves were entitled at this season. The majority of the slaves in the north-western parishes had determined not to turn out at all. On the 28th of December, the Rev. G. Blyth counted sixteen incendiary fires from his residence in St. James's.<sup>3</sup> The contest had clearly begun, yet, had the militia been more efficient, the outbreak would have been quelled. The exploits of this body were afterwards greatly extolled in the local papers, but their first encounter imparted confidence only to the rebels. Colonel Grignon, better known locally as "Little breeches," with a party of militia, met a number of insurgents soon after the outbreak commenced. He gained what others would have thought an advantage. Many of the slaves were killed and more wounded. His party had only lost one man killed and four wounded, yet he thought fit to retreat to Montego Bay, and most of the white people deserted their

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1831, October session, pp. 86, 108, 132, 197.

<sup>2</sup> Despatch, January 5, 1832.

<sup>3</sup> "Missionary Reminiscences," p. 57.

properties and fled. To the credit of numbers of the head negroes on these properties, it is stated that in many cases they preserved them from the torch of the incendiary. This was especially the case with those slaves who had been under the teaching of the Presbyterians.

Intelligence of the outbreak having reached the seat of government, martial law was proclaimed on the 30th of December, and Sir Willoughby Cotton hastened with reinforcements to the scene of action, invested by the Governor with all the military authority it was possible to confer. The general established his headquarters at Montego Bay, and on the 2nd of January issued a brief soldier-like address to the negroes. He assured them that the idea that the king had made them free was entirely without foundation. He pointed out that resistance was folly, and that though rebels deserved death, yet if they would surrender, mercy would be shown to all but the actual ringleaders. For some of these rewards were offered, three hundred dollars each for slaves known as Colonel Gardner, Captain Dove, Captain Johnson, and Samuel Sharp. This last was generally called "Daddy Sharp," and was described in the proclamation as "preacher to the rebels."

Troops being sent out in all directions, a party of the 22nd Regiment came up with a considerable number of insurgents, and killed thirty, wounding many more. A day or two after, a detachment of the 84th encountered another body of rebels, and dispersed it with considerable loss. At Hazelnymph and Catadupa similiar successes were achieved, but the general soon discovered that he was not likely to encounter any combined force, and in one of his earliest despatches he observed that the rebels were in small scattered parties.

The slaves in Jamaica, like other half-civilised people, never gave any indication of ability for extended organisation. In 1831 there was a sort of general under standing, but no combined movement. Still, the scattered bands could do much harm; and for many days after the arrival of the general, he saw, night after night, incendiary fires breaking out in all directions, while the mountains of Trelawny, St. James, and Hanover were occupied by considerable bands of negroes, who were all of them ready for mischief.

Troops, both of English soldiers and militia, were scouring the country in all directions. In the meantime the work of retribution began; great numbers expiated their offences by death, and others

received severe floggings. General Cotton, was, however, a humane man, and as early as possible he commenced a tour of the disturbed districts, addressing the negroes he could get together, kindly but firmly. He also issued an order forbidding the destruction of their houses.

While thus endeavouring to bring matters to an end with as little loss of life as possible, loud complaints appeared in many newspapers of his conduct—mistaken leniency it was called. The importation of bloodhounds from Cuba was advocated by some people, and a great deal said of what the militia would do if they were only allowed freedom of action. How they would have acted was clearly indicated by the conduct of a certain lieutenant. Arriving at an estate which had just before been visited by General Cotton, he assembled the slaves, called out one of their number, and without any trial whatever, ordered him to be shot. For this offence he was tried by a court-martial, when he coolly stated that he had several times done the same thing, and his conduct had been highly commended, but in this particular instance he was not aware that the general had previously visited the estate. He was acquitted.<sup>1</sup>

The anxiety of the general to prevent unnecessary effusion of blood left no cause for complaint that mercy was overstrained. Only a dozen white men fell at the hands of the insurgents, but, up to the 4th of February, ninety-four reputed rebels had been hung up in the town of Montego Bay alone, and frequently from fifteen to twenty were flogged on a single day. Some twenty-one had been shot or hung in Falmouth, and double that number flogged. All through the district the work of retribution was proceeding to a more limited extent. Martial law was proclaimed for another month, for most of the ringleaders were still at liberty, and numbers of slaves remained out in the woods.

In other parishes a spirit of discontent was plainly visible, though not attended by such serious consequences. In St. Elizabeths a large body of negroes, suffered to escape by Colonel Grignon's uncalled-for retreat, had crossed over the hills, and effected a junction with the disaffected in that parish, especially those at Y.S. estate. The militia attacked them with success; many were slain, and great numbers taken prisoners, more in fact than

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<sup>1</sup> "Courant," January 27, 1832.

could be put into the crowded jail, and a ship in Black River harbour was consequently converted into a temporary prison. A ship of war and a wing of the 77th Regiment were at once sent down. In this parish, as in those on the north side, properties deserted by the whites were protected by faithful slaves; and many prisoners declared that they never would have joined the rebels had they not been told that the king's troops would not fight against them. Most of the estates resumed work, the slaves being greatly assured by a timely visit by the indefatigable general. An attempt was made, by two leading insurgents from St. James's, to incite the Accompong Maroons to join them, but it entirely failed.

Kingston and Spanish Town remained perfectly quiet. In addition to the troops stationed in both places, a merchant ship was anchored opposite the end of each of the streets and lanes in Kingston leading to the harbour.<sup>1</sup> These sixteen vessels, manned by 360 seamen, and mounting thirty-five guns, under the command of Captain Barclay, a noted trader of those days, could have rendered essential service in the event of an outbreak. Clarendon, though the scene of the first insurrection, and the early home of the Maroons, remained perfectly quiet. Manchester was more excited. Several negroes suffered death, and the Rev. Mr. Pfeiffer, a most estimable Moravian minister, was arrested on the 11th of January.

On the same day there was a fight in another part of the parish, between some slaves and the militia, the former losing six of their number; but general tranquillity was soon restored.

In Portland the people on three estates refused to work, and, on soldiers being sent for, fled into the woods. On another estate the men fled, but the women continued to work. In the neighbouring parish of St. George's, and in St. Thomas in the East, there was some disaffection, but no actual collision took place, though at Port Antonio, Manchioneel, and Morant Bay several were executed, and many others. The "Jamaica Courant," was not likely to describe in gentle terms the offences of these people, yet its virulent description of negro iniquity furnishes no adequate explanation of the reason for these inflictions.

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<sup>1</sup> The city is laid out in straight lines, the streets and lanes running from east to west and north to south. The latter are visible throughout their entire length to the harbour. A well-directed cannon-ball could be sent up most of them to the open country beyond.



On the 1st of February Earl Belmore reached Montego Bay. He found three hundred and sixty-three prisoners in the jail, and ascertained that there was a general inclination among the negroes yet in the woods to surrender, could they be assured of kind treatment. He accordingly lost no time in issuing a proclamation, offering free pardon to all who would surrender in ten days, excepting only the actual ringleaders and incendiaries. Two days after he declared martial law to be at an end. Then was heard a loud cry of discontent among those whose vengeance was not yet satiated, and complaint was made that the governor, in his proclamation, had said that "unlawful proceedings on the part of the slaves can have no other tendency than to defeat the humane intentions of the government to improve their condition." By some occult process of reasoning, it was maintained that this was an intimation that what the slaves failed to obtain by force would be conceded to them by the imperial parliament. This proved to be true, but assuredly Lord Belmore's words did not declare or imply it.

To use the late deplorable events as means by which the shackles of slavery could be bound more firmly, was the undoubted purpose of many. To silence the missionaries and to destroy their chapels, seemed one way by which this purpose could be effected. On all sides it was asserted that the rebellion had been caused by the teaching of missionaries, and particularly by that of the Baptists and Wesleyans. The former, it was said, were the most guilty; indeed, the rebellion was frequently spoken of as the Baptist war. The most ridiculous stories obtained currency; a meeting of four Baptist ministers, to open a new chapel at Salter's Hill, in St. James's, arranged months before, in anticipation of the Christmas holidays, was adduced as proof of complicity in the plot.<sup>1</sup>

The Kingston papers were filled with preposterous stories. One day<sup>2</sup> the "Courant" announced that a Methodist preacher was cruising off the north side in a small schooner, keeping out at sea by day and running in shore at night, to communicate with the rebels. Unfortunately, for melodramatic writers, the name of this clerical Paul Jones was not mentioned. In the next day's issue the concentrated hatred of the upholders of slavery was displayed more strikingly. Intelligence had reached Kingston that Messrs. Knibb, Abbot, and Whitehorne were under arrest. A most virulent article on the event terminated thus:—"The Baptist ministers are now in custody, and as we are satisfied they would not have been

taken into custody upon slight grounds by Sir Willoughby Cotton, we hope he will afford them fair and impartial justice. Shooting is, however, too honourable a death for men whose conduct has occasioned so much bloodshed and the loss of so much property. There are fine hanging woods in St. James's and Trelawny, and we do sincerely hope that the bodies of all the Methodist preachers who may be convicted of sedition may diversify the scene. After this our hostility, even to men so reckless of blood, carnage, and slaughter, shall cease."

Even louder were the shouts of triumph when Mr. Burchell on the next day (January 7th) arrived from England, and was arrested. Mr. Barlow and Dr. Prince, also identified with the Baptist society, were taken into custody at Annotto Bay. No accusation was too gross, no language too scurrilous to employ in reference to these gentlemen. The most iniquitous means were resorted to in the hope of obtaining some legal proof of their complicity in the rebellion. Leading questions were put by officers in the militia and others to prisoners, in the hope of eliciting some answer which might criminate the hated missionaries. Even in the midst of pitiless floggings the punishment was on some occasions, suspended, in the hope that, in the midst of excruciating pain, words would be uttered of which use could be made.

If English gentlemen like Mr. Roby, the collector of customs at Montego Bay, interposed to obtain simple justice for a prisoner, or to defend innocent men from infuriated mobs, they were denounced as accomplices. Roby was actually burnt in effigy on a gallows, though it was well known that he had no sympathy with Baptists, as such. The record of the un-English treatment of missionaries at this period may be found in many works,<sup>1</sup> and is not given in detail here except where necessary to the general narrative.

On the 26th of January, a society called the Colonial Church Union was formed. Its professed object was to defend, by constitutional means, the interests of the colony, to expose the alleged falsehoods of the Antislavery Society, and to uphold the church and kirk. The destruction of dissenting chapels was another and principal object not noted in the programme. Immediately

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<sup>1</sup> Cox's "History of Baptist Missions," vol. ii. p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> January 5, 1832.

after the cessation of martial law, the work commenced. Salter's Hill chapel, the one before alluded to, was the first object of vengeance; it was set on fire by a party of St. James militia, led by an English half-pay naval officer. On the 7th of February, Mr. Knibb's chapel, which had been used for barracks, was destroyed by another party of militia, and on the same day another chapel at Stewart Town was partially demolished. Next day, at noon, the spacious chapel at Montego Bay, in which Mr. Burchell had often preached to nearly two thousand people, was entirely destroyed; and the Baptist Chapel at Lucea shared the same fate. Chapels at Brown's Town, Savannah la Mar, Fullers' Field, and St. Anns' Bay, followed. At Rio Bueno, the solid stone structure was too much for the destructive powers of the infuriated mob. The leaders in these doings were men well known in the community. Many names have been preserved:<sup>1</sup> staff and other officers of militia, magistrates, members of assembly, public officials, and even the rector of Hanover, subsequently shot in a duel, appear in the list of incendiaries and destroyers.

The governor issued a proclamation denouncing these outrages, and calling on the custodes and magistrates to do their duty; but martial law was not proclaimed again, as it would have been if negroes had been the aggressors, and sugar works instead of chapels the objects of attack. No one was ever convicted for complicity in these proceedings. Other outrages followed the proclamation, and an attempt was made to burn Wesley chapel, in Kingston. This affair was thus referred to in a city paper:—"This act of outrage we sincerely deplore, as those who in mere wantonness would set fire to the chapel, might destroy the property of innocent individuals. If the populace are determined to sweep these dens of infamy from the face of the earth, the best plan would be to pull them down."<sup>2</sup>

While these events were disturbing the minds of all right thinking people, some of the leading negro rebels were arrested and executed; Wilberforce and Wellington at the end of January,

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<sup>1</sup> "Life of Knibb;" "Life of Burchell;" "The Voice of Jubilee;" Clark's "Memorials of Baptist Missionaries;" Cox's "History of Baptist Missions," vol. ii.; Duncan's "Wesleyan Missions in Jamaica," pp. 268-356; Brown's "History of Missions" vols. i. and ii.; "Moravians in Jamaica," p. 84-112; "Jamaica Courant," 1832; "Narrative of Recent Events (Baptist)," &c.

Dove and Gardner about the middle of the next month. The Baptist missionaries, Knibb, Burchell, and Gardner, were committed for trial, bail for their appearance being accepted. The result of the attempt to implicate them in the rebellion had, however, been indicated by a circumstance which had happened in Manchester. The Rev. H.G.Pfeiffer, who, after his arrest, had been confined in the gallery of Mandeville church, was brought to trial on the 15th of January, before a court-martial of thirteen militia officers. Some slave witnesses deposed that on a certain Sunday he had told them in the chapel that they were all to be free after Christmas; but the chief witness, it was proved, had not been in the place at all on the Sunday referred to. Other persons contradicted one another both as to time and place. For the defence, a host of witnesses, hastily brought from the distant place at which Mr. Pfeiffer preached, declared that on none of the Sundays spoken of had he uttered words even susceptible of such a misconception. Mr. Pfeiffer had incurred the displeasure of many influential men by insisting that the wishes of the absent proprietors of Frontier estate, in St. Elizabeth, should be carried out with respect to the instruction of the slaves; but prejudice could not convict in the total absence of all proof of guilt, and on the following day a verdict of not guilty was returned.<sup>1</sup>

Towards the end of March the Baptist missionaries were brought to trial for inciting slaves to rebellion. The grand jury of Cornwall ignored the bill against Burchell, but found true bills against Gardner and Knibb. On the 23rd, the former was brought to trial. Had his persecutors desired to expose themselves to ridicule, they could not have succeeded better: the case broke down in every particular. The attorney-general threw up his brief, and the chief justice directed an acquittal. A *nolle prosequi* was at once entered in the case of Mr. Knibb. Three hundred persons were in attendance to swear that these missionaries had never incited them to rebellion.<sup>2</sup>

Another trial in Kingston followed, which awakened the most intense interest. Mr. Edward Jordon, one of the most estimable coloured gentlemen in the colony, was at this time joint editor and

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<sup>1</sup> Cox's "History of Baptist Missions," vol. ii. pp. 145-147, &c.

<sup>2</sup> "Courant," February 18, 1832.

proprietor of the "Watchman" newspaper. On the 7th of April a reference was made in that paper to a certain member of the house of assembly, in which was the following sentence:—"Now that the member for Westmoreland has come to our side, we shall be happy with him, and other friends of humanity, to give a long pull, and a strong pull, and a pull altogether, until we bring the system down by the run Knock off the fetters, and let the oppressed go free." Such language was pronounced sedition, and Mr. Jordon was put on trial. The prosecution broke down through the impossibility of proving that Mr. Jordon was really editor of the paper.<sup>3</sup> It was well known in the city that he did not write the paragraph, or even see it before it appeared. The fact that such language should be regarded as seditious, is one of the best illustrations that could be given of the state of society and feeling in the colony at this time.

The sad list of executions and punishments on account of the rebellion was not yet complete, Through April, slave courts were sitting, and many slaves were condemned to death, or floggings of two or three hundred lashes.

A trial held at Morant Bay, on the 15th of March, illustrated the feelings of many planters on the great question of slavery. The presiding justice was a Mr. McCornock, a justice of the peace: four others were associated with him at the trial in question. The culprit was a mulatto, named Barclay; the charge was rebellion. The trial was a patient one, and the prisoner was defended: he was, however, found guilty. McCornock, in passing sentence, said to the prisoner: "You, and many more of your class in different parts of the island, have been led by evil, designing, and discontented individuals, to believe that the king had made you free, and your owners unjustly withheld that freedom from you, and this belief has urged you on to acts which have brought you into the fearful state in which you stand. The king cannot make you free, and whoever has told you so, has told you a falsehood."<sup>1</sup> Twomonths after, the "Courant" echoed these sentiments in a still more startling manner. "Be it remembered that our slaves are not

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<sup>1</sup> "Jamaica Courant," Feb. 13, 1832; "Moravians in Jamaica," pp. 90-96.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., May 30; Cox's "History of Baptist Missions," vol. ii, p. 127, &c.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., April 18, 1832; "Watchman," &c.

his Majesty's subjects: they are the property of their owners, by laws which his Majesty's ancestors have recognised, and which are now in force."

Throughout Jamaica, the attitude of the planters was more defiant than ever. But in England, the news of the rebellion and the unwarranted treatment of the missionaries deepened the conviction that slavery must be abolished. On the 23rd of March, Lord Howick reminded the House of Commons that since 1823, three successive colonial secretaries had sought to induce the Jamaica legislature to adopt the orders in council for the amelioration of the condition of the slaves, but their remonstrances had proved in vain. The time for expostulation, he added, had now terminated.

The legislature of Jamaica seemed resolved to prove that his warning was true, when it met on the 28th of February. Earl Belmore stated in his opening speech that he had been commanded to submit to their consideration measures for the amelioration of the condition of the slaves. The house immediately declined to consider any measures not emanating from themselves.<sup>1</sup> Petitions were presented from several parishes, denouncing sectarians, and praying for the expulsion of all missionaries. The newspapers were filled with abuse of English philanthropists, and of any in or out of parliament who expressed sympathy with slaves; and thus encouraged, the assembly proceeded to greater extremes. Early in March, a despatch from Lord Goderich was sent down by the governor: its proposals and suggestions for more considerate treatment were rudely rejected,<sup>2</sup> and some resolutions moved by excited members, too outrageous for the assembly, blinded as it was, to adopt. One member proposed to put all missionaries on their trial, and moved that none should be allowed to leave the island; also, that any one who might hereafter be allowed to preach, should first pay a stamp duty of £500 on his license. Another gentleman went further, and proposed perpetual expulsion.<sup>3</sup>

The British cabinet and his Majesty's council were not treated with more deference. Mr. Berry moved that the orders in council should be carried into the square before the house, and burned by the common hangman: to facilitate the process, he tossed the copy he held over the bar.<sup>4</sup> Mr. Stamp suggested utter disregard of the orders, and then began to talk wildly of physical force, and the

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<sup>1</sup> "Jamaica Courant," April 18, 1834,

ability of the militia to resist with bayonets the forces of the mother country.

A series of resolutions followed the hot discussion, containing, among other matters, the assertion that the worst slaves were those who had been best treated.<sup>5</sup> The house soon after manumitted, or in other ways recompensed eighty slaves, for their good conduct during the rebellion.<sup>6</sup> It would be interesting to know what their previous treatment had been.

The Hon. Richard Barrett, the speaker, and the Hon. Abraham Johnson were appointed to proceed to England, and instructed to represent the condition of the colony at the next sitting of the imperial parliament,—the body the assembly so often declared had no right to control its proceedings. £1000 was voted to each of these gentlemen to defray expenses. Their mission was to represent the ruinous consequences of the policy which had been pursued in relation to the colony—to afford information as to the actual condition of the slaves—to oppose the progress of opinions which, it was said, had stirred up rebellion—to ascertain the views of his Majesty's government—and, last of all, to ask the said government, if they emancipated the slaves, "in what state they expected to leave the island?"<sup>1</sup> All this being settled, an address was prepared to the king, praying to be relieved of the expense of supporting the troops, followed by another, complaining of the injustice of patent offices being held by absentees.<sup>2</sup>

During the session an inquiry was instituted by the assembly into the causes of the rebellion. The report of the committee was presented on the 15th of April, too soon for the excited, angry feelings to have calmed down, if the committee had desired to do justice. The evidence attached to the report is entirely *ex-parte* in its character; no missionary was examined, or any one known to regard their operations with favour. After this partial investigation, it was reported that several causes had contributed

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1832, pp. 3–19.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1832, p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> Clark's "Memorials of Baptist Missions," p. 129; Duncan's "Wesleyan Missions," p. 308.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 308, 309.

<sup>5</sup> "Votes," pp. no, III.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 1832 pp. 163, 167.

to excite the slaves to rebellion. The most influential was “the increasing and unconstitutional interference of his Majesty’s ministers with local legislation in regard to the passing of laws for their government,” and the intemperate expression of sentiments on the part of his Majesty’s ministers and other persons in Great Britain on the subject of slavery. It was asserted, secondly, that delusive expectations of freedom had been produced in the minds of slaves by crafty, ill-disposed persons. Thirdly, that it was owing to “a mischievous abuse existing in the system adopted by different religious sects in the island, termed Baptists, Wesleyan Methodists, and Moravians, by their recognising gradations of rank among such slaves as had become converts to their doctrines; whereby the less ambitious and more peaceable among them were made the dupes of the more artful and intelligent, who had been selected by the preachers of those particular sects to fill the higher offices in their chapels, under the denomination of rulers, elders, leaders, and helpers.”

The committee assigned yet another cause, namely, the free discussions of the white inhabitants on the measures proposed in England. Yet from this they digressed to the missionaries, particularly the Baptists, who, it was asserted, taught the slaves to believe that they could not serve two masters; and thus led them to resist the temporal master, under the idea that they would thereby render themselves more acceptable to the spiritual one.

The evidence on which these charges were based utterly failed to bear out the assertions made. Mr. Codrington, of St. Thomas in the East, thought he heard Buswell, a slave, say that he overheard a driver tell his wife that Parson Burton had told him that the king had made the negroes free after New Year’s day. He also thought that the said slave had said that Mr. Burton uttered the words on the Sunday before Christmas day. Mr. Codrington, in another part of his evidence, said that there had been much excitement among the slaves since August, owing to the unguarded manner in which the acts of the imperial government had been discussed by the planters.

The speaker, Mr. Barrett, also custos of St. James, stated that he had examined the papers of Mr. Burchell, but found nothing

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<sup>1</sup> “Votes,” pp. 186–239.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 240–245.



whatever that could in any way criminate him. Nevertheless, he was decidedly opposed to the plan of leadership prevailing among the Baptists, as it was calculated to enable evil disposed persons to foment rebellion. These two gentlemen are fair examples of the kind of evidence adduced—a good deal of mere hearsay and strong opinion, formed not so much on the basis of actual facts, as on mere inferential deductions. Two clergymen supplied several confessions they had taken from the lips of convicted criminals: these clearly show that the negroes thought the king had made them free, but that the planters kept back the boon. It is clear that some Baptist leaders had a good deal to do with planning the outbreak, but there is absolutely nothing to cast blame on their pastors. The charge is so incredible that it would not be noticed, but it is even now frequently repeated, and it is therefore desirable to show that no evidence whatever was ever given in support of it.

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By the same committee it was stated that the losses incurred by the rebellion amounted to £1,154,000 cur rency. In St. James, one hundred properties suffered to the extent of £606,000; in Hanover, sixty properties, to the amount of £425,000. The balance was distributed between Westmoreland, St. Elizabeth, Manchester, Portland, and St. Thomas in the East; but in the three last places the claims were chiefly for slaves put to death. The expenses of repressing the rebellion were at first put down at £161,000, but finally reached £200,000 currency.

The house was prorogued at the end of April, but it had previously agreed to an address to the governor, who had been recalled, and left for England on the 12th of June, 1832. He was said to be amiable in all the relations of private life, but he had not the strength of character necessary for the crisis. It is questionable if any good man regretted his departure from the colony. It is certain that the Church Unionists felt it to be a fatal blow to their projects.

The West Indian party in England was as unwise as the planters in its action, and hastened the final abolition of that system of slavery it was so anxious to uphold. In April, at a large and influential meeting held in London, the blame of all that had taken place in Jamaica was attributed to the English government, and an

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1832; "Evidence," pp. 307–347.

indemnity claimed for the losses sustained. On both sides of the Atlantic the West Indian party felt quite confident that it could manage slaves well enough if they were only left to its legislation. The British nation was not, however, prepared to endorse the sentiments of Mr. McCornock and the editor of the "Courant." Slaves were his Majesty's subjects, in the judgment of the people of Great Britain, and must be legislated for accordingly.

On the 24th of May a petition was presented to the House of Lords, signed by 135,000 persons in or near London, praying for the speedy abolition of slavery; twenty-one petitions, signed by 163,815 persons in the provinces, were soon after handed in by one nobleman. Mr. T.F.Buxton, in the House of Commons, moved for a committee to prepare the way for the speedy abolition of slavery; and though defeated by the ministry, it was soon clear that the nation would tolerate no more trifling with the gigantic wrong. Next year its doom was pronounced.

In the meantime a true nobleman, not only by royal patent, but by the grace of God, was sent to govern Jamaica. On the 26th of July, 1832, the Earl of Mulgrave landed, and at once commenced an administration of untarnished lustre, of uncompromising fidelity. Mr. Cuthbert, president of the Council, had acted as lieutenant-governor during the brief interregnum.

The Earl of Mulgrave, immediately after his arrival, made a tour of the island, and very carefully examined the condition of those districts which had been the chief scenes of the late rebellion. He saw little or nothing to confirm the idea, so freely entertained in some quarters, that another outbreak was impending. A very different source of apprehension presented itself to his mind. The Colonial Church Union was endangering the peace of the community far more than any slave confederation had ever done. Some most disgraceful proceedings had already taken place at Savannah la Mar, and when the earl reached that little town, he saw many painful indications of the sanguinary spirit of the unionists.

Towards the close of October, Earl Mulgrave met the assembly. The reply to his opening address made it evident that the time for expostulation with Jamaica legislators had gone by. In a very conciliatory and guarded manner the earl alluded to his recent tour, and expressed his conviction that no further acts of insubordination on the part of the slaves could be expected; and with great delicacy he alluded to the unlawful proceedings of the

Colonial Union. He informed the members that he was instructed not to press the adoption of the order in council of the 2nd of November, 1831, as a committee of the imperial parliament was engaged, at the instance of the West Indian body in England, in investigating the actual state of affairs in the slave colonies. Still he hoped they would, of their own accord, initiate measures of an ameliorating character. He also announced a bill affording relief to Jamaica in consequence of the losses sustained during the late rebellion; and assured them that he would faithfully examine into the real state of the island, and as faithfully report his impressions.

To this address a long and petulant reply was returned. The assembly bluntly declared that it was no party to the inquiry instigated by the West Indian proprietors at home, nor would it admit that the House of Commons could institute any effectual inquiry in relation to the social institutions of the colony. It had never recognised the parliamentary resolutions of 1823, or admitted the right of the House of Commons to legislate on the internal affairs of the island. Jamaica was not represented in the British parliament; and as actual representation was the fountain from which just legislation must flow, any attempt to dictate to the assembly or people of Jamaica would be tyranny. The irate legislators then proceeded to express their gratification that his excellency had not been compelled to make the unavailing effort to induce them to give effect to the late order in council, which only proved how unfit theorists, who had never visited the colony, were to legislate for it. They were, however, much gratified to find that his excellency intended to examine thoroughly, and report faithfully, the state of affairs, as they had previously had to complain that distance, want of adequate information, bigotry, and political intrigue, had caused them to be misrepresented in the mother country.

To this long tirade the governor calmly replied, thanking them for their personal references to himself, while expressing regret at the general tone of the address. Leaving them to settle with the West Indian body in England the question of the parliamentary committee, he reminded them that their own speaker, accredited by them as their representative, had pressed the appointment of this committee on the government at home. He could not listen to their denial of the right of the imperial parliament to legislate on the internal affairs of the colony, "without asserting, in the most unequivocal manner, the transcendent powers of the imperial

legislature, regulated only by its own discretion.” The earl then adroitly turned upon them the complaint that distance led to misapprehension, and suggested that they also might obtain a larger measure of consideration from the reformed parliament than they expected.

The assembly soon after proceeded to pass a resolution, in which the view of the governor as to the transcendent powers of the British parliament was stated to be subversive of the common rights, and dangerous to the lives and liberties of the colonists! They acknowledged the supremacy of the sovereign, but could not admit the supremacy of a portion of his Majesty’s subjects in the parent state over another portion of those subjects in Jamaica.

During the session the governor, in compliance with instructions from home, called upon the legislature to provide indemnification to the proprietors of the chapels which had been destroyed. To this, reply was made that, while deploring such acts of lawless violence, the house could not afford compensation to all who had suffered during the late disturbances, and it would be an act of injustice to indemnify a few. Moreover, the proprietors had a remedy at law. When this nonsense was penned, every man in Jamaica knew that proceedings had been taken against the men who destroyed the chapels at Ocho Rios and Oracabessa, but that the grand jury had ignored the bills.<sup>1</sup>

The planters were, to some extent, assisted by the imperial parliament. A loan of £300,000 was voted; another of £200,000 followed next year, and the colony was relieved of the payment of the troops.

Some other proceedings in the assembly, during this session, showed that its members not only disputed the superior privileges and power of the imperial parliament, but actually claimed rights not belonging to that body. For an indefinite period, the assembly had arrogated to itself and its committees the right of examining witnesses on oath. Earl Mulgrave imagined that this right had been conferred by some express enactment, for which, however, he sought in vain. A message was sent down to the house, pointing out that this custom was unknown in the British House of Commons, and that, in the absence of some law on the subject, no prosecution for perjury could be maintained by the house. All that could be said in answer was that the custom was interwoven with the constitution of the house, and had never been disputed or called in question before.

With this and other assumptions of high prerogative, the assembly was not willing to concede to the council the privileges enjoyed by the corresponding branch of the imperial legislature. The council had, during this session, framed two bills, one empowering justices of the peace to take probate of wills and other conveyances, the other to enforce the attendance of magistrates on the summary trial of slaves. These were sent down to the assembly, who refused to receive them, declaring that the upper chamber had no right or power to originate bills. The council refused to do any more business until their rights were acknowledged, and a dissolution followed.

The earl, in his remarks on this occasion, pointed out that those who claimed privileges not parliamentary should at least concede those that were to the other branch of the legislature; more especially as their own journals proved that they had often adopted measures originated in the council.<sup>1</sup> He reminded them that his views as to the superior authority of the British parliament, which they had stigmatised as subversive of their rights and dangerous to their lives, were not his, but those of every constitutional lawyer, maintained by the practice of their own courts, and asserted in official correspondence with his predecessors. As a cautious statesman, his lordship reminded them that the question had been raised by themselves, and with them any consequences resulting from its agitation must rest. The vehemence of their denial could not negative the existence of imperial rights, though moderation might avert their exercise. But should the necessity arise, it would not be for any purpose of display, but in furtherance of measures for the ultimate accomplishing of which the parliament of Great Britain was pledged, and then only when experience had shown that the legislature of the colony would not itself adopt them.

Dissolution did not immediately disperse the assembly. A considerable number remained and held meetings, at which resolutions were passed. The new assembly, like that of England, represented an enlarged constituency. Jews and men of colour, possessed of the necessary qualifications, were now eligible to vote.

The Colonial Unions had been declared illegal by the attorney-general, and instructions were received from home respecting their

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<sup>1</sup> Duncan's "Narrative," pp. 321-324. 20

suppression. The parish of St. Anns had long possessed an unenviable notoriety for its hostility to missionaries, and here, too, the union feeling was strong. Two officers of the St. Anns regiment of militia had been very active in inducing their men to enrol themselves as members of the union while on duty, and were in consequence dismissed by the earl. Colonel Hilton loudly condemned this proceeding, and seemed disposed to set the executive at defiance. A brief correspondence ensued, resulting in his removal from the command of the corps.

Colonel Brown, who now succeeded to the command, addressed the men, and in angry terms commented on the conduct of his excellency. Conciliatory measures having failed, the governor ordered the regiment to be mustered on a certain day, and proceeded to the place, accompanied by a few gentlemen, chiefly members of his staff. Efforts were made to stir up the worst passions of the people. Placards were posted about, with such words as "tar and feather him," &c. The governor, on his arrival, found the men mustered, with Colonel Brown at their head. In a few brief and manly words he addressed them, and then ordered Colonel Brown to sheath his sword, and consider himself as dismissed. Many of the officers now tore off their epaulets and trampled them under foot, and in the general confusion nearly all the men broke from the ranks. The governor was quite equal to the emergency, and under the command of the next senior officer the line was reformed, and marched past in review order, although efforts were made by those officers who had sympathised with Brown to prevent them. So for a time the affair ended. A great deal of discussion followed, but this review on the Huntly pasture was the death-blow to the Colonial Unions.

In May, 1833, Mr. Stanley, the colonial secretary, stated in parliament that recommendation, advice, exhortation, had all failed to impress the minds of the infatuated slaveholders, and that the British nation must now, through its representatives, suppress the evil of slavery. He accordingly introduced a series of resolutions providing for its gradual abolition. Children born after

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<sup>1</sup> On the 29th of October, 1753, the assembly passed a resolution, declaring that, by letters patent granted by Charles II., in the time of Sir Thomas Lynch, both branches have the power of proposing laws, statutes, and ordinances, for the public peace, welfare, and good government of the island.

the passing of the act, and all those under six years of age at that time, were declared free. Others, it was proposed, should be registered as apprentices, and work for their former owners for twelve years, if field labourers, and for seven if engaged in domestic work. A loan of fifteen millions sterling to the planters was proposed; and a special magistracy, together with a system of education, was suggested as necessary to the efficient working of the plan. These propositions were warmly discussed: some opposed most vehemently the project of emancipation under any form. Others sought better conditions for the planters, while great numbers thought that too much had been conceded to them. A few argued that as human beings could not be regarded in the light of property, no compensation should be afforded to those who held them as such. Amidst men whose hatred to slavery was undoubted, differences of opinion on this last point arose. Mr. Sturge, and many others connected with the AntiSlavery Society, not only opposed all compensation, but passed a vote of censure on Mr. Buxton for supporting that proposition.<sup>1</sup> In many quarters fears were expressed that the system of apprenticeship would not work well, nor were these fears groundless. Mr. Buxton strongly opposed the provision, and Lord Howick resigned his office as a member of the government through inability to sustain it.

The sterling honesty and sound sense of the British nation settled the vexed questions arising in the course of controversy. It was felt that the planters ought not to suffer exclusively by emancipation, great as their folly had been, for slavery as a system had been recognised and fostered by English laws. The proposed loan of fifteen million pounds was changed into a gift of twenty millions, of which rather more than six millions was appropriated to Jamaica. The term of apprenticeship was limited to six years for field hands, or predials, as they were termed, and four years for house-servants, or non-predials. Children of six years of age were declared free. Stipendiary magistrates, unconnected with the planting or local interests, were appointed, and some very inadequate provision made for education.

So much excitement was occasioned in Jamaica by the discussion of these questions, that on the 29th of June the governor issued a proclamation to guard the slave population from mistaken

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<sup>1</sup> "Life of Buxton," pp. 336–338. "Life of Sturge," pp. 105, 106.

notions as to the intentions of the British government. On the 5th of August he was able to write to the colonial secretary to the effect that the increased amount awarded for compensation had modified previous dissatisfaction, and that a better spirit was beginning to prevail. It was, however, no part of the policy of the colonists to yield a graceful assent even to the inevitable; and on the 19th of the same month the speaker, Mr. Barrett, Mr. Hodgson, the other island delegate, and the island agent, Mr. Burge, presented an address to Earl Grey, who was then premier, protesting against the bill. At the end of that month it passed the House of Lords, and on the 1st of September the Plover mail-packet brought into Kingston copies of the bill in its amended form. A few weeks after another packet brought intelligence that it had received the royal assent.

The braggadocia of men who had denied the superior authority of the British parliament was thus confounded ; though, as Mr. Stanley had said in the House of Commons, on the 20th of May, "it was not without extreme reluctance, nor without a conviction of the absolute necessity of such a course, that his Majesty's government had taken upon themselves the responsibility of recommending to the imperial parliament the exercise of their indisputable right to interpose the paramount authority of this country in legislating for the internal regulation of the chartered colonies."

The readiness with which the British people consented to the payment of twenty millions, to secure emancipation for the slaves, stands pre-eminent as one of the grandest acts of national self-sacrifice for the cause of justice and humanity the world has ever witnessed.

On the 8th of October the new assembly was convened. The speech of the governor was chiefly in reference to the great question of the day. Though not then in receipt of official intelligence, he had no hesitation in telling the legislative bodies then assembled that the almost unanimous voice of the British people had pronounced against the continuation of slavery, and that a grant of twenty millions had been made by way of compensation. He reminded them that they had not expressed any desire to perpetuate slavery if compensation was given, and he therefore depended on their co-operation in carrying out all the requisite details. He went on to urge a kind and considerate course of conduct on the part of proprietors, and especially on that of their subordinates; so that the personal authority which must soon



expire should seem rather to be abandoned voluntarily than abruptly taken from them at the period fixed by imperial enactment. The kindly caution was not unheeded, though not in all cases regarded. On the very evening of the 31st of July, 1834, the eve of emancipation, some foolish, vindictive men inflicted corporal punishment on slaves—in one case in face of a special appeal from a newly-appointed stipendiary magistrate.

Early in the following year Mr. Stanley <sup>1</sup> was able, not only to express high approbation of Earl Mulgrave's conciliatory and dignified address, but much satisfaction at the manner in which it had been received by the council and assembly. The latter body did not, in some subsequent proceedings, display the spirit shadowed forth in their reply to the speech; still, justice demands that their language should be recorded. The people of Jamaica, it was said, "have never advocated slavery in the abstract, but as connected with the right of property. Upon the principle of compensation they are ready to relinquish the system, and will be proud to show that they have feelings as favourable to the improvement of the labouring population as their fellow-subjects in the mother country. All they claim is to be fairly dealt with."

The parish of Trelawny sent up a petition, urging the assembly to put aside all past differences, and so far from resisting the wishes of the mother country, to carry them into effect in such a manner as should combine the welfare of the slaves with the wishes of their owners.<sup>2</sup> From St. James and Westmoreland petitions of a similar character followed. On the 15th of October the "act for the abolition of slavery throughout the British colonies" was laid before the house, and a measure for the adoption of its principles by the local legislature was also presented. During the sitting of the committee to whom it was referred, Dr. Pine, a holder of two hundred and eighty slaves, sent in a petition recommending immediate emancipation without the intervention of apprenticeship. There were those in the assembly who sympathised in his views, and were prepared, with the more astute statesmen in Antigua, to welcome immediate emancipation. They proposed to *delete* all the clauses in the bill that had relation to that period of suspense, and provide that on the 1st of August,

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<sup>1</sup> Despatch, January 8, 1834.

<sup>2</sup> "Votes," 1833, p. 36.

1834, slavery under any form should cease throughout the island, on the one condition that the sum awarded as compensation should be previously paid into the Bank of England. The amendment was, however, only supported on the division by four votes against thirty.<sup>1</sup>

The bill at length passed through its several stages, when, instead of being sent to the council, it was referred once more to a committee of the whole house. Few amendments of any importance were made. Among the rejected ones was a proposal to the effect, that though accepting the compensation, the assembly expected more would be given if the sum awarded was found insufficient. At length the bill got into the hands of the council: there many amendments were made. The assembly fortunately regarded these as improvements (which they really were), and adopted them. On the 12th of December the governor gave his assent, and the bill became law. The will of Great Britain with respect to slavery had been so clearly pronounced, that opposition on the part of any colony would have been perfectly futile. The measure was a national one, though opportunity was afforded to the different local legislatures to give effect to its provisions. Of necessity, though most unwillingly, that of Jamaica gave its assent, and so avoided a collision which would have proved ruinous to the planters and detrimental to the good order of the emancipated peasantry. Yet so infatuated was a considerable party, that it is questionable if the bill would have passed, even as soon as it did, had not the Earl Mulgrave exercised a very considerable degree of personal influence. No good end could be gained by reviewing more fully the bitter party politics of the day. The conciliatory manners and manly firmness of the earl greatly contributed to the speedy adjustment of the important question.

Though the assembly yielded, they did not act gracefully. They did what was done under protest, notwithstanding all they said about desiring freedom on equitable principles of compensation. That the compensation was adequate, there can be no reasonable doubt. Property in Jamaica would not have been worth a year's purchase if freedom had been denied. And yet, on the very day on which they were summoned for prorogation to the council chamber, they prepared a "protest against the act of the imperial

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1833, P. 174

parliament for the abolition of slavery.” The document is preserved in the printed votes of the assembly, and there it may well remain undisturbed. One hundred and thirty-five years before the “Groans of the Plantations” were published; and now that the groans of those who in bitter bondage had toiled in those plantations were almost at an end, the last groans of the descendants of the grumbling plantocracy of 1698 may well pass unheeded by. Let it suffice to say that they were seven in number. The unconstitutional character of the proceedings in the British parliament was asserted. The act of emancipation was declared to be one of spoliation, which could produce nothing but clamour, discontent, and rebellion. The compensation was inadequate, and its appropriation uncertain, indefinite, and expensive. No protection, it was added, was afforded to the free men in the island against the dangers of emancipation. And, last of all, the bill was the fruit of a coercive system of policy, which had substituted hypothesis and speculation for history, fact, and experience.<sup>1</sup>

Now, when all the pomp and ceremony which formerly attended the meetings of the legislative bodies have passed away, and the simple forms of a parochial vestry are substituted in their place, it may be well to recall the scene which presented itself to the gaze of those who were present at Earl Mulgrave’s last interview with the legislature. The place of assembly was the spacious Council Hall. The Countess of Mulgrave, with a number of ladies and a few male guests, occupied the gallery. The members of the council were seated; those of the assembly stood on their right hand. At the head of the council table was the governor, in full military uniform, wearing the blue ribbon of the Bath and the grand cross of the Royal Hanoverian order. The officers of his staff and a numerous gathering of military and naval officers surrounded him; but, strangest of all on this occasion, was the presence of coloured and black men, who crowded the space below the bar, and thus significantly gave indication of the great change which had come over the social condition of the people. The speech delivered by the earl on this occasion was congratulatory; yet words of caution were not wanting, rendered more impressive by the deep emotion of the speaker. It was almost the last important act of a brief and

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<sup>1</sup> “Votes,” 1833, p. 295.

eventful administration, for the incessant labour and excitement of the past few months were only too plainly evident in the failing health of the noble-minded governor.

As the assembly dispersed, many of its members returned to their homes with the most gloomy forebodings. A repetition of the events of 1831 on a larger scale was predicted by not a few. The slaves, however, were at rest; there was light now in all their dwellings, for the day of deliverance was at hand. They understood that Christmas time, as they had never done before, the grand meaning of the angels' song, "Peace and good-will to men." The Lord in whom (though often with imperfect knowledge) they trusted had done great things for them. "He had exalted them of low degree." Sweet, soothing *Magnificat!* sung thoughtlessly oftentimes, rarely perhaps with a full comprehension of the promise given to suffering humanity in its blessed words, yet ever pronouncing the coming downfall of all wrong and cruelty, tyranny and oppression. Its promise to the suffering of all ages was in part fulfilled in Jamaica, and will one day be realised by all mankind.

Towards the close of 1833 six stipendiary magistrates arrived from England, and early in 1834 many others followed. On the tact and energy of these gentlemen the efficient working of the abolition act in no small degree depended. A board of assistant commissioners was also formed, to settle the questions which now arose as to the apportionment of compensation to slaveholders. In other ways, pressing duties engaged the attention of the governor, whose departure at such a juncture was in many respects unfortunate.

On the 14th of March, 1834, he embarked for England. In reviewing his administration, it is not easy to see how firmness and discretion could have been more firmly blended than in the character of this nobleman. The colony had passed through a fiery ordeal: a single false step on the part of its ruler might have led to frightful calamities. The simple fact that peace was preserved at such a crisis is in itself no small testimony to the statesmanship of the governor.

At no former period were the hospitalities of King's House more gracefully dispensed. The high accomplishments and amiable disposition of the earl, and the affable, genial manners of the countess, shed a lustre on Spanish Town, and influenced society throughout the colony. The brilliant entertainments of the governor

and his lady were not confined, as in former days, to the white population. Ladies and gentlemen of colour now mingled with others, and experienced the same courtesy and attention from their distinguished hosts. It could not be expected that the descendants of old creole families would set aside the prejudices of generations, and follow at once the example set at King's House. Still, to the Earl and Countess of Mulgrave belongs the honour of having broken through the caste notions that prevailed, and which unhappily still linger amidst a very limited section of West Indian society. Never was such a tribute more gracefully rendered than when, in addition to the customary tokens of respect, a number of beautiful maidens of colour strewed the path of the countess with flowers as she approached the place of embarkation. A seat in the cabinet, and subsequently the lord-lieutenancy of Ireland, marked the esteem in which the Earl of Mulgrave (afterwards Marquis of Normanby) was held by the British nation. It was confessed at the time that Ireland had never been better governed than during his administration. None ever ruled Jamaica with more wisdom, or deserved from its inhabitants a higher tribute of gratitude; yet no statue has been erected to his memory, no district has been called by his name. Nothing, in short, has been done in Jamaica for the man whose memory will be venerated by the great and good in all succeeding ages of the world's history.

For fifteen days after the departure of the earl, Mr. Cuthbert, president of the legislative council, acted as lieutenant-governor. Then Sir Amos G.R.Norcutt arrived as commander of the troops, and assumed the temporary administration of affairs; but in less than a week after the Marquis of Sligo arrived, and on the 4th of April, 1834, was sworn in as governor. Like most of his predecessors, he made a tour of the island, visiting nearly every parish. The exigencies of the public service did not allow him to stay long in any one spot, for early in June he found it necessary to convene the legislature, to supply some omissions in the emancipation bill, to which attention had been called by the colonial office. The jails and workhouses<sup>1</sup> also were not only insecure, but required important changes in management and discipline. An efficient police was greatly needed, some arrangement for circuit courts of justice seemed indispensable, together with weekly courts for jurisdiction in minor offences. The old slave courts would soon be obsolete, but the machinery for the administration of justice in their place had yet to be organised.

Though the abolition bill passed during the former session had received the royal assent, and the right of the island, in consequence, to participate in the compensation had been proclaimed on the 10th of April, complaints as to the principle of distribution were heard, to be soon followed by indications of the fierce contentions which subsequently threw the affairs of the colony into confusion and imperilled its constitution. When the marquis had delivered his opening address to the legislature, the assembly proceeded to vote an address, in which they set forth their grievances, and declared that, in giving effect to the act of emancipation, they did so against their better judgment, and only to avert the still greater danger of opposing it. There was good reason to believe that they would not now amend the bill, and only the wild fear that the negroes would rise preserved the island at this critical moment from a collision between the governor and the assembly. With no good will, but under the pressure of necessity, the “act in aid” of the abolition bill was passed, with all the provisions but one recommended by Mr. Stanley.<sup>2</sup> The police bill, as at first passed, could not have received the governor’s assent, but a prorogation of a day enabled some judicious members to enact one of an improved character.

On the 4th of July the legislative assemblies were dismissed: in less than four weeks the slaves would be free. It was a great and untried experiment—what wonder if men, not only in the colonies, but in Europe, awaited it with anxiety. Many were convinced that the emancipated classes would make good use of their freedom, while others indulged in the most gloomy forebodings. There were a few who would have rejoiced had the change been marked by riot and disorder, and were quite prepared to aggravate any angry feelings that might be displayed by the use of severe measures. The marquis foresaw this, and secretly took steps to secure the military stores and ammunition from being employed, except under the direction of competent military authority. His words at the closing of the session were very significant. He spoke of the necessity of mutual forbearance, and expressed his confidence that the slaves would gradually attain the virtues of free men. But he added: “Let

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<sup>1</sup> Not poor-houses, as the word signifies in England, but houses of correction—slave prisons.

<sup>2</sup> Despatch, February 20, 1834.

not the expression of their joy be mistaken for a disposition to riot—let not those under you so mistake their feelings, and misuse authority.”

Every precaution had been taken for immediate suppression in the event of an outbreak. The military force was one thousand men in excess of the number located in the island during the most perilous period of the French war. A large fleet was stationed around the coast, and as steam was now introduced into the navy, it was possible speedily to land a force at any spot, irrespective of the trade wind, which had often before prevented rapidity of movement.

The 1st of August fell on a Friday. It was announced that a holiday, lasting till Monday, would commence on Thursday night. On Friday every chapel was open for Divine worship, and nearly every church, except in Kingston, where by some blunder they were kept closed. Every place was crammed by apparently devout and grateful worshippers. No riot of any kind occurred. In Kingston, Montego Bay, and some other places, there were grand festivities in the evening, but the vast majority devoted the day to worship and quiet gatherings. No people on the face of the globe could have celebrated a day of such vast importance to themselves and their posterity with so much real devotion and so little uproarious hilarity.

The following Sabbath was even more remarkable. Sunday markets had been abolished with slavery. No groups of people with baskets on their heads could now be seen crowding the roads as heretofore. All shops were closed, and thousands of cleanly-dressed and happy-looking peasantry thronged the roads, flocking to their respective places of worship. It was a high day, a Sabbath long to be remembered, a foretaste of better things to come. For though in one respect a day of freedom, there were yet four years of that strange social solecism called apprenticeship to be endured; and if all hearts were joyful, the full blessedness of their changed condition could only be realised when “full free,” as the negroes soon learned to call it, had come.

The Marquis of Sligo, in a despatch dated the 13th of August, described the conduct of the late bondsmen as most exemplary; and after alluding to the manner in which the holidays were spent, stated that on the Monday all turned out to work, except in St. Anns. In this parish white rioters had taught insubordination to negroes. On the 7th of August the governor was informed that in

the eastern part of this large parish refusals to work were general. The deputy adjutant-general was immediately despatched, in the *Rhadamanthus*, with two companies of the 37th Regiment, and reached Ocho Rios early on the morning of the 9th. Their appearance struck terror into the hearts of the negroes, yet they were evidently unwilling to return to work.

The special magistrate warned them of the consequences, but it was not until several of them had been flogged, and others sent to the workhouse, that his advice was taken, and work resumed. A great deal was made out of this affair, but it is quite evident that the masters and overseers of these people were far from blameless in the matter. In St. James, Westmoreland, St. Elizabeth, and St. Thomas in the East, some very petty disturbances occurred. They were very easily accounted for. In many cases mothers were not allowed to take time, during work hours, to suckle their children; the old women, who had formerly been appointed as nurses and field-cooks, had been withdrawn; and many little privileges and perquisites, granted by most proprietors in slavery, but not specially secured during apprenticeship, were withheld by short-sighted men.<sup>1</sup> Where proprietors treated their people with consideration, they had as a rule little cause for complaint.

In one case, the special magistrate was thought in England to have been too harsh in his treatment of the apprentices, but searching inquiry exonerated him from blame. The occurrence referred to was at Belvidere, in St. Thomas in the East. In consequence of many continued acts of insubordination, the magistrate ordered certain apprentices to be sent to the workhouse at Morant Bay. While arrangements were being made for this, the prisoners were locked up in the boiling-house. One of them called out to his friends without to burn the trashhouse. This was done: first one and then the other trash-house was set on fire, and not a single field negro would assist in putting out the flames. The prisoners did not, however, succeed in escaping during the excitement, as was no doubt intended, but were marched off to jail. Instigated by an aged woman, three of whose children were among the number, an abortive attempt was made to rescue them. Trials for arson followed, and punishments were inflicted on the original offenders, when matters quietly settled down. With the exception of the affair in St. Anns, this was certainly the most serious charge of insubordination that could be found to justify the



prophecies of evil in which the opponents of emancipation indulged.

