

EUROPE.

ENGLAND.

London May 28, 1833.

MEETING OF THE PROPRIETORS IN THE WEST INDIA INTEREST.

At a general Meeting of Proprietors, Merchants, Bankers, Ship-Owners, Manufacturers, Traders, and others, interested in the Preservation of the West India Colonies, convened by public advertisement, and held at the City of London Tavern, on Monday, the 27th of May, 1833.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Harewood in the Chair.

It was, on the motion of the Viscount Combermere, seconded by Admiral Sir Byam Martin, K. C. B. and supported by C. F. Young, Esq. M. P. unanimously resolved:

1. That the cultivation of the sugar colonies and their maintenance as dependencies of Great Britain has been justly considered as objects of vast importance to the prosperity and power of the British Empire. The shipping employed in that trade amounts to 950 ships, with a tonnage of 240,000 tons, exclusive of the very considerable British tonnage engaged in the large and increasing trade between the islands and the British North American colonies. The annual exports amount to 44 millions, and the revenue on the produce imported to 7 millions—while the great bulk of the net proceeds of such produce is spent by proprietors resident in Great Britain, thereby giving immediate and extensive employment to British industry.

It was, on the motion of Lord Colville, seconded by Admiral Sir Robert Stopford, K. C. B. and supported by Thomas Fitzgerald, Esq. M. P. unanimously resolved—

2. That any measure which shall have the effect of suddenly extinguishing or materially diminishing, the cultivation of these colonies, will be attended with the most calamitous results to every branch of British interest. As respects our revenue, the enormous rise in price consequent on the destruction of Colonies which now supply a moiety of the whole quantity of sugar imported into Europe, would render it impossible to raise the same duties, and thereby impose on Government the necessity of substituting other taxes on an impoverished people. The Naval power of Great Britain would be most essentially impaired; and a very large proportion of the shipping engaged in the colonial trade, and of the labour engaged in manufactures for the colonial markets, would immediately be thrown out of employment. It was, on motion of Jeremiah Harman, Esq. seconded by Sir Charles Price, Bart., unanimously resolved—

3. That a trade which has existed for centuries, that of such magnitude, must necessarily involve in no considerable degree the prosperity of all the other mercantile and of the banking and moneyed interests of the empire: and this meeting, assembled in the centre of British commerce, looking to the effects which must be produced on these interests alone, can not contemplate without dismay the probable result of the extinction of the West India Colonies as trading communities.

It was, on the motion of Sir Michael Shaw Stewart, Bart., M. P. seconded by H. Bliss, Esq. unanimously resolved—

4. That this meeting are most desirous of pressing upon the attention of His Majesty's Government, of Parliament, and the public at large, that independently of planters, merchants, manufacturers and tradesmen, obviously and directly connected with the colonies, there is a numerous class of persons scattered throughout Great-Britain, consisting of widows, orphans, minors, annuitants, and other claimants under wills and settlements, who have no support for themselves and their families, except a charge upon colonial property created on the faith of existing laws who must therefore be reduced to beggary by any ill-considered or precipitate measures of emancipation.

It was, on the motion of the Viscount St. Vincent, seconded by Neil Malcolm, Esq. Jun. unanimously resolved—

5. That this meeting are willing to promote the success of any well-digested measures, which may lead to the extinction of slavery, in conformity with the spirit and language of the resolutions of the House of Commons in 1823. Any measure, however, to be consistent with those resolutions, must have regard to the future as well as the present condition of the negroes—must provide for the continued cultivation of the colonies—for the preservation of the lives of the inhabitants—and must be accompanied by adequate compensation to the West India proprietors.

It was, on the motion of John Irving, Esq. seconded by Andrew Colville, Esq. unanimously resolved—

6. That the scheme of Emancipation which has been promulgated by His Majesty's Ministers is deficient in the leading principles which this meeting consider essential to a wise and just arrangement of the subject of slavery. It provides no security for the lives of our fellow-subjects in the colonies—it proposes to divest the owner of his property without any real compensation—it tends to destroy Colonial Agriculture, by entailing heavy additional expense on a cultivation already confessedly depressed—it renders all outlay of capital in the West Indies unprofitable, and thereby puts a stop to the progressive civilization of the Negroes in our own Colonies, while at the same time it directly encourages the Slave Trade and Slavery in Foreign Countries.

