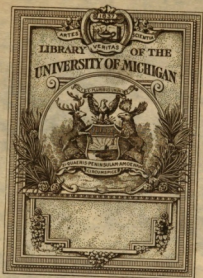


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Mortimer-

The immediate abolition
of slavery...



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THE
IMMEDIATE ABOLITION
OF
SLAVERY,
COMPATIBLE WITH THE
SAFETY AND PROSPERITY OF THE COLONIES
IN
A LETTER
TO THE
REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE
Southern Division of Northumberland,
AND OF THE
TOWN AND COUNTY OF NEWCASTLE ON TYNE.
BY THE
REV. G. F. W. MORTIMER, M. A.,
HEAD MASTER OF THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL, NEWCASTLE ON
TYNE.

Διὸ ἐκ ἑωμεν ἀρχῆς ἀθεμενω, ἀλλὰ τίς [τοῖς] ὅτι ἰσχυρὸν τῆ το
νοῦ, καὶ γίνεται τυραννός.

Wherefore we permit not an individual, but law, to rule; because
the individual seeks only his own good, and degenerates into a
tyrant.

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE:
PRINTED AT THE COURANT OFFICE, BY J. BLACKWELL AND CO.:
PUBLISHED BY FINLAY AND CHARLTON, AND EMPSON.

1833.

THE
IMMEDIATE ABOLITION
OF
SLAVERY
CONSISTENT WITH THE
FAITH AND PROSPERITY OF THE COLONIES

A LETTER

TO THE REPRESENTATIVES

If any observations contained in the following pages appear to reflect strongly upon the conduct of the West India Planters, I beg it to be understood that my censure is directed, not against individuals, but against a system. I charge Slavery with many evils; amongst them, that it has hardened the hearts of men, who, under other circumstances, would have been generous and humane: with this conviction deeply impressed upon my mind, I would not trust *myself* with the possession of arbitrary power.

Ms. A. 9. 2. 4

To many truly excellent persons the present Abolition of Slavery appears beset with obstacles of a nature almost insuperable; and whilst the justice of immediate Emancipation is the possibility of effecting it is very generally doubted.

LETTER, &c.

I respect the opinions of the dissenters, and believe that I am convinced that in the present instance they owe their origin to an imperfect acquaintance with the subject of Colonial Slavery.

GENTLEMEN,

THE Committee of the Anti-Slavery Society of Newcastle on Tyne having, upon a late occasion, imposed on me the pleasing task of expressing to you their conviction of the great and fearful evils inseparable from the existence of Colonial Slavery, it became my duty to communicate with *you*, in common with other Candidates for the representation of these and the surrounding districts, upon that most important and most interesting subject.

I thank God, that in the discharge of the trust committed to me, I have not had to confer with any individual who did not declare himself favourable, in principle, to the Emancipation of our suffering fellow-subjects; who did not consider the existence of Slavery in any part of the British Empire, to be a blot upon our free and liberal institutions—a foul and loathsome stain upon the honour of the British character. It is no small triumph to the friends of humanity, to find the principles they have long advocated every where triumphant; but the pleasure which this triumph must otherwise afford, is in a great degree counteracted by an observation of the difficulties that still seem to intervene between the admission of those principles and their actual adoption.

of justice and humanity has all this time been gaining ground, day by day, and hour by hour. Will the Slave Proprietor dare to assert, in the face of such a warning, that he has not had ample space allowed him, both for considering the best means of averting ultimate loss, and for embracing every successive opportunity to reduce that loss within the narrowest dimensions? Will he claim to himself the character of a wary and intelligent man, and confess that he is at last overtaken unawares by a storm, which has been gradually gathering in the horizon, and perceptibly thickening-in for thirty years? But if the planters are not wary and intelligent, they deserve to suffer; and I can see no reason why *they* should be indemnified at the national expense, rather than any other individual, or body of individuals, embarrassed by the unfortunate issue of commercial speculations. It would have been as just to have taxed the nation in behalf of those persons who were ruined by the failure of the great South Sea scheme, as it would be to tax the nation in behalf of the West India Planters. Besides, we have already rejected the claim to compensation in the case of a property far less objectionable than that under consideration; a property held upon a tenure incomparably superior; a property that outraged no law of humanity, violated no ordinance of religion, trenched in an infinitely less degree upon the claims of justice; a property which was at least as fully recognised by the Statute Book of England, and was at least as fully guaranteed to its possessors by the authority of prescriptive usage—I allude, of course, to the Nomination Boroughs, which the last Parliament disposed of at one fell swoop, without at all entertaining the question of compensation to those persons who had, in many