The governor was at this time sorely harassed by the complaints and inquiries which poured in upon him from all quarters. The task he had to accomplish was one of the most delicate and difficult ever imposed upon a colonial governor, and his position was very imperfectly understood at the colonial office. He had to enforce laws held in perfect detestation by the great mass of proprietors and their subordinates, who also were quite certain that nothing but ruin and bloodshed could follow emancipation. There was continual alarm lest the people should rise in rebellion. First, it was to be in August, the August whose peaceful festivities have been noticed; then Christmas, then the anniversary of freedom. Sligo had no such fears, or if he feared at all, it was the planters rather than their labourers. The planters hated him, for they identified the man with the measures he was bound to enforce. Had he been faithless to his trust, had he carried out the great scheme of emancipation in another spirit than that in which it was understood by the British nation, and supported the special magistrates in acts of severity, he might then have escaped the storm which was about to burst upon him.

The legislature assembled, as usual, in October. In the opening speech the governor frankly admitted that the special magistrates were not sufficiently numerous to discharge the onerous duties they were called on to perform, and that many practical difficulties had arisen in the working of the scheme of apprenticeship. These, he hoped, would soon be overcome, and he virtually acknowledged that coercion was necessary in some cases, by alluding to the absence of treadmills in many parochial workhouses. The assembly took a far more doleful view of the state of affairs. It was asserted that, not only were the special magistrates few in number, but many were partial in their decisions. The slaves were not gaining the virtues of free men, but were insubordinate and impatient of restraint; they worked badly in legal hours, and very few would work in their own time for wages. Life and property would not be safe, but anarchy would soon universally prevail, if the apprentices were not taught by an efficient magistracy that, "though the

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<sup>1</sup> Parliamentary Papers, 1836. No. 33.

domestic authority of the master no longer existed," another form of control had been substituted.<sup>1</sup>

In reply, the governor did not attempt to deny that some magistrates had made mistakes; still, it should be remembered that they had no precedents to guide them, and each one necessarily gave his own interpretation of the law. As for the apprentices, he suggested that three months was too short a time for them to gain the virtues of free men and lose the vices of long ages of slavery; but where insubordination existed, the magistrates would teach them that proper control really existed.<sup>2</sup>

A few days later the assembly appointed a committee to inquire into the proceedings of the commissioners charged with the duty of apportioning the compensation awarded to slave-owners. The governor courteously reminded the house by message that those gentlemen were not under the control of the local legislature, but acted under authority derived from the imperial parliament. After a long search for precedents, the assembly voted the message a breach of privilege, and received an assurance from the governor that he did not suppose his information could be regarded in such a light, he merely wished to afford them information. This question of privileges, of which the house was never weary, was soon revived in another form.

In an address to the king, the assembly called the emancipation act a "frightful experiment," and asked for many privileges, not only with regard to protection from competition with slave colonies, but with the English possessions in the east. It also proceeded to pass some measures which infringed on the provisions of the act of emancipation; but a despatch from the colonial office clearly laid down the principle that no local measure could alter that agreed to by parliament, and upon which alone the planters' claim for compensation rested.

A committee of the house accumulated a vast amount of evidence as to the manner in which the apprenticeship system worked. An epitome of evidence given by some of the largest proprietors and attorneys in the island can briefly be given. Mr. Gordon,<sup>1</sup> who had thirty properties and from seven to eight thousand slaves under his care, stated that on the whole the system

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1834, pp. 18, 19.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1834, pp. 20, 21.

worked well, better than he had expected; though, owing to the shortening of the hours of labour, only three-fourths of the work formerly completed could be done. Other gentlemen, Mr. Farquharson and Mr. Barrett, who had each eleven hundred slaves, said their work was done, and saw no material difference in the properties under their care. Mr. Miller, with four thousand slaves, simply said it did not work so well as he could wish; and the colonial engineer found that he had to add fifteen per cent. to his estimates of the cost of labour. A great planting attorney of St. Thomas, who had two thousand six hundred slaves, spoke of the system as working indifferently; while five or six others, managing about seven thousand slaves between them, complained strongly of the change. It is amusing to find some of these gentlemen lamenting that children of slaves were not apprenticed. The law had only set free those under six years of age.<sup>2</sup>

In December of 1834, the Marquis of Sligo was able to report that the negroes had lost all fear of making complaints if they imagined themselves wronged, and in many cases these complaints were unfounded; while the owners were becoming more reconciled to the new system. The apprentices were more ready to work during overtime than they had at first been. Half-a-crown seems to have been an ordinary recompense for twelve hours' labour. Copious reports were sent in by the stipendiary magistrates, and on the whole their character was favourable. On some properties peculation was complained of, or occasional outbursts of discontent, chiefly among the women.<sup>1</sup>

When the first year of the apprenticeship had expired, a difficulty arose in consequence of the expiration of the bill appointing a police force. It ought to have been passed for the whole term of apprenticeship, but to this the assembly would not agree. In the expectation that an efficient police would be provided, no grant was asked for the support of the troops. The assembly was not, however, disposed to make any permanent provision for the preservation of the public peace; and the session convened in August, 1835, was so unsatisfactory, that the marquis was compelled to dissolve the house and appeal to the constituencies.

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<sup>1</sup> Father of the late W.G.Gordon.

"Votes," 1834; appendix.

Among other extraordinary proceedings in relation to the apprentices, it was found that in some parishes their little possessions had been taxed. To this the governor strongly objected, asserting that they had neither the rights nor privileges of free men, and ought not therefore to be liable to taxation, a view in which the colonial office agreed.

During the elections, some ground was given for hoping that a better spirit would be displayed by the new assembly towards the Marquis of Sligo. In many instances candidates were urged not to oppose him, and the first days of the session afforded some promise of a better state of things. It seemed likely that the measures passed would be such as to satisfy the reasonable expectations of the English government, and give full effect to the great scheme of emancipation; when, unfortunately, a letter from the island agent called the attention of the house to some remarks made by Lord Sligo, in reference to a certain parish in which harsh treatment prevailed.<sup>1</sup> Documents clearly proved the correctness of the statements made, but they affected the reputation of men able to create a powerful opposition, and all harmony was at once at an end. There were frequent adjournments, and one from the 14th of December to the 26th of January, 1836. At this latter sitting the assembly sent in to the council a most imperfect measure in aid of the abolition act, quite failing to supply the deficiencies which had been pointed out by the colonial secretary. The council proceeded to make the requisite amendments, and so altered the bill as to bring it into accordance with the spirit of the abolition act. To these changes the assembly would not agree, and the marquis then appealed to them to reconsider the subject, and to modify the measure so as to bring it into accordance with the wishes of the English people. This proceeding was immediately voted a breach of the privileges of the house, and it was resolved that no business should be done until reparation had been made.

Next day, assent having been given to some bills, the governor prorogued the house. His speech was a most severe rebuke. He reminded them how every recommendation he had made in the interests of the apprentices had been disregarded. He had asked them to revise the discipline of the jails, and to prevent the administration of corporal punishment by the supervisors; to

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<sup>1</sup> Parliamentary Papers, 1834–35. 21

prevent the whipping of females, of which complaint had been made, and also the cutting off of their hair before conviction; and to put an end to the imposition of taxes on the property of apprentices; yet to none of these recommendations had the slightest attention been given. He had sent four messengers on the subject of education, but all were unheeded, while other matters of the utmost importance had been neglected. He denied that there was any breach of their privileges in the message he had sent, for the constitution of the assembly was not the same as that of the House of Commons. There the cabinet ministers were the legitimate interpreters of the wishes of the crown; but in the house of assembly, in the absence of such a body, a message from the governor was the only way in which the wishes of the executive could be conveyed to the representatives of the people.

Next day a new session was convened, but the house still resolved not to proceed to business until reparation was made for the alleged breach of privilege. The governor reminded the members that it was unusual to refer at one session to what had been done during the previous one; and that, where no offence had been contemplated or really committed, no reparation could be made. The house adhered to its position, and another prorogation followed.

Reasonable as the position taken by Lord Sligo was, it turned out that he was legally wrong, and the course he had adopted was not approved by the colonial minister. Accordingly, on the 24th of May, he called the assembly together, and stated that, having been informed by an authority of more experience than his own, and to which it was his duty to submit, that the delivery of the message relative to the act in aid involved a breach (not contemplated, as he had assured them) of their privileges, he had only to express his regret at its having taken place.<sup>1</sup> It was not to be expected that, after such an occurrence, Lord Sligo could remain much longer in the colony, and he was soon succeeded by Sir Lionel Smith.

From the first, the planters had not taken kindly to the introduction of the stipendiary magistracy; and the mistakes naturally made by men to whom the negro character was a new study, were made the subject of severe animadversion. The number

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<sup>1</sup> Parliamentary Papers on Slavery, No. 242.

at first sent out was altogether unequal to the duties which had to be discharged; and the incessant work, the exposure to all weathers, together with mental anxiety, occasioned twenty deaths during the first two years.<sup>2</sup> The assembly urged Lord Sligo to appoint gentlemen of local experience to the work, but this he refused to do, and the British government soon sent out a much larger staff. A specimen of the work which devolved on these officials is found in the statement that in May, 1835, fifty-six stipendiary magistrates travelled (mostly on horseback) 14,196 miles, visiting 3440 properties, on 1282 of which there were complaints to be heard. This was not a special season of hard work, for the returns of one year, from May, 1835, to 1836, show journeys extending to 170,469 miles, and involving visits to 38,664 estates.

The salary, at first £300 a year, but subsequently raised to £450, was altogether inadequate, as many horses had to be kept. In part from the want of taverns, these gentlemen had to partake of the hospitality of the planters; and however impartial a man might be, it was natural that the apprentices should argue that those who had been entertained by the master would be disposed to favour him in any case against his people. That they had reason to complain in some cases, is unquestionable. In instances where magistrates were dismissed for improper conduct, purses or plate were presented by certain planters, while those who were not regarded with favour were harassed by civil suits; and in several inquiries instituted by the assembly, they were brought up to Spanish Town to give evidence, and kept waiting for days, at great expense, which was never refunded. When the number of these gentlemen was only thirty, it was customary, in many quarters, to speak of them as the thirty tyrants.

In the great majority of cases they faithfully and conscientiously discharged the duties entrusted to them; but that some should have been partial in their decisions is hardly to be wondered at, when all the strong party feelings of the time are taken into account.

A serious difficulty arose out of a very simple matter. There was great diversity of opinion as to the way in which the forty and a half

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<sup>1</sup> Letter of Lord Glenelg, March 31, 1836; Votes of May session 1836, pp. 5, 32–34, 164, 183

<sup>2</sup> Sligo's "Jamaica under the Apprenticeship," p. 33.

hours of work required of the apprentices was to be divided. The plan which became most common was to take nine hours on each of the first four days of the week, and four and a half on Friday; the remainder of the week being at the disposal of the apprentice, who could either hire himself out for wages, or work in his provision ground for the maintenance of himself and family, as he had done in the days of slavery. While the apprenticeship had not set the labourer free from this obligation, it secured for him, if properly interpreted, the privileges and allowances of slavery. In many instances these were refused, and great discontent ensued. Where kindness was blended with firmness, and proprietors, adapting themselves to the new order of things, sought to secure the good feeling of their apprentices, things as a rule worked well. In some cases larger crops were taken off than in slavery, and there was much less loss of stock and other property than previously.

Yet thus early it was seen that some sugar estates, which flourished under slavery, were so unfavourably situated as to soil and climate, as to be losing concerns under the ordinary conditions of the free labour market, and they were in consequence abandoned soon after. The equalization of sugar duties, ten years later, led to the relinquishment of other properties. It is to the fact that protection and high prices, combined in the first instance with slavery, had led to the opening of many estates that could not pay under any other conditions, that to some considerable extent the great diminution in the exports of the colony is to be ascribed.

Sir Lionel Smith arrived on the 30th of August, 1836. He had been governor of the Windward Islands during the introduction of the apprenticeship there, and his retirement had been generally regretted. High expectations were formed by the planters in Jamaica as to the results of his administration among them. He was destined, however, to find, as Lord Sligo had done, that the time had not yet arrived when a governor, anxious to do even-handed justice to all, would be appreciated by the ruling class. His opening speech, when the legislature met on the 1st of November, must have sounded strangely to many who heard him. After alluding to the fact that Jamaica had been the first to give effect to the act of emancipation, and deploring the difficulties which had arisen as to details, but which he trusted would be soon adjusted, he went on to say: "There is one most important subject which I cannot resist submitting to your grave consideration. It is the religious and moral condition of the negroes. No man has had such

enlarged opportunities of observation among this class as I have had, either in the immediate government of, or the eventual control of, seven colonies; and I am sorry to proclaim that they are in this island in a more deplorably backward state than any other. Yet, gentlemen, men must be taught to fear God before they can be made to respect the laws. It is physically impossible for the ministers of the established church, few in number, with an extended surface of population, to do more than they have done. The first object is to instil the doctrines of Christianity, and not to insist on any particular form of church discipline. I firmly believe that the assistance of the missionaries is most necessary to this end. Gentlemen, you have hardly four more years to watch over the experiment of apprenticeship: give every facility you can to the missionaries' labours. Banish from your mind the idea that they are your enemies. I will answer with my head for their loyalty and fidelity. Encourage their peaceable settlement among your people. Let every four or five contiguous estates combine for the erection of chapel-schools; and knowing, as you well do, the attachment of the negro to the place of his birth and the burialplace of his parents, you may, I sincerely believe, by these means locate on your estates a contented peasantry."

These were words of wisdom. The house replied that the clergy had not done all they could, and that the missionaries had not been opposed so long as they confined themselves to their legitimate duties. However, the members were anxious to do all they could to promote the moral and religious welfare of the people, and to establish schools, if habits of industry were inculcated. Certain parties seemed willing to believe this, and so sent in petitions for aid in their efforts to promote the religious welfare of the people, generally speaking without success. Very little can be recorded of the proceedings of this session. Great abuses, especially in the hospital and lunatic asylums, were brought to light, and disclosures made as to the deplorable want of efficient police supervision, even at the seat of government. Sir Lionel Smith complained that his family could not rest in consequence of the disorderly bands which paraded the town at night.

Of far more importance to the island than the proceedings of its local legislature, was a select committee of the House of Commons, moved for by Mr. Buxton, "to inquire into the working of the apprenticeship system in the colonies, the condition of the apprentices, and the laws and regulations affecting them which



have been passed." The first report made by this committee had relation chiefly to Jamaica. It stated that many legal difficulties had arisen, involving substantial and practical consequences as well as important principles. The tribunals for valuing the apprentices who might claim their freedom were pronounced defective. The valuations were in many cases excessive, owing to the local justices outvoting the stipendiary magistrate. From August 1st, 1834, to May 31st, 1836, 581 persons bought their freedom at a cost of rather more than £18,000. These valuations were made up to the 31st of July, 1840, at which period it was at first intended slavery should expire.

That corporal punishment had been inflicted on females, notwithstanding the prohibitions of the Abolition Act, was clearly proved: it was generally done in workhouses which were under the supervision of local magistrates. Many questions arose during this inquiry as to the allowances and indulgences common in slavery, to times of labour, the marriage of apprentices, and other matters affecting the well-being of the people. The committee elicited the fact that on 527 estates slaves were working for hire in their own time, and that on only sixty-nine had they refused to do so. The average rate of payment was about twopence per hour. This was currency, so the pay for ten hours would only be one shilling. Two shillings sterling was given for digging a hundred caneholes.

The punishments were shown to be very numerous. During the first year of apprenticeship upwards of twenty-five thousand were inflicted; but during the first eight months of the next year twenty-seven thousand punishments are recorded. Neglect of duty, disobedience, and insolence, were the chief offences.

Yet, on the whole, the committee thought that the system of apprenticeship was working favourably. The conduct of the apprentices generally was good, they worked for wages, were fairly treated, and more heartily than during slavery. Mutual suspicion and irritation were subsiding; industrious habits and desire for improvement were increasing. Such being the opinion of the committee, it is not surprising that the report wound up by the declaration that it would "regard as unfortunate any occurrence which should have a tendency to unsettle either party in regard to the determination of the imperial parliament to preserve inviolate the compact by which the services of apprentices are secured, under certain restrictions, for a definite period." Mr. Sturge and other leading abolitionists were by no means satisfied with this

conclusion; and in company with Mr. Harvey, he determined to ascertain, by personal inspection, the true state of the apprentices. The result of the personal inquiries of these gentlemen was embodied in a volume they published, and excited immense attention throughout the British empire. The disclosures they made, relative to the state of the workhouses, or slave prisons, the treadmill system, and the unsatisfactory condition of a great number of properties, revived the anti-slavery feeling which had partially slumbered, and it began seriously to be debated whether the term of apprenticeship must not be cut short, as its working was so unsatisfactory.

Another committee of the House of Commons inquired further into the condition of the colonies, and on the 20th of February, 1838, Lord Brougham moved, in the House of Lords, a series of resolutions, among which was one to the effect "that it is expedient that the period of predial apprenticeship in all the colonies should cease and determine on the 1st of August, 1838." On this occasion only seven peers supported him. On the 29th of March a resolution to the same effect was brought before the House of Commons. It was sustained by petitions signed by over a million of people. Delegates came up from all parts of the kingdom, and crowded the lobby of the house on the night fixed for the debate. The government opposed the motion, but two hundred and fifteen voted for it, and two hundred and sixty-nine against it. On the 22nd of May another, and still bolder proposal, was laid before the house, to the effect "that negro apprenticeship in the British colonies should at once cease and determine." The government was unprepared, and the motion was carried by a majority of three. A week after, the government induced the house to adopt a resolution which virtually rescinded this, but it was quite clear that the struggle was hopeless, and the colonial legislatures were induced to give effect to the wishes of the British people.

The death of William IV., and the accession of Queen Victoria, had led to a dissolution of the Jamaica house of assembly, and on the 24th of October, 1837, the newly-elected members met. The prospects of the colony were rather gloomy; for several months it had suffered from drought, and there was considerable scarcity of provisions. The first weeks of this assembly were occupied by a variety of local questions. The condition of the apprentices was the subject of more than one message from the governor, and of much

discussion in the house. In the treatment of the negroes, some owners or overseers had made a distinction between the allowances and the indulgences of slavery. The former, such as certain grants of food, clothing, &c., were still secured by law; the latter were optional, but their cessation had occasioned an immense amount of ill-feeling. Cooks to the field labourers, persons to fetch water, nurses in hospitals, and an allowance to the sick, were things that might be refused, and often were. Then, in slavery, mothers of six children, aged people, and pregnant women, were exempted from all but the lightest labour, and often entirely excused, but this was not generally done during apprenticeship. Sir Lionel thought all this to be deplored, and pointed out that though the people might henceforth work for their former masters, their feelings would not be so cordial as if they were considerably treated during the transition period.

Another class of residents had grounds for complaint as strong as any of the apprentices: these were the white emigrants. The house of assembly had hatched a project for importing white emigrants into the island; and a Mr. Myers was quite ready to bring almost any number from Germany, at a charge of £15 a head. The records of the house of assembly afford ample information relative to the progress of this experiment, and of the money paid on account of it from time to time. £29,270 is the sum put down for premiums. This would represent 1,950 emigrants; fifty-three came in the middle of 1834, five hundred and six later in the year, and five hundred and thirty-two soon after. The catalogue of names, and of the location of the different parties, is complete, but not the record of death and misery. Three villages were provided, at the cost of several thousand pounds, for these people, one in each of the counties into which the island is divided. At first the reports from these villages, especially from Seaforth and Altamont, were encouraging. Land was brought under cultivation, and some progress made; but how these settlements, even in their most flourishing state, yielded any return for the immense expenditure, it is impossible to see. The chief object of Mr. Myers would appear to have been to secure emigrants, Their previous habits of life could have been of little importance, for in the list of occupations may be found millers and weavers, dyers and colliers, musicians and comedians, for none of whom was there occasion in Jamaica.

Great indignation was expressed by the assembly on account of the disallowance by the colonial office of several acts passed

during former sessions. A very long report, in reply to sundry messages of the governor on these topics, defends the action of the legislature. That the colonial minister was anxious to secure the liberties and rights of the labouring classes, is evident; and that the assembly was anxious to coerce where possible, is equally plain. Other messages had reference to bills affecting the revenue, a point upon which the house was always tanacious of its privileges; but the question of prisons was the most serious, and soon came up again in a form that led to serious complications. This session cannot be regarded as satisfactory, but only a brief adjournment could be given. The 5th of June, 1838, saw the legislature once more assembled, with business of the most momentous character to transact.

The governor, in his opening speech, explained that he had called them together at such an unusual time in consequence of the great agitation in England. The efforts of the ministry were found barely sufficient to preserve the original duration of the apprenticeship as an obligation of national faith. There was also no little excitement among the negroes, and it would be difficult to secure their labour in agricultural operations, when not only had other colonies declared for an earlier day of freedom, but some proprietors in Jamaica had determined to release predials and non-predials from labour at the same time. The assembly professed to be ready to consider the subject, and observed that the apprenticeship had been forced on its acceptance as one of the precautionary measures to be adopted in the transition from slavery to freedom, and was a portion of their compensation. In discussing its early cessation, it was added: "We neither assume the responsibility, nor exonerate the public faith."<sup>1</sup>

The despatches which had been received from the colonial minister accelerated the action of the house. The first of these, dated April 2nd, alluded to the agitation in and out of parliament on the question of the apprenticeship. The public, it was said, had been excited by exaggerated statements, while facts favourable to the existing state of things had been suppressed. Still, it was felt that abuses really existed to an extent sufficient to supply the means of provoking public indignation; and while the complaints

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1838, 10.

had not exclusive reference to Jamaica, the evils alluded to existed there to a larger extent than in any other colony.

But it was only after all attempts to obtain from its legislature a correction of the defects in the abolition "act in aid" had failed, that the imperial parliament was asked to interfere. The bill which had been submitted to the House of Lords, to supply the defects in that of the Jamaica legislature, had passed that and the lower house without any expression of opinion that it outran the necessity of the case, while many thought it did not go far enough.

It received the royal assent on the 11th of April, and copies were at once sent out to Jamaica, with instructions that it should be proclaimed in the colony, and a day named when it should come into force. It dealt with all those questions which during the term of apprenticeship had occasioned such bitterness of feeling, and led to so much hostility between all classes. The hours of labour were regulated, and one hour deducted for every three miles the labourer had to journey in going to or coming from his work. It dealt with allowances and indulgences, and appointed official umpires in cases of valuation. Prisons, hospitals, and workhouses were regulated, and power given to stop actions against stipendiary magistrates where they had clearly acted in discharge of their duty. Authority was given the governor to release from all further obligation to labour any apprentice who had been subjected to cruelty and wrong; and in addition to other provisions of an ameliorating character, it abolished corporal punishment for all offences peculiar to the apprenticeship.

Thus far the British government was prepared to go, and the proclamation of this measure would have declared that the imperial parliament could overrule colonial legislation whenever the necessity might arise. It was hoped, and not in vain, that the Jamaica legislature would choose the other alternative, and by bringing the term of apprenticeship to an end, satisfy the demand which was gaining more and more strength in England, and obviate the necessity which might yet arise of more direct interference with the original terms of emancipation. The house lost very little time in proceeding to business. On the third day of their sitting a bill to terminate the apprenticeship on the 1st of August, 1838, was read the first time; after a brief adjournment it was again read; next day it passed through committee, and having been read a third time, was sent to the council. In the council it was amended, and after repeated conferences between the two

branches of the legislature, all the amendments were with one exception adopted. On the 16th of June it received the governor's assent, and the legislature was at once prorogued.

This act was not, however, performed with the best grace. Jamaica was the last of all the slave colonies to enact this measure, and there it was done under protest. This document is so extraordinary, that some memorial of it should be preserved. It set forth in glowing terms the constitutional history of the colony, the greatness of its resources, and the liberality of its legislators. It protested vehemently against interference in its internal affairs by the government of Great Britain, and asserted that its legislation would bear favourable comparison with that of the mother country. Its laws were not resisted, as they were in Ireland; no bands wandered forth at night to burn barns or corn-ricks; there were no combinations to raise wages; burking was unknown; families were not murdered, as in England, to save them from the pangs of starvation; mothers did not outrage nature, "by the destruction of their new-born offspring, to avoid the cruel persecution of a hard-hearted and destroying morality." There were no corn laws, no poor laws, and therefore no temptations to commit suicide to avoid the workhouse. The House of Commons was accused of perjury; and as a mock assembly was worthless, it was suggested that the power of levying taxes in the colony should be delegated to the House of Lords, to console it for the want of such power in Great Britain. After some further uncomplimentary remarks on the English cabinet and parliament, the document concluded by a protest, on behalf of the assembly and the people of Jamaica, before God and man, against the English act to amend the act for the abolition of slavery in the British colonies, and its proclamation by the governor on the 1st of June. It was declared to be illegal and unconstitutional.

In a milder address to the youthful sovereign the assembly demanded indemnity for the loss sustained by shortening the apprenticeship, and asked for a reduction in the duties levied on the produce of the island, and the prohibition of slave-grown sugar in Great Britain.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, the perfect freedom of the apprentices was secured, and soon the first of August came, and with it quiet but hearty rejoicing throughout the land. The last vestige of serfdom had been destroyed, and upwards of three hundred thousand human beings were entirely disenthralled. How they would use their liberty was the great question now to be answered.

## CHAPTER II

# COMMERCE AND AGRICULTURE

The difficulty of forming any really satisfactory idea of the state and progress of agriculture and commerce in Jamaica, in former years, is considerable. One of the highest authorities on such matters<sup>2</sup> has stated that “the blue books of Jamaica are the worst returns in the colonial office;” and he adds that the registrar-general of shipping had stated that a similar negligence prevailed in his returns. Mr. Martin has, however, done not a little to reduce the imperfect returns to order; and sundry proceedings on the part of the legislature also help still further to illustrate the commercial condition of the island.

In November, 1792, an elaborate report on the state of the island was laid before the assembly, and most certainly furnished a strong argument in favour of those who subsequently contended that slavery was not so conducive to the prosperity of the master as was generally alleged by its advocates. A great quantity of ships traded with the island; the tonnage, in 1791, is put down as 138,149 tons, though four years before it had only been 85,788. From five to six thousand seamen found employment in these vessels. In 1799 the shipping was put down at 178,196 tons. From 100,000 to 120,000 tons is a fair average for many succeeding years.

During the same time considerable increase in prices was noted, not only on articles required, but on those produced in the colony. Comparing the report of 1792 with one made in 1799, it will be seen that, notwithstanding the extensive importation of slaves, their value gradually increased. From 1772 to 1775, an average price seems to have been £34 10s. sterling. In 1791 it was £59. In 1799, £72 4s. is named as the average. And comparing the official report of 1792 with that of 1799, it will be seen that freights,

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<sup>1</sup> “Votes, “June session, 1838, pp. 41, 46.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Montgomery Martin, “Statistics of British Colonies,” p. 17.



probably owing to war, had gone up from £6 to £10 a ton. Draught oxen required on estates had risen in price from £18 to £30, and mules from £28 to £45. The price of negro labour had gone up from is. 2d. a day in 1772, to is. 9d. in 179; though at the close of the century some, no doubt of a higher class, were charged for at the rate of 33. 4d. American provisions and lumber had risen greatly during the same period.

The planters obtained high prices for their produce. Sugar, the great staple, was produced for the last few years of the eighteenth century at the average rate of upwards of 90,000 hogsheads a year. In 1798 the produce was 95,858 hogsheads. Next year the Bourbon cane was introduced into the island, and at once led to a considerable addition to the production. In 1799, 110,000 hogsheads were exported. In 1800 the yield was rather less, but in 1801 it sprung up to 136,000 hogsheads, a little more the year after, then an average of 114,000 for the next two years, and in 1805 came the largest yield of any year, when 150,352 hogsheads were sent out of the island. The abolition of the slave trade, in 1807, affected the production, yet about 120,000 hogsheads may be put down as an ordinary yield for the next fifteen years. Whenever it fell much below this, the explanation will be found either in a storm or a drought. In 1822, when the question of the abolition of slavery was gravely raised in the British parliament, the cultivation began to decline, and a decreased production also marked the passing of the emancipation bill. All that is further necessary to illustrate the great fluctuations in the yield of sugar in the colony, will be found in the following table, wherein the average of different septennial periods is stated :—

From 1794	to 1800	92,306	hogsheads.		
" 1801	" 1807	133,755	"	Bourbon cane introduced.	
" 1808	" 1814	117,765	"	Slave trade abolished.	
" 1815	" 1821	118,859	"		
" 1822	" 1828	96,665	"	Mr. Canning's resolutions.	
" 1829	" 1835	91,399	"		

The average of 1836, 1837, and 1838, was 66,070 hogsheads. During these periods the prices greatly varied. From the assembly's report of 1791, we find that the accounts of one of the largest

merchants in Kingston proved that, from 1772 to 1775, the average price of sugar, in the English markets, was 34s. 8d. per hundredweight, free of duty, and that, from 1788 to 1791, the average was 58s. 7d. After this prices continued to rise; in 1793 it was 73s. per hundredweight. The war with France ran it up to 87s. in 1800. It was as high as 97s. in 1815, but had been as low as one-third of this price at some of the intermediate periods. Only half the price realised in 1815 could be obtained next year, and after the peace it gradually fell. These variations could not fail seriously to affect the planter, though it will be remembered that the net sum he actually realised would, in war time, be by no means so great as may appear, if allowance is not made for the extra cost of freight and insurance.

Fifty years before emancipation the trials of the Jamaica planter had fairly commenced. An iniquitous system such as slavery could never be permanently prosperous. Extravagant and wasteful expenditure must sooner or later bring on disaster; and when to this it is added that the soil adapted for sugar cultivation in Jamaica is limited in extent, and that sugar estates in the interior could only, with rare exceptions, be successfully cultivated in times of high prices and protective duties, the decline in cultivation is not by any means surprising.

The report of 1791 discloses some startling facts relative to the actual position of many proprietors. In that year there were 769 sugar plantations in Jamaica. Of these, only 451 were in the hands of the men, or their descendants, who possessed them in 1772. Since that date 177 had been sold in payment of debts, 92 remained in the hands of mortgagees or receivers, and 55 had been abandoned, though 47 had been newly-established during the same period.<sup>1</sup>

The returns of the provost-marshal from 1772 to 1791 showed great pecuniary embarrassment among vast numbers in the colony. Astounding as it must appear, 80,021 judgments, amounting to £22,563,786, had during that period been lodged in his office!

It was noted as an encouraging fact in the last-named year, that only about two thousand judgments had been lodged against double or even treble the number in most preceding years. Things were looking a little brighter: there was to be for a few years a certain kind of prosperity, but no lasting welfare could be expected in face of the declaration made to the assembly in 1796, that six hundred and six sugar plantations were in the hands of one

hundred and ninety-three attorneys of absentees and mortgagees. The commissions obtained by these gentlemen were stated to be upwards of £240,000 per annum.<sup>2</sup>

During the last seven years of the eighteenth century, eighty-three new sugar estates were settled, and yet a report made to the assembly in 1802 was full of bitter complaints of the conduct of the imperial government in keeping up so high a rate of duty on the staples of the colony. The cry was renewed two years later, but coupled with the demand that a protective duty should be laid on sugar imported from the East Indies, where it was asserted that coolie labour was obtained for only two shillings a month. The duty then imposed on West India sugar was 27s. per cwt.: on that from the East Indies it was 2s. 8d. more. The duty had been increased to 27s. since 1799, when it was only 17s. 6d. per cwt.

In 1807, it appeared that though many new estates had been settled, sixty-five others had been abandoned, and one hundred and fifteen had passed into chancery since 1799. But during the year a boon was granted to the sugar-planter by the prohibition of spirits in England made from corn or grain, and thus an increased demand for rum was created.

Turning from the sugar to the coffee planter, we find things more cheerful. In 1799 it appears that there were no less than six hundred and eighty-six plantations of coffee; about thirty thousand acres out of two hundred and seventy thousand being occupied in the culture of the berry. The high rate of duty levied by the British government was loudly complained of, but in 1811 it was reduced from 2s. to 7d. a pound. The increase in production was marvellous: from 1791 to 1794 the average quantity exported was only 1,603,066 lbs.; in 1804 it had risen to 22,000,000 lbs. In 1808 it was little under 30,000,000 lbs., while in 1814 the largest yield was gathered in, being very little short of 30,500,000 lbs. From this period down to 1834 the average yield was about 22,000,000 lbs.; during the four years from 1835 to 1838, the average was under 12,000,000 lbs.

The price in 1808 may be put down as 120s. per cwt. in the colony. Three years later we find 54s. to 73s. quoted as the price in

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. ix. Also quoted in Edwards' "History," fifth edition, vol. i. p. 313.

<sup>2</sup> Journals, vol. ix.

London, and three years later it had again risen to from 118s. to 142s. After the peace of 1815 it ranged from 77s. to 104s.,<sup>1</sup> and then, as now, was more highly valued than most other varieties in the market. No production increased so rapidly in public favour. In 1801, only a little more than an ounce per head was consumed, on an average, by each person in Great Britain: after the duty was reduced to 7d. a pound, the consumption increased seven-fold.<sup>2</sup> It is greatly to be deplored that the average yield since apprenticeship has only been about six million pounds per annum,

The increase of cultivation noted above was a source of gratification to all truly interested in Jamaica. The coffee planters were for the most part residents, and the proceeds of their industry, which for many years varied from a million to a million and a half per annum, were expended in the colony.

Pimento, ginger, and rum are the only other staples that figure largely in the exports of the island. Pimento being an indigenous product of the island, gaining nothing by cultivation, and simply requiring to be gathered, dried, and sent in bags to the place of embarkation, is one of the few staples that has continued gradually to increase. Low prices have at times made it hardly worth the while of the proprietor of the fragrant trees to gather the berries; seasons of drought have been unfavourable; but on the whole, a gradual increase in the quantity exported may be noticed. From 1793 to 1807 the average quantity exported was 1,767,500 lbs.; from 1808 to 1834 the average was 3,280,000 lbs.; from 1835 to 1838 it amounted to 5,347,900 lbs. Since the last-named period the exports have reached far higher figures: in 1858 it exceeded nine million pounds. What was then thought to be of little value by the slaveholding proprietor or his attorney is now well worth the attention of the free negro.

Ginger is a plant depending so much on careful cultivation and favourable seasons, that the export returns exhibit greater variation than perhaps any other staple. Moreover, though cultivated largely when Jamaica was occupied by resident proprietors, it was neglected after sugar cultivation extended, and the far more remunerative coffee plant engaged the attention of so

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<sup>1</sup> Tooke's "History of Prices."

<sup>2</sup> "Pictorial History of England," vol. viii. p. 728. 22

many of the smaller landholders. In 1797 the largest ginger crop was produced: it amounted to 3,621,260 lbs. Next year it was a little over two millions, and then from 1800, on to 1815, the average was only between 500,000 lbs. and 600,000 lbs. Three years of increased production followed, then five years on a lower scale, and after this for ten years, from 1825 to 1834, the average rate of export was 2,370,592 lbs., and from 1835 to 1838 it was nearly as much. It again declined for many years, but to no great extent.

The produce of rum depends to a great extent on that of sugar, though far more puncheons have of late been made in proportion to hogsheads of sugar than was formerly the case. Years can be pointed out, as for example, 1797, 1802, 1822, and 1836, and some later ones, when only one puncheon was exported for every three hogsheads of sugar; but as a fair general statement, an average of two puncheons for five hogsheads may be taken. Since 1854 the average is as one to two.

Minor products do not, all through the period under review, amount to much. A few hides, some logwood, dyewoods, cotton wool, indigo, &c., may be mentioned.

Mr. Montgomery Martin gives the following estimate of the value of exports in 1834—Arrowroot, £7,483; cinnamon, £543 ; cocoa, £1,200; coffee, £612,199; cotton wool, £60; fustic, £8,855; logwood, £33,710; mahogany, £184; ginger, £39,466; hides, £6, 936; indigo, £5,822; molasses, £3,283; lime juice, £1,070; pimento, £52,159; sarsaparilla, £3,051; rum, £350,228; sugar, £1,539,946; succades, £4,939; tortoiseshell, £5,491; tobacco, £483; wood spars, £3,430; miscellaneous, £32,626.

In addition to these island products, British manufactures to the amount of about £400,000 were re-exported from the islands, chiefly to the ports in Spanish America, making the total value of exports £3,148,797.

In 1836 the exports were valued at £3,273,188. Of this, £2,661, 978 were sent to Great Britain, £70,248 to North America, £111, 916 to the United States, £374,599 to foreign states, £51,760 to the West Indies.

782 ships, with a burden of 119,066 tons, and manned by 7,510 men, were employed in this service. One-third more in ships, tonnage, and men, are stated as the returns of 1823. These figures will give a fair idea of the average commerce of many preceding years.

An order of the king in council, dated July 5th, 1804, threw open to the merchants of Jamaica the trade with the Spanish colonies in South America, on condition that a licence was obtained from the governor of the island. Kingston became, in consequence, a kind of emporium, from which the Spanish colonists obtained large supplies of British manufactured goods, chiefly cottons. Naval and military stores were, however, the only prohibited articles. In return, considerable quantities of indigo, cochineal, drugs, cocoa, tobacco, logwood, mahogany, dyewoods, hides, tortoiseshell, together with cattle and horses, were imported. Most of these articles were reexported to Great Britain.

The difficulties thrown in the way of commercial intercourse with the United States have been noticed elsewhere, in connection with the want of food occasioned by the series of hurricanes commencing in 1780. When some of these restrictions were in part removed, enough remained to deprive the colony of many advantages she might have enjoyed. Still, the loud complaints of the Jamaica legislature and of the merchants were often very unreasonable. They asked for free trade so far as it suited their own interests, but in some respects they were the most uncompromising of protectionists, even in those days. They would have a prohibitory duty imposed on East Indian sugar, though from parts belonging to Great Britain; they were constantly on the alert lest in some way their produce should be depreciated by competition, but they would have taken it into every market in the world if they had been able. In 1811, they complained that they could only export to the United States, rum, molasses, and dyewoods, but that sugar and coffee were prohibited. Hence the Americans took specie for a large part of the lumber and provisions they sold here, and carried it over to Cuba, where they obtained the articles last named. The sale of rum to the States also declined. In 1804, 20,000 puncheons were exported there, but the average from 1808 to 1811 was only 5383 puncheons per annum. The British government was, of course, not accountable for this.

In 1812, war commenced between Britain and her old colonies, and Jamaica, for a time, felt the shock severely. There were then only a few vessels of war on the station, and the seas soon swarmed with American privateers. But at last the eyes of the colonists seemed to open to the folly of being so dependent on others for food. Not only had insurance gone up in a few days an additional ten per cent, but food was likely to be scarce, and the

grave problem was mooted how the rum, now produced in increasing quantities, was to be sent home. Hitherto the white oak staves had been used for puncheons, and it was doubted if the island could find a substitute. Still the food question was a far graver difficulty, and another hurricane had reduced the small supply. The men of the present day have not yet been sufficiently awakened to understand the folly of depending so largely on other countries for food, or they would smile at the fact that, in 1811, the year before the American war, 33,200 bushels of maize had been imported.

The legislature saw the dilemma in which the island was likely to be placed, and offered liberal premiums to encourage native production. Few of the prizes were ever claimed, but the list is interesting as the first attempt of the kind, and as indicating the degree of anxiety which was felt.<sup>1</sup> For curing and salting not less than ten barrels of beef, £200; for a field of not less than twenty acres of cocoas, £200; for the next largest field, £100; for a twenty-acre field of white or negro yam, each, £200; for the next largest of each, £100; for twenty acres of bitter cassava, or fifty of maize, each, £200; for the next largest of each, £100; for not less than ten acres of mountain rice, £200; for the next largest, £100; for the greatest number of casks, not less than ten, of island-growth wood, capable of holding sixty-three gallons of spirits, £200.

The drought of 1813, together with a storm on the 1st of August of that year, was subsequently assigned as a cause why so little was done to secure these very liberal premiums. The peace removed many of the difficulties by which the island was beset, and little of importance remains to be related with respect to the trade or agriculture of many succeeding years.

In 1825 there were some changes favourable to commercial prosperity. The British West Indian ports were thrown open to foreign ships, and duties on West Indian produce, in one or two particulars, were lowered. A considerable reduction also took place in the fees levied by the custom-house officers, and increased facilities were afforded for warehousing goods intended for re-exportation to other countries, and so facilitating the increase of the trade with the South American colonies.<sup>2</sup>

The imports of cattle from these places were, however, decreasing, as the pens or grazing farms in the colony were now on the increase, especially in St. Anns, and some other parishes. In 1833, upwards of one-fourth of the slaves in St. Anns were

attached to cattle farms, feeding nearly thirty-thousand horned stock. On many of these, coffee and some other minor products were cultivated, and nearly all, on the north side, contained groves of pimento. English farmers will hardly wonder that the proprietors made a formal complaint to the legislature, in 1833, of small returns, when they were told that, on most of these farms, there were two slaves for every seven head of cattle, and that there was, on an average, only one ox or cow to every four acres of land.<sup>1</sup>

Manufacturers continued to be very few in number, and thus entries in the journals of the assembly, and references in the newspapers of the day, which, under any other circumstances would seem childish, may be quoted as showing that, now and then, cases were found in which ingenious and enterprising men sought to remove this drawback to colonial prosperity.

The importance of establishing sugar refineries from time to time engaged attention, but the heavy duty imposed, £4 2s. 6d. per cwt., on all exported to Great Britain, repressed any effort in this direction beyond preparing small quantities for colonial consumption,<sup>2</sup> but several improvements in the manufacture of raw sugar were made.<sup>3</sup> A treatise by Dr. Wiggins, on an improved mode of making sugar, attracted so much attention, that he was invited to come to the colony. Leaving a lucrative practice in London, he established himself at Constant Spring, a few miles from Kingston. A vote of £1000, and then another of £500, were made by the assembly, and a committee of the house inspected and reported favourably of his plans. Unfortunately his health soon failed, and he left the island. £1000 sterling was also voted to Mr. Boussie for improvements in making Muscovado sugar. In 1803, £500 was voted by the assembly to Mr. Blackford for an improved mode of making sugar. In 1810 and 1811, £1200 more was given. In the latter year, £480 was voted to two gentlemen for valuable suggestions relative to the manufacture of sugar and rum; and it also appears that £1000 was voted to Louis Duboc for coming to the island to explain a plan of Monsieur Dorion of clarifying cane juice by the use of the bark of the bastard cedar. Dr. Jeffrey also obtained £700 as a reward for certain improvements in the

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. xii.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. xiv. p. 385.



construction of stills.<sup>4</sup> Other cases of liberality might be noted. The real value of the different plans suggested can only be appreciated by experienced planters; but the facts recorded serve to show that the legislature was not so indifferent to improvement, either in the cultivation of the great staple, or in its preparation for the market, as some have asserted.

In other matters, a few sentences will comprise what little can be said. The possibility of tanning excellent leather was early recognised. Joel Evans laid some information before the house of what he had done before the close of the last century, Good strong leather for boots, harness, and carriage tops, was produced in considerable quantities at his establishment.<sup>1</sup> Two other tanners, one a Frenchman, also stated they could manufacture as cheaply as was done in England.

Some attention, about the same time, was given to a plan of a George Ashbridge for making artificial stone for roofing and building houses.<sup>2</sup>

Just before the apprenticeship, Mr. Ralph Turnbull presented an interesting memorial to the house, stating that he employed sixty journeymen and apprentices in making up the woods of the country into furniture; but the pecuniary results, it appears, were not so satisfactory as he deserved they should be.

A manufacturer on a smaller scale was John Conery. He was at first a maker of tobacco pipes, but was afterwards known for many years as a manufacturer of very good pottery, for which some of the clays in the island are well suited.

The island has always been rather proud of its Botanic Garden, and not without reason. Dr. Broughton and Dr. Dancer both paid considerable attention to it. About the year 1790 a fine collection of plants was sent to the royal gardens at Kew, at the expense of the colony. This was, however, but a small return compared with the royal gift intended for the island on board the *Bounty*, but which never reached it in consequence of the mutiny. The assembly, however, voted five hundred guineas to Bligh, as some consolation for his sufferings. In 1793 Captain Bligh made a

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1833, p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> Journals, vol. viii. pp. 54, 55.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., vol. viii. pp. 97, 98, 102–104.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., vol. xi. p. 51.

second and more successful voyage. He brought three hundred and fifty plants of bread-fruit, and many other valuable plants. The former were distributed through the island, and also some of the latter; others were for a time carefully tended at the gardens in Bath. With a view of making the best of the boon thus conferred, the valuable gardens of the late Hinton East, below Newcastle, were bought of his executors, together with thirty-nine slaves, and many of the plants were put there. Dr. Broughton displayed great zeal in the matter, and well deserved the service of plate voted him by the assembly. To Captain Bligh a thousand guineas were voted, and five hundred to his lieutenant, Portlock. Bligh, however, was offended at this last, and wrote one or two letters about it, by no means creditable to his judgment or temper.<sup>1</sup>

The gardens in St. Andrews were sold some years later, but considerable sums continued to be spent over those at Bath. In other places, as at Milk River, moneys were liberally expended to secure to the public the benefit of the mineral waters with which Jamaica is so well supplied. It was even more difficult then than it is now to reach those places, while the main roads, even to important places, were very bad. St. Mary's, one of the worst places in these respects, was, however, the first to try the plan of macadamising. Some years after, the legislature offered a premium of £100 for the best piece of road, of not less than one mile, repaired on this principle, and it was awarded to the Hon. R.Barrett, of St. James's, in 1826.

It was about this time that renewed attention was spasmodically given to the importance of opening up other resources than the cane-fields afforded. £100 premium was offered for five thousand lbs. weight of tobacco grown in the island, and another £100 for a ton weight of a really good substitute for hemp. There was some debate about the propriety of awarding £250 for the best manufacturing establishment giving employment to free people, but nothing came of it. The Kingston tanneries, and two foundries in Kingston and at Falmouth, were just then attracting attention, especially the former, where the use of mangrove bark was found to produce excellent leather, and cheaper than it could be imported. Unfortunately, industrial efforts in the manufacturing

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. viii. p. 106.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. viii. p. 189.

department have seldom succeeded. Foundries, tanneries, and cabinetmaking furnish, though on a small scale, almost the only exceptions. Capital and perseverance seem to have been wanting, yet it cannot truthfully be said that there is no mechanical skill among the people. About the year 1800, John Lodge, a free coloured man, a cabinet-maker in Kingston, contrived a most ingenious model of a sugar-mill, with rollers to revolve more rapidly than those then used, without any additional labour to the cattle. The model was pronounced, by a committee of the best planters in the assembly, really excellent, though they had some doubts as to certain details of importance in its erection. Lodge received a *douceur* of £100 sterling for his labour, and the promise of a bill giving him the exclusive right of his discovery, should any mill be erected successfully within two years. This seems to be the last heard of the matter.

In these days, and indeed till some time after apprenticeship, retail dry goods or drapery stores were unknown. Shops with windows and counters are hardly yet a quarter of a century old. No lady ever entered a store: goods or patterns would be sent for her approval, but pieces were not cut by the storekeepers, they were bought entire. A good deal of trade was done on what is still known as the *drogger* system. People, as mentioned in a former chapter, chiefly coloured women in good position, continued to buy goods of the merchants, and send them out with persons, generally slaves, to the houses of residents in the towns, and far into the country. The business done in this way was very considerable.

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. ix.

## CHAPTER III

### RELIGION AND EDUCATION

The early part of this period presents little to be recorded in the lives and labours of the clergy very different to what has been related in the previous chapter. Their number, it is true, was small; nevertheless, they might have done more good if so disposed. In no part of the world was the influence of the clergy so insignificant as in the British West Indies, until far on into the nineteenth century. The legislature was not illiberal; a fair stipend was paid to each rector, from the colonial funds, munificent fees were provided by law, and legacies and gifts combined to make some livings extremely valuable.<sup>1</sup>

The culpable neglect of duty on the part of many of the rectors, and the fact that the Bishop of London never exercised the authority delegated to him in 1745, rendered some mode of ecclesiastical supervision necessary. The legislature proposed to vest this power in the governor for the time being, and the question was submitted for legal advice in England. Sir William Scott, afterwards Lord Stowell, was requested to report to his Majesty's government on the subject. He clearly pointed out the evil consequences which would attend the proposed arrangement, as a colonial governor, however high his qualifications, could not have "any intimate knowledge of the nature and exercise of the pastoral office;" and recommended that the king, as supreme head of the church, should appoint three or more respectable clergymen in the island as commissaries, to exercise, jointly and synodically, discipline over the clergy; provided that no sentence of deprivation, by which freehold rights would be affected, should be carried into execution without the concurrence of the governor.<sup>2</sup>

In this view the Bishop of London concurred, and the legislature having conferred the necessary powers, the rectors of Kingston, St. Andrew, St. James, St. Elizabeth, and St. Catherine, were appointed commissaries in the year 1800. But so irregular was the conduct of the clergy, that it was necessary to pass a law,

providing that the receiver-general should not pay the quarterly stipends of the rectors without a certificate from the churchwardens of their residence and conformity; but if these gentlemen should refuse the said certificate on insufficient grounds, they were liable to a fine of £500. The result was that it never was refused. Rectors, however, might obtain leave of absence for a term not exceeding eighteen months, from the governor; and as concessions were always made when any kind of pressure was put upon the clergy, the same law provided glebe lands where required. Trustees were provided for the widows' fund, established some years before, and a salaried registrar and an apparitor provided for the new ecclesiastical court<sup>1</sup>

In 1804 this law was found to require amendment. Rectors got leave of absence, and no one was left to discharge the duties of the parish; so it was provided that they should obtain curates to act for them when away, or failing to do this, the governor should appoint one, and give him all the emoluments of the living, the glebe only excepted; but should the rector be absent more than eighteen months, then the benefice was to be declared vacant.

The fees paid the rectors were enormous. The amounts fixed by law were generally exceeded. A doubloon, or £3 4s. sterling, was considered a small recompense for a baptism, a funeral, or a marriage; double this sum was usually given by all who laid claim to any position in society. Three and even four doubloons were often presented by the more wealthy. Fees were also given for the erection of monuments in churches, &c. In some parishes these fees exceeded, by three, four, or even six times, the fixed stipend.<sup>2</sup>

If a clerical income of from £1000 to £3000 per annum had secured the services of painstaking, good men, there would have been less cause for complaint; but bankrupt merchants, overseers, military and naval officers, who could obtain sufficient interest, were appointed in some cases to rectories. Early in the century the church doors in country districts were not opened, even on Sundays, for weeks or months together, as admitted by a staunch defender of the colony.<sup>3</sup> As for the instruction of slaves, it was hardly ever attempted. So late as 1817, when a better feeling was beginning to

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<sup>1</sup> Bridges' "Annals," vol. i. p. 549.