It was, on motion of J. Horsley Palmer, Esq. seconded by James Lewis, Esq. unanimously resolved—

7. That this meeting know of no stronger title to property than that which is derived from positive law, and of no other security against spoliation than a confidence that

the Government under which they live will respect those rights and interests which have grown out of the laws it has made. That the Proprietors of negro slaves possess those slaves under the sanction of British laws, which enabled and especially encouraged the people of Great-Britain to convey slaves from Africa, and to sell them to their fellow-subjects in the colonies. And this meeting, looking to the rights which have been thus acquired, do solemnly protest against any measure which takes away the property of their fellow subjects without adequate compensation, and which is, therefore, calculated to impair that confidence under which the system of British commerce has been nurtured and sustained, and to establish a precedent which may very shortly subject every other species of property to be dealt with upon similar principles.

It was, on the motion of the Lord William Powlett, seconded by Geo. Hibbert, Esq., unanimously resolved;

8. That petitions founded on the preceding resolutions be presented to His Majesty, and to both houses of Parliament. (Signed) HAREWOOD, Chairman. The Earl of Harewood having then left the chair, and the Viscount St. Vincent having taken it, it was on the motion of John Fuller, Esq. seconded by W. R. Keith Douglas, Esq. unanimously resolved—

That the best thanks of this meeting are due to the Earl of Harewood, for his kindness in taking the chair, and for the dignity and ability with which his Lordship has directed the proceedings of the day. It was further, on the motion of the Viscount St. Vincent seconded by the Earl of Harewood, unanimously resolved; That the warmest thanks of this Meeting are due to George Hibbert, Esq., for his able, temperate and unanswerable advocacy of the just rights of the West India body, no less honorable to his esteemed character as a man than to be admitted from his venerable and well-grounded experience, and equitable views at all times promulgated by him for the benefit of every class of society.

[Continued from yesterday's Courier.] Lord Combermere said that after having heard the remarks of the Noble Chairman it was unnecessary for him to say much. He spoke as a soldier who had been a Governor in Barbadoes for three years, and had visited all the other colonies. On his honor he firmly believed that the measure proposed by the Government to meet the wishes of those who professed so much humanity, would, if carried, inflict more injury on the negroes than any now experienced, and misery, he might say on millions. (hear.) He concluded by moving the first resolution, for which see advertisement.

Admiral Sir Byam Martin rose to second that motion. He was not a West India proprietor, but he wished to come forward to give them a helping hand, and to promote colonial prosperity—[hear.] which every Englishman ought to be anxious about, as it was by the colonies that the burdens of this country were lightened. He was also interested in the preservation of the colonies, because if the colonies were lost the revenue derived from them would be lost. [Cheers.] As an Englishman he was interested in the colonies, as they aided our manufacturers. [Cheers.] As a naval man he supported the interests of the colonies, feeling convinced that with the loss of our colonies the country would lose its navy. [Loud Cheers.] The Noble Chairman having read the resolution.

Mr. S. F. Young said, that being the representative of the second port in the world, he felt called on to say a few words. The West India colonies gave employment to a great tonnage; and, if the changes that must take place under the new plan, were carried into effect, the loss to this country would be great. If the system of reciprocity were not followed up the injury would go on increasing. With respect to the West India question, he supported the basis laid down in the resolution of 1823. He thought that the time was come when slavery could no longer exist, but he contended that full compensation should be granted. The British nation had disposed of the property in the West Indies to their present owners, and if a good title was not given with it, why the British nation ought to pay back the purchase money. [Loud cheers.] If the British Ministry dared to be honest, they would offer full compensation to the proprietors of West India Property. [Loud cheers.] These were the sentiments he advocated and should continue fearlessly to advocate, feeling convinced that the shipping interest was materially connected with the preservation of the Colonies. [Loud cheers.]

Lord Colville had attended that meeting from no interested motives; as he had no connection with the West India Colonies; but, as a lover of justice, he came forward respectfully to move the resolution that had been put into his hands. If, however, he was not personally interested, his professional life had given him an opportunity of judging and knowing the interest of the West India proprietary. He wished the slave trade to be done away with entirely, but a false humanity—a morbid sensibility—had been engendered in the public mind. [hear.] The plan of Government, if carried, would have the effect of driving the sugar trade into the hands of those countries who had never promised to abolish the slave trade. [hear, hear.] The people of this country could no more do without sugar than without beer, and, therefore, they would have to apply to the Brazils, or some nation where slavery would be carried on with all its barbarities unknown in the British colonies—[hear, hear.]—The naval service would also be much injured by the

destruction of the colonies.—[Hear, hear.] Our naval superiority never could be upheld after the annihilation of the colonies.—[Hear, hear.]—unless, indeed it was done by steam. [Laughter.] He had seen the commerce of the country flourishing, and he would implore his Majesty's Government not to persevere in a measure that must ruin it. [hear, hear.] The West India Proprietors did not wish to embarrass a Government which God knew was embarrassed sufficiently already. That body, however, ought to be met liberally, and their claims ought to be respected. There was not a more humane description of persons, and he could not see the justice in singling them out for destruction. The Noble Lord then moved the second resolution.