instances, invested large sums of money in the purchase of this species of property, and for whom, in every instance, this species of property possessed a very considerable exchangeable value.* Every argument that applied to the Nomination Boroughs, applies with ten-fold force to the Slave Property of the West India Planters. In the former case, Justice alone pronounced the verdict; in the latter, Religion and Humanity applaud the sentence. The principle, *Nullum tempus occurrit Regi*, is one which the law of England admits; is it possible that the same law can reject the principle, *Nullum tempus occurrit Justitiæ*? The legislators of our country have already decided otherwise. Surely they will not now invalidate their own decision, by admitting the claim to compensation advanced by the West India Planters?

I now proceed to the still more important question of gradual Emancipation. By gradual Emancipation I understand Emancipation which, refusing immediately to recognise the Slave as free, defers doing so until he shall have passed through some previous stages of preparation, or makes his freedom ultimately depend upon his fitness to possess it; and I expressly except from my notions of gradual Emancipation, Emancipation which begins by declaring the Slave free, and removing him entirely from that subjection to another's will, which is at once the most galling and the most degrading part of Slavery; whilst, in mercy to himself, it imposes some salutary restraints upon his full exercise of liberty. I shall, by and bye, have occasion to shew, that these two systems of Emancipation, although both may be considered in a certain sense gradual, are as different from each other as light and darkness.

* The case of the Seigniorities of Scotland is, if possible, still stronger.

Against gradual Emancipation, then, understood in the sense that I have above defined, I at once enter my most decided protest, and that for two reasons—that it is absurd in theory, and impossible in practice. I never hear a plan suggested for preparing the Slave for freedom, as a preliminary to granting it, without being forcibly reminded of the maternal caution, “Be sure you do not venture into the water, until you have learnt to swim.” Good habits are the result of similar actions. By acting justly, we become just; by acting temperately, temperate. I am not aware of any exception to the universal law of nature, of any special clause in favour of Slavery; and until I see the tree at last become straight, by continuing to grow crooked; until I see the vicious become virtuous, by a perseverance in vicious actions; until I see the order of things inverted both in the natural and moral world; I must be pardoned for disputing the monstrous proposition, that the way to teach any human being to be *one thing*, is to accustom him to be *another*. I must hold that the longer a man is kept in Slavery, the more completely will he be unfitted for the possession of liberty, the more thoroughly will his mind be degraded, his character depraved, the light of reason quenched beneath the influence of stormy passions, and all that is human, all that is divine, about him, debased, brutalized, destroyed. And does not experience confirm this view? Does not the present condition of eight hundred thousand of our fellow-subjects demonstrate its truth beyond the possibility of doubt or denial? If they be fitted for liberty, there is no further excuse for keeping them in Slavery; if they be still unprepared, after two hundred and fifty years of intercourse with Europeans, may we not reasonably hesitate whether the moment of preparation will ever arrive? But what is the fact?