<sup>2</sup> Letter of Sir William Scott (Lord Stowell) quoted by Bridges, vol. i. pp. 552-554

exist, the Rev. John West, rector of St. Thomas, declared that negro slaves could derive little or no advantage from attending church, and that few attended catechising, as they were conscious of their defects of understanding.<sup>4</sup>

At the close of 1815, the assembly, before it separated, unanimously resolved at the next meeting to take into consideration the state of religion among the slaves, “and carefully investigate the means of diffusing the light of genuine Christianity, divested of the dark and dangerous fanaticism of the Methodists which has been attempted to be propagated, and which, grafted on the African superstitions, and working on the uninstructed minds and ardent temperament of the negroes, has produced the most pernicious consequences to individuals, and is pregnant with imminent danger to the community.”<sup>1</sup>

This was plain speaking. For more than a dozen years they had been seeking to crush the missionaries, now they would endeavour to compete with them. When they next met, they passed a bill providing for the appointment of curates to assist the rectors in propagating the gospel among the slaves. The parishes were required to provide proper places besides the church, where divine service might be performed on Sundays and holidays; and the baptismal fee for a slave was reduced to two shillings and sixpence. The house not only passed the bill, but accompanied it with a message to the governor, requesting him to employ his influence with the Bishop of London, so sterling per annum, together with every possible encour that he might send prudent and discreet clergymen to act as curates, promising them £300 currency, about £180 ageement and assistance. Such a stipend secured missionaries in the face of discouragement, but not clergymen.<sup>2</sup> The Bishop soon wrote to say he had little hope of securing the services of any clergymen to come to such a climate for that sum. The legislature, by a bill passed in 1818, augmented it to £500 currency.

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<sup>1</sup> “Laws of Jamaica,” 1801.

<sup>2</sup> “Account of Jamaica,” by Williams, 1808, pp. 44–46 ; Stewart’s “Present State of Jamaica,” 1823, pp. 149–152.

<sup>3</sup> Barclay’s “Practical View of Slavery,” p. 124.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 121.

Four years later it was found that only twelve had come to the island, instead of one for each parish. In only two or three parishes had chapels-of-ease been erected, and it was asserted that little good had been done except in such parishes. The governor was therefore requested by the assembly not in future to nominate a curate to any district in which no chapel had been provided.<sup>3</sup>

In most cases these curates were mere assistants to the rectors, and neither they nor the planters cared about the instruction of slaves.<sup>4</sup> There were, however, two or three noteworthy exceptions. The Rev. Francis Humberstone, a young clergyman trained at Newport Pagnell college, in Buckinghamshire, an institution sustained by churchmen and dissenters, arrived in Kingston at the close of 1818, and officiated for the rector of that parish, then absent in England. He only lived a few months, but before his death he had borne uncompromising testimony against the disregard of the marriage tie, the violation of the Sabbath, and the more common sins of the community. In his last sermon, preached on the anniversary of the great earthquake, he not only referred to these transgressions, but pleaded the cause of the slave in a way that would have led to the bitter persecution of any missionary. Referring to the repentance of Nineveh at the preaching of Jonah, he said: "How many poor slaves rejoiced on that day. The fast required of us (and no other will be acceptable to the Lord) is to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free." The communicants at the Lord's table had increased from a very few to upwards of six hundred when his brief but earnest ministry closed. Nor was he a mere philanthropist or moralist; there was no possibility of forgetting the great sacrifice of Calvary when he preached. His funeral sermon, delivered by the Rev. A. Campbell, the rector of St. Andrews, bore unmistakable testimony to the purity of his doctrine and the holiness of his life.<sup>1</sup>

The Rev. Mr. Trew, afterwards archdeacon of the Bahamas, was another early labourer among the bondsmen. Soon after his settlement in Manchester, he addressed a circular letter to the

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<sup>1</sup> "Journals of Assembly," vol. xii. p. 833.

<sup>2</sup> Stewart's "Present State of Jamaica," pp. 291, 292.

<sup>3</sup> Journals, vol. xiv. p. 70.

<sup>4</sup> Stewart's "View," pp. 292, 293; Bridges' "Annals," vol. i. p. 556.

proprietors, urging upon them the duty of attending to the religious instruction of their slaves, and offering to visit their properties, if they would appoint a portion of a week day once a month for that purpose. With the same zeal and earnestness he laboured in the parish of St. Thomas, to which he was soon removed.<sup>2</sup> Here in seven years he married 1744 couples.

Other clergymen displayed considerable activity in making proselytes, though unaccompanied with efforts for their instruction. The Rev. G.W.Bridges, the annalist, stated, in 1823, that he had baptized 9413 slaves during two years, and that many of them attended church.<sup>1</sup> The proportion must indeed have been small, for the church he refers to (Mandeville) could not at that time have held a twentieth part of the number. Most of these slaves paid half-a-crown each as a baptismal fee. Mr. Bridges, in happy oblivion of what he had said of the money given to missionaries being the result of a cruel and heartless imposition on their superstition and ignorance, observes of the fees he received, that "this laudable desire of exchanging worldly goods for celestial rewards," evinces "a measure of faith words cannot express."<sup>2</sup> By the end of another year this zealous baptizer was able to report that 12,000 out of 17,000 slaves in the parish had received the holy ordinance, and, he adds, "happily there are no sectarians."<sup>3</sup>

The parish is now filled with flourishing and intelligent congregations of Moravians, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists. If Mr. Bridges wished to keep out sectarians he should have taught the slaves, but he was satisfied because some had learnt the Lord's Prayer and the ten commandments<sup>4</sup> And what, after all, were these baptisms which displayed such unutterable faith, and in recompense for which, or for the half-crown fee, celestial rewards were supposed to be obtained? In the majority of cases the clergyman paid a hasty visit to the estate at an appointed time. The slaves to be baptized were assembled; after some words of explanation the service was read, the applicants were duly baptized in the name of the triune Jehovah, and the rest of the day was devoted to feasting and dancing.<sup>5</sup> It is to be hoped that the nature of the marriage tie was better explained; for in this

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<sup>1</sup> "Evangelical Magazine," 1819; "Jamaica Pioneer," 1858, pp. 27-29.

<sup>2</sup> "Report of Society for Conversion of Negroes in British West Indies," 1824.



new-born zeal which was to crush the dissenters, and bind the slaves to the Church of England, 3897 couples were joined together in a short term of years,<sup>6</sup>

In 1824, it was deemed desirable by the British government to appoint two bishops to the West Indies. The Right Rev. Christopher Lipscombe was nominated for the see of Jamaica, with which Honduras and the Bahama Islands were connected. He arrived on the 11th of February of the following year, was duly installed four days later, and took a seat as member of the legislative council. On the 13th of April following, he held his first ordination; and the first session of the legislature after his arrival was not allowed to pass without providing a bill consolidating and amending the laws relating to the clergy.

It enacted, among other things, the reception in the island of all the ecclesiastical canons, laws, and ordinances used in England, so far as they related to the due government of the clergy; but no power, spiritual or temporal, was given over the laity, nor were the powers of the governor, as ordinary, infringed upon. A considerable increase was made in the salaries of the registrar and apparitor, and those of the rectors were increased to £600 per annum, the additional £180 being compensation for loss of fees from slaves, which were no longer to be taken. A very handsome scale of fees was, however, provided for church services performed for free people.<sup>1</sup> Banns were in future to be published where a license had not been obtained, but the consent of owners was requisite in the case of slaves; and an efficient system of registry was provided, not only for the future, but to preserve records of baptisms, burials, and marriages, of which the only account hitherto kept was in the church books. All these registers had to be copied and sent to the bishop's office for preservation. Great was the outcry about the trouble of complying with this law, and heavy claims were sent in for the expenses said to have been incurred.

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<sup>1</sup> Bridges' "View of Jamaica," p. 27; published in 1823.

<sup>2</sup> "Dreams of Dulocracy, or the Puritan Obituary," 1824, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> "Statistical History of Parish of Manchester," published in 1824.

<sup>4</sup> "View of Jamaica," p. 27.

<sup>5</sup> Sir Henry de la Beche; pamphlet published in 1825, p. 27; local information, &c.

<sup>6</sup> "Dreams of Dulocracy," p. 28.

Many of the clergy did not fail to criticise with some severity the acts of the bishop; while he is reported to have said that no good could be expected from his mission till the old clergy, especially those appointed by the Duke of Manchester, were exterminated.<sup>2</sup>

The newly-appointed bishop and archdeacons cost the British government £6000 per annum. This would have sustained twenty working clergymen, and some years later the Church Missionary Society showed that such could be found. They were not much more welcome than missionaries had been. Mr. Panton, whose zealous labours in St. Thomas were above all praise, had to encounter opposition, just as the Wesleyans had done.

From the statements made by the bishop, the archdeacon, and the Rev. Lewis Bowerbank, to a committee of the assembly in 1832, it appears that thirteen churches had been erected since his arrival, and that nine others were in progress. There were then, in the island, forty-five clergymen and thirty-two catechists and schoolmasters. Religious instruction was imparted on two hundred and eighty properties, by clergymen, catechists, and bookkeepers. In few cases were the last named religious, or even moral men. Instruction appears to have been given twice a week for about one hour. On seventy of these estates, visited by the archdeacon, rather more than eighteen thousand slaves were under instruction. Two thousand he pronounced proficient, that is, they could repeat either a quarter, a half, or in three hundred and twenty-three cases, all the church catechism. Some who had not attempted the catechism knew the ten commandments; about fifteen hundred knew the creed, and about as many half of it, while others had only managed to learn the Lord's prayer. Other clergymen in their evidence admitted that what the negroes wanted was to be taught to read, and that they did not much value mere oral instruction; others complained of the impossibility of instructing them adequately till Sunday markets were abolished.<sup>1</sup>

The commencement of the apprenticeship was attended by the arrival of some excellent missionary clergymen; many of the stations they occupied are among the most flourishing of all the episcopal churches in the colony. In 1836 there were fifty-seven clergymen in the island, and the average cost of the establishment

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<sup>1</sup> Bridges' "Annals," vol. i. Appendix, p. 569.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. i, pp. 558–575; vol. ii. pp. 383–387, 495.

for that and the four preceding years exceeded £43,000 currency per annum. Congregations of from twenty to twenty-five thousand people were gathered on fine Sundays. From a parliamentary return made at the close of 1838, it appears that there were then fifty-three churches in the island, sixty-one clergymen, and seven catechists.

The Episcopal church was not the only form of religion established in Jamaica. A Presbyterian kirk had also succeeded in obtaining an endowment. So far back as 1788 a petition was presented to the house of assembly, showing that there was only one place of worship in Kingston, and that a very large number of the white persons who arrived in the colony were Presbyterians, who, not finding in Kingston or elsewhere a church of their denomination, acquired a habit of entirely neglecting all religious worship, and at length lost all regard for religion. Aid in erecting a church to be affiliated with the established church of Scotland was accordingly asked for. An attempt was made to refer the petition to a committee of the whole house, but it failed: it was ordered to lie on the table, and no further notice taken of it.

Some twenty years later another effort to engage the sympathies of the legislature was made, but without success. In 1814 the matter once more came before the house. The Presbyterians were then in a position to report that they had themselves commenced the task. Referring to their numbers in the colony, they stated that a large sum had been contributed to erect and endow a place of worship, with which it was proposed to connect a seminary for the instruction of youth, under the guidance of the minister, and they merely asked for legislative aid to enable them to appoint trustees to receive and appropriate the donations and bequests that might be given.<sup>1</sup> A bill was accordingly prepared, and passed through the usual stages in the assembly. About a week before it came under the consideration of the council, another petition was laid before the assembly, stating that though the contributions had been very liberal, the desired end could not be gained without the aid of the house. This seems to have alarmed the council, who, though perhaps willing to afford any necessary powers to the proposed body of trustees, had no wish to entail upon the colony the expense of a second establishment: they accordingly rejected the

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<sup>1</sup> Evidence before Committee of Assembly, 1832.

bill which had been sent up to them. As soon as the assembly was made acquainted with this, a clause was inserted in the poll-tax bill, granting to certain trustees therein named the sum of £5000, to be laid out in completing a Presbyterian kirk.<sup>2</sup> The poll-tax bill only reached the council the day before that fixed for prorogation. To have thrown it out would have involved the affairs of the colony in confusion by depriving it of the chief source of revenue, and thus by a trick unworthy of legislators the first step was taken to impose a fresh ecclesiastical burden on the colony.

It was destined to be a very expensive institution. The corporation gave a liberal donation, but ere long the trustees came before the house with the statement that £16,000 had been spent, but more was required to provide an endowment. They thus obtained another vote of £3500.<sup>1</sup>

The kirk was opened in 1818, and not only whites but great numbers of slaves and free coloured people attended. These, it was stated in a petition to the assembly, had, from want of accommodation elsewhere, been obliged in former days to resort to "Methodist meeting-houses," but had "been rescued from their former sectarianism." Many more, it was hoped, would be "delivered from the control of their former instructors, and the injurious habits acquired from their influence." Still the aid of the assembly was needed, and £500 was given to effect the desirable objects indicated.

Again and again petitions were presented. In 1825 a committee of the house visited the Sunday-school, and granted £500 to the minister, Mr. Wordie, for his assiduity in instructing the young there. In 1828, though it was admitted that only one-third of the pews were free, the house was asked, "by one act of durable munificence," to elevate the Scotch church, and uphold so important an institution. This was not acceded to, but the annual grant was raised to £700 currency; and though from time to time some alterations have been made, the kirk has since remained a charge upon the revenues of the colony. More recently an annual sum of £365 sterling was granted, besides £187 received as interest of money in the public treasury. This income it still continues to

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. xii. p. 566.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. xii. p. 609.23

receive, but the sum first named will cease on the demise of the present incumbent.

About 1832 application was made for a grant to aid in the erection of a kirk at Falmouth. Though this was not acceded to, a grant for £500 currency was made two years later, to support the minister and the Sunday-schools.<sup>2</sup> Annual grants were made for several succeeding years, until at length a pastor connected with the Free Church of Scotland was appointed, and the expenses have since been met from the contributions of the people, aided by missionary funds.

Roman Catholics and Jews had congregations in Kingston and elsewhere. The first application for aid from the Catholics, but which was unsuccessful, was from the Rev. Edmund Murphy, who stated that numbers of children were instructed in their schools; and suggesting that the house, by extending aid to this invaluable work, would confound their enemies, who were ever ready to brand them with intolerance. Next year the application was renewed, but without success.<sup>1</sup> At the close of 1838 the Catholics had four chapels and four priests in the island. The number of both has since increased.

The Jews have always sustained not only their own religious services, but to a very great extent their own poor. In 1808 a section made an attempt to secure the adequate support of the latter by their own body, through means of a legal enactment. In a petition to the assembly, the wardens and elders of the Spanish and Portuguese synagogue stated that it was the custom of their nation all over the world to sustain their own poor, and that this was usually done among them by assessment; but of late some in their synagogue had refused to pay their portion, and in consequence had thrown an unduly heavy burden upon the more willing. Legislative provisions were sought to prevent this in the future by compelling payment. A bill was introduced, but rejected—no doubt to the satisfaction of the more intelligent members of the Hebrew community, who understood so well the true principles of voluntarism.

With the exception of one or two denominations, copious accounts have been published by missionaries of the labours in

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. xiii. pp. 34–85.

<sup>2</sup> "Votes," 1834, p. 24.1.

which they have taken part in Jamaica. It may be asserted, without any violation of Christian charity, that the most glowing descriptions of the results which have followed such labours are the least trustworthy. Honest, well-meaning men have frequently described as fruit that which was only blossom; while vain, though pious men, too anxious for the praise of their fellow creatures, and ambitious of the ephemeral fame of missionary chronicles or the applause of public meetings, have sometimes injured the cause they wished to serve by too highly-coloured descriptions of their success.

If the numbers reported as having been baptized on confession of faith, or otherwise received into fellowship, could be accepted as representing in any large proportion converted men and women, then the success of missionary effort in Jamaica is unsurpassed by anything that has ever been recorded since apostolic times. But if the general, moral, and religious character of the community is carefully considered, it must be evident that though the field has not been barren, and no faithful minister has toiled in vain, yet amidst abundant evidence of the restraining, converting, and elevating power of the gospel, there yet remains a wide field for Christian philanthropy. The work which some of the religious communities of England inaugurated at the close of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, and to which such general attention and help was given at the time of emancipation, is most assuredly not yet completed.

The period now under consideration comprises upwards of fifty years of slavery, and but four of semi-freedom. That so much was accomplished under such disadvantages, and in the face of unceasing opposition, is—divested of all undue colouring—one of the most wonderful stories to be found even in the annals of missionary triumphs.

The only proper object of missionary enterprise is the same in all societies; and in portraying the labours of the missionaries during this period, a brief sketch of their general operations will be given, and an account of the circumstances by which all were alike affected, favourably or otherwise.

The Moravians, as the only body labouring in the island before 1783, must first be noticed. The relation they bore to the

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1833, p. 80.

proprietors of the estates, their own connection with slavery, and the daily labour they were obliged to undergo, could not fail to affect their usefulness. The first event of much significance for many years was the arrival of a zealous missionary, named Lang, from England in 1805. His untiring efforts to revive the languid religious life of the converts, and to lead others to a knowledge of the truth, were not in vain, and the somewhat erratic, but it may be hoped sincere, efforts of a pedlar named Lewis, who travelled as a pedlar from Kingston, are described as having had a beneficial effect upon the people among whom the Moravians laboured.<sup>1</sup>

In 1823, Mr. Stobwasser arrived in the island from Antigua, charged by the mission board to effect some important changes. Henceforth it was decided that the missionaries should be relieved from any necessity for manual or other secular employment, all their expenses being in future defrayed from the mission fund; and their whole time and energies were in consequence to be devoted to their special work. Old Carmel was sold, and only the burial-ground retained, where already rested thirteen brethren who had died, mostly after brief periods of labour, and eleven of their wives. Fairfield, on the Manchester mountains, a place of wonderful loveliness, was selected as the principal station. The congregation that had assembled at Old Carmel lived mostly near Fairfield, and thus little inconvenience was felt by the removal, which was so desirable on the score of health.

Gradually new chapels were opened, but always in near communication with each other, and thus a circle of compact and well-appointed stations was established in Manchester, St. Elizabeth, Westmoreland, and St. James. Beyond these parishes they have never gone, but their missions have in consequence a completeness which only in a limited degree belongs to any other. In 1816, the missionary, Ward, mentioned with delight that he had met for the first time with a black man who was able to read. This simple acquisition was indeed rare in the country parts; but it was not until 1826 that the brethren saw their way clear to attempt the establishment of Sunday and day schools. The first of these latter was opened that year, and afterwards each year was marked by progress in this direction. During slavery these schools could only be attended by the children of free people: the attendance at each rarely exceeded twenty, and little was taught except reading, texts of Scripture, and hymns.

To meet the case of slave children, evening schools were attempted, but they were soon abandoned; the kind missionaries saw that it was positive cruelty to attempt to teach children who all the day had been toiling in the fields. Mr. Bryan Edwards tells of a negro who declared that "sleep hab no massa." The poor little urchins soon proved that it had no "schoolmassa," for soon after school began they would be found dropping from the benches fast asleep. Sabbath schools proved rather more successful, but of course the instruction given was very limited. Knowledge, however imperfect, is incompatible with slavery, and through these weary years the Christian labourer among the slaves was chiefly confined to such instruction as he could communicate orally.

The unjust accusations preferred against Moravian and other missionaries are related elsewhere, together with the trial and acquittal of Mr. Pfeiffer. For a time the negroes were so terrified by these proceedings that the chapels were almost deserted; but by April, 1832, those of the Moravians were as crowded as ever. During this year a school for orphan girls was established at Fairfield, and for twelve years proved a most valuable institution. The commencement of apprenticeship set at liberty all children under six years of age, and for these infant schools were arranged. Six new mission stations were opened, and increasing numbers attended these, as well as others long established. It was a time of much outward, and not a little deep spiritual interest in religious things.

Statistics have a certain value, though not so much in relation to missionary efforts as many good men suppose. As illustrative to some extent of the progress of the United Brethren in Jamaica, it is recorded that in 1813 there were 2282 persons, including children, connected with all their stations in the island. In 1831 there were 4100 persons, and in 1837 there were 9913. Of these, 2100 were communicants. At this last date there were twenty-five day schools, with rather more than a thousand scholars.

The missionaries during slavery did all in their power to encourage marriage among the converts. The loose mode of life in which they had so long indulged was not the only obstacle. The marriages celebrated among them had not the sanction of the law.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchner, "Moravians in Jamaica," pp. 47-53.



It was not until 1835 that all previously celebrated, and others henceforth to take place, were declared to be legal.<sup>1</sup>

The work of Christian instruction which had been commenced by the Moravians was, at the close of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, taken up by other denominations. The Wesleyans were the first of these in order of time; but before Dr. Coke visited the island, in January, 1789, some black ministers were engaged in Kingston and elsewhere in preaching, and other Christian work. The career of some of these men was remarkable. Early in January, 1783, when the struggle for independence in the United States had been decided in favour of the colonists, about four hundred white families, and between four and five thousand of their negro slaves, arrived in Jamaica, preferring a colony still under imperial rule to residing under a new and untried republican government.<sup>2</sup> Among the men of colour thus brought to the island, George Lisle and Moses Baker exercised considerable influence over its future religious interests. The former laid the foundation of the native Baptist churches in the island, and the latter prepared the way for the representatives of the Baptist Missionary Society.

Lisle came from Virginia; his master, a deacon of a Baptist Church, had given him his freedom. On his arrival in Kingston he began to preach on the race-course; great numbers were attracted by the novelty of the spectacle, and a few of the merchants encouraged him. Having procured a dray and horses, he laboured for his own support; but a little church of four persons being formed, he erected first a shed then a chapel on the Windward road. Many persons of influence, and among them Bryan Edwards, the historian, contributed towards the erection of this place. It had not been opened long before a sermon Lisle preached was misrepresented, and he was arrested, put in irons, and tried on a charge of inciting the slaves to rebellion. He was acquitted, but soon after was involved in fresh trouble on account of the debt remaining on his chapel. He was now cast into jail once more. Some merchants advised him to declare himself insolvent, and take the benefit of the act. This he refused to do, and remained in

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<sup>1</sup> Buchner's "Moravians in Jamaica," pp. 43-121 ; Brown's "History of Missions," vol. i. pp. 257-259.

<sup>2</sup> Southey's "Chronological History," vol. ii. p. 540.

prison, until, aided by his friends, he had paid the debt. The keeper of the prison, who highly appreciated his integrity, often allowed him to visit his family or any of his congregation who were sick, at night, a privilege he never abused. There is abundant evidence that though this earnest and good man held some peculiar views, such as the washing of feet and anointing the sick, he taught the essentials of religion, and maintained strict discipline in the church.<sup>1</sup> It would have been well for Jamaica if all of the native preachers had been like him. He had from time to time to endure much personal rudeness and petty persecution from the irreligious whites around; but for a long period he continued faithfully to labour among the flock he had gathered, many of whom resided in the town, but most in the country districts around.<sup>2</sup>

Another remarkable man was Moses Baker. He also came from America, and for some time after his arrival lived in utter disregard of religion. When brought to a better state of mind, by the efforts of an illiterate but good man, he was baptized by Lisle in 1787, and next year went down to the estate of a Quaker named Winn, in St. James's, where he was provided with a residence and a small stipend, as the religious instructor of the slaves. Baker found them living in the grossest immorality, and all firm believers in Obeah. But he pursued his labours with diligence, and introduced among the converts the form of covenant that Lisle had prepared.<sup>3</sup> Some other black men, separating from Lisle, established churches in other places. In some instances they were altogether unqualified; in others they mingled many superstitious observances with what they had learned from the Scriptures; but it is undeniable that many of the early disciples of these people and their children may be numbered with the most exemplary, though not the most intelligent, of the Christian converts during the time of slavery.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Coke, the pioneer of Wesleyan missions, first visited Jamaica on the 19th of January, 1789. He preached several times in Kingston in private houses, and then in a large concert room,

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<sup>1</sup> The Covenant of the Anabaptist Church, begun in Tamaica, December, 1783.

<sup>2</sup> Cox's "History of Baptist Missions," vol. ii. pp. 12-15, &c.; Rippon's "Register," vol. i.

<sup>3</sup> "Evangelical Magazine," September, 1803; Hill's "Lights and hadows," pp. 77-80.

which was placed at his disposal. Though on one occasion he was violently interrupted, as many as four hundred whites and two hundred slaves attended these services; and the doctor, though unable to make a prolonged stay himself, arranged for Mr. Hammett, who had rendered good service in the smaller islands, to take up his residence in Kingston. This missionary arrived in August, and rented a house in Hannah's Town for temporary use as a chapel. Soon after, he formed the first class, or society, consisting of eight persons. The obscurity of the meeting-house preserved the little flock from interruption, but when, at the close of 1790, a large house at the east side of the Parade was purchased, enlarged, and opened as a chapel, considerable opposition was displayed. The grand jury of Kingston presented it at the court of quarter sessions as a nuisance.<sup>2</sup> The newspapers for months were filled with controversial letters, and at length a mob tore down the gates at midnight, and serious damage was only prevented by the arrival of the town guard. Those of the rioters who were apprehended were acquitted in the face of the clearest evidence. Mr. Hammett was obliged to refrain from preaching after dark, almost the only time when slaves were able to attend; but two or three estates in the neighbourhood were opened for his ministrations, and a society was formed at Port Royal.

Dr. Coke revisited the island in 1791 and 1792, and preached, not only in Kingston, but at Montego Bay and some other places. Two other missionaries were sent, but one soon died, and the other, with Mr. Hammett, was obliged to leave the island through ill-health. For a short time the infant societies were left without a pastor, but in May, 1792, the mission was once more supplied, and has never since been without resident English missionaries. In 1793 Dr. Coke paid his last visit to the island. For some years after, with the exception of a few trifling disturbances, not more serious than those to which dissenters were exposed in some parts of England, the missionaries laboured without interruption. In Kingston and in some of the eastern parishes, about six hundred persons were gathered into church fellowship towards the close of the century.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Coke's "History of West Indies," vol. i.

<sup>2</sup> Coke's "Journals," pp. 101-135; Duncan's "Wesleyan Missions in Jamaica," p. 16.

The first religious intelligence, in the year 1800, can hardly be read without a smile. On the 5th of February an honourable member rose in his place in the house of assembly, and with serious countenance read to an attentive auditory an important communication with which a Mr. David Dick of Edinburgh had favoured him. It announced that a body of missionaries were to sail for Jamaica early that year. Mr. Dick did not know what doctrines they would preach, but he was assured they were opposed to slavery, and that their coming would be “pregnant with mischief to the colony.” He promised to send some magazines to show what manner of men they were. The extract from Mr. Dick’s letter was referred at once to a committee of the whole house, then inquiring into the state of the island.<sup>2</sup> The committee must have soon found that the missionary invasion was not so dangerous as Mr. Dick supposed. The party consisted of the Rev. J. Bethune, a minister of the church of Scotland, and Messrs. Clark and Reid, catechists. Within three weeks after landing Mr. Clark died of yellow fever. A few days after Mr. Bethune fell a victim to the same malady. He was a married man, but his wife and child died on the passage home, and Mr. Reid was soon the only survivor of the party. He was not dismayed by the sad fate of his companions, but at once commenced meetings among such of the black and coloured people as he could gather together, and opened a school for their children. He was soon interrupted in his labours by persecuting measures now to be recorded, and obliged to accept a situation as teacher in a school, where he secured the esteem of large numbers of the inhabitants of the city.<sup>3</sup>

In the year 1802 a determined effort was made to put an end to missionary labours in the island. The chief instigator was Mr. Simon Taylor, a man of degraded habits, though possessed of many estates, and the attorney for several absentees. For some reason not quite clear he had conceived a great hatred to the Wesleyans, and having failed in shutting them out from St. Thomas, of which parish he was custos, he determined, if possible, to restrain them by legislative enactment. Perhaps no planter was ever possessed of more power than this imperious, vulgar man, and

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<sup>1</sup> Duncan’s “Wesleyan Missions in Jamaica,” pp. 18–42.

<sup>2</sup> Journals, vol. x.

<sup>3</sup> Brown’s “History of Missions,” vol. ii. p. 427.

on the 17th of December the assembly, at his instigation, passed “an act to prevent preaching by persons not duly qualified by law.” Next day it passed through the council, and the lieutenant-governor, Nugent, immediately gave his assent.

The bill provided that any persons, not qualified by the laws of the island and of Great Britain, who should preach or teach in meetings of negroes or persons of colour, should, if free, be committed to prison, there to be kept at hard labour; if slaves, they were to be imprisoned for the first offence, and whipped for every subsequent one; but if the offence committed by a white person should appear to be one of extraordinary heinousness, then, on conviction, he was to receive *such punishment as the court should see fit to inflict, not extending to life*. This ambiguous phrase, when used in reference to slaves, had for a number of years meant repeated whippings, ear clipping, nose splitting, and other forms of dismemberment; what it might mean in reference to Christian missionaries cannot now be known, as, in 1804, the disallowance of the act by the king was announced to the assembly. The members were highly indignant in consequence, and pronounced certain recommendations with which the disallowance was accompanied a breach of their privileges, to which they could not submit.<sup>1</sup>

In the meantime several preachers had been silenced. The first victim of the iniquitous law was Mr. Williams, a Wesleyan local preacher residing at Morant Bay, where he held some property. He had refrained from preaching until he could obtain a license, but early in January next year a few friends were at his house. They sang hymns and prayed together; this was all, and for this Williams was sent to the workhouse for a month! the Rev. Mr. Campbell hastened down from Kingston to console the afflicted church, and as he was authorised, according to the laws of Great Britain, he felt at liberty to preach; but he was arrested, and the magistrates decided that, by the laws of the island, he was not qualified. What or where the law was by which he could qualify, the magistrates declined to say. There was, in point of fact, no such law upon the statute book.

When Mr. Campbell, by a writ of *habeas corpus*, brought the case before the Kingston assizes, then sitting, the chief justice, who

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. xi. p. 287.

was a lawyer, pronounced in his favour, but the puisne judges, who were planters and merchants, outvoted him, and the decision of the magistrates at Morant Bay was confirmed.

In 1807 the common council of Kingston passed an ordinance, which came into operation on the 1st of July, providing that no person not duly authorised by the laws of the island and Great Britain, should teach or preach, under penalty of fine, imprisonment, or whipping, according to the condition in life of the offender; and, moreover, that no person, though qualified, should conduct service before six o'clock in the morning or after sunset, under a penalty not exceeding £100, or imprisonment, or both. Persons were also prohibited from allowing their places to be used for purposes of worship. Intolerant as the common council was, the assembly was equally so, and introduced into the consolidated slave law clauses requiring masters and others having care of slaves to instruct them in the Christian religion, according to the Church of England, and forbidding any Methodist, or "other sectary or preacher," to instruct slaves, or to receive them into their houses, chapels, or conventicles. There was no penalty for masters *not* instructing, but £20 was imposed if they were instructed by the missionaries. The clauses were introduced not as a separate bill, but in one with which they had no real connection. In this way it was supposed that the vigilance of his Majesty's advisers would be eluded.

This expectation was disappointed. The act was disallowed, as containing clauses opposed to the principles of toleration prevailing in Great Britain, and the conduct of the legislature, in inserting them, was pronounced to be more objectionable from the fact that the law of 1802 had been disallowed on similar grounds. Instructions, dated the 9th of June, 1809, directed colonial governors in future to withhold consent from any laws relating to religion till his Majesty's pleasure was known.

But though the act passed by the assembly was thus disallowed, the ordinance of the Kingston common council remained in force; and in November, 1810, the assembly passed another bill relative to the licensing of preachers and places of worship, limiting its duration to a year, and to this the Duke of Manchester gave his consent, in face of the instructions he had received; but no attempt was made to renew the iniquitous measure.

The full review of all the petty persecutions which marked these years would be wearisome. They affix a lasting stigma to the men

by whom they were encouraged. The sole object of these restrictions was to prevent the instruction of slaves, for Catholics and Jews could assemble after nightfall. The first victim was Mr. Gilgrass, who was found guilty of singing a hymn after sunset, and imprisoned for a month. The fact was this minister, who had just arrived, had been teaching a new tune to the young people who used to come to the chapel on certain afternoons to learn psalmody, and, interested in the melody, the moment of sunset was not accurately observed. Such was the offence, such the penalty.

Licenses were refused to all new missionaries, and among those who were thus prevented from preaching was Mr. Johnston, a minister in the prime of life and of great prudence, who had brought credentials from many of the leading men in other colonies where he had laboured. When the act of 1807 was disallowed, he applied to the common council of Kingston for permission to open the chapel in the parade, promising to confine himself to the hours prescribed in the ordinance. The application was refused. He was, however, allowed to qualify at St. Thomas's, and services were resumed at Morant Bay in 1810, great numbers crowding the chapel, for persecution had awakened inquiry.

If the common council of Kingston was persecuting, it was not proud. In 1811 it wanted some temporary accommodation for the free school, and applied for the use of the Wesleyan chapel. It was granted, and occupied from October until August, 1812. As the prohibitory act of the legislature of 1810 had expired some months before, Mr. Wiggins opened the chapel after the scholars of the free school had vacated it, and preached morning and afternoon. For this he was arrested, tried, and imprisoned for a month, and every kind of slander was put in circulation concerning him. Thus again restrained from preaching, he visited distant societies in St. Thomas in the Vale, Spanish Town, Morant Bay, and elsewhere; great numbers were added to the list of members, and some fifty meetings were held among the people weekly.<sup>1</sup>

At length, in 1814, the council seemed disposed to relent. A Mr. Davies, just from England, was licensed, but within three months he died of fever. Other missionaries followed, but for a time their licenses were refused, notwithstanding repeated applications. By the end of 1815 a better spirit prevailed, and licenses being given to Messrs. Shipman and Bugar, the chapels at Morant Bay and

Kingston were opened, after eight years of trial and anxious expectation. Good Mrs. Smith, the first friend of Methodism in Jamaica, opened the gates in Kingston herself, with earnest prayer that they might never be closed against the worshippers of God again. Her prayer was answered.<sup>2</sup>

For many years after this the Wesleyans pursued their work without serious interruption. New stations were gradually established in different parts of the island, and from time to time missionaries arrived from England. The first district meeting was held in Kingston early in 1817; there were then four missionaries in the island, and it was stated that, in the four societies at Kingston, Spanish Town, Morant Bay, and Grateful Hill, there were 4151 members: of these, only twenty-five were whites, and one-third were free persons of colour.<sup>3</sup>

In the meantime a valuable accession to the missionary band had been made. The English Baptists, whose sympathies had been enlisted on behalf of their coloured coreligionists in the island, had sent forth missionaries to carry on and extend the work which the black preachers had commenced. So far back as 1806, Moses Baker, Lisle, and Swiegle appear to have commenced a correspondence with Doctors Rippon and Ryland, distinguished Baptist ministers in England, and Dr. Ryland was much impressed with the desirability of an English minister being sent to help them. Swiegle and Baker had then about seven hundred members each, while those connected with other black preachers must have amounted to some thousands. Dr. Ryland succeeded in enlisting the sympathy of Mr. W. Wilberforce in the matter, but owing in part to the persecuting enactments, and perhaps also to the want of suitable agents, no one was sent until the beginning of 1814. On the 23rd of February, Mr. John Rowe landed at Montego Bay. This gentleman had been for several years a student at Bristol college, then under the presidency of Dr. Ryland.

On arriving at Flamstead, the residence of Moses Baker, about twelve miles distant from Falmouth, he found that for eight years that venerable man had been prevented by the prohibitory law from preaching to the people. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper

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<sup>1</sup> Duncan's "History of Wesleyan Missions in Jamaica," p. 94.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 102-130; Brown's "History of Missions," vol. i.



had not been administered all that time, and though some had been baptized, no record had been kept of numbers. Mr. Rowe found difficulties thrown in the way of his obtaining a license, but hoping to disarm opposition by courtesy and forbearance, he commenced a day school at Falmouth, as a means of usefulness and support. On Sunday he instructed as many children, bond and free, as were sent, and after a time began to preach at Falmouth and at Flamstead. His quiet and amiable deportment secured the favour of the custos and others, who promised to obtain for him legal protection, but in June, 1816, he died. A few months before his death Mr. Compere had arrived, and having obtained a license from the mayor of Kingston, he commenced preaching.

There was at this time nearly, if not quite, two thousand native Baptists in that town. Most of these were strongly attached to their peculiar views and practices; but about two hundred soon connected themselves with Mr. Compere, and, after due examination, were formed into a Christian church : the number was doubled in a month. In 1817, Mr. Coultart succeeded Mr. Compere, who, for some reason not very intelligible, had failed in giving satisfaction to the Baptist committee: but apart from this, his health had completely failed, and as soon as Mr. Coultart arrived he left the island.

In 1822, the large Baptist chapel in Kingston, then capable of seating 1600 persons, was opened, and crowded with eager worshippers. The church alone, by this time, had increased to a thousand persons. In the same year a new chapel was opened near, under the pastoral care of Mr. Tinson. Mr. Godden was also labouring successfully in Spanish Town, though the destruction of the chapel by a drunken and apparently half-witted negro, for a time retarded operations. They were, however, successfully carried on by Mr. Phillippo, who arrived at the close of 1823, though his license was not granted for nearly a year, on the ground that he had not taken the usual oaths before the Lord Mayor of London. The certificate of this high official, though deemed so important in this case, was, as has already been seen, always supplemented by an island license. Mr. Burchell, early in the following year, arrived at Montego Bay, where he took charge of what yet remained of the scattered followers of Moses Baker, and in other places laid the foundation of several flourishing Christian communities.<sup>1</sup>

In 1824, the Scottish Missionary Society, after an interval of twenty-four years from the date of their first effort, sent out the

Rev. G. Blyth to Jamaica. Mr. Stirling, the principal proprietor of Hampden estate, and Mr. Stothert, proprietor of Dundee, engaged to pay half the expense of the mission, Mr. Blyth's labours being chiefly directed to the instruction of the slaves on their estates, which were near Falmouth. Many of the first missionaries sent out by the Baptists were men possessed of scholastic attainments far superior to those of the majority of the early Wesleyan missionaries; but the Scottish society was even further in advance in this respect. Mr. Blyth was in all respects well qualified for mission work in any part of the world, and, moreover, had already had some experience of missionary life in Russia. The state of Jamaica at this time was such as to demand the presence of thoughtful, judicious men, and the committee did wisely in sending an agent of experience.

How delicate the position of a missionary was, is evinced by the simple fact that one of the colonial newspapers recommended that Mr. Blyth should be sent home by the vessel that brought him; because, at a farewell meeting held in Edinburgh, a Dr. Stark had observed that: "If the slaves were still to be retained in the galling yoke of bondage, the Gospel would support their minds under their trials, and cheer them with the hope of a better world."<sup>1</sup> Mr. Blyth had not long commenced his labours before four slaves expressed a desire to be married to the women with whom they cohabited. Mr. Blyth at once wrote to their manager, mentioning their wish, and offering to perform the ceremony, unless he desired the rector to do so. The manager, though ordinarily a mild man, was urged on by another gentleman to give each of the negroes a flogging, and then commenced a prosecution against Mr. Blyth for violating the law in teaching the slaves after sunset. The case was heard by a full bench of magistrates, and ended in the missionary promising to observe the law, and the manager promising to allow the slaves to go for instruction on the Sabbath. A large proprietor was induced, in consequence of what he then heard, to request Mr. Blyth to take the religious oversight of his slaves on several properties, promising to allow additional time at noon-day, when required for purposes of instruction.<sup>2</sup> In 1827, two other Scottish missionaries, Messrs. Chamberlain and Watson, were sent out by the society, and another, Mr. Waddell, in 1829. Hampden chapel, the first connected with this mission, was opened in 1828. It was

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<sup>1</sup> Cox's "History of Baptist Missions," vol. ii.; Underhill's "West Indies"; Phillippo's "Past and Present State"; "Life of Burchell," &c.

erected at the cost of the society, aided by liberal contributions from Messrs. Stothert, Stirling, and other proprietors. No contributions appear to have been accepted from the slaves who attended, on the ground that if they gave money, it must have been the proceeds of their earnings on the Sabbath.<sup>3</sup> Soon after the chapel was opened, a church, consisting of seventy members, was formed, and thus was the foundation laid upon which such a solid structure has since been built by the Presbyterian missionaries.

The Wesleyans during these years had met with much encouragement in their work. Its progress was more marked in the towns than in the rural districts, and a very large proportion of the free coloured people continued to connect themselves with the societies. Considering how small a relative proportion these bore to the slave population, the numbers who became Wesleyans is very remarkable. At the close of 1823, Wesley chapel, in Kingston, erected at a great cost, was opened, and throughout the island new places of worship were continually in progress.

In 1826, the Rev. G.W.Bridges, who was then rector of St. Anns, began to show that hostility to missionaries which some years later led him to identify himself with the infamous Church Union. On the night of the 25th of December a party of militia fired into the Wesleyan Mission House at St. Anns, happily without injury to the missionary or his family. Some fruitless inquiries into the outrage were made by the magistrates, and a reward was offered for the apprehension of the guilty parties. Dr. Lushington brought the matter before the British House of Commons, and the Duke of Manchester anticipated the inquiries of the colonial office by a letter, in which he described the affair as a mere drunken frolic of militia men out on guard, and in no way attributable to a sermon preached by Mr. Bridges on the morning of the day.<sup>1</sup> Such was, however, asserted to be the case, not only by Dr. Lushington, but by well-informed persons in the colony. Mr. Bridges thought it necessary to defend himself, not only by vehement letters, but by the publication of the sermon, which the governor, in his despatch, stated was "not written by Mr. Bridges, but by the Archdeacon of Colchester." Certainly Mr. Bridges must have altered it, as it not

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<sup>1</sup> Blyth's "Missionary Reminiscences," pp. 44, 45.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 48–50. <sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 52.

only denounced Methodist preachers, but alluded to the effect of their teaching on the “unstable minds of the ignorant negroes around.”

It is remarkable that, though a few years later far greater antipathy was displayed towards the Baptists than the Wesleyans, yet at this time the latter only were exposed to any particular annoyance, and they probably would have escaped but for the ill-feeling which had been created in St. Anns by the rector. The progress made by both denominations, in obtaining a hold upon the slaves and free coloured people, was, to some extent, shown in the course of an inquiry instituted by the assembly, and a formal report of which was presented in December, 1828. Connecting the statements made to this committee with official and other returns, it appears that the Wesleyans had increased the number of their circuits to eleven, presided over by thirteen missionaries, and containing over twelve thousand members. The Baptists had nine missionaries, and between seven and eight thousand members. The Moravians and Presbyterians did not number nearly so many communicants.

The examinations tended more to ascertain the cost of the missions, and the amount contributed by the people, than in any other direction; but at the conclusion of the inquiry the following brief but extraordinary report was presented. It is so brief that it is given entire.

“Your committee, appointed to inquire into the establishment and proceedings of the sectarians in this island, report that they have taken the examinations of sundry persons, which examinations are annexed, and find that the principal object of the missionaries in this island is to extort money from their congregations by every possible pretext, to obtain which recourse has been had to the most indecent expedients. That, in order to further this object, and to gain an ascendancy over the negro mind, they inculcate the doctrines of equality and the rights of man. They preach and teach sedition even from the pulpit, and, by misrepresentation and falsehood, endeavour to cast odium upon all the public authorities of the island, not even excepting the representative of majesty itself. That the consequences have been abject poverty, loss of comfort, and discontent among the slaves

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<sup>1</sup> Despatch to Colonial Secretary, April 30, 1827.

frequenting their chapels, and deterioration of property to their masters. Your committee therefore feel themselves bound to report that the interference of the missionaries between the master and the slave is dangerous, and incompatible with the political state of society in this island, and recommend to the house to adopt the most positive and exemplary enactments to restrain them.”<sup>1</sup>

The examinations referred to occupy upwards of seventy quarto pages, and the most careful collation of the various statements entirely fails to sustain the allegations of the committee. The assertion that the people were made poor and wretched by their contributions to the religious objects sounds strange in contrast with the much belauded statements of the Honourable Alexander Barclay, who in a book published that very year, in answer to Mr. Stephens’ work on “Slavery in the British West India Colonies,” altogether rejects the idea that the slaves were poor, and asserts that their property on one estate under his care (Hollands) would be a bargain if bought for £10,000; and that many slaves all through Jamaica had money to the amount of from £50 to £500, and even as much as £1000.<sup>1</sup>

In the account of historical events, the successive rejection of bills intended to restrain the efforts of the missionaries has been referred to. In 1831, the last serious struggle to restrain the preachers of the gospel by legislative enactments terminated. But the day was soon to come when brute force would try its strength under the form of zeal for the Established Church, and urged on in more than one instance by its ministers.

For a time the mission churches had rest, and increased greatly in numbers. Now and then the hearts of the ministers were deeply wounded by the punishments inflicted on slaves by their owners on account of their attendance at the chapels. It is not unlikely that in many cases the slaves neglected their work on the plea of religion, and so gave some just occasion for displeasure; but when due allowance is made for such instances, there yet remains the fact that men and women were flogged or otherwise punished for no other offence than praying or attending preaching in their own time.

A case in point was brought before the colonial secretary, in consequence of a communication from Mr. Whitehouse, a

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<sup>1</sup> “Votes” (appendix) for 1828.

Wesleyan missionary. He immediately wrote to Lord Belmore, directing inquiry to be made. The scene of outrage was St. Anns, and Mr. Bridges' name was once more mixed up with the transaction; but the governor's secretary was Mr. Bullock, a most intimate friend of Bridges. He conducted his correspondence with Mr. Whitehouse on the subject with so little of the decorum and civility usual in official documents, as to draw from Lord Goderich, who was then at the colonial office, a severe and dignified rebuke.<sup>2</sup>

By the close of 1831 the several missions in the island had attained a considerable degree of power and influence, and, in conjunction with the labours of earnest men connected with the Established Church, had done not a little to dispel the gross darkness in which, at the commencement of the century, the slaves were found. Nevertheless, considerable numbers altogether neglected the opportunities which were afforded them of obtaining religious instruction, while others had not yet even heard or seen a Christian teacher. An examination of the returns of the different societies, and a comparison of the stations with a map of the island, will show that, while the ports and places near the coast were well supplied, the interior was for the most part unoccupied. This, too, will in part account for the great mortality among the missionaries.

Of the native Baptists it is not easy to say much; no returns exist, and few materials remain from which to form any estimate of their actual number. But it is undeniable that the successors of Lisle and Baker were not men of the same spirit. The best of their members, and the really good people who had joined the numerous offshoots from the church of the former, were attracted by the superior teaching and more scriptural discipline of the missionaries, and their withdrawal left the superstitious and often grossly immoral men who had assumed the office of teachers and leaders to pursue their course with less restraint. With a few exceptions, native Baptist churches became associations of men and women who, in too many cases, mingled the belief and even practice of Mialism with religious observances, and who perverted and corrupted what they retained of these: among them sensuality

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<sup>1</sup> Barclay's "Practical View of Slavery," pp. 264, 265.

<sup>2</sup> Duncan's "Wesleyan Missions in Jamaica," pp. 256-260.

was almost entirely unrestrained. Their leaders, or “daddies,” as a class were overbearing, tyrannical, and lascivious, and united the authority of the slave-driver with the darkest forms of spiritual despotism. Of scriptural teaching there was little. Simple facts were so perverted, that they would have been ridiculous had they not been blasphemous.

Evidence of conversion and qualification for baptism was sought not so much in repentance and faith as in dreams; but if the applicant had experienced a “convince,” that is, had swooned away, and while in that state had a vision, or passed through a stage of great excitement, attended by physical contortions, then all was well.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Thomas Knibb wrote, in 1822, concerning Mammy Faith, a creature to whom deluded negroes, like herself, prayed for pardon, and who asserted that she had power to forgive sin. This wretched woman was only one of many scattered over the island. A worthy Baptist missionary has given a list of several early native preachers. The charity of the writer is known to all who have enjoyed the pleasure of his acquaintance; but he writes guardedly even of the best of those he names, for they were generally unwilling or unable to restrain the “daddies,” though they might not always be themselves equally ignorant or depraved.

Some reports unfavourable to the purity of the Baptist mission churches had reached England; and when Mr. Burchell visited that country in 1831, he drew up a detailed account of the churches under his care, and of the course he pursued to maintain the strictest purity: it is a straightforward, honest statement of facts as they appeared to him.<sup>1</sup> That he and other co-workers thought highly of the churches gathered by their labours is not to be wondered at. How could it be otherwise? They had seen these people daily exposed to the horrors of slavery, surrounded by scenes and circumstances calculated to debase the soul. They had watched them crowding to the chapels, often walking miles, and frequently spending no small part of the night in the journey; and when there they saw them listening with eager attention to the word of life, and heard them in their broken sentences expressing their sorrow for sin and their love to Christ. That thousands upon thousands did love the Saviour is unquestionable; that many failed to see what His service required is equally true.

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<sup>1</sup> John Clark's “Memorials of the Jamaica Mission,” pp. 15–18,

The love of Jesus, though imperfectly understood, was a wondrous story to them, more wonderful in some respects than those who have heard it in cradle songs, and from a mother's lips. For who, during the long ages, had loved them, poor hapless slaves, or even spoken to them in words of hope and mercy? But now they heard of One who had been buffeted and beaten as they had been, and who had died a cruel death that they might be made happy, and taken at last to a home of peaceful rest.

Poor sons of Africa, dark and dreary as their superstitions were, they yet pointed to something after death. But the golden streets, the garland of victory, the pure white robes, so lovely in a negro's estimation; the cheerful home, where the crack of the whip would be exchanged for the melody of the harp; and the aching, weary body for the tearless eye; the cry of the suffering for the society where none are sick—these were tidings they first heard from the missionaries of the Cross. Who shall wonder that they loved the men, and, above all, the Master whom they served? That their religion was to a great extent merely emotional, is just to say that it was what the religion of the uneducated African always, to some extent, will be. To say that their lives were often very unworthy is also true; but the ameliorating influences of the gospel began to work but as yesterday, while African superstitions and wretchedness were old and horrible when the foundations of the pyramids were laid.

The early missionaries were, no doubt, too sanguine; they saw the apparent piety of the slave, but forgot to consider whether church fellowship ought not, in most cases, to be longer delayed. In fact, their work was too laborious to afford sufficient leisure for calm consideration, and, moreover, slavery precluded pastoral visitation and strict personal examination, even if the number of missionaries had been equal to the task. As it was, Mr. Burchell had frequently to travel upwards of one hundred miles a week, for months in succession, in attending to the different places under his care.

The vast numbers who connected themselves with the Baptist churches, combined with the small number of missionaries, rendered some mode of supervision necessary beyond that of the pastor and a limited number of deacons, as usual in English

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<sup>1</sup> Cox's "History of Baptist Missions," vol. ii. pp. 69–76.



churches. The well-known plan of the Methodists, and the practice of the native Baptist churches, suggested one which has often been the subject of severe animadversion on the one hand, and of undue praise on the other. This was the appointment of leaders, and the use of tickets. The plan obtained, in course of time, the name of the "ticket and leader system."

The churches were subdivided into classes, and over each a leader was appointed. These leaders, in all cases, were expected to become personally acquainted with each member of the class, to visit them as often as possible, and report from time to time to the minister concerning the conduct, both of members, of inquirers, and of candidates for church fellowship. Perhaps not always at first, but in course of time these leaders began to hold services among the people, and gradually the erection of what were called class-houses was common in almost every negro village. Their opinion as to the fitness of a person for baptism was not in itself satisfactory, at least to really judicious men,<sup>1</sup> but the candidate was personally and often repeatedly examined. Still Mr. Burchell, whose report to the committee is above referred to, and who had four thousand persons under his pastoral care, observes that many he could only see on Sunday.<sup>2</sup>

The class system, as worked in the Baptist churches, had one grave disadvantage as compared with the Wesleyans. A very large proportion of the members of the latter denomination were free persons, and from among these, or the whites, the leaders were invariably selected; no slaves were appointed to this office.<sup>3</sup> Among the Baptists they were generally slaves, and consequently illiterate. Their meetings were therefore more likely to awaken suspicion, especially in a time of general excitement; and that some of the leaders were active in the rebellion of 1831 is unquestionable. That the ministers in any way encouraged them in so doing was a baseless and malicious libel.

