

MAURITIUS.

R E P O R T

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS OF INQUIRY

UPON

T H E S L A V E T R A D E

AT

MAURITIUS.

[PRESENTED TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY HIS MAJESTY'S COMMAND.]

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,

" 1 June 1829.

R E P O R T

Of the Commissioners of Inquiry upon the
SLAVE TRADE at Mauritius.

THE REPORT

p. 3

APPENDIX:

N. B.—The Appendix to this Report, being very voluminous, has not been printed, but it remains at the Colonial Office for the purpose of being referred to by Members.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE WILLIAM HUSKISSON,
ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARIES OF STATE.

Mauritius, 12th March 1828.

SIR,

In forwarding to you the informations taken by us in pursuance of the instructions of Earl Bathurst, that we should inquire into the Slave Trade alleged to have been carried on in this Colony, and more especially into the conduct of the Colonial Servants accused either of having been actually engaged in it, or of having systematically connived at those proceedings on the part of others, we think it our duty in the first instance to explain the circumstances which have led to the course we have found it necessary to adopt in the prosecution of this inquiry.

Although the investigation of such a subject would at any time have been unpopular with the inhabitants, it was apparent to us, on our arrival, that circumstances had occasioned a strong repugnance to prevail against it. The recent reduction of the British duties on Mauritius sugar, which had tended to connect the colonists more nearly in their interests with Great Britain, had in the same degree led to an anxiety on their part to have credit in England for a wish to support the Abolition Laws, and as it might be supposed that many individuals were deeply interested in evading the retrospect into their former proceedings, they would take advantage of their influence and of the situation of the community to awaken a general apprehension of the consequences of such an investigation as that with which we were charged, and the risk attending any admission of the extent to which the slave trade had been carried on and encouraged.

A few days after our arrival at Port Louis, a deputation of three gentlemen waited upon us to present an address, which had been drawn up in the name of the inhabitants, and was signed by six individuals. In this paper, purporting to be observations on a speech attributed to Mr. Buxton, the charge of their having generally engaged in the Slave Trade was denied; and we were referred to certain sources of information for the refutation of it, and also in support of counter-accusations brought by them against Generals Hall and Darling, the former of whom was considered to have acted illegally and tyrannically in the measures pursued by him, while acting governor, and the latter to have been influenced in his charges against the colonists by unjustifiable motives.

It does not appear that these observations, though addressed in the name of the inhabitants, had any avowed sanction from them, although the individuals subscribing the address were subsequently recognised at a general meeting as members of an existing committee, then augmented and appointed to draw up an address to the Government on the subject of the measures proposed for ameliorating the condition of the slaves. As some of the statements reflected on the conduct of the late Judge Smith, we took occasion to address Mr. Telfair, as registrar of the Vice Admiralty Court who had signed the paper, for an explanation on the subject, and in his reply he did not avow any public sanction for the communication; but it has always appeared to us, that the community had tacitly, if not expressly, approved the course adopted by the individuals who addressed us, and had entered into a general resolution to make no admission that the slave trade had been encouraged by the inhabitants or carried on to any extent in the colony.

See Address, da
28th Nov. 1826.
Appendix No. 9.

See Letter of the
Commissioners to
Mr. Telfair, 3 No
1827;
and Mr. Telfair's
Reply, 3 Nov. 182
Appendix No. 9.

With only two exceptions the French colonial servants, as well as the inhabitants, abstained from calling on us upon our arrival, and their subsequent communications have been limited to the answers which individuals have given to the inquiries we have specially addressed to them in the course of our proceedings. It is but just that we should acknowledge the general facilities which the Governor (Sir Lowry Cole) has at all times afforded to us in the prosecution of our inquiries, and also the assistance we have received from the heads of some of the public departments in the researches we have required them to make into the records of their respective offices; but, with these advantages, we are bound to state that the difficulties of the inquiry have been considerable, from the general unpopularity attending it, and which had led to our obtaining, by accident, at a late period, an acquaintance with facts which must have been generally notorious in the community, and, in some instances, acquiring a knowledge of the existence of important public papers from persons who had no connection with the offices in which they were recorded.

From the circumstances to which we have alluded, and in order that witnesses might not be discouraged from coming forward, we found it necessary not to employ persons connected with the colonists, but to depend upon ourselves for the accuracy of interpretations. We beg to explain that we have made a point of conducting all examinations together, and of taking down all of them ourselves, and it has been our uniform practice to write the questions in English, and to read them to those witnesses who understood the language, and to translate them to those who did not, receiving their answers either in English or French, but writing them down in English. At the final close of the examination of a witness his evidence was carefully read over to him, and when requisite interpreted, and every correction that he proposed taken down, after which he was required to sign it, a form which we had deemed it right to adopt, and to which only one individual ever offered the slightest objection; but if others had done so, we should nevertheless have forwarded the information (if important) upon the strength of our own conviction that no mistake of the meaning of any witness has taken place.

From the nature of the inquiry it has been sometimes necessary to carry on the examinations of a witness through several days or weeks, and sometimes to renew it at distant periods, as opportunities offered or as further information arose to which his evidence applied. The dates at which the witnesses attended for examination are entered in our journal, but have been generally omitted in transcribing the evidence, from the frequent interruptions it would have occasioned; and as in all instances it was finally read over and subscribed by the witness, the dates have been preserved only where it was necessary to mark that the inquiries had been pursued at distinct periods.

We have considered it also our duty to deviate from the stricter rules followed in taking evidence in courts of justice by interrogating parties regarding the particulars they had heard at times, when reports were prevalent of the participation of the colonial servants in the slave trade, the same practice having been adopted in the examination of witnesses in the Committee of the House of Commons. It appeared to us essential to the characters of the public servants that we should trace the reports which had been circulated to their prejudice. In this we have not always been successful. In some cases the sources of direct evidence have been indicated, but the death or absence of the witnesses referred to have precluded a further investigation; and in other cases the charges have appeared to have originated in vague rumour. In one instance only have we found that a charge of this nature had been taken up by the individual accused. Mr. Royer, on hearing of an accusation against him, placed upon record in the courts the evidence on which he relied for his vindication.

We regret that it has been necessary in the case of the public servants thus accused to record the existence of such reports, when we have not been able to refer to any direct testimony in support of them; and we earnestly submit to you that in all cases where the evidence is hearsay, it would be just that the answers should be expunged, and which would not preclude a reference to any direct witnesses who may be referred to, as the authority for the statements.

We have in all cases endeavoured to impress upon the persons who have been before us, that the inquiry with which we were charged concerned the honour of the

the Government, and that an investigation of the grounds of such suspicions attaching to the public servants was of importance, even in cases where no means existed of legally substantiating any charge.

We deem it necessary to add, that in taking the evidence of persons of various descriptions, and in pursuing the investigation wherever there appeared a probability of obtaining further information leading to any definite result, we have not deemed it proper at this stage of the inquiry, and in the present temper of the community, to disclose to the parties the names of their accusers.

In all instances in which it could be supposed to be necessary, we have taken care that the witnesses should be admonished that they would be held responsible for their statements, and would be liable to be called on to answer upon oath.

Instances have however occurred in which persons have been led into erroneous or contradictory statements from a defective recollection of remote occurrences, and there are some examples of careless and even wilful misrepresentations. In justice to the parties affected by such testimony, we shall consider it our duty to state our opinion of the weight to be attached to the testimony of the witnesses or informants; but notwithstanding the discredit attaching to them in some instances, we have not judged it right of ourselves to hold them publicly responsible for their conduct.

The prevalent impression of the hostility of the community against persons making accusations of slave-trading, and the examples quoted to us of the prosecutions sustained by them, precluded us from taking a course which would have been construed as an intention to discourage persons from coming forward to confirm the accusations so confidently stated, and would have tended to perpetuate a belief in the existence of an authority for reports which in several instances have been shown to be entirely destitute of foundation. Keeping in view the essential object of the inquiry, namely, the vindication of the honour of the Government in the conduct and proceedings of its servants, we have spared no pains to arrive at a knowledge of the facts alleged against them, whether by examination of witnesses or by researches in the public records; and we have withheld from the parties no particulars deserving of their attention, or on which we have considered it essential to afford them an opportunity of explanation.

The correspondence we have held with the public servants whose names have been brought forward in the Parliamentary evidence, or in the informations received by ourselves, will afford a summary view of the charges preferred against them and of their explanations.

We do not think it would be advisable to enter into a general analysis of the voluminous evidence which we have collected, with a view to explain the bearing of it upon the particular charges which have been the subject of our investigation; these must, in many instances, remain to be decided upon the issue of further inquiries which we have had no opportunities of pursuing. Before, however, we proceed to a consideration of the general subject of the slave trade which has been carried on in these seas, we are desirous of offering some observations upon the evidence of certain individuals in explanation of the manner in which they came before us, and the light in which their communications require under all circumstances to be viewed. We propose first to notice the information we received previous to the commencement of our inquiries.

Mr. Byam, who had been chief commissary of police at Port Louis, on his arrival at the Cape placed in our possession a great number of documents which we had no opportunity of particularly examining at the time; but observing the want of arrangement in them, he employed himself, at our suggestion, in reducing to form some of the information they contained. From his materials he prepared a statement of the voyages and operations of several colonial vessels which he confidently stated to have been engaged in carrying on the slave trade to the latest period of his residence in the colony. These details were accompanied with a copious narrative of nearly 400 closely-written pages, with numerous supplementary papers, containing an account of various proceedings chiefly relating to the slave trade alleged to have been carried on and encouraged during the administration of Sir Robert Farquhar. Reference was made to some of the sources of his information, and to persons on whom he relied for the confirmation of his statements.

Appendix,
No. 1.
No. 2.
No. 3.
No. 4.
No. 5.
No. 6.
No. 7.

MR. BYAM.
Vide Appx. No.

See Extract of
Mr. Byam's List
of Voyages of Colon-
ial Vessels, Appen-
dix No. 10.

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Although it appeared to us, at first, that the numerous references made by Mr. Byam to persons resident in Mauritius would enable us to investigate the subject with success, and to arrive at an early and decisive conclusion, we soon had occasion to discover that the individuals on whom he depended for the confirmation of his statements had no direct knowledge of the facts so confidentially stated by him. Some, indeed, were either dead or absent, but others, from whom Mr. Byam professed to have received the details he communicated, and on whom he chiefly relied, alleged that they had no proofs to bring forward, or the means of referring to any direct testimony whatever.

MR. MARCENAY,
Appendix No. 11.

A communication that we received from the Governor of certain letters addressed to Mr. Wilberforce by Mr. Marcenay, an inhabitant of Mauritius, were subjected by us to similar examination with the statements of Mr. Byam, and although many of the statements were the same that had been communicated by Mr. Byam, Mr. Marcenay has been equally unsuccessful in his attempts to establish his allegations by any direct proof. To enable him to do so, we extracted from his statement the several charges which appeared to us sufficiently specific to merit investigation, and in some instances we interrogated the persons to whom he referred, but without any satisfactory result.

It would be useless to trouble you with a particular detail of our proceedings in these cases, although it has been necessary to refer to them in accounting for the time which such investigations have unavoidably consumed; and we are bound to observe, that the only conclusion we have been able to draw from the communications of Mr. Byam and Mr. Marcenay has been, that charges of a very grave nature have been actively propagated during several years, against persons in high public stations, while those, who have asserted them with the greatest degree of confidence have been unable to state their origin, or to point out the means by which they could be substantiated. On the other hand, the parties whose characters have been thus assailed have not, in general, appeared to be duly alive to the discredit attaching to such derogatory imputations, which (it would appear) were, at successive periods, very currently repeated without any contradiction that we are aware of.

DORVAL.
See Evidence of
C. Letord alias
Dorval.

The evidence of a person very prominently noticed by Mr. Byam and Mr. Marcenay we had an opportunity of obtaining on his return from Bourbon in the last year. This person, named *Letord* or *Dorval*, received, in 1822, a pardon for all offences he had previously committed against the abolition laws, and has spoken unreservedly of his own proceedings as a slave-trader, and of the acts of some others with whom he had been connected. He is a native of this colony, and possessed of much natural intelligence, and in the general information he has given, we have found his statements confirmed in those instances in which we have had opportunities of referring to other sources of evidence. While he has acknowledged the extent to which the slave trade was carried on by some notorious individuals encouraged by the inhabitants at large, he has manifested great reluctance to declare the names of persons for whom he imported the negroes whom he landed in the colony, or to whom he disposed of them.

Without deducing any inference from his reluctance to give distinct evidence upon particular points, partly arising from his sense of the difficulty that would attend the substantiation of such charges, and partly from his desire to screen individuals, our general impression of his evidence is, that upon those points on which he has had no motive for concealment, the information he has communicated is accurate, and in cases where such motives have apparently operated, we have not obtained any decisive evidence to fix him with the knowledge of facts with which it has been affirmed that he is acquainted.

See Case of Dorval,
Appendix No. 12.
Ibid.

Case of the Slave
Esperance,
Appendix No. 12.
See Parliamentary
Papers. S. T.

He was employed as a pilot by Captain Moresby, and afterwards by the late Commodore Nourse, and by these services he rendered himself obnoxious to the colonists. He was prosecuted and imprisoned for a fracas in the theatre, and subsequently under a colonial regulation for having sold a slave at Madagascar, who had accompanied him as a servant from Mauritius. He absconded to Bourbon, from whence he returned in the last year. While absent, there is every reason to believe that he again engaged in the slave trade, but the atrocities charged to him by the inhabitants of Delagoa Bay in their communication to Captain Owen in 1825 do not appear to be confirmed.

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Having again gone to Bourbon, in the last year, he was arrested and sent up to Mauritius.

See Statement
Correspondence
Appendix No. 13.

GARFIT.

See Evidence of
Garfit.

C. H. Garfit, who had been employed in the Custom-house, preferred a complaint to us that he had not received the reward for aiding in the seizure of some negroes in the year 1812; and he took occasion to bring forward a charge against the late Mr. Speares, the searcher of customs, to whom he stated, that he had communicated the information he had obtained of a landing of negroes from a vessel called the Industry in the year 1821. From the explanations of Dorval and the subsequent admission of Garfit, the conduct of the latter appears to have exposed him to the imputation of a corrupt connivance with Bataille, the owner of the Industry, which however he denies.

D'HOTMAN.

See Evidence of
D'Hotman.

Chéri Lapommeray or *D'Hotman*, a Frenchman who resided at Port Louis, appears to have been employed by Governor Farquhar after his return to the colony in 1820 and 1821, in procuring information in the port, of the proceedings of slave-traders, and in 1822 he was appointed to effect the seizure of L'Hoste, the nominal captain of the "Coureur," upon the information of Dorval; the circumstances of which case we shall hereafter have occasion to notice. We have had no reason to discredit the testimony of this man, and in that which relates to the prosecutions to which he alleges that he was subjected by the police, the explanations afforded by Mr. Denis Virieux do not remove our apprehension that the extensive powers of the department were unjustly exercised to his prejudice.

LATOURE.

See Evidence of
A. F. Latour.

See Letter of

Major Robertson,
10 March 1821,
Appendix No. 22.

André Felix Latour is a person who gave information to Governor Farquhar in the case of the "Coureur" in 1821, having been himself apprehended on suspicion. He is believed to have rendered very general assistance to the slave-traders in conducting their negroes through the woods, and which his employment by the Government for the apprehension of Maroons facilitated. There can be no doubt that this man must be generally acquainted with all the parties who have been directly or indirectly engaged in the slave trade.

BAILEY.

See Evidence of
Joseph Bailey.

See Case of

Mr. Telfair,
Appendix No. 1,
pp. 280-281.

HULM.

The evidence of Joseph Bailey, a man who was employed as a shipwright by the owners of the estate of Belombre, contains a charge against the manager of that estate, and also a complaint that he had not been paid for his work. He is accused of having threatened to complain to us if his account was not settled, but the threat is declared to have been made at a date subsequent to the evidence that he gave before us.

William Hulm, an overseer at Belombre, stated to have been implicated in the affair at Belombre, denied the charge after having refused to answer to our inquiries, which we admonished him of the necessity of his doing. We think that the testimony of both these witnesses is liable to some exception, but particularly that of Hulm.

LIEVRE

and

RAVARTZ.

Vide Parl. Papers,
S. T. 1818—1825,

No. 2, p. 66;

See Case of
Cuvillier,
Appendix No. 13.

Charlot Lievre, and André Ravartz, are persons pointed out to us as possessing small habitations in the woods of the Savanne District, where they concealed the negroes who had been landed, and facilitated by their removal through the country. Lievre is mentioned in the deposition of La Violette (which has been published) as having assisted in landing the slaves of the "Minerve" in 1818; and although the charge is denied by him, we have reason to believe, from other information we have received, that he has been engaged in such proceedings on different occasions.

BORNE.

See Evidence of
William Borne.

The confessions made to us by William Borne, who was apprehended in the year 1819, explain the extent to which he was engaged in the slave trade for several years; and the co-operation of some of the principal inhabitants. From the circumstance of this individual having been allowed to reside unmolested in the colony for several years, and from the manner in which he has answered the inquiries which we were led to make upon information we had received of his acquaintance with some transactions of great importance, we hope, that in giving publicity to his information, care may be taken that he shall not be made to suffer from the consequences of his voluntary avowal of his past conduct.

MADGE.

See Evidence of Anthony Madge.
See Case of Negroes at Providence Island, Appendix No. 14.

See Case of the Lutteur, Appendix No. 15.

Vide Correspondence, Case of Mr. Madge, Appendix No. 3.

AUGUSTIN REBAUD and ROQUELAURE LOUIS.

Vide Sentence, Appendix No. 16.

See Case of the Courier des Seychelles, Appendix No. 17. See Parliamentary Papers, 1826, S. T. Examination of Capt. Moresby, p. 73.

See Case of Augustin Rebaud, Appendix No. 16.

MOUSTIQUE LA FLEUT.

See Case of Moustique La Fleut, Appendix No. 18.

Having observed among the records of the police department that a man named *Anthony Madge* had been employed as a fisherman in the island of Providence, and that on his return to Port Louis in 1825 he had denounced the "Régisseur" or overseer in that island for the murder of a slave by excessive punishment, and for the concealment of some negroes of a cargo landed from the wreck of a French vessel (*Le Lys*), and not conceiving that the explanations obtained by the police had been satisfactory, we pursued some inquiries on the subject. It appeared that the man had formerly been at Seychelles, and that he had been employed by Mr. Madge, the Government agent, in a search for some negroes who had been landed at Mahé from a vessel called the "Lutteur" in 1817.

In allusion to the subject, Anthony Madge made before us a direct charge against the Government agent of corrupt connivance in the slave trade in this and another instance. Having communicated the particulars of the charge to Mr. Madge for his explanation, we had occasion subsequently to notice some material contradictions in the statement of Madge; and as he was unable to refer to any evidence in support of it, we did not think it necessary to take any evidence in disproof of an accusation resting on such grounds, especially as Mr. Madge referred to the evidence he had taken in the case of the *Lutteur* recorded in the registry of the Vice Admiralty Court.

The evidence of two negroes who were brought from Seychelles to Mauritius in 1823, as domestic servants, and were seized at the Custom-house as not corresponding with the extracts of registry brought with them, has appeared to us of much value, as containing a circumstantial account of their introduction at the Seychelles in the year 1822. These negroes, named *Augustine Rebaud* and *Roquelaure Louis*, having been condemned in 1826 by the Instance Court of Vice-Admiralty, together with the negroes brought up from Providence Island, on the information of Madge, and no claim being put in for them, either at the period of their seizure in 1823 or of their condemnation in 1826, we interrogated the negroes (then in charge of the collector of customs), and who declared to us that they were of a cargo landed in Seychelles in 1822, by a vessel called the "Courier des Seychelles," and which is shown to have been that to which Captain Moresby alluded in his evidence before the Committee in 1826. Having taken these negroes to the Custom-house on the arrival of some slaves belonging to the owner of the vessel, they identified the slave who had served out provisions to them on board the "Courier." We had previously taken much evidence in this case, and the testimony of these negroes was so far confirmed that we communicated it to the Governor, but the negroes were not considered by the judge to be sufficiently instructed in the nature and obligation of an oath to justify the reception of their evidence; and the captain of the vessel who had been apprehended was discharged.

From the circumstances of the case, as these negroes were not under contracts of service, we considered it our duty to request the collector of customs to postpone the execution of any indentures of apprenticeship, and we also requested that the negroes might be put into a course for receiving such moral and religious instruction as might enable them to be brought forward as witnesses to facts of which their recollection seemed to be so clear; and we trust that measures may be taken to protect them from any engagement which might subject them to ill-treatment through the influence of any of the persons who may be affected by their testimony.