Ever since the extinction of the Slave Trade, the current of public and private attention has flowed in one continued stream in the direction of the Antilles; legislative enactments have been multiplied for the express purpose of ameliorating the present condition of the Slave, and preparing him for the ultimate enjoyment of freedom. We have seen Protectors of Slaves appointed; parliamentary resolutions adopted; orders of council issued: and it would be unjust to deny that the nine years which have succeeded the issuing of those orders have not been marked by some improvement in the present condition of the Negroes. But what has been done towards the great object of preparing them for freedom? Nothing, absolutely nothing! In proof of this assertion, I refer to facts. On an average of the last eleven years, for which returns have been made, the Slave population in the Sugar Colonies has decreased to the enormous extent of 52,624 persons—that is, in a proportion of above six per cent.; while, during the same period of eleven years, the free classes in Trinidad, and even the Maroons of Jamaica, placed, as they undoubtedly are, under the most unfavourable circumstances, have increased in the proportion of above forty per cent. Here, then, is a decrease upon our Slave population of above forty-five per cent., in eleven years, directly chargeable upon Colonial Slavery: here is a sacrifice of nearly one-third of the human beings that should have been in existence, perpetrated by this system of legal murder. To persons accustomed to contemplate the phenomena of population, no further proof will be necessary, that the state of things under which such a waste of human life has occurred, must be a state of unmitigated cruelty—a state which comprises under it all the worst of evils—a

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state where the cravings of hunger, are superadded to the wasting influence of excessive toil,* the severity of barbarous punishments, and the ravages of premature disease; but the heart sickens at the contemplation of miseries so intense as to have caused this frightful expenditure of life: let us turn from the horrid picture. Alas! one scarcely less horrible arrests the eye! Demerara, in the year 1829, contained a population of 61,626 Slaves: between the 1st of May and the 31st of October of that year, the number of punishments reported by the Protector of Slaves amounted to 10,207; and, from January 1st, 1828, to December 31st, 1829—37,620 punishments were inflicted. In Berbice, during the same two years, ending December 31st, 1829, the number of punishments inflicted on the Plantation Slaves amounted to 21,240, while the whole population of the Colony was, by the last return, under 21,000. I have not selected the reports from these two Colonies as being in any degree more appalling than those furnished from other settlements; on the contrary, I might go on to particularize Trinidad, St. Lucia, and the yet more fearful records of the Mauritius:† but I forbear; I have already advanced sufficient evidence as to the working of the present system. I have shewn that, in every eleven years, it destroys to the amount of more than forty-five per cent. on the entire population; that, in a period of about three years and a half, it inflicts punishments equal to the number

* See note below.

† Sir Geo. Murray, in a letter dated May 8th, 1829, and addressed to the Governor of the Mauritius, observes:—"Specimens of the various chains and collars, with or without spokes, which are used at Mauritius in the punishment of Slaves, have been transmitted to this department; and they appear to be nothing less than instruments of torture."



of persons capable of being punished; it exhibits every individual Slave in the character of a condemned criminal. And who, in the face of this evidence, will be the apologist of Slavery? Who will not join in condemning it as a murderous, a demoralizing, an accursed system? Who will blame us for demanding its immediate extinction? For refusing to be content with half measures, which have been already proved* so utterly ineffectual? "What further need have we of witnesses?" Here are facts written in blood. Here are catalogues of guilt, and punishment, and degradation, that baffle description, and make comment useless; catalogues, be it observed, drawn, not from Anti-Slavery sources, but from government returns. I almost feel that some apology is necessary for the addition of another syllable upon this subject: but I cannot suffer Jamaica to pass unnoticed. Jamaica contains nearly one-half of all the Slaves subject to the British crown; and, in Jamaica, where the Planters assert† "that they have gone great lengths in ameliorating the condition of their Slaves, in the spirit of the resolutions of the British House of Commons of 1823"—where Mr. Hume states, that "every thing has been agreed to which the House of Commons proposed for the benefit of those in whose favour the resolutions of May, 1823, were framed." Two motions—one for the introduction of a compulsory Manumission Bill, the other for the appointment of a Committee, to enquire and report on the expediency of abolishing the flogging of female

* These atrocities, it must be recollected, have occurred *subsequently* to the issuing of the parliamentary resolutions.

† See resolutions of a very numerous meeting of the inhabitants of the parish of St. Ann's, convened by his Honour the Custos, on the 6th day of August, 1831, and signed Henry Cox, Chairman, and Custos of St. Ann's.