The system was most effectual in increasing the numbers of adherents. In 1827 there were eight Baptist churches, and 5246 members. In 1831 there were twenty-four churches, presided over by only fourteen ministers, containing 10,838 members, of whom 1931 had been baptized during the preceding year; 2937 of the

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<sup>1</sup> Burchell, in Cox's "History of Baptist Missions," vol. ii. pp. 75, 76.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 71.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. Mr. Barry's evidence before Committee of Assembly. "Votes," 1828.

members were connected with Mr. Coultart's church in Kingston. In the eleven Wesleyan circuits there were nineteen ministers and close upon 13,000 members. The Presbyterian mission had five ministers, but though they visited a considerable number of estates, and instructed the people, their congregations were not very large at this time. In 1826 the general Baptists, whose mission in Orissa has been so successful, commenced one in Jamaica. Three missionaries were sent out; one soon died, another returned on account of ill-health, and the third resigned his connection with the society. The stations they occupied were, in consequence, transferred to that portion of the Baptist denomination which had been longer in the field.<sup>1</sup>

So much of the religious history of 1831 is inseparably mixed up with the general affairs of that time, that it has already been alluded to in the account given of the rebellion and the events that immediately followed it. The Baptists were most severely handled; the Methodists escaped more easily, but not unscathed. The only case of persecution among the Moravians was that of Mr. Pfeiffer, while the Presbyterians suffered little, with the exception of a few hard words. That all were innocent of any complicity in the rebellion, and that most had used every effort in their power to restrain the misguided people, is unquestionable.

Mr. Knibb was the first to obtain information of the intended rising,<sup>2</sup> and immediately communicated the intelligence, in terms strongly censuring it, to Messrs. Abbot and Whitehorne: the first discredited it, the latter warned his people against any participation in it. On Christmas Eve inquiries were made by several slaves of Mr. Knibb, if "free paper," as they termed it, had come out. He assured them to the contrary, and told them that any member who did not go to work after Christmas would be put out of the church.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Blyth heard of the projected outbreak on Christmas Day, and, in common with all the missionaries in the quarter, did everything that could be done to appease the people and secure tranquillity.<sup>4</sup> On the morning of the day on which the incendiary fires began, Mr. Gardner and Mr. Knibb were at the

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<sup>1</sup> Cox's "History of Baptist Missions," vol. ii., Appendix, pp. 33, 34 ; Clark's "Memorials of Baptist Mission," p. 149.

<sup>2</sup> Cox's "History of Baptist Missions," vol. ii. p. 79.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 80, 81; Blyth's "Reminiscences of Mission Life," PP. 57-59.

opening of a new chapel, and in the strongest terms warned the people against any complicity in deeds of violence.<sup>1</sup> The result of these and other appeals was, in many cases, to irritate the excited slaves against the missionaries, particularly Knibb and Blyth, There was talk of personal violence towards the former,<sup>2</sup> and some native Baptists threatened to burn the latter in his own chapel.<sup>3</sup> The missionaries could not answer for these people: an excited, uneducated negro is, perhaps, of all men the least amenable to reason while his passion lasts.

On many estates the chief men, drivers and others, preserved the property when their masters fled; and not a few of these faithful people were members of the mission churches.<sup>4</sup> The Presbyterians were certainly the most faithful, no property on which they had influence was destroyed.<sup>5</sup> Certain of Knibb's members were blamed by the rebels for arresting some of their number, and were commended by their pastor.<sup>6</sup> The first indication of bad feeling on the part of the authorities was shown in requiring the missionaries to take up arms. Mr. Heath, the rector of Hanover, had done so, but as his character is best illustrated by the fact that he lost his life in a duel, his example was of no weight in such a matter. However, one Presbyterian and one Wesleyan missionary residing at Lucea did the same. The curate at Falmouth, with a more becoming sense of the proper duties of his office, said it was not his place to fight, but to perform the last offices of the church for the dying and dead, which he was ready to do; and as there was an instruction that dissenters should only be required to render militia duty when the clergy did, Messrs. Waddell and Blyth were left in peace.<sup>7</sup>

The Baptists, being more obnoxious, were more hardly treated; and Messrs. Knibb, Whitehorne, and Abbot, who were at Falmouth, were obliged to enter the militia. They were soon after

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<sup>1</sup> Cox's "History," pp. 82-84.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 83, 84.

<sup>3</sup> Blyth's "Reminiscences," pp. 58, 59.

<sup>4</sup> Cox's "History," p. 84.

<sup>5</sup> Blyth's "Reminiscences," pp. 62, 63.

<sup>6</sup> Cox's "History," p. 84.

<sup>7</sup> Blyth's "Reminiscences" p. 62.

taken into custody, and sent in a canoe to Montego Bay, where they were treated with much indignity. Mr. Burchell's arrest followed as soon as he arrived from England, and after being detained on board ship some time, he was obliged to leave the island. So bitter was the feeling against them, that Mr. Waddell and Mr. Blyth, together with Mr. Barrett, a wealthy proprietor and the custos of the parish, sent down a memorial to the authorities, declaring their belief that the Baptists had, neither directly nor indirectly, any hand in occasioning the revolt.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Roby, the collector of customs, also interested himself, and they were released on bail next day, Mr. Roby and another gentleman of high position standing as security. Mr. Gardner was also arrested, but released on bail.<sup>2</sup> So far as actual incarceration was concerned, they all suffered very much less than Wesleyan missionaries had formerly done, or than Mr. Rowden, the Wesleyan, suffered at Morant Bay, later in the year. Their enemies were not pleased at this, and complained that they were kept guarded in the jury box of the court house, instead of being cast into jail with the slaves.<sup>3</sup> The attempt to convict them miserably failed, though the most virulent abuse was bestowed upon them. The custos was strongly condemned for the course he pursued, which was calm and dignified. He carefully examined Mr. Burchell's papers, but his declaration that they afforded no proof whatever of his complicity in the outbreak was coarsely criticised in the "Courant."

A very considerable number of the leaders of the rebellion were men of no religious profession, but some were Baptist members. The most prominent of these was Samuel Sharp, a man of considerable intelligence, and a deacon at Montego Bay. From English papers and the "Jamaica Watchman" he had learned how slavery was regarded in Great Britain, but unhappily he did not see that the friends of the slave would not rest till their object was attained by peaceful means. He accordingly formed a secret association, and administered a solemn oath. The object kept in view by his followers was simply to secure their freedom; this, it is asserted, they did not expect to gain by bloodshed, but by the simple expedient of refusing to work. They thought that the masters

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<sup>1</sup> Blyth's "Reminiscences," p. 61.

<sup>2</sup> Cox's "History," vol. ii. p. 96. <sup>3</sup> Ibid., vol. ii. p. 91.

would then be obliged to pay them, as the work must be done; others saw that this could not be attempted without fighting, and guns were procured. Samuel Sharp, however, did not forsake them, but became a sort of chaplain in the rebel ranks. He may by some be accused of cowardice, but he really possessed a great deal of moral courage. When he surrendered himself he declared that the missionaries were blameless in the matter, and that he was the prime mover in the insurrection, though he never contemplated the shedding of blood, and that he had done much to prevent it.<sup>1</sup> In his dying words he declared that he had never heard evil advice from the pulpit; and in reference to his hopes of salvation, there was none of that confidence of pardon which some criminals express, to the grief of every thoughtful mind, but a humble hope that God would pardon through the Saviour's merits.<sup>2</sup> Sharp was a mistaken man: he might have greatly injured the cause of freedom, but with all his errors there seems little room to question that he was one of the best men who suffered at this time.

Against the list of Baptists who suffered for rebellion, must be put the fact that, out of seventy-four slaves rewarded in Cornwall for their services, twenty-five were Baptists, a very large proportion with respect to their numbers in the country.<sup>3</sup> The conduct of the Colonial Church Union, with such men as Rectors Heath and Bridges to urge it on, was far more reprehensible than that of the most misguided among the slaves. The latter fought for freedom; the Union destroyed property, and ill-used those who fell into its hands, in order that slavery might be established on a firmer basis, and the progress of gospel truth be retarded. Chapels valued at upwards of £22,000 were destroyed by the unionists, but the British government gave nearly £12,000 to replace them, and £14,000 was contributed in England by the friends of missions.<sup>4</sup> Some of the other proceedings of the illegal unions have been recorded elsewhere, for the Earl of Mulgrave had soon to interpose with vigour to repress the prevailing lawlessness.

One missionary was tarred and otherwise maltreated, and his wife knocked down by a brutal mob.<sup>5</sup> Another was assaulted, and

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<sup>1</sup> Clark's "Memorials," pp. 101, 102-107.

<sup>2</sup> "Cornwall Chronicle."

<sup>3</sup> Clark's "Memorials," p. 107.

<sup>4</sup> "Tracts and Documents," p. 3; Report of Baptist Missionary Society, 1835.

<sup>5</sup> Duncan's "History," pp. 305, 306.

Clark's "Memorials," p. 115.

would have been seriously injured, if not killed, had he not hidden himself in a negro hut.<sup>6</sup> While another was from home, his house was fired into, and his wife and infant child having escaped the first assault, an attempt was made to burn the place.<sup>1</sup> Several missionaries were imprisoned for preaching, and many members of their congregations punished for coming to hear them.<sup>2</sup> The case of Messrs. Barton, Barlow, Nichols, and Abbott, among the Baptists, and of Barr, Wood, Greenwood, and Murray, among the Wesleyans, are recorded at length in the publications relative to these disgraceful proceedings.

St. Anns, as usual, was unenviably notorious. There missionaries were hung in effigy, and every effort to restrain them from preaching was made, even after the Earl of Mulgrave had removed Colonels Hilton and Brown from the command of the militia, and superseded several magistrates. Mr. Barrett, who was appointed to the office of custos, was rudely interrupted by some of the suspended magistrates and others when listening to the application of Mr. Greenwood for a license. He was told to order the parson out, and the only reply to a calm and dignified rebuke was: "Our determination is above law. We set the law at defiance. Turn out the Methodist. Down with the villain." And as bludgeons had been freely distributed, the custos was compelled to help the missionary to escape by a window, and had soon after to secure safety by flight himself.

This was almost the crowning act of violence.<sup>3</sup> The governor immediately placed a detachment of troops at St. Anns Bay, and the rioters were prosecuted by the attorney-general, who, having no confidence in a bill being found by a grand jury, proceeded by *ex-officio* information; but in the face of overwhelming evidence a verdict of not guilty was found. There was no hope for the missionaries in a Jamaica jury at that time. They had sought legal redress for the burning of their chapels, but in vain. They had appealed for justice when assaulted and falsely imprisoned, but always in vain. When Mr. Greenwood was in prison, he applied to the new chief justice, Sir Joshua Rowe, for a writ of *habeas corpus*. This had been granted by the lamented Scarlett to Mr.

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<sup>1</sup> Clark's "Memorials," p. 121.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.; Duncan's "History."

<sup>3</sup> Duncan's "History," pp. 349, 350.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 329.

Orton under similar circumstances, but Sir Joshua refused the application.<sup>4</sup>

Before the introduction of apprenticeship, the outward persecution of missionaries ceased, the Toleration Act being judicially declared to be in force in the island; and the English Emancipation Act set any remaining doubt as to the rights and privileges of Nonconformists for ever at rest. To rebuild the ruined chapels, to erect others, and to gather increasing numbers into fellowship, became the work of Christian ministers.

With the commencement of apprenticeship, renewed efforts were put forth by all the missionary societies then labouring in the island. It is pleasing also to note that the virulent opposition to the efforts of the missionaries, especially the Wesleyans and Moravians, began to abate, and soon they were able to number, among those friendly to their labours, some who had been their most bitter opponents.

The abolition of slavery, the firm and manly support afforded by Earl Mulgrave, the Marquis of Sligo, Sir Lionel Smith, and Lord Metcalfe, to the missionaries, as opposed to the weak and imbecile concessions of the Duke of Manchester and the Earl of Belmore to their foes, all contributed to this end. Nor were the colonists, now that the moral and mental incubus of the slave system was removed, uninfluenced by that growth of public feeling and liberality of sentiment which was so marked in Great Britain. The habits and prejudices of the slaveholder were not overcome at once; but as a general rule it may be asserted that there is no part of the British dominions where a nonconforming minister, who respects himself and his office, is more respected by the mass of the inhabitants of all classes than in Jamaica. The change in the sentiments of the white population towards them may be dated from the time of abolition, though not fully seen until some years after.

The Wesleyans sent out the Rev. Valentine Ward, a valued minister of some thirty years' experience at home, to act as chairman of the Jamaica district. Other younger men arrived, so that early in January, 1835, five and twenty ministers met in Kingston at the annual gathering. Compared with their position three years before, there was little to report in the way of progress, so far as membership was concerned. But the way was now opened for the free proclamation of the gospel, and when the district

meeting was convened a year later, upwards of three thousand seven hundred persons had been received into church communion,<sup>1</sup> and year after year reports were published almost if not equally gratifying to those who regard such statistics as indications of spiritual progress.

It is curious to note the change in the conduct of the assembly at this time. A member of the denomination and also of the house proposed a grant of £500 to assist in erecting a new chapel on the Kingston Parade, in place of the old building. The money was not only granted, but several members spoke of the Wesleyan ministers in terms of the highest respect.<sup>2</sup> The town council of the city atoned also, in some degree, for the persecuting spirit of bygone days, by a munificent grant. The mission was not, however, exempt from trials of another kind. In one year Mr. Ward and five other missionaries died; but the Wesleyans rarely want volunteers for mission work, and the places of the fallen were almost immediately supplied. More serious in its character was a secession, chiefly in the Kingston and one neighbouring circuit, in 1837. Of this Mr. Thomas Pinnock was the leader; he took away with him great numbers of the people; but the exact cause of the defection is not very clear. There had been a good deal of trouble in the denomination in England, and the complaints made there were preferred here by Mr. Pinnock; something was also said about a native ministry. A separate denomination was thus called into existence, and a great deal of bitter feeling created when union was peculiarly desirable. Whatever loss of membership was sustained by the Wesleyans, it was more than made up by fresh accessions. By the close of 1838 they reported upwards of twenty thousand members. The annual cost of the mission to the parent society, during these years, was about £4000 sterling.<sup>3</sup>

The Baptist records of these days are full of the most glowing accounts of the prosperity of the mission. The enthusiasm with which Messrs. Knibb and Burchell were received, after an absence of about two years, could not fail to be gratifying in the extreme; and as the burnt chapels were rebuilt, they were crowded with worship pers.<sup>1</sup> Early in 1836 the first meeting of the Jamaica

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<sup>1</sup> Duncan, p. 380.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 386; "Votes," 1836, p. 236.

<sup>3</sup> Petition to Assembly, "Votes," 1836, vol. ii. p. 236.



Baptist Association was held in Kingston. There were then fifteen missionaries in the island, having fifty-two stations under their care, and nearly 14,000 communicants, together with vast numbers of inquirers.<sup>2</sup> From 1835 to 1838 the missionaries baptized no less than 10,550 persons. Five or six hundred persons were, in some instances, baptized in a single year by one minister.<sup>3</sup> Surely the society at home was greatly to blame for not sending forth more labourers to such a harvest field: only four arrived during the whole period of apprenticeship.<sup>4</sup>

Had the Baptist churches in England done their duty, and given practical illustration of the interest they appeared to feel when Knibb and others stirred up their hearts, they would have sent at least one minister to each of the fifty-two stations, and not have left a single man to do work which could only be adequately done by three or four. Then would the inquirers have been more fully instructed, and the newly baptized more carefully guided onward to the higher walks of the Christian life; then would they have been spared the humiliation they must have felt when a process of decay commenced, almost as marked and striking as the day of triumph had been. In proportion to the population of the island, additions were being made to the churches numerically unequalled since the Apostle Peter preached in Jerusalem, not only during these years, but during the first few that followed perfect freedom. The harvest truly was great, but the labourers were few.

The numbers in connection with the Moravian churches were also considerably increased during the period of apprenticeship. At the close of 1837 nearly ten thousand persons were under their care, double the number reported in 1831.

The London Missionary Society commenced operations at the close of 1834, when six missionaries arrived in the island, and occupied stations in St. Anns, Trelawny, Clarendon, Manchester, St. Thomas, and Kingston. Next year four schoolmasters were sent out. Two other missionaries and four more schoolmasters arrived

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<sup>1</sup> "Lives of Knibb and Burchell"; Cox's "History of Baptist Missions," vol. ii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 231.

<sup>3</sup> Reports of Baptist Missionary Society for 1836 and 1837.

<sup>4</sup> Clark's "Memorials of Baptist Missions."

before the close of the apprenticeship; and allowing for deaths and retirement, thirteen European agents were in the field, occupying ten stations, at the close of 1838. The excellent schools then in existence were instrumental in training many who subsequently became superior teachers. But the missionaries, warned by the inconsistent character of great numbers of professing Christians among the people around them, were slow in forming churches, and cautious who they received as communicants. Only 183 had been received into fellowship, by the eight churches, at the close of 1838. The more guarded the missionaries, the more successful has their work been. Nearly 1400 children were in the day schools at the time of freedom, and several hundreds, in addition, were connected with the Sunday and night schools.<sup>1</sup>

Throughout the whole colony great efforts were being made to educate the children, now at liberty to receive instruction. In Kingston the means of education were plentiful from an early period, and large numbers of free coloured children were sent in from the country districts. In 1830 nearly one thousand children were attending Woolmer's, the national, and mission schools, and upwards of eight hundred boys were found in twenty-eight private schools, and almost as many girls in thirty-three schools.<sup>2</sup> Two years after, a still larger number was mentioned as attending.

A valuable addition was made to the educational institutions of Kingston, and indeed of the island at large, in 1836, by the establishment of the Mico Institution. More than one hundred years before, Lady Mico had left a considerable sum of money, to be appropriated in purchasing the liberty of Christians held in bondage by the Algerines. The victory of Lord Exmouth and the liberation of all captives rendered such an appropriation of the funds impracticable for the future. At the suggestion of Lord Brougham, Mr. Lushington, and others, steps were taken, and an order in chancery obtained, to employ the property (over £100,000 sterling) in the education of the emancipated negroes. Schools were at once established in Mauritius, Jamaica, and other West Indian islands, and an efficient body of teachers sent out. Gradually this

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<sup>1</sup> Reports of London Missionary Society, 1835–1839.

<sup>2</sup> "Votes," 1832, pp. 345, 346.

plan of operations was changed, and large Normal schools for the education and training of teachers of all denominations established in Jamaica and at Antigua. The former establishment is still in existence, and has sent forth a very large proportion of the best teachers now engaged in the work.

In 1835, the British government granted £5000 in aid of Normal schools in the West Indies. Half of this fell to the share of Jamaica, £2000 was given to the Mico Charity, and £500 to a school called the Metropolitan, at Spanish Town. £25,000 were also voted this and during the following year for school-houses. Grants for education, to the amount of £30,000 in all, were also made during each of the succeeding years of apprenticeship, and continued up to 1842, when they were reduced by £6000, and the same amount was taken off each year until 1846, when the grants entirely ceased. In the island of Jamaica, about eighty schools were aided by the grants for building, more than half being connected with the Established Church, and to these by far the largest proportion of succeeding grants was given.

The labours of the Rev. Mr. Trew at the Mico, of the Rev. T.H.Bewley, among the Wesleyans, and of other educators, were greatly assisted by a visit from Mr. Latrobe, who was sent out by the British Government to inspect the schools to which parliamentary aid had been given, and to furnish a report of the state of education generally. He arrived in Jamaica in April, 1837. Though somewhat surprised to find that few school-houses had been completed, he saw that this was not owing to want of zeal on the part of those to whom grants had been made, but to the difficulty of obtaining sites, though in most cases schools had been commenced near the intended locations.

Mr. Latrobe was able to report favourably on the whole as to the progress of the children in most rudimentary branches of education, while in writing and arithmetic he described it as extraordinary.<sup>1</sup> About three-fourths of those in attendance were the free children of apprentices; the remainder, of free coloured people and Maroons. At the Sunday and evening schools a large number of young and of adult apprentices attended. Mr. Latrobe was struck by the absence of really good private schools for the middle and higher classes, and the want of an institution of a

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<sup>1</sup> Report, p. ii.

collegiate character. Throughout the island he found nearly 43,000 children and adults under instruction; but of these only 12,580 were in day schools, 5300 in evening schools, and 20,870 in Sunday schools, while rather more than 4000 were in private schools: these for the most part were described as little better than what were known as dame schools in England. The average attendance was about one-fifth less than the number on the books.

A large number of teachers were brought from England; out of 153 masters and 104 schoolmistresses alluded to by Mr. Latrobe, only forty-one of the former and sixty-one of the latter were persons of colour. Nearly half of the children in public and private day schools were to be found in Kingston, or its immediate neighbourhood. So great was the desire for instruction, that many of the boys at Woolmer's free school were able to clothe themselves, and in some cases their brothers and sisters, from the fees, varying from threepence to a shilling a week, they obtained from little classes of three or four up to half-a-dozen adults they taught in the evenings and on Sundays. It was estimated that about fifteen hundred persons were under the instruction of these children and of itinerant teachers. Ninety private schools in the city contained upwards of two thousand five hundred more.

It is painful to find that though there were several well endowed schools in the colony, they did but very little to elevate the educational status of the people. The funds were in many cases misappropriated, in nearly all mismanaged; and even where a liberal education, with board and lodging, was professedly provided, there was grave cause for complaint. Woolmer's free school, in Kingston, was almost the only instance of tolerably good management; and though the corporation of the city was not very remarkable for its wisdom, either in educational or religious matters, it had made such changes in the management of the charity as the times required. Latrobe found upwards of five hundred scholars in attendance.

At Titchfield, in Portland, between three and four hundred acres had been granted as a common for the use of the inhabitants generally. A few persons, however, managed to get possession of it, fenced it, and planted it with canes. This led to complaint, and the wish of the inhabitants appearing to be that the land should be vested in trustees, and the proceeds appropriated to the support of a school, so as to remove the necessity of sending children to England, a bill was passed by the legislature for this purpose in

December, 1785. Trustees were appointed, and a seal provided, upon which Apollo was represented inviting youths to the temple of Fame, with the inscription, "Virtute et eruditione."<sup>1</sup> In 1828, the lands yielded a rental of £600 per annum, but the number of youths in attendance it is difficult to say. In this year a Mr. Williams became master, and secured the praise of the trustees for his attention to the boys, one of whom secured a prize for high classical attainments, and others for Latin only or other branches of study.<sup>2</sup>

In November, 1790, a committee was appointed by the house of assembly, to inquire into the bequests and gifts which had been made from time to time for the establishment of free schools, but which had not been properly appropriated, and into the steps necessary to recover them.<sup>3</sup> Next year Mr. Bryan Edwards, as chairman of the committee, presented the report; from which it appeared that, confining attention only to such funds as might be recovered, there was sufficient available to establish schools in St. Anns, St. Andrews, Vere, and Westmoreland.

Fifty years before, Charles Drax, of St. Anns, had provided funds for the education of a few children. These funds were secured on estates called Shelton and Drax Hall. By an arrangement by no means creditable, these estates had passed into the possession of William Beckford, so well known in connection with Fonthill Abbey. According to legal opinion, they were liable to the amount of arrears, £57,973, or, with simple interest added at the Jamaica legal rate, to £155,028 currency. Legal proceedings were taken to recover this amount, but they were terminated in a compromise, by which £11,200 were paid. This, and other sums added by public contributions, procured Walton Hall, and thus what was called the Jamaica free school was established in St. Anns early in the next century.<sup>1</sup>

Gregory's Trust in Spanish Town, and Manning's in Westmoreland, had also been greatly mismanaged, but were now turned to some account.<sup>2</sup> The more thoughtful men in the assembly were, however, far from feeling satisfied with the results of this inquiry, and in 1805 another committee was appointed to

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vol. viii. p. 137, &c.

<sup>2</sup> "Votes," 1844, appendix, p. 219.

<sup>3</sup> Journals, vol. viii. p. 587.

ascertain what funds were available, or might yet be recovered, to establish a seminary on a broad and liberal basis. Letters were sent to all the churchwardens, but it was soon made clear to the minds of all on the committee that the funds withheld could only be ascertained by a search of all the wills recorded in the island secretary's office. After a good deal of inquiry, few tangible results were arrived at. It was thought that Walton would be a fine spot for a school on a more extended basis, and if all the funds available could be secured to make this the grammar school of the island, about £41,000 would be provided; but as the board and education of fifty boys was estimated to cost £7780 currency per annum, subscriptions or other funds would be necessary. A bill was prepared on this basis, but was thrown out. Walton was established with the funds properly available. A school at Montego Bay was commenced, and then, from 1808 to 1815, the journals of the legislature are silent on the subject of education.

Little of importance appears to have transpired for some years later. The transactions relative to what is known as Munro and Dickenson's charity, though commencing early in the century, were exposed in the report of the school commissioners in 1844 and later years. Throughout this period the influence of the endowed schools, with the single exception of Woolmer's, was small in the extreme. Upwards of £3000 per annum were spent to about as little purpose as it is possible to conceive.

During these years it is hardly possible to refer to a single native of the colony who occupied any distinguished position in literature. A very great number of works relating to Jamaica were published, but they were chiefly controversial in their character. It is remarkable how much more was written about Jamaica by people who had never seen the island, or who merely paid it a hasty visit, than by those who had long resided in the colony. Still such productions, when written by men of well cultivated minds, were of considerable value; and among the pamphlets which the controversies of the early part of the century produced, that of Sir Henry de la Beche is extremely valuable, as giving a most impartial description of the state of affairs, especially with respect to the

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<sup>1</sup> Journals, vols. ix., xi.; Bridges, vol. i. p. 557.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. ix. pp. 162–165; vol. xi. pp. 48, 49 ; vol. xii, p. 255; "Votes," 1844, appendix, pp. 194–237 ; Bridges, vol. i. p. 558.

slave population. The only work of any permanent value, published since the history of Bryan Edwards (an edition of which was reprinted in 1822, with additions to 1819 by an anonymous writer), is that written by the Rev. G.W.Bridges, and published in 1827 and 1828. It is entitled the "Annals of Jamaica," and though it is, in many respects, a very valuable and reliable work, one must not forget that Bridges was an advocate of slavery, and had an intense hatred of missionaries and of dissent under any form. In addition, therefore, to his strong expressions of opinion on these subjects, it will be found that, like many partisans, he concealed or misrepresented facts which an unbiassed historian would have recorded.

Mr. Bridges came to Jamaica in 1816. He had previously held curacies in Essex, Norfolk, Hampshire, and London. For some time after his arrival in Jamaica he was rector of Manchester, and subsequently of St. Anns. As an author, he first attracted attention by a pamphlet entitled a "Voice from Jamaica." This was written in reply to Mr. William Wilberforce, who had published an appeal on behalf of the slaves.

Next year he printed another controversial paper, called the "Dreams of Dulocracy," and about the same time he issued a prospectus of his projected history of Jamaica, which, it appears, was to have been more extended in its character than that actually published. The statistical and topographical account of parishes was not completed. If an opinion may be formed from the execution of "The Statistical History of the Parish of Manchester," which appeared in pamphlet form, this is greatly to be regretted. The house of assembly voted him a sum of £700, to assist him in his literary labours.

The feelings with which Mr. Bridges' hostility to missions, his treatment of slaves, and his sympathy with the disgraceful acts of the Colonial Church Union, were regarded by large numbers of people, were almost forgotten in the all but unparalleled calamity with which he was visited in the early part of 1837. Four of his daughters, the eldest only eighteen years of age, had gone with a party of friends on a boating excursion. They had passed a little beyond the reef without St. Anns' Bay, but still in sight of their father, who was watching them from the shore, when the boat suddenly overturned. The poor girls, and most of their companions, perished in their father's sight, nor were their bodies ever recovered. The unhappy man was completely prostrated by

this great agony, and for weeks remained like one bereft of reason. Shutting himself up in a little room, surrounded by the toys and personal possessions of his children, he refused to be comforted. At length he admitted the visits of the Wesleyan minister, and soon after those of Mr. Sturge, who was then visiting the island on behalf of the Society of Friends. The quiet Christian demeanour of this good man had a happy effect on the mind of the almost brokenhearted father, and he was induced to return into society. One of his first acts was to publish a little tract of eight pages, entitled "A Call to my Parishioners." It is an impassioned and impressive production. He refers to his calamity in terms of poignant sorrow; confesses how, in his love to the creature, he had forgotten the Creator; and urges those he addressed to recognise, as he had not done in former days, the overruling hand of God in human affairs, and by faith in "a crucified Saviour, to yield themselves to His service."

This appeared on the 10th of May. Soon after he left the island, and visited the western states of America. He was then heard of as a wanderer in the east. For years he was in considerable pecuniary difficulty, and was assisted in the education of his only surviving child by grants from the house of assembly. At length he settled in England, and in charge of a rural congregation spent the evening of his days, and some years afterwards an announcement of his death, at an advanced age, appeared in a Jamaica paper.





## CHAPTER IV

### MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

In many respects, little change in the manners and customs of the people during the early part of this period can be mentioned, as compared with those of the preceding one. But with the commencement of the century, and more especially after the peace of 1815 had made ocean travelling less perilous, a great improvement may be observed in the habits of the more respectable white people, in consequence of the greater number of families whose children were sent to England for education. Removed at a very early age from the debasing influences of a slaveholding colony into scenes of European delicacy and refinement, they not only received a superior education, judged by the standard of the day, but were spared the contaminating scenes too common on a plantation,

The creole child, trained in the colony, had almost invariably a little slave allotted as a servant. Both boys and girls were too apt to tyrannise over these dependants, and foolish parents in many instances encouraged, rather than checked, such exhibitions of youthful cruelty. Some of them even suffered their children to witness the punishments inflicted on the household or plantation slaves, never reflecting on the brutalising effects of such exhibitions, or on the fact that they ultimately became sources of amusement.

Children so trained would see in future days no evil connected with a state of slavery, and they were among the most determined opponents of every measure proposed for its amelioration; while those who had enjoyed the advantage of an English education could not fail, on their return, to contrast the state of things they saw on every hand with those they had left: and if the result was to create an intense longing to return to Europe, it also, where this desire could not be gratified, induced many, especially females, to labour for the improvement of those dependent upon them, and to discountenance the lax morality which prevailed.

There were some women, however, not only among those who had never left the colony, but others whose familiarity with slavery had blunted the finer feelings of womanhood, who, while retaining tender sentiments towards their own kindred, and conducting themselves as affectionate wives and mothers, would not hesitate to order, or in some cases to inflict, severe punishment on such slaves as had incurred their displeasure. Such instances gradually became more rare with the improvement in manners, and though visitors of undoubted veracity have told of ladies leaving their drawing-room to chastise some transgressing handmaiden, these cases must not be taken as illustrative of general feeling.

It is wonderful that in other respects the character of the white creole ladies proved so excellent, and amiable as it most undoubtedly was, their position was a trying one. It was rarely that an offer of marriage was received from any one who did not maintain at least one coloured or black *housekeeper*, for so in the colony it was customary to designate a concubine. This all but universal appendage of a bachelor's household would, in most cases, retain her position until a few days before the marriage. If a good-natured person, as was usually the case, she would prepare the home she was quitting for the expected bride; while that lady would often take an interest in the future welfare of herself and children, astonishing to any woman trained amidst other associations. It was well for her domestic peace if she had not to submit to the existence of one or more establishments other than that of which she was the head.

It had become even more common than in the earlier history of the colony for the more wealthy proprietors to reside in England. Thus it was that the planting attorney ranked among the most important personages in the island. Generally the proprietor of one or two estates, he would have from half-a-dozen to twenty others under his management. He had, in some cases, an interest in a mercantile firm, or he might be a doctor or a solicitor. Occasionally two attorneys were appointed to one property, one having care of its mercantile affairs, and the other superintending its cultivation. As so many properties were under one general superintendence, it is evident that very much, both in the details of cultivation and the management of the slaves, was left to the overseers.

The attorney's was the most lucrative post. Though in some instances a salary was given, the general mode of remuneration

was five or six per cent. on the purchases and sales. Moreover, they lived not only on, but as far as possible out of the property, during their periodical visits. The number of great attorneys, as those having many estates under their care were called, diminished somewhat of later years, and more frequently a few estates only were entrusted to the same individual.

There were other colonists whose emoluments often equalled those of the planting attorney, and whose mode of life and general habits were not dissimilar. There were large mercantile houses in Kingston, and though then, as now, the senior partners usually resided in England, those who were entrusted with the management of the business were enabled to live luxuriously, and in many cases returned at length to the greater ease and comfort of an English life. Lawyers, doctors, and in a few instances, surveyors, were frequently exceedingly prosperous, £2000 to £4000 a year being stated as the income of several in the two first-named professions. £500,000 a year was said by a competent authority to be the sum often paid during the earlier part of the century for legal expenses. Medical charges were very high, and the care of several estates was the most lucrative thing in the profession out of Kingston or Spanish Town.

The lower classes of white inhabitants led in many cases unenviable lives. Some artisans, such as coppersmiths, saddlers, coopers, and a few other working trades, were able to secure not only the comforts of life but its luxuries; though, perhaps, for every one who succeeded, twenty succumbed to the climate, or became victims to vicious indulgences.

The most numerous class was employed on estates. The old system of bond-servants was at an end, but large supplies of young men could be found as book-keepers. If coarse and uneducated, their mental suffering on reaching the colony would not be great, but to a young man accustomed to a cheerful, quiet home, the shock must have been very painful. He found he had no books to keep, but that his duty consisted in following the gangs of slaves to the field in all weathers, and superintending their labours there or in the boiling and still-house: he was thus exposed to the influence of heavy dews, sudden showers, and burning heat. No wonder that large numbers soon fell victims to the climate, or that, shut out from civilizing influences and virtuous female society, many lived a life of riotous debauchery night after night, and also on the

Sabbath day. New rum and yellow fever hurried hundreds yearly to an untimely grave.

In a few years the book-keeper who survived might hope, if he secured the good-will of his employer, to become an overseer; but though his emoluments were increased from £50 or £80 a year to double or treble the larger sum in many cases, with considerable perquisites in addition, his social position was little improved. Marriage among these classes was still, with few exceptions, discouraged by their employers: why, it would not be easy to say, for a black or coloured housekeeper was not objected to. Many young men of good disposition were debarred from connections of the most promising character by the existence of this absurd and most immoral prohibition.

The recreations accessible to any class of the white community were very limited. Dancing was still the chief household amusement: it stirred the most languid creole, especially ladies, into almost preternatural activity. Public balls were common in Kingston and some large towns: twenty or thirty miles was not thought too far to go for a dance, with the thermometer at 80° or 90°. The Hindu Mogul who, visiting the governor-general of India, gazed with astonishment at the high-bred ladies joining in the quadrilles, and exclaimed, with astonishment, "We make our nautch girls do that," would have been still more astounded in Jamaica. The fair, delicate lady, who at ordinary times was accustomed to ring for a maid to pick up a fallen handkerchief, could dance night after night, until the rising of the morning star indicated the approach of dawn. The day was of course mostly spent in sleep, and care was taken not to eat too heartily, as that would unfit for the laborious pleasure. In most other respects the habits and occupations of the wealthy families were similar to those of the same kind in England.

When the furniture of the houses was different, the climate was the cause. Carpets were all but unknown; the floors, generally of mahogany or rare woods, were polished most beautifully by half-a-dozen or a dozen maids, by means of oranges and brushes made of the husk of the cocoa-nut. No diminution of the number of domestic servants can be noticed during this period, as compared with the former one.

A dinner party was usually a very sumptuous entertainment, though far more expensive in town than in country, where so many things were produced on the property. The successive

courses were, to a great extent, dispensed with, the table being loaded to profusion with the different viands, pastry and dessert alone excepted. Often the ladies withdrew, as in England, but sometimes, when singing was introduced, they remained for a considerable time. Bachelors' parties were not as a rule less sumptuous, but not unfrequently very uproarious, nor were rough practical jokes uncommon.

In towns, English times for meals were common. In the country the hour for rising was daybreak, and that of retiring to rest, unless when visitors were present, was usually a couple of hours after sunset, which varies from six to seven o'clock. Everywhere hospitality, not always limited by the means of exercising it, was the rule. In the early part of the century, and for a long time previous, visits on an extended scale were not uncommon; an entire household, personal attendants and nurses included, would journey to the residence of a friend. The party might consist in all of twenty persons, or even more, together with horses, mules, carriages, &c. For weeks they would stay at the place so honoured; in fact, it was not unusual to remain till the poultry-yard was entirely cleared of everything eatable, and no small havoc was made on the supply of the larger animals. The month or six weeks so spent was a perfect carnival—feasting, dancing, and gossiping, filling up the time. The entertainers would themselves be treated after the same fashion, if desirous of returning the visit, or, as it has not inaptly been termed, the visitation.

These customs gradually declined as education and refinement diffused higher sources of pleasure. But the almost utter disregard of the sanctity of the Sabbath, the neglect of religious duties (except perhaps the ordinance of baptism), and the custom of transacting business on Sunday, as on any other day, were evils which were not cured until after this period.

The coloured people, by which is meant the mixed races (not black), had increased in numbers and importance. They, too, were divided into classes. Those of the coloured people who were slaves, were as a rule exempted from the hard work of the plantations, and the males were usually brought up to trades, and the females as domestic servants, more frequently as nurses. But by far the greatest portion of those fairer than the mulattoes were free. Among the free coloured women there was a somewhat general desire to obtain the protection of a white man. It has been said by some, only superficially acquainted with the colony, that they

desired this merely that they might obtain the opportunity of a more lavish display of dress and a more luxurious style of living than was usually attainable through honourable marriage with a man of their own class. With some, this may have been the chief or only motive, but certainly not with all. Many women felt deeply the fact that, as a proscribed race, debarred from the enjoyment of civil privileges, a coloured man could not protect them from injury or insult as a white man could, and they were as faithful to their protectors as they could have been if married. Some of these ladies were possessed of considerable property of their own, but it was not till after the abolition of slavery that matrimonial alliances with white men were at all common.

Shut out from all equal familiar intercourse with the white races, they did not fail to provide amusements of their own. Their balls were grand affairs. To some of these men of their own colour were invited, while from others they were excluded, and only white men admitted. Where religion had failed to elevate and purify the character of these people, some consolation for social proscription was sought in a round of pleasures, and too often of that reckless character which shuts out higher hopes and aspirations.

Of the state of the slave population it can only be said that their condition had gradually improved ever since the abolition of the slave trade. More care became essential on the part of their owners when losses occasioned by neglect or ill-treatment could not be replaced; nor could the great and increasing interest awakened in the British dominions on the subject of slavery fail to engender greater cautiousness on the part of the owners. In a former section it was observed that the slaves of resident proprietors fared better than those of absentees. Intelligent observers, such as Sir Henry de la Beche and others, who visited the island before emancipation, perceived that even when the treatment was harsh, the slaves of residents were more content. The fact that there was some one to whom they could complain of any wrong they suffered at the hands of subordinates, was in itself a relief; and however long the story might be, no wise West Indian proprietor would refuse to listen to it.

On estates confided to the supervision of attorneys, the slaves, as a rule, fared worse when many were under one individual. If the overseer was a considerate man, all worked as well as was possible in such a state of society, and perhaps things were still better

where the overseer was appointed joint attorney. But, given a harsh overseer, and an attorney whose numerous avocations prevented him being on the spot above once or twice a year, and the cup of negro misery was sure to be full. Of later years some attorneys would not allow an overseer to inflict corporal punishment until he had been six months on the property, and had become acquainted with the character of the people.

Where, from any of the causes cited, there was much oppression, complaint was of little use. The large attorneys could not know much of the thousands of slaves under their charge, and if in any case they interposed on behalf of any one who had been ill-used, the poor sufferer would only be exposed to worse treatment as soon as the attorney had left the place. In courts of justice an impassable barrier to substantial redress was interposed in most cases by the fact that slave evidence could not be received against white men. All the slaves on the plantation might witness the murder of one of their number by a white man, and yet their evidence was absolutely worthless according to existing law.

The dwellings of the slaves were of the same character as described in the former period. Unfortunately, too many negro huts are still to be found throughout the colony quite as unfit for human habitation.

Their amusements had become more elaborate in some particulars, and less coarse in their character. Dancing was still the favourite recreation, especially on moonlight nights. On Saturdays, the slaves of an estate, and often many from adjoining properties, would assemble, permission being first obtained, and spend hours in boisterous revelry. A large ring was formed, and the horrid goomba drum beaten. By law this should have been silenced by ten o'clock, but unless in troublous times the rule was generally relaxed. Rattles made of calabashes, filled with hard seeds called Indian shot, were shaken, and when the drum was silent formed the only instrumental accompaniment. A woman usually led the singing, in a kind of recitative or solo, the whole body joining in the chorus. Thus stimulated, two persons, male and female, leapt into the middle of the ring, and danced till ready to sink from exhaustion. As one couple retired another would take their place, continuing the exercise till near the dawning of the day. At Christmas and at other holiday seasons these or similar amusements were prolonged from night to night.



In town places domestic slaves had learnt, in process of time, to devise recreations of a more attractive kind. At the Christmas carnival the younger women adorned themselves with all the finery they could procure: this was often of a superior kind, for their savings for months were devoted to the purpose. Nor would their mistresses, whether white or coloured, refuse to assist them, either with gifts or the loan of jewellery and other ornaments. Gaily adorned, the damsels paraded the streets in parties, known as the Reds and Blues, or the Yellows and Blues, each seeking to outshine the other. A kind of rivalry existed, in which their owners often seemed to feel an equal interest. Any indication of want of taste, or of imperfection in the arrangements of the opposite party, was sure to meet with very caustic criticism.

The effect was striking. These young women, with elastic figures which many a fair lady of wealth and fashion might have envied, and adorned with considerable taste, presented a spectacle the beholder was never likely to forget. Their frocks were usually of fine muslin, with satin bodices of the colours named above. In Kingston and Montego Bay, groups of twenty, thirty, or even more, passed through the streets, singing and dancing as they went. Each party had its queen, dressed far more gorgeously than the rest, and selected for much the same reasons as the May queen of an English village.

Sometimes the "setts," as these companies were termed, were all of the same height. Others varied greatly in this respect, but were carefully arranged, the line tapering down from the portly, majestic women, who led the procession, to quite little children in the rear. But every one in the sett was dressed exactly alike, even in the most minute particulars, not excepting the parasol and the shoes, the latter frequently of white kid, then costing nine or ten shillings sterling a pair. There was another rule from which departure was unknown—blacks and browns never mingled in the same sett. The creole distinction of brown lady, black woman, was in those days of slavery and social distinctions strictly observed; and, except in the smaller towns, different shades of colour did not readily mingle.

While these setts were parading the streets, John Canoe parties also displayed themselves: from an artistic point of view it might be said that these had improved on the original idea. The different trades and occupations formed separate parties, each with its John Canoe man, or some quaint device. In some cases a resemblance

might be traced to the English mummers of olden time. Now and then these people were dressed up to represent characters they had seen on the stage. Shakespeare was sadly parodied on such occasions. Richard III., for example, after shouting vociferously for a horse, would kill an opponent, who, however, again revived, and performed a sword dance with the monarch.

A simpler and more picturesque scene was presented at Whitsuntide and Easter, when groups of people often danced around the American aloe, then found in bloom, and which was familiarly known as the Maypole.

Many of the younger people were accustomed to give dances, in imitation of the balls of their English masters. The expense was met by subscription, and many of these entertainments were of a very pretentious character. At a more private ball, given by a black doctor of some local celebrity, Sir H. de la Beche was present, and bears testimony to the excellence of the arrangements and to the profusion of poultry, hams, and wines which had been provided. A trifle to the musicians was expected from the guests, but this was all. On these occasions toasts were proposed, as in more refined circles of the same period, songs were sung, and in too many cases the vice of gambling was not unknown.

Resident proprietors were generally disposed to contribute to the enjoyment of their domestics. A kindly disposed lady would often play her piano for hours while the household slaves and the friends they had invited danced in the great hall of the mansion; nor were suitable refreshments refused on such occasions.

On the sugar plantations a festival not altogether dissimilar to the harvest-home of England was observed. When the last ripe cane had been cut and carried to the boiling-house, what was known as Crop-over commenced. The largest rooms in the great house were given up to the slaves, and an ample supply of food, rum, and often wine, was provided. Fiddlers were called in, and a perfect saturnalia ensued; dancing was kept up with great vigour, nor did the white men employed on the plantation refuse to take the hand of sable damsels on such occasions. Early in the century different tribes of negroes and their descendants formed separate parties, but as the creole element gradually predominated after the abolition of the slave trade, all amalgamated. Something of the same kind of festivity was common at Christmas, but as religious feelings spread, these merrymakings became less common, and even the Crop-over celebration gradually lost its charms,

From amusements to funerals may appear a strange transition, yet it is fairly open to question whether the latter were not in their way a most agreeable relief to the tedium of plantation life. Some changes had taken place in the mode of conducting them as compared with those related in a former chapter on manners and customs. When a person of any kind of importance died, preparations were made for a wake. If the family were not able to bear the expense, plates enveloped in black crape were sent round from house to house, and the gifts of those kindly disposed collected. It was thought something extremely mean not to contribute for such a purpose. All who chose to come to the wake were freely welcomed: it was a grand time for gossip, feasting, and too often drunkenness. Similar customs to those described under the former period prevailed.

The ceremony of catching the shadow of the dead person was usually gone through with many strange antics; and when this wonderful feat was declared to have been accomplished, the shadow was put into a small coffin and carefully buried. After this there was no fear of the duppy, or ghost, giving any trouble.

Still the dead man could not, as a rule, go quietly to his last resting-place unless all outstanding matters were adjusted. The friends or relations who bore the coffin often received some hint, the nature of which was best known to themselves, and then placing their ears to the coffin, they professed to interpret the utterances of the departed, who it seems had not yet lost the gift of speech. Slanders spoken against him, or injuries not yet redressed, were now publicly proclaimed. More frequently the corpse was declared to proclaim the name of its debtors: the creditors were invariably forgotten. Woe to the man who owed anything to the estate of the departed. No matter what superhuman efforts the bearers seemed to make, the corpse was obstinate, and would not go past the residence of the delinquent. A living dun is usually a very inconvenient visitor, but what can a man do with a dead one? A coffin before one's door, which no power on earth can lift until the debt is paid, is perhaps one of the most unpleasant modes of enforcing payment that can be well imagined, and, as a rule, it was most successful. Yet it sometimes turned out that the corpse was not honest, that the alleged debt had been paid; and then it was wonderful how light the coffin of the claimant became, and how rapidly the bearers proceeded on their way.

In 1831, night funerals were prohibited by law: owners permitting them were liable to a penalty of £50, and slaves attending them to a whipping of thirty-nine lashes. In the early part of the century they were very frequent. The scene presented on these occasions was wild in the extreme, though rarely witnessed by white people, and only then by stealth. One or more negroes played upon the goomba, and another, at intervals, blew a horn made of a conch shell; another took the solo part or recitative of a wild funeral wail, usually having reference to the return of the departed to Africa; while a party, sitting in a circle, gave the chorus. These melancholy dirges were often protracted through the night, the coffin not being laid in the grave till the morning star arose. Food, consisting of pork, yam, rum, &c., was placed in the coffin, for the use of the departed in his long journey across the blue water to the fatherland. In later years it became common to use more expedition at the grave, and when the funeral was over, and a few dirges sung, to return to the house and spend the night in feasting, often accompanied with dancing.

The progress of public opinion in Great Britain on the subject of slavery tended to ameliorate the condition of the bondsmen, not only by laws passed by the imperial parliament, such as the Registration Act, but in leading the masters to see that a milder system of general treatment must be adopted. There was a growing sense in the colony of the danger of defying public sentiment. In a defence published by certain magistrates who had incurred the displeasure of a member of the council, whose slaves they had shielded from his tyranny, it was observed: "What would they have said in England if we had not acted as we have done?"<sup>1</sup> The overseers and bookkeepers were, as a rule, selected from a better class of men than formerly, and their power of inflicting corporal punishment was more limited. So greatly had things gradually changed for the better, that Mr. Barclay, writing in 1824, asserted that not one-twentieth of the number of punishments were inflicted then as compared with 1803, when he came to the island.<sup>2</sup>

The number of holidays had been gradually increased, and with the Saturday half-holiday there was time, not only for the slaves to secure, in favourable seasons, an abundant supply of food for their families, but to supply the markets. All kept pigs and poultry, and as wealth was carefully hoarded, and handed down from parent to son, many were possessed of considerable property. There was never any interference with the rights of slaves to such possessions:

and if the grounds allotted to them were changed, compensation was almost invariably given. The regard which was shown to the feelings of the people in these respects during slavery, rendered the conduct of their former owners in ejecting them after freedom more aggravating. No allowance was made for improvements they had made, or for valuable trees they had planted; yet in 1807 the notorious Simon Taylor allowed his slaves sixteen shillings for each cocoa-nut tree he cut down in their grounds, to effect certain improvements on one of his estates. Wills were made and property bequeathed by slaves, just as among white men, without the legal formalities, but with quite as much certainty of the wishes of the testator being observed. In some places the slaves established courts of justice among themselves. Three judges were usually appointed, and decided all disputes. These officials were commonly well plied with drink, yet they listened patiently to the long stories generally told on either side, and finally awarded damages and costs of suit, which latter, like those in all law courts, from the court of chancery downwards, were very exorbitant. Marriages became more common as Christianity spread, and gradually influenced, though at first imperfectly, all the habits of the people.

Sir H.de la Beche has given a sketch of the course of daily labour on his estate in Vere about fifty years ago, and as a fair description of a well and humanely managed estate in those days it deserves preservation, if only in an abbreviated form. Halse Hall, the property referred to, had rather more than two hundred slaves upon it, of whom ninety-six were males and one hundred and eleven females: these were all creoles, with the exception of ten Africans. The occupations of the day began early, from five o'clock to six o'clock in the morning, according to the season of the year, but mothers with children came an hour or two later. On many estates the slaves were summoned by the loud crack of the driver's whip, which was often laid on those who were late. At Halse Hall, as at many other places, a bell was rung.

At nine o'clock, from half an hour to three-quarters of an hour was allowed for breakfast, which had been previously prepared by the field cooks. About half-past twelve o'clock the overseer blew a

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<sup>1</sup> "View of Jamaica," by J.Stewart, p. 240.

<sup>2</sup> Barclay's "Practical View of Slavery."

conch shell, which was the signal for dinner, for which two hours were allowed, the more industrious usually taking part of the time to labour on their own grounds. Work was again resumed until half-past five o'clock, or half-past six o'clock in the longer days. Half of the mothers worked in the gangs, and another half took turn in minding the very young children under the trees. The driver on this and some other estates did not carry a whip: all complaints were taken to the overseer, who alone could punish.

The gangs into which the workers were divided were three in number. The first, or great gang, consisted of strong and able men and women: these dug cane holes, and did other heavy work. The second gang was made up of weakly men and women, and of young people from ten to seventeen years of age: these did hoeing and other comparatively light work. The third gang was composed of children from six to ten years of age, who were employed in weeding and other odd jobs. During crop time, which lasted four months, the slaves were divided into two spells, and the work went on without intermission day and night, except on Saturday afternoon and Sunday. At this time the slaves were exceedingly healthy, as they were allowed to eat as much cane as they liked. It was this free use of sugar, the nourishing properties of which are known to every creole, that led the slaves to prefer sugar to coffee estates, though the hours of work on the latter were usually shorter, and the work itself lighter.