We had occasion to discover that one of those negroes was returned in October 1826 to the office of Slave Registry at Seychelles, after he had been condemned by the Instance Court of Vice-Admiralty, and that his description was also taken at Port Louis and recorded in the books of the New Registry. We beg leave to refer to the correspondence we have held on this subject.

The statement of a negro named "*Moustique La Fleut*," who is borne on the registry as the slave of Mr. Madge, we made the subject of a former communication. As his testimony is entitled to the same degree of credit, and as he appears to have been with others unjustly sold under colour of a sentence of the Instance Court of Vice-Admiralty, we recommend him and them also to the favourable consideration and protection of the Government.

We are not aware of any further explanations that are required respecting the condition or testimony of the witnesses; and upon a review of the whole of the evidence

dence we have taken in the course of this inquiry, we feel called on to observe that whilst imputations of the gravest character have been circulated against some public officers from the earliest period of the British administration in these colonies, we have had reason to regret that no conclusive evidence has been found attainable on the spot, either to establish or confute them; and the only course therefore open to us has been to transmit the evidence we have been able to collect, and the explanations of those parties to whom we have had the means of referring, and to leave the merits of the respective cases to depend upon such further investigation as it may be found practicable to pursue, either in the colony or in England. In fairness, however, to the individuals whose characters have been directly assailed, and whose cases have been under our investigation, we think it due to them at once expressly to state, that while suspicions have arisen which have not in all cases been satisfactorily removed, and the charge of a corrupt connivance and participation has, in some instances, been supported by direct evidence, we have hitherto seen no just grounds to conclude that they have either been actually engaged in the slave trade themselves, or have systematically connived at those proceedings on the part of others.

We proceed to report to you the result of our general inquiries concerning the trade in slaves which has been carried on by the inhabitants of Mauritius and its dependencies, and the measures taken for its suppression since the first establishment of the British authority on those islands.

Under the French Government, the slave trade was permitted and carried on to the fullest extent at Mauritius. The law of the Revolutionary Legislature abolishing slavery was never recorded, or in any way put in force, so that the decree of Buonaparte, as first consul, re-establishing slavery, was not required to revive what had never been discontinued.

The occupation of the island of Rodrigues, by a detachment of British troops under Colonel Keating, took place in the year 1809, and was followed by the capture of Bourbon in that year, and of Mauritius in 1810. Previous to the establishment of the British authority in these islands, the slave trade had been, in a great degree, checked by the activity of the British cruisers, and their success is shown by the number of vessels that were captured and sent to the Cape of Good Hope, where they were condemned as prizes by the Court of Vice Admiralty.

The small number of slaves taken in them indicated that, at that period, the slave trade was less an object with the colonists than the capture of British merchant vessels in the Indian seas. The manner in which the slave trade appears to have been carried on differed in few respects from that which had prevailed in the Atlantic ocean from the Western coast of Africa. Vessels of various burthen were engaged in it, but chiefly fast-sailing brigs or schooners, which were calculated to make expeditious voyages, and to escape from the pursuit of the British cruisers. Vessels of the smallest burthen, and even boats, were employed in the conveyance of slaves from Madagascar, and those of the largest size made voyages to the coast of Africa, and chiefly to the Arab settlement of Zanzibar. The slaves brought from the interior of Africa were embarked at the minor ports on board the Arab dows, and were carried to Zanzibar, either for the supply of the Asiatic and Arabian markets in the Persian Gulf, or for sale to the European traders. The Portuguese settlements on the Eastern coast exported slaves, and may also have occasionally furnished cargoes to the French vessels. The voyage of these vessels from Zanzibar to Mauritius and Bourbon was generally accomplished by the way of Seychelles, these small islands being situated to the Northward, and beyond the reach of the hurricanes which prevail in the summer season at Mauritius, Bourbon, and on the coast of Madagascar, presented great advantages to vessels engaged in such expeditions; and Mahé, the principal island of the cluster, possessed a secure anchorage where vessels could receive repairs and procure supplies, and not being in the track of ships navigating between Europe and India, it seems originally to have been occupied for the convenience of the colonial vessels engaged in these voyages to the coast of Africa.

The vigilant blockade of Mauritius during the south-west monsoon, by the British squadron from the Cape, checked the intercourse between the months of May and December, and the commencement of the hurricane season, which obliged our cruisers to quit the station, favoured the slave-traders and privateers in getting

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out of Port Louis, and also in returning with the northerly winds before the British ships could regain their position. The sale of slaves at Port Louis was generally conducted by commission. The slaves, on being landed, were ranged in warehouses with labels suspended from their necks, indicating the prices at which they were disposable. The vessels appear to have been considerably crowded, from the eagerness of the traders to increase the profits of their voyages.

For a short time after the capture of Bourbon and Mauritius the slave trade does not appear to have been resumed to any great extent. The interruption of general commerce during the war, and the restricted intercourse with Madagascar, and the countries from whence the inhabitants drew their supplies of provisions, had induced the French Government to enforce the colonial regulations for applying the labour of the slaves to the cultivation of manioc and other subsistence. In Bourbon, the pursuits of the inhabitants were chiefly agricultural, but the possession of a secure and commodious harbour had directed the attention of the inhabitants of Mauritius more to maritime affairs, and the inducement to maintain a number of slaves during the war was less a view to immediate profit than to convenience in a country without roads or the ordinary means of conveyance, and in which the whole labour of draft and carriage was performed by the negroes.

From the tax rolls, it has been estimated that the number of slaves in Mauritius, in the year 1809, was 60,000, and in the Seychelles 2,533.

In the return for Mauritius, it is deserving of remark, that the adult slaves were stated to be in the proportion of 31,836 males, and 14,237 females, and the children, who were the offspring of these, and born in the colony, at 7,589 males, and 6,348 females. These returns are not to be strictly relied on for the actual numbers, but the relative proportion of the sexes may have been nearly correct.

The Acts of the 46th and 47th Geo. 3, commonly called the "Abolition Acts," do not appear to have been registered in the courts of the colony, or to have been published in the Gazette; and the inhabitants of both islands seem to have considered that the omission of the first form exempted them from the operation of the law. Their opinion, that the terms of the capitulation by which their laws were preserved has secured to them the right of continuing the slave trade, received, in some degree, the support of Governor Farquhar; and the observations contained in his dispatch, dated 15th February 1811, imply that the inhabitants had begun to consider of the means of rendering the labour of their slaves more profitable, and of increasing their stock.

The vigilance of the Navy was, however, not relaxed, although the inhabitants appear to have taken advantage of the capitulation concluded between Captain Lynne, of His Majesty's ship Eclipse, and the agent of the French settlements in Madagascar, for obtaining a supply of slaves from that island. The British troops had been withdrawn from the settlements by General Warde, probably from the experience of their extreme unhealthiness during the summer season, and the settlers, who apprehended the resentment of the natives, were desirous of removing with their property to Mauritius and Bourbon.

These settlements had been places to which persons of bad character were sent under the French Government, and as the chief advantages were derived from the profits of the slave and provision trade, these were the only objects which induced any other description of persons to settle on so unwholesome a coast.

The articles of the capitulation of Tamatave we have not been able to find on record in the colony; but we conclude, from the correspondence which took place, that it contained no express stipulations for the transfer of the slaves to Mauritius. But the legal opinion of Mr. Shaw, the judicial assessor, being in favour of the measure, licenses were granted for their removal. The number of slaves claimed by forty settlers at the date of the capitulation was 863; and from the return furnished to us, that number was licensed to be brought over under a public notice, dated 10th August 1811.

The seizure of two vessels, named *L'Eclair* and *Industry* (the former engaged in the importation of bullocks for the supply of the troops), drew attention to the frauds that were committed. A number of negroes were found on board "*L'Eclair*," concealed under a platform or moveable deck; and although a license was produced which authorized the transfer of that number of slaves, and as we conclude

See Return
No. 28.

See Return No.
35
and Correspondence.

See Case of
L'Eclair, Appendix
No. 19.
Evidence of
Mr. Stokes.

UPON THE SLAVE TRADE AT MAURITIUS.

I conclude procured the restoration of the vessel, which had been condemned at the Cape of Good Hope, there is reason to believe that if the discovery had not been made by the boarding officer of the "Astrea," the slaves would have been smuggled on shore.

Evidence of
Vine, and Let
of Capt. Royer
Appendix No. 11

An agent having been sent over by the Government to grant licenses for these transfers, some glaring frauds were discovered; and the slaves who were disembarked from a vessel at Tamatave, were received on board the Government schooner "Egremont," and conveyed to Bourbon. Captain May, commanding this vessel, was in consequence sent out of the colony, and appears to have escaped prosecution upon an opinion obtained from the judicial assessor.

Evidence of
Vine.

The frauds that are alleged to have been committed consisted in the clandestine embarkation of the slaves at Madagascar and debarkation at Mauritius and Bourbon. The passage being short, the chances of escape were in their favour. A license for transferring a certain number of slaves was kept, to be produced in case of detection; but if the slaves were successfully landed, the license was retained for the conveyance of others so long as the fraud remained undiscovered. Captain Lynne has stated that a great many slaves were fraudulently transferred under colour of this capitulation; and we entertain no doubt that his opinion is well-founded, although it would be impossible now to estimate the number.

See Memorials,
Return No. 35

Previous to Governor Farquhar's return to Europe in 1811, several applications appear to have been addressed to him by the settlers who had remained at Madagascar, for permission to transfer slaves, and which were referred to Judge Smith for his legal opinion. The judge declared it to be illegal but it must have been obvious to the Governor that such slaves had been acquired subsequently to the transfers under the capitulation, as the full number originally claimed had been transferred, and as the names of some of those who had received licenses in 1811 were on the list of these new applicants.

See Return No.

By the tax rolls for the year 1811 a small reduction is stated to have taken place in the total number of the slaves, 60,000 having been returned for 1809, and 59,734 for 1811. The disproportion of the sexes continued.

See Dispatch
10 Nov. 1812.

In November 1812, the attention of Governor Farquhar appears to have been drawn to the effect of the Act of the 51st Geo. 3, in respect to the transfers of slaves between the islands, and which were objected to by Earl Bathurst, on the conclusive ground that such transfers would lead to a renewal of the slave trade. Dispatch 29 Oct. 1812. No registers having been kept at the Custom-house, we have no means of ascertaining the extent to which such transfers took place till the year 1818; but, from our inquiries, it is apparent that in some instances either such transfers must have been allowed, or the slaves were introduced directly from the coast of Africa. As an illustration of this remark, we may here state that the island of Rodrigues was occupied in the year 1809 by a detachment of British troops under Colonel Keating, at which period there were but very few slaves in the island, and these were employed in the labour necessary in providing for the defence of the island. A considerable number of native Africans having been returned by one inhabitant for the first time in 1820, and were too young to have been of the number of those employed in 1809, the proprietor explained to us that he had purchased them at Port Louis, and transferred them at a time when no regulation existed on the subject. His statement being unsatisfactory, we caused inquiry to be made at Rodrigues, and the slaves have all declared that they were carried from the coast of Africa to Seychelles, and from thence to Rodrigues, about ten years ago. The omission to return these slaves to the slave registry previously to 1820 we shall have occasion to notice hereafter.

Evidence of
General Keating
See Case of Slave
at Rodrigues,
Appendix No. 21

While the capture of vessels engaged in the slave trade necessarily depended at sea upon the exertions of the navy, it was apparent that if they escaped the vigilance of the cruisers their subsequent detection would depend upon the measures taken within the colonies. Before the termination of the war in 1814, the military posts and signals established round the coast facilitated their discovery, and in some instances the seizure of the negroes soon after they had been landed. From the seizures which were thus made, both in Mauritius and Bourbon, it was apparent that the slave trade was still carried on, and received great encouragement from the inhabitants. The exertions of the military undoubtedly tended to check it. The movements of vessels were observed from the signal posts, and information sometimes given

See Military
Correspondence,
given Appendix No. 22

given of the negroes by slaves who came to the posts, or sent into them the stragglers from the cargoes landed.

Vide Seizures by Craig and Bell, Military Correspondence, Appendix No. 22.

See Military Correspondence, Appendix No. 22.

Ditto.

See Case of the Egremont, Appendix No. 22.

See Military Correspondence, Appendix No. 22. See Letter of Mr. Virieux, 30 May 1814, Appendix No. 5.

Evidence of General Keating.

See Sentence of the Court of First Instance, Appendix No. 43.

Proclamation, 3 Jan. 1814, Parliamentary Papers, 1811-17, page 83. S. T.

Evidence of Major General Keating.

See Case of Slaves at Barry, Appendix No. 44.

See Parliamentary Papers, 1811-1817, page 31, S. T.

See Correspondence with Sir Alexander Campbell, Appendix No. 23.

Vide Letter of the Procureur-General, dated 30 May 1814 Appendix No. 5, page 215. See General Order, Appendix No. 24.

See Case of the Josephine, Appendix No. 43. See Correspondence of Sir Alexander Campbell with General Keating, Appendix No. 23.

In some instances considerable seizures were made even on the high roads. These proceedings were unpopular with the inhabitants who complained of them. A seizure had been made in December 1813 on the high road near Port Louis by the serjeant of the signal tower of twenty-eight newly-landed negroes, claimed by a man named Bourgine; and in February 1814, fourteen negroes were seized by the vigilance of the same signal man.

Two landings, in opposite quarters, were reported in March; one of them seen by a signal man, who seized thirty-three of the negroes on the habitation of Mr. Curtat, at Tamarind Bay, where they had been landed, and it is probable from the Egremont schooner. A considerable number were traced a few days afterwards to another habitation, in the same quarter, on the information of slaves, but no seizure was made, as the soldiers had received orders not to enter the premises; and the subsequent search of the police was ineffectual in consequence of the delays that took place. The Egremont was seized, and afterwards released by the court of First Instance; Curtat was exonerated, and the persons who made the seizure on his premises were sentenced to imprisonment. Of the other landing in March at a place called Poudre D'or, two negroes were traced to a habitation, where they were ordered by the quarter-master-general to be seized; and these occurrences led to the remonstrance of the procureur-general, who declared the illegality of such interference of the military excepting when called on to aid the civil power.

The activity of an officer stationed at an out-post at Bourbon enabled him to accomplish the seizure of a vessel on the coast of that island in 1813; and in the same year the collector of customs at St. Denis, seized a vessel called the Josephine, belonging to an inhabitant named Malherbe, on the information of some of the negroes who had been landed from her. The collector and the owner having repaired to Port Louis the vessel was ordered to be restored to the latter, by whom the collector was subjected to a prosecution, and condemned in a penalty of 2,000 dollars. The lieutenant-governor at Bourbon having appointed a committee composed of the collector of customs, the chief secretary to Government, and some other officers, to take evidence in the case of the Josephine, the committee was ordered to be dissolved on the ground of the illegality of its proceedings, and a proclamation was published by Governor Farquhar, in order to re-assure the people of Bourbon that he would maintain the laws and courts of justice which had been recognized in the colonies, and prevent any innovation in the manner of carrying the laws into effect.

An occurrence which was noticed by the Governor shortly after this publication evinces the disposition of the inhabitants. A boat having been driven on shore at Bourbon with slaves in 1812, a prosecution was entered in the colonial courts during the following year. The court of First Instance dismissed the cause in July 1813, on the ground that the Abolition Acts had not been registered by the courts at Bourbon; and this decision was confirmed by the Court of Appeal in November following. In January 1814, the Governor reported to Earl Bathurst that having just been informed of these proceedings he had suspended the judges, and on the nomination of others a change was made in the government of Bourbon, by which the lieutenant-governor was removed from his civil functions, and the chief secretary, who was appointed to succeed the officer who resigned on this occasion, was instructed to correspond directly with the governor at Port Louis. About the same period a reference was made by the Governor to the commander of the forces on the subject of the interference of the military, grounded on the opinion of the procureur-general, to which we have alluded. A general order was accordingly published enjoining the troops to communicate to the civil authorities the information they acquired, and to act under their instructions.

The commandant at St. Paul's, having in November 1814 seized a number of negroes who had been landed from the Josephine, was removed from the command, and the negroes were restored. In these proceedings the commander of the forces appears to have acted strictly upon the principle of enjoining an implicit conformity by the troops to that which was declared to be the law, and to have abstained from the expression of his own opinion of the effect of the measures that were recommended to him by the Governor for adoption.

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The employment of the military was ostensibly justified by General Keating on the ground that it was in time of war, and that the approach of a number of vessels, under suspicious circumstances, warranted his calling out the troops. He has acknowledged, however, that his real object was the detection of the slave traders; and that when reports were circulated by the colonists of intended insurrections of the slaves, he found it was intended to divert attention from the landing of negroes.

Evidence of Major General Keating

See Correspondence relating to the revolt of Slaves at Bourbon in 1814, Appendix No. 45.

See Case of the Ravenant, Appendix No. 25.

See Evidence of Mr. Le Sage.

See Evidence of Captain Vine.

Vide Sentence dated 24th June 1815, App. No. 25.

See Military Correspondence, Appendix No. 22.

The reports of the officers at the out-stations in Mauritius mention several instances in which new negroes delivered themselves up at the posts, but as these were a few stragglers from considerable parties no conclusion can be formed of the actual numbers landed in the colony; and the reduction of the signal-posts, at the termination of the war, diminished the chance of discovering the slave vessels when they arrived upon the coast. An offer was made by the commander of the forces to maintain the signals if required by the civil department, but it was not accepted by the Governor.

Vide Letter of Sir A. Campbell to Governor Farquhar dated 29 June 1814.

See Return No. 18.

From the return we have compiled of the several captures and condemnations, it will be seen that previous to the year 1814 no negroes were condemned who had been seized after being landed in the colony. In that year 63 were condemned who had been seized by the soldiers, but in consequence of the restrictions imposed on the military and the removal of the signal-posts, only one negro was taken on shore in 1815. Although the slave trade was carried on to a great extent in 1816 and 1817, and several captures were made at sea, the number seized on shore were inconsiderable. In 1818, through the exertions of the military who were again employed, a large number were taken on the habitations; these proceedings we shall hereafter notice, but there is reason to conclude that the negroes who were taken on shore were but a small part of the numbers landed in the colony.

To check the slave trade a deputation had been granted to the government agent at Seychelles to enable him to make seizures, and two vessels were fitted out at Port Louis, by which several captures were made.

See Letter dated 15th April 1814, Appendix No. 26.

The Aglaé and the Parisienne.

The capture of the Aglaé in November 1814, proved that the traffic was occasionally conducted by the way of Seychelles. That vessel having sailed from Port Louis, landed a cargo of negroes at Seychelles, and proceeded for a second cargo, with which she was taken off the coast of Mauritius.

The government agent proposed, in 1815, various measures to enable him to see Letter 15 Jan. 1815, App. No. 26. carry the laws into effect, but none of them appear to have been at that time adopted.

The attention of the Governor had been directed in the year 1814, to the establishment of a registry of slaves, from the returns made annually to the collector of internal revenues; but the restoration of Bourbon to the French, and the events that followed the renewal of the war in 1815, delayed the execution of any measure until the receipt of the order of His Majesty in Council of 24th September 1814.

See Proclamation 11 April 1814.

This ordinance reached the colony in 1815, and the office was placed under the superintendence of Mr. Bradshaw. Great reluctance was shown by the inhabitants to deliver in returns of their slaves, and when ultimately received, the descriptions were so defective that the registration of the slaves, according to the terms of the ordinance, was rendered impracticable. Under these circumstances it was considered by the Governor to be expedient, not to reject the returns, but to receive and register the whole of them, notwithstanding their defects. As several inhabitants had delayed to make any returns, and petitioned to be allowed to do so, several months after the period for receiving them had expired, a proclamation for the extension of the term was published on the 10th April 1816, and returns of upwards of 7,000 slaves were licensed by the Governor to be registered in the

Evidence of Gen. Keating.

The Order was published 25 April 1815. See Letter of the Secretary to Government, dated 24 July 1827, Appendix No. 47.

See Correspondence of Mr. Bradshaw, Appendix No. 8.

See Evidence of Mr. Michel.

See Return No. 2.

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See Case of the Alligator, Appendix No. 46; and Case of the St. Jacques, Appendix No. 38.

See Return, No. 21.
See Case of Suzor Capt. of the Aigle, App. No. 48, and Parl. Papers, 1818-1825, p. 9. S. T.

See List of Voyages Casa de L'Espoir, Appendix No. 52.
See Evidence of Wm. Borne.

See Account of the Jeune Amande, Case of Cuvillier and La Cotte, Appendix No. 13.
See Case of Cuvillier, App. No. 13.
See Evidence of C. Letord alias Dorval.

See Case of the Courreur, Appendix No. 12.
See Case of the Alligator, Appendix No. 46.
See Case of L'Eclair, Appendix No. 19.

Evidence of Wm. Borne.

Evidence of Letord.