Slaves, made by Mr. Beaumont in the House of Assembly of Jamaica, and dated 22nd of November, 1831, were defeated by majorities of 30 to 2, and 25 to 3! I am convinced that no observations of mine could add to the effect of this practical comment on the fruits of gradual Emancipation. "*The Legislature of Jamaica has already gone great lengths in ameliorating the condition of its Slaves!*" Merciful and humane men, we acknowledge your benevolence! We confess, that hitherto we understood not the meaning of the term "*ameliorating*,"—that to our simple minds it was somehow or other connected with the idea of actual improvement; we have learnt your vocabulary: we acknowledge our error: from henceforth, by "*amelioration*," we understand the cart-whip, and by "*gradual Emancipation*," eternal bondage.

From these records of cruelty and degradation, I turn with pleasure to the more agreeable task of proposing a remedy; but, before entering into details, it will, perhaps, be best to state the principles upon which my plan of Emancipation is founded. In the first place, I acknowledge no property in man: I deny the right by which one human being presumes to hold another in a state of Slavery.

Secondly, I consider arbitrary power as too dangerous a possession to be entrusted even to the most upright and humane; the concurrent testimony of history proves that it has never existed without abuse.

Thirdly, I hold that the absolute Emancipation of the Slave is the only reasonable source from which his improvement can be expected.

Fourthly, the adoption of these principles must be made to consist with the security of the persons and property of the Colonists.

Fifthly, in bestowing liberty, we must use every precaution to guard against its degenerating into indolence and licentiousness.

Sixthly, the continued cultivation of the Colonies should be secured, as far as it is possible to secure that end, without infringing upon the rights of individuals.

In conformity with these principles, I would recommend that an early day be fixed, on which

**SLAVERY SHALL CEASE IN EVERY PART
OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE:**

And that the exposure of any man, woman, or child to sale, shall, from thenceforward, be deemed a felony; and the infliction of any punishment a misdemeanour, except such punishments as may be sanctioned by lawful authority, and inflicted by the appointed officers of justice.

Secondly, That all existing laws and regulations applying to the state of Slavery be absolutely repealed; and that, in all cases not hereafter specified, the liberated Negroes be admitted to all the privileges of British subjects, and governed by the same laws and regulations with their Fellow-Colonists.

Thirdly, That on or before the day lawfully appointed for the cessation of Slavery, the name of every Slave about to be manumitted be registered in the presence of commissioners appointed for that purpose.

Fourthly, That all manumitted Slaves, capable of labour, be required to hire themselves to some Master, for a period of one year, at the ordinary rate of wages in the Colony; and that the names of the contracting parties, together with the terms of the con-

tract, be registered by the Commissioners; and that the violation of such contract by either contracting party, unless upon grounds deemed satisfactory by the Commissioners, be punishable by law.

Fifthly, That in case it appear to the Commissioners, that any manumitted Slave possess property sufficient for his or her support, or be capable of obtaining a livelihood by the practice of some trade or business, such manumitted Slave be not required to hire him or herself to any Master.

Sixthly, That in case the Master find it impossible to pay his labourers in the current coin of the Colony, he be permitted to assign them portions of land, together with a supply of such implements as may be necessary for the cultivation thereof; or else a certain proportion of the produce of their labour, to be by them received in lieu of wages; or to enter into any other engagement founded upon equitable principles of barter; provided always, that such engagement be approved and registered by the Commissioners, and be binding upon both parties during the entire period of service.

Seventhly, That the Commissioners be empowered to levy a fixed amount of fine upon any Master violating his engagement with his labourer, and to apply the fine to the benefit of the injured party.

Eighthly, That the Commissioners be empowered to punish any labourer violating his engagement with his Master, by confinement and hard labour.

Ninthly, That task-work be encouraged by all possible means—for instance, that in plantation-work, sugar-refining operations, and all other cases where it shall be deemed possible, a certain amount of labour per diem be contracted for; and, in case that amount be

exceeded, the excess be paid for according to the stipulated rate of wages: where, however, such engagements cannot, from circumstances, be entered into, the registered terms of the contract must positively define the number of hours per diem to be devoted to labour, except in the case of household servants, &c., where such precision is evidently impossible.

Tenthly, That one member of a family be permitted to perform the stipulated labour of any other member of that family, male or female.