Halse Hall is in the lowlands, and more food was of necessity allowed to the slaves than on upland properties, where the provision grounds allotted to the slaves were more luxuriant. Thus a gallon of Guinea corn was issued weekly to each adult at Halse Hall. Salt fish, pork, and herrings, to the value of about four dollars a year, was about the average cost of food for each slave on most estates. On Easter Monday and at Christmas clothes were usually distributed. The list given by De la Beche is a fair average account of these gifts. To the head driver a cloth jacket and a couple of shirts were given as extras, and about twenty yards of osnaburg and eight yards of baise: to other head people a trifle less. Men and women in the gangs had ten to twelve yards of osnaburg and four of baise: to women a few yards of calico were given in addition, and to children about half the quantity afforded to their parents. A hat, a cap, a handkerchief, a knife, some tape, thread, and needles, with an iron pot every two or three years, were also bestowed. Only to this extent was the toil of slaves for five days

and a half in each week removed from the category of altogether unrequited labour. Where the superior fertility of the provision grounds rendered an allowance of Guinea corn unnecessary, ninepence a week may be estimated as the average cost of the maintenance of a negro slave when liberally treated! Women were allowed six weeks' holiday after confinement, and usually ceased work about two months before. An allowance of rum, from a pint to a quart a week, was common to the adult negroes.

It will be seen that though the slaves were dependent for food on their half day's labour on their allotments or provision grounds, they had generally the means of procuring clothing of a superior kind to that allowed by their owners, and also of saving, if so disposed: this was chiefly by disposing of their surplus produce. The following list of prices in the markets of Lower Clarendon and Vere, in 1823, may be interesting for the sake of comparison, and as illustrating the sources by which slaves acquired money, and many years later were able in some cases to buy their freedom:—A fat pig, 36s. to 54s.; a medium size, 18s. to 28s.; a sucking pig, 4s.; a good milch goat, 20s. to 245s.; a kid, 4s. or 5s.; two pigeons, is. 6d.; a capon, 3s.; a pullet or hen, is. 6d.; a large bunch of bananas, is.; pine-apples, 3d. to 6d.; a water melon, 6d.; a large pumpkin, 6d. to 9d.; beans, 4½d. to 6d. a quart. Any of the following articles might be bought for threepence:—Six large sweet potatoes, three pints of maize, two cocoa-nuts, twelve oranges or mangoes, six star apples, eighteen naseberries, six sweet sops, four Avocado pears, one shaddock, a quart of ockroes, or a yard of tobacco. As a whole, the above list is not very different to the prices now asked in the Kingston market.

Medical advice was provided for the slaves at the cost of the estate: four shillings a head was now a common charge as remuneration. The sketch of life on a plantation will hardly be complete without some reference to certain peculiar maladies common among slaves. The yaws was a terrible scourge: it may be described as a species of leprosy. It was originally introduced from Africa, and gradually declined after the abolition of the slave trade, though it still lingers among the less elevated classes of the emancipated peasantry: dirt and bad habits are favourable to its propagation. With proper attention, it is curable in from six to nine months. It can be communicated by inoculation, and in slavery mothers frequently thus gave it to their children, to escape from the labours of the estate.

Fearful ulcers and even elephantiasis were occasioned by filth, and allowing the chigoe flea to burrow in the feet and toes. These troublesome insects are easily removed, but if left under the skin they soon produce a numerous progeny. Lameness for life was often the result of this gross neglect.

The ravages of the Guinea worm, described in most books on tropical diseases, were chiefly confined to Africans. A most peculiar disease to which negroes were subject was called *mal de stomach*, or dirt-eating. This, though often treated by planters as a vicious propensity, and punished as such, is really occasioned by a diseased state of the stomach. The body swells, and assumes a bloated appearance, and the countenance an unnatural colour. There are violent retchings, and great shortness of breath. Where the propensity cannot be cured by the administration of wholesome food and mild restraint, death soon terminates the suffering.

The dread of Obeah killed many, as in former days, but the spread of Christianity gradually diminished the influence of the Obeah men, and the cessation of African importations reduced their numbers. Baptized negroes were supposed to be less subject to the power of magic arts. Still, superstition is among the last of all evils corrected by Gospel teaching, and many who had ceased to fear Obeah themselves continued to play upon the credulity of others, and were accustomed to hang up a bundle of feathers, teeth, &c., in a conspicuous part of their provision grounds, as an effectual guard against the depredations of thieves.

Where Obeah was practised it was more secretly than before, and creole pretenders were never supposed to possess the same powers as their African predecessors. It was only by these latter that the mysterious rites performed under the shadow of the gigantic cotton-trees were celebrated. Many superstitions, originally brought from Africa, were modified, and often blended with others which had been introduced by Christian or Jewish colonists. An idea, certainly not of African origin, is still current—namely, that the room in which a person dies should not

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<sup>1</sup> "Or stone at the bottom of the river." The uneducated negroes had a habit of putting the letter S where it should not be, and of leaving it out where it should be.



be swept or disturbed for nine days. Water and other requisites are placed in it, and, as among the Jews, a light is kept burning during the prescribed period.

The negroes had floating among them a variety of terse proverbial expressions. The following are examples selected from about three hundred collected during a long period of intercourse with them. "Softly waters run deep," meaning that a wise man is usually quiet and reserved. "Poor man never bex (vexed)"—he is humble, and cannot afford to take affront. "When man dead grass grow at him door:" this is indicative of the neglect which follows death. "When trouble catch bull-dog, monkey breeches fit him," meaning that a blustering man collapses when his pride is taken down by adversity. "Greedy choke puppy," or the puppy chokes itself by eating too fast; and thus a man who charges too much, or seeks to monopolise all he can, will overreach himself at last, and suffer. "Rocky tone <sup>1</sup> a ribba bottom no feel sun hot." This shrewd proverb was applied to people in comfortable circumstances, who did not sympathise with the sorrows of others. "When cockroach gib dance, him no ax fowl." Fowl, like birds of paradise, love to feast on cockroaches; but the idea rather seems to be that people in inferior circumstances should not seek the friendship of those above them, or they may come to grief. As a specimen of the coarser kind of proverb, "Full belly tell hungry belly keep heart," may be quoted, as indicative of the kind of consolation too often given by the prosperous to the needy. Many others might be cited, proving that the old negroes were careful observers of men and things, and did not fail to hit off the weaknesses and follies of their fellow creatures.

There was another strange kind of traditional literature extant among the people, called "Anancy Stories." The word Anancy signifies a spider in the creole African *patois*, but the meaning of the word, as applied to the foremost character in this fairy mythology, is not illustrated by any reference it contains. Anancy is an inferior character, and more concerned about eating and

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<sup>1</sup> Introduction to "Lectures on Negro Proverbs," by Rev. J. Radcliffe.

<sup>2</sup> The materials for this chapter have been obtained from Stewart De la Beche, Barclay, Monk Lewis, Michael Scott, Madden, con temporary magazines, newspapers, local information, &c.

drinking than anything else. He has a wife named *Crookie*, and they have a son, *Tacooma*. This Being, though described as much stronger, is not so cunning as his father, and disagrees with him, as Anancy also does with his wife.<sup>1</sup>

Some of these Anancy stories would form no bad addition to the fairy stories of the world; but the race of *nanas*, or creole nurses, who used to tell them to delighted audiences in the old country residences, is fast passing away.<sup>2</sup>



# PERIOD V

## FROM EMANCIPATION TO 1872

### CHAPTER I

#### THE FIRST DAYS OF FREEDOM

WHEN the 1st of August, 1838, had passed, a succession of difficulties demanded the attention of the governor. Before the day of full emancipation, indications had not been wanting to show on how insecure and unsatisfactory a footing the future position of master and labourer was placed. In one respect, the latter seemed to be entirely in the power of the former, for his cottage and the little garden around it, together with the provision lands he cultivated, were on the estate of the master, who might summarily dispossess him if at all unruly. Under any circumstances, the adjustment of the grave questions which arise when a long enslaved people are suddenly restored to freedom, must be of a character to demand the highest statesmanship.

Sir Lionel Smith was a warm friend of the negro, and heartily sympathised with the missionaries, but he had not sufficient generosity to forgive the planters for the hard things they had said about him, nor did he consider sufficiently what a trial to their temper and judgment the ordeal was through which they were passing. But if Sir Lionel was not the man to conciliate, it must be conceded that even his occasional want of judgment was trifling in comparison with the almost utter absence of this quality on the part of the assembly and the planters generally. These last appeared to think that they could coerce the negroes as they had hitherto done, not indeed by the whip, but by means of vagrant laws perverted from the proper purpose of such provisions, by

ejecting offenders from their estates, and other modes of petty persecution. They forgot that there were vast tracts of virgin land upon which the negroes could find a home, and be far more independent of the planter than he could be of them.

West Indian parliamentary papers, from 1838 to 1840, government despatches and returns, together with voluminous controversial documents, illustrate to some extent the struggles of the period. For several weeks before the day of emancipation, the planters were engaged in making preliminary bargains for work. In some cases the labourers demanded the rate at which they had seen valuations made during the apprenticeship; in other cases, a shilling a day sterling was asked. In July, Sir L. Smith embarked on board a man-of-war, and visited most parts of the parishes near the coast. He found nothing settled as to the question of wages, but an idea generally prevalent that a shilling a day sterling should be given if rent was to be paid for houses and grounds, or a shilling currency if these were to be free. In many cases, notices had already been given to the negroes to quit their houses, in the hope of thus coercing them to accept low wages. This was chiefly done by small proprietors.<sup>1</sup>

Sir L. Smith issued a plain, simple address to the apprentices, advising them, if possible, to remain on the old properties, but reminding them that they had no legal right to their holdings. He at the same time urged a steady industry, and recommended them to spare their wives "heavy field work," that they might attend to the duties of home. When the day of emancipation arrived, he was able to report how soberly and quietly it had been observed; but on the 13th of August he officially stated that the negroes had not generally returned to plantation work. The only approach to a disturbance had, however, been in Falmouth, where a good deal of alarm had been excited by a threat to burn Mr. Knibb in effigy, and which was soon perverted into a report that he was to be hung in reality. Immense numbers assembled, with sticks and cutlasses, to defend him, but soon dispersed. A few days after, the excitement was even greater, in consequence of a report that Knibb was actually killed. Great crowds of people assembled, with cries for vengeance, and at Rio Bueno the report being communicated to a crowded congregation by an excited messenger,

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<sup>1</sup> Sir L. Smith's Letters to Lord Glenelg, July 27, Sept. 7, 10.

the alarm and fury was as great as at Falmouth. It was soon allayed, and during the week Mr. Knibb showed himself at numerous estates, to assure the people of his safety.”<sup>1</sup>

After some little delay, the question of wages was, on the whole, satisfactorily settled; but a shilling sterling for a day's work by no means represented what an able-bodied negro could earn. Eighteen-pence a day was quoted in many parishes, and piecework realised fair prices, less than the same work cost in apprenticeship or slavery, but still a just cause of complaint. The real grievance of the negro lay in another quarter. The rate of wages was, by a most unparalleled system of oppression, made, in many cases, a mere delusion and snare. The negroes, it has been stated, occupied cottages on the estates: around these their fathers, and even remote ancestors had been buried, and the spots were thus peculiarly sacred to their mind. If a little ordinary wisdom had been exercised by the proprietors and their agents, the former slaves and their descendants might, by means of these feelings, have been attached to the estates. It was a provision of the Emancipation Act that the holders of these places should occupy them for three months after freedom, and it was generally understood, even by means of the stipendiary magistrates, that this meant rent free. The attorney-general of Jamaica decided otherwise, and the result was deplorable. It led to general excitement and retarded or interrupted many negotiations on the labour question then proceeding.<sup>2</sup> This opinion was subsequently set aside, on the judgment of her Majesty's attorney and solicitor-generals, Rolfe and Campbell.

What rent a man should pay for a small plot of generally worn-out land, containing some fruit trees of his own or parents' planting, and a hut which he had for the most part built and repaired himself, was a question to which a moderate reply should have been given. But the reply was seldom moderate. In some instances, only a shilling sterling per week was asked, and the same for the provision ground; but in many cases more was demanded.

But this was not all. It will hardly be credited, but it is a simple fact, recorded on the concurrent testimony of hundreds of letters from forty or fifty stipendiary magistrates, that immense numbers of peoples were compelled to pay rent for *every* inhabitant of a

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<sup>1</sup> "Life of Knibb," p. 260.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Lionel Smith to Lord Glenelg, Sept. 24, 1838.

cottage; that is, rent for himself, rent for his wife, and rent for each child! In other cases a system equally objectionable prevailed. No rent was professedly charged, but it was understood that the occupant and his family should work on the estate, but when any one was absent, tenpence a day currency, or sixpence sterling, was a common thing to charge as the rent of such an absentee. In one instance, the wife being unable to go to the field in consequence of illness, sixpence a day was forthwith charged for the shelter she enjoyed. The rent roll of a certain property was found to amount, at these rates, to £1300 per annum, a sum the estate had not for many years been known to yield under slavery.<sup>1</sup> In another case, a man was summoned for rent, at the rate of £40 per annum, for a place that could not have cost one-fifth of the sum. But even now the negroes would not have been driven from their cottages and grounds, if for any settled sum, at all reasonable, they could have retained them with any prospect of permanency. But though a year was needed to gather in most of the crops planted by the negroes, no lease or even fixed terms were granted.

On some caprice or other, the overseer would raise the rent, and if remonstrance were made, the cattle were turned into the grounds, and the growing crops destroyed. Cottages were pulled down without notice, and in short, from one end of the island to the other, acts of tyranny were perpetrated, embittering the minds of the more immediate sufferers, and teaching others that they could not be sure of a home unless they obtained freeholds of their own.

Wise and benevolent owners found their profit in a mild and conciliatory course, though every effort was made by the island agent and others to persuade the British people that the negroes would not work, but the statements of the stipendiary magistrates refute this. Then it was proclaimed that they believed they had an indisputable right of possession to the cottages and gardens they held on the estates. The Marquis of Normanby, notwithstanding his previous acquaintance with the people and colony, was induced to believe this statement, and actually sent out a proclamation to disabuse the negroes of the idea.<sup>1</sup> Sir L. Smith circulated it, though regarding it as uncalled for, and it resulted in a perfect inundation

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Mr. Ewart, in Parliamentary Papers on West Indies, 1837, p. 121.

of addresses from Baptist and other congregations, declaring that they never had such an idea, and did not believe it had ever been entertained except by a very few. A large amount of correspondence, from ministers of all denominations, also confuted a statement made by the rector of St. Thomas in the East, that female profligacy had increased in consequence of Sir Lionel's advice relative to women not working on estates; and that Morant Bay and other seaside towns were daily receiving accessions of young women of loose habits, in consequence.

Sir Lionel exposed himself to animadversion in consequence of a somewhat unguarded reply to the Baptists in which he spoke of the abundance of labourers where they were properly treated. But only a few days after he was obliged to issue a proclamation urging them to return to work after the Christmas holidays of 1838. For a time it seemed as if they would not return, but they eventually did so, explaining their delay on the ground that it was their first free Christmas. The rent difficulty was not removed by the lapse of time, and the result was the purchase of land and the erection of free villages. In this movement the ministers of all religions, the Baptists especially, exerted themselves.

From one point of view it was a pity to withdraw so many from the immediate scenes of labour, but there can be no doubt that the settlers gained greatly both on the score of morality and comfort. Some of these villages still remain, and are among the most picturesque in the island; though others, settled as estates more favourably located came gradually into the market, have in many respects surpassed them. This drafting of the negroes from their old locations on the estates was a gradual work. That new settlements should have sprung up was unavoidable, but the absurd and wicked rent system is accountable for the rapidity with which the change was effected, and the results it produced on the labour market. As few planters would sell land near their estates, the location of the people on that at a distance became a matter of course. All difficulties in the labour market now are to no small extent the fruits of that folly, which originally drove the labourer from the soil he had formerly cultivated, and to which he was attached.

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<sup>1</sup> Letter of Marquis of Normanby to Sir L. Smith, April 15, 1839.



That the negroes were as a class disposed to do what was right, is to some extent proved by the fact that for the first two years of emancipation there was a remarkable absence of crime among them, as shown by the reports of almost all the stipendiary magistrates. Rumours of intended outbreaks were not unfrequent, but the governor wisely ordered that, in the event of any disturbance requiring military suppression, only the regular troops, and not the militia, should be called into action.

The session commencing in October, 1838, nearly proved fatal to the legislative privileges of the planters. The imperial parliament had passed a bill to provide for the better government of jails in the West Indies, and this was regarded as impinging on colonial rights. When the usual motion was made to appoint a committee to prepare an address in reply to the governor's opening speech, it was supported by only ten votes; and an amendment was carried to refer it to a committee of the whole house to inquire into the state of the island. Next day five resolutions were reported.

The first declared that an Act of the British parliament, entitled "an Act for the better Government of Prisons in the West Indies," was an infringement on the inherent rights of the legislature in Jamaica; that it "has not and ought not to have the force of law in this island, and that the authorities will not be justified in acting on it."

The second resolution pronounced this violation of colonial rights to be less excusable, as the house was prepared to enter upon a consideration of prison discipline as soon as the report of her Majesty's commission was before them.

Regret was next expressed on account of the unmerited censures passed upon the inhabitants of the island (the emancipated peasantry were not included in the term inhabitants), the extent to which the public mind had been poisoned against them, the reckless manner in which laws passed by the legislature had been disallowed, and the system of legislation for the colonies which had been adopted, so that the assembly had ceased to exist for any useful purpose.

In the fourth resolution the members of the assembly declared that they would abstain from all exercise of any legislative function, except such as might be necessary to preserve inviolate the faith of the island with the public creditor, until it was known if they were to be treated as subjects having the power of making

laws, or to be governed by British parliament and by orders in council, as instanced in the late amended Abolition Act.

An address to the governor was then ordered to be prepared by a committee. It echoed the opening speech of the governor, but declared an intention of adhering to the course of action indicated in their fourth resolution. The governor prorogued the house for a day, in the vain hope that having recorded its opinions it would then proceed to business. On the 3rd of November he reopened it with a conciliatory address. The police bill, he observed, would soon expire, together with other bills providing for the collection of taxes and other important matters. He promised to lay before the house the communications he had received explaining the grounds upon which her Majesty had exercised her prerogative of disallowing certain laws, and of recommending important measures regulating the duties of masters and servants, the prevention of vagrancy, &c. But the house was determined to adhere to the resolutions that had been passed in the former session. It was therefore dissolved.

On the 18th of December the new assembly was convened, and opened with a brief speech, in which no allusion was made to the past. But next day it resolved: "That this house do adhere to the resolutions which were agreed to by the house of assembly on the 31st of October last, and which have been fully sanctioned by the constituency of the island." On the following day stronger language than ever was employed. It was asserted by the members, in an address to the governor, that their liberties as legislators had been invaded by a law to regulate the jails, which was a measure of internal regulation; that even some of the laws were rendered inoperative by influences biasing the decisions of the stipendiary magistrates; and that so long as the present state of things continued, and "her Majesty's government continued to throw its weight into the already preponderating scale of physical strength and natural repugnance to labour, they saw no prospect of the cultivation of the plantations being conducted with advantage to the proprietors."

Captain Darling, afterwards governor of Jamaica, and three other gentlemen, alone opposed the adoption of this address. Thirty-two supported it. When it was presented, Sir Lionel Smith expressed his regret at its tone, and his gratification that his conduct had not provoked it. Nothing remained but once more to appeal to the constituency. But on the provost-marshal proceeding

to summon the assembly to the council chamber, an extraordinary scene ensued: the doors were closed against him, and admission denied. He attempted to gain an entrance, but was prevented by superior numbers. The assembly then passed a resolution, from which only two dissented: "That the conduct of the provost-marshal-general, in attempting to force an entrance into this house, with violence, after the closing of the doors, is a breach of the privilege of this house."

The doors were then opened, and the excited legislators duly summoned to the council chamber; when the governor, having thanked the council for the readiness with which it was prepared to enter upon the business of the colony, thus addressed the members of the assembly:—"The authority of the imperial parliament to legislate for the colonies having been gratuitously denied by the late house of assembly in their reckless declaration, that laws passed by the lords and commons of the empire, and sanctioned by the sovereign, ought to have no power or effect in this colony, I did my duty in appealing to the sense of the electoral body ; and I remark, with regret, that the majority of you gentlemen of this house of assembly, in pursuing the same destructive course, consider such conduct corroborated by the full and cordial sanction of the constituency of the island. Although I am fully sensible of the dangers and difficulties to which your resolution exposes your country and my administration, I shall be found firm at my post; and without resorting to that physical strength alluded to by you, I am confident I shall be able to defend the weak, to punish oppression, and to uphold the majesty of the laws."

Thus was this short-lived house of assembly dismissed; and when men began to reflect calmly on the events of the past few months, they saw little cause for comfort or hope, except in the wise action of the imperial government. The council supported Sir L. Smith all through this trying time, but by the end of December seventeen of the annual laws had expired, and among these, that providing for a police, and to a great extent for a public revenue. Sir Lionel was powerless, for the assembly would not act, and no other constituted power remained.

When the British government became acquainted with the state of affairs, it was felt that the rebellious legislature must be brought to terms; and it was determined to introduce a measure into parliament, suspending the constitution of the island for a term of

five years, during which period a provisional government, consisting of the governor and council, was to administer its affairs. This was certainly a mild remedy, and it would have been happy for Jamaica if the change of 1865 had been effected then. The progress of decadence would have been to some extent arrested, and years of useless party conflict avoided. The assembly had proved itself totally unfit for the proper discharge of the duties demanded by the changed conditions of the colony.

But mild as the ministerial measure was, there was a strong West Indian interest that viewed it with suspicion; while others, who had no sympathy with the planters, could not bear the idea of a British parliament, and that one lately reformed, depriving a colony of the constitutional rights it had enjoyed from the days of Cromwell. Moreover, Lord Melbourne's ministry was weak and unpopular in the extreme. On the 9th of April, 1839, Mr. Labouchere, then under-secretary of state for the colonies, brought forward the proposed measure. Counsel was heard on behalf of the assembly, and their pleading was far from ineffective.

That this body had been very blameworthy, all parties admitted; so much so, that the very tenderness occasionally suggested for naughty children, was spoken of as the only proper course. Others were for enlarging the constituency, which consisted of only about 1500 voters; while not a few felt that a change, sooner or later, would have to be made in the constitution of the island, and saw that no time could be more favourable than the present. The ministers pressed their measure, and on the morning of the 7th of May obtained in a full house a majority of only five in favour of it. This was tantamount to a defeat; and on the ground that the Jamaica assembly would believe that its conduct was upheld by the British parliament, and that the authority of the crown would be weakened there and in other colonies, the ministers announced their resignation of office.

Sir Robert Peel was called upon to form a cabinet, a work in which he met with unexpected difficulties in consequence of the questions which arose relative to the appointment of the ladies of her Majesty's household. The result was the return of Lord Melbourne to office. On the 30th of May a new Jamaica bill was introduced to the house by Mr. Labouchere. It was greatly amended in its passage through the lords: in fact, Peel and his party held it in their own hands. In the shape in which it finally passed, it allowed the assembly time to re-enact those annual laws

which were so necessary to the credit and good order of the island; but should the assembly refuse, the governor in council was empowered to pass them at the expiration of two months from the time of the assembly's failure to do so. This simple measure passed through its final stages on the 9th of July. Soon after, Lord John Russell became colonial secretary, in the place of the Marquis of Normanby, who had held that office for some months. It was evident that a new and firm hand would be required to guide the colony at this trying period, and Sir Charles Metcalfe, an Indian statesman of deserved celebrity, was appointed to the onerous task.

## CHAPTER II

### ADMINISTRATION OF SIR CHARLES METCALFE

The announcement of the appointment of Sir Charles Metcalfe to the government of the colony was not at first received with much favour by the West Indian interest. As an East Indian ruler, they were disposed to infer that he would wish to change all those constitutional modes of government upon which they set so much value. Mr. Burge, the island agent, however, smoothed the way for his reception by his constituents, and it soon became manifest that Sir Charles united in his person those qualities by which men of the most opposite feelings could be conciliated. He arrived at Port Royal, in Jamaica, on the 25th of September, 1839, and landing next day, at once assumed the government of the colony. Four days after, Sir Lionel Smith left, amid the plaudits of the emancipated peasantry, and the kindly feelings of all unblinded by prejudice.

The government of Sir Charles Metcalfe was professedly one of justice and conciliation. Writing to the colonial office four days after his arrival, he observed: "I shall regard it as my duty, first and principally, to do justice to all classes of the population, as far as may depend on me; and, secondly, to conciliate all by all means in my power." "But," he added, "in the latter object I have little hope of success, for it is not improbable that the attempt may dissatisfy all the conflicting parties, by not being sufficiently exclusive to be agreeable to any."

Sir Charles succeeded on the whole far better than he anticipated. His manners and general bearing were much in his favour. He looked and acted, to a great extent, like a genial English gentleman, rather of the olden than of the modern school. The people of Jamaica of all classes like a pleasant, good-tempered, and affable ruler. But beyond all this, he was truly anxious to restore peace and concord, and spared no pains to attain his object.

He met the legislature, for the first time, on the 22nd of October, and his opening address, which, like most he delivered, was somewhat lengthy, was received by the assembly with a general burst of applause. He expressed his anxiety that past differences should be buried in oblivion, and his hope that, though he would have to lay before them the recent act of the imperial legislature occasioned by their past differences, there would be no occasion to call it into exercise. He was there to preserve inviolable their laws and constitution, subject to those laws by which the whole empire was regulated. Peculiar circumstances had necessitated a considerable amount of legislation for the colonies at large, but the great measure of emancipation being completed, there was no reason to anticipate further interference with the action of local legislatures, unless it was of a tendency to counteract or retard the benefits designed by that measure.<sup>1</sup>

On the 25th, the house presented its reply. It defended its past conduct, and asserted that it had only contended for the free exercise of deliberate judgment in enacting its laws, and had never claimed a right to pass any inconsistent with the general interests of the empire.<sup>2</sup> The struggle, it was evident, was now at an end, though previous to the adoption of this address, resolutions were passed recounting the encroachments of the British government, especially in the Prisons Act, but rejoicing in the recent proceedings in parliament as affording ground for hope that the colony would be protected from the unwarrantable acts of the ministry, and preserved in the enjoyment of its ancient rights.<sup>3</sup>

The legislature having voted £2000 to Mr. Burge, the island agent, for having defended the privileges of the colony before the imperial parliament, went steadily to work; and with the exception of a difficulty respecting the Stamp Act in 1842, the greatest harmony characterised the proceedings of each branch during Metcalfe's administration. No other governor ever maintained so good an understanding with the assembly, and no other possessed the authority he did of dispensing with its services in the event of difficulty arising. New laws and institutions suited to a state of general freedom were needed, and though Metcalfe gave his assent to some measures of very questionable prudence, the legislation of the time deserves some praise.

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1839, PP. 7-13.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, 1839, pp. 31-33.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1839, pp. 16-18.

The mere list of laws passed during this administration would fill several pages. Perhaps the most important were those relating to the administration of justice. The apprenticeship had removed upwards of three hundred thousand people from the absolute control of their masters and of the old slave courts, which in the nature of things had ceased to exist. Freedom had placed all these emancipated people in precisely the same position as the rest of her Majesty's subjects, so that the courts of justice, which in former years had jurisdiction only over the free people of the colony as distinct from slaves, had now to deal with the entire community. The supreme court and two courts of assize were altogether unequal to the work, and as the chief justice, Sir Joshua Rowe, pointed out at the close of 1838, the necessity of delivering the jails led to a most inconvenient delay in civil cases, both kinds of business being then transacted by the same court.<sup>1</sup>

In September of the next year, Sir Joshua wrote more strongly on the subject, and urged that the supreme court should consist of the chief justice and three assistant judges, sitting three times a year as a court *in banco*, and holding three courts of assize in each county during the year. In addition to this he proposed that the island should be divided into eight districts, and that to each a barrister should be appointed as chairman of quarter sessions. Thus, he thought, stipendiary magistrates could be relieved of the duties they then performed.<sup>2</sup> A committee appointed to inquire into the subject, recommended that, with some modifications, these suggestions should be carried into effect.<sup>3</sup> A bill was in consequence introduced, and after passing through its several stages, received the governor's assent in April, 1840. It provided for a most elaborate judicial establishment, costing nearly £20,000 per annum, and consisting of a vice-chancellor, two assistant judges, and nine chairmen of quarter sessions. Barristers of two years' standing at the English bar, or solicitors of ten years' island practice, were made eligible for the latter office; but the judges must have practised two years in Jamaica, or eight in England, a distinction to which objection was not unreasonably made at the colonial office, though the bill was allowed.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1839, PP. 75, 76.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1839, PP. 78, 79.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1839, pp. 323–327, and appendix, pp. 326–352.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 1842, pp. 391, 392.



While these matters were under discussion, Sir Charles Metcalfe made a well-meant but unsuccessful effort to establish what he called courts of reconciliation. These had prevented much litigation in Norway, where they had existed for a long time. Sir Charles hoped that they would enable the labouring population to settle most of their disputes with one another without having recourse to law, and also that they would assist in preparing them for their new duties as citizens. For a time, under the influence of novelty, these courts seemed to work well; but as submission to their decisions was optional, the love for litigation led the people to prefer the law courts, and thus the courts of reconciliation, becoming useless, were soon abandoned.<sup>1</sup>

The imperial government was anxious to see the necessary prison reforms commenced, and urged the matter upon Metcalfe before he had been many weeks in the colony.<sup>2</sup> He saw clearly how delicate the subject really was after what had already transpired, and delayed reopening the question until he perceived some prospect of a satisfactory issue. Captain Pringle, who had been appointed in 1837, by Lord Glenelg, to report upon prisons in the West Indies, at length completed his task, and in November, 1839, Metcalfe sent a copy of his report to the assembly.<sup>3</sup> It was lengthy, but conclusively demonstrated the necessity of a radical change in the existing system. Very little time was lost by the assembly in declaring that it had only waited for this document before legislating on the subject. Still it was pleaded, not without reason, that want of funds prevented the immediate erection of a penitentiary. In the meantime it was recommended that the numerous convicts under sentence of transportation should be sent either to Africa, or to some settlement it was proposed to establish on behalf of all the West India islands. But for the tact and temper of Sir Charles, little further progress would have been made with this question. He, however, made good use of some discretionary powers vested in him by a bill passed at the close of the session for the better government of jails and houses of correction, and by using different prisons for the same description of convicts, some

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1840, p. 14; Speech of Sir C. Metcalfe, Kaye's "Life of Metcalfe."

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 261.

<sup>3</sup> Appendix to "Votes," 1839, pp. 96-195.

kind of classification was secured. When the assembly next met, he reported at some length what he had done, and secured a vote for the commencement of a penitentiary. While it was in progress a temporary establishment was set up at the Kingston district prison. But exclusive of £25,000 voted for the new penitentiary, the ordinary prison expenditure was enormous. In 1841 it cost £44,000. In no jail was the cost of each prisoner less than £42 per annum, and in one it mounted up to £186.<sup>1</sup>

The cost of courts of justice and of jails was only exceeded by that of the established church. The votes for 1841–42 on this account were only a little short of £66,000. Of this, £22,930 was appropriated out of the general taxation to the support of fifty-nine clergymen, and £7480 for church extension. The parochial vestries, however, expended £30,906 for church purposes, and £4603 for what was called education. These liberal grants were assisted by £8100 more from the English government, and £3000 from the Propagation Society. The Church Missionary Society had also agents in the colony.

While the governor was guiding the legislature to some practical action on the prison question, and in the face of existing extravagance preparing the way for the present economical system of management, he was equally zealous in effecting ameliorations in the penal code. The prisons were filled with people, against whom sentence of death had been recorded for sheep stealing, larceny, and other offences. It was never intended that such sentences should be carried into effect, and the governor, after consultation with the judges, either commuted the punishment to transportation, which was impossible, or to imprisonment for from six months to three years. Thus was the most awful sentence of the law tampered with.<sup>2</sup> The law was now changed, and the sentence of death only passed in the case of offences for which it could be legally inflicted in England, while the punishment of whipping was entirely abolished.<sup>3</sup> The police were a tolerably efficient body, but cost upwards of £40,000 per annum, while some £15,000 was expended on the militia. Allowances were also made, as in former years, to the officers of English regiments serving in the colony,

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1842, p. 150.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1839, pp. 182–192; *Ibid.*, 1840, pp. 10, 11.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1840, pp. 367, 368.

and to these were now added those in command of negro troops. The popularity of Sir W. Gomm, the commander-in-chief, no doubt secured this act of justice from the assembly.

To this general, in connection with Metcalfe, belongs the credit of having established the barracks at Newcastle for European troops. The fearful mortality among these men has been referred to again and again in these pages, but so late as 1840, great numbers of the 82nd Regiment were swept away by a terrible visitation of yellow fever. Metcalfe, as soon as possible, on his own personal responsibility, caused temporary barracks to be provided on the hills. The buildings at Newcastle, beneath the shadow of Catherine's Peak, were soon after erected; and here, at an elevation of three thousand feet above the level of the sea, the mortality among the men has fallen from an average of 140 out of 1000 per annum to from 22 to 23. The services of General Gomm in this and other respects were gratefully acknowledged by the assembly.<sup>1</sup>

While these and other reforms were in progress, a better understanding had been gradually growing up between the employers and the peasantry, though enough of hostile feeling remained to create anxiety. Relatively, the peasantry were the most prosperous and independent; they were rapidly acquiring small freeholds of their own; and though as a rule the cottages they erected were little better than those they occupied in the days of slavery, they felt the joyousness of freedom, and in many cases acquired comforts and even luxuries to which they had been strangers in the days of bondage. They were fast becoming quite independent of estate labour, and consequently only worked when it suited them, for others; and as their own grounds required attention at the same time as it was most wanted on the sugar estates, the planters found it difficult to obtain labour when it was most needed for the safety of their crops. Had the planters at the time of emancipation been more conciliatory, the cry for labour which soon followed would not have been heard to the same degree; but Metcalfe was not then in the colony, and Sir Lionel Smith, with all his noble hatred of oppression, was too much of a partisan and too little of a statesman to mediate between the opposing classes.

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1842, p. 428.

It was not to be expected that the owners of broad acres would be willing to see them lie waste; and thus, as in all other sugar colonies, except those densely populated like Barbadoes, a cry for emigration was raised. In Jamaica, no less than £150,000 was voted for the purpose. It seems almost incredible, but it is nevertheless true that attention was turned in the first instance to Europe as the source of supply. Some years before, emigration of this description had been attempted. A Mr. Myers had brought hundreds of Germans to the colony, and thousands of pounds had been spent, and many lives sacrificed, to say nothing of a succession of miseries truly heartrending. Considerable sums had also been paid by way of bonus to planters and others who had brought out labourers for their own properties. But now more treasure must be wasted, and lives sacrificed, before the legislature and the planters who elected them would learn that, except in a very few cases, the European constitution cannot endure hard outdoor labour on the plains of Jamaica. Yet just before this last scheme was decided on, certain Scotch settlers at Altamont, brought out in 1837, had been telling their simple but suggestive story to the assembly.<sup>1</sup>

The interposition of Lord John Russell prevented any emigrants being brought to the colony under indentures to serve for any longer period than twelve months. Of course the contract could be renewed, and no doubt would be if the labourer was kindly treated.<sup>2</sup> Late in 1840, seventy-one emigrants arrived from America, and in January, 1841, three hundred and twenty-two came from Stranraer, in Scotland. A month later, one hundred and twenty-seven arrived from Limerick, but they were brought away with difficulty, for O'Connell denounced the emigration scheme with all his vigour, declaring it to be nothing else but a system of white slavery—a new wrong inflicted upon suffering Ireland by the Saxon race. The ship, while in the Irish port, was guarded night and day by the police: only one-third of the number she was intended to carry sailed in her, and no steam-stug would venture to tow her out of harbour.<sup>3</sup> Towards the end of the year six hundred

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1839, pp. 215, 216.

<sup>2</sup> Despatch, printed in "Votes" of 1840, pp. 59–61.

<sup>3</sup> "Votes," 1841, appendix, pp. 67–76.

other emigrants sailed from Aberdeen and London in addition to some two hundred and seventy Africans, including many descendants of the expatriated Maroons from Sierra Leone. A list of the names of all these emigrants has been preserved,<sup>1</sup> but comparatively few of them survived: exposure and intemperate habits swept away large numbers.

Out of sixty-three brought by one ship from London, twenty-seven were sent back at once, in consequence of the loud complaints they made of the deception which had been practised upon them. Those who were induced to come by the Jamaican emigration agents appear to have had no reasonable cause for complaint on this score; but an association called the "West Indian Emigration Society" had sprung into existence in England, and made a traffic of the business.<sup>2</sup>

Those who were landed at Kingston, and located for a time at Admirals Penn, near the city, were far less healthy than those removed at once to the mountains. But, as Mr. Barclay pointed out, the emigrants most likely to serve the required purpose would be found on the coast of Africa. Yet how to encourage free emigration from the coast of Africa, and yet not foster the slave-trade, is a problem English statesmen have not yet been able to solve. Hopes were at this time held out that captured Africans from slave ships would be sent to the colony, and an official estimate of the cost of erecting buildings at Lime Cay, opposite Kingston, to receive them on first landing, was laid before the assembly.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to the larger bodies of emigrants above alluded to, some three hundred others were brought from Great Britain by individual residents; but though these were imported simply to further their employers' interests, their passage-money was paid from the Jamaica exchequer. For example, a clergyman brought out two young girls as domestic servants in his family, and received £20 as the cost of their passage! This was no exceptional case. The principle of this emigration scheme was that of importing labourers and servants for the few at the cost of the entire family. It was argued that the whole colony profited by the experiment.

During this and the succeeding government the planters were not so indifferent as many supposed to the improvement of their estates and the introduction of machinery. A Mr. Lockhart received a liberal reward for improvements he introduced, while suggestions of a practical character from other quarters were acted upon. Agricultural societies were formed in several parishes, and encouraged by the governor and other leading inhabitants. Premiums were also offered by the assembly for the cultivation of indigo, cocoa, divi-divi, silk, cotton, and tea. £300 was the sum to be given for the production of 500 lbs. of the latter, in the colony.

<sup>1</sup> An attempt to grow cotton in the neighbourhood of Kingston seemed for a time to afford much promise of success. Ten thousand pounds weight was in one year obtained by Mr. Gourgues from ten acres: twenty-eight thousand shrubs were planted.<sup>2</sup> The experiment ultimately failed.

Silk for a time seemed to afford greater promise of success. A company was formed, and commenced operations in St. Anns, upon a property to which the name of Metcalfe was given. One hundred and thirty acres were planted with mulberry trees, which flourished luxuriantly. For several successive generations worms were produced in a cocoonery, erected at great expense. Other buildings and the necessary machinery were erected, and it was hoped that many hundred persons unfit for estate labour would here find suitable employment. When a few samples of silk had been produced, £20,000 had been expended. Application was then made to the assembly for a loan of £3000 to carry on the works. This was granted,<sup>3</sup> but the experiment ultimately failed.

Attention was once more given to the copper mines scattered about the colony, but with no remunerative success. An abortive attempt was also made to produce tobacco on a large scale. The miserable state of the main and parochial roads was a great drawback to any great development of the undoubted resources of the colony. Metcalfe thought, not without justice, that the sums voted for these purposes might be far more usefully spent than they had been.

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1841, pp. 1–28.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1841, pp. 30–109.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1841, pp. 143–146.

Without the colony, an undertaking was commenced which contributed greatly to its prosperity. The old line of packet brigs was displaced by the splendid steamers of the Royal Mail Company. This not only effected desirable improvements in the postal service, but was a great accommodation to travellers, and also tended to elevate the general tone of society, by the freer communication thus established with England and other European colonies. No good is unmixed with some evil, and in one respect the trade of Kingston suffered loss by the change. It was now easy for the Spanish American merchants to visit European markets and make their purchases. Formerly Kingston had been a great emporium for trade with the republics around the Gulf of Mexico, and even across the Isthmus of Panama.

The streets in the lower part of the city had once been frequented by these foreign visitors going from store to store, followed by servants bearing treasure on their heads; but many valuable stores at the west-end of Harbour Street and Port Royal Street were speedily deserted, in consequence of the decay of this lucrative branch of colonial trade, and grass grew in what had once been the most thriving portion of the city. The improved condition of the working classes afforded some compensation in the increasing internal trade of the island, and the demand for retail establishments, which have continued to increase in importance and number.

In 1841, the value of British manufactured goods reexported from the island was only £220,030, as compared with £392,694 in the former year. Under the old slave system, banking business had been transacted through the medium of large mercantile houses, but the growth of joint-stock banks in England led to the formation of the Colonial Bank in 1837. The success of the Jamaica branch led to the establishment of two local institutions—the Jamaica Bank and the Planters' Bank. In 1839 it was thought desirable by the legislature to pass some laws restricting banking operations in the colony. This action was prompted by a communication from the Colonial Bank, showing that in June, 1838, the Jamaica Bank, with a capital of only £56,000 currency,

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1840, pp. 17–354.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1841, pp. 70, 71; *Ibid.*, 1842, pp. 55–275.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1841, pp. 48–142, 166, 287, 289, 293, 411.

had notes in circulation to the amount of £269,000, besides other liabilities. By April, in the following year, these notes amounted to £318,000. To add to the peril, it was found that though at first the notes issued bore the signatures of several persons of considerable wealth, the late issues were simply signed by the manager and cashier, although the bank had no charter of incorporation. Moreover, these notes were not redeemable in specie, but might be paid by island cheques—one kind of paper, in other words, being substituted for another.

Though this subject first engaged attention when Sir Lionel Smith was in the island, the changes recommended could not be carried out for some time. A committee of the council, with Sir Lionel at its head, strongly urged the importance of all notes, whether issued by banks or by the island treasury, being redeemable in silver. This desirable change was gradually effected. A part of the treasury notes were exchanged for certificates, bearing interest, and thus some paper money of questionable character was withdrawn from circulation. Other banking operations were so arranged as to afford the security which before had been wanting, and a considerable quantity of silver money was imported, to supply a long felt want. The absence of such coinage is the only excuse that can be offered for such a disproportionate supply of paper money. So great had been the scarcity of silver, that 6 to 6½ per cent. premium was commonly paid by the planters for it, when required for the payment of wages.<sup>1</sup> The improved system of keeping accounts in sterling money, as in England, instead of in currency of twelve shillings sterling to the pound, was at this time introduced.

Serious and well-substantiated complaints were made, about the same time, of the manner in which the corporation of Kingston discharged its functions. There were those who urged, not without reason, that the Act of 1801 should be repealed, and the management of affairs be entrusted to the magistrates and elected vestrymen, as in other parishes.<sup>2</sup> This proposal was not adopted, but the aldermen and common councillors were deprived of the magisterial powers they had hitherto exercised by virtue of their office, and which in future were confined to the custos and justices of the peace appointed by the governor.<sup>3</sup>

This step was the more necessary, in consequence of the ill-judged efforts taken by the mayor and other city officials to put down some party manifestations.



Another law materially assisting the social development of the people was passed during Metcalfe's administration. For many years missionaries had celebrated marriages, but they had no legal sanction. It was now provided that all such unions should be recognised as legal, on condition that they were recorded in the office of the island secretary by a given time. The first law was subsequently modified, as the fees demanded were too high; and with regard to all future marriages, it was decreed that dissenting ministers should be their own registrars; just as clergymen on the establishment were; no other condition being demanded as to time, way, or place of celebration, beyond the due publication of banns in the chapel where the parties usually attended, the repetition of certain unobjectionable and necessary declarations on the part of the couple who desired marriage, and the registration of the duplicate marriage certificate in the secretary's office within six months of the celebration. Within four years of the passing of this law, three thousand marriages were celebrated by the Baptist missionaries, and very considerable numbers by ministers of other denominations.

In 1842, Sir Charles Metcalfe left the colony. With very few exceptions, he had succeeded in gaining the favourable opinion of all classes of the community. His removal was felt to be a public loss. That he gave his assent to some measures of a very questionable character cannot be denied; but his position was one of great difficulty, and a less conciliatory course of policy in relation to the planting interest might have resulted in plunging the colony into greater difficulties. To all classes of the religious community he displayed the greatest liberality, and his purse was ever open to relieve the sufferings of the poor.

His relations with the Baptist body were not so cordial as with others, partly owing to the unguarded publication of a letter he addressed to the colonial office, a few weeks after his arrival, in which he reprobated the course pursued by certain ministers of that denomination in reference to the labour question. Mr. Kaye, who wrote the life of Metcalfe, and Mr. Hinton, the biographer of Knibb, have both entered fully into this question, and with their

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1839, PP. 224-226.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1840, p. 393.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1841, p. 416.

record of the controversy it may suitably rest. Mr. Knibb possessed immense influence over the peasantry, and did not hesitate to proclaim the fact. It is not therefore to be wondered at that Sir Charles should deal with him, and to some extent the denomination to which he belonged, more in relation to their political than their religious standing. Mr. Knibb's biographer points out the error into which that energetic man had fallen, and attempts to explain it.<sup>1</sup> Sir Charles regretted the alienation as much as any one, for he was no stranger to the great work the denomination had accomplished in India, and was anxious to co-operate as heartily with them in Jamaica as he had done in Serampore.<sup>2</sup>

The gratitude of the community for his services was expressed in the perpetuation of his name in the new parish of Metcalfe, and in the vote of three thousand guineas to erect a statue, lately removed from Spanish Town to the Central Park, in Kingston.

Sir Charles, during his residence in Jamaica, not only exercised unbounded hospitality, but most generously aided the ministers and missionaries in their undertakings. In reply to an address presented to him at the time of his departure, by the ministers of the London Missionary Society, he thus expressed his sentiments: "In the trifling contributions which it has been in my power to make to the religious and charitable institutions of the island, it has always been a source of serious regret to me that they have been so utterly inadequate to the important purposes which they have been designed to promote, and that the habits of the world consume the greater portion of every man's means in expenditure of far inferior utility, on objects comparatively trivial and contemptible. I hold it to be the bounden duty of every one, on whom the bounty of the Almighty has generously bestowed abundance, to give freely and cordially, each according to his means, for the benefit of those in less fortunate circumstances, who tread the thorny paths of life and need assistance. No purpose can be conceived having stronger demands on our best exertions, than that on which the pious ministers of Christianity in this island unceasingly labour—the intellectual, moral, and religious

instruction of the great mass of its inhabitants, who were formerly in the chains of mental as well as bodily bondage.”

The subsequent career of Sir Charles Metcalfe does not belong to these pages. It was watched with deep interest by multitudes in the island, and his death was generally deplored.

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<sup>1</sup> “Life of Knibb,” pp. 411, 412.

<sup>2</sup> “Life of Lord Metcalfe,” vol. ii.

### CHAPTER III

## FROM THE RETIREMENT OF SIR CHARLES METCALFE TO THAT OF SIR CHARLES GREY

Major-General Sir William Gomm acted as lieutenantgovernor until May, 1842, when the Earl of Elgin arrived. His predecessor had happily succeeded in healing the dissensions which had troubled the colony, and in restoring as near an approach to harmony between different classes as was possible in so short an interval from the days of slavery, especially in a community where caste prejudices were so strong. To Lord Elgin belongs the distinguished honour of endeavouring to improve the social condition of the colony, and of developing its varied industrial resources. He anticipated the coming struggle on differential duties. The cry for cheap sugar had now commenced, and though earnest and true-hearted philanthropists had succeeded in obtaining the emancipation of the slaves, they were powerless to prevent the introduction of that policy by which the produce of slave-holding colonies was introduced at length into Great Britain on the same terms as that from her own free possessions. The struggle between the friends of the slave and the advocates of free trade with slave colonies was intense; and though conscientious men were found who were resolved never to use sugar which was the produce of slave labour, they were too few to resist the general demand.

The demand for sugar and coffee was greatly on the increase, while the supply from the free colonies was declining. For the four years (1805 to 1808) before the abolition of the slave trade, the exports from Jamaica had averaged rather more than 141,000 hogsheads of sugar. For the four years before emancipation, the average was 91,000 hogsheads. During the apprenticeship it was 69,000 hogsheads; while from 1839 to 1842, the produce fell to a little less than 42,000 per annum.

Admitting the force of much that has been said of the blind prejudices of planters trained amid the influences of slavery, and of the palpable folly which characterised the conduct of many towards the emancipated peasantry, it must be obvious that in a

country like Jamaica, with hundreds of thousands of acres of land to be purchased for a mere trifle, and with materials on every hand to erect cottages suited to the requirements of uneducated negroes, it was useless to expect that amount of continuous labour on estates which, in slave colonies, could be extorted by the coercion of the whip. That free labour is as cheap as that of slaves, may be conceded, but men will not work for others when they can turn to equal or better advantage a freehold of their own.

The Earl of Elgin saw very clearly that whatever depression affected the sugar market, there was hope for the colony in its capability of producing so many other things besides sugar and rum. To the development of these resources, the improvement of roads, and the introduction of machinery, he directed the attention of the legislature at his first meeting. The planting interest, by which term in Jamaica the large sugar planters is usually meant, had no reason to complain that it was ignored. It was still the most powerful in the assembly, though other classes of the community were more fully represented than formerly; and this power was again exercised to obtain fresh supplies of imported labour at the expense of the general revenues.

Of late years, under the more immediate control of the imperial government, coolie emigration has, in some instances, been made conducive not only to the general prosperity of the sugar colonies, but to those of the coolies; but the first attempt to employ such immigrants under Lord Elgin's government was as miserable a failure as the attempts which have been related in former years. From a return laid before the assembly, it appears that £128,000 had been spent over immigration up to the end of September, 1844. For this, 2685 immigrants had been introduced from Great Britain, 1038 from Germany, and about two thousand Africans from Sierra Leone, St. Helena, and America.<sup>1</sup> A loan of £45,000 was now voted to import coolies.<sup>2</sup> The first lot brought to the island were the sweepings of the streets of Madras; they had no knowledge of agriculture whatever, and little inclination for labour of any kind. Yet in October, 1845, Mr. Darling, the immigration agent, reported that he had applications for eight thousand of them.<sup>3</sup> More, it was declared, would be applied for, if there was any chance of obtaining them.

The legislature of 1843 assembled in October, under somewhat gloomy circumstances. Earthquakes had desolated some of the West Indian islands, and though Jamaica had escaped, its principal

town had been greatly injured by fire. Two hundred and thirty-four houses had been utterly destroyed, and more than one hundred others partially burnt or pulled down, while some had been blown up by the soldiers to stop the progress of the flames. Public buildings, together with the valuable stores and wharves, escaped injury, and the total loss did not exceed £94,000. The poverty and misery occasioned was very great; indeed, many respectable but struggling families never recovered themselves. A vote of £5000 from the assembly, £1000 from that of Barbadoes, and some £5000 or £6000 from private subscriptions, was some assistance to the sufferers; but very few were insured, the unreasonably heavy premiums demanded by insurance companies being a sad hindrance to the general exercise of this provident precaution.<sup>4</sup>

The crops had not been good, owing to drought, and it was admitted by Lord Elgin, in his opening address to the assembly, that capital was not yielding a fair return where invested in agricultural pursuits. The plans for the penitentiary and lunatic asylum were making more progress than anything else to which the governor alluded in his speech. The taxation of the colony was very burdensome, exceeding as it did half a million per annum. Any comparison with the amounts then apparently raised and the present time would be deceptive, from the fact that the parochial vestries had power to raise money by local rates: thus, in 1844, £390,000 was raised by the authority of the assembly, and £118,000 by that of the vestries. The manner in which these taxes were assessed was very oppressive. Hereditaments which were valued at thirteen million sterling were estimated at an annual value of six per cent.; but on this valuation the rate of taxation varied from one to three shillings in the pound in country districts, and was four shillings and sixpence in Kingston. Nearly two-thirds of the parochial income came from this source. The balance was made up from taxes on horses, horned stock, asses, wheels, dogs, &c. In Kingston there was a tax for church and poor, realising from

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1842, pp. 43, 44.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1844.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1845, p. 89.

