already brought, or apprenticed labourers who hereafter might be brought, into the United Kingdom, with the con­sent of their possessors, were to be absolutely free from the date of the act. The apprentices were divided into three classes. The first two classes, called “ prædial apprenticed labourers,” comprised all slaves “ usually employed in agri­culture, or in the manufacture of colonial produce,” upon the lands in the colonies ; the first class being slaves of this sort, who were usually employed on lands belonging to their owners, and who were declared to be “ attached to the soil the second class, declared to be “ not attached to the soil,” being such slaves as were similarly employed on lands not belonging to their owners. The third class, called “ non-prædial apprenticed labourers,” embraced all slaves not included in either of the two other classes. The apprenticeship of the first and second classes was not to continue beyond the first day of August 1840; and such apprentices were not to be liable, in virtue of their appren­ticeship, to labour for their employers for more than forty- five hours in any one week. The apprenticeship of the third class was not to continue beyond the first day of Au­gust 1838. Voluntary discharges by the employers, before the expiration of these periods, were allowed, under provi­sions to secure old and infirm apprentices against destitu­tion ; and the apprentice was to be entitled to claim his discharge, even against his employer’s consent, on payment of the appraised value of his services. No apprentices were to be removed from the colony to which they belonged ; and those of the first class were not to be removable even from their own plantation, except that they might be re­moved to other plantations of the same owner in the same colony, on a certificate of justices of the peace that the re­moval would not injure their health or welfare, nor separate members of the same family. Under similar restrictions and conditions, the services of the apprentices during their term were to be transferable property. It was conditioned that the employers were to furnish the apprentices with food, clothing, lodging, and other necessaries, according to the existing laws of the several colonies, and to allow them sufficient provision ground, and time for cultivating it, in' cases where that mode of maintenance was adopted. Chil­dren born upon or after the first of August 1834, as also all those under six years of age at that date, although they became at once free, might, if proved destitute to the sa­tisfaction of a magistrate, be bound out by the magistrate as apprentice to the employer of the mother, by indenture, to continue in force till the child had completed its twenty- first year. For giving effect to the act. the crown was de­clared entitled to name, or to authorise governors of colo­nies to name, justices of the peace by special commission, and to give salaries not exceeding L.300 a-year, to such justices, not exceeding one hundred in all.

The act limited itself to general principles, such as those now specified, declaring that, for carrying the principles into effect, enactments by the several local authorities were the most proper means ; and it therefore provided for hav­ing such regulations made by the local legislatures for the colonies which had charters, and by the king in council for the crown colonies. It was provided, however, that no such local acts were to authorise the employers, or any one but the special justices, to punish the apprentices by whipping, beating, imprisonment, or addition to the hours of labour ; and that they were not to authorise corpora) punishment of females on any account, or by sentence of any court. The special justices were made exclusive judges, in the first in­stance, in all questions between the employer and the ap­prentices; and no sentence was to impose as punishment extra-work for more than fifteen hours in any week, nor prolongation of apprenticeship, except in the case of run­aways, whose prolonged service should not be compellable after the termination of seven years from the end of the ap­prenticeship. No apprentice was, whether under the act, or by way of punishment, or otherwise, to be compelled to labour on Sundays, except for certain necessary purposes ; and none was to be prevented from attending anywhere on Sundays for worship at pleasure.

The remaining sections of the act provided for the rais­ing and application of the twenty millions of compensation-money. The sum might be raised by loans, under the usual restrictions on the government ; and commissioners, not fewer than five, were to be appointed by the crown for distributing it, while assistant commissioners were to act for the same purpose in the colonies. No money was to be payable to any slaveholder in any colony, until it should have been declared by an order in council, that satisfactory provision had been made by law in such colony, for giving effect to the act by special or supplementary regulations. The whole money was to be divided into nineteen shares, one for each of the colonies, each share being proportional to the number of registered slaves in the colony, taken in connection with the market-price of slaves in each colony, on an average of eight years ending with 1830.

In virtue of this act, upon the first of August 1834, nearly 800,000 negroes became nominally free ; but both the friends and the opponents of emancipation watched with much anxiety what would be their conduct during that probationary state which it had been deemed proper for them to pass through,—a state which, by the very removal of some evils, opened the way for certain others, and which, while it gave increased protection against some kinds of oppression, left the negroes more helpless against severities and neglect of other kinds. Two subse­quent acts of Parliament provided as far as possible against abuse; and, although many conflicting accounts have reached this country, there does seem to be no sufficient reason for believing that the treatment of the apprentices was really in any material respect worse than it had been dur­ing their slavery ; while there appears to be as little reason for doubting, that the slaves in general conducted themselves with thankfulness and decency on their change of condition.

But in different islands the policy of the local legislature was very various. Many of the colonists were as well satisfied as the most zealous members of the Anti-Slavery Society, that the apprenticeship was wrong and dangerous. Anti­gua had the honour of leading the way in making this opi­nion operative. The legislature of that island declined to take advantage of the apprenticeship at all ; its slaves were emancipated at once, and “ on Christmas-day 1834, for the first time these thirty years, martial law was not proclaimed in Antigua.” Bermuda followed the example, which was next imitated by the small isles, and afterwards by the great island of Barbadoes. Still some colonies held out, with Jamaica at their head; and, particularly from this island, there reach­ed us not only threatening resolutions of the Assembly, but reports of extreme severities towards the slaves, and of decid­ed hostility to the stipendiary magistrates; while one or two of the colonies would not even condescend, for several years, to take such steps as the act declared to be necessary for entitling their landholders to payment of the compensation-money.

In the spring of 1838, the question of immediate aboli­tion of the apprenticeship was stirred, on those and other grounds, in both Houses of Parliament. Lord Brougham’s motion to this effect, supported by Lord Lyndhurst and others, was met by the previous question. Sir George Strickland’s, in the House of Commons, was also negatived ; and, although a similar resolution was afterwards carried in the Commons, the ministry intimated that they would throw every obstacle in the way of any, measure founded on it, and the attempt was therefore given up.

But the colonists were warned in time, by the spirit which reigned here, and by that which appears to have been rising among the negroes. They proceeded forthwith to aboli-