See Case of the St. Jacques, Appendix No. 38; and Case of the Alligator, Appendix No. 46.

Evidence of Letord.

succeeding two months, and amongst the slaves so registered, appear ten belonging to the Governor himself, purchased from the restored cargo of the Eclair.

The establishment of the Court of Vice-Admiralty in the year 1815 superseded the practice of sending the prizes to the Cape of Good Hope for adjudication. Several vessels which had been fitted out at Mauritius, and were captured by His Majesty's cruisers, with or without slaves on board, were condemned by Judge Smith, the persons implicated being condemned in the penalties declared by the Abolition Act for all the slaves thus captured. The establishment of a special court, for the trial of these persons for the felony, does not appear to have led to any conviction of importance. In 1815, the Grand Jury threw out a bill against the captain of a schooner. In 1817, one man was tried and acquitted, and seven accomplices sentenced to six months imprisonment. The parties condemned in penalties, either eluded apprehension or escaped from prison, and they took refuge in Bourbon, or under other names remained at or soon returned to Mauritius. In some instances, they were discharged from inability to pay the penalties.

The practice which prevailed at Port Louis of fitting out vessels for the slave trade, and concealing the names of the owners, is exemplified in the returns of the voyages made by the colonial vessels at that period. The captain was sometimes entered as the owner, and in some instances, as the supercargo. If the vessel was captured, the real owner was not compromised, nor his property made answerable for the penalties. The accounts of such speculations were rendered in a form intelligible to the parties, and on which recoveries might be made. A person who was established at Port Louis, and notoriously engaged in the slave trade has left on record an account of the disposal of the cargo of the vessel on his return from Madagascar. The cargo was merely designated "Balles et Ballots," which, from the nature of the transactions, could obviously have had no reference except to the specified number of male and female slaves that were landed and disposed of. This person, named Cuvillier, carried on the slave trade in vessels of his own, employing the name of the captain or supercargo, and the seizure of his vessel, the "Minerve," in 1818, we shall have occasion to speak of. Having formerly resided in Madagascar, he was enabled, by his connections, to carry on his operations with their assistance.

Some adventurers fitted out vessels, bringing over negroes on freight for different persons who supplied funds or merchandize for their purchase. In order to diminish the risk, the negroes from the continent of Africa, or the islands of Mozambique, were brought through Madagascar to Tamatave, and the other eastern parts for embarkation; but in some instances the Mauritius vessels went to the coast of Africa for cargoes. These were carried occasionally to Seychelles, and if not disposed of there, were landed and concealed until opportunities offered for re-embarking them for Mauritius. From the proximity of the Seychelles to the coast of Africa, the greater number of slaves in those islands are negroes of the continent or Mozambique. At Mauritius, the usual places of debarkation were "Mapou" on the north, and "Black River" on the south of the island; but landings were sometimes made in other parts of the coast, and particularly of the Savanne district. The vessels arriving off the coast were enabled to lie concealed off Morne Brabant, and approached at night to land the negroes in the boats of the fishermen, or sometimes by floating them ashore upon rafts. They were then, with many ingenious precautions, conducted into the woods and concealed in caverns, or received into the houses of the inhabitants, where the law prevented any search from being made for them without the warrant of a judge, and from whence they were conducted into town for sale, or delivered in the country to the persons for whom they had been imported, and who had private marks by which to distinguish their own. The negroes were rendered submissive to their conductors by practising on their fears of the consequences of detection, and on approach of persons who were in search of them, would lie down or disperse on a signal, or on a command given in their own language, the women and children crouching behind the men. To prevent all traces of their passage through the country, they were conducted into the interior through by-paths or through beds of ravines or rivers. Some of the persons employed by Government in the apprehension of Maroons called "Chefs de Detachment," from their familiar acquaintance with the passes of the country, were employed on these occasions; and it may safely be affirmed that nothing but a general disposition in the inhabitants in favour of the slave trade, and the negligence

or connivance of the civil authorities in the districts, and great inefficiency, if not culpability in the police department, could have enabled bands of negroes to be landed and carried through so small an island and disposed of without detection, except in the case of a few stragglers who were arrested at the military posts and delivered up to the Civil Commissioners; nor in any instance, that we are aware of, did the arrest of these lead to the detection of the parties from which they had strayed. It may be observed also that the concealment of the negroes on the habitations must have been known to great numbers of slaves who, in most instances, were deterred from denouncing the offenders from fear of the consequences to themselves. In some instances the negroes who had been seized were again taken off and concealed, probably by inducements held out to them to rejoin their comrades.

See Military Correspondence, Appendix No. 22.

The precaution was not always taken of conducting the negroes through the woods. A seizure was made by Lieutenant Campbell, aide-de-camp to the commander of the forces in 1816, on the high road from Pamplemousses. An attempt was made to bribe the sergeant of the guard, but on the arrival of Lieutenant Campbell, the armed men who conducted them escaped, ordering the negroes to disperse. A great number were thus carried off and 37 were secured by the guard.

See Evidence of Lieut. Campbell, and Case of Servet's Slaves, Appendix No. 27.

It has also been stated that bands of negroes were sometimes conducted through the town of Port Louis at night*. The defective state of the original registers, owing to the reception of incorrect returns, facilitated the fraudulent disposal of the negroes thus imported under the registered names. Several of the returns carried the appearance of fraud on the face of them. The slaves were generally described of a certain age and height, and having "country marks," the general distinction of castes was that of "Mozambiques," "Malgaches," and "Creoles," meaning the negroes of the African continent, natives of the island of Madagascar, and slaves born in the colony. The last were without marks, except from accident or disease.

See Evidence of Conflans.

* See Evidence of Negroes in the Case of the St. Jacques, Appendix No. 38.
See Copies of the Returns of the Slaves of Logros, and those of Servet, App. No. 21 & 27.

Some returns, containing more than a hundred names, described them all as young Mozambiques or Malgaches, averaging from fifteen to twenty years of age, without parents or children, and such returns are observable amongst those which were licensed to be registered by the Governor after the term for receiving them had expired, it being now ascertained that some of the parties making these returns possessed at that time no property whatever.

See Police Correspondence in the Case of Hypolite Fronten, Appendix No. 28.

We do not find that any inquiry was made at the time, whether the slaves thus returned were really possessed by the parties. Their condition, in some instances, implied that they could hardly be the owners of so many slaves, and it has since been ascertained that such persons were sometimes induced to make returns, that they might dispose of the certificates of registry to those who purchased or imported the negroes, or who sent the descriptions to the coast of Africa or Madagascar, that slaves might be purchased who corresponded with them.

See Evidence of Paul Allard and Julius Caesar, and Case of R. de la Coudray, Appendix No. 29.
See Case of the St. Jacques, Appendix No. 38.

The negroes seized by Lieutenant Campbell were restored upon a return of this description, and it does not appear to have been usual at that time to dispute the claim to negroes who were seized and who gave themselves up on shore, if the person who claimed them could refer to the registry, in which the height and ages of a number of slaves who stood in his name corresponded in some degree with those of the negroes whom he claimed. The negroes seized by Lieutenant Campbell at Pamplemousses were not given over to the collector of customs for prosecution, but were restored by the authority of Judge Smith, on the claim of a person named Servet, and on a reference to the slave registry, where a very defective return had been recorded.

See Case of Servet's Slaves, App. No. 27; and Evidence of Lieut. Campbell.

A seizure made in 1816 by Mr. Madge, the Government agent at Seychelles, is further illustrative of the practice that prevailed. A number of negroes had been landed from a vessel named the Maria Louise, and the small-pox having broken out amongst them, Mr. Madge established a lazarette on a small island adjacent to Mahé, and taking advantage of the alarm of contagion, invited the inhabitants who had purchased the negroes to send them over. These negroes he seized, but having no means of securing them, a number were forcibly carried off to Bourbon by one of the owners of the vessel, and the remainder, claimed by the other owner, were secured. The vessel which had been carried off was afterwards seized and condemned at Port Louis. The claim for the negroes who were at Seychelles being

See Case of the Marie Louise, Appendix No. 30.
Evidence of Mr. Madge.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF INQUIRY

See Sentence of
Mr. Caunter, Case
of D'Albaredo,
Appendix No. 31.

Statement of
Mr. Bradshaw,
Appendix No. 8;
and Evidence of
Mr. Michel.
Case of the Indus-
try, App. No. 32.
Evidence of Letord.
See Letter of Judge
Smith to the Pro-
cureur General,
Case of the Indus-
try, App. No. 32.

Evidence of Mr.
Le Sage.

reserved by Judge Smith, a description taken of them at Seychelles was filed in court, and eight were subsequently ordered to be restored by the officiating Judge of Vice Admiralty in 1818, from the description of eight negroes in the registry of D'Albaredo being found to correspond with the description of a similar number on the schedule. In neither of the instances to which we have referred can any doubt be now entertained that the negroes had been recently brought from Africa.

The commission of frauds in the registry was much facilitated by one of the clerks named Bataille, whose proceedings were not then known to Mr. Bradshaw, but who was afterwards discovered not only to have made numerous alterations in the original registers, but to be the owner of vessels notoriously engaged on the slave trade. One of these vessels was the Industry, captured at Zanzibar, by Captain Moresby with a cargo of slaves in 1822, and commanded by a notorious person named "Mongin." The Industry had successfully landed several cargoes in the island. He also possessed another vessel named the Constance, in which he afterwards made his escape to Bourbon on the discovery of the various frauds he had committed.

In the year 1816 Governor Farquhar opened a communication with Radama, a chief in Madagascar, with a view to establish relations that should lead to the suppression of the slave trade in that island. The father of this chief of a tribe called the Ovahs had carried on successful wars in the country, and had realized much treasure from the sale of his prisoners. Radama, who was young, had also engaged in these wars, which were fomented by the slave-traders, to whom many of the captives were sold, and the expeditions against the islands of the Mozambique seem to have had the same object. The Ovahs were a tribe settled in the interior of the country, and distinguished from the inhabitants of the coasts by their superior intelligence and enterprise; subsisting partly by agriculture, and possessing some useful manufactures, they were in a situation to derive benefit from a civilized intercourse with Europeans. Although the influence of this tribe did not at that time prevail over the whole country, the attempt to establish such relations with Madagascar judiciously commenced in that quarter.

The readiness with which Radama entered into the views of Governor Farquhar for the suppression of the slave trade in his dominions must be immediately referred to the advantages which were held out to him as a compensation for the sacrifice in renouncing the profits he had derived from the sale of slaves, and the duties levied on their exportation. He engaged to accept in return an annual subsidy, partly contributed in specie, and partly in clothing, arms, and ammunition for himself and his troops. His adoption of European customs, and the dress and discipline of the British troops, some of whom he had seen with the escort of the British agent, was the consequence of his intelligent perception that it would tend to increase his power, and eventually lead to the civilization of the country. He has readily comprehended, that to prohibit the exportation of slaves would promote the industry of the people, the extension of agriculture, and the growth of legitimate commerce. These objects he might have been led to believe would be productive of future resources to himself; but, as there is a strong propensity to avarice in the Ovahs, and which had led to the hoarding of much treasure, the stipulation for the payment of an equivalent had an unquestionable effect in inducing a renunciation of the profits of the slave trade. A treaty was concluded with Radama in October 1817, and a proclamation was at the same time published in his name commanding an observance of its engagements. On the completion of this measure, Sir Robert Farquhar took his departure for England in November 1817, having established an agent (the late Mr. Hastie) to reside at the court of Radama.

Major General Hall, the commander of the forces, succeeded to the charge of the government on the departure of the Governor, and appears to have been early impressed with a belief that proper measures had not been taken to put down the slave trade, and that all effectual means for its suppression had been discouraged. It was the opinion of General Hall that the slave trade had been systematically promoted by the inhabitants of Mauritius, who had a direct interest in augmenting their stock of slaves, and his attention was directed to the object of discovering and punishing those who protected and encouraged it within the colony, as a more decisive course than that pursued by attempting to close the sources from whence slaves were supplied, or to promote their capture at sea.

See Treaty dated
23 Oct. 1817.

See Evidence of
Mr. Copale.

See Dispatch of
General Hall,
28 Jan. 1818,
Parl. Papers,
1818—1825, p. 5,
S. T.

UPON THE SLAVE TRADE AT MAURITIUS.

Unacquainted with the nature of the frauds which were afterwards found to have been practised in the registry, and judging from the numerous debarkations that were reported to have taken place, General Hall concluded that there were several thousand slaves in the colony who had not been registered. Observing that the delays attending the legal forms for the execution of search warrants led to the evasion of the parties, and the concealment of negroes of whom information had been received, he proposed the adoption of more summary proceedings. On one occasion he had sent his aide-de-camp, and the deputy-marshal of the Admiralty Court, accompanied by a judge who had power to issue a warrant on the spot, for the search of any habitations on which negroes should be found concealed. This search was unsuccessful; but, on information he received from a slave, of the concealment of a body of negroes on a plantation in the neighbourhood of his residence at Reduit, the aide-de-camp proceeded with an armed party and surrounded the house. The civil commissary of the district being summoned arrived the following morning, and on entering the house, 92 negroes were seized, together with their conductors. These negroes had been landed from a schooner, the "Minerve," belonging to a person named Cuvillier, to whom we before alluded, and who, with the captain of the vessel and others, were found with the negroes.

About the same time another seizure was made of 11 negroes on a habitation near Reduit. The parties who were apprehended were sent to England for trial, with the exception of Cuvillier, the owner of the Minerve, who died in prison. The neglect of the usual forms in these proceedings, and especially in the search of dwelling-houses, upon the information of slaves not taken upon oath, and without the sanction of a judge's warrant, drew strong remonstrances from the legal authorities. It is, however, ascertained that the military guard only surrounded the habitation to prevent the escape of the parties, but that the house was not entered until the arrival of the civil commissary on the following morning.

On similar information General Hall subsequently directed the seizure of some slaves on the habitation of two planters, (one of them the registrar of the Court of First Instance,) and appointed a committee to examine them and to compare their descriptions in the registers. From the result of this inspection and the report of the registrar, it appeared that some of those negroes had been recently imported, and they were accordingly condemned.

In two other cases of seizure made under the same circumstances in 1817, and which remained undecided until 1819, the negroes were adjudged to be restored, on the ground that they had been three years in the colony at the time of their seizure, and that the claimants had duly registered them. We are unable to refer to the authority relied on by Judge Smith for these decisions; the Colonial Court of Appeal has, however, in a recent case rejected a claim of freedom reversing a sentence of the lower court, on the ground that three years prescription confirms a title to slaves as personal property.

General Hall granted deputations to the commanding officers of regiments empowering them to make seizures upon the habitation, when information might reach them of negroes being concealed. The seizures in question had been made under this authority, and the circumstances were noticed in the sentence of the judge.

General Hall suspended one of the civil commissioners for having punished a slave who had given information of the concealment of negroes to the officer commanding at the military posts in the neighbourhood; and it appearing that the fishermen settled round the coasts of the island had assisted in the debarkation of slaves, he revived a regulation of the French Government by which they were prohibited from going out with their boats at night, and were required to deposit their masts, oars and sails at the adjacent military post. Some of these persons he caused to be removed from their residence on the "Pas Géométriques," or line of coast which has been reserved by the Government. He also prohibited the exportation of arms and ammunition to Madagascar, which articles were eagerly bartered by the natives for slaves beyond Radama's dominions; but, as the vessels could clear out with these articles for other ports, the prohibition was evaded. It appears that foreigners often, of very bad character, and particularly French seamen, had been allowed to settle in the colony, to take the oath of allegiance as subjects of His Majesty, and to navigate in colonial vessels. General Hall introduced stricter regulations regarding them, directing the enforcement of the navigation laws, and requiring that three-fourths of the crews should be British subjects.

See Dispatch date
28 May 1818,
Parl. Papers,
1818—1825, p. 5,
S. T.

See Evidence of
Lieut. Campbell,
Mr. Christie, and
Mr. Reader.

See Case of Cuvi-
llier, App. No. 13.
Evidence of Lieut.
Campbell and Mr.
Woods.

Vide Return No.
21, Seizure by Capt.
Freeman, 5th May
1818.

See Evidence of
Lieut. Campbell
and Mr. Woods.

See Case of Chres-
tien's and Husson's
Slaves, App. No. 33.

See Case of Car-
sene's and Jean
Peat's Slaves,

Appendix No. 24.
See Case of Del-
phine, App. No. 35.

See Sentences in
the Case of Car-
sene's and Jean
Peat's Slaves,
Appendix No. 24.

See Evidence of
Col. Leitch and
Mr. Finniss.
See Case of Car-
sene's Slaves,
Appendix No. 34.
See Case of Blan-
card, Parl. Papers,
1818, vol. 2, p. 53,
S. T.

See Case of Perre-
l, Appendix No. 1.

See Letter of the
Chief Secretary to
Government,
21 March 1818,
Appendix No. 52.

Case of Cuvillier,
Appendix No. 13;
Evidence of Lieut.
Campbell and
Mr. Woods.

The alleged illegality of some of the measures adopted by General Hall, and the severity of their application in some particular instances, have occasioned much complaint, but their efficacy in giving a check to the slave trade must, at the same time, be fully admitted; and the seizure on a habitation of 93 negroes landed from the Minerve is the only instance, that we are aware of, in which the discovery made of an entire cargo of negroes landed in the colony has led to their being secured.

The employment of the military by General Hall appears to have proceeded from the conviction which had influenced General Keating in his proceedings at Bourbon, that the inhabitants of the colony, including the French civil functionaries, were generally opposed to the adoption of any effectual measures for the suppression of the slave trade.

The refusal of General Hall to fulfil the terms of the treaty concluded with Radama, the Madagascar chief, cannot be considered to have tended to the same beneficial result. A report was made by the government agent at Madagascar, of 1,726 slaves having been delivered to the European traders, in fulfilment of pre-existing engagements. It is probable that a great part of them were intended for Mauritius, and this transaction explains the extent to which the clandestine traffic had been carried on; but the infraction of the engagements with Radama was unfortunate in its effects, from the opening thus presented to the slave traders to make fresh purchases of slaves, trusting to the opportunities that might offer for the introduction of them into the colony.

See printed Papers
1818—1825, p. 54
S. T.

Parl. Papers,
1818—1825, p. 74,
S. T.

See General Order
dated 15th May
1818, App. No. 24.

Vide Military Re-
ports, App. No. 22.

See Case of Ne-
groes seized on the
Habitation of Mr.
Vigier, Parl. Pa-
pers, 1818—1825,
p. 80, S. T.

Vide Case of the
Jeune Adolphe,
App. No. 36; and
Evidence of
W. Borne.

See General Orders
1 Aug. 1819,
Appendix No. 24.
See Case of the
Deux Amis,
App. No. 37 and
Return No. 21, p. 8.

See Dispatch of
General Darling,
8 Dec. 1818, Parl.
Papers, 1818—
1825, p. 119, S. T.
Evidence of
W. Borne.

Evidence of L. de
Conflans.
See Letter of
D. Virieux, dated
9 January 1828,
Evidence No. 71.

In February 1819, soon after the arrival of General Darling to assume the government of the colony, he was induced to take off the restriction which had been imposed by General Hall on the fishermen, and by proclamation allowed them to go out with the boats at night, although he renewed the prohibition against persons residing on the "Pas Geometriques;" acting in concert with Judge Smith, he also appears to have reverted to the usual forms for the execution of search warrants. The orders then in force for the military were, on receiving information at any of the posts of the landing or concealment of negroes, to surround the habitation, but not to enter it until the arrival of the civil authority.

In May 1819, information being communicated by a slave to the party stationed at Cape Malheureux, 91 of the negroes were seized by the troops, but many of them were forcibly rescued, as appears by the evidence of the soldiers taken at the time. They stated that the whole cargo had been reported by their informant to consist of 300, but no more were apprehended than those retained by the military, and the civil commissary of the district was considered by General Darling to merit the severest censure for his conduct on the occasion. Twenty-four of the negroes were condemned to the Crown, but no steps seem to have been taken to bring the offenders to justice.

In the month of July 1819, another landing was effected in the same quarter of the island from a vessel called the "Jeune Adolphe," and some of the parties were apprehended. The fishermen who had assisted in landing the negroes, were allowed by the police to escape, and the search for negroes led to no discovery of them.

The orders that were issued to the military in the month of August, renewed the prohibition against their entering any habitation for the search of negroes, except in the presence of the civil magistrate. In the same month, a capture made by the boats of His Majesty's ship "Liverpool," having led to a prosecution in the Instance Court of Vice-Admiralty, and the condemnation of the parties in the penalties, a discussion arose upon the expediency of prosecuting the parties for the felony; but on the month of December, before the question was decided, they effected their escape out of the prison. A seizure was made about the same period of some negroes in a house at Port Louis, together with the man who had imported them: this man also effected his escape. From his confession, it now appears that he had disembarked the negroes at the Riviere Noire, and the vessel had proceeded to Bourbon for a cargo of goods with which to re-enter the port.