Eleventhly, That, except in the case of household servants, no engagements be considered to include the Sunday; and that for all out-door work required upon a Sunday, the labourer receive such a money payment as may be agreed on between him and his employer.

Twelfthly, That every labourer who is not paid in the current coin of the Colony have one entire holiday in every week, for the purpose of cultivating his allotment of ground, or of selling the share of produce assigned him; and that such holiday be always upon the market-day. To this provision, as well as some others, exceptions must occur in processes requiring continued labour: these should be specified by the terms of the engagement, and approved by the Commissioners.

Thirteenthly, That at the expiration of every year, it be lawful for the labourer to change his Master, no debts incurred during the time of service withstanding, provided he can find another Master willing to employ him; and that otherwise the engagement of last year be renewed, with such alterations as may be agreed on between the two parties, and duly registered.

Fourteenthly, That at the close of five years from the date of the abolition of Slavery, every labourer who has, during that period supported himself and family without having been convicted of any misdemeanour, or any other offence punishable by law, be deemed capable of continuing to support himself, and be at liberty to employ his labour as he chooses; subject only to such punishments as may be legally enacted against begging, vagrancy, &c.

Fifteenthly, That from the date of the abolition of Slavery, a deduction of sixpence per week from the wages of every labourer for ever continue to be levied, and be paid by his employer into the hands of persons appointed by government to receive the same, and be allowed to accumulate for five years at compound interest; and that, on the conclusion of these five years, the fund so raised be applied to the support of sick and infirm persons, and orphan children, and such other persons as shall be considered incapable of labour, from any cause hereafter specified.

Sixteenthly, That the British Government undertake the support of all sick and infirm persons, and of all orphan children, and of all others incapable of labour from any cause hereafter specified, at the date of the abolition of Slavery, and of all persons who shall become incapable of labour during the five years next ensuing.

Seventeenthly, That all children under the age of twelve years be educated at the expense of the British Government.

Eighteenthly, That officers in his Majesty's service be appointed Commissioners, to carry these regulations into effect.

Under these eighteen heads, I have given a brief

sketch of the regulations which I consider necessary for effecting an entire change in the state of society prevailing in many of our Colonies, for putting a close to the existence of Slavery, and for raising the Negro to the condition of a Man. I am convinced that this outline needs but to be filled up by other, and by abler hands, in order to form the ground-work of such a code, as would ensure order and security, whilst it conferred the inestimable boon of freedom. The few remarks which I shall subjoin, are merely explanatory of my views on some particular points.

The first and second provisions, which abolish the state of Slavery, may, I think, pass without comment.

With regard to the third, I consider the principle of registration absolutely necessary, in order to ensure the equal administration of justice, and to prevent eternal litigation.

With regard to the fourth provision, which requires the manumitted Slave to hire himself to some Master, for a period of one year, at the ordinary rate of wages in the Colony, I would remark that it has been already successfully adopted by the present government in the case of the Crown Negroes liberated in the Mauritius.

The exceptions suggested in the fifth are plainly consistent both with reason and equity.

The sixth provision requires some comment, as well as the greatest care in its application: a money payment would, of course, be most advantageous to the labourer, but to the Master, I am well aware, that in many of our Colonies it must be ruinous,—that, in short, under present circumstances, it is impracticable: there remains, then, a choice between the two plans, of assigning land to the labourer for cultivation and support, and of paying him in kind with a certain proportion of the

produce raised. Both these plans are open to objection,—the first as being unfavourable to, if at all compatible with the introduction of task-work; the second, as affording great facilities to fraud, both on the part of the employer and the employed, and in many cases subjecting the latter to grievous oppression, as has been the case in the manufacturing districts of Staffordshire, under what is called the truck system: in fact, I consider the mode of payment to be adopted in the case of the free labourer, the only serious difficulty that embarrasses the question of Colonial Slavery; but it is a difficulty that must be grappled with; and however objectionable the method of barter undoubtedly is, we should recollect that it has obtained successively in every nation, and is inseparably connected with a certain condition of society in the history of the progressive improvement of mankind; if our Colonies have not yet emerged from that condition, we cannot expect that they should escape its attendant evils. The greatest possible care will be necessary on the part of those who administer the laws by which the wages of labour are regulated: to their zeal and fidelity we must entrust the prevention of abuses; I believe, too, that the method of registering proposed will, in this respect, be found of the greatest benefit.