Admiral Sir R. Stopford seconded the resolution. Although a stranger to that respectable meeting, he was not a stranger to their interests. He did not wish to label all former Governments for the hue and cry raised against them for giving encouragement to the West India colonies. The West India Colonies had in times of war been the means of furnishing the greatest support to the navy. To quote the words of Lord Nelson—no mean authority, and with whom he [Admiral Stopford] had had the honor to serve—"England could not be wounded in a more tender part than the West Indies." [Immense applause.] The public philanthropy that manifested itself was a spurious philanthropy, and he hoped that so dangerous a wound to the interests of thousands as the one threatened by Government would still be averted.

Mr. Fitzgerald said the present meeting did credit to the great city of London. The question before them interested all classes. If this system of spoliation and destruction to the West India proprietors was carried into effect, property of every description was in jeopardy. The West India property was held by Act of Parliament, and therefore was as sacred as the land, the funds, or any other description of property. [hear, hear.] There had been a great delusion practised on the community. Nearly the whole of the petitions against slavery were manufactured in the city of London. [hear, hear.] He wished as much as any one for emancipation, but he wished it to be attended with justice to all parties, and he did not see how it was possible for those interested in West India property to agree to the resolutions of Government. He thought it was the most striking instance of injustice and spoliation of property that ever disgraced the Government of any country. [hear, hear.] The resolution was then carried, amidst much applause.

Mr. J. Harman moved the third resolution. The measure of the present Government were marked with precipitation; they appeared never to think of the safety valve. [Hear.] He was opposed to slavery, but he was not one who would "wish to do evil that good might arise." [Hear.] He hated the name of slavery, but there was one thing which he abhorred more, and that was, doing an act of injustice under the name of humanity. [Cheers.] He hoped when Ministers were in possession of this feeling of that great meeting, they would pause before they proceeded with a measure so fraught with injury and injustice. [Great cheering.] He then moved the third resolution.

Sir C. Price seconded the resolution. He was of opinion, that the British Parliament, as constituted, had no power to call for a sacrifice of property on the part of any individuals, without full compensation. [Hear, hear.] If slavery was a national disgrace, let it be wiped away at the national expense. [Cheers.] It was the duty of Parliament to protect the interests and property of all the subjects of the King, and not to destroy it. Cheers. The resolution was carried unanimously.

Sir M. S. Stewart moved the fourth resolution. As a representative of a country interested in West India affairs, he presented himself before the meeting with the greatest sincerity. Hear. The present was a crisis, when every individual ought to throw his mite into the scale. The ocean itself was composed of drops. The resolution required no observation, it showed justice to all, and carried conviction with it. Thousands and tens of thousands had a great interest in the affairs of the West Indies, although that interest was not a direct one. Of all the subjects that now claimed the attention of Parliament, he considered the West India one of the greatest importance. It was co-extensive with the interests of the empire. He had still confidence in the honesty and ability of Earl Grey and Mr. Stanley, and he therefore hoped, before the question came again before Parliament, they would listen to the advice of the West India Planters, and the voice of such great meetings as he was then addressing. The Hon. Member concluded by reading the 4th resolution.

Mr. H. Bliss seconded the resolution, which he contended, he did not exaggerate the statements it detailed. The measure proposed would reduce many persons from affluent or easy circumstances to want, distress, and beggary. But the meeting had not solely assembled to sympathize, for that was insignificant compared with the great stake which it was sought to save to the country.—Another Buonaparte, or a visitation of Providence, was less to be dreaded, and would be trifling comparatively with that which now threatened the colonies. Let the meeting bear in mind what was to be gained and what lost. Hear, hear. The colonies supplied produce to the amount of from 10,000,000L. to 11,000,000L. annually, and consumed of manufactures between 4,000,000L. and 5,000,000L. There were employed in the trade not less than 250,000 tons of shipping, not to enter into the trade arising from the mutual interchange of