It is also stated by a watchman that he met at night in the streets of Port Louis, a band of Negroes with sacks of corn upon their heads; but although the man has stated that he reported the circumstance to the police, and also the facts of his having been fired on by the conductor of the negroes, we can find no trace of the communication, nor does the police officer (Mr. Denis Virieux) acknowledge to have

See printed Paper
p. 97, 1818—18
S. T.

See Evidence of
Negroes in the
Case of the St.
Jacques,
Appendix No. 3
Evidence of Mr.
Blane.

See Dispatch of
General Darling
26 Feb. 1820,
Parl. Papers,
1818—1825,
p. 124, S. T.

See printed Paper
p. 121, 1828—
1825, S. T.

See Correspondence
of Judge Smith,
printed Papers,
p. 21, 1818—1825,
S. T.

See printed Paper
p. 21, 1818—1825,
S. T.

See Return of
Slaves of C. Letor
Appendix No. 12.

See Dispatch of
General Darling,
17 Dec. 1819,
Parl. Papers, p. 12
S. T.

See Evidence of
W. Borne.

See Case of the
Alligator,
Appendix No. 46.

See Evidence of
Mr. M'Carthy,
and Mr. Michel.

Evidence of
Mr. M'Carthy and
Mr. Michel.

have any recollection of it: a case is also referred to in the enclosure to General Darling's dispatch, dated 27th July 1819, and in the proceedings against the St. Jacques.

We are not informed of any other instances that occurred about that time of the landing of slaves in the colony; but as the hurricane season which then prevailed is that in which the slave traders have usually been most active, and as the interruption of the treaty with Radama had facilitated the purchase of slaves at Madagascar, (although we are aware of no instance in which Radama departed from his engagement of 1817,) the landing and concealment of other cargoes, as in the cases we have mentioned, might have been readily accomplished in the absence of His Majesty's ships.

The correspondence between General Darling and the Commune of Port Louis appears to have originated in a belief on his part in the general connivance of the inhabitants in such proceedings, and an apprehension that the mortality occasioned by the epidemic that had broken out would give an increased stimulus to the slave trade.

Although on the one hand we are aware of no facts to justify the imputations of a very general importation of negroes at the period in question, excepting in the landing and successful concealment of two or three considerable cargoes, yet on the other hand we conceive that from the examples that had occurred the disposition of the inhabitants to protect the slave traders was to be inferred; and the observations of General Darling to Earl Bathurst of the 17th of December 1819, relative to the general practice of purchasing negroes who had been illegally imported, accorded with the admission that had previously been made when the purchasers of such negroes were considered to be in no degree implicated in the guilt of those who had imported them, nor to be liable to the same penalties in cases where they relinquished them on discovery. As to the fact that the negroes fraudulently imported were generally purchased by the inhabitants, it might be sufficient to refer to the observations we before made, that excepting in one instance no seizure of a cargo of negroes appears at any time to have been made in the colony but the same conclusion may be drawn from the fact that one of the most enterprising and successful of the slave traders has at no time possessed more than two or three slaves, who were registered in his own name.

From the extent of the importations, General Darling appears to have concurred in the opinion of General Hall, that a great number of unregistered negroes existed in the colony; but the frauds to which we have alluded in the registry were of a nature to facilitate the application of this form to all the negroes who were imported. The nominal transfers that were executed upon returns originally fraudulent were a source of profit to the persons who had made them; and we have received the acknowledgment of a slave dealer of the facility with which he made purchases of fictitious bills of sale on registered names, after landing his cargo of negroes. As the returns made to the registry did not contain any particular description of the slaves who were named in them, it was not difficult to apply them to the imported negroes, who were generally young men and women of the castes denominated "Malgache" and "Mozambique."

The triennial returns being received in the years 1819 and 1820, the necessity of comparing them with the original returns of 1815 and 1816 led to the discovery of the frauds of Bataille, and the impracticability of remedying the defects of the original registry, made under the provisions of the order in council of September 1814, was at the same time demonstrated. From the report of the committee appointed by General Darling to investigate the state of the registry, it was apparent that other circumstances had occurred to increase the confusion in which the department was inextricably involved. The damage sustained by the books and records from the effects of a hurricane had rendered many of the latter totally illegible; but if this accident had not occurred, the original defects of the registry were of a nature to defeat the attempts, in a great majority of instances, to trace the slaves who were declared in 1819 through the various transfers which had intermediately occurred. In cases of doubt, we do not find that it was the practice to require the production of the slaves in order that they might be identified; and the greater part of the returns being left unexplained by the parties, the slaves were not entered on the triennial registers, but transfers continued to be made and recognized as if the conditions of the law had been complied with.

See Returns
No. 1 & 3.
Evidence of
Mr. McCarthy and
Mr. Michel.

See Case of Lavo-
pierre, App. No. 39.

Evidence of Charles
McCarthy.
See Case of Lavo-
pierre, App. No. 39.
Extract of Mr.
Bradshaw's Letter,
dated 20 Dec. 1825.

See printed Papers,
p. 121, 1818—
1825, S. T.

See Instructions to
Mr. Pye, 4 Nov.
1820, Case of the
Rodrigues Slaves,
Appendix No. 21.

See Returns of the
Slaves of Mr. Le
Gros, Case of the
Rodrigues Slaves,
Appendix No. 21.
Evidence of
General Keating.
See Evidence of
Mr. McCarthy and
Mr. Michel.
See Evidence of
Mr. Le Gros.

See Mr. Byam's
Return,
Appendix No. 10.

See Correspondence
respecting the
Voyages of certain
Colonial Vessels,
Appendix No. 40.
See Extract of
Voyages, Case of
La Paix,
App. No. 50; and
Case of the Jeune
Amile, App. No. 51.

Of 80,046 slaves returned in Mauritius in 1815-16, only 72,728 would appear to have been registered in 1819. On the discovery of the frauds of Bataille after he had absconded, the registers containing them were marked by the Court of First Instance, and no transfers were made upon them.

In another instance a prosecution was entered against a man named Lavoipierre, who had nominally transferred 400 slaves, having only 101 names on his return, but without declaring the transfer at the office.

Different persons appearing to claim the same slaves in 1819 led to a detection of the fraud, as it explained the nature of the practices by which the inhabitants were enabled to appeal to the registers, when suspicions were raised of the negroes in their possession having been newly imported. It is necessary also to observe that the transfers declared at the triennial period by the last purchasers could be no proof of the extent of these transactions in the intervening years, as numerous purchases and sales might be effected by individuals whose names did not appear, either in the original or triennial returns. A person who had made a return of slaves he legally possessed, might also have dealt to a great extent in new negroes on the certificates of returns under other names. An inspection of the slaves however at any period would have established their identity on a comparison of the description given in the returns; and it is much to be regretted that this course was not taken on the delivery of the returns, which were licensed by Governor Farquhar to be registered in 1816, and also at the triennial period of 1818-19, when General Darling had received the instructions contained in Earl Bathurst's dispatch of the 20th July 1819. If the returns had at that time been verified, the nature and extent of the frauds would at once have been ascertained; and instead of a great excess of unregistered slaves in the colony, it would have been found that fictitious returns were made in anticipation of the means of importing negroes to correspond with them; that deaths were not declared, that the registers had been interpolated, by a clerk who was engaged in these nefarious proceedings, and that a traffic had been carried on in the extracts of the registry to the full extent of negroes who were successfully introduced. Although the release of several negroes unjustly held in slavery would have been accomplished by the detection of these frauds, a great number of names would probably have appeared on the returns for whom no slaves could be produced, an inference that we conceive will be fully confirmed by a comparison we shall hereafter make of these returns, with the result of an actual inspection of the slaves which took place in the last year.

The arrival of Sir Robert Farquhar in July 1820, to resume the government, was followed by a renewal of the treaty with Radama, and the re-appointment of an agent to reside with him. The Governor also appointed an agent to reside at the island of Rodrigues, where it was apprehended that some attempts would be made by the slave-traders during the ensuing hurricane season. This measure was connected with another of considerable importance, which the agent was ordered to execute, namely, the preparation of returns of the slaves on that island who had not been registered in 1815 and 1816. We have already adverted to a strong presumption that the slaves of one proprietor at Rodrigues have been fraudulently introduced, and which we were led to suspect from observing the description given in the return of his slaves. The returns thus prepared in 1821, on being sent to Port Louis, were transmitted by the Governor to the registrar; but as that officer did not consider himself legally authorized to register them, he abstained from doing so, but he allowed the proprietor to make oath to his return in 1822, and some of these slaves though unregistered, we find were subsequently sold at the bar of the court. No satisfactory reason has been given why the slaves at Rodrigues were not returned within the period prescribed by the order in council of 1814.

The nature of the voyages made by several colonial vessels about this period exposed them to some suspicions.

The restrictions imposed in the ports of Madagascar, which were subject to the authority of Radama, would seem to have been in a great degree effectual; but other ports to the southward and westward were still open to the slave traders, and to these parts of the coast the colonial vessels repaired for cargoes of rice and bullocks, occasionally running over to Mozambique, and touching at the islands dependent on Mauritius to which they were not bound. It was noticed that these vessels occasionally made successive voyages between Bourbon and Madagascar, and that

the length of time they were absent was not always accounted for by the ostensible voyages they had made. We will notice in this place the operations of two vessels, the "Industry" and "Coureur," which have attracted a great deal of attention from the notoriety of the persons concerned in the issue of the trials which took place in 1821 and 1822.

We have no distinct information of the voyages made by the Industry previous to 1819. In the latter end of that year she must have landed a cargo of slaves in the colony, and having run down to Bourbon, she came up from thence in ballast. The Custom-house officer who boarded the vessel having observed some irons which indicated the nature of the voyage, remarked it to the people on board, and a bribe was offered to this man by the owner (Bataille) which he declares he rejected, but which is otherwise explained to have been withheld by Bataille after the vessel had sailed on another voyage, her departure having been hastened to prevent a discovery. Information was subsequently given to the same Custom-house officer that she had returned and landed a cargo of slaves in the island, and the original memorandum has been produced to us; but whether from the corruption of this man, or the connivance of the chief searcher to whom he alleges that he communicated the information, no proceedings appear to have been taken.

At a man named Mongin commanded the "Industry" on this and subsequent voyages, until she was taken in 1821 at Zanzibar by Captain Moresby; but it seems probable that Dorval had been employed in her previous to 1820, and it is certain that her operations had been very successful. In the middle of that year, and about the period of the arrival of Sir Robert Farquhar, Dorval sailed from Port Louis in a small vessel named the "Coureur." This vessel cleared out with a cargo of arms and gunpowder for Muscat; she was ostensibly commanded by a man named L'Hoste, but was boarded off the port by Dorval, who embarked with a party of French sailors, deserters from the vessels in the harbour. Having proceeded directly to the port of Tamatave, she was unable to procure a cargo of slaves, ~~as~~ alleged from the effect of the recent restrictions. She then proceeded to Bembatoc on the western coast of Madagascar, and was again disappointed from another cause, the "Industry" having just completed her cargo. The "Coureur" finally sailed for Zanzibar, from whence she returned with a cargo of negroes in March 1821; and being chased by a government cruiser, she was stranded in the night, and the slaves having been landed, the vessel was burnt. The officer at the neighbouring port repaired to the spot, and found a few of the negroes who had been unable to accompany their party, and discovered a few others in the possession of two individuals, but the measures taken for the recovery of the remainder, and for the arrest of the parties concerned in the adventure, proved ineffectual.

A proclamation was published, offering rewards for their apprehension, and discouraging the inhabitants from concealing the negroes, and although traced through the woods by the military, who acted under the orders of the civil commissary, and subsequently to various habitations in different quarters of the island, the searches which were made led to no discovery of them. Dorval and L'Hoste, against whom, with some others, true bills were found by the Grand Jury, embarked in a boat at Morne Brabant and effected their escape to Bourbon. Dorval having returned to Mauritius in the same year, remained for some time in concealment, but having been arrested in 1822 by the deputy-marshal of the Admiralty Court to whom he gave himself up, he produced a secret promise of pardon under the signature of Sir Robert Farquhar, and which was to be granted to him for all past offences on his accomplishing the apprehension of the registered captain of the "Coureur," (L'Hoste) and which he had then effected. The former owners of the "Coureur," (two brothers of the name of Touche) had been indicted, but the bill was not found; one was afterwards tried and acquitted, and the prosecution of L'Hoste in August 1822, as owner and captain, failed from a flaw in the indictment. Although a technical objection prevailed against the prosecution of this man on a new indictment, it is apparent that the pardon of Dorval occasioned a strong repugnance on the mind of Judge Smith to any further proceedings in this case, and whatever inducement may have prevailed with Sir Robert Farquhar to accord so signal a favour to Dorval (and the circumstances attending which have not been satisfactorily explained), it is much to be regretted, that a full disclosure of the persons who had received or purchased the negroes, and retained them in defiance of the proclamation of Government, had not been made a primary and indispensable condition of any act of grace extended to him.

Evidence of
Charles Garfit.

Evidence of
Mr. James Lai-

See Evidence of
Garfit.

See Case of the
Courier,
Appendix No. 1.

Evidence of
E. Daudet and
Monton.

See Evidence of
Letord, alias
Dorval.

See Case of the
Courier,
Appendix No. 1.

See Proclamation
of the 7th March
1821, Case of the
Courier,
Appendix No. 1.

See Evidence of
Letord, alias
Dorval.

See Evidence of
Mr. May.

See Copy of this
Paper, dated
24 April 1822,
Case of the Cour-
Appendix No. 12.

See Return No. 1
pp. 39, 40.

See Proceeding,

Case of the Cour-
Appendix No. 12.

See Evidence of
Mr. Smith.

See Proclama-
tion in the Case of the
Courier,
Appendix No. 12.

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See Letter of the Chief Commissary of Police to the Procureur General, dated 16 March 1821, Case of the Coureur, Appendix No. 12.

See Manifest, dated 21 Oct. 1820, Case of the Coureur, Appendix No. 12.

See Statement of E. Gersigny, Case of the Coureur, Appendix No. 12.

See Evidence of Mr. Christie.

See Statements of the Negroes Mandola and Fadaguira, Case of the Coureur, Appendix No. 12.

See Case of the St. Jacques, Appendix No. 38.

See Case of the Industry, Appendix No. 32.

See Evidence of Mr. Reader and Mr. Fox.

See Pamphlet in the Case of the Industry, Appendix No. 32.

See Pamphlet, Appendix No. 52.

See Correspondence of Police Department, Apprehension of New Malagache Slaves, Appendix No. 41.

See Case of Mandine, La Jeunesse, and others, Appendix No. 41.

See Case of La Jeunesse, Appendix No. 41.

See Minute of Sir Robert Farquhar, 19 Jan. 1823, Case of La Jeunesse, Appendix No. 41.

See Case of La Jeunesse and others, App. No. 41.

See List of Voyages, Case of the Coureur, Appendix No. 12.

The person who had freighted and given security for the "Coureur" on her last voyage, was a man named St. Colombe, and from information given to the police after her return from Zanzibar, St. Colombe was traced with a large body of negroes to a habitation in the leeward quarter, where he had concealed them, and from whence he removed to the southern parts of the island. No doubt can exist of the correctness of this information, but neither the police officers who were sent in search, nor the civil commissioners of the districts apprehended him; and after deliberately disposing of his negroes, he effected his escape to Bourbon in a colonial vessel. Mr. Christie, the attorney-general, appointed to conduct the prosecution, has stated that the informations taken in the case of this man were never communicated to him; that he had never heard of his name, and that other persons were brought forward on much slighter grounds. Two of the negroes who were taken up several months afterwards, have explained that they wandered during a month in the woods before they were detached from their party and sold, but they can give no account of what became of the others. During the year 1821, while at Bourbon, St. Colombe appears to have entered into new arrangements, in concert with persons in Mauritius, for the purchase and employment of colonial vessels in the slave trade. We are not distinctly informed of the operations of these vessels, which subsequently made several voyages of a very suspicious nature.

The proceedings in the special court against Mongin and Dubignon, the captain and supercargo of the "Industry," were no less unsatisfactory in the result. These persons had been captured in the vessel at Zanzibar with the slaves on board, but Dubignon, who was a Creole of the colony, and had navigated with Dorval, having changed his name, was not identified by persons to whom he was believed to be well known, and the bill of indictment was thrown out by the Grand Jury. Mongin, who was brought to trial, also personated a brother of his name, an officer in the French service, and was acquitted. Both these persons, against whom penalties had been adjudged in the Instance Court of Vice-Admiralty, were enabled to abscond during a tumult that was raised in the court apparently with this object, as the deputy-marshal was ordered to arrest them; nor did the subsequent measures taken for their apprehension prevent their escape to Bourbon, where Bataille, and other notorious persons had already taken refuge. A gross libel upon Judge Smith was subsequently printed and circulated in the colony in the name of Mongin, but no effectual measures were taken for the discovery and prosecution of the author, nor in the case of another indecent attack made upon the judge in the name of Madame Bourgène, whom he had caused to be apprehended on the information of a slave, and in whose house were seized some negroes, who were concealed by her husband, a notorious slave dealer, who had absconded.

We have not been able to trace from what vessel were landed in the colony a large cargo of negroes, apparently about the period of the landing from the Coureur (March 1821), and of which no notice whatever appears to have been taken. Three or four of these malgaches were taken up according to their own account a few weeks after their arrival, and from our examination of them we think it would not have been difficult to have traced the others alleged to have amounted to 200 or 300; and being natives of Madagascar, who had been shipped at Tamatave in the dominions of Radama, a breach of the treaty must have taken place at a period which rendered it of much importance to have traced it, as well as to have obtained the liberation of so many negroes. Some negroes who had been seized about this time were restored by the collector of customs to the claimants, but one was detained in prison from September 1821 to January 1823, when, in consequence of no claim being made by the person on whose estate he was seized, he was ultimately transferred from prison to the government establishment called the Bagne, by order of Sir Robert Farquhar, where we traced him recently on a perusal of some papers recorded in the police-office, and he has identified five others of the same cargo who are employed in the engineer department, and had been with others condemned to the Crown on the 4th April 1821.

Some conception may be formed of the extent of the slave trade with Madagascar from the voyages of particular vessels, although the proceedings of the Coureur do not appear to have attracted attention until she was stranded and burnt in 1821. It appears that she sailed from Port Louis on six successive voyages to Madagascar in the years 1819 and 1820, commanded either by L'Hoste (or by Dorval, whose name did not appear), and from the information we have received it appears that

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she landed negroes on the coast of Black River, who were concealed in the forests. The shortness of the run from Madagascar admitted of a larger number being shipped on those voyages than from the coast of Africa; and hence the practice of bringing the Mozambique negroes through Madagascar to be embarked at Tamatave. From 150 to 200 may be taken as the average number in each voyage.

From the return of colonial vessels it will be seen that the number of vessels which cleared out from Port Louis in 1820 was 171, and that the average number which cleared out annually from 1815 to 1821 was 150, chiefly for Madagascar and Bourbon; and viewing the profits arising from the slave trade, the shortness of the voyage, the connections with those countries, and considering that in cases of capture the persons taken were generally enabled to escape, while the freighters of the vessel and importers of the negroes were rarely prosecuted, or the negroes recovered if once landed, the greatest temptation was held out to the colonists to promote such adventures, and to unprincipled persons who had but little property to lose to embark in them.

We cannot quote a stronger instance of the perseverance of the slave traders in their course than in the case of a man named Lemoine, who commanded a vessel (L'Espoir), which was seized at Madagascar with 85 slaves on board, and condemned in July 1817 by the Vice-Admiralty Court. The vessel was immediately restored to Lemoine, who was admitted to take the oath of allegiance, and he again sailed for Madagascar in December 1817, and, having proceeded to the African coast, committed, it is said, an act of piracy, by treacherously surprising and murdering the crew of a Portuguese vessel which he pillaged. Lemoine absconded on the arrival of L'Espoir at Seychelles, where some of the crew were apprehended and sent to Port Louis; two of them were imprisoned for nine months, and then set at liberty without trial. Two others were apprehended in the June Adolphe and Ravenant slave traders.

Lemoine, who was denounced by the French and Portuguese Government, returned to Mauritius in 1823, and assuming another name, obtained a written permission from the police department to reside in a distant quarter of the island, where he has recently been apprehended through the exertions of the present chief commissioner of police, on the accidental complaint of a female slave who happened to disclose his real name.

In 1822 the returns for the triennial registry of slaves were again called for, but the inaccuracies contained in those which had been delivered in 1819 remaining for the most part unexplained, only 7,485 slaves were entered on the registers, being about one-tenth of the number contained in the original returns of the year 1815; the remainder being rejected by the registrar on the ground that they could not be traced in the original registers.