The seventh and eighth provisions invest the Commissioners with that power of punishing a breach of contract, which is necessary to carry the whole system into effect.

The ninth suggests the propriety of giving encouragement to task-work; this, it is presumed, may be done to a considerable extent in the way already mentioned.

The tenth provision, which permits one member of a

family to perform the work of any other, cannot injure either the employer or the labourer, it may probably prove beneficial to both of them.

The eleventh provides for the observance of the Sunday, and forms part and parcel of every order in council which has been dispatched from this country to the Colonies for the last nine years.

The twelfth, which secures one holiday per week to every labourer who is not paid in the current coin of the Colony, is obviously necessary, in order to ensure the means of existence to those persons who either depend for sustenance upon the cultivation of their little plots, or the exchange of a part of the produce of their labour.

The thirteenth, which permits the labourer to change his Master at the close of every year, is adopted from the Colonial law of the Cape; where, however, the Dutch Boors managed to evade it by running the Hottentots into debt, and thus retaining them in interminable servitude: this abuse must be guarded against by a special clause.

The fourteenth provision is most important: it fixes a limit to the period of probation, and admits those who have gone through their probation satisfactorily into the enjoyment of perfect liberty. I feel no peculiar attachment to the number five, but I consider five well spent years a sufficient guarantee for future good conduct in every ordinary case: exceptions will undoubtedly occur, but we are fully justified in expecting that they will not be numerous. Upwards of three hundred Negroes were set free in Antigua in the month of December, 1829. The latest account of their conduct that has been made public, is contained in a dispatch of Sir Patrick Ross, dated May 25th, 1830. He says,

“ It affords me much satisfaction to have the honour of reporting, that during a period of five months, which has expired since they were set at large, I have not received a single complaint against them; nor has one of them been committed by a magistrate for the most trifling offence. There has not, to my knowledge, been any application from them on the score of poverty; and they appear to be, in general, industriously occupied in providing for their own livelihood.”

That their conduct continued to be equally praiseworthy to a much later period, may be assumed from the fact, that on the 17th of August, 1831, Viscount Howick stated in the House of Commons his entire satisfaction with the result of this experiment, and the encouragement he had thence derived to proceed to the Emancipation of all Slaves belonging to the crown, in every Colony where such were to be found. But we need not confine our observations to Antigua only, everywhere the manumission of the Negroes has been attended with complete success. Upon this point, the following extract from a dispatch of Lord Gode- rich, dated March 12th, 1831, appears to be quite conclusive. He says, “ In the year 1828, a Circular Instruction, of which I enclose you a copy, was issued to the Governors of those Colonies in which there were Negroes forfeited to the crown under the abolition laws, the purport of which was to direct that those Negroes should be placed upon the footing of other free persons of African birth or descent, and left to seek their own subsistence. In some of those Colonies the number of forfeited Negroes amounted to several hundreds. The reports, which have since been received from the respective governors, fully justify the expectations which were entertained, that the people in ques-

tion would be able and willing to support themselves by honest means, without being a charge upon the funds either of the Government or of the Colonies, and without detriment to the Colonial Societies. The experience thus obtained affords a satisfactory assurance that the Negroes now the property of the crown, will, when manumitted, support themselves in a manner equally innocuous."