commodities, between the southern and northern colonies and amounting annually to upwards of 2,000,000L. and employing shipping of 100,000 tons. If the one branch was struck at, the other would be endangered if not destroyed.—The northern colonies were so much implicated with the interests of the other that the destruction of the latter would deeply and sensibly affect them, besides shake their confidence in the Imperial Government. Cheers. No man could doubt but that this attack upon the West India colonies would affect a deficiency in the revenue of 7,000,000L. annually, which would then make the work of confiscation go round, and he would here inquire how the deficiency was to be supplied? Cheers. Would the importation of foreign sugars do this, or would it rather not tend to enhance the price, by which the system of slavery would be perpetuated in foreign lands—a system which the abolitionists imagined they could by this measure terminate and destroy? The dignity of this nation could not be enhanced by spoliation or by the adoption of a cheap liberality in enfranchising the slaves with money which was not its own. Cheers. The object of the meeting was to prevent this most unjust spoliation—this attack upon the power and wealth of the nation. Let the complaints be loud, and the legislature would probably listen as they had done to the 177,000 sentimental spinsters who had, in petition ventured to submit counsel and advice to the British senate. Cheers and laughter. He trusted the colonial empire would not be frittered away for cant and sentiment, or that this country would not lay violent hands upon her own possessions.—If the colonial dominion and the supremacy of the seas were thus maintained, it never could be said that as a nation England had by passing such a measure as this, declared herself incompetent to rule and unworthy to maintain these possessions. [Loud cheers.]

The resolution was carried unanimously. Lord St. Vincent said he wished to carry the resolutions of 1823 into effect. But he would not consent to the confiscation of a property which the Legislature itself had not only created, but had compelled the proprietors to possess. Hear, hear. Without compensation to the planter, how was the cultivation of the colonies to be continued, or how was the welfare of the negro to be promoted or his existence to be preserved? The planters had never refused to consent to emancipation, provided proper compensation was allowed them; but up to the present time no such proposition had ever been made.

Mr. Neil Malcolm seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

Mr. Irving, in moving the 6th resolution, related the circumstance under which the deputation from the West India body commenced and conducted the negotiation with the Government when the Colonial Office was under the direction of Lords Goderich and Holwick. The plan of emancipation proposed by those Noble Lords was unanimously rejected by the Deputation. It was impracticable in every respect, and was valuable only for one or two admissions, especially this—that the negro would not labour voluntarily, and that to continue the cultivation of the colonies, coercion was indispensable. But there were in this plan two important blanks—one was that there was no amount of compensation mentioned, and the other that time was not defined at which the freedom of the negroes was to commence. The deputation rejected that plan, and gave reasons for condemning it. Lord Goderich gave them to understand that he would consider their objections, but the next day the Noble Lord and his plan retired and they heard no more of either. [hear, and a laugh.] Without meaning disrespect to Lord Goderich, he (Mr. I.) was free to say that the deputation heard of the retirement from the Colonial Office with much pleasure. But their expectations of more statesmanlike and just views from Mr. Stanley, who had succeeded the Noble Lord, were disappointed. [hear, hear.] The plan which that Right Honorable Gentleman proposed, was such as could not be carried into effect without risking the safety of the colonies, and the West Indians and their friends, and the friends of the naval and commercial, and manufacturing interests of this mighty Empire, would not assist in their suicide.—[hear, hear.] He called the attention of the meeting to this, that the resolutions submitted by Mr. Stanley to the House of Commons carefully avoided the mention of the word compensation, and even went the length of expressing a doubt that the planters would suffer a loss by the confiscation of one fourth of their property.

Mr. Colville seconded the resolution. If the plan of the Government were persevered in, white people could not obtain such a profit from the cultivation of the West India Islands as would induce them to reside in those climates; and consequently the colonies must be given up to the negroes, who would no doubt cultivate them as they cultivated St. Domingo and the plains of Africa; but without any improvement of their own condition, and without any advantage to this country, or to the human race. [hear.] The plan was precisely such a spoliation of the planters as it would be were they to say to the fundholders—"The debt is a most burdensome thing—it must be got rid of—the nation must be relieved from it—you receive 3l. per cent. on the capital which you invested—now you shall receive in future but 2l. 5s the remaining fourth of your dividend being applied to the liquidation of the debt—and, moreover, that the whole of the debt may be paid off in twelve years, you must pay into the treasury every year for that time the twelfth part of the value of your capital. [hear, hear.] Put our own price on it—if three per cent. are worth

84l you shall pay 7l a year, whilst you receive interest 2l 5s—for what? for the payment of the nation's debt to you?"—[Cheers and laughter.] The resolution was agreed to without dissent.