<sup>4</sup> The rate now demanded for most houses in the town is 50s. per cent. per annum.

£4000 to £5000 per annum. It seems to have been levied more at the pleasure of the corporation than on any fixed equitable principle. The parochial taxes in that city amounted in all to upwards of £20,000 a year, and there was a debt of nearly £25,000. The leading merchants and wealthy men in the city were content quietly to surrender the control of the public moneys and the conservation of the peace to a clique of persons for the most part totally unworthy of the trust reposed in them. The streets, with all this lavish outlay, were so neglected as to be dangerous to the life and limbs of those who walked in them after nightfall; and there was not a public building in the whole city worthy of the name. The wonder is, not that the longsuffering inhabitants now and then petitioned for the abolition of the jobbing corporation, but that their protests were couched in such mild language.

The revenue generally was raised to a far greater extent than now by direct taxation, the total of the import duties being far less than in later years: in 1842 they only amounted to £69,000. During the same year a most objectionable plan was adopted to provide for the repairs of roads and bridges; this was no other than a capitation tax on all inhabitants of the island. Its adoption elicited the strong animadversions of Lord Stanley,<sup>1</sup> and it was soon abandoned.

The importance of railways engaged much attention. One from Kingston to Spanish Town was completed and opened, but other projects of railways around and across the island were not carried out, though in some cases bills were passed giving the necessary powers. The Kingston Water Works proved a successful undertaking, but a number of other projects for the development of the internal resources of the island, though freely ventilated and ably sustained in some quarters, were abandoned in despair when the bill equalising the duties on sugar from slave colonies with those of British free colonies passed the imperial parliament in 1846. Many who till then had been hopeful, now felt that the fate of the colony was sealed.

All that wise patronage and judicious advice could effect to stimulate and encourage the colonists, was done by the governor. Prizes were offered for the best essay on the cultivation of the sugar cane, and for another on industrial schools. Local

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<sup>1</sup> Despatch, printed in "Votes," 1843, p. 47,497.

agricultural societies were supplemented and fostered by the establishment under royal patronage of the Royal Agricultural Society. Intelligent men of all classes were connected with it or its branch associations, and communication was opened up with similar associations in Great Britain, America, and elsewhere. As the result of these efforts, a variety of improvements were introduced in modes of cultivation, machinery, &c.; and new breeds of cattle introduced.<sup>1</sup> Proposals then made by Lord Elgin to establish central sugar factories for several estates were not seriously entertained; yet surely the day will come when each estate will no longer keep up its separate sugar mill and distillery, except in isolated cases. On the plains, with good roads, there seems to be no reason why one central manufactory, provided with the best appliances, should not manufacture the sugar and rum produced on the fields of several estates. Such factories, conducted on equitable principles, ought in many districts to be invaluable to small settlers, who now keep their little, but comparatively costly, sugar mills idle during the greater part of the year, and make very little profit from that which in larger estates is converted into rum.

In consequence of the general spirit of enterprise called forth by the governor's example, Mr. Edward McGeachy, the crown surveyor, produced his valuable pamphlet on irrigation.<sup>2</sup> Plans similar to those he recommended are now engaging the attention of government.

Societies of a social and benevolent character, unknown in the days of slavery, began to spring into existence. A mutual life assurance society was formed, and has continued to prosper. Dispensaries were established, but have not proved so successful. Friendly societies among the working classes were more efficiently supported, and their success seems to prove that men of African origin are not so devoid of the power of co-operating for their mutual benefit as many have asserted.

Under the efficient superintendence of Mr. Daughtrey, the system of prison discipline was greatly improved, and any adaptation of existing buildings being impossible, the foundation

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Stewart's Reports, &c.; "Votes," 1845, P. 383; Reports of Royal Agricultural Society.

<sup>2</sup> Published by De Cordova, Kingston, 1846.



stone of the present penitentiary was laid in February, 1845, by the Earl of Elgin. Several other colonial governors were present at the ceremony, having come to Jamaica to discuss the feasibility of establishing a convict settlement for all the West Indian islands, a project which was, however, ultimately abandoned, as it was surrounded by insuperable difficulties.<sup>1</sup> The penitentiary has gradually become less burdensome to the public through the labours of the prisoners, and is still so to a very creditable extent. The public hospital during this administration was enlarged and improved, but radical reforms greatly needed were deferred for many years later. Attention was also called to the wretched condition and treatment of lunatics, and a spacious and costly building commenced for their reception, though not completed and occupied for nearly twenty years later.

Some of the most able lawyers in the colony were laboriously employed in the consolidation of the laws during this period. Another commission, first appointed in 1843, was also discharging the duty of inquiring into the extent and management of the different charities of the island, and quietly preparing the way for some wholesome reforms. Many painful facts were brought to light relative to the culpable alienation of benevolent bequests from their intended purpose; and other facts equally discreditable, in reference to the mode in which existing charities were managed.

Dickenson's charity was a sad illustration of the first. named form of neglect, and the Vere school of the second. The valuable and comprehensive reports of the commissioners are preserved in the votes of the house of assembly from 1843 to 1847, and supply all the information that can be desired on this subject up to the later date. Some £60,000 was found to the credit of the different charities in the treasury. On this different rates of interest, averaging about eight per cent., were paid. Yet an expenditure of £4600 per annum secured the education, such as it was, of only 1016 children, of whom only thirty-eight were boarded. Over five hundred were at Woolmer's school in Kingston, under the care of Mr. Reid, whose arrival in the year 1800 had so terrified the assembly. In this establishment the cost of education was under thirty shillings a head, and its character seems to have been in advance of any endowed school in the island. When Messrs. Sturge

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1845, pp. 3-9; Prison Reports of same year.

and Harvey, of the Society of Friends, visited the island, they pronounced it to be the best of any school they had seen in the West Indies at that time.

The grants which the imperial government had for some years made for the education of the emancipated peasantry had now ceased. The parochial vestries sustained a few schools, chiefly distinguished as being the most expensive and least efficient of any in the colony. As the colonial office pressed the matter of education upon the attention of the legislature, a return was sought of all schools in the island, and special information was solicited respecting any of an industrial character. As the custodes of the parishes were asked to provide these returns, they were most imperfect, and in the crude form in which they were laid before the assembly could have been of little value. The legislators cared very little about the matter: if any planter interested himself in education, it was in that of an industrial character. Mr. Niven, a Presbyterian minister, saw through the hollowness of this new-born educational zeal, and indiscreetly, though not perhaps untruthfully, said the proposer of the scheme was more fit to be in school himself than in the house of assembly. This was pronounced a breach of privilege, and the offender was ordered into custody.

At the close of 1843 an act was passed, forming an educational board, and £1000 voted for educational purposes. The dole was ridiculous: forty Wesleyan and six Presbyterian schools were aided to the extent of about £5 each on an average. Only one Baptist and one Congregational school applied. The bulk of course went to the Establishment. Next year the grant was increased to £2000. This latter amount is little below the average of all the annual grants for education voted by the assembly from this time until its abolition in 1865.

While the purse strings were being slowly unloosed for education, loud complaints were not unreasonably made in many quarters relative to the lavish expenditure on other matters. Grave reasons were urged against the immigration schemes of the day, and others even more cogent against the heavy grants for ecclesiastical purposes, all the more grievous because the largest proportion of the people attended nonconforming places of worship.

Dark days in colonial history were clearly looming when the Earl of Elgin retired from the colony. His sojourn had been clouded by a painful domestic affliction. The countess, who had endeared

herself to all who had the privilege of personal friendship, died, and was buried in Spanish Town cathedral, where a chaste monument ordered by the house of assembly testifies to her worth. Amid the intricacies of Indian politics the earl subsequently gained renown as governor-general, but Jamaica was destined to become a scene of social disorder and of political and public bankruptcy.

During this administration a census of the island was taken. There is good reason to doubt its correctness, but according to the published returns there were, on the 3rd of June, 1844, 377,433 persons in the island, who were more minutely described in the following table:—

	MALES.	FEMALES,	TOTAL.
Whites	9,289	6,487	15,776
Coloured	31,646	36,883	68,529
Black	140,688	152,530	293,128
		Total...	377,433

On the retirement of Earl Elgin the government devolved on Major-General Berkeley, then in command of the troops. It was soon announced that Sir Charles Grey had been nominated by the colonial office, and in expectation of his arrival, the lieutenant-governor delayed calling the assembly together until some weeks after the usual time. When further delay became impossible, and the legislative bodies met, Berkeley carefully refrained, in his brief opening remarks, from any allusion to the affairs of the colony, confining himself to the mere welcome of the legislative bodies.

But the long dreaded blow had been struck by the imperial parliament. The equalisation of sugar duties was one of the first measures of Lord Russell's ministry, and was carried into effect by the Act passed in August, 1846. The object aimed at was at once to reduce, and ultimately to abolish, all differential duties on foreign sugars as compared with those of British colonial production; in other words, to admit slave-grown sugar into the market on the same conditions as that which was the product of free labour. The question had been fiercely debated, not only in parliament, but at public meetings. West Indian protectionists and determined abolitionists were united in their protest against the project. Some of the latter thought that free labour might compete successfully with that of slaves, but they were few in number, and exposed

themselves to the censure of their former friends by the expression of their sentiments.

Earl Grey, in his "Colonial Policy," has entered fully into the reasons which, in his judgment, rendered the change desirable. Under a system of monopoly the planters invariably complained of their position, and declared that their capital never yielded a fair return. Earl Grey thought that too high a price was paid for labour; he asserted that the more a negro earned the less he worked, and that in consequence, the dearer labour became, the less was the amount of production—precisely the same assertion as in 1873 is made of the Welsh and English colliers. In British Guiana, two shillings and fourpence was paid for a day of six hours; but with wages more proportionate to those paid for agricultural labour in England, this statesman thought that free colonies could compete with those in which slavery still existed.

Parliament, in equalising the sugar duties, provided for other alterations which it was thought would benefit the colonies. The free-trade policy of the day threw open colonial ports to the admission of foreign goods on the same terms as those of British manufacture, and the repeal of the navigation laws led to a considerable reduction in freights. Every possible effort was made to suppress the slave trade, and emigration was greatly encouraged. The policy thus inaugurated was, to some extent, justified by results. The quantity of sugar imported from all the sugar colonies increased from less than two hundred thousand tons, in 1844, to about two hundred and fifty thousand tons in 1851. During the former year, British sugar cost, without duty, 34s. 9d. per cwt., against 23s. 8d. in the latter, while no marked change was noted in the price of that sent from Cuba. Such statistics were quoted for very different purposes by the free trade party and those who advocated protection; but that the policy of the government ultimately led to greater economy in the cost of production, is unquestionable.

When Major-General Berkeley reluctantly met the assembled legislature at the close of 1846, he found that the greatest excitement and indignation prevailed in consequence of these free-trade measures. The assembly declared that the recent policy of the imperial government made it impossible longer to maintain the existing institutions of the colony on their old footing, and thus was sounded the key-note of a struggle as bitter and disastrous as ever marked the financial history of the colony. In reply to this

declaration, the lieutenantgovernor simply expressed his hope that such a conclusion had not been arrived at without a deep conviction of its necessity, and that some means would be devised of maintaining the credit of the colony.

Resolutions were then passed by the assembly, in accordance with the character of their reply to the governor's speech. A petition to the queen was also prepared, in which all the evils which had fallen on Jamaica were attributed to the abolition of the slave trade, which was the first blow to the extending commerce of the island. The recent change in sugar duties was declared to be "a flagrant violation of national faith, consistency, and honour." African emigration, and a measure of continued protection, might have enabled the free colonies to compete with those in which slavery still existed; but now it was declared that the chains of slavery were riveted, and the British character for humanity compromised. The house wound up by demanding compensation from the imperial parliament for the loss entailed upon the colony by its recent legislation.<sup>1</sup>

The next step was to send a message to the lieutenantgovernor, stating that, owing to the sugar duty bill, the house could no longer defray the expense of coolie emigration, and requesting that it might immediately be arrested, even though forfeits should have to be paid to the vessels engaged for the service. This hasty decision occasioned the greatest embarrassment to the immigration department, for 5000 coolies had been ordered, of whom 1850 had arrived early in the year, and about 2000 more were on their way before the wishes of the assembly could be carried into effect.

<sup>2</sup>

The assembly adjourned a week before Christmas. On the 21st of December, three days afterwards, Sir Charles Grey arrived as governor. He was a man of considerable experience. He had been a judge in India, had served in Canada as a commissioner after the rebellion, and more recently had been governor of Barbadoes. His talents were respectable, if not brilliant, and if his administration in Jamaica failed to gain for him distinction, it should be remembered that the condition of the colony was such as to perplex the most astute statesmen of the age.

On the 16th of February, 1847, Sir Charles met the assembly. The courtesies of a first public interview were soon followed by scenes of disorder and personal animosity. A party known as determined advocates of retrenchment was springing into

existence, and though, during this session, they were unable to overcome the opposition of men who were not prepared suddenly to alter all the public institutions of the colony, they gradually secured a majority in the house. The session terminated on the 3rd of April, and Sir Charles Grey, in his closing speech, congratulated the legislators on having made sufficient provision for the public revenue to enable him to dismiss them, though he expressed surprise at the desponding spirit they exhibited. But the struggle which was to involve the island in bankruptcy had commenced. A bill to tax the salaries of all officials, from the chief justice downward, had passed the assembly, but had been rejected by the council. Still, a reduction of a fourth was made in the police expenditure, and parochial salaries, to the extent of about £20,000, were taken to the public account, to relieve the direct taxation so much complained of in the parishes. This measure, though allowed in 1848, was at first vetoed by the colonial office, for reasons which betrayed profound ignorance of the character of a Jamaica vestry board,

In October, 1847, the legislative bodies were again assembled. The course initiated by the advocates of retrenchment had been sustained by public meetings, convened in all parts of the colony; petitions were pouring in, urging the assembly to reduce the public expenditure, and protesting against the recent policy of the English government. Some of the petitioners thought that African emigration should be asked for, at the cost of the English nation, while others urged the repudiation of the debt of £200,000, owing to the imperial treasury by the colony. Sir Charles opened the proceedings of the session in a speech of unusual length. He suggested that, while honourable members deplored the changes in imperial policy, it would be wise to limit their demands to what they might reasonably expect to obtain, and not waste time in vain references to the days of protection, gone beyond recall.

Yet they had claims on the imperial government, and though he had no instructions to promise relief, he thought they might justly ask for a reduction of duty on their sugar, especially as English finances were improving. The facts by which he supported this opinion may be of interest to some at the present time. In August,

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1846. pp. 22-27.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1846, p. 181.

1844, Muscovado sugar averaged 32s. 4½d. per hundredweight apart from duty: foreign sugars were virtually prohibited. In March, 1845, the duty on sugar from British colonies was reduced from 24s. to 14s. a hundredweight, and that from foreign colonies, *where slavery did not exist*, was fixed at 23s. 4d., instead of the former prohibitory rate. In August, 1846, foreign sugars, whether slave or freegrown, were admitted at the same rate, namely, 21s. a hundredweight; but this was to be gradually reduced, until, in 1851, they would reach the same rate of duty as was imposed on the free-grown produce of English colonies.

The result of this legislation had been a considerable fall in the value of sugar. In August, 1844, under protective duty, British colonial sugar was quoted at 56s. 4½d., of which 24s. was duty, leaving 32s. 4½d. to the merchant. In August, 1846, the price was 39s. 5½d. of which 14s. was paid to the revenue, leaving 25s. 5½d. only as the price for production, &c.: or, in other words, the selling price was 16s. 11d. less, though the duty was only reduced 10s. The idea entertained by Sir Charles Grey, that these facts justified a claim for a further reduction of duty in favour of English colonial produce, would have been feasible if finance was the only consideration involved. But the demand for sugar was increasing daily, and not only refiners, but those who consumed it in its raw state, wanted it at the cheapest possible rate. A reduction of the duty on British produce would not have been acceptable in England if its only design had been to protect West Indian free colonies: equalisation of duties, so as to secure the article as cheap as possible, was what was required.

A few honest, consistent men would not admit into their dwellings any sugar which was the product of slave labour; but multitudes would shout themselves hoarse in applauding an orator who denounced the evils of slavery, and yet would not give three farthings a pound more for their sugar, that a differential duty of seven shillings a hundredweight might be imposed on the slavegrown article.

The effort to retain protection was defeated by parliament in 1848. If it was wrong to admit slave-grown sugar it was equally wrong to admit slave-grown cotton; but had the latter been prohibited, what would have become of the industries of Lancashire? Happily, the result has proved that, under similar conditions of climate and soil, free labour can compete with that

of slaves; but it would be idle to claim prescience of this fact for any but a very few at this period of political controversy.

Sir Charles, in his address to the legislature, strongly recommended that permanency should be given to some of the annual votes, especially such as related to the administration of justice and the preservation of order. There was, however, a greater evil than this. Any member could propose a grant of public money, and during the whole period when the assembly was not sitting, its members were constituted into a body called the commissioners of public accounts, and as such exercised free control over the revenue. Even after the dissolution of the assembly this body retained power until new members had been returned. Perhaps the recommendations made by Sir Charles Grey of a really sterling character would have received more attention if they had not been coupled with so many that were purely visionary in the existing state of the colony. He saw clearly the anomalies connected with what was known as the tax on hereditaments which was really an impost on progress; but his proposed substitute of a tax of two shillings an acre was a perfect absurdity. Equally impracticable was his proposal that government should borrow money at 5 per cent. and lend to planters at 7 per cent.

The assembly, by reply, and in a series of resolutions, declared its inability to consider any measure involving the expenditure of public money, and would only pledge itself to provide for the existing expenditure of the colony for a single year, and that only in the hope that relief by reduction of duties on colonial produce would be granted, and the island saved from destruction. The assembly did not fulfil its promise, there was a deficiency of £15,000 on the face of the printed estimates, and it was evident that the actual revenue would be far less than was estimated.

Considerable time was occupied by a committee of the whole house in inquiring into the distressed state of agriculture, and the extent to which cultivation had been abandoned since the passing of the Emancipation Act in 1832. This committee arrived at the conclusion that sugar could not be produced for less than 27s. a hundredweight, and that therefore competition with slave colonies was hopeless; but no attempt was made to elicit any facts proving that more economical plans could be adopted. Every disaster was put down to emancipation and to negro idleness; nothing to the fact that so many proprietors were absentees, or to old-fashioned modes of management and cultivation. Nor was any allusion made



to the fact, now generally understood, that very many of the old sugar estates were located in spots which could never be successfully cultivated except under a system of protective duties. The committee sorrowfully declared that one hundred and forty sugar estates and four hundred and sixty five coffee plantations had been abandoned since 1832. Much was said about the withdrawal of labourers from the estates and their settlement elsewhere, but this was the result of the want of conciliation already recorded. The planters were in too many instances reaping the fruits of their ill-judged policy during the first year or two of freedom. The report concluded with the declaration that the only alternatives were, "protection or destruction."

Happily, experience has shown the fallacy of this assertion. The sugar planters of the present day, after nearly twenty years of equalized duty, are far more prosperous than the men who, leaning on protection, thought of no other remedy for the evils of their position; and who, in the petition to the Queen which followed their investigations, asked for a continuance of distinctive duties, emigration from Africa on a large scale at the cost of the imperial treasury, and the remission of the debt of £180,000 due by the colony.<sup>1</sup>

The death of the receiver-general at this time prepared the way for some improvement in the system of keeping public accounts. Mr. Barclay was appointed, at a salary of about one-third that of his predecessor, and soon after a system of audit was introduced, a step which had been only too long delayed. The excitement occasioned by the discovery of deficiencies to a great amount in this department was intensified by the difficulties into which the Planters' Bank was plunged. One of its local agents had absconded, and bills to a large amount were returned from England. A loan of £40,000 from the assembly was asked for, but refused: had it been carried, the governor, as he informed Earl Grey, would have refused his assent. The bank soon after wound up its affairs, which were far from hopeless. Its assets, as stated in evidence, were £193,000; its liabilities, not including £93,000 due to shareholders, were only £78,000, of which £43,000 was for notes in circulation.

An autumnal session had become necessary in consequence of the embarrassed state of the colony. Public meetings in several parishes urged this step upon the governor, for the commissioners of public accounts had refused to exercise the right they had

hitherto claimed of issuing treasury certificates, to make the ways and means tally with the expenditure. A scramble of public creditors at the treasury seemed probable, to see who could first secure payment, or else the treasurer would be compelled to select from the rival claimants which should be paid. It will be understood that at this time certain revenues were not applied to specific purposes, as at present.

The time was not favourable for those theories for establishing a better state of affairs of which Sir Charles Grey was so fond. He saw that something in the form of responsible government was desirable, but his proposal of six specific subjects for consideration was listened to with indifference, if not contempt. They embraced the better control of public accounts; the funding of the island debt; the establishment of an agricultural bank; the abolition of the tax on hereditaments; the formation of reservoirs for purposes of irrigation; and sundry improvements in the practice of courts of justice. In answer to all this, the assembly declared its "utter inability to enter upon improvement of any kind."<sup>1</sup>

Controversy upon another point raised by the governor was very bitter. He had referred to rumours of an effort being in contemplation to restore slavery. That some such plan was not unlikely to be attempted was believed by many negroes, and considerable excitement was occasioned. The very injudicious remarks of some leading men were misrepresented or exaggerated; and an idea generally prevailed that the Americans might be induced to take possession of the island, and reduce the peasantry once more to bondage.

Persons who had helped to create the alarm, were among the first to urge the governor to take strong measures in every case of local riot. In June and July there were many rumours of insurrection, and large bodies of police were despatched to two districts where acts of violence were apprehended. The governor soon after issued a proclamation, assuring the people that there was no danger of any attempt being made to reduce them again to slavery.<sup>2</sup>

The members of assembly, alluding to the passage in the governor's opening address, declared that in their belief the idea of restoring slavery had never entered into the mind of any man in

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1847, pp. 361–363, 421–424.

Jamaica ; and sent an address, asking for the grounds upon which he had ventured to make the statement he had done, and of the reason of a circular he had sent on the subject to the custodes of the several parishes. He declined to furnish the voluminous correspondence he had received, but pointed out that it was frequently and publicly asserted, that while two centuries had been required in England to relax the bonds of villeinage, all the intermediate conditions had been passed by in Jamaica; and that plans had been discussed by which severe vagrant laws should be made, to restrict change of residence and make labour attainable on easier terms, and also to secure a large amount of African emigration under indentures which could not be cancelled. The governor could not well say more, but he assuredly knew right well that in some quarters the United States had been spoken of as affording hope for the revival of the same system as then prevailed in its southern states. He reminded the house that the liberty of speech, which was their privilege, might be so freely indulged as to have a most injurious effect on an uneducated people. That very day he had seen it necessary to send a military force to a disturbed district.

This was the 25th of August. On the preceding day the house had declared its inability to raise the customary amount of supplies for 1849. Though the assembly remained in session for seven weeks longer, it did nothing but call for returns, send messages to the governor, and wrangle. At length, a fall from his horse prevented Sir Charles from coming down from his mountain residence; and the house, taking advantage of the circumstance, asked for an adjournment to October, which was granted.

Sir Charles Grey, in a despatch written about this time to the colonial office, stated that the assembly would have transacted the necessary business, but for the advice of influential persons in England, who urged them to withhold the supplies, as a means of embarrassing the government at home in relation to the question of protection. In this opinion he was sustained by that of the governor of British Guiana, who spoke of the policy of stopping supplies in that colony, so similar to what was done in Jamaica, as

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1848, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Grey's "Colonial Policy," vol. i. pp. 179-181.

generally understood to be instigated by the West Indian party in England.

By thus throwing the colonies into confusion, it was hoped that the free trade cabinet of the day would apply to parliament for means to carry on the government in Jamaica and Guiana, irrespective of their legislatures.<sup>1</sup> In the existing state of parties such an application would have been as unfortunate as that made by Lord Melbourne's cabinet in 1839, and thus protection for a period might have been restored. A very significant proceeding on the part of the assembly showed how intimate its relationship was to the opponents of free trade. In December, 1848, a resolution was passed deploring the death of Lord Bentinck, the great protectionist leader: for such an act there was no precedent. His father, the Duke of Portland, acknowledged the resolution of the house.<sup>2</sup>

The October session of 1848 was opened as usual by a long address, in which this alleged co-operation with protectionist leaders was referred to. Sir Charles freely spoke of the advice given to colonial legislatures to use extraordinary powers of opposition, so as to secure concessions in the matter of differential duties. He urged them to establish some system of mutual credit, and pointed out, that while measures of judicious and economical reform would be supported by the colonial office, those destructive of existing interests would be opposed.

The imperial government, in sympathy with the colonies now exposed to competition with slaveholders, had sought to afford some relief by a loan of half a million, of which £ 100,000 were appropriated to Jamaica. This was felt by many leading statesmen to be unequal to the exigencies of the colonies; and a motion, to the effect that the remedial measures proposed by the government were inadequate, was only rejected in a full house by a majority of fifteen, 245 voting for it. This greatly strengthened the hands of the protectionist party, and encouraged the local legislatures of Jamaica and Guiana in the contest on which they had entered. The purposes to which this loan might be appropriated were defined to be—the introduction of free labourers, the formation of roads, railways, works for irrigation, or public undertakings of a similar character. The mode of appropriation in Jamaica was the subject of

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<sup>1</sup> Grey's "Colonial Policy," vol. i. pp. 147–181.

<sup>2</sup> "Votes," 1848, p. 176.

much angry controversy: a suggestion of the governor's was voted a breach of privilege, and ultimately the house refused to accept the loan.<sup>1</sup>

This session, like the former one, transacted little business of any importance. In the middle of December a resolution was passed, intended as a menace to the council, declining to raise any revenue after the 15th of the following February, unless a measure of retrenchment was passed into law; and a week after the assembly adjourned, without the governor's consent, until the 23rd of January. The day after Christmas he called it together, and pointed out that in five days the annual bills would expire, and the greatest confusion result. The defence offered was, the governor had departed from the old custom of assenting to bills from time to time as they were passed by the legislature—a charge easily replied to by the fact that this had only been done when the bills were contingent on some other, by which alone the necessary revenue could be provided. Such bills would have been perfectly useless in many cases, if the revenue ceased, as had been intimated, in some six weeks. However, a few bills were passed during that and the following day, and once more the house adjourned, leave being asked of the governor until the day previously named.

Waste paper is cheap, and at the price of this article many goodly-sized volumes of the votes of the house of assembly for these and succeeding years may be purchased. If there are those who feel disposed to study carefully the doings of the Jamaica legislators from 1849 and onwards, the materials are ample; but most assuredly the number of readers is exceedingly limited who would care for any but the most condensed account of the last sixteen years of the existence of the house of assembly. That it still numbered many noble-hearted men is unquestionable, some, indeed, white and coloured, who would have done no discredit to the parliament of Great Britain; but its general character was fast changing, and those who saw more clearly what was required at the hands of the rulers of Jamaica, were too few to preserve the general character of the house, and keep the colony from anarchy and distrust.

Jealousy of the council chamber, leading to bitter strife, was no unfrequent incident in Jamaica history, but now it appeared in a still more virulent form. Mr. Whitelock had accused that body, in

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1848, pp. 183, 184; Earl Grey's "Colonial Policy."

a letter, of most dishonourable conduct, and when the assembly, of which he was a member, was appealed to for redress, it was refused.<sup>1</sup> The contest on the retrenchment scheme was intensified by the ill-feeling which existed, for the council had declared the determination to raise no revenue after the 15th of February to be an attempt to deprive it of the right of free deliberation, and therefore dangerous and unconstitutional. The retrenchment bill, the passing of which was the condition of a continued revenue, was remarkable from the fact that it swept away almost every institution by which it was likely that the people at large would be pecuniarily benefited. It was proposed to terminate all allowances for dispensaries and health officers; grants to improve the hospital and lunatic asylum were also withheld. That for expenses of commissioners of charity shared the same fate. The dole for education was reduced to £1000, or about a halfpenny a head for each inhabitant of the island; and though the assembly proposed to reduce the salaries of its speaker and clerk from £960 to £500 per annum, this clause was not in the copy sent to the council. A general reduction of salaries was proposed; on those ranging from £100 to £300 per annum, 10 per cent., gradually increasing on the higher rates, and reaching, on those over £1000 a year, 25 per cent.; from the two or three stipends over £2000, one-third was to be deducted.

That the colony was paying too much for certain services is unquestionable. The expensive judicial system introduced after freedom was generally complained of, yet a very large proportion of the persons who had accepted these or other appointments had done so on a reasonable understanding that they would be regarded as permanent. Some, indeed, pleaded too strongly for what were called vested rights, while others more temperately maintained that no proof had been adduced to show the necessity of reduction; for the taxes, it was said, were most imperfectly collected, and public money shamefully squandered. The average expenditure on roads, by the assembly and parochial vestries, exceeded £34,000 per annum, and yet their general condition was bad in the extreme.

Prorogations of the assembly, though necessary, led to no practical results; nor did a timely warning of the governor that he

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1849, pp. 40-57.

had no resources with which to carry on the government, if ordinary supplies were refused, avert the threatened evil. The assembly was determined upon forcing its retrenchment scheme on the council, and as that body resisted, passed a resolution declaring that: "A legislative body depending on the crown, irresponsible to the people, and composed of judges of the land and salaried officers, is opposed to the principle of the British constitution." Its reform was asked for in a petition to the queen and to parliament. The latter took no action in the matter, but from the colonial office, on behalf of the sovereign, it was replied that on the occasions to which the assembly had referred, the council had been actuated by a regard for the public welfare.<sup>1</sup>

The assembly went beyond its resolution, and passed some bills providing a revenue to the 1st of October, but so marred by clauses designed to stop the payment of salaries to which objection was made, that the council could not pass any but the import duty bill. No provision was made for receiving immigrants, though numbers were on their way at the cost of the English government. The parochial assessments were unprovided for, and prisons were left without means of support. With the colony in utter confusion, the house was prorogued on the 3rd of March. On the 26th of June it was again convened. In the meantime Sir Charles Grey had been strengthened by a despatch from Earl Grey, dealing with all the points at issue,<sup>2</sup> which was laid before the assembly.

This fully sustained the governor in the action he had taken, and commended the tone and temper of his communications with the legislature. Apart from the fact that the salaries of the governor, the judges, clergy, and others had been secured by acts not then expired, it was shown that the retrenchment proposed would not equalize the income and expenditure of the colony; and that a persistent refusal on the part of the assembly to provide the needful revenue could only result in disaster, as no authority was vested in any other quarter to levy taxes or control the expenditure. The desire which had been expressed in some quarters for responsible government now came under review, and

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1849, Despatch of Earl Grey.

<sup>2</sup> Grey's "Colonial Policy," Appendix C; "Votes" of June session, 1849, pp. 19-25

Earl Grey sketched out a plan similar to that of Canada, and which, with some modifications, was introduced a few years later.

The assembly could not receive the dispatch of the earl without attempting to justify its recent proceedings. Nine members attempted to introduce an acknowledgment that the change of government suggested would be acceptable, but nineteen voted against them. Other efforts to tone down the angry and exaggerated character of the reply proved equally ineffectual, and it was moreover resolved that the house would abstain from all further exercise of its legislative functions until the people had expressed their opinion on the course hitherto pursued by their representatives; the people meaning about two thousand persons, spread over twenty-three constituencies who had the privilege of voting. A dissolution immediately followed, the voters being reminded by Sir Charles, in his speech that the best proof they could give of their loyalty would be to elect as their representatives "men of temperate and considerate minds, not likely to lead them into trouble." With few exceptions, they returned the very men who had brought them into trouble, for there were few new members in the next assembly.

In the meantime anxiety and distress prevailed on every hand; public officials and other creditors could only obtain money by selling their claims at a considerable discount. The island cheques issued from the treasury, and commonly known as "red cheques," were at a discount of from thirty to forty per cent.

The new assembly did not at its earlier meetings afford much indication of its willingness to bring this unsatisfactory state of things to a close, but it soon became evident that the colonists generally were weary of the contest, and saw nothing but disaster as likely to result from its continuance; while in England the success of the free trade policy had destroyed the hopes of the protectionist party, on whom the planters had so largely depended. Not indeed without great controversy and fresh struggles with the council, the assembly at length passed the necessary bills to support the credit of the island and provide for the loss of revenue occasioned by the former dissensions. An intimation from the governor, that a conference between the assembly and council might lead to an arrangement for reducing the expenditure on equitable principles, failed to effect the desired object, and thus this question was left to be revived after a little time with undiminished acrimony.



The next session opened more harmoniously. Sir Charles once more hopefully unfolded plans for the advancement of the island. Dame schools and industrial schools were spoken of, as well as a possible university. Convict labour was to be turned to good account, and an Encumbered Estates Act hinted at. The reply was so favourable that the governor said he could not wish to change a single word.

Perhaps it was the dark shadow then looming over the land that had so calmed the minds of men. Political questions were almost forgotten in the presence of the dread mysterious visitor who now took possession of the country. The governor had alluded to the appearance of Asiatic cholera at Port Royal, and the possibility of its spreading. The year had not terminated before almost every parish had suffered severely from its ravages. It will probably be below the actual fact, if the mortality is estimated at thirty-two thousand persons, or about one in thirteen of the population at that time. Every attempt to arrest its progress by isolation and stopping communication with infected districts was in vain. The terrible malady exhibited all those peculiarities as to progress so well known in the east.

The towns and villages were alike destitute of all proper sanitary regulations, while such precautions as could be taken were too late to be of much service. Kingston, the largest town, was in a most unsatisfactory state; filthy hovels, utterly unfit for the habitation of human beings, without any means of ventilation, were crowded by large families. There was no drainage; hogs roamed at large in the streets and lanes, rooting up the pathways and roads, and seeking for garbage among the heaps of manure cast into the ruts made by the rains. It will hardly excite surprise that out of about thirty thousand inhabitants 3675 fell victims. The military prisoners were removed from the penitentiary the day after the disease appeared, but out of 506 others who were left, 128 died. In the little town of Port Maria more than one half of the people perished: one eighteenth of the population died in a single day.

Some parishes suffered far more than others. St. Thomas, St. Catherine's, and St. Andrews, on the south side of the island, suffered a loss of seven thousand. In St. James and Trelawny, on the north side, nearly five thousand fell victims. The mortality was greatest near rivers and morasses, while in Manchester, where the inhabitants were dependent on ponds for water, only twenty persons died.

A central, and several local boards of health were formed. Medical men, though comparatively few in number, distinguished themselves as members of that noble profession almost invariably do in times of real danger; while in most parts of the island persons were found ready to act under their instructions, and minister to the suffering around, in many cases with satisfactory results. In Kingston and other towns gentlemen volunteered their services, and went from house to house, giving advice, watching for the first indications of disease, and helping the wretched sufferers. The spectacles they were in some instances compelled to witness were frequently of the most awful character: the misery they prevented or alleviated will only be known when the good deeds of true Samaritans shall be proclaimed.

The peasantry, where under Christian influence, displayed a readiness to assist their suffering friends worthy of all commendation, and if there were deeds which dishonour the name of man, they were comparatively exceptional. Clergymen and missionaries were foremost in setting an example to their flocks; yet thousands died without assistance, so rapid was the spread of the malady. The British government sent out Dr. Milroy to Jamaica, who subsequently published a valuable report, containing many suggestions for the future sanitary government of the island, which were for the most part unheeded when the danger had passed.<sup>1</sup> The assembly voted the necessary funds for medical and other expenses, and not only in the colony, but in England and Barbadoes, contributions were raised for the relief of the families of sufferers.

When the disease abated, and the assembly proceeded with the public business, little satisfactory progress was made. Several of the bills which were passed were subsequently disallowed. The police bill was lost, and one passed in its stead, enabling each parish to appoint its own constabulary and frame regulations for its government. Other measures having reference to a new loan, and another to promote emigration, were so unsatisfactory, that though the session had been prolonged from October to the end of May, the governor only prorogued the house for a fortnight in the first instance. He intimated that he indulged the hope that he

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<sup>1</sup> Grey's "Colonial Policy," pp. 191-195; Appendix, p. 367 ; "Votes," 1851, pp. 281-295.

should be given to understand that the members wished to be called together again, that they might reconsider some of these measures ; and with the view of aiding them in so doing, he pointed out changes and amendments he thought desirable.

When the house once more assembled in October, its first thoughts were occupied by the consideration of this well-meant but unfortunate prorogation speech. The governor anticipated the coming storm by remarking that in England the views of the government were made known to parliament, and he was anxious to prevent the inconvenience of measures being passed to which it was impossible for the executive to consent. The assembly, however, asserted its rights and privileges in twelve resolutions.

Some time before Mr. William Smith, a man of considerable energy and forethought, had suggested the establishment of a system of responsible government. The scheme had met with the approval of Earl Grey. A bill was now introduced to give effect to the proposition, and at the same time to limit the power of imposing taxes. The colony was not then prepared for the change. Petitions against it were sent up from several parishes, and the bill was rejected by a majority of eighteen in a house of thirty members.

Resolutions were passed declaring the colony to be on the verge of ruin, and an address to the queen adopted, in which the evils of competition with slave colonies were pointed out. With singular inconsistency the assembly passed a bill for promoting emigration, providing for the expense by imposing a tax on exports, though they had declared that these were in danger of ceasing altogether. These emigration schemes were all most unfortunate. Two thousand one hundred and twelve coolies had been imported in the years 1845 and 1846, but in 1847 two thousand four hundred and forty-four were introduced. The mortality among them were very considerable. The agent-general for immigration stated, in 1851, that only about fifteen hundred of those imported in 1847 were alive, while those who lived were ill-fitted for the labour of sugar estates.

Attention was given to a plan for introducing free coloured people from Canada and the United States. £100 was voted to meet the expense of preliminary inquiries. Mr. W.Wemys Anderson was requested to undertake a mission to these people, and ascertain their views on the subject. He was greatly assisted in Canada by Mr. John Scoble, formerly secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society, and

met many coloured people at Toronto and elsewhere. Jamaica, however, presented few attractions to them: the wages offered were too low, and the idea of being indentured was not approved of. Mr. Anderson did all in his power to meet their objections, but if the free people of Canada emigrated at all, it was clear it must be on other conditions than those proposed.<sup>1</sup>

The house during this, as in the former session, passed a bill to borrow money to the amount of £450,000, to meet the growing deficiencies. To this the governor once more refused his assent, for the measure was most imperfect. The financial state of the colony was most deplorable. The deficiency in 1846 exceeded £64,000; in 1847, £44,000; in 1848, £16,000; in 1849, £38,000. The expenses of the cholera had reached about £50,000,<sup>2</sup> and altogether there was a debt of £680,000 in January, 1851, with every prospect of further increase—a mere trifle if the colony had been prosperous, or even in its adversity had been wisely governed; but the assembly was altogether unequal to the crisis, and while it held the purse-strings of the island, the other branches were almost powerless. Public buildings were falling into disrepair, and the roads were becoming in places almost impassable,

The assembly made one attempt to preserve public morality by expelling a member who had received sums of money on account of roads, which he had not expended, and suspended certain others for forty-eight hours for disturbing the dignity of the house by a fracas, in which glasses, books, and inkstands were used as missiles.<sup>1</sup> It also appointed a committee to report on the condition of the place in which it held its sittings, and thus secured an official statement that the furniture was in a very dilapidated condition, not only endangering the raiment of honourable members, but their limbs; that the walls of the assembly-room were stained and dirty, and, like Joseph's coat, of many colours; that from lamps and chandeliers oil and candle grease fell on the heads of the assembled legislators; and that in the retiring-room, the only place of escape from uninteresting speeches, there was no chair, but a large collection of old bottles, ink jars, and oil cans.<sup>2</sup>

While the assembly was seeking by such means as emigration to stem the progress of decay, public meetings was held in all parts of the colony to consider the state of affairs, and to press upon the

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1852, p. 541, &c. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1851, pp. 194–449.

home government the necessity of some remedial measures. In 1852 three gentlemen were sent home as delegates from the island to describe its condition, and if possible secure assistance: these were Messrs. Thompson, Girod, and W. Smith. Their mission had little practical result. On the 10th of May a petition, signed by Jamaica clergymen and missionaries, was presented to the House of Commons, complaining of the prevailing distress, and asking for assistance. For once these gentlemen and the planting interest were in harmony; they all felt that the gradual equalisation of the duties on free and slave-grown sugar was a gross injustice. It had developed the resources of Cuba, while the production in Jamaica was declining.

Sir Charles Grey was of opinion that nothing could ultimately avert ruin from the colony but the abolition of all duties then levied on Jamaica produce.<sup>3</sup> In return, he would stipulate that no import duties should be imposed on British manufactures brought to the island: he would, in fact, make Jamaica, as one of its earlier governors had suggested, a great free port, for which its position in the Gulf of Mexico renders it peculiarly adapted.

The existing distress was very great; wages had sunk to the lowest rate ever known in the colony, crime was on the increase, and it really appeared as if the condition of all classes was becoming desperate. Happily the worst of the crisis was passing by, and though riot without much individual suffering, brighter days began to dawn upon the colony.

A return to the proceedings of the house of assembly is absolutely necessary to explain the course of events. Its fourth session commenced in November, 1852, some weeks after the usual time of meeting, but even then no business of importance was done for several days. The governor did not, in his opening address, make the usual demand for supplies, as a measure calculated to relieve the finances of the colony was then under the consideration of the imperial parliament. When on the 15th of February, 1853, he did so, he informed the assembly that a guaranteed loan of £ 100,000 had been provided for. He,

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1851, pp. 153-184.

<sup>2</sup> Report of Special Committee, 1851.

<sup>3</sup> Despatch to Sir John Pakington, June 26th, 1852.

however, was told that provision could only be made on a reduced scale.

A committee was then sitting to investigate every department of public and parochial expenditure, and devise a comprehensive plan of retrenchment. It recommended a reduction of twenty per cent. on all salaries, with certain exceptions. The members of the judicial bench petitioned against this, and asserted that the public were as much pledged to them for the amount of their salaries as to any other public creditors, and this view was maintained by most of the officials, the clergy included. The cost of the established church was certainly considerable in relation to the total revenue of the colony. It exceeded £40,000 per annum. There were eighty-one clergymen and ninety-six churches, accommodating about fifty thousand people, but the clergy claimed 124,586 adherents, or about one fourth of the population of the island.

One of the judges, Mr. Stevenson, was not satisfied with petitioning, but on the 28th of March he published a letter in the "Morning Journal," protesting against the conduct of the assembly in attempting to retrench without affording compensation. This letter being brought to the notice of the house, was pronounced a breach of privilege, and on the 30th the judge was arrested and brought to the bar of the house. He protested against his arrest as unconstitutional. The house asserted that its privileges had been violated, and proceeded to take the unprecedented course of committing one of the judges of the land to what was called in the warrant the common gaol for the county of Middlesex.<sup>1</sup> Friends were not wanting to console the prisoner in his captivity, but after such an event the colonial office saw he could not advantageously retain his office in Jamaica. He was therefore appointed to the government of British Honduras, and some years later to that of Mauritius, a position then far more desirable than that of Jamaica. He had consequently no reason to regret the course the assembly adopted towards him,

The revenue bills passed by the assembly failed to secure the approval of the council, and it was told with bitterness how that chamber had rejected six bills since 1846, in which retrenchment had been aimed at. The council, though certainly largely composed of officials whose stipends would be affected by the proposed changes, nevertheless contended for a principle maintained by the

English government, and generally recognised as equitable in its character.

The legislature was now prorogued for a few days, but when again convened it refused to do business with the council. Another prorogation followed, and at the next meeting the governor pointed out the critical state into which these dissensions were plunging the colony. The revenue laws had expired on the 30th of April, and £100,000 would be due to the public creditors before the ordinary meeting in October, if things were allowed to remain in their present condition. It would soon be necessary to discharge all prisoners, and the police, not receiving pay, would be released from their engagements. Even if the revenue bills were at once renewed, it would be found that the country had already lost half of the contemplated saving by retrenchment.

Within two weeks after the expiration of the import duty bill, ships had arrived in Kingston harbour, and landed cargoes on which £10,000 of duty had been lost. There had been ugly rumours in the colony that members of the house had anticipated such a contingency, and provided for it. Sir Charles Grey said that he would not entertain the idea of collusion for such a purpose, but American houses had certainly been prepared for the opportunity.<sup>1</sup>

Up to October a loss equal to ten times the amount would be entailed, and an immense quantity of rum, free from excise, would be put into the stores. The house refused to act, and its reply was acrimonious. The governor had now lost all patience, and bluntly said that the pain, pleasure, or indifference with which he heard remarks on his public conduct, depended on his estimate of those who made them. This was on the 20th of May. The house adjourned to the 26th, and then thirty-nine pages of its journals are occupied by statements that on certain days Mr. Speaker and a few members attended, but no quorum. This continued until the 30th of September. Early in October Sir Henry Barkley arrived as governor, and on the 6th the assembly was prorogued by proclamation.

Sir Charles remained some months in the island, to which, as a residence, he had great attachment. Perhaps, under happier circumstances, he would have gained reputation as a wise and

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1853, pp. 485-491

thoughtful ruler. As things were, he was charged with folly, and looked upon by many as the chief cause of the calamities which befell the colony. Some of the measures he proposed are now engaging general attention, yet, when first propounded in his lengthy speeches, they were regarded as the dreams of a mere theorist

The distress in which many in the colony were plunged by the stoppage of supplies was very great. Officials, who had not savings upon which to fall back, were glad to sell their claims at a considerable discount, and the island cheques for a pound each were often sold for twelve shillings. At such a crisis there were plenty ready to take undue advantage of the necessities of the poor.

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1853, P. 4





## CHAPTER IV

# RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT

Sir Henry Barkley met the legislative bodies in October, and on the 18th, delivered his opening speech: the session did not terminate until the 13th of April, 1854. During this protracted sitting no bill was passed to which he was unable to give his assent, though to one of a questionable character it was only given in consideration of the prevailing distress. This was a bill sanctioning an issue of £100,000 in island notes and certificates, secured by the promised loan of the imperial government. £500,000 had been offered to relieve the distress into which the colony was plunged, on condition that the constitution of the island should be changed in some important particulars. There was, for some time, danger of collision between the assembly and council as to the details of the new measure, but all difficulties were at length overcome. It was arranged that an executive committee of not more than four persons should be appointed as responsible advisers to the governor, with whom alone all measures requiring an expenditure of public funds must originate, thus taking away the power originally possessed by individual members of introducing bills involving a charge upon the island revenue. It was hoped that a proper equipoise would in future be established between income and outlay, and the annually increasing deficit of former years avoided. This plan also provided a way by which the views of the governor could be communicated to the assembly without the perpetual recurrence of those questions of privilege which had done so much mischief in former years. In consideration of the adoption of this plan of responsible government, and the provision of an income of £25,000 per annum, to be appropriated in payment of certain salaries, the imperial government guaranteed a loan of half a million sterling, the repayment of which, within thirty years, together with interest at the rate of four per cent., was secured by a sum of £30,000 per annum. This arrangement secured the immediate settlement on favourable terms of the greater

proportion of the claims then outstanding, and placed the salaries of the judges, the executive committee, the receiver-general, and many other public officers, beyond the danger of being interfered with by the legislature.

The proposed change met the approval of both branches of the British parliament, and the guaranteed loan was taken up at par, thus showing that confidence was in some degree restored. That the constituency of the island approved of the action taken by their representatives was indicated, to some extent, by the fact that four-fifths of the members who had supported this change in the constitution were re-elected at the general election which followed. An important alteration also took place in the constitution of the council chamber. Hitherto this body had discharged the functions of a legislative body, and also those of a privy council. The eleven members of the old council were retained in the new legislative body, which was increased in number to seventeen, but deprived of the duties of a privy council. A new privy council was formed, consisting, at first, of sixteen members, some of whom were members of the legislative council, others of the assembly, and a few were unconnected with either branch of the legislature, but held responsible government offices.

The new assembly did not meet until the close of November, 1854, by which time all had been satisfactorily arranged, and the first executive committee appointed. To these gentlemen, only three in number, £800 per annum was given; they had also a secretary, for whom £400 was allowed. The chief feature of this assembly was the adoption of a new import bill, by which a far larger amount was sought to be raised than hitherto, in the way of indirect taxation. The *ad valorem* duty on non-enumerated articles was raised from five to twelve and a half per cent., at which it still remains. Some time necessarily elapsed before the revenue recovered its elasticity. The quantity of rum which had been warehoused during the late deadlock had lessened the demand on the manufacturer, and consequently the amount of excise duty; while the warehouses being filled with imported articles, on which no duty had been paid, affected for some time the customs. Gradually things resumed their accustomed course, and by the beginning of 1855 men felt that the crisis was over, and hoped that, with a better system of government, the island would flourish once more, in spite of the competition with slave colonies and other drawbacks to prosperity.

During the April and May of 1854, Sir Henry Barkley visited a considerable portion of the island, and while pained to witness the number of abandoned estates, he was gratified by many indications of progress among the peasantry. Though not feeling that the sanguine expectations entertained by many, at the time of emancipation, had been realised, he could not join with those who anticipated a relapse to the semi-barbarism of Hayti. Education, he felt, had been neglected, but he bore ready testimony to the judicious and successful efforts of missionaries to elevate the people. Strongly attached to the Church of England, he saw that it was quite impossible for its clergy alone to perform all the necessary work, had the missionaries been withdrawn. A minister for education, and a plan of coolie emigration, were among the suggestions he offered to the secretary of state.<sup>1</sup> The latter he regarded as absolutely essential, if sugar cultivation was to be continued on a large scale; but with such assistance he thought that successful competition with slave-grown produce was not altogether impossible on estates favourably situated for sugar production; a condition, it must be remembered, that exists only in the case of a limited number of districts in Jamaica.

Under the administration of Sir Henry Barkley, the new plan of government worked well. The colony had been wearied out with past dissensions, and not only the governor, but Lady Barkley, were popular with most classes in the community. The retrenchment which had been so long demanded was effected, if not to the satisfaction of all parties, yet on terms which on the whole were equitable. The reduction of the judicial establishment involved a radical change in the plans elaborated by Sir Charles Metcalfe. The Act of 1855 secured pensions to several retiring judges and chairmen of quarter sessions. A chief justice was appointed, at a salary of £1800 a year, instead of £3000, as formerly paid, and three assistant judges received £1200 a year each.

The old clergy bill had yet some time of its original term of fourteen years to run, but a measure was presented to the legislature, in which it was proposed to renew that bill for twenty years from date, and thus secure the position of the several incumbents for a longer time than was assured by the existing law,

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<sup>1</sup> Despatch to Duke of Newcastle, May 26, 1854.

but with the understanding that a reduction in their stipends should at once be made. The fifty island curates were, under the existing law, in receipt of £390 per annum; this was to be reduced to £340, unless the incumbent elected to receive his full amount during the term secured by the old bill, in which case he would only receive £297 10s. when that term expired. The stipends of the rectors varied in the several parishes, but reduction was effected in their case on the same general principle. Provision was also made, about the same time, for ten additional curates, at a salary of £300 a year, one-half of which was paid out of the island treasury, and the other half out of funds at the disposal of the bishop, who was then, as he had been for many years, a non-resident.