In the Seychelles Islands, it appeared from the tax-rolls that 2,533 slaves had been returned in the year 1810, and in the year 1815 the number returned to the Slave Registry Office was 6,950, of whom 4,960 were males, and 1,990 were females.

The same irregularities had occurred in carrying into effect the law of registry in those islands, and the same frauds appear to have been committed. The facilities which the situation of the islands afforded for the introduction and concealment of negroes, rendered the attempt to trace them in most instances ineffectual, and the Government agent for several years had no establishment which could enable him to effect a seizure when any resistance was offered. In the year 1822 some police officers were for the first time sent up, but their exertions were ineffectual, and as even in the principal island of Mahé negroes were successfully introduced and concealed in the woods and caverns, and upon the habitations. The produce of those islands, consisting chiefly of cotton, being required by the regulations to be sent to Port Louis for exportation, the vessels of the inhabitants were employed during the fair season in bringing it down, and in returning with supplies. During the hurricane months, from December to April, their vessels were either laid up at Mahé, or employed in making voyages to Aldabra, an island near the coast of Africa, where they collected land turtle, or to Zanzibar for rice. These voyages made at a season when the cruisers had retired from the station, were exposed to some suspicions; and although a decline in the value of cotton had diminished the

See Statement of the Slave "Col...
Case of the Cour...
Appendix No. 1.

See Return No.

See Case of L'Espoir,
Appendix No. 42.

Letter of General Darling to Governor Milius, 22 May 1819.

See printed Paper 1821, Class C, p. 96, S. T.

See Letters of Procurer-General to the Police, dated 31 May, 15 June, 1 July 1819; 29 March 1826; Case of L'Espoir, Appendix No. 42.

See Return No. 28.
See Evidence of Mr. Madge and Mr. Knowles.

See Evidence of

Evidence of Mr. Madge;
Mr. Knowles.
See Evidence of G. Coombes.

See Return No. 31.
See Letter of Mr. Harrison.

15 Aug. 1827,
attached to p. 6.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF INQUIRY

Evidence of
Mr. Knowles.

See Return No. 29.
See Cases of
Roquelaure Louis
and Augustine
Ribaud, App. No. 16.
and Moustique La
Fleut, App. No. 18.

Evidence of
Mr. Madge.

See Cases of Slaves
transferred by the
Victorine,
Appendix No. 53.

Evidence of
Mr. Madge and
Mr. Le Sage.

Evidence of Lt. etord.

Evidence of
Mr. Madge.

Evidence of Mr.
Kelsey and Mr.
Chignard.

See Case of the
Courier des Sey-
chelles, App. No. 17.
Evidence of
Mr. Knowles.

See Abstract of
Return, Case of the
Courier des Sey-
chelles, App. No. 17.

See Evidence of
Mr. Madge.

Evidence of
Mr. Knowles and
Mr. Kray.

Case of the
"Composant,"
Appendix No. 54.
Evidence of
G. Coombes.

profits from the labour of the slaves employed in its cultivation, the cheapness with which they could be subsisted, and the facilities attending their transfer for sale to Mauritius, continued to hold out inducements to the inhabitants to import them. From a return of the births and deaths of slaves, prepared in the Office of Slave Registry, it appears that 1,398 births were declared in ten years (from 1815 to 1825), and only 143 deaths within the same period; and it has been proved in some instances that the names being preserved in the returns gave occasion to the substitution of new negroes for those who had died.

The occupation of the Amirante Islands had led to the transfers of slaves to them for the cultivation of cotton and grain. These transfers were made upon the authority of the Government agent; and some proprietors having estates in different islands, were in the habit of removing their slaves continually for the cultivation of them. As the detached islands were under the management of overseers, or "regisseurs," in some instances persons who had themselves been engaged in the slave trade, no reliance could be placed on their disposition to uphold the laws; and the Government agent, who from his situation could exercise no effectual control in the island where he resided, was still less enabled to prevent abuses in those at a distance. The islands thus occupied in a direction towards the African coast, rendered it almost practicable for the inhabitants to cross over in their boats; and the habits acquired by the slaves who were employed in fishing and navigating between the islands, have led to their carrying off the boats in some instances with the object of escaping back to their native country.

The original returns of the inhabitants were allowed to be taken back to Mahé by the Government agent in 1817, that extracts might be granted in compliance with the forms for the transfer of slaves to Mauritius, but it was not for some time that this practice prevailed to any extent. The decline in the value of cotton, and the exhaustion of the lands at Seychelles, induced the inhabitants to employ their slaves on fishing, and in raising grain and manioc for their subsistence. The effect of this change, though beneficial for the slaves, was less productive to their owners, and in the years 1821 and 1822 considerable numbers were transferred to Mauritius for sale.

These slaves were found in several instances not to correspond with the descriptions given in the extracts of registry accompanying them, and in these cases they were not allowed to be landed, and were taken back to Seychelles. It does not appear to have been the practice, either in the transfers to Mauritius or between the islands, to inspect them at the Custom-house at Mahé previous to their embarkation; and in cases where they had been rejected at Port Louis they were retained by their owners.

In the hurricane season of 1821-22, from information that had reached the Government, a cruiser (the Eliza), with a police officer and some troops, was sent up to intercept a vessel belonging to Seychelles that had cleared out for the island of Aldabra, and a search was directed to be made on shore for any negroes who might be disembarked from her. This vessel (the "Courier des Seychelles") arrived in ballast at Mahé, the day previous to the arrival of the Eliza, and after landing a cargo of negroes at Silhouette, a small island within sight of Mahé. But the search made in that island and at Mahé was unsuccessful, although strong suspicions at that time existed of her illegal proceedings, and which, as we already have noticed, have since been considerably strengthened. This vessel had been much employed in the conveyance of slaves from Seychelles to Mauritius, and the family of the owner, who had returned 290 slaves in 1815, made many transfers of their own.

These measures having been taken without communication with the Government agent, he remonstrated against them; and it must be admitted that the searches that were made on the habitation at Mahé and Silhouette did not in all instances proceed upon such information as at a former period would have been held to justify the issue of a warrant. On the other hand, the attempt made on a subsequent occasion by the Government agent himself to accomplish the seizure of the captain of a vessel which he had detained on suspicion of having landed negroes at Mahé, was characterized by the same neglect of the formalities required by colonial law.

The slaves brought from Seychelles were returned chiefly as domestics; but in some instances the slaves who had been embarked as sailors in the colonial vessels were

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were discharged on their arrival in port. The extent to which newly acquired negroes may have been thus introduced from Seychelles could not be readily ascertained. It is certain that the transfers from thence considerably increased in the years 1821 and 1822, when the direct introduction of slaves from Madagascar had been checked by the treaty with Radama, and the prospect of disposing of their slaves at Mauritius held out an inducement to a continuance of the slave trade at Seychelles, where a decline in the value of their produce had ceased to compensate the risk attending it, by any profits to be derived from their labour.

Upon the same view of closing up the source of supply, Sir Robert Farquhar entered into negotiations with the Imaum of Muscat, with whom a treaty was concluded in 1822 by Captain Moresby, prohibiting his subjects at Zanzibar from selling slaves to Europeans.

The treaties concluded by Sir William Keir Grant in 1820 with the Arab tribes of the Persian gulf, who consented to renounce the slave trade, and to declare it piracy, prepared the Imaum, who was present, for an acquiescence in this restriction, which the influence of the government of India was also exerted to accomplish; and it was declared in the treaty concluded by Captain Moresby with the Imaum, that His Majesty's ships should be entitled to capture all Arab vessels having slaves on board to the eastward of a line drawn from Cape Delgado, the southern extremity of his African territories, to Dio Head in the gulf of Cambay. This treaty with the Imaum, and the treaty with Radama added to the provisions of the treaty of His Britannic Majesty with the King of Portugal, for limiting the slave trade of the Portuguese to their settlements south of the line, and excluding foreigners from all participation, were calculated, if strictly fulfilled, to exclude the people of these islands from all the markets to which they had been accustomed to resort for the purchase of slaves, no slave markets ostensibly remaining open but those in the neutral territory between the Imaum of Muscat's dominions and those of Portugal on the African coast, and that at Fort Dauphin in Madagascar beyond the authority of Radama.

At the period that Sir Lowry Cole succeeded to the government of the colony in the year 1823, the state of the slave registry office had undergone no improvement, nor had any check been given to the irregularities which had defeated the attempt to form a correct registry of the slaves. The rejection of the triennial returns for 1822 did not impede the sales and transfers of slaves, which were of daily occurrence; and the numerous changes which took place were added to those which had remained unexplained, and transfers were allowed on the unregistered returns from Rodriguez, and even sales at the bar of the court; and the only exception that we are aware of was in the instance of the frauds committed by Bataille. These remained uninvestigated, but the leaves of the registers containing them had been marked by the Court, and no transfers of those slaves were recognized at the office till within the last year. It had long been apparent that no exertions could be effectual to remedy the evil without verification of the slaves by their actual inspection; and this measure had in no instance that we are aware of been resorted to, excepting in the seizure of some slaves under the authority of General Hall in the year 1818, and the occasional production at the Custom-house of slaves arriving from the dependencies.

In the year 1825 the triennial returns were again presented at the office, but not registered. The Governor having recommended the formation of a new registry founded upon an actual inspection of the slaves, the execution of this measure under the order of His Majesty in Council of the 30th of January 1826, was commenced in the month of October and completed in January 1827; and the actual number of slaves at Mauritius has been ascertained to amount to 69,264; at the Seychelles to 6,520; and in the other dependent islands to 782 slaves; in all, 76,566. In 1815-16 the inhabitants at Mauritius and dependencies returned 87,352; and in January 1819, 80,185, a number that would be reduced to 77,949 with reference only to the births, deaths and enfranchisements which were declared. On a similar estimate, allowing for the casualties declared in 1822 and 1825, the numbers would successively have been reduced to 77,478 and 76,539.

The mortality that occurred in three months, viz. November and December 1819, and January 1820, in which period an epidemic distemper prevailed, has been referred to in accounting for the great reduction in the numbers of the slaves;

Vide Return No. 7.

See Return No. 9.

Vide Return No. 8.

See Return No. 9.

See Return No. 9.

See Return No. 4.

Vide Return No. 4.

Vide Return No. 19.

See Returns Nos. 4 & 30.

See Case of the Alligator, Appendix No. 46.

See Returns Nos. 4 & 30.

See Case of Slave at Colivi, Appendix No. 55.

and as several returns in 1822 and 1825 were not received, it is probable that the number of deaths recorded was short of the actual amount. The number of deaths declared in January 1819 for the three preceding years amounted to 4,285, averaging 1,428 per annum, and the number declared in 1822 for three years did not exceed 2,011 or 670 per annum; although the mortality of 1819-20 had intermediately occurred. The neglect also of the regulations of the French Government, which enjoined the civil commissioners of the quarters to keep a register of births and deaths, has prevented us from deriving any information on this subject from the very defective returns they have furnished.

From an account preserved in the police department of the number of burials at Port Louis, it has been ascertained that in the three months in which the sickness prevailed 795 slaves had died in the town alone; but in some of the districts the number of deaths recorded for the years 1819 and 1820 was less than in other years when no such malady prevailed. In the year 1826 the district registers were more correctly kept, and the total number of deaths recorded in that year throughout the island amounted to 1,436, nearly corresponding with the average number declared for the years 1816-17 and 1818. The number of births also in 1826 amounted to 663, and the average of the number declared from 1815 to 1825 is 600 per annum. It is deserving of remark, however, that these results do not correspond in any degree with those deduced from the inspection of the slaves; in 1826-27, 14,238 children in Mauritius alone having been returned under twelve years of age, or born since 1815; and which number does not include a large proportion that must have died within the same interval. It is also observable that the reduction in the number of females is much less in proportion than that of the males, although a considerable disproportion in the whole number of males and females was still found to exist in 1826-27.

The increased number of deaths declared, which in 1826 (a healthy year), exceeded the number declared in the year of the cholera morbus, would seem to have been in contemplation of an actual inspection of the slaves, as the omissions in 1819 may have been in the expectation of the means of replacing those who had died. From a return we have obtained of the number of slaves registered according to their castes, it has been found that this disproportion exclusively applies to those who have been imported. The number of Creoles in Mauritius being respectively

17,371 males, and 17,416 females. Of Mozambique negroes 15,444 males and

3,713 females; and of Malgaches 8,271 males, and 4,306 females. The total number of males of these two castes are 23,715 males, and 8,109 females, or nearly three to one; and we find that the proportion is the same between the males and females who have been captured in the slave ships.

An inspection of the slaves in the Seychelles and other dependent islands has ascertained the existence of a similar equality in the numbers of males and females born in the islands, and a disproportion in the numbers of those imported. According to these returns the number of imported slaves who have been born since the capture of the colony does not exceed 155 in Mauritius and 30 in Seychelles, from which it may be inferred that very few children have been introduced; and it is observable from an inspection of the returns appearing to be fraudulent, that the cargoes have generally consisted of young men and women between the ages of 15 and 25 years; those who have been registered must therefore be traced, for the most part, in the second column of the returns of 1826-27, comprehending the number of each caste above 16 years of age, born previous to 1810.

In our examination of the records of the registry-office, we have found it practicable, in several instances, to trace the slaves through the original returns which have been sworn to by the proprietors, and by comparing the present with the former descriptions of them, to derive some important evidence of the frauds which, in particular cases have been committed, and although we should not on the ground of errors in the returns presume fraud against the parties making them, we conceive that in all instances they justify inquiries where the rights of the slaves are in question.

On the recent inspection of the slaves in the island of Cotivi, it appeared that several slaves who had originally been returned by the proprietor in 1815 as Mozambique or negroes of the continent, were found to be Malgaches or natives of Madagascar; and we have noticed the same changes in some Mauritius returns.

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In the case of the Rodrigues returns, it was also apparent that a great number of negroes (not creoles) were too young to have been imported before the abolition. See Case of Rodrigues Appendix N.

The extent to which such frauds have been committed throughout the colony and its dependencies could now be ascertained only by a careful comparison of the former returns with the results of the late inspection; and we entertain no doubt, that wherever similar discrepancies are found to exist, the interrogation of the slaves would lead to the acquirement of distinct as well as direct evidence of the time and circumstances of their introduction.

Although no doubt whatever can exist that the excess in the number of male slaves in the colony is exclusively attributable to the slave trade, we do not think we should be justified in asserting that it has been altogether the effect of the importations which have taken place since the capture of the colony. In the return of 1,333 Government slaves we have remarked that the number of males and females are in the proportion of 853 and 480; and although no satisfactory account of them can be traced in the early records of the Matricule department, we see no ground to suppose that these numbers could have been augmented since 1810 by any means excepting the natural increase, and the very limited effect of the colonial law making foundlings of colour liable to be placed amongst the slaves of Government.

From the result of all the inquiries we have been able to make, we are induced to believe that, although considerable numbers of slaves were imported previous to the year 1818, the proportion may have been over estimated, that the check given to the slave trade in 1818 tended to diminish the numbers in the following years; and although projects were subsequently formed, and vessels fitted out by persons now resident and established in the colony, and which vessels engaged in the slave trade, it has been generally maintained that no direct importation of an entire cargo of negroes has taken place at Mauritius since the landing effected from the "Courieur" in March 1821. We have already stated the ground of our belief that a cargo of "Malgache" (or Madagascar) negroes was landed about the same time, if not three weeks later, and although no notice was taken of it by the public authorities, and from the case of the "Walter Farquhar," and the correspondence of Sir Robert Farquhar with the Government of Bourbon in 1823, we find that vessels of this colony were engaged in the slave trade at Bourbon at a much later period.

We have noticed the evidence of a landing at Seychelles from the "Courier des Seychelles" in March 1822, and Mr. Madge is of opinion that strong grounds of suspicion existed against the "Composant," a vessel which he thinks landed a cargo of slaves at Seychelles as late as 1823, and from his statement of the circumstances, we are disposed to agree with him in considering that there was much reason to suspect a debarkation had taken place.

That slaves in small numbers have since been smuggled into the island and its dependencies by the vessels engaged in the trade with Madagascar, and the coast of Africa, may however be suspected; nor does it appear to us from the manner in which that trade has been carried on, that the local regulations have been of a nature to prevent it.

Although a material check would have been given to the slave trade by the treaty of Sir Robert Farquhar with Radama in 1817, had it been adhered to, the measure to which we must primarily attribute its suppression within the colony, was that which was adopted by Generals Hall and Darling pursuant to the instructions of Earl Bathurst for sending to England for trial the parties accused of slave-trading, and the example made by their transportation in some instances to New South Wales had already produced an effect on the minds of the colonists at the period of the return of Sir Robert Farquhar to the colony in 1820.

The daring adventures that were subsequently undertaken were certainly proofs of the encouragement it still received, and the issue of the trials in Mauritius in 1821 and 1822, and the circumstances attending them, betrayed the same spirit in the colonists that had before existed; but the determination of His Majesty's Government to suppress the slave trade had been rendered obvious to them, and after the successful renewal of the treaty with Radama in 1821, which shut them out from their nearest source of supply, they could not expect in future to escape the consequences of landing and distributing cargoes of negroes in the colony, although speculators

Evidence of G Keating and C. Letord.

See Letter of S R. Farquhar to Gov. Freycinet

11 March 1822

Case of the W

Farquhar,

Appendix No.

See Return No.

See App. No. 5

Evidence of Mr. Madge.

See Case of the

Composant, No.

See Correspondence relative to the Voyages of certain Colonial Vessels Appendix No. 4

speculators might continue to promote distant adventures by concealing their participation with those who were enabled to engage in them by means of the resources they supplied.

The rapid increase in the produce of the island in later years, has been referred to in support of the opinion that the importation of new slaves must have been continued. The destructive effect of the hurricanes on the plantations of coffee and spices had led the colonists of Mauritius to direct their attention to the cultivation of the sugar cane, and a progressive increase in the quantities of sugar annually exported has been latterly the consequence of the direct encouragement held out by the colonial Government, and the substitution of imported supplies for the subsistence formerly raised almost exclusively on the plantations. The increasing importations of rice and salt beef from Madagascar subsequent to the treaty for the suppression of the slave trade, and the pacification of that country by Radama, and the supplies of rice received from British India, have facilitated this change by cheapening the means of subsistence for the slaves, and the improvement in the communications throughout the island, which has been chiefly the consequence of the great attention paid by Sir Lowry Cole to the formation of excellent roads, and the introduction of horses, mules, and draught oxen, has progressively augmented the number of slaves disposable for the labour of the plantations. The practice of employing slaves in drawing carts, which is continued in Port Louis, has been relinquished in the country, and the use of water-mills constructed in the colony, and of steam-engines imported from England, has further enabled the planters to employ their slaves in clearing and cultivating new lands. To these causes must chiefly be ascribed the great and sudden increase in the production and exportation of sugar. The reduction of the import duties in Great Britain has also, within the last year, given a new stimulus to the speculations of the inhabitants. The proprietors of slaves at Seychelles have availed themselves of the law allowing of the transfer of plantation slaves under license of the Governor. One hundred and eighty seven slaves were thus transferred to Mauritius in the year 1826, and 1131 in the year 1827. These parties were enabled, in some cases, to comply with the terms of the law by purchasing estates, frequently, it is believed, on the credit of the slaves they were licensed to remove, and of fifteen licenses granted in the last two years for the removal of 1397 slaves from Seychelles, the owners have, in all instances, acquired their property about the period they applied for the licenses to transfer their slaves. From another return, it will be seen that 89 slaves have been licensed to be transferred from Seychelles by owners who have not possessed lands in Mauritius. In a recent instance, some of the slaves who were transferred under license, were sold by the proprietor immediately on their arrival, in violation of the terms of the application on which the license had been granted, and this occurrence has given occasion to the refusal of the governor (publicly announced) to grant any more licenses for the transfer of slaves from Seychelles until the pleasure of His Majesty may be known.

See Return No. 11.

See Return No. 15.

See Return No. 16.

See Government Notice dated 3 January 1828, Case of Savy's Slave, Appendix No. 52.

See Return No. 10.

The whole number of slaves who have been brought into Mauritius from the dependencies since July 1808 (the earliest date of any record at the Custom House) to December 1827, amounts to 3246, of whom 79 were rejected as not corresponding, in description with the registers, and nine were seized and condemned as illegally imported. From this return, it will be observed that eight of the number rejected were from 1818 to 1822, and 71 from 1823 to 1825, but it is apparent that no record could have been kept of the number who were sent back to the Seychelles previous to 1823.

Return No. 16.