Mr. H. Palmer, in moving the seventh resolution, said that every man who had any property, from the first nobleman in the land to the humblest cottager, was interested in resisting the reckless plan of spoliation now attempted to be carried into effect by the Ministers of the Crown. He was most desirous to see a practicable plan of emancipation carried into effect; but he firmly believed (from the experience which the important station he lately held as Chairman of the Bank of England enabled him to acquire,) that if these plans could, by possibility, be carried into effect, the result would be more destructive of public credit, and more productive of misery and crime, than were the events of the year 1825. If these measures were carried, there would be no security for funded property. [Cheers.] Funded property was secured by only one act of Parliament, and West India property was secured by one hundred acts of Parliament. [Cheers.] If one fourth of the property of the West Indians were to be taken from them, what security could the country have that the plans of Mr. Atwood or of Mr. Cobbett should not be adopted, and one fourth of the property of the fundholder be confiscated? If justice were regarded in making arrangements for negro emancipation, he would be as eager as any man to assist in removing from the colonial institutions of the British empire the blot of Slavery. [hear.]

Mr. Lewis seconded the resolution, which was carried amidst applause.

Lord William Powlett moved the eighth resolution. He considered the measure introduced by Government found in injustice. They were not met to discuss the policy and justice of emancipating the slaves—all were agreed on that point. The only object for their consideration was, the terms on which that emancipation was to be effected. [Hear.] If adequate compensation was given it would be equally advantageous to the slave and the owner.

Mr. George Hibbert rose to second the resolution. The Hon. Gentleman was received by the meeting with loud cheers. He thought it was unnecessary, after what had been said on the justice of giving compensation to the colonists, to make many observations. If the resolutions proposed by Ministers were adopted by Parliament, there was no longer any security to property of any description.

The Earl of Harewood, after announcing that he should probably not be in Parliament when the petition was presented, reminded the meeting that it was possible that branch of the Legislature might attend to their interest. It had hitherto done some services, and he would wish every man to consider whether the attempt which had once been made to overturn the decision of that assembly had placed the rights, interest and safety, of the nation on a better footing than before. The resolution was then carried with acclamation.

Mr. J. Fuller moved the thanks of the meeting to the Noble Chairman, in doing which he complimented him on his zeal and honesty in favour of the West India interest.

Mr. Keith Douglas seconded the resolution, which was carried amidst loud cheering.

Earl St. Vincent moved the thanks of the meeting to George Hibbert, Esq. for his unwearied zeal and integrity in the cause of the West India interest, which was unanimously agreed to, and the meeting, one of the most numerous and respectable ever assembled in the city of London, separated at half-past five o'clock.

ROYAL GAZETTE.

FREDERICTON, JULY 24th 1833.

ALMS HOUSE AND WORK HOUSE. Commissioners for GEORGE MUNCHES, Esq. next week.

SAVINGS BANK. Trustees for HENRY G. CLOPPER, Esq. next week. JAMES TAYLOR, Esq. JEREMIAH SELASOR, Esq.

Civil Appointment.

Alexander McLaggan, to be one of the Commissioners for exploring a new line of Road from Robert Doak's on the Miramichi, to Fredericton, in the room of Robert Doak, Esquire, who resigns.

By the arrival of the *Armenia* at St. John, from New York, papers of that city have been received, containing London dates to the 30th May, and Liverpool of the 1st June. The second debate on the subject of Negro Emancipation took place on the 30th, and would be resumed after the discussion of the Bank question which was fixed for the 1st of June. It would appear as if some mistrust was manifested by Mr. Stanley, as to the efficacy of the Ministerial plan of emancipation, and he has accordingly announced great alterations therein. We hope it may be safely and speedily arranged on such principles as will best accord with the wishes of the people of England, the interest of the West India Planters and the well being of the human family throughout the world.

We had selected a variety of interesting extracts, but having at a late hour received a number of advertisements of a public nature, we have been obliged to alter our arrangements for the present week.

Fredericton, 17th July, 1833.

Having been appointed a Committee, to present a Petition to His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, from the Merchants and others, Inhabitants of York and Carleton, on the subject of the Tonnage duty on Timber, we beg through the medium of your paper, to inform the Petitioners that we have attended to their directions in that respect, and for their information, we request that you will insert in the Royal Gazette, the following answer to the said Petition.

We are Sir,

Your obedient Servants,
WILLIAM I. BEDELL,
WILLIAM TAYLOR,
JOHN STAPTON, Esquire.