Perhaps no changes were on the whole more beneficial than those effected in the management of the parochial boards or vestries. The vicious system of expenditure was brought under control, and the power of levying taxes, or of borrowing money on the security of certificates called "parish papers," was taken away. The general supervision of parochial affairs was vested in the executive committee, and thus some security was given that public funds would be more faithfully watched over and expended. The objectionable tax on hereditaments was abolished.

It was a loss to the colony when, in May, 1856, after a residence of a little more than two years and a half, Sir Henry Barkley retired. The distinguished manner in which he has since discharged his duties as governor in other colonies renders all further praise unnecessary. His place in Jamaica, for some fourteen months, was filled by Major-General Edward Wells Bell, the officer in command of the troops. No events of importance occurred during his administration to call him into prominence, but he left the island amid general expressions of esteem. An amiable and kind-hearted gentleman, he discharged his temporary duties with quiet dignity and courtesy.

On the 24th of July, 1857, Charles Henry Darling, Esq., arrived as governor. To give any detailed account of his administration would involve frequent references to painful party struggles and personal animosities. The details would interest few, and the events of October, 1865, so completely annihilated the prospects of men who sought personal advantage from the results of political strife, that the record would illustrate no essential point in the history of the colony, beyond the fact that a representative body was a delusion and a snare in a community where not one in

two hundred of the inhabitants had a vote, and where old systems and prejudices had raised barriers in the way of progress which only a strong, wise, and impartial government could eradicate. A mere sketch of the state of parties, and of the leading subjects of discussion, will satisfy most readers.

To form some idea of the obstacles which lay in the way of a good strong government, it must be borne in mind that there were, at this time, two distinct and rather powerful parties in the assembly. It is difficult to give to either a simple distinctive name. The town and country party were terms not unfrequently employed. By the latter was understood what has also been called the planting interest. Those who belonged to it were usually proprietors of large estates, or else represented the proprietors as attorneys. The town party was sometimes spoken of as that of Jordon and Osborn, but the definition was not quite correct, at all events if it was meant to imply that all their followers were, like themselves, gentlemen of colour. The noble stand taken by Mr. Jordon in the days of civil disabilities, had enlisted on his side nearly all whose liberties he had helped to secure. Mr. Osborn was his partner in business, and few men were ever better acquainted with the practice of the house of assembly. This fact, combined with the statesmanlike qualities of Mr. Jordon, pointed them out as leaders, not only to the class to which they belonged, but to many others whose interests were not identical with those of the country party.

The town party, as with this explanation it may be called, had one great advantage over that of the country. They mostly resided in Spanish Town or Kingston, and thus the time to which the session was prolonged did not materially affect them. But gentlemen whose estates lay in the rural districts were anxious to get the business of the session over before Christmas, so that they could return to their properties and attend to their personal affairs. If therefore the session could be prolonged into January or February, the town party was in a position to carry their measures without opposition. Beyond these parties were a number of men voting with either, as principle or personal interest dictated—"waiters on providence," to use a newly coined English parliamentary phrase.

The first executive committee was a compromise: it consisted of Mr. Jordon and Mr. Hosack, a planter. The Honourable Bryan Edwards, of the council, was for a short time a member of it, but

he soon gave place to the Honourable George Price. It was under the guidance of these gentlemen that the measures of retrenchment and reform, alluded to during the government of Sir Henry Barkley, were carried into effect. It is impossible to approve of all that they recommended, but they did a good deal' to restore public confidence, and place the affairs of the colony on a more satisfactory basis than had been known for many former years.

For a time they worked harmoniously with Governor Darling, but in 1860 a serious difficulty arose. The necessity of improving the roads in the colony was admitted by all parties; a considerable sum from the taxation of the colony was therefore expended in this direction, and a loan for the same purpose was authorised. Yet in addition it was found that the executive committee, in one year, had expended £17,000 beyond the amount authorised. Mr. Darling maintained that they were responsible to the assembly for this transaction. They denied their responsibility to that body, either for acts of maladministration or for over-expenditure like that alluded to. A great deal of angry controversy followed, some asserting that the executive committee were "mere clerks of the governor," and others declaring that the governor "had conjured up a demon in the shape of limited responsibility, which would not be laid for many years." It was an unlucky business, but a majority in the assembly upheld the governor in the view he had taken. The existing committee was dismissed, and Messrs. Smith, Solomon, and Baron Ketelhodt were called to office in their place.

This question of responsibility had not been settled by the Act appointing an executive committee. Mr. Smith was anxious it should be clearly defined, and before his nomination, proposed a resolution declaring that "the power is inherent in the house to invoke that responsibility whenever the occasion for so doing may arise." Mr. Westmoreland moved an amendment, adding to the foregoing assertion another to the effect that the responsibility of the governor for the proper control of public affairs was clearly established by the Act for the better government of the island. This was carried by a majority of seventeen to twelve.

The members of the new executive committee were not well versed in the forms of the house, and above all they required time to prepare their measures, and become fully acquainted with the state of public business and finance. No consideration was, however, shown them by their opponents, and much time was lost in debate. The session did not close until the 22nd of March,

1861, and little really profitable came out of all its discussions. The next assembly met on the 12th of November, and sat until the 15th of February. A change in the committee had taken place, by the resignation of Mr. Solomon and the appointment of Mr. Whitelock.

The subject which attracted most public attention during 1861 was not political in its character. His Royal Highness Prince Alfred was then a midshipman on board H.M.S. the *St. George*. After visiting other West Indian islands, that vessel reached Jamaica on the 2nd of April. Everything that the government and the citizens could do to give him a suitable reception was done. Banners, evergreens, flowers, and fruit almost hid many of the houses; and, in addition to levees at the seat of government, an opportunity was given to the multitude to see the young prince, not only in his journey through Kingston, but by a reception on the parade. Triumphal arches were abundant, but most wonderful of all was the immense concourse of people. A large pavilion had been erected, and here many addresses were presented, while temporary platforms were prepared on which upwards of two thousand Sunday-school children were gathered, singing, as the prince approached, the well-known strains of the National Anthem. During his brief visit, the prince visited St. Thomas in the Vale; but other excursions and arrangements made for public festivities were brought to an end on the 6th, by the arrival of the news of the death of the Duchess of Kent. His Royal Highness immediately went on board his ship. But though his visit was so painfully terminated, it will long be remembered with pleasure by all classes of the community.

In the spring of 1862, Governor Darling obtained leave to visit England, and Mr. Eyre, then at one of the smaller islands, was removed to Jamaica, to fill the office of lieutenant-governor during his absence. Mr. Eyre discovered, when the assembly opened at the close of the year, that the government of the colony would be no easy task. A very strong party in opposition to the executive committee had been formed, led by its former members, reinforced by Mr. Westmoreland, who for some time had taken a prominent position in the house. This gentleman commenced the struggle by a speech in opposition to the budget. Other measures were so opposed or retarded in their progress, that it became necessary, on the 29th of January, to prorogue the house, which was, two days afterwards, dissolved by proclamation. There was considerable



excitement throughout the island, and when the new assembly met on the 24th of March, 1863, it was found that the opposition was stronger than before.

During the discussion on the reply to the opening speech of the lieutenant-governor, the executive committee was defeated, though only by a majority of one. Resignation followed, and Mr. Westmoreland and Mr. Jordon, together with the Hon. G.L. Phillips, were appointed in their stead. Mr. Phillips soon withdrew, and Mr. Price resumed his old position. It was remarked that the new committee when in power had little that was new to propose. Indeed, these gentlemen carried into effect the very measures they had so vehemently opposed when in opposition. These included a bill for the abolition of toll-gates, the loss in revenue being met by a small addition to the import duties.

Mr. Eyre failed to gain the favour of any large section of the leading members of the assembly, nor was he sustained as he should have been by the executive committee. Resolutions affecting him were prepared and handed about, which, if carried, would have obliged him to retire from the government, and have precluded all hope of his obtaining another colonial appointment. These were chiefly used for purposes of annoyance, and with the exception of some proposed but not supported by Mr. Groves, were never put on the motion paper.

Soon after his arrival Mr. Eyre had taken a step which elicited the hearty approval of the missionaries and many others interested in the social well-being of the colony, but which was most severely criticised by a large number of persons. This was the publication of what was known as the morality proclamation. In this document Mr. Eyre announced that in future no person would be put on the list of applicants for public appointments unless he was able to transmit a certificate from a minister of religion, or other trustworthy person of position and responsibility, stating that the candidate was strictly honest, sober, and moral in his conduct and habits. In the case of any one then in the public service who was setting an evil example by leading an immoral life, such conduct would be a bar to promotion. Heads of departments were notified that they were not in future to recommend any one they had reason to believe was given either to intemperate or immoral habits.

Some comment was afterwards made with relation to certain appointments, but most assuredly the responsibility lay not with

Mr. Eyre, but with those who had furnished the recommendations. That this proclamation gave great offence there can be no question, and, in combination with other things, created a strong feeling of opposition to Mr. Eyre. But, if foes were numerous, friends were active, and many addresses in his favour came up from all parts of the colony.

In February, 1864, Mr. Eyre's conduct formed the topic of other discussions in the assembly. On the 8th of that month, when few members were present, a series of eight resolutions were passed, enumerating the grievances of the house. Among other things, it was complained that the lieutenant-governor had refused to supply copies of certain correspondence between himself and the colonial secretary; that he had interdicted the agent-general of immigration from giving evidence before a committee of the house; that he had referred to the colonial secretary for instructions on certain matters under discussion in the assembly; and, above all, that he had instructed the attorney-general to take proceedings by way of *habeas corpus* to impeach the right of the house to imprison for contempt. On these and some other minor grounds, the few members who were present, and constituted the house, resolved to do no further business with him. Thirteen out of seventeen members supported this determination. The executive committee might have fallen back on the forms of the house, which would have delayed discussion, and given time for members to come up from the country, but they did not, and their action favoured the suspicion that they were not loyal to their chief.

There were other gentlemen who could not look upon this proceeding without taking steps to vindicate the character of the house, and an energetic protest was drawn up by sixteen members who were absent on the occasion, protesting against the resolution which had been passed. This protest, taken in conjunction with the many addresses approving of Mr. Eyre's public conduct, led the colonial office to confirm him in his appointment, with the full rank of governor. The commission arrived in May, 1864, for Mr. Darling had been appointed governor of Victoria, and thus the government of Jamaica had become vacant.

The confirmation and promotion of Mr. Eyre must have greatly disconcerted many in high places. The executive committee, whose want of energy has been shown in reference to the vote to do no business, had taken a more decided step in the way of opposition. In April, Mr. Eyre had seen fit to send down to the house a

despatch he had received from the colonial office in the early part of the former year, having reference to the very discussions which had brought the existing committee into office. In this document the colonial secretary laid down the principle that if "a bare majority, formed by accidental and temporary circumstances, shall be headed by interested persons to obstruct public business on slender and futile pretexts, and by questionable methods," the conduct of such persons "will be regarded by her Majestiy's government, not as entitling them to seats in the executive committee, but as disqualifying them from serving in it. If therefore (added the colonial minister) the new assembly should unfortunately follow in the steps of its predecessor, and offer, not merely fair opposition, but factious obstruction to public business, designed to force certain parties into office, I am of opinion that you should nevertheless retain the services of the present executive committee as long as they shall be willing to serve."<sup>1</sup>

This despatch did not reach Jamaica till April, 1863, by which time, it will be remembered, the new assembly had met, and continued the opposition to the members of the old committee, which led to their resignation and the appointment of the existing body. Its publication, twelve months after, greatly annoyed these gentlemen, and Mr. Price prepared, as he subsequently admitted, a resolution, which was moved in the house of assembly by Mr. Alberga, in which the conduct of Mr. Eyre in the transaction of public business was condemned. A correspondence between Mr. Price and Mr. Eyre followed, and ended in Mr. Price's dismissal from office.

It was generally understood that Mr. Price had not acted on his own responsibility in this matter, and when Mr. Eyre's full appointment arrived, it was expected that the other members of the committee would resign. They retained their seats, and one of the thirteen who had refused to do business with Mr. Eyre, moved a resolution to the effect that the retention of office by the members of the executive committee in the assembly, while assisting to subvert the policy of the governor, was contrary to the spirit of the Act for the better government of the island, and detrimental to the character of the assembly. There was much hot discussion. Several of the "thirteen" asserted that in what they had done they felt they had the moral support of at least one member of the committee seated in that house, but the resolution fell to the ground. The assembly and the country wanted rest, and Mr. Eyre,

being now fully recognised as governor, was disposed to condone all past offences.

Mr. Jordon was appointed to the post of receivergeneral, and subsequently to that of island secretary. He was succeeded in the committee by Mr. Hosack, and Dr. Hamilton took the place of Mr. Price in the council.

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<sup>1</sup> Despatch from the Duke of Newcastle, March 16, 1863.



## CHAPTER V

# RELIGION, EDUCATION, AND SOCIAL PROGRESS, FROM 1839 TO 1865

Before entering upon a consideration of the painful events of 1865, a brief review must be taken of those movements of a religious and social character which marked the period since emancipation. A purer code of social morality had been introduced among all classes of society. In the days of slavery, it was a rare thing to find a married overseer or book-keeper. This state of things no longer exists; and while it would be idle to deny the existence of much social impurity, a vast improvement has taken place in this respect. Where vicious habits are indulged, the fact is more generally known than in the great cities of Europe, for in small communities these things are not hidden as in the great centres of population.

The habits of the upper classes have become more conformed to those generally prevailing in Europe or America. Colonial life is not so isolated as it once was. The frequent and rapid communication by steam has had a marked effect on society generally; and the visitor to the West Indies, introduced into a respectable circle, would observe very little distinction between the prevailing manners and customs, as compared with England, that could not be accounted for by the difference of climate; while education and the opportunity of acquiring property afforded to those whose ancestors were affected by social disabilities, has led to the formation of a large and increasing middle class. Among the rural population generally many will be found who are not greatly improved in their habits or condition since the days of slavery, but this statement would be quite untrue if applied to more than a small minority. In the case of most, a great and truly wonderful change has been effected. The serfs of the past generation are the freeholders of the present; they possess a very considerable extent of the soil, and are producing an annually augmenting proportion of the articles exported from the colony; while the improvement in

their social condition leads to an increasing demand for articles of British manufacture.

After Dr. Underhill's return from visiting the island in 1861, he published a volume, in which he gave many interesting statements illustrative of the fact last named. Some statements he made as to the material wealth of the people have been questioned, but they are repeated here,<sup>1</sup> with the conviction that the estimate might now be almost doubled.

The efforts of the various religious bodies since 1838 do not supply so many striking facts as at the earlier period. The days of persecution had ended, there was free access to the people at large, and gradually the work of faithful, earnest pastors assumed the characteristics which mark it in countries where Christianity is recognised as the religion of the people.

The Moravians, after emancipation, found it necessary to enlarge several of their places of worship, and the cost was defrayed by their congregations, aided by friends in England.<sup>2</sup> A normal school was also established at Fairfield. When public attention was drawn to the desirability of African colonisation, by the Niger expedition of 1840, several persons, some of whom were married, went out with two missionaries from Basle to Akrapong, near Coast Castle, Guinea. The experiment, though not a failure, was by no means so successful as to lead to its continuance.

But while young converts were thus sent forth in the hope that their example would tell beneficially on the heathendom of Africa, old superstitions were struggling to regain their former ascendancy over the minds of Christian communicants in Jamaica. In 1842 several negroes residing on an estate near Montego Bay gave themselves out to be Myalmen; and in St. James, West

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Underhill's statement is as follows:—

65,000 houses, with furniture, at £16 each.	£1,040,000
354,575 acres of land, at 30s. an acre	531,862
Clothes for 65,000 families, at £4 each	260,000
Stock on freeholds, at £3 each family	195,000
5000 sugar mills, at £10 each	50,000
Funds in savings banks	49,399
	£2,126,261

<sup>2</sup> "Moravians in Jamaica," pp. 132.

£2,126,261

moreland, and Trelawny, thousands of deluded people became their followers. They were accustomed to meet together after nightfall, generally beneath the shadow of a cotton tree. Fowls were sacrificed, and wild songs sung, in the chorus of which the multitude joined. Dancing then began, becoming more and more weirdlike in character, until one and another fell exhausted to the ground, when their incoherent utterances were listened to as divine revelations. Half-demented creatures sat among the branches, or in the hollow trunks of trees, singing; while others, with their heads bound in a fantastic fashion, ran about with arms outstretched, and declared that they were flying. It became necessary at last to swear in several hundreds of special constables, and to punish numbers of these deluded people for disturbing the peace. It is satisfactory to add that very few members of churches were implicated in these proceedings.<sup>1</sup> Some six years later a Myalman, called Dr. Taylor, gave much trouble in Manchester and Clarendon, drawing great crowds after him. He was sent to the penitentiary, where he was accidentally killed. In 1852 the delusion again appeared: some now gave themselves out to be prophets, and saw visions, but the firmness of the missionaries soon put an end to these practices.

In 1847 a visitation of the Moravian churches was held by Messrs. Herman and Mallalieu. Mr. Pfeiffer established a mission among the Indians on the Mosquito Coast, which still continues to prosper. During the cholera the losses among the people were very great: at one station one hundred and forty church members died, but on the whole much prosperity has attended these missions. In 1853 the Moravians had thirteen stations, at which, to use their own phraseology, there were seventeen brethren and sixteen sisters; 4182 persons were members of their churches; and, including children, there were 12,800 persons in all connected with the congregations. In 1865 the returns were somewhat similar, and fifty-two day schools were in operation.

For some time after freedom the Baptists increased in number; in three years eleven thousand persons were baptized.<sup>2</sup> At the close of 1842 it was reported that in ten years the churches had increased

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<sup>1</sup> "Moravians in Jamaica," pp. 138-141.

<sup>2</sup> Phillippo's "Jamaica," p. 297.



from about 10,000 members to 33,658, the chapels from fifteen to fifty, and that the congregations comprised 80,000 persons, of whom nearly 15,000 were inquirers.<sup>1</sup> A discussion as to the purity of these large churches was commenced about this time by the Rev. G. Blyth, a Scotch missionary of great experience. His views were endorsed by all the Presbyterians, by many connected with the London Missionary Society, by some earnest clergymen of the Church of England, and also by a few Baptist ministers. A catalogue of the pamphlets and more important newspaper and magazine articles on this subject would fill several pages: an epitome of the whole may be found in Dr. Brown's "History of Missions."<sup>2</sup> The excitement occasioned by this controversy only ceased when the missionaries and churches in Jamaica declared themselves altogether independent of the parent society in England. £6000 was then contributed by the society to pay off some chapel debts, with the understanding that the mission in Jamaica should seek no further support from home.

Immense sums of money were at this time raised by the Baptist churches. Mr. Knibb, in a speech at Exeter Hall, in London, stated that in a few years £60,000 had been contributed by the people for "houses for God." His own congregation had built him a house, which they had furnished and provided with a library, at a total cost of nearly £1900. They also contributed £1000 to build a house which should belong to his widow and family in the event of his death.<sup>3</sup> While thus frank about matters in which he had a personal interest, he was not able to supply similar returns as to the expenditure at other stations.<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Knibb's influence among the people was immense. At the celebration of the jubilee of the Baptist Missionary Society, at his station, called Kettering, nine thousand people assembled. As many, it was computed, were present at his funeral on the 16th of November, 1845, for he died when only forty-two years of age. He was soon followed to the grave by his accomplished friend and co-worker, Mr. Burchell.

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<sup>1</sup> Statement by Baptist Missionary Society.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. ii. pp. 82-93.

<sup>3</sup> Knibb's Speech at Exeter Hall, April 28, 1842; "Life of Knibb," pp. 419-432.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 435, 436.

In 1842, a party of forty-two persons, including wives and children, mostly natives of Jamaica, sailed in the *Chilmark*, to establish a mission on the coast of Africa. Mr. Clark and Dr. Prince, who accompanied them, were devoted missionaries, but even under their superintendence the enterprise met with only partial success.<sup>1</sup>

In 1843, Calabar College was established, to train a native ministry; it was at first under the care of Rev. Mr. Tinson, who died in 1850. Two years after, the Rev. D.J. East came from England as principal, and under his superintendence, and that of his predecessor, many excellent pastors have been trained for their work. In September, 1855, a Normal school for training teachers was commenced, and is still in operation. Both institutions have lately been removed to Kingston. They are aided by contributions from the English society, and from friends interested in the work.

The general depression of commercial affairs, beginning in 1846, greatly affected the resources of the Baptist churches; the contributions of the members declined, while a spirit of worldliness on the part of those whose religious convictions had never been very deep, still further affected the finances of the mission. Some missionaries were so seriously embarrassed as to leave the island, others suffered much privation; and the cholera still further told upon the material progress of the churches. Appeals were in consequence made to the society in England for aid: they were not responded to, as the committee of management adhered to the principle of independence laid down, but special subscriptions were raised to afford assistance to needy churches for a limited time.<sup>2</sup> More recently, some slight departure has been made from the strict rule of not aiding the Jamaica pastors.

In 1861, Dr. Underhill, one of the secretaries of the Baptist Missionary Society, arrived in the island, and spent four months in visiting the different congregations. He found that in 1859 there were 19,300 church members and 2,300 inquirers. He estimated the average number attending all the places of worship at 35,000. There were seventy-seven churches, but only thirty-eight pastors,

of whom twenty-three were Europeans.<sup>1</sup> The total amount contributed for religious purposes was about £8000.<sup>2</sup>

In 1865, there were eighty-seven places of worship; twenty white, and eighteen native pastors: nearly 22,000 members; sixty-six day schools, and 4000 children on the books; and about the same number of Sabbath schools, in which there were 750 teachers. The chapels were estimated to contain 51,328 people,<sup>3</sup>

It is not so easy to gain precise information relative to the Wesleyan body. No books have, of late years, been published by its missionaries in Jamaica, but that it has made steady progress is indisputable. In every parish in the island its chapels will be found, and in some districts every village has its society. A comparison of statistical statements shows some loss in the number of adherents. In 1884 there were 26,585 members; in 1850, 19,554; in 1860, 17,575; in 1864 there were 18,105. They had, at this last date, seventy-two chapels and fifty-five preaching stations. Twenty-six missionaries laboured among these people, and a numerous staff of local preachers. For many years the Rev. Jonathan Edmondson superintended these missions with fidelity and zeal. They still receive aid from the parent society, but are making vigorous efforts to keep the amount as low as possible.

The party which broke off from this denomination in 1837, under the leadership of Mr. Pinnock, passed through many vicissitudes. In 1850 it had about two thousand members, under the care of six ministers, meeting in ten chapels. A division took place, and Mr. Baxter, a man of considerable power, was sent out from England, and, through his influence, an association was formed, under the name of the United Methodist Free Church. It was affiliated with the body of the same name, and enjoys a fair measure of prosperity.

In 1847, the stations which had been occupied by the Scottish Missionary Society were transferred to the Board of Missions of the United Presbyterian Church. The first-named society had been formed on the broad basis of uniting all Scottish Presbyterian churches in the work of Christian missions, but of late years the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and the United Secession Church had established separate missions; and though

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<sup>1</sup> "Voice of Jubilee," pp. 130–133, &c.

<sup>2</sup> "Baptist Missionary Herald" for 1851, &c.

these did not for a time affect the older society, the controversies that subsequently arose on the question of church establishments made it evident that the support of Jamaica missions would become increasingly difficult. The missionaries in the island had, with one exception, been connected with the United Secession Church before they left Scotland, and that body has now been amalgamated with what were known as the Relief Churches, under the title of the United Presbyterian Church. The missionaries accordingly agreed to unite themselves with the new organisation, which had also established some churches in the island. The whole were therefore united as one mission under the same management.

This mission for some years suffered greatly from the mortality among those sent out by the society. It was often no easy task to supply their places, and the churches, on this account, suffered greatly, as little was done to develop the lay agency so efficient when judiciously selected. In 1865, there were twenty-six stations, twenty-two missionaries, and forty-eight schools, with 1791 children in attendance. The chapel accommodation was for 12,575 persons, and the average attendance 7955. In 1866, the cost of the mission was about £5000 to the parent society, and £3000 was also contributed at the stations. No other British society is so liberal in its expenditure.

The work of the London Missionary Society, commenced in 1834, continued to make quiet progress. In 1843, the Rev. J.J. Freeman, one of the secretaries, visited the island, and examined carefully into the state of the mission. The result of his visit was a gradual withdrawal of English schoolmasters, and an increased development of native agency. Mr. Cargill, while engaged as government inspector, visited the schools connected with the several stations, and reported them as among the best in the island. In 1865, there were fifteen chapels connected with this body, at which churches were organised, and eighteen village chapels or preaching stations. The accommodation was for 9010 persons; the congregations averaged 5610. In 1856, an institution at Mandeville was established for the training of a native agency. It was relinquished after three years, and a system introduced more

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<sup>1</sup> "The West Indies," by Dr. Underhill, p. 429, &c.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Blue Book for 1865.

in accordance with the requirements of a small mission in such a colony as Jamaica.

Shortly after freedom an American mission was commenced, chiefly among the mountains in Metcalfe. Six missionaries had charge of as many stations, and, in 1865, reported that their chapels would seat 1340, and were attended by 750 persons.

Five or six priests ministered to the spiritual necessities of the Roman Catholics in the island. They had eight chapels in 1865, and about three thousand adherents, a very considerable number of whom were refugees from Hayti, or descendants of Haytian families who had previously settled in the island.

In the returns printed in the Blue Book for 1865, from which many of the figures quoted above are taken, reference is frequently made to the fact that both schools and congregations were smaller than they had been for many years. To what extent this was owing to the feelings of dissatisfaction and insubordination which culminated at Morant Bay, it would be difficult to say, but of the fact there can be no doubt whatever.

In 1861, there had been a very remarkable religious movement, known as "the revival." It commenced among the Moravians, and gradually extended to all parts of the island. Like a mountain stream, clear and transparent as it springs from the rock, but which becomes foul and repulsive as impurities are mingled with it in its onward course, so with this most extraordinary movement. In many of the central districts of the island the hearts of thoughtful and good men were gladdened by what they witnessed in the changed lives and characters of people for whom they long seemed to have laboured in vain ; but in too many districts there was much of wild extravagance and almost blasphemous fanaticism. This was especially the case where the native Baptists had any considerable influence. Among these, the manifestations occasioned by the influence of the Myalmen, as described previously, were very common. To the present time, what are called revival meetings are common among these people.

Apart from these accessories, the movement effected an immense amount of good. The extravagances attracted public attention; the quiet, purifying influences were less observable. Many thousands of marriages were celebrated among people who had lived together for years in disregard of that sacred tie. Evil habits were abandoned. The rum shops were forsaken by multitudes, and thousands were added to the different congregations, of whom

many became communicants, and have remained faithful. Perhaps one of the most pleasing facts connected with the movement was the increased study of the Word of God. Thirty-seven thousand copies were sold within a period of eighteen months. Those who have carefully considered the details of similar movements in America, Scotland, and Ireland, will need no further information as to the characteristics of this in Jamaica. It was similar in all essential features, so far as it was under the guidance of earnest, judicious pastors.

Some of the more important facts connected with the Established Church have already been alluded to in the course of historical events. In 1839, the Church Missionary Society had nine clergymen and twenty-six catechists labouring in the island, on whom, together with grants for erecting churches and schools, they expended £19,000.<sup>1</sup> Two years later, a return showed that there were twenty-one rectors and thirty-eight curates on the establishment, receiving £22,930 from the public funds. £7480 more was granted for church extension, and £30,906 was paid in addition from parochial funds. To all this must be added £8100 more from the British government, £3000 from the Propagation Society, and large sums, as seen above, from the Church Missionary Society. It is true that a far better class of clergymen were now at work than in former years, but the spiritual results were not in accordance with the lavish expenditure. The Bishop of Jamaica was an absentee for nearly a quarter of a century, and a suffragan bishop, under the title of Bishop of Kingston, discharged his duties, and in addition to his stipend as archdeacon, received rather less than half the sum (£3000 a year) paid by the British government to the Bishop of Jamaica. Had the colonial instead of the imperial parliament been responsible for these stipends, such an arrangement would not have been sanctioned. The Rev. Reginald Courtenay, D.D., who was appointed suffragan in 1858, delivered his primary charge in the same year. The mission churches were gradually transferred to the island establishment, and aid from England almost entirely ceased. In 1865, there were eighty-six churches, capable of accommodating 46,434 persons, and reported as attended by 39,710.<sup>1</sup> The number of clergy was rather in excess of that of churches.

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<sup>1</sup> "Votes," 1839, p. 218.

In connection with the religious and educational operations of different sections of the church, must be remembered the liberality of several English associations. The British and Foreign Bible Society, the British and Foreign School Society, and other similar institutions, greatly aided those who were toiling for the benefit of the people. The Society of Friends have always taken a deep interest in the people; liberal subscriptions were given by them for many years to country schools, and occasional deputations evinced kindly interest in the labours of those who were seeking the moral, social, and religious advancement of the peasantry.

One of the greatest drawbacks to the advancement of the people, especially in the eastern districts, was found in the influence of the native Baptists. To the superstitious practices described in a former chapter, others might be added. Their leaders were men of no education, and to their influence and teaching the deplorable events soon to be recorded, must be, in no small degree, attributed.

For many years past attention had been called from time to time to the alleged mismanagement of the public hospital and lunatic asylum. The admitted unfitness of the latter place for the reception of patients, led to the commencement of a new asylum so early as 1844, but in consequence of the financial embarrassments of the colony, the costly building was left uncompleted, and was for some years almost hidden from view by the jungle which grew up around it. Towards the close of Sir Charles Grey's administration, many gross abuses were brought to light, and formed the subject of inquiry by the house of assembly. The superintendent was not a medical man, neither had he received any special training for his work. Any one more unfit for such a position it would have been difficult to find. The treatment of the wretched inmates was disgustingly cruel. A system known as "tanking" was in constant use: it consisted in plunging troublesome or disobedient patients into a large bath or tank, and holding them under water, this process being repeated again and again, until the sufferer was well-nigh exhausted. There was no allowance made for sex, and if a female patient was too strong for the ordinary nurses in the ward, men would be called in to duck her. The unhappy creatures were

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<sup>1</sup> Blue Book, 1865.

fed as if they were pigs, while solitary confinement and stripes were not unfrequent modes of punishment.

The want of classification was another sore evil. At night numbers were locked in cells together, and the fighting was often terrific. Means were used to make the lunatics work for the personal benefit of the superintendent, and altogether it was one of the most mismanaged institutions in the West Indies.

Inquiries in the house of assembly seldom resulted in much good, for the accused parties had friends among the members. Thus, though these abuses were spoken of from time to time, no measures were taken to bring them to an end until the year 1858, when the matter was warmly taken up by Dr. Bowerbank, one of the leading members of the medical profession in Kingston. The management of the hospital and asylum was vested in a body of commissioners, appointed by the house of assembly, but these gentlemen paid little attention to the statements made by the indefatigable doctor. For some years the most untiring efforts were made to awaken general interest; the public, the assembly, and the governor, were all appealed to, and at length Dr. Bowerbank succeeded in drawing the attention of the English commissioners in lunacy to the subject. After a series of efforts, and at an outlay of money which would have discouraged any ordinary man, the doctor secured the appointment of a commission in 1861 to investigate the alleged abuses. The disclosures made on this occasion fully justified the persistence with which most of the charges had been pressed, and reform speedily followed.

While necessary changes were made in the old place of confinement, the new buildings were pressed forward to completion. A honorary board of visitors was appointed, and a medical gentleman, experienced in the treatment of lunatics, sent out from England. The lunatic asylum may now bear favourable comparison with similar institutions in Great Britain. The order, discipline, and good behaviour of the inmates, the absence of restraint, and the general aspect of the establishment, afford the most striking contrast to the dirt, misery, and disorder of the former receptacle for lunatics, that can well be imagined.

Reforms also followed in the management of the public hospital, and though the existing buildings are not very well adapted to the purpose, it has become, like the asylum, a credit to the colony. Some attention was also given to sanitary matters, and in this also Dr. Bowerbank rendered considerable service. A society



for promoting sanitary, educational, social, and moral remedial measures, was started; but though it elicited and published some important facts, it did not long continue in existence.

It has been mentioned that, during the time of the Earl of Elgin, an Agricultural Society was formed. The transactions of the years 1842 and 1843 are very interesting, and prove that, in almost all the parishes in the island, great interest was felt in the proceedings of the society, by many leading men. Cattle shows, ploughing matches, and meetings for imparting information, were numerous. In August, 1854, the Royal Society of Arts was established, and not only corresponded with similar societies abroad, but published some very interesting transactions, and promoted, in no inconsiderable degree, the interests of the colony. Large contributions of native productions were sent to the first exhibitions in London and Paris, and a very interesting local museum established. Ten years later it was thought well to unite what remained of the Agricultural Society with the Society of Arts, and an Act of Incorporation was obtained from the house of assembly. Little good came of the change, and ultimately the society ceased to exist, and the museum was handed over to the government.

Among the questions mooted at some of the earlier meetings of the Society of Arts, was one relating to the existing juvenile depravity. As the result of these inquiries, two reformatories sprung into existence: one for boys, under the auspices of the Rev. D.H.Campbell, now archdeacon, was established in 1858; and one for girls, under that of the Rev. J.Watson, of the United Presbyterian Church. For some years these institutions were under the care of committees, deeply interested in the work they had undertaken, aided, as in England, by government grants. Ultimately the number of inmates increased so much, that it was thought desirable to hand them over to the government. The boys' reformatory, which in 1859 had only 32 inmates, had 140 in 1867. That for girls had not so many; the number in 1867 was 81.

No comparison can be drawn between the benefit societies established in England and those which have sprung up since emancipation in Jamaica. Still, some progress has been made in this direction, especially in Kingston. These societies hold their meetings in schoolrooms, and not in public-houses, as is so frequently the case in England. No rent is charged, and the working expenses are exceedingly small. They afford an

illustration of the fact that the working classes in Jamaica can co-operate for purposes of mutual advantage. In 1864, a building society was established by a few friends anxious to promote the well-being of the working and middle classes. Its income at first was small, but in 1871 profits were for the first time declared, and shares, upon which sixteen guineas had been paid by instalments of four shillings a month for seven years, were found entitled to five per cent. interest, making £20, and a bonus of £5 9s. 6d, in addition. The safety of the project being thus proved, great numbers have since joined, and its income in 1872 was about £20, 000. It is purely mutual in its character, and has provided many people with excellent homes they could have obtained in no other way.

A little was done before 1865, and more has since been attempted, in the way of providing alms-houses for the destitute, and in other ways of meeting the necessities of the poor. But the class who can assist to any great extent in these undertakings is limited. Men who make fortunes in Jamaica generally retire to Europe to spend them, and thus little is done by the wealthy to assist in the religious and benevolent efforts put forth in the colony. The obligation which is gradually being laid upon the members of all sections of the church, to sustain their pastors and church institutions, will for many years absorb nearly all their means; still indications are not wanting of a spirit of true philanthropy among many of the people of all classes. The Hebrew community have their alms-houses, and make liberal provision for their numerous poor.



## CHAPTER VI

# THE OUTBREAK AT ST. THOMAS IN THE EAST

It would have been a good thing for Governor Eyre if the appointment he so greatly coveted had been withheld. His lot was cast in evil times, for never, since the day of emancipation, had the island been in circumstances of greater peril. The house of assembly was generally felt to be a barrier in the way of all progress, and in no proper sense of the word could it be regarded as a representative body. Jamaica, with a population of upwards of half a million, was divided into twenty-three parishes or electoral districts, returning forty-seven members in all. But in 1864, the united registries showed only 1903 persons qualified to vote, and at the last general election, held that year, only 1457 persons exercised their privilege. The highest number of votes recorded for any one candidate was in Kingston, where 303 were given for Mr. Jordon. Thirty-two members who were at this time elected had less than fifty votes each, and twenty-five of these had less than thirty.<sup>1</sup>

With such small constituencies, it was an easy matter for any man anxious to obtain a seat to do so, and in parishes where bribery and corruption could not be supposed to influence the votes, there was no representation of the great body of the people for whom the assembly was assumed to legislate. In the county of Cornwall, containing five large parishes, and a third of the entire population of the island, there were only 246 voters, 162 of whom returned ten members to the assembly.<sup>2</sup>

That many upright and honourable men were elected by such small constituencies must be admitted, and yet such men occasionally complained to their intimate friends that they were fast losing their self-respect. For the past twenty years the

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<sup>1</sup> Returns of provost-marshal, appended to Blue Book for 1863.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

character of the house had been gradually deteriorating, and its deliberations were often painfully interrupted by scenes of confusion and strife. The appointment of the executive committee had led to no permanent improvement, for after the first few years a constant struggle for place and power was maintained, and partisanship became more bitter than before.<sup>1</sup>

The violent language so often used in the house was not without influence on the people at large. At public meetings expressions of a very seditious character were commonly employed, and a turbulent spirit exhibited itself in many parts of the island. The community had grave reasons for complaint, for while the assembly was wasting time in wrangling about its so-called privileges and rights, glaring abuses in almost all public institutions were unredressed, and very little was done to promote the social elevation or true prosperity of the country.

Early in 1865, a circumstance happened, the consequences of which are to be deplored. Dr. Underhill, whose visit to the island has been referred to, addressed a letter to the colonial secretary, Mr. Cardwell, in which he embodied the substance of a variety of statements that had reached him relative to the depressed state of the island, and pointed out some plans which he thought might prove remedial. He wrote, as any English gentleman might have done, to a minister of the crown, who regarded the letter as sufficiently important to justify him in sending it to the governor, with a request that he would make a report on its contents.<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Eyre, anxious to render his reply as complete as possible, caused the letter to be printed, and then forwarded copies, with a circular, requesting information on the points raised by Dr. Underhill. This was sent to the custodes (or chief magistrates of parishes), to clergymen, missionaries, and many others; and in this way the document became public, and was warmly discussed in the newspapers and at many public meetings. It suited certain persons of no position in society, but who had long been connected with political intrigue, to form what was known as the "Underhill Convention," and thus they associated the name of the

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<sup>1</sup> "The problem of Jamaica," first published in the September number of the "Eclectic Review," 1865, and subsequently printed as a pamphlet.

<sup>2</sup> Despatch from Mr. Cardwell, January 2, 1865.

respected secretary of a peaceful society with an organization of a very questionable character.

The greatest mischief was done in St. Thomas in the East, where an inflammatory address drawn up by Mr. G.W. Gordon was distributed, and meetings of a seditious character held. It might have been well if, when so many revolutionary sentiments were being expressed or printed, active measures had been taken to arrest the mischief by prosecuting some of the ringleaders; but it was generally understood that the attorney-general was opposed to such a course, under the impression that it would make these persons more important, by constituting them, in the estimation of their friends, political martyrs.

It was no secret, however, that there were persons who indulged in open threats against the government, and declared their intention of going from parish to parish, telling the people that they were oppressed. Towards the end of July, matters became so alarming in St. Elizabeth, that a ship of war was sent down as a precaution. The necessity of such a step has since been questioned by some, while others, quite as likely to be well informed, assert that this demonstration prevented an outbreak.

In Kingston, and some other parts of the island, attention had been drawn to the fact that considerable numbers of persons met together for drill, generally under the name of "sham volunteers." This, in some places, was probably no more than an imitation of the volunteer movement, which, as in England, had enlisted the co-operation of large numbers of young men; but in the district around Morant Bay it was far more serious in its character.

Mr. G.W. Gordon, who had taken a prominent part in all these discussions, was the son of Mr. Joseph Gordon, formerly referred to in these pages as a great planting attorney: his mother was a woman of colour. In early life he kept a store in Kingston, and even then attracted attention by his peculiarities. In course of time he became possessed with a perfect mania for the acquisition of land, and bought properties in several parts of the island. They never paid under his management, and at the time of his death they were all mortgaged. His admitted liabilities amounted to £35,000.<sup>1</sup> In his dealings with the labourers and others in his employ, his conduct was often called into question, and most certainly it was not of such a character as to justify the position he assumed as friend of the people.

In early life he was brought up in the Church of Scotland, he then identified himself with a kirk connected with the United Presbyterian Mission, and was regarded by many who formed his acquaintance at that time as a very exemplary character. After a brief connection with a Congregational church, he identified himself with the native Baptists in 1861. Among these people he assumed a leading position, preaching to them, and administering the ordinances. He it was who appointed Paul Bogle (afterwards known as the leader in the disturbances at Morant Bay) to the office of deacon. The certificate to this effect was among the documents laid before the royal commission.<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Gordon was fond of power. Unfortunately, neither in his relations to the churches he was first connected with, nor in his public life, were his conduct and ability such as to secure it. He had been for many years a member of the house of assembly, then he was unseated, and for a considerable time was unable to resume that position: he was, however, a member for St. Thomas in the East at the time of the outbreak. In accordance with an unwise custom long prevailing in Jamaica, he was also magistrate in six or seven parishes. It would be impossible to assign him any clearly defined position in the political circle of the colony. He certainly had not the confidence of those gentlemen of colour who took a leading part in the discussions of the assembly, and he not only unsparingly condemned their measures at times, but occasionally indulged in bitter invective against them.

Mr. Gordon had been prominently connected with affairs in St. Thomas in the East for many years, but the only points of general interest date back to some months before the outbreak. Among other things, he had complained of the condition of a building used as a lock-up at Morant Bay, and also of the conduct of a brother magistrate in relation to it. As the result of an inquiry ordered into the matter, the building was condemned, but it was thought that he must have known that the charges made against the magistrate were untrue. He was, in consequence, deprived of all the commissions he held as justice of the peace, and this extreme course on the part of the governor was approved of by the colonial minister.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Report of Jamaica Royal Commission," p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

He had also been elected to fill the office of churchwarden, but his right to act in that capacity was disputed, as he was not a member of the Church of England. This alleged want of qualification formed the subject of an action at law, in which Baron Ketelhodt, the custos of the parish, was the defendant. On two occasions verdicts had been given in favour of the latter, and a third trial was pending at the time of the outbreak.<sup>2</sup> These proceedings had created great ill-feeling among the native Baptists, and formed the subject of some severe comments in letters Mr. Gordon addressed to Bogle and others. Some extracts from these communications are given by the commissioners. One opponent is described as "a most worthless fellow;" another as "a great villain." To one friend he says, "Some calamity will come on them." To another he writes, "The reign of others will soon be cut short." "We must wait and see the end of these evil doers."<sup>3</sup> "The wicked shall be destroyed."<sup>4</sup> At public meetings, both at Morant Bay and in Vere, Mr. Gordon used very strong language, so much so as to lead a friend to prepare an article in his defence; or, as he wrote to Mr. Gordon, "to shield you and them from the charge of anarchy and tumult, which in a short time must follow these fearful demonstrations."<sup>5</sup>

Mr. Gordon was warned by others of the possible consequences of these meetings, and to one gentleman he observed: "If I wanted a rebellion, I could have had one long ago. I must upset that fellow Herschell, and kick him out of the vestry, and the baron also, or bad will come of it."<sup>6</sup> To another gentleman he pointed out the possibility of people resisting troops by keeping in the mountains while the latter perished by fever.<sup>7</sup> The most striking proof of Mr. Gordon's intimate acquaintance with the proceedings of his friends about Morant Bay was furnished by his wife, who stated that on the evening of the day of the outbreak he brought her the news,

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<sup>1</sup> "Report of Royal Commission," p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.



but no intelligence reached the authorities or the public till the middle of the next day. The commissioners at first supposed that Mrs. Gordon had mistaken the day, but this she assured them was not the case, and stated another fact in confirmation.<sup>1</sup>

The melancholy events of that and several succeeding days must now be related, notice first being taken of some preliminary disorders. On the 7th of October a lad, charged with assaulting a woman, was tried at Morant Bay, and fined four shillings and costs, whereupon a man called to him, and told him to pay the fine but not the costs, and then continued to make a disturbance in the court. He was laid hold of by some constables, but rescued; a second attempt to arrest him failed, and the constables were beaten. After order was restored, a case of trespass came on for trial, but this had no connection with the subsequent disturbances, as often stated, except so far as, it being of some interest, it had led to an unusually large attendance at the court-house.<sup>2</sup> Paul Bogle was one of the rioters on the 7th, and three days after he and nineteen others sent a letter to the governor, in which they complained of their treatment, asked for protection, and declared that, if this was refused, they “would put their shoulders to the wheel,” The commissioners said they could not regard it as indicating peaceful intentions. “Its language is that of scarcely concealed defiance, and looking at its terms, at the time at which it was written, and the acts by which it was accompanied and followed, it seems to us to partake rather of the character of a manifesto, preparatory to and attempting to justify a recourse to violence.”<sup>3</sup>

Warrants had been issued against Bogle and others for the rioting in the court-house: eight constables went to arrest him, and found him at a place called Stoney Gut, four miles from Morant Bay, where he lived. He called for help, and a body of men, estimated at from three hundred to five hundred, almost immediately rushed out of the chapel in which Bogle preached, armed with sticks, cutlasses, and pikes. The policemen were beaten, three of them detained for some hours as prisoners, and only released on their swearing to “join their colour.”<sup>1</sup> Bogle then

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<sup>1</sup> “Report of Royal Commission,” p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

avowed his intention of marching down to Morant Bay, "to kill all the white men, and all the black men that would not join them." It was proved that meetings had been held, oaths administered, and names of confederates recorded: large bodies of men had been drilled in different places, and several persons were spoken of as colonels.<sup>2</sup> Whether the events of the 7th precipitated the plans of the leaders will perhaps never be known, but there was some evidence to the effect that Christmas time had been spoken of as the period for action.

On the 11th of October, Bogle and his associates marched down to Morant Bay. The vestry of the parish, who were elected by the same constituency<sup>3</sup> as the members of the assembly, and the magistrates, were assembled on ordinary parochial business, but Mr. Gordon was absent. Between three and four o'clock, the news came that a body of men was approaching. They were armed like those at Stoney Gut, with the addition of a few muskets and bayonets they had obtained from the police station which they had plundered on their way. Baron Ketelhodt, on account of the disturbed state of the parish, had written to the governor for troops, which had not yet arrived, and called out the volunteers: these last were hastily got together, and drawn up in front of the court-house. The baron, standing on the steps, asked the people what they wanted, and was met by cries of "War." He then began to read the Riot Act, and while reading it, stones and bottles were thrown, and the captain of the volunteers struck on the forehead. The order was then given to fire: it was done, but the mob was close to the volunteers, and immediately rushed on them, and disarmed the greater number; some of the rest fled, and others took shelter in the courthouse.<sup>4</sup>

A few of the magistrates and others in the court-house escaped by the back windows. Those who remained were pelted with stones or fired at by the rioters, and the fire was returned by the few volunteers who had retained their rifles. A cry was then heard:

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<sup>1</sup> "Report of Royal Commission," p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 5, 6.

<sup>3</sup> Most of these were negroes; the names of Bogle and several of his confederates appear in the list. It was notorious that Mr. Gordon had seen to their qualification under the existing law, and thus secured his election,

<sup>4</sup> "Report of Royal Commission," p. 5.

“Go and fetch fire ;” “Burn the brutes out 1” and Bogle’s voice was heard, directing fire to be applied to the court-house, which, like so many buildings in Jamaica, was covered with wooden shingles. A school-room near by, together with the court-house, were soon in flames, and the roof of the latter began to fall in as the sun went down. The inmates now sought safety in flight, or by concealing themselves in the first convenient refuge, but many were seized or dragged from their hiding-places, and beaten to death. Eighteen, including the custos, were killed, and thirty-one more or less severely wounded.<sup>1</sup>

A party now proceeded to the prison and compelled the gaolers to throw open the doors and release all the prisoners, fifty-one in number. An attempt to force the door of the magazine, containing three hundred serviceable stand-of-arms, happily failed, but many stores were plundered, and from one a considerable quantity of gunpowder taken. Some incidents that occurred during these proceedings serve to show that this was no accidental riot, but a planned resistance to the constituted authority of the land. When Mr. Price, a black gentleman, was caught, there was a dispute as to what should be his fate. “Don’t kill him,” said one; “we have orders to kill no black, only white.” “He has a black skin, but a white heart,” was the reply, and he was beaten to death.<sup>2</sup> A man who pretended to be a doctor was released by Bogle on promising not to dress a white man’s wounds.<sup>3</sup> “Colour for colour,” was the exclamation continually heard. Other expressions were proved, indicating the prevailing feeling. “We want blood ;” “We must humble the white man;” “We are going to take the lives of the white men, but not to hurt the ladies;” “Buckra country for us. Never mind the buckra women, we can get them when we want;” “We don’t want the women now, we will have them afterwards.” It seemed strange that incendiary fires were rare, but it was explained by the remark, “Don’t burn the trash-house, we want sugar to make for ourselves;” “Don’t set fire to the house, only kill the white man, we have the house to live in ourselves.” Golden Grove, a fine mansion, was to be retained for Bogle’s residence.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “Report of Royal Commission,” Newspapers, Letters, &c,

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

Doctors, as well as women, were to be preserved, and one man was spared because he declared himself to be a friend of Gordon.<sup>2</sup>

During the night following the massacre at Morant Bay, Bogle returned thanks in his chapel at Stoney Gut, "that God had succeeded him in his work."<sup>3</sup> He seems to have remained there during the next day, for large numbers of men were drilled, and told by Bogle "that this country would belong to them;" "that it had long been theirs;" and "they must keep it wholly in possession." Plans were then made for defence, in case "the enemy came."<sup>4</sup> Next day Bogle was seen marching up the Blue Mountain Valley, at the head of two hundred men. Three days after, when troops were approaching, he advanced to give them battle, but being dissuaded from the attempt, his followers became panic-stricken, and fled.<sup>5</sup> Other parties were marching in different directions. Bath, eight miles to the north-east of Morant Bay, was visited by an armed band, with drums beating and flags flying; murders were committed, and many persons were barbarously beaten. To the east, in the Plantain Garden River district, there was also great excitement, in consequence of insurgent bands, The point furthest from Morant Bay visited by them was Elmwood, thirty miles to the east.<sup>6</sup> The crops were left uninjured, and most of the buildings preserved, but plunder was unrestrained. "The intention of taking the lives of the whites was openly avowed, and diligent search was made for particular individuals."<sup>7</sup> The few white and almost all the coloured inhabitants fled to the woods, or at Port Antonio went on board ships in the harbour. The timely arrival of troops prevented further bloodshed, and enabled about two hundred persons who had left their homes to reach Kingston. This town was soon crowded with refugees from all parts. The parochial buildings were set apart for some who were poor, the corporation appropriated a sum of money for their immediate wants, and liberal subscriptions were raised.

No attempt has been made in this account to depict the alarm which prevailed: the bare facts, as recorded by the royal

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<sup>1</sup> "Report of Royal Commission," p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

commissioners, have alone been referred to. But it ought not to be forgotten that the white population of the entire parish, according to the census of 1861, was only two hundred and eighty-two persons, of whom many were women and children: there were 23, 230 blacks. That many of these were on the side of law and order is unquestionable, and noble instances of devotion on the part of servants were frequent; but the influence of such men as Bogle was very great, and until the arrival of troops the insurgents did whatever they desired.