The defective state of the records has not enabled us to obtain any very accurate account of the state of property in Mauritius and its dependencies, but it is sufficiently apparent from the returns furnished to us, and from which we have formed those to which we refer, that the inhabitants at Seychelles do not in general possess any land at Mauritius to which their slaves could be transferred; and we shall hereafter take occasion to explain more particularly the grounds of our opinion that the condition of the slaves in the principal islands of the Seychelles, where they are employed either in the cultivation of coffee or cotton, or in raising subsistence, and in fishing, is, with some exceptions, preferable to that of the slaves at Mauritius, where the labour of the sugar plantations is, for the most part, severe, and their subsistence from imported supplies of provisions daily becoming more dependent on the fluctuations of commerce, the produce raised in the island being also liable to destruction

destruction by the hurricanes, the temptation of large profits, and the employment of borrowed capital at high rates of interest in clearing and planting new lands, have also had an equal tendency to lead the planters in Mauritius to exact more labour both from males and females than is always consistent with the comfort, and even the preservation of the slaves and with the permanent interests of the colony.

That several of the slaves brought down from Seychelles had been there imported, in violation of the abolition laws, is to be concluded from the nature of the frauds which are known to have been committed, and from the proofs existing against some of the individuals who have transferred them, and considering the great facilities which are afforded in those islands for evading the law, from their proximity to the coast of Africa, from the description of people residing in the detached islands, and the precarious control that can be exercised over their proceedings, we did not hesitate to represent to His Majesty's Government the expediency of prohibiting the further removal of slaves to Mauritius, as well from consideration for the slaves themselves as that the profits to be derived from their transfer might not tempt the inhabitants to commit future infractions of the law in situations so remote from effectual control.

Slaves transferred by Langlois, Co
of the Courier d
Seychelles, Appendix No. 1
Vide Dispatch addressed to R. W. Hay, Esq
dated 21 July 1828

See Return No. 1.

See Case of Agalega Slaves, Appendix No. 5.

See Case of Mous
tique La Fleut, App. No. 18; an
Augustin Ribon
and Roquelaure
Louis, App. No. 1
See Mr. Madge's
Explanation, Appendix No. 18

See Return No. 1.

See Case of the Victoline, Appendix No. 53,
and Evidence of Lieut. Brownrigg.

That these apprehensions are not groundless may be inferred alone from the return of births and deaths declared from 1815 to 1825. Making every allowance for the salubrity of the climate of the Seychelles islands, it is impossible to conceive that in a population where the number of females have not been more than one-half the number of males, the birth in 10 years should have amounted to 1,395, and the deaths should not have exceeded 143. The situation of the slaves in some of the detached islands has been found unfavourable to the rearing of children, and we can only conclude that several slaves have died without any declaration having been made, and that opportunities have been taken to replace them, as in some instances to which we have alluded.

The transfer of plantation slaves between the islands of the Seychelles it may be expedient however to sanction for a time, under the special license of the Governor, and on the concurrence of the guardian of slaves, founded on the report of the assistant guardian, whose duty it would be to show that the proposed transfer would be conducive to the interest of the slaves themselves; and as their removal to the more remote islands has been represented to have exposed them in some instances to great hardships, and to have induced some of the proprietors to relieve them occasionally from such situations, it may be generally found advantageous to grant licenses for the return of such slaves to the principal islands, where they might be permanently established, and inducements held out to the proprietors to relinquish such remote possessions by conferring on them grants in the islands to which it may be desirable to encourage a transfer of the slaves, and where they may be under the immediate protection of a magistrate. The transfers, till the year 1826, were permitted to take place under the authority of the government agent at Seychelles.

The detention in 1825, by Captain Dunn, commanding His Majesty's ship Samarang on that station of a small vessel called the Victoline, which sailed from the back of the island of Mahé with some slaves that were thus licensed to be transferred by Mr. Madge, explains the irregularities to which the practice was subject, unknown to the Governor, to whom the government agent did not report this occurrence.

A more important advantage may be generally conceded to the inhabitants of the dependent islands by removing the colonial restrictions under which they are compelled to bring all their produce to Port Louis, and by allowing all the privileges of trade to the Port of Mahé (where there is a custom-house), which are enjoyed by other free colonial ports not under the particular restriction to which that of Mauritius is subject as a sugar island. The memorials which have been successively addressed by the inhabitants to the colonial government, and the report of Lieutenant Cole explain the great importance they would attach to the concession, and as they would be thus enabled to send their vessels to the coasts of India during the hurricane season in which they are unable to come to Mauritius, they would have less inducement to employ them either in the trade of the African coast, or in the fisheries of the small islands contiguous to it, and which have usually been the pretext of the slave traders in the clandestine voyages they have made to Zanzibar.

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See Letter of Mr. Harrison, 15 Aug.
1827, Return No. 31.

See Captain Dunn's Letter, dated 21 April 1827; Appendix No. 52; and Case of the *Courier des Seychelles*, App. No. 17. Evidence of Mr. Madge, Letter from Capt. Dunn, 21 April 1827, App. No. 52.

From the nature of the resources of these islands, and from their situation so contiguous to the coast of Africa, we are induced to recommend the removal of restrictions upon their trade, rather than any encouragement to them to employ their slaves in the cultivation and manufacture of sugar; and as the hurricanes to which the Mauritius is exposed do not extend to the latitude of Seychelles, no obstacle is presented to the cultivation of coffee, cocoa, and other productions which grow there remarkably well, and to the improvement of the fisheries including that of the spermaceti whale, which may tend in a greater degree to their permanent advantage, and to the health and comfort of their slaves.

The islands more immediately connected with the Mauritius, and where the proprietors reside, and which from their situation have at no time formed a part of dependency of Seychelles, are supported by their enjoyment of the exclusive supply of salt-fish, and cocoa nut oil to the Mauritius market, an advantage which has resulted from the privilege the proprietors have enjoyed of importing their produce at Mauritius without payment of the colonial duties imposed on similar productions from Ceylon and other British possessions, from whence they might be cheaply and abundantly supplied.

See Return No. 6.

From the return, it will be seen that ten islands which have thus been settled are occupied by 782 slaves, of whom 522 are males and 260 are females, the proportions varying in each island.

We have been unable to trace the removal of these slaves through the records of the Custom-house, and the irregularities observable in some instances have given rise to apprehensions that several of the slaves may have been illegally procured. These island are in all instances under the management of "Regisseurs," they are rarely visited excepting by the vessels of the proprietors, and the slaves in them are beyond the reach of the protection of any magistrate.

See Case of Lascares at Cotivi and Agalega, App. No. 55 & No. 57.

The recent return of an officer who had been sent round to take the descriptions of the slaves has enabled the Government to ascertain their condition on the several islands, and to bring back some free persons who had been detained in two of them unknown to the authorities for several years, and considering the impracticability of exercising any control over these outlying settlements, and the serious nature of the charges which have been preferred against some of the persons connected with them, we think that no slaves should in future be allowed to be transferred to them, but that the proprietors should be permitted to receive licenses for the transfer to Mauritius of all such slaves with their families as they can prove to have taken from hence, and in cases where no satisfactory explanation can be given, but where there may not be decisive proofs that the slaves have been illegally imported, such licenses should only be granted where the slaves may also be found desirous of removal. For the removal of slaves since 1818, we beg to refer to the Returns we have compiled from the information we have received from the Custom-house.

In recommending that the colonial duties now levied upon cocoa nut oil, and dried or salted fish brought from British settlements eastward of the Cape of Good Hope, may be taken off with a view to encourage the importation of those articles from Ceylon and the continent of India, we anticipate such an increase in the supply as would tend to augment the comforts of the slaves, as well as the indigent classes of the free inhabitants, and we think it would at the same time be equitable that the proprietors of those islands should be privileged to export their produce direct to other places, on certificates from the Custom-house at Port Louis, where they reside.

We have already alluded to the means that may still be found in evading the regulations in force and smuggling slaves in small numbers into the colony, and its dependencies, and the intercourse subsisting with Madagascar and Bourbon, has drawn our attention to this subject, upon which it may be necessary to offer some observations.

The high price of slaves at Bourbon, which is the consequence of the great encouragement given by the French government to the cultivation of sugar, and the monopoly which that island nearly enjoys of the markets of France, supersedes at present all inducement to attempt the introduction of slaves from thence; and the clandestine removal in the year 1825 of some slaves from Mauritius to Bourbon sufficiently

sufficiently attests the relative circumstances of these islands. The difference in value of slaves in the two colonies is not, however, a circumstance on which any permanent dependence could be placed for preventing importations more than the efficiency of the port regulations, both as the smuggling of goods is known to have taken place, and as in point of fact the introduction of new negroes at some parts of the coast might not be attended with greater difficulty than the clandestine removal of the slaves of this colony to Bourbon.

See Parl. Pap. in the Case of met's Slaves, Class B, 1825, 1826, p. 115.

In considering the extent to which the slave trade is still carried on at Bourbon, and the resources that are indirectly derived from the connexions subsisting between the islands, it must not be overlooked that great facilities will at all times exist in carrying on a clandestine intercourse between them. The passage is ordinarily accomplished in a few hours, and may be performed by vessels of the smallest size, and even by boats from the south-west quarter of the island, whence Bourbon may be seen in clear weather. Dorval escaped from that quarter with some of his companions in an open boat in March 1821; and the greater facilities attending the communication from thence than from Port Louis has been made the ground of successive applications for the permission to export timber from the forests of Savanne direct to Bourbon. If slaves were any at time to be introduced from thence, it would probably be accomplished by bringing over in the coasters such as could be substituted for deceased slaves in the registers, and landing them either in the Baye du Cap, or at the Black River; and whether a Mauritius or a Bourbon vessel were employed, she could pass over in the interval of an ordinary coasting voyage without attracting observation, as vessels can lay concealed off the Morne Brabant during the day-time. The woods overhanging the coast of Savanne and Black River must afford the ready means of concealing the negroes landed in that quarter; and we can state from our own observations that they afford equal facilities for conducting them by pathways into the interior of the island.

See Application of certain Proprietors of the Savanne, Appendix No. 1.

The impunity with which the laws have been violated would not however have been so general had the proclamations of the Government been made known and interpreted to the slaves, who must in all instances have been aware of the concealment of negroes in the quarters in which they resided, and if the clamour raised against persons who denounced crimes had been counteracted by enacting and enforcing penalties against accomplices as well as principals.

See Correspondence with Procureur-General, Appendix No. 5, pp. 257 & 259.

On the subject of the transfer of domestic slaves it has been customary to permit them to return from Bourbon, a practice to which we formerly alluded; and instances at one time occurred, though not recently, of the domestic slaves of Bourbon being brought up and returned at the port-office as such, though unregistered. We also noticed the want of precision in that clause in the consolidated Slave Act, which permits a master to carry with him his domestic slaves. Our former observations, however, related merely to the absence of restriction of the number of slaves who might thus be lawfully carried from one island to another of the same colony, or from one British colony to another. But it has appeared to us that this cause requires some further limitation in respect to the places whither the slaves may be so carried. As the law at present stands, a master cannot be prevented from carrying his domestic slaves to a foreign slave country, where the laws affecting that class of persons may be peculiarly severe, or where from the state of society they can receive no adequate protection against violence or injustice, or where others answering to their descriptions might be procured in case of their death; and as slaves are more valuable at Bourbon, and may become more so if the French law against the slave trade should be rigorously enforced, temptation may be offered to remove slaves under the title of domestics to that island; and by a late decision of the French courts, it would not appear that any obstacle would be presented to such removals.

See Case of Calmet's Slaves.

We would submit that the benefit of the slave, which as well as the convenience of the master must have been in the contemplation of the Legislature, would be equitably secured if it were to be declared illegal to carry domestic slaves to any place where they could legally be held as slaves, excepting to a British colony in which a registry of slaves is established.

Parl. Papers, Class B, 1825—1826, p. 115.

At Madagascar a restriction has been imposed by Radama upon the sale of slaves to Europeans; and although the law has been evaded by the European settlers upon the coast, who are engaged in the trade with Mauritius, it has not led here, that we are

Vide Evidence of Mr. Blanchard and Mr. Copalle.

are aware of, to a renewal of the exploded traffic. A practice has prevailed of allowing slaves to return as such with their owners from Madagascar; and from the records of the Custom-house it appears that 28 slaves have thus been brought up since July 1818.

Vide Return No. 11.

The relations subsisting between the settlers at Madagascar and the colonists at Mauritius have led to transfers of property in some instances, and to the disposal of unregistered slaves belonging to such estates, under the authority of the Curatelle department at Mauritius; and from the return of intestate estates it appears that 54 slaves, or persons declared to be such, were sold at Madagascar for 2,215 dollars by the agents of that department between the years 1814 and 1823, by the tacit permission of Radama's government, as he has never formally sanctioned the authority of the delegates of the Curatelle of Mauritius. The occasional employment of slaves by the settlers in vessels engaged in the trade with Mauritius is a practice alleged to have existed, although the people who are generally employed in them are the free natives of Madagascar, denominated marmites, or labourers.

See Return No. 34.

These people are hired to take care of the cattle brought over, and are subject to no particular regulation; but we have not heard of any instance in which they have been reduced to slavery in this colony. In one case, however, which came under our notice, we had reason to apprehend that some marmites who came up to Mauritius in a vessel of this colony trading to Bourbon and Madagascar in the year 1823, were sold by the owner at Bourbon.

See Return No. 24.

With the exception of the American vessels which trade at the port of Bembatoc, on the western coast, the provision trade of Madagascar is almost exclusively carried on by the vessels of this colony; and of more than 200 colonial vessels, which have annually cleared outwards and entered inwards at Port Louis since 1820, the greater part have been engaged in importing supplies into Mauritius and Bourbon. The remainder have been engaged in the trade of India, the Malay islands, and the coast of Africa, and in importing the produce of the Seychelles and other dependent islands.

See Evidence of

George Williams.

Case of the Alliga-

tor, App. No. 46.

See Return No. 25.

Ditto.

The vessels employed in importing bullocks from Madagascar are fitted out in a manner that renders it difficult to distinguish them from those equipped for the slave trade. They have large hatchways, fitted with open gratings to admit air, and a great number of water-casks. Fifty-five vessels, chiefly of this description, and containing 5,725 tons, have been registered under the statute of 1825, for regulating the registry of British ships; and these vessels are navigated by 819 colonial seamen, a third of whom are slaves. There are also 22 coasters at Mauritius unregistered, containing 715 tons, and navigated by 120 slaves.

Vide Letter from

the Procureur-

General to the

Chief Commissary

of Police, Oct.

1822, App. No. 52.

The practice which we have noticed in the case of the "Courreurs" of engaging and encouraging desertion from French vessels, of their seamen to embark in voyages for the slave trade, appears at one time to have been carried to a great extent, and the formalities required by the French regulations of police on the arrival and departure of vessels do not appear to have been effectual at any period in preventing these and other abuses. All seamen in the port are under the superintendence of the police, exercised through the medium of an officer of that department, whose duty it is to board all vessels on their arrival and departure, and to sign the muster-rolls after mustering the crews and passengers, whose names are inserted in them. Notwithstanding the vigilance of the chief commissary of police, it has been impracticable for him to prevent the embarkation of foreign sailors; and on various occasions the escape out of the colony of notorious offenders, who in some instances have embarked at the outports, where there are no establishments, and sometimes from Port Louis, in the colonial and foreign vessels. In the same manner they have returned to Port Louis, and remained for indefinite periods without being apprehended.

By the colonial practice persons nominated to command and navigate private vessels are liable to rejection; an interference which has been attended with no useful result. It has given occasion to the rejection of particular individuals who had been under the surveillance of the police, but who were subject to no disqualification by the statute; but as others to whom the same objection have applied have been allowed to navigate, it has exposed the inferior officers of police to the imputation of connivance in such instances. Some persons have thus been admitted who had been condemned in penalties for carrying on the slave trade; and there are several

See Case of
Debaize,
Appendix No. 59.

several instances of the ostensible nomination of young colonists to command the colonial vessels which have really been owned and navigated by Frenchmen who have embarked as passengers. Several of the coasting vessels are commanded by foreigners who have not taken the oath of allegiance.

In a late instance, a man named Brocard, was entered as mate on the muster-roll of a colonial vessel, who had commanded the Soleil French slave trader taken in 1825, and condemned at Port Louis for having been fitted out at Seychelles. An attempt was made to apprehend Brocard on the return of the vessel to Port Louis, but he escaped to Bourbon under circumstances of great suspicion attaching to the police-officer who was sent on board to arrest him.

The inefficacy of the forms regarding the arrival and departure of passengers is also shown by the fact that two very notorious persons are reported to have been seen at Port Louis within the last year who had come up from Bourbon: the one, Dubignon, the supercargo of the Industry, who absconded in 1822, and has been constantly engaged in the slave trade; another named Piveteau, formerly employed in the colonial vessels of this island, who has since commanded different slave traders under the French flag, and who entered the harbour of Diego Gracia in 1826 with a cargo of Malay slaves, in a vessel called the Chicken. Dubignon and Piveteau are creoles of Mauritius, and the mate of the Chicken named Tirant, was a creole of Seychelles. A man named Durand, who had been condemned in penalties of 9,000*l.* in the year 1819, and with others had absconded, but had remained in the island, was seized about the period of our arrival under the name of Fabre, and lodged in prison, where he still remains; and having in the course of our inquiries become aware of other instances in which individuals condemned in heavy penalties for slave trading were at large in the colony, we considered it our duty to bring them to the notice of the Governor.

A man named Theodore Debaize, who had commanded a vessel called L'Espoir in 1815, was condemned in penalties of 13,900*l.* as captain of the Petite Aimée, taken in the slave trade. In 1819 he again commenced navigating in a vessel of the colony called the Jeune Theodore, and was absent 16 months on a voyage ostensibly to Madagascar. We are informed that the vessel was seen at Zanzibar in 1820, and she returned from Bourbon in ballast in the year 1821. Debaize subsequently commanded the same vessel and others in the colonial trade; and in the year 1822 he was unaccountably admitted to take the oath of allegiance as a British subject. We apprized the Governor of the penalties against him, but on the explanation of the King's proctor that the captors had not sued for their share, the Governor determined to grant him a passport. He absconded to Madagascar about the period of our inquiries concerning him, but has since returned to Port Louis. The vessel he commanded in 1819-20 belonged to the proprietor of Providence Island; and the present "Regisseur" of that island appears from the muster-roll to have been on board.

Having found amongst the papers recorded in the case of the Industry that there were two persons named Bataille, who were implicated in the proceedings of that vessel, and the individual of that name who was condemned in penalties of 13,000*l.* appearing not to be the man who had absconded, but his brother, residing in Port Louis, we apprized the Governor of this circumstance, and also of the re-appearance of Dubignon in the colony, who had been condemned in the same penalties. On a reference to the chief judge the Governor was informed that both these persons (on the grand jury not finding the bills) had been discharged by proclamation of the special court; on which ground no further steps were taken to apprehend them for the penalties adjudged against them in the Instance Court. In neither of these instances does it appear to us that the grounds stated to the Governor by the judge and the King's proctor were sufficient to justify the non-apprehension of the parties, the penalties having been awarded under precisely the same circumstances in the case of Durand and Debaize; the conduct of the former not having been since exposed that we are aware of to any suspicion, and the offence of Bataille and Dubignon being much more recent than the others, the Industry having been the last vessel of this colony captured in the slave trade.

Having adopted the same course of bringing to the knowledge of the Governor any infraction of the law which became known to us in the course of inquiry, and which had not been prosecuted, we have persevered in doing so, although informed

Vide Eviden-
D. Woods.
Vide Papers
ing to Provide
Island, App. 1
Case of St. An-
Appendix No.
Evidence of J.
Louis Tutour.

See Case of Br-
Appendix No.
See Evidence
Crutillier.

See Case of the
"Chicken,"
Appendix No.
See Case of Du-
Appendix No.

See Case of
Debaize,
Appendix No.
See Case of
L'Espoir, App.
No. 49; and E-
vidence of W. Ba-
See Sentence
8 Jan. 1817,
Return No. 21
See Case of Deb-
Appendix No. 1.

See Muster Ro-
dated 19 Nov. 1
Appendix No. 1.

See Case of the
Industry,
Appendix No. 3.

See Correspon-
with the Gover-
Appendix No. 3.

See Letter of
Mr. Blackburn,
Appendix No. 3
and Enclosure.

by the Governor of the objection he entertained to the prosecution of the parties for former offences; and we have considered it at the same time our duty to inform ourselves of any steps that might be taken in such, as well as for the opinions of the law officers of the Crown. These cases have comprehended either direct charges of slave trading or frauds in violation of the orders for the registration of slaves.

See our Dispatch dated 7 May 1827.
See Case of Mous-
tique La Flut,
and others,
Appendix No. 18.
See Case of the
Marie Louise,
Appendix No. 30.