The fifteenth provision is likewise important. A compulsory benefit society is, in my opinion, the best possible method of providing for the sick and infirm; whilst the facilities afforded for the introduction of such a system, by a change from Slavery to free labour on the part of the entire working population of our Colonies, are great and unparalleled. A payment of sixpence per week from each labourer is quite sufficient to meet all the necessary expenses of a benefit society in England, and to ensure a constant accumulation of funds; and if it be sufficient in England, there can be no doubt that it will be found adequate to every purpose in tropical climates, where the range of human wants is at once more limited, and more easily satisfied: but the intervention of five years between the establishment of the fund and its first application will make assurance doubly sure. Of course, none but the sick and infirm, the widow and the orphan, must be permitted to become chargeable to the Society: the healthy labourer is compelled to contribute, upon the chance that sickness and infirmity may be the portion of his declining years, or that he may leave some behind him too helpless to support themselves.*

* Mr. Vivian, the author of "Thoughts on the Poor Laws," has, in that able little pamphlet, given a sketch of the advantages of a compulsory national benefit society over every other institution for the

The sixteenth provision, without acknowledging a claim to compensation on the part of the Planters, confers on them a most important pecuniary benefit, by taking off their hands the support of the sick, the infirm, the orphan, and the widow, and imposing the burthen of their maintenance upon the British public. Such a measure of relief, if adopted, might probably overcome the hostility of the Colonists to the Emancipation of their Slaves: at all events it ought to do so. There are in Jamaica large tracts of unappropriated land: if, as I imagine, they are the property of the crown, they might be made available for the maintenance of those persons who, though unable any longer to endure the fatigues of plantation labour, still possess sufficient strength to cultivate an allotment of ground for their own support: here buildings might be erected for the reception of those who have become chargeable to the public; allotments of land might be assigned, and labourers hired, if necessary, to assist in the cultivation. This might be done at a very trifling expense: the same plan might be adopted in other Colonies where crown lands exist, or where there is land for sale; whilst the whole burthen to be borne by the British public would be limited in its duration to a very few years, by the operation of the compulsory benefit system before alluded to.

The seventeenth provision respects the education of children in the Colonies. This is not a question of expediency, it is one of justice—for two centuries and a half we have been instrumental in prolonging the moral night of Slavery; we are only called on to undo

maintenance of the poor. The Society which he established at Bushy flourished for twenty years under his direction, but not being compulsory, died with its founder.

adopted by the Government, and that speedily. This is not a question the decision of which may be indefinitely protracted: at home, the voice of the British public is distinctly heard; in the Colonies, knowledge is making its way among the Slave population—and in the train of knowledge, liberty must follow: whilst the admission of free persons of colour to a share in the legislation, has given power to a numerous party deeply solicitous for the enfranchisement of their unhappy brethren. I do not doubt that the Negroes will obtain their freedom; but I tremble lest they should obtain it by other than by peaceable and lawful means. I tremble lest the scenes of Hayti should be renewed in our own colonies—lest the remonstrance and the complaint should be exchanged for the desperate struggle of armed violence; and, therefore, I would urge a speedy settlement of this most momentous question. Let us untie the knot of Slavery, lest it be severed by the sword. Let us hasten to give freedom to the prisoned element, lest it force an outlet for itself in some terrific explosion, scattering ruin and dismay. One hope of security remains in the wisdom and determination of the British Senate. Heaven grant that our appeal to the British Senate may not be made in vain; and that the speedy abolition of Slavery by legislative authority may realize the aspiration of the poet, that

“Where Britain's power

“Is felt, mankind may feel her mercy too.”

I am, GENTLEMEN,

With great respect,

Your obedient Servant,

GEORGE FERRIS WHIDBORNE MORTIMER.

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COMPATIBLE WITH THE
SAFETY AND PROSPERITY OF THE COLONIES
IN
A LETTER
TO THE
REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE
Southern Division of Northumberland,
AND OF THE
TOWN AND COUNTY OF NEWCASTLE ON TYNE.
BY THE
REV. G. F. W. MORTIMER, M. A.,
HEAD MASTER OF THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL, NEWCASTLE ON
TYNE.

Διὸ ἐκ ἡμῶν ἀρχῆς ἀθέσμων, ἀλλὰ τῆς [νομῆς] ὅτι ἰσχυρὰ τῆ το
νομοῦ, καὶ γίνεται τύραννος.

Wherefore we permit not an individual, but law, to rule; because
the individual seeks only his own good, and degenerates into a
tyrant.

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