It has been stated that Baron Ketelhodt had written on the 10th, requesting military aid. The letter was received by the governor next morning, who sent to Major-General O'Connor, requesting him to despatch one hundred men. They reached Morant Bay next day, but only in time to preserve that place from a second attack by the insurgents. On the morning of the 12th, news of the massacre reached Kingston. More troops were at once despatched, and orders were sent to Newcastle for a detachment to march down the interior mountain passes, to intercept the insurgents, who had been heard of in that direction. It was this party from which Bogle's detachment fled.

On the night of the 12th, the privy council was convened at the official residence of the major-general, and came unanimously to the decision that it was desirable to proclaim martial law. But a recent Act<sup>1</sup> of the Jamaica legislature had provided that martial law should not be proclaimed in future except by the consent of a council of war. The governor, the privy council, and the members of the house of assembly composed this council, together with certain military and naval officers, twenty-one being a quorum. Thirty of these met on the morning of the 13th, including men of all parties, and it was unanimously resolved that martial law should be proclaimed in the county of Cornwall; Kingston, for commercial reasons, being exempted from its operation. The royal commissioners were of opinion that the council of war had good reason for the advice it gave, and that the governor was justified in acting upon that advice.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 9 Vict. cap. 35.

<sup>2</sup> "Report of Royal Commission," pp. 10, II.

Seamen and marines were landed at Morant Bay, to cooperate with the troops, and Major Nelson, with the rank of brigadier-general, appointed to the command. These and other similar arrangements were subsequently pronounced to have been "prompt and judicious"; for, "by confining the insurgents to the parish of St. Thomas in the East and its neighbourhood, the disturbances were kept in check, and were prevented from spreading to other parts of the island."<sup>1</sup>

Into all the details of the operations conducted by the different officers in command, there is no occasion to enter. Only a few particulars need be mentioned. At the Rhine, near Bath, nearly one hundred refugees, women and children, many of whom had undergone severe privations, were found, and escorted to Port Morant, whence they embarked for Kingston.<sup>2</sup> Some of these were wounded, and all were in a most deplorable state. Other detachments passed through different districts around Morant Bay.<sup>3</sup> Their proceedings in many cases could not be defended, but the commanding officers were more under the personal supervision of General Nelson, than in other districts, whose instructions, if carried out, would have prevented much injustice.

Colonel Hobbs, with a body of white troops, was engaged in the interior. On the 16th, he reported to Major-General O'Connor, "that numbers of the rebels had come in, having thrown away their arms, seeking protection ; and, though worthy of death," he "shrank from the responsibility of executing them without first receiving the general's or the governor's wishes respecting them."

<sup>4</sup> To this he received a reply, in which he was told that the major-general hoped that he would deal in a more summary manner with the rebels, and on no account forward prisoners to Kingston.<sup>5</sup> Colonel Hobbs had suggested that the well-disposed black people should be invited to enrol themselves as special constables, and that thus it would be seen who were on the side of law and order. This idea was not acted upon. In consequence, however, of orders he received, he pushed on to Stoney Gut, which he found occupied by troops from Morant Bay. Returning up the valley, eleven prisoners were tried on the charge of complicity in the murders of Morant

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<sup>1</sup> "Report of Royal Commission," p. II.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. II.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12,

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

Bay. Colonel Hobbs reported that their guilt was clear, and, being “unable either to take or leave them, he had them shot.”<sup>1</sup> Twenty-three more were shot next day. On the 21st a circumstance occurred which created much controversy. A reputed Obeah-man was tried by court-martial and convicted. One of the favourite assertions of these people has been that “Buckra can’t hurt them.” Colonel Hobbs directed him to be placed on a hill-side, about four hundred yards from the firing party. The bullets caused almost instantaneous death, and it is stated that the effect on the minds of the prisoners was so great, that the colonel felt at liberty to release a considerable number then in his camp, many of whom were heard to say they never would believe in Obeah again. Nearly one-half of the houses burnt during martial law were in the district in which Colonel Hobbs operated, and in all sixty-eight persons were put to death.<sup>2</sup>

For many years previous to these occurrences Colonel Hobbs had borne the name of being not only a kindhearted man but one of deep Christian feeling. He took a lively interest in the welfare of his soldiers, and in Kingston he was known as one who heartily sympathised with the social and religious movements of the day. In judging his conduct during this trying time, let it be remembered that he conducted his operations in the midst of heavy rains and among swollen rivers; that he was thus cut off from any accurate knowledge of the real character of the outbreak, or the actual strength of the insurgents; and that his first despatch relative to prisoners had elicited a reply calculated to convey the idea that leniency to the guilty was not to be exercised. The major-general, in a letter received on the 21st, wrote: “I am much pleased by your adopting a decided course with respect to captured rebels.”<sup>3</sup>

A few weeks after the investigation before the royal commission, Colonel Hobbs sailed for England. He had previously shown signs of mental derangement, but one day he managed to escape the vigilance of his attendant, and threw himself overboard. All efforts to save him were in vain.

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<sup>1</sup> “Report of Royal Commission,” p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

While these active measures were being taken in the neighbourhood of Morant Bay, and in the interior, Captain Hole was also engaged in the extreme eastern district of the island. Eighty-nine persons were tried by court-martial and executed, many were flogged, and among them about twenty women. The infliction of this punishment was reprobated by the royal commissioners, though they admit the difficult position in which Captain Hole was placed, as he offered these people pardon if they would give up the property it was proved they had stolen.<sup>1</sup> Another serious matter in connection with this district was the lawlessness of certain black soldiers. Captain Hole, when on the march with his detachment, found eleven dead bodies, at different places on the road, shot by a band of six or seven black soldiers, not of his party, who had broken loose. It was this fact that gave rise to the sensational story, told in England, about "eight miles of dead bodies." Another negro deserter shot on one day ten prisoners he had taken from the charge of native constables, who did not interfere to prevent the barbarous deed. Three other soldiers reported that they had shot ten persons, and they brought in two waggon-loads of plundered property they had recovered. The troops under Captain Hole's command were evidently an unruly lot. Two corporals were degraded, one was sentenced to penal servitude for seven years for burning houses without orders, and another flogged.<sup>2</sup>

Some doubts had been entertained as to whether the Maroons would prove faithful. Bogle and his friends had tried to win them over to their cause,<sup>3</sup> and great care was taken by the insurgents not to injure any one connected with them.<sup>4</sup> On the 13th a party of them occupied Bath, and took active measures to put down disorder. On the 20th another party, under the command of Colonel Fyfe, entered that little town.<sup>5</sup> Next day Colonel Fyfe attacked a sort of fort the rebels had made at a place called Torrington. The approach was dangerous, and one man was wounded by the shots fired at them, but the insurgents were soon driven out with a loss of seven men killed.<sup>6</sup> This was about the only attempt at resistance after the arrival of troops: one shot only had been fired at the soldiers who entered Stoney Gut.<sup>1</sup> Large



quantities of plunder were found in the huts near Torrington, and one hundred and forty-one cottages were burnt; but Colonel Fyfe, who was an old resident in the colony, ordered that a shelter should in all cases be left for women and children. Between Torrington and Stoney Gut a sort of barricade had been thrown across the road, which was removed with difficulty.

Many reports were circulated relative to the cruelties of these Maroons. It seems that twenty-five persons in all were put to death by them; and with respect to the floggings at Bath, which at first were very numerous, it is only justice to Colonel Fyfe to say, that as soon as he arrived, he gave positive orders to discontinue the practice.<sup>2</sup> It was here that, under the superintendence of a local magistrate, but before Colonel Fyfe's arrival, cats, round which wires were twisted, were used for the punishment of men. No language is sufficiently strong to use in condemnation of such barbarity.

This outline includes all that can be of interest with respect to the plans taken to suppress the insurrection. The royal commissioners observed, respecting them, that "by the prompt and rapid manner in which the different movements were executed, the outbreak was overcome in a very short period."<sup>3</sup>

The act which occasioned most sensation during these exciting times was the arrest, trial, and execution of Mr. G.W.Gordon. Immediately after martial law was proclaimed, Mr. Eyre went to Morant Bay in the French steamer *Caravelle*. During his absence Dr. Bowerbank, the custos of Kingston, was urged by Mr. Westmoreland and Mr. Hosack, members of the executive committee, to arrest Mr. Gordon. Dr. Bowerbank then went to Major-General O'Connor, who objected to its being done, on the ground that he had not a single soldier to spare in case of its occasioning a disturbance.

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<sup>1</sup> "Report of Royal Commission," p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 14, 15.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 6, 7.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

Fears were entertained by many that serious disorders would occur in Kingston, and at a meeting of about forty magistrates, Dr. Bowerbank was requested to write to Mr. Eyre, urging him to put that city under martial law. This Mr. Eyre declined to do. But about one hundred and forty pensioners formerly attached to West Indian regiments, were called out, and in all, upwards of six hundred volunteers were enrolled; mounted companies, under Captains De Cordova and Astwood, rendering great service in keeping up communication with the disturbed districts, and in guarding Rock Fort, about four miles from Kingston, where large quantities of arms and ammunition were deposited.

Mr. Eyre returned from Morant Bay on the 17th and at once ordered the arrest of Mr. Gordon. Search was made for him at a relative's, and at his residence, but he was not found; his office was also visited in vain. Later in the day he came to the house of the general, and was arrested. Dr. Bowerbank accompanied him to see his wife, and he was then taken on board the *Wolverine*, which at once sailed for Morant Bay with the governor, who returned to the scene of the outbreak, but Mr. Gordon was not landed until the 20th. There was then a court sitting, composed in part of members of the legislature, but Brigadier-General Nelson did not think it right that Mr. Gordon should be tried by persons who might be supposed to be prejudiced against him. He accordingly adjourned that court and formed another, consisting of one military and two naval officers. The trial took place on the 21st, and lasted six hours. The charges were for high treason, and for complicity with parties engaged in the insurrection. It is impossible for any clear-headed, unprejudiced man to read the notes of this trial without coinciding in the remark of the royal commissioners, that "the evidence, oral and documentary, appears wholly insufficient to establish the charge upon which the prisoner took his trial."<sup>1</sup> He was, however, found guilty, and sentenced to death. Brigadier Nelson approved of the finding, but delayed execution of sentence until Monday. In the meantime he sent copies of the proceedings and evidence to Major-General O'Connor, by whom they were read to two members of the

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<sup>1</sup> "Report of Royal Commission," p. II.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

executive committee, and then forwarded to Mr. Eyre, who communicated to Nelson his concurrence in the justice of the sentence, and the necessity of carrying it into effect. This despatch reached Morant Bay on the 23rd, before Mr. Gordon was executed. General O'Connor next day transmitted to the secretary of state for war, and to the military secretary at the Horse Guards, a copy of all documents relating to the transaction, and in reference to the governor's approval of the sentence, adds, "In which I fully coincide."<sup>1</sup> It is pleasing to be able to append to the account of this deplorable event, that the stories told of indignities offered to Mr. Gordon at the time of his execution are unfounded.

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During the month of martial law eighty-five persons appear to have been put to death without trial, in some cases wantonly, in others under the impression that the act was justified. Three hundred and fifty-four others suffered death after trial by court-martial. In all, about six hundred were flogged, and about one thousand cottages were burnt.

When the tidings of the outbreak reached Cuba, the governor-general immediately despatched two vessels of war with an offer of assistance, which was courteously declined. Admiral Sir James Hope afterwards arrived in the *Duncan*, from Canada, with troops, but not being required they soon returned, as a Fenian outbreak in that colony seemed to be impending. A vessel had been despatched to Barbadoes at the commencement of the insurrection, which had then returned with parts of an English and of a West Indian regiment. These were speedily located in different districts of the island where alarm was felt and troops seemed desirable.

The tidings of the outbreak first reached England from America by the Atlantic telegraph, and towards the middle of November the despatches of the governor and major-general were received. Very different feelings were awakened by these communications. By some, the conduct of the authorities was praised in the highest terms, and old stories of negro ferocity and worthlessness were revived: the enemies of the race imagined that now they had at last proved the truth of every prediction as to the folly of emancipation. On the other hand, the ruthless murders at Morant Bay and

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<sup>1</sup> "Report of Royal Commission," pp. 24, 25.

elsewhere, the terrible sufferings of hundreds of women and children hiding in the bush, amid the inclemencies of the rainy season, in peril of their lives, and of what to a pureminded woman is dearer than life, were forgotten in indignation at the retribution inflicted, and above all at the execution of Mr. Gordon.

Mr. Eyre, in his opening speech to the legislative bodies early in November, used language which no one in his position should have done; for he not only condemned the conduct of men he was pleased to call "pseudo-philanthropists," but he spoke also of the misdirected efforts and misguided counsel of certain ministers of religion; "sadly so miscalled," he proceeded to say, "if the Saviour's example and teaching is to be the standard." For any reflection on the conduct of a single nonconforming minister connected with an English society or denomination, Mr. Eyre had not the least warrant. Only a few months before the outbreak there had been a serious altercation among the leaders in a native Baptist chapel near Morant Bay, because two English ministers had been permitted to hold a service in one of their chapels. "Colour f or colour" was the argument used.

In his despatches to the colonial minister, Mr. Eyre wrote in a similar strain, and thus did not a little to intensify the indignation with which his conduct in other respects was regarded. The unfortunate *animus* he displayed towards those he regarded as opponents did a great deal to prevent justice being done to the painful circumstances in which he was placed, or to the promptitude with which he dealt with the outbreak in its first stages.

Mr. Cardwell, in his first despatch, called attention to Mr. Gordon's case, and asked for explanation on this and other points; but the intense excitement in England required stronger measures to be taken, and it was determined to send out a special commission to make inquiry into the origin, nature, and circumstances of the outbreak, and the measures adopted in its suppression. The following gentlemen were appointed:—Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Knight Storks, G.C.B.; Right Honourable Russell Gurney, M.P., Recorder of the City of London; and J.B. Maule, Esq., Recorder of Leeds. The former was

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<sup>1</sup> "Report of Royal Commission," pp. 23, 24, 25.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

also empowered to act as governor of the island and commander-in-chief of the troops during the course of the inquiry, and until the final decision of the British government was made known.

These gentlemen discharged their duty in the most complete and impartial manner. Counsel were permitted to watch the proceedings on behalf of those who were likely to be affected by the result of the inquiry. Reporters from several English newspapers were present, and thus the utmost publicity was given to all the proceedings. The commission was formally opened in Spanish Town, on Tuesday, the 23rd of January, and sat, almost without intermission, until the 21st of March. The commissioners also visited Morant Bay and Stoney Gut, and took evidence. Mr. Russell Gurney held a separate court at Morant Bay, Bath, and Manchioneel; and Mr. Maule at Monklands, Leith Hall, Golden Grove, and again at Morant Bay. Fifty-one days in all were spent in the examination of seven hundred and thirty witnesses. The commissioners, in their report, bear testimony to the facilities which were afforded them by all classes for the prosecution of their inquiry, which was a most exhaustive one. From their report most of the facts stated in the preceding pages, relative to the outbreak and its suppression, have been taken,<sup>1</sup> but a few points yet remain to be noticed.

With respect to the courts-martial, they said that, “in the great majority of cases, the evidence seemed unobjectionable in character, and quite sufficient to justify the finding of the court” Exception was, however, taken to several cases besides that of Mr. Gordon, which are specified;<sup>2</sup> and it was observed with respect to some of these, that “at Port Antonio the evidence allowed to be given was of a most objectionable description.” This place was most distant from the centre of operations where Brigadier Nelson was located. Yet the commissioners add that other evidence seems to have been given in some cases beyond what appeared in the notes, from which they alone formed their opinion; and that in one case, where the evidence appeared most defective, the guilt of the prisoner was proved incidentally in the course of their own inquiry.

<sup>3</sup> A very considerable number of sentences of imprisonment passed could not be carried out, as the power of these courts did not extend beyond the duration of the martial law which had called them into existence.

Mr. Gordon’s case had special consideration, and after a careful review of all the facts relating to his conduct, the

commissioners arrived at the conclusion that the true explanation of it was to be found in the account he had given of himself. "I have gone just as far as I can go, and no further." "If I wanted a rebellion I could have had one long ago." "I have been asked several times to head a rebellion, but there is no fear of that. I will try first a demonstration of it."<sup>1</sup> "Mr. Gordon," the commissioners observe, "might know well the distinction between a 'rebellion' and a 'demonstration of it' but that would not be so easy to his ignorant and fanatical followers. They would find it difficult to restrain themselves from rebellion when making a demonstration of it." But while giving weight to the fact that "the conduct of Gordon had been such as to convince both friends and enemies of his being a party to the rising," and that he himself admitted that "this was the general belief as soon as the news of the outbreak was received," the commissioners did not feel justified in going beyond the statement that "it appears exceedingly probable that Mr. Gordon, by his words and writings, produced a material effect on the minds of Bogle and his followers, and did much to produce that state of excitement and discontent in different parts of the island which rendered the spread of the insurrection exceedingly probable."<sup>2</sup>

With regard to other important points, the commissioners observe: "That by the continuance of martial law in its full force to the extreme limit of its statutory operation, the people were deprived for a longer than the necessary period of the great constitutional privileges by which the security of life and property is provided for;" and lastly: "That the punishments inflicted were excessive; that the punishment of death was unnecessarily frequent; that the floggings were reckless, those at Bath being positively barbarous; and that the burning of one thousand houses was wanton and cruel."<sup>3</sup>

On the 18th of June, 1866, Mr. Cardwell forwarded a despatch in reply to the report. He agreed with the views expressed, but observed that no instructions had hitherto been given to colonial governors with respect to such an emergency as that which had arisen; and that Mr. Eyre had only been partially informed of the

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<sup>1</sup> "Report of Royal Commission," pp. 1-3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 18.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

measures actually taken, nor had any complaints been made to him against the conduct of officers in command during the whole period of martial law. Yet "her Majesty's government, while giving Mr. Eyre full credit for those portions of his conduct to which credit is justly due, feel compelled, by the result of the inquiry, to disapprove other portions of that conduct." Mr. Eyre was not in consequence restored to the government, and for a time Sir H.K. Storks continued to rule the colony.

The commissioners had expressed their opinion that, as on the 30th of October Mr. Eyre had stated that the rebellion had been put down and its chief instigators punished, "directions might and ought to have been given that courts-martial should discontinue their sittings, and the prisoners in custody have been handed over for trial to the ordinary tribunals."<sup>1</sup> This would not have made much difference in the number executed, and an amnesty had been already proclaimed to all but ringleaders or murderers. But Mr. Eyre's own remarks fully justify this opinion. He told the legislative bodies, in his opening speech, that "within three days from the first intelligence of the rebellion reaching Kingston it was headed, checked, and hemmed in: within a week it was fairly crushed." Yet, that his position may be fairly estimated, it must be added that if he had suspended the action of the military courts he would have acted in opposition to the judgment of almost all around him; and if by pursuing a different course to that he adopted at the outset, the rebellion had gained ground, or broken out in other districts, there were those in high positions who would have held him responsible for whatever consequences ensued.

During martial law, a number of persons who were generally known as political prisoners had been arrested. Some of these were Haytians, who had been engaged in revolutionary projects with respect to the existing government in that island, but who, by a peculiar combination of events, were not unreasonably suspected of some connection with the outbreak in Jamaica. Others had spoken or written what was now regarded as seditious. One gentleman, Mr. Sydney Leven, was arrested at Morant Bay, one hundred and twenty miles from the scene of disorder: he, however, was released

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<sup>1</sup> "Report of Royal Commission," p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

by writ of *habeas corpus*. Nelson questioned his power to bring these political prisoners to trial, and Mr. Eyre considered he had acted wisely in his decision. Of these, some were tried by ordinary courts, and, in a few cases, slight sentences were passed. A considerable number of prisoners were also tried some months after the outbreak, for complicity in it. Two, against whom the crime of murder was proved, were executed, and others were sentenced to imprisonment or penal servitude.

While martial law was still in operation, the assembly was convened. Mr. Eyre, in his opening speech, commended, in the most eulogistic terms, those officers who had been engaged in the suppression of the outbreak, and enlarged upon the danger to which the island had been and was still exposed. The want of the colony, he said, was a strong government, and to obtain it he was of opinion there was but one course open. The existing form of constitution must be abolished, and another one substituted, "in which union, co-operation, consistency, and promptness of action, may as far as possible be secured." He did not fail to observe that all whose offices were abolished ought to be compensated. The address of the legislative council re-echoed the speech of his excellency, and so also did that of the assembly; which went so far as to take up an expression of the governor, and assert that a strong government was necessary to save Jamaica from sinking "into the condition of a second Hayti."

Mr. Westmoreland, the leading member of the executive committee, lost no time in introducing a bill to alter the constitution. It was proposed to abolish the existing chambers, and appoint a legislative council, whose members should be nominated by the crown, and hold office for life. This did not commend itself to the judgment of the house, and it was finally agreed that the council should consist of twenty-four members, half of whom should be nominated by the crown, and half elected, four for each of the three counties into which Jamaica is divided. This bill was not passed without much opposition: nine members in the assembly voted that it should be read a second time in six months; and in the council, Mr. Moncrieff pointed out the danger of only one legislative chamber. It turned out that this was not a measure that her Majesty's government could accept, and on the

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<sup>1</sup> "Report of Royal Commission," p. 27.



14th of December another bill was introduced, and finally adopted, which placed the future constitution entirely in the hands of the imperial government. It provided that her Majesty should assume entire management and control of the affairs of the island, and by orders in council, or otherwise, conduct its affairs, such orders to have the force and effect of law.

No doubt the members of the executive committee anticipated a continuance of place and power under the new order of things: indeed, they threw out hints to that effect.<sup>1</sup> But if the British government disapproved of Mr. Eyre's conduct, they could not reinstate in authority those who had been his responsible advisers. A review of the bills introduced by the executive committee during this session will fully justify the change which was effected. One empowered the governor to detain in custody persons arrested during martial law. Another provided for the forfeiture of the real or personal estate of persons convicted of treason or felony during the rebellion. A third provided for the trial of offences committed during the rebellion by military tribunals after martial law had expired. All these were disallowed by the queen.

The most absurd of all measures was one prohibiting the importation, sale, and use of the agricultural instrument called a cutlass; and when Mr. G.Henderson calmly pointed out that the negro had been so trained to its use from the days of slavery that it was now indispensable, and far less dangerous as a weapon than the machete or billhook, Mr. Westmoreland rose at once and moved that the doors should be closed.<sup>2</sup> This last was a common practice during this session, when there was anything like freedom of discussion. This bill, together with one to form the Maroons into military clans, was rejected. So also was another, which carried the thoughts back to the days of the Stuarts. It proposed to register missionaries and schoolmasters, to regulate the times of worship, and generally (while exempting the established churches) to bring nonconforming places under the control of the civil power. The prompt and earnest protest of the ministers in Kingston led to its withdrawal.

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<sup>1</sup> Sinclair's "Debates," 1865, pp. 132-140, &c.

<sup>2</sup> Sinclair's "Debates"; "Morning Journal," December 8, 1865.

Among measures left to their operation by the crown may be enumerated an Act to indemnify the governor and others engaged in suppressing the rebellion; one to prevent the training of persons in the use of arms; one to empower the governor to send away aliens where necessary for public safety; and another to prevent the administration of unlawful oaths. Before Christmas the house was dissolved by Mr. Eyre, who complimented members on having patriotically immolated their privileges. Never, perhaps, in the history of the world, were patriots less appreciated. Men and women went about the common business of life as usual, apparently unimpressed by the greatness of the sacrifices which had been made.

When Sir H.K. Storks arrived, on the 6th of January, 1866, he again called the legislature together, but only to pass two bills necessary to carry out effectually the purposes of the royal commission. On the 10th of January the history of representative institutions in Jamaica terminated for a season, after having existed for two hundred and two years. When education has raised the masses of the people to a far higher standard, when old prejudices and animosities are forgotten, then, but not till then, they may be advantageously restored. In the mean time most men will agree with Sir J.P. Grant, that it is best to leave things as they now are.<sup>1</sup>

After the royal commissioners' report had been approved by the colonial secretary, Mr. Eyre retired from the colony. He had previously received numerous addresses, signed by about five thousand men and three thousand five hundred women, expressing approval either of all, or of portions of his conduct during the late outbreak. In England Mr. Eyre found many influential friends, and some injudicious ones. Enemies were numerous: he was brought before the magistrates in the county where he resided, and charged with murder, but acquitted. A subsequent attempt to convict him, and also Brigadier Nelson, in London, failed, the grand jury throwing out the bill. Committees were formed for purposes of prosecution and defence, and large sums of money raised. The painful story was, it is presumed, brought to a close on the 8th of July, 1872, by a large majority of the House of Commons ordering a payment of over £4,000 to be made to Mr. Eyre, to reimburse him for the expenses of his defence. On this occasion Mr. Russell

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Hon. G.Solomon.

Gurney pointed out that the ex-governor had remained in ignorance of some of the most painful atrocities in the repression until they were brought to light by the investigations of the royal commission.<sup>1</sup>

In Jamaica, Mr. Gordon Ramsay, who had acted with extreme severity as provost-marshal during martial law, was charged with the crime of murder at St. Thomas in the East, but the grand jury threw out the bill. This case was subsequently adduced by Sir J.P. Grant as one reason for the abolition of grand juries in Jamaica.<sup>2</sup>

A dozen English officers of high rank were also sent out to hold a court-martial on two officers, who were accused of wilfully ordering the shooting of three men during the outbreak. The court sat for several weeks, but the charge was not proved. That the men were shot was unquestionable, but by whose orders was not clear.

Some inquiries were also instituted into the cases of those who had suffered loss by the military occupation of the district, and compensation given to a limited amount.

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<sup>1</sup> Debate in "Times," &c.

<sup>2</sup> Despatch to Secretary of State, No. 33, October 24, 1866; Report on Blue Book for 1870-71. 3 29 Vict. cap. 12.

## CHAPTER VII

# THE ADMINISTRATION OF SIR JOHN PETER GRANT

In August, 1866, Sir J.P. Grant arrived as governor of Jamaica. He was well known as an Indian statesman, and his appointment was very generally welcomed by all classes of society throughout the island. Effect had been given to the laws passed by the assembly to alter and amend the constitution by the imperial parliament,<sup>3</sup> in an "Act to make provision for the Government of Jamaica." By the exercise of the powers thus conferred upon the queen, an order in council was passed on the 11th of June, establishing a legislative council in Jamaica, consisting in the first instance, of the officer in command of the troops, the colonial secretary, the attorney-general, the financial secretary, the director of roads, and the collector of customs, together with a few non-official members.

On the 16th of October the first legislative council was convened, consisting of all the official members named above, except the director of roads, who was not then appointed, and of three non-official members, the Honourables Messrs. Mackinnon, Moncrieff, and McDowell. One of the most important measures passed at the first sitting of this council conferred upon the new government the powers and functions of the former executive committee and of various other boards, and abolished the elected vestries and road boards, of the several parishes. It also enabled the governor to nominate persons in their stead, to whom, under the title of municipal boards, were entrusted the duties formerly discharged by those bodies.

The subsequent abolition of the offices of financial secretary and of collector of customs, rendered another order in council necessary.<sup>1</sup> This abolished the *ex-officio* seat of the director of roads, and opened a wide field for selection, by enabling her

Majesty to appoint any three officers to complete the full number (six) of official members. The director of roads and the auditor-general were, in the first instance, appointed under this provision. Some changes have since taken place, and other unofficial members have been introduced, so that the full number (six) have now been nominated. The proceedings of the council present a marked contrast to the wearisome debates and the class legislation of the former house of assembly.

Great, and on the whole, most beneficial changes have been effected in the mode of legal procedure in the colony. District courts have been established very much on the model of the English county courts, and, like them, deal with common law and equity cases. They have a limited jurisdiction in matters respecting titles to land, and unlimited with regard to unlawful possession without title. They have also a restricted criminal jurisdiction, and defendants charged before a magistrate's court may have the trial moved up into that of the district judge. They have also become the insolvent and probate courts of the colony, and have special powers in cases affecting indentured coolie labourers. The business transacted in the eight courts which have been established has increased from year to year, and public confidence has been secured in the integrity and justice of their decisions; for during three years there were only six appeals to a higher court, as provided by law, out of nearly five thousand criminal trials, and only twenty-five out of upwards of sixteen thousand civil cases.

In former days the clerks of the peace were paid by fees; it was thus to their interest that cases should be multiplied, and cross-summonses issued by contending parties. This system has been brought to an end, and the clerks of petty sessions, as they are now called, are paid fixed salaries, and the fees are converted into stamp duties. The time of these officers is entirely devoted to their professional duties, no private practice being permitted. Two assistants to the attorney-general have also been appointed, who practically discharge the duty of a public prosecutor. The old office of official assignee, not without good reason,<sup>1</sup> has been abolished, and the duties entrusted to the judges of the district courts. The office of the masters in chancery has also ceased to exist, and under the able supervision of the present chief justice, Sir J. Lucie

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<sup>1</sup> November II, 1859.

Smith, the duties have since been efficiently and economically despatched. The paucity of barristers has been in part supplied by a law allowing the judges of the supreme court to admit attorneys of seven years' standing to practise as advocates.

Another great reform has been the abolishment of imprisonment for debt, except by order of a competent court of justice, and then only in cases of dishonesty; while the recent introduction of the English bankruptcy law is a further advance on the measure which gave the district courts jurisdiction in cases of insolvency, and through which dividends were declared—almost a new feature in the history of the colony.

These judicial changes have had a marked effect upon the community at large. Confidence in the rectitude of legal decisions is now general; old abuses have been swept away, and simple but effectual remedies are provided for those who are compelled to have recourse to law.

Among other laws passed during this administration, two should be especially noticed, from the contrast they afford to the proceedings of the former executive committee. The one repealed the provisions relating to the declaration of martial law, and the other imparted to aliens the same power to hold real and personal property as is enjoyed by British subjects. A very considerable number of enterprising Cubans and others have in consequence purchased property in the island. While facilities have thus been afforded to all willing to settle in the colony, determined steps have been taken to put down squatting. Abandoned properties are leased by government for a term of seven years, during which time any person having a valid title may come forward and obtain possession, subject to the leases. The squatters, as a rule, are glad of the security thus offered. Provision has also been made that when quit-rents and land-tax have been long in arrear, the land may be sold, after legal proceedings in the circuit courts and public notifications at three months' interval. Many such extensive tracts of land are now offered for sale.

A determined and partially successful effort has been made to establish a really efficient and trustworthy police force. Only about six hundred and fifty officers and men have yet been appointed, but

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<sup>1</sup> Report on the Blue Book for 1868, pp. 5, 6.

the maximum number authorised by law is nine hundred and fifty, or more than double the former force. This body is formed upon the plan of the Irish constabulary, and the men are enlisted for five years. They undergo military drill, but only wear arms when called out on special duty, in case of riot or disorder. No opportunity has happily been afforded of proving how they would behave if required to act in any really serious emergency. Their appearance on several occasions has been sufficient to restrain violent men from proceeding to open resistance. A bill has also been passed to establish a rural constabulary, and more efficient regulations introduced with respect to habitual criminals,

The requirements of what is commonly called the planting interest have not been ignored, though for four previous years no Indian immigrants had been introduced. During 1867, 1636 coolies were brought into the colony, of whom nearly one-third were females, a very much larger proportion than in former years. Next year the immigration ceased, owing to the mismanagement of the agent in India; but Mr. W.M. Anderson was sent from Jamaica, and his selection has been far more judicious than that of any of his predecessors. Important changes have been effected in the provision made for the treatment of these people. Former laws had only made it compulsory on the employer to provide the coolie labourer with rations for three months. After that period he became entirely dependent upon his wages, which rarely amounted to a shilling a day: many, especially the sickly, were on the verge of starvation, and could not earn enough to recover health and strength. It was now made compulsory that every coolie should receive, either in wages or food, sixpence a day for the whole period for which he was indentured, enough to support him in health and strength, or to maintain him in hospital, if ill. Daily rations are supplied on a scale and at a price approved of by the governor in council. Wages are fixed at one shilling a day for men, and ninepence for women and boys of from twelve to sixteen years of age. Work must be found for six days a week, and task work is permitted, if thereby the immigrant can earn not less than the stipulated sum. Hospitals are provided by the government at the cost of the immigration fund, and the medical men attending the coolies are now appointed by the governor, and paid from the same fund, and not by the employer, as was formerly the case.

Not only are these provisions excellent as regards the welfare of the labourer, but that they suit the employer is shown from the

fact that great numbers of coolies have been applied for. 1394 were introduced in 1869, 906 in 1870, and 1354 in 1871. Applications were made for 2400 to arrive during 1872. In 1871, 925 coolies, whose industrial residence of ten years in the colony had expired, returned to India, taking with them £7229 in treasury bills, beside a large quantity of specie. 1215 coolies, also entitled to a return passage, elected to remain in the colony, and received £12 each as bounty for adults, or £6 for all children over three years of age. Great improvements continue to be made in the treatment of those under indenture, and instead of the old system of barracks, separate cottages are now more generally built. The desire to remain in the colony, receiving the bounty, instead of returning to India, increases; and the adaptation of the climate to Indian immigrants is illustrated by the fact, that out of 592, who arrived in 1860, only 123 had died, while there had been 122 births. Sir J.P. Grant seems quite justified in his remark, that had there been a fair proportion of the sexes, the births would have trebled the deaths.<sup>1</sup>

The fact that so large a proportion of the negro population of the island had become freeholders, and consequently independent of employment on estates, made coolie labour essential to sugar cultivation on a large scale, and it is very satisfactory to find that the evils of the system have been so far overcome by good management. Of 1379 who embarked in 1870–71, only twenty-five died on the passage. In two of the three vessels the mortality was under one per cent., while the death rate in the colony, since the introduction of the new regulations, has greatly declined. 7793 Indians were reported in the census of 1871. The cost of immigration is met by an export duty on sugar, rum, and coffee, the articles chiefly cultivated by the coolies.

The inhabitants of the colony generally have not been left to complain that no regard has been had to their well-being. The hospitals have been greatly improved, and a government medical service established; forty medical men are stationed in different districts, receiving salaries of from £200 to £300 a year. They have care of all paupers, prisoners, and police; parochial hospitals are also under their charge. It is their duty to attend to vaccination, and generally to keep the government informed on all matters relative to the public health. The system costs little more than was formerly paid to medical men, mostly in towns, to attend to those who were dependent upon government; but it places medical



advice within the reach of large numbers to whom, of late years, it had not been available. Could dispensaries, under qualified superintendence, be established in rural districts, still greater benefits would be derived. The subject has been, and is still under the consideration of the government.

Savings banks had been for many years established in the colony, and in most cases well managed. Defalcations, however, occurred from time to time, and a most distressing one in Trelawny, where over eight thousand pounds was found deficient, induced the government to adopt a modification of the English system. In 1870, a government savings bank was established, the parochial treasurers, who collect the taxes and attend to government financial business, managing the branches. After a given date the interest, four-and-a-half per cent., allowed by the treasury to the private savings banks, ceased, and in consequence all accounts have been transferred to the government institution. The highest number of private banks at any one time was nine; there are now nearly three times as many places where deposits can be received. The amount has increased year by year: in 1864 the total amount deposited was under £50,000, in 1871 it was £105,478.

The post-office has also greatly improved, the means of communication are increased, and the rate of intercolonial postage reduced. The revenue has been augmented in consequence. The returns of 1871 show a total of 1,362,000 letters, papers, and book packets conveyed during the year. Owing to the scattered state of the population in many districts, great numbers of letters are still sent by private hands.

The greatest of all the changes effected under the new constitution has been the disestablishment of the Church of England, and the introduction of a system of popular education. From an early period of the administration of Sir J.P. Grant, he had refrained from filling up vacancies as they occurred in the clergy list, in anticipation of a complete change in the existing system with the expiration of the clergy bill. So early as 1867, the cost of the incidental expenses of worship, amounting to £8000 a year, had been thrown upon the congregations, at the suggestion of the bishop.<sup>1</sup> But a moiety of this was not given, as proposed, to other church purposes. A lengthy correspondence ensued between

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<sup>1</sup> Report on Blue Book for 1870, p. 26.

the governor and the bishop, and also with the colonial office. Many plans were suggested to reduce expenditure, while yet maintaining connection with the state; but in 1870 disestablishment was finally decided upon, regard being had to the claims of the existing clergy, who retain their incomes while discharging the duties required at their hands.

The disestablished "Church of England in Jamaica" at once put forth a degree of energy and vitality unknown in former days. On the 13th of January, 1870, a convention or synod of the clergy, with a number of lay delegates, assembled in Kingston, and sat for a week. A good deal of business was done, and arrangements made for the future management of the church. Questions were, however, raised as to the legality of this synod, and during the year an act was passed providing for the formation of a constitution for the future government of the church on the voluntary principle; and giving power to her Majesty to incorporate by charter the duly appointed representatives of the free church, in whom should then be vested all ecclesiastical property. This law was framed very much on the principle of those adopted in Canada and Ireland. Under its provisions another synod was held, and arrangements made for a sustentation fund, and for the general government of the church. A most commendable degree of zeal and earnestness is being displayed by many of the clergy and laity, and if wise counsels prevail, the future prosperity of this body may be safely predicted.

A resolution of the English parliament had some time before provided that the stipends hitherto paid out of the consolidated fund to colonial bishops and archdeacons should terminate with the demise of the existing incumbents. Early in 1872 the Bishop of Jamaica died, and the British government declined to continue the payment of that portion of his stipend which, for a quarter of a century, had been paid to the suffragan Bishop of Kingston. He is, however, still entitled to his stipend as archdeacon: this will be supplemented from the funds of the church in Jamaica, so as to secure him an income of £1200 a year, far less than he has hitherto received, but more than it is intended to pay any future bishop.

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Sir H.K. Storks, April 19, 1866.

In the grants that, to a very limited amount, had for many years been made for educational purposes, no fixed principle of distribution had been recognised, and there was in fact no defined standard either of efficiency or numbers. In 1867, a system was introduced by which grants in aid were apportioned in accordance with the merits of the school and the numbers in attendance. Schools were divided into three classes. To those which passed in the third, or the lowest of these, £10 was awarded; to the second class schools, £15; and to those which attained to the first class, £20. In addition to this, a capitation grant is given on the average attendance for the year, of four, five, or six shillings, according to the rank attained by the school. No grant is made if the average attendance is less than twenty, or if the school has not been opened for one hundred and eighty days in the year. The inefficient vestry schools were abolished, and with the funds thus saved, four model schools were established. Gradual steps in the way of progress and improvement have also been taken with regard to the twenty-nine endowed schools.

In 1867 there were three hundred and seventy-nine elementary schools in the island, mostly under the superintendence and management of clergymen and missionaries: two hundred and twenty-six of these received aid from the government. Nearly half were connected with the established church, for a very considerable number of nonconforming ministers had persistently refused to accept government aid. Nor was it until they were convinced that there was no intention whatever to interfere with the religious education imparted, and that the amount of aid would be regulated solely by the attainments of the children in secular subjects, irrespective of denominational distinctions, that they gradually fell in with the plan.

During the first year that this system was in operation, only ninety-six out of two hundred and eighty-six schools came up to the government standard, one in the first class, six in the second, and the remainder in the third; but out of the hundred and ninety that failed, eighty-eight were recommended for an exceptional grant of one half that allowed in the third class. A few Baptist schools earned four times as much as they had accepted under the old system, and Wesleyan schools earned more than twice as much. Next year, out of two hundred and sixty-two schools inspected, only forty-five failed to pass, and the returns showed three times the number in first and second classes. In 1870, the number of

inspected schools was three hundred and twenty-nine, of which two hundred and forty-five passed with a marked increase on the higher grades. Next year the same rate of progress was maintained. Four hundred and eight schools were examined, and of these, six passed in the first class, sixty-eight in the second, and two hundred and thirty-nine in the third. The grants are by no means large, the average being a little over £54 to first class schools, £34 to the second class, and £20 to the third.

Additional provision has been made for the training of schoolmasters at two Normal schools established by government; and additional students are received at the Mico Institution, from which some of the best schoolmasters in the colony have been sent. The Baptists, the Moravians, and the Presbyterians also continue to sustain institutions for training teachers. There is one serious defect in the existing system: no provision is made for preparing female teachers, and as a consequence very few are employed. Girls, as well as infants, are now mostly taught by men, and with very rare exceptions all are mixed together in the same school. In rural districts the mixture is unavoidable, but it ought not to be continued in the larger centres of population. Women who would be admirably fitted for the work of education, if properly trained, could be found if a suitable Normal school was established. A small capitation grant of two shillings is allowed for all girls who are taught sewing. In 1871, £348 was thus granted, but it is not in all cases that the necessary instruction can be secured. School fees are generally exacted, and as a rule those are the best schools where they are most regularly paid.

It is a most remarkable fact that nearly £20,000 will be required for educational grants for 1873, including a preliminary vote for a college about to be established in Spanish Town; while the allowances for ecclesiastical purposes have fallen to less than £18,000, and will of course diminish year by year, until they entirely cease.

The census of 1871 showed a considerable increase in the population of the colony. The official return appears on the next page.

Both in religious and in educational matters, active measures are still required to provide for these augmented numbers.

The appointment of Lieutenant-Colonel J.R. Mann, R.E., as director of roads and superintendent of public works, and the

## NUMBER AND COLOUR OF PERSONS.

	WHITE.			COLOURED.			BLACK.		
	Sex.		Number.	Sex.		Number.	Sex.		Number.
	Male.	Female.		Male.	Female.		Male.	Female.	
1871	6,909	6,192	13,101	48,048	52,298	100,346	191,498	201,209	392,707
1861	7,295	6,521	13,816	38,223	42,842	81,065	167,277	179,097	346,374

TOTAL: 1871, 506, 154; 1861, 441, 264.

formation of a competent staff of assistants, has resulted in a far more economical and well-directed expenditure in these departments than was formerly the case. A saving of at least twenty-five per cent. has been effected in the cost of repairing the public roads, and the work is also much more efficiently performed. Some new roads have been made, or commenced, connecting important districts of country, and bridges constructed where greatly required. The public buildings are in a far better condition than at any former period, and important additions have been made to their number. In Kingston, a desert of eight acres in the very centre of the city, called the parade, has been enclosed, and converted into a public garden or park. A really excellent market, admirably adapted to the requirements of the climate, has replaced the sheds formerly used for the purpose, and the muddy beach near it has been enclosed by a substantial sea wall, and provided with a handsome and commodious landing-place.

The water-works at Kingston and Spanish Town have become government property, and arrangements are in progress by which Kingston will be abundantly supplied with that necessary, and the

The most important of all the public works hitherto commenced, is the one by which it is hoped to irrigate a large tract of country now lying comparatively waste. When Sir J.P. Grant first arrived in Jamaica, he was impressed with the facilities afforded by the Rio Colre, which runs by Spanish Town, for such a purpose. Mr. Hutchins, an engineer formerly employed in similar works in India, was brought to the colony, and the cost of the entire project is estimated at £60,000. The river will be dammed up a few miles above Spanish Town, and the waters

brought down by a canal, capable of conveying 45,000 cubic yards an hour. It will then diverge in different directions, irrigating 43,000 acres of land. Competent engineers speak hopefully of the success of the undertaking, and the proprietors of three large sugar estates have undertaken to contribute largely to the expense: they thus afford practical evidence of their appreciation of its value. Should this plan realise the expectations which are formed respecting it, other parts of the island will in all probability be improved by a similar process.

Among private undertakings, the extension of the railway from Spanish Town to Old Harbour may be mentioned. Under the former system of government, several thousand pounds were wasted in an attempt to construct a tramway between these places, under a guarantee from the public funds. The conduct of the contractor, and of the government official who ought to have seen to the proper execution of the work, was very reprehensible, and the work was ultimately abandoned. The present government has not afforded encouragement to projects for further extending railway communication under a guarantee from the public funds. If the resources of the colony will admit of the outlay, such works could more profitably be undertaken at the cost, and under the direct supervision, of the Board of Works.

When Sir J.P. Grant arrived in Jamaica, the finances were in a deplorable condition. On the 30th of September, 1866, there was a debt of £757,316, after allowing for sinking funds: by the same time next year it was £788,090. The annual charge, including sinking funds and some perpetual annuities, was £70,472.

The expenditure for the first of these years was in excess of the revenue by £68,238. For five preceding years the total excess of expenditure over income had amounted to £229,333. To meet this deficiency, the excise duty on rum consumed in the colony was increased from 2s. 9d. to 5s. a gallon, giving an additional revenue of over £30,000 a year. Some new taxes were also imposed, chiefly a trade license on merchants and general dealers, of from £1 to £25 per annum, and a tax of from 2s. to 6s. on houses under the value of £12 a year, which had formerly been exempted. These taxes amounted to about £24,000 per annum. The day was however not far distant when it was found possible to remit other taxes to an equal amount. The tonnage duty on shipping, long

protested against, was abandoned, though yielding £15,000, a year; and also a tax on breeding stock, producing £9000 a year. The import duties were also reduced from  $13\frac{1}{4}$  to  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

Measures were taken to collect the revenue more impartially than had hitherto been the case, by means of a well-organised department. During the four years ending in 1872, there have been surpluses exceeding £130,000 in all. The debt has been reduced to a similar amount, and the charges for interest and sinking funds, by judicious arrangements, greatly diminished. Debentures, on which six per cent. was formerly paid, have been exchanged for others on which five per cent is allowed, and these last are generally sold at a small premium. Not only is the income of the colony in excess of its expenditure, but the latter is now regulated on sound principles of equity and economy.

In turning to the lists of imports and exports of late years, no very considerable advance can be traced: there has, however, been some progress. The average of the exports from the colony for the three years, 1866 to 1868 inclusive, was £1,112,265; and during the next three years, £1,231,493. In imports the improvement has been more marked; the value during the first three years being £967,420, and during the last three, £1,281,819. The inhabitants have consequently been larger consumers of imported goods than formerly, and have thereby shown an improvement in their material condition; and there can be no doubt that a larger proportion of island products are consumed within the colony than was formerly the case. But the most striking illustration of the improvement in the condition of the people is exhibited in the returns issued by the Colonial Bank. The value of the notes circulated is one-third in excess of what it was three years ago. In 1867 it was as low as £83,022. In 1871 it was £127,356. From 1866, to the 5th of March, 1872, £155,000 worth of silver had been imported by this establishment, and of this, £95,000 during the last half of the period. There is no evidence whatever that silver is ever exported. But apart from all statistics, there is abundant evidence, patent to every resident in the island, that never since the abolition of the sugar duties, in 1846, have the inhabitants generally been in a more prosperous or contented state: and never, at any former period, has the prosperity that is enjoyed rested on a sounder basis.

The produce of sugar and coffee depends very much on the seasons. In 1870–71, 37,010 hogsheads of sugar were exported, the largest quantity for nineteen years. The coffee crop of 1870 reached 9,047,284 lbs., the largest since 1838: next year it fell below the average for many years past. More rum is now made, in proportion to sugar, than formerly. The number of puncheons, thirty years ago, was about one-third that of hogsheads of sugar: it is now more than one half. A considerable fruit trade has sprung up with America; excellent tobacco has, of late, been cultivated, especially by Cuban settlers. Cocoa is once more resuming its place among the products of the colony; thirty-two tons were produced in 1870, though in 1867 the total was little more than a fifth of that quantity. Its growth is steadily increasing from year to year.

The Botanic Garden, now removed from Bath to Castleton, about eighteen miles from Kingston, has had unusual care bestowed upon it: a number of rare plants have been introduced, as many as two hundred varieties in one year. Several kinds of valuable fibres have been brought to maturity, and a few new fruits, notably the Bombay mango, have been introduced. An extensive cinchona plantation is in a most flourishing condition in the Blue Mountains, and plants of Assam tea appear to have taken kindly to the soil and climate of the loftiest hills. On the Palisadoes, opposite Kingston, cocoa-nut trees have been planted in great numbers by prisoners, whose labour has thus been turned to profitable account; while a sandbank of several miles in length is gradually being converted into a magnificent grove. Jamaica is not dependent on her exports of sugar and rum. In a soil so varied a variety of tropical and semi-tropical plants can be brought to perfection, and in days to come this fact will be more fully recognised than it is at present.

In reviewing the events of the past six years, it is evident that a marked improvement in the existing condition and future prospects of the island has been effected. The discontent which once characterised so many of the people is now rarely witnessed. Taxes are more cheerfully paid, because it is known that they will be carefully expended for legitimate purposes. Education is extending, and Christian churches are flourishing. Crime is under control. Industrious habits are stimulated by the prospects of success, while the commercial and agricultural condition of the



island alike indicate steady but real progress. To Sir John Peter Grant no small share of the credit of this state of things is due, nor has he lacked the assistance of able and zealous co-workers.

His full period of service as governor will soon come to a close, but whether he then retires from the colony, or stays for a longer period, in accordance with the expressed wish of many thousands of its inhabitants, it is certain that, whatever honours may be awarded him by the sovereign he has so long and faithfully served, he will bear with him, whenever he may go, the grateful thanks of a united people, and his memory will long be cherished by their descendants.

## APPENDIX

THE following translation of the Latin poem on pages 209 and 210, is from the pen of E.J.CHINNOCK, Esq., M.A.. LL.B., of the Mission College, Blackheath:

A POEM IN HONOUR OF  
SIR GEORGE HALDANE, KNT.,  
A MOST VIRTUOUS AND BRAVE MAN,  
GOVERNOR OF THE ISLAND OF JAMAICA, ON WHOM  
ALL THE ENDOWMENTS OF MORALS AND OF WARLIKE  
VIRTUES HAVE BEEN ACCUMULATED.

Since the fates wish that the year should come at last, all the joys which are to be seen through a lengthened day are present. The people having shaken off their anxieties, are prosperous under a bright image, and the land flourishing under law. While thou art ruler, the useless things which had been done by an ill-advising mind will not return at thy appearance. Therefore all the people, even the rabble, will see that thou hast removed the yoke clinging to their necks, and the ills which the guiltless island has formerly endured with dreadful tortures. The burden would have been excessively painful did not thy victorious hand, previously renowned for valour, wish of its own accord to aid our state going to ruin. The British king has no better servant than thou art, while Scotland rejoices in thy talent. Thou art the best of heroes to prop up the fall of a nation; while the island survives, the memory of thee will also survive. Guadaloupe will recognise thee as her conqueror, and will deservedly despise the plundered camp of its governors. The golden Iris will weep for her boastful standards, and together with her inhabitants will groan for the conquered towns. Believe me, it is not in my power, O man, dear to Mars! Minerva denies to an Ethiopian to celebrate the wars of generals. Buchanan would sing thee in a poem, he would describe thee as equal to Achilles in council and in war. That famous poet, the honour of his country, is more worthy to relate thy exploits, and is

scarcely inferior to the majestic Virgil. We live under an Apollo driving his own flame-bringing team. Every kind of eloquence is lacking to slaves. Receive this at any rate. Though poured forth from one very black, it is valuable, coming from a sonorous mouth; not from his skin, but from his heart. The bountiful Deity, with a hand powerful and firm, has given the same soul to men of all races, nothing standing in his way. Virtue itself, and prudence, are free from colour; there is no colour in an honourable mind, no colour in skill. Why dost thou fear or doubt that the blackest Muse may scale the lofty house of the western Cæsar? Go and salute him, and let it not be to thee a cause of shame that thou wearest a white body in a black skin. Integrity of *morals* more adorns a *Moor*, and ardour of intellect and sweet elegance in a learned mouth. A wise heart and the love of his ancestral virtue the more remove him from his comrades and make him conspicuous. The island (of Jamaica) gave me birth the renowned Britons brought me up; the island which will not grieve while thou its father art well. This I pray: O may earth and heaven see thee without end, ruling a flourishing people.

FRANCIS WILLIAMS.

FINIS.