In the case we have already reported of some negroes who had been seized at Seychelles by Mr. Madge in 1816, who were improperly sold in 1818, under an alleged decree of the Vice-Admiralty Court, which was not referred to when the sale took place, the most satisfactory evidence appeared that they were unjustly detained in slavery; and had the case been brought before the Court of Vice-Admiralty, we can entertain no doubt that their immediate release must have ensued, as part of the negroes who had been actually condemned by that court for being imported in the Marie Louise.

See Letter to June
1821, and Cor-
respondence with
Mr. Blane and
Mr. Cooper,
Appendix No. 3.

See Case of Renouf de la Coudray, Appendix No. 29. Evidence of P. Allard, and Julian Caesar. See Letter of Pro-
curer general to
the Governor, dated
14 May 1827,
Appendix No. 29.
See Evidence of
L. B. Michel.
See Case of
Demmeret,
Appendix No. 63;
and the Prize Negro
Joseph, Ibid.

On inspecting the slave returns of Mr. Madge, we observed that he had also included a slave named "Emery," who had not been registered in 1815, and on inquiry, we found that he had brought the case to the notice of Governor Farquhar in 1821, and had requested that if the slave could not then be placed on the triennial registers, he might be declared free, and granted to him as an apprentice. No answer having been given to this application, and Mr. Madge having registered him as a slave in 1826, we advised him in September last to bring the case to the knowledge of the Governor, who, upon the opinion of the English counsel (Mr. Cooper) has recognised the title of Mr. Madge to retain them on the registers as his slave. The case we have already reported respecting a charge against a man named Renouf Dela Coudray, of having in 1816 registered the names of 22 slaves whom he never possessed, and of whom he could give no account, was also, as we conceive, susceptible of the clearest proof, by the evidence that was within the reach of the procureur-general. In his letter to the Governor, he has admitted that he would not have supposed that this man (who we are informed was at one period a watchman) had at any time possessed 22 slaves to register, but he concludes that as the registry took place by license, that Governor Farquhar did not grant such a license without requiring him to give proofs of his property; a precaution which does not appear to have been taken in this, or in other instances.

The recent detection by the King's proctor of a negro apprentice who had been stolen from him several years ago by an inhabitant who had enregistered him as a slave under the order of His Majesty in Council of the 30th January 1826, has led to a compromise, after a prosecution had been commenced, by the payment into court and distribution of the fines imposed by law, but without any disqualification of the party from holding slaves in future. On the reference of the Governor to the attorney-general in Admiralty, that officer has stated that Demmeret having paid the fines that were sued for, he "did not see that it was any body's business to interfere further."

See Letter of Mr.
Cooper, dated
4 Dec. 1827,
Appendix No. 63.
See Case of Slaves
at Rodrigues,
Appendix No. 31.
See Correspondence
with the Governor,
Appendix No. 21.

We have alluded to the case of the slaves on the island of Rodrigues, of whom returns were for the first time made by order of Governor Farquhar in the year 1821. Having ascertained that the registrar had received these returns in obedience to the orders of the Governor, but had not registered them, an act that would have been in direct violation of the law, we brought the case to the knowledge of the Governor previous to the departure of the officer appointed to register the slaves in that island under the new order. In referring to the correspondence we have held with the Governor, and the issue of the inquiry undertaken at our request by Mr. Warner (the officer in question), we have only to state that, independently of the additional grounds for presuming that a great number of those slaves have been introduced in violation of the laws abolishing the slave trade, the entry which has been now for the first time made of these slaves on the registers, has appeared to us in no degree to invalidate their just claim to freedom, as the illegality of registering them in 1821 was not only obvious to the registrar who did not do it, but to Sir Robert Farquhar, who did not venture to give a license to that effect. We cannot find that Sir Robert Farquhar made any report on this subject to the Secretary of State.

See Case of Slaves
at Agalega,
Appendix No. 57.
See Evidence of
W. Borne.

See Letter of the Governor, dated 14 Jan. 1828, Appendix No. 57.

In

In respectfully calling your attention to the correspondence which has passed between the Governor and ourselves, and especially to the expression of his opinion of the injustice of proceeding against past offences, even in cases where the liberty of so many persons who may be found to be illegally held in slavery is involved, while we differ entirely from this opinion, as well as from that on which General Darling grounded his objection to carry into effect the orders conveyed in Lord Bathurst's dispatch of the 20th July 1819, for taking charge of the unregistered negroes, we shall only say that, for the sake of our inquiries, we have had reason to regret that the Governor should not have taken a different view of a question involving the conduct of public servants, the interest of public justice, and the rights of persons who are entitled to the protection of the laws.

If the parties formerly condemned in penalties were, for the most part, persons who were without means of paying them, it is only to be regretted that men of property who promoted the slave trade within the colony, should so generally have been allowed to escape, and in these cases where the owners of the slaves are themselves charged with having illegally imported them, we cannot conceive that the rights of the negroes can justly be affected by any question as to the period when the law was violated; nor can the individuals, who may be proved to have fraudulently registered them as their slaves, plead the injustice of being made to forfeit the advantages they had acquired in direct violation of the law.

The case we before mentioned, relative to certain slaves in the island of Cotivi, we brought to the notice of the Governor on observing that the proprietor had returned several as "Mozambiques" who, on inspection, proved to be natives of Madagascar. As these changes had not been accounted for by his intermediate returns or by the transfer of slaves from hence recorded at the Custom-house, and as this person had long been engaged in the Madagascar trade, it appeared to us of some importance to prove that he had not replaced from thence the slaves who had died. An accusation of that nature had been indirectly made against him, but he was also at that time under a direct charge of slave trading preferred by some natives of India, who had been brought up from Cotivi on information given to the Government (by their relations who had come from India in search of them), of the illegal detention of them for several years. In the proceedings on this charge the evidence of his slaves was received upon oath, and on which he was released from bail; but no notice was taken of the inaccuracies in the registry, nor have they even been subject to investigation, on the alleged ground that the new registry had given an opportunity to all the slave proprietors to correct the errors in their former returns.

We have already referred to the case of the "Courier des Seychelles," and the evidence of two negroes of the cargo landed from that vessel at Seychelles in 1822. That evidence, which we communicated to the Governor, led to the apprehension of Rosse, the captain of the vessel, and who was discharged, as we are informed, on the opinion of the chief judge, that the witnesses did not sufficiently comprehend the obligation of an oath. Considering the intelligence of these negroes who had been more than four years in the Government establishment, and the opportunities still afforded for their instructions, we have considered that their testimony may still be made available in this important case. They have already recognized some slaves in Port Louis who were of the same cargo with themselves, and we beg to draw your attention as well to the evidence of Mr. Knowles as to the letter addressed by him to the Government in 1821, in answer to the complaints of Mr. Madge against his proceedings on this occasion. The death of Mr. Quincy, "Juge de Paix," at Seychelles, has prevented us from pursuing an inquiry we had commenced into the circumstances under which he became proprietor of one of these negroes; who, notwithstanding his condemnation by the Vice-Admiralty Court in 1827, we found had been returned and entered as a slave on the new registry; the registrar not having been apprized of the decree in favour of the slave.

In referring to these cases and to the objections which Sir Lowry Cole has taken occasion to express to enforcing the penalties of the law against parties who may have committed former offences, we deem it but just to state that in no instance of which we are aware has any report prevailed of an attempt to renew the slave trade where the attention of the Governor has not been promptly directed to the means of prevention and for the detection of the parties concerned. On in-

See Case of Slaves
at Cotivi,
Appendix No. 3.

See Letter of the
Governor, dated
7 Dec. 1827,
Appendix No. 5.
See Correspondence
with Mr. Cooper,
Appendix No. 3.
pp. 89 to 97.

See Case of the
Courier des Sey-
chelles, App. No. 3.

See Letter dated
12 Sept. 1821,
Appendix No. 1.

Case of Augustin
Ribaud,
Appendix No. 16.

See Case of the
Empress,
Appendix No. 64.
Case of the Eugene,
Appendix No. 65.

formation communicated by the Government agent at Madagascar respecting a colonial vessel named the "Empress," which was wrecked on the south coast of that island in the year 1825, an investigation took place by his order, and also in the case of the "Eugene," which left Port Louis in the year 1825, whose proceedings we shall take occasion to notice.

A rumour having been circulated of an intended landing from a French vessel the "Pauline," which had been fitted out in this port in 1826, precautions were also taken to prevent any attempt being made, or to secure the parties if it should be accomplished.

The desire of the Governor to carry into complete effect the order of His Majesty in council for the registration of the slaves has been also fully evinced, as well as recently to prevent the repetition of such an abuse as the transfer of slaves from the distant islands for sale under the pretence of removing them to other estates of the proprietors.

But with whatever integrity the laws may have lately been upheld, we cannot but perceive the very unfavourable effects likely to arise from the reluctance evinced to bring to justice persons implicated in past offences against the laws, and the unsatisfactory proceedings in the courts in some cases. Considering the large amount of penalties in which parties have been condemned, the trivial instances in which these penalties have been enforced, and the unsatisfactory result of the few prosecutions for the felony that have taken place in the colony, the inhabitants must naturally have become confident in their belief that if violations of the law are concealed for the time and the parties can elude the immediate vigilance of the authorities, some casual change by removing those who are responsible for neglect may absolve them from the consequences; nor could the zeal and activity of some public officers counteract the general want of energy on the part of the colonial functionaries in the enforcement of laws which must be still characterized as most unpopular.

Notwithstanding the motives of interest that are now operating with the inhabitants of this island in restraining them from any daring violations of the law, and from their former clamorous opposition to it, we can discover no essential change in the public opinion on the subject which would justify a general indemnity for past offences more than a relaxed execution of the law at the present moment, where the temptation to practise frauds and evasions is so greatly facilitated by the situation of these islands and their vicinity to countries subject to imperfect regulation, and over which no control can be exercised.

See Case of
Recoule's Slaves,
App. No. 41; and
Rodrigues Slaves,
Appendix No. 21.
See Case of
Bataille,
Appendix No. 28.
See Case of
Augustine Ribaudo,
Appendix No. 16;
and Mr. May's
Prize Negro,
Appendix No. 63.

We have taken occasion to notice some of the frauds and perjuries which have been traced in the registry; but, notwithstanding their admitted existence, we are not aware of a single instance in which the right of a negro to his freedom has been declared or recognized by the inhabitants, or the least hesitation evinced in placing indiscriminately on the new registers those whom the parties must have known to have been illegally imported. This has been done in cases where they had not previously been registered, or where the registers containing the names had been marked by the court on account of the frauds they contained; and some instances where the individuals registering the slaves had stolen them after they were landed by the slave traders, and even where they had been seized and condemned to the Crown.

Considering the extent to which these crimes and others have been committed we can neither subscribe to the justice nor the policy of opposing any obstacle to the vindication of the rights of those whose freedom has thus been compromised, and in order to engage the inhabitants to co-operate, we think that the remission of all penalties as held out by the proclamation of the 16th of March 1821, for recovery of the negroes of the "Coureur," (several of whom were stolen) might be promised to all those who spontaneously come forward to renounce their title to any negroes who had been illegally registered: and in such instances the individuals might be allowed to retain, under indentures on moderate wages, for a term of years, the negroes and negresses they declared, even in cases where they had themselves imported them into the colony; and to all planters the option might be given of granting, instead of wages, such allotments of land as would be deemed by the guardian to be adequate to their future support. It would, at the same time, be advisable to announce, that those who did not come forward after the lapse of three months

months from the publication of the notice, should be certainly prosecuted for the illegal detention of the negroes in slavery; and persons giving information leading to conviction would share in the penalties for false registration.

With regard to the penalties already adjudged in the Vice-Admiralty Court, and amounting to £24,000*l.*, we think that it will be expedient, in the first instance, to direct their impartial enforcement; and as to several of the parties who were not tried for the felony, and who, with others absconded to Bourbon, and have resided in the foreign settlements, where they continue to carry on the slave trade, their apprehension might be accomplished by direct applications to the foreign governments in whose settlements they have taken refuge, and also by the publication of rewards. With exception of those who have thus continued to violate the laws, we think that a remission of the penalties might be accorded to the parties making a full acknowledgment of their proceedings and connections in this colony, and thus facilitating the redemption from slavery of the negroes they had imported. In the same view we recommend that the law officers of the Crown, as well as the guardian of slaves, may have full access (at present withheld) to the original records of the Slave Registry Office whenever they may require to refer to them.

We cannot omit to notice that in the case of a negress named Nina, who was for the first time registered in 1826, and has been released by decree of the Vice-Admiralty Court, an expectation was held out to the claimant in 1824, at the office of Slave Registry, that the publication of a new order in council would give an opening for registering her as a slave. This case originated in the complaint made by the negress at our office. We have noticed also that Mr. Bradshaw had, in some instances of himself, authorized slaves to be registered who had not been originally returned; but, without a careful comparison of the registers, it would be impossible to determine the extent to which these and other irregularities may have taken place.

The intimate relations of family and commerce subsisting between the two colonies of Mauritius and Bourbon have exposed the inhabitants of this island to the imputation of an indirect interest in the slave trade known to be carried on at Bourbon. Colonial vessels engaged in the provision trade have been found to make frequent voyages between Bourbon, Madagascar, and other places, remaining absent a considerable time, and returning to Port Louis in ballast; these desultory voyages being at variance with a colonial regulation which was ineffectually devised to control them.

Persons engaged in the navigation of British colonial vessels have been found in vessels under the French flag, and sometimes engaged in the slave trade. The "Eugene," to which we have alluded, was a vessel registered at Port Louis, and commanded by a native of Mauritius. She sailed for Bourbon in 1825, and after being concerned in a smuggling transaction at the Black River, sailed for Bourbon and the coast of Africa, from whence her register was sent up with a view of obtaining a release from the securities. It was accompanied by the declaration of an Arab chief at a place called Thoonghy, that she had been wrecked, a statement which has been discredited, and the owner, a native of this colony, is alleged to have since commanded a vessel under the French flag, and, in connection with the notorious Bataille, to have imported several cargoes of slaves at Bourbon. Bataille appears also to have been concerned in the "Soleil." The arrival at Bourbon of the persons who went down with the "Eugene," has been announced in the Gazettes of that island, but we are not aware that they have since returned to Mauritius, although reports to that effect have prevailed.

A colonial vessel, which sailed from Port Louis last year for Bourbon and Bombay, was subject to a judicial process on her arrival there, owing to the sudden death of the mate, attributed to poison, after an attempt on the part of the supercargo (a Portuguese slave trader) to carry her to Mozambique, with the assistance of some foreign sailors who had been shipped at Bourbon. The Portuguese appears to have come to Port Louis with the object of purchasing a vessel for the slave trade; but the registered owner has asserted that the vessel was only freighted by the Portuguese, although she was sold at Bombay to a Portuguese house, the agents of this man.

From the transactions between some mercantile houses of Port Louis, and their correspondents at Bourbon, apprehensions may arise that the capital of this colony has,

Vide Case of
Bataille and oth
Appendix No. 2

Case of the Cour
Appendix No. 1
See Letter of Co
Drapier, dated
1 February 1825
Appendix No. 4

See Case of Nin
Appendix No. 6

Vide Case of
Mr. Lesage's Sla
Appendix No. 4

See Voyages of
sundry Vessels,
Appendix No. 5

Vide Case of the
Eugene,
Appendix No. 6

See Papers in the
Case of Bataille,
App. No. 28; an
Case of the Solei
App. No. 69.
See Bourbon
Gazettes,
Appendix No. 52

See Case of
L'esperance,
Appendix No. 6-

See Case of the
"Mauritius,"
Appendix No. 68.

See Case of the
Brave, App. No. 68.

has, in some instances, indirectly contributed to support the illegal speculations of the latter. *Spécie* is known to have been largely remitted to Bourbon, where high rates of interest are offered, and from the nature of the voyages made by the colonial vessels when long absent, and the various transactions of barter, of which no specific account can be rendered by captains or supercargoes, it must be impracticable, in all instances, for the owners to assure themselves of the nature of those transactions from which their profits may have arisen, or at least to be satisfied that opportunities have not been taken by the persons they have employed to engage in illegal adventures for their own profit under circumstances of great temptation. On the condemnation last year of a colonial vessel for breach of the colonial regulations, we have mentioned that a protest was entered by the owner of another vessel engaged in the Madagascar trade, and who threw on the captain all responsibility for having made frequent voyages between Bourbon and Madagascar without returning to Port Louis.

See Return No. 26.

The number of French vessels that come up to Port Louis for repairs has drawn our attention to the nature of the proceedings of those which have been suspected to be engaged in the slave trade. From the facilities afforded to us by the Governor, we have been enabled to obtain from the port department a very detailed account of the French vessels which have been fitted out since the period of our arrival, and in some particular instances we have had an opportunity of referring to the journals and reports of His Majesty's ships on this station, both as to the nature of their equipment, and of their ulterior proceedings on the coast of Africa.

See Return No. 27.

According to the return furnished to us, the value of the repairs executed at Port Louis since March 1823, amounts to 166,930 dollars, or 33,386*l.* sterling, exclusive of sail-makers bills; and the names of some vessels frequently occur which are declared to be notoriously engaged in the slave trade, and which, from the manner of their equipment, are peculiarly fitted for that traffic; nor can it be alleged that they are engaged in the cattle trade, which is almost exclusively in the hands of merchants at Mauritius.

See Correspondence with Governor of Bombay, Appendix No. 52.

In some instances they have been met with on the coast of Africa by His Majesty's cruisers, under circumstances that can leave no doubt of their destination.

From information we have received, it appears that some of these vessels have proceeded to the Malay islands contiguous to Java and Sumatra, but that the greater part of them have procured cargoes of negroes on the coast of Africa, and that they have been facilitated by connections formed in the Arab and Portuguese settlements.

These vessels after fitting out at Port Louis, go down to Bourbon, and in some instances clear out for Muskat or Bombay freighted with spices, where it is stated they procure specie, arms and ammunition. In other instances they have procured these objects from hence. At Mozambique, the principal settlement of the Portuguese, they have obtained by corrupt means the registry and flag of that country, to enable them to procure slaves in those settlements which are all situated south of the line. The Soleil or Tigre was captured in 1825, under Portuguese colours, the owner and supercargo, a Frenchman named Moncouet, having formerly been taken on board a vessel of this colony (the Deux Amis), and condemned in penalties.

The settlement made by Captain Owen in Delagoa Bay in 1823, having been subsequently destroyed, a connection is stated to have been formed between the Portuguese and the French slave traders, and a marauding system commenced, the object of which was the capture of the peaceable tribes inhabiting the interior of that part of Africa, to which cause has been attributed the appearance since 1823, of great numbers of starving people upon the frontier of the Cape colony. The slave traders at Delagoa Bay, are said to have gone out in armed parties to drive off their cattle, and destroy their grain, in the expectation that a large proportion of these wretched people would repair to the coast, in quest of subsistence, where they might be seized and embarked in the slaving vessels. A vessel of this colony (the "Walter Farquhar"), engaged in the slave trade at Bourbon, was wrecked on her return from Delagoa Bay on the southern coast of Madagascar, and 116 negroes taken from her were brought to Mauritius by His Majesty's ship Ariadne, and condemned in the Vice Admiralty Court in 1825.

Evidence of
C. Letord, alias
Dorval.

See Case of the
Deux Amis,
Appendix No. 37.

See Case of the
Walter Farquhar,
Appendix No. 59.

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We have seen a passport obtained in 1825, from the Portuguese authorities at Mozambique, for a French slave trader which had been fitted out at Port Louis, to proceed to the other settlements on the African coast, where she procured a cargo of slaves; and we entertain no doubt of the corrupt practices in those settlements, where persons of most notorious character, who have absconded from justice on this island, are known to reside, and where they have matured their arrangements, in concert with the slave traders at Bourbon, for a systematic violation of the laws.

See Case of the
Soleil, App. No. 1.

See Chart No. 1.

The small independent Arab states situated to the south of Cape Delgado, and to the northward of the Portuguese, are also frequented by the French slave traders, and through their established agents, the negroes are understood to be collected for shipment on the arrival of their vessels; and from the accurate knowledge they possess of the coasts and harbours, their operations are also much facilitated.

We entertain no doubt of the disposition of the Imaum of Muskat to enforce the conditions of the treaty into which he has entered with the British Government, and the officers of His Majesty's navy have expressed the most favourable opinion of the integrity of the governor he has appointed at Zanzibar. The continuance of the slave trade carried on by the subjects of the Imaum has (we apprehend) led to evasions, which it has been found impracticable to control, and which we think would have also occurred at Madagascar, if the importation and exportation of slaves had not been altogether prohibited by Radama.

See Chart No. 1.

As the Imaum of Muskat does not maintain any cruisers upon the station, the Arabs of Zanzibar are enabled to carry their slaves to the small islands to the southward, or to the settlements of the Portuguese, where they can dispose of them to greater advantage than by making a longer voyage to the Persian Gulf; and as the Arab dows clear out for Muskat, it has been proposed by the Governor of Zanzibar to the commanders of His Majesty's ships to capture them when found to the southward of the port, and even within the line defined by the treaty. Were this privilege however to be conceded by the Imaum, the departure of the British cruisers would always afford opportunities to the Arabs to accomplish their purpose, and as the slaves are kept in dépôt, their embarkation may be delayed for a favourable time without any inconvenience.

The encouragement given to the Arab chiefs of Mombas, to declare their independence of Muscat, and to recognize a British establishment on that island, although intended by Captain Owen to repress these abuses, has not, we apprehend, prevented the smuggling of slaves, whilst it has given occasion to the remonstrances of the Imaum against the occupation of a territory to which he has asserted an hereditary claim.

See Correspondence
Appendix No. 70.

The negroes purchased in the northern parts of Africa are considered preferable to those procured to the southward; and the restriction of the Portuguese slave traders to their settlements southward of the line has not had the effect of rescuing the countries to the northward from this scourge; and the treatment to which the negroes are subject in the Arab dows, in which they are carried to the Portuguese settlement as well as to their own, is characterized by the greatest possible degree of insensibility to their sufferings. In the short voyages performed by them from the continent to Zanzibar, often in sultry weather, they are packed so closely between stages, that a small quantity of food is given to each before their embarkation, which must sustain them during the passage, as they are unable to stir from their first position. Numbers die from suffocation, whose bodies cannot be removed till after their arrival, when the stages are broken up. On longer voyages their sufferings are augmented by the privation of food and water, which the Arabs from their habits are better able to sustain.

See Evidence of
Captain Moreby,
and Evidence of
C. Letord, alias
Dorval.

The practice of crowding their vessels is followed also by the Portuguese; and numbers have thus been sacrificed during their annual voyages to the Brazils.

See Statement of
L. B. Aubin, Case
of the Pauline,
Appendix No. 71.

The practice of chaining the negroes together has been adopted in the vessels of this colony and Bourbon; and instances have been known of their jumping overboard, although secured in pairs with iron rings riveted to their necks and ankles, and connected with bars of iron. Whatever may be the feelings which rouse the negroes to this effort to effect their escape, it does not appear that revolts during the passage have been frequent. The small-pox has sometimes occasioned great mortality;

mortality; and it may be apprehended that great numbers have perished from suffocation by closing the hatches upon them during the hurricanes that so frequently occur in the summer season.

That this apprehension is not groundless, we may observe that the loss of His Majesty's ship "Delight" in the hurricane of 1824 has been attributed to the impossibility of closing her hatches upon the negroes she had taken on board at Providence Island; and in a gale that took place in 1826, several of the bullock vessels were saved by throwing their cattle overboard.

See Harbour Reports, Appendix No. 52.

The policy of obtaining the co-operation of the native states in suppressing the slave trade has been exemplified in the relations so successfully established with the chief of Madagascar; and although treaties might be entered into with the independent Arab states on the African coast similar to that which subsists with the Imaum of Muskat, we apprehend that all practical attempts to restrict or control them must be ineffectual while an authorized slave trade is allowed to be carried on. The restriction of the European slave trade on that coast, even in the settlements of the Imaum of Muskat, can therefore, we conceive, alone be accomplished by inducing an unqualified renunciation of it by the Arabs themselves; and where the chiefs have once been induced to enter into these engagements, they have been able to accomplish, by severe laws, the extinction of a traffic which it has been impracticable for them to control if tolerated in any shape by law. There can be little doubt that any partial restriction in Madagascar would have defeated the best intentions of Radama from the frauds and evasions that would have ensued.

The exclusion of the Brazilians from the Portuguese settlements where they have hitherto procured slaves, and the negotiations opened for the abolition of the slave trade by Portugal, will, we hope, lead to the final extinction of the traffic on the southern coast; and we earnestly recommend that every practicable inducement may be held out to the Imaum of Muskat finally to renounce the slave trade, which is carried on in his own dominions, and with the ports of the Persian gulf; and to employ his maritime resources in the suppression of it along the line of African coast possessed by the Arabs. The Imaum cannot be ignorant of the revolting mutilations which are practised on many unfortunate negroes, who are carried into Persia and Asiatic Turkey; and we are disposed much to rely upon his disposition to co-operate with the British Government in the accomplishment of these views.

The residence of a native agent at Zanzibar is an arrangement, the continuance of which we cannot altogether recommend, although we have no facts on which to ground any conclusions unfavourable to the individual in question; but the appointment of a respectable British consular agent would be a measure of considerable importance if the slave trade should be abolished; and we think that the appointment of consuls at Bourbon and Mozambique would be attended with good effect. But the measure above all others calculated to extinguish the foreign slave trade would be the consent of the French, Portuguese and Brazilian governments with that of Great Britain to recognize a reciprocal right of searching all vessels under their respective flags, a concession which would demonstrate the sincerity with which those powers have entered into treaties to abolish the slave trade, and their disposition to repress the connivance and corruption prevailing in their remote settlements.

To revert to the measures within these colonies, which may be calculated effectively to defeat the frauds and combinations that may in future be attempted, we think it may be expedient to carry into effect the arrangements that were projected for registering the boats employed in the different islands, and requiring them to carry numbers painted on their sides or sails; and as military officers are entitled to seize under the statute, it would be desirable that the coasters and fishing-boats of Mauritius should be required to produce their passes to the officers at the outports, and in all cases of suspicion, that the crews should be subject to interrogation, such officers should also be empowered to employ the fishing boats, when required by them, for the purpose of boarding vessels.

6 Geo. IV. c. 113.

It has been the practice for the coasters to enter Port Louis and to depart without the notice of the Custom-house; and as there are no officers of customs at the outports, much advantage would generally result from such a superintendence. It has been remarked, that suspicious vessels have been hovering

on

on the coast, and in some instances they have hoisted the blue flag carried by the coasters, in order to mask their operations, which were emboldened during the prevalence of the slave trade by the knowledge they had that the military posts had no means of communicating with vessels, or across the creeks and rivers in case of landings.

A regulation of this kind would be inapplicable to any of the dependent islands, excepting Mahé, where a detachment of troops has been advantageously stationed by Sir Lowry Cole, to give support to the civil authorities when required; nor are we aware of any control that can be exercised in the other islands of the Seychelles, except by the constant employment of one of His Majesty's armed vessels in cruising amongst the different islands at uncertain periods, with instructions to examine the passports of all boats and vessels navigating between them, and to make inquiry whether any foreign vessels may have communicated.

An assistant registrar and assistant guardian of slaves should be appointed, the former of whom should be required to make one complete circuit of the islands in every year, and at uncertain periods, carrying with him extracts of the registers of the slaves in each island, and in all cases of suspicion, to have authority to inspect them, and by inquiry to ascertain whether any deaths had occurred which had not been reported. In taking the triennial returns, the assistant-registrar should give no previous notice of the islands he intended first to visit; and on discovery of any fraud, or evasion of the law, he should be bound immediately to report it to the government agent; and in any case involving the claim of a slave to freedom, he should furnish the assistant guardian with the extracts he may require from the records of his office, and the government having caused the evidence to be taken upon oath, should transmit it to Mauritius for prosecution of the claim in the Vice-Admiralty or Colonial Court, taking charge in the mean time of the slave whose claim should be in question. It would tend to facilitate these officers in the discharge of their duties if a boat, with an efficient crew of European or colonial seamen, should be placed at the disposal of the government agent at Mahé, and which should be understood to be equally for the use of the assistant collector of customs, and the assistant registrar and guardian of slaves.

An assistant in the office of registry at Port Louis should also be appointed to verify the slaves annually in the different islands more immediately dependent on Mauritius, and to act in the same manner in cases where the law had not been observed; and we should recommend that in no instance should any excuse or explanation be admitted for not enforcing a penalty where it had been incurred by a proprietor. As it cannot be supposed that abuses can take place without the knowledge of the slaves, we consider it of the first importance, that no obstacle should be allowed to prevail against their free communication with the officers appointed to watch the execution of the law, or to make seizures.

We have not in general sought the information of slaves, not wishing to commit them with their masters; but in cases where we have had occasion to refer to their testimony, we have derived much assistance in our inquiries, and we are inclined to believe that the alarms that were raised by the colonists about the period of our arrival, had in view, as on some former occasions, to discourage our communication with that class of the population.

In the case of information communicated by a slave, he should be admonished of the consequences of making a false statement, and at the same time assured of protection if his information should not prove incorrect. His declarations should be taken down in writing, and if he should designate any estate on which negroes were concealed, or even a single negro fraudulently detained, it should be competent for the officer at the nearest military post, or the guardian, or his assistant, to carry him before the nearest magistrate, where he should, if able to make oath, be sworn to his statement, and necessary measures should be taken to prevent the information from transpiring till the search could be made.

We ought to remark that great assistance in detecting illegally imported slaves may be rendered by the prize negroes, and specially those who have been released from their indentures. Several of these negroes have been taken up from time to time as stragglers from the parties which were successfully landed in the colony. Of the party of the "Courieur" alone, there are 24, and circumstances that are calculated to mark the contrast of their condition are not overlooked by them.

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Evidence of General Keating Appendix No. 1.

See Return, Ca
of the Courieur,
Even Appendix No. 1.

Even the slaves, when indistinct in their reckoning of the number of "New Year's days" they have passed subsequent to their arrival, are generally able to recollect the period in relation to some striking event which has happened in the colony, such as the hurricanes of 1818 and 1824, and more particularly the cholera morbus which raged in the end of 1819 and beginning of 1820; the great fire of Port Louis which took place in 1816, and as a more remote event, the capture of the colony in 1810.

October 1828.

We would propose that at the next biennial period for the registration of the slaves, the guardian and his assistants should be required to be present at the inspection of them, attended by one or more of the prize negroes of each cargo landed in the island, to point out such of their companions as they could identify. The date of the seizure of the negro being on record, the slave thus identified could then be interrogated whether he recollects one or other of the events we have mentioned, and how long before, or after either of them, he had been landed in the colony, the persons concerned in his introduction, and whether he could recognize his comrades.

See Papers relative to the power of granting Warrants, and Opinion of the Procureur General, March 1821, restricting that power to the Colonial Courts, Appendix No. 52.

See Order in Council, 30 Jan. 1826.
See Extract No. 52.
See Case of Cherima, App. No. 76.

The Case of Cherima is one recently brought to our notice, in which Homé and others were prosecuted in Colonial Courts under this law for having stolen a Prize Negro, and sold him as a Slave. See Case of Marion in Appeal to His Majesty in Council.

See Papers taken on board the Succès.

See Case of Cuvillier, App. No. 13. 20*l.* to 25*l.* the Malgache; 30*l.* to 40*l.* the Mozambique.

See Case of Cuvillier, App. No. 13. Six Dollars a month, or 14*l.* 8*s.* a year. See Case of Christians Negros.

Appendix No. 33. Note.—Eight Dollars a month claimed and admitted by the Court for Compensation for the Services of Negroes seized and restored.

See Case of the Slaves of Juglard, Appendix No. 47.

See Case of Hulm's Slaves, App. No. 47. From the issue of some recent inquiries, we have reason to apprehend that the register although executed with great care, so far as has depended on the officer who has superintended it, will not be found to be free from inaccuracies in the descriptions of the slaves taken by the assistants employed for the purpose. The errors we have had occasion to notice have been in the ages and marks of the imported slaves, and unless their descriptions should be carefully verified, some confusion might

Inconvenience having been experienced from the delays attendant on the forms required in procuring warrants for the search of dwelling-houses, the chief commissary of police and the civil commissioners of the quarters should be declared competent as magistrates to grant such warrants, when information is received by them on oath, or on the unswear declaration of a party incompetent to make oath where they shall see no ground for discrediting his statement, to be taken down in writing; and such searches should be promptly made, and all information taken, which might lead to the discovery of any newly imported or fraudulently acquired negroes, who might be declared to be concealed, or falsely registered by the party accused; and all persons found guilty of stealing, concealing, or wilfully and fraudulently registering as their slaves, free persons of whatever class or colour, whether born in or out of the colony, should be declared liable to the same pecuniary penalties and disqualifications as at present ordered for the registration of a newly imported negro, and further to transportation for 14 years. Although the pecuniary penalties and disqualifications from holding slaves may in some cases operate as a sufficient check to abuses under the registration law, we do not think that alone they are sufficient. The colonial law declares twelve years labour in irons as the punishment of persons guilty of destroying the proofs of the civil state and condition of a free subject, an enactment which strictly applies to false registration, but which has never been enforced in any instance of which we are aware, although questionable titles have been raised to the possession of persons and their descendants as slaves who had been born in freedom; regardless of the habits and feelings contracted by connections subsisting during their whole lives with persons of free condition, and who are therefore quite as sensible of the calamity of being reduced to slavery as the native African, who is protected by a law which makes the carrying and dealing with him as a slave a capital offence.

From various sources of information it appears, that the ordinary price at which healthy negroes, purchased originally at 20 and 25 dollars a head, have been sold on their landing, has varied from 100 to 200 dollars (20*l.* to 40*l.*) a head, a price calculated to cover the expenses and losses, and to afford a profit adequate to the risks incurred. The engagement of Le Cornu with Cuvillier was to advance 6,000 dollars, or 1,200*l.*, to receive eighty Mozambique negroes, or at 15*l.* a head, incurring only the risk of wreck and capture. Considering that this sum, equivalent to the premium allowed by Parliament to captors for their liberation, is the ordinary rate of colonial hire for the labour of a negro in one year, and considering the number of years these negroes have laboured, the severity of that labour, and the profits of the sugar plantations for some years past, a compensation might justly be due to the negro for past service rather than any claim for indemnification be asserted by the master for his present release.

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might be apprehended, where slaves imperfectly described were again produced for inspection by other proprietors to whom they had been intermediately transferred.

From the tenor of our preceding observations it will be apparent, that to prevent the renewal of the slave trade, we are disposed in a greater degree to rely upon the severity of the law and its strict enforcement against all offenders, than upon measures of prevention in the spirit of the French code, which consist in the enforcement of complicated forms, which are tardy and often vexatious in their operation, and which, notwithstanding the integrity of the chief officers, are liable to be evaded or misapplied through the corruption or connivance of the numerous subordinate agents, often in the interest of the parties, who must necessarily be employed for their execution. We are therefore led to consider that the musters and inspections on board of vessels arriving and departing may be dispensed with, and by employing persons in the police, customs and port departments, who are less connected with the colonists, a sufficient degree of security will be provided for the detection of abuses so far as may depend upon them. Some of the forms required on the arrival and departure of strangers may be necessary, and captains of ships may be held responsible under penalty that all persons arriving or departing in their vessels should be duly declared at the police-office; neither do we conceive it necessary that any other restrictions should be imposed on the persons who engage in the navigation of the colonial vessels than such as are provided in the Acts of Parliament for the regulation of trade and navigation in His Majesty's colonial possessions, all subjects of His Majesty being freely allowed to embark in whatever capacity they may choose. We conceive, however, that it should not be competent for the owners or masters of colonial vessels to engage foreign European seamen, who have, for the most part, composed the crews of vessels engaged in the slave trade in a larger proportion than one-fourth of their crews; and then only in case they can be made liable to the pains and penalties of the Abolition Acts when captured at sea. The date of arrival and departure at every port at which the vessel should touch should be entered on the log-book of each vessel, and an extract of these dates furnished to the collector of customs on the return of the vessel from her voyage.

See Letter of Procurer-General 23 Oct. 1820. Appendix No. 47.

The sedentary duties of the chief commissary of police occupying at present a large portion of his time, we conceive it would enable him to direct his attention to other objects of material importance to appoint a responsible commissary of police for the town instead of two of the assistants, by which the chief commissary of police would be enabled to visit the distant quarters and the different parts of the coast, where his active superintendence would be of the greatest utility in checking abuses and promoting vigilance on the part of others.

We are not aware that any regulation can be devised to prevent the repairs of foreign vessels in the ports of this colony which may afterwards be engaged in the slave trade; but we have ascertained the practicability of obtaining such precise information regarding their equipment and ulterior movements as can hardly fail to lead to their identification, if afterwards met with by His Majesty's ships with slaves on board; and the colonial government, by collecting such details, may communicate them to His Majesty's ships on the station, and in cases of capture it would at all times be practicable to procure evidence of the equipment of such vessels in a British port.

That the majority of the negroes who are captured in slave ships would be desirous of returning to their country is probable, both from the extraordinary exertions they have been known to make to escape before quitting the African coast, and their attempts to return to it by carrying off boats from the Seychelles islands.

The attempt made by some slaves to escape from Mauritius in 1822 with the Madagascar chief Rassitatane, may also be referred to in proof of the existence of such a feeling, as the trial and execution of that person for an alleged conspiracy has shown the consequences of bringing persons of free condition from those countries into the colony, where they are liable to meet with many individuals in a state of slavery and subject to harsh treatment with whom they may formerly have been connected under different circumstances.

Undoubtedly much may be done to ameliorate the condition of the negro apprentices, were it only in shortening the terms of their engagements, by giving due attention to their complaints, and by the watchfulness of an officer, such as the guardian of slaves, who would have time to investigate them: but the condemnation and apprenticing in the colonies of the negroes captured in slave ships has, we apprehend, hitherto operated most unfavourably, by affording a pretext to the slave traders to throw discredit on the motives with which such captures have been made.

The distribution of these negroes amongst the slaves in the colonies, their submission for a term of years to the same coercive labour and harsh treatment, and their exposure, without remuneration in some instances, to severe drudgery from the superior interest of the master in the preservation of his slaves, has rendered the condition of that class but too often a reproach to the colonial authorities, and has given rise to an argument that their condition as slaves would have been preferable had they not been captured.

We have reason to believe that these opinions have been industriously disseminated on the African coasts; and we are aware of the difficulty in selecting any situation where they would be enabled, under due protection, to enjoy the advantages which they could derive from the known value of their labour. In respect to the natives of Madagascar, it might not be difficult to enter into arrangements with Radama for the return to their own country of all those who desired it; and if the final suppression of the slave trade on the African continent could be brought about, no obstacle would then present itself to the release of the negroes in situations where their freedom would be in no danger of being compromised, a course that would at once demonstrate to the inhabitants of the European and native settlements the intentions of our interference, and in time secure their co-operation.

See Case of
Lageunesse and
others, App. No. 41.

See Act 5 Geo. IV.
c. 113.

It is perhaps unnecessary to observe, that the success of any measure that can be taken in the colonies must depend in a great degree upon the encouragement held out to those who may manifest a disposition to co-operate with the Government in supporting the laws; and in order to counteract the strong propensity that exists to the concealment of crime, and the discouragement or oppression of those who should have the boldness to denounce it, we think it would be expedient to enact, that all procurers, counsellors, aiders and abettors, within the colony, who may be concerned in reducing to or detaining free persons in slavery, should be declared guilty of a misdemeanor, and subject to the same pains that are enacted by the eleventh clause of the Abolition Act against those directly concerned in the slave trade. It would further be expedient to enact, that all accessories should be absolved from the penalties against them in cases where their information may lead to the conviction of the principal offenders and the release of the slaves. We would also recommend as a proper solemnity in regard to the Abolition Laws and the registration orders in council, which are the subject of great colonial unpopularity, that governors should on entering upon their office formally and separately swear to maintain them, in the same manner as they now take an oath for the observance of the laws of trade and navigation.

To avoid all doubts which have been raised, not without apparent foundation, we take this occasion to mention, that the clause in the order of His Majesty in Council of the 24th of September 1814, enacting a penalty of 300*l.* for the fraudulent registration of a negro, &c. imported, should be declared or made applicable to the fraudulent registry of any African negro, Indian, Malay, or other persons either newly or formerly imported or born in the colony.

The adoption of these measures, added to a temperate, firm, and uncompromising administration of the laws by the courts established, will afford the best assurance that no future attempt will, in any form, be made on these islands to renew the slave trade, and we trust that the due enforcement of the laws of foreign states will lead to its final extinction throughout their settlements in these seas.

To encourage the diffusion of correct feelings, and especially amongst the rising generation of His Majesty's subjects in this colony, we should be glad, if it might be found practicable, for His Majesty's ships on the Cape station to receive on board

board the sons of colonists natives of Mauritius, and born since the conquest, who have been distinguished in the Royal College for their proficiency in nautical studies, and in the English language; and in order to relieve the apprehension of the colonists, in which we do not participate, that a reduction in the number of their slaves, arising from the present deficiency of females, should restrict their future operations, we recommend that every reasonable encouragement may be held out by His Majesty's Government to the views of the colonists, for the introduction of Chinese or other free labourers not liable to be reduced to slavery.

We have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble servants,

WILLIAM M. G. COLEBROOKE.
W. BLAIR.