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Slave Trade.

II.

*continued.*

FURTHER PAPERS RELATING TO

Captured Negroes :

*viz :*

Return to an Address of The Honourable House of Commons,

dated the 7th March 1825;—for

REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS RELATING TO

CAPTURED NEGROES, APPRENTICES,

&c.

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

*16 March 1825.*

IGS99 GUANA  
AND BVI SCIENCE

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## II.—PAPERS RELATING TO

N<sup>o</sup> 3.  
MAJOR MOODY'S  
REPORT.

assist. In neither case was the whip used as in slave labour, and self-interest was the stimulus to both, except that Mr. Steele had still the power to punish, under the sentence of a court formed by himself. Under whatever well ascertained data the examination be made, the result will be a decided proof of the erroneous statements made, respecting the value of the labour of the Nottinghams, as compared with the value of the labour of the slaves of Tortola, with reference to the interests of the parent state, which unquestionably, according to the acknowledged principles of political economy, as I am prepared to prove, derived much more advantages from the labour of the slaves, than from that of the Nottinghams, with regard to equal numbers of each.

I need not repeat that Mr. Nottingham was not the only person in Tortola who had emancipated male and female slaves, leaving them land also for their subsistence, a Mr. Percival acted in the same manner, and emancipated seventeen slaves, to whom he gave a cotton estate in Guana Island, which at the time of his death rented for 150*l.* sterling per annum.

Mrs. Harragin, formerly Vanterpool, also emancipated twenty, and gave them land in the island of Great Camanoes.

These are the three bodies of slaves, who had been emancipated, to whom the legislature of Tortola had referred; but I am unable to explain why my colleague has only noticed one of them, unless perhaps the result of his inquiries respecting the other two bodies had been, like mine, still more unfavourable as to the value of their free labour in West-India agriculture than the case of the Nottinghams proved; for after many years of undisturbed freedom, with the advantages of religious instruction, and two schools in their village, the Nottinghams in 1822, after valuing the property of the husbands of the female Nottinghams, as the property of the wives alone, yet they were not then worth the sum of money which had been distributed amongst the older people in cash, and even after valuing the land given to them as capital of their own creation.

Yet, my Lord, this case of the Nottinghams was a specific statement annexed to the parliamentary debates on the memorable 15th of May 1823, to show to the British public the superior value of free over slave labour in West-India agriculture as regards Great Britain,—a question, my Lord, on which hangs the fate of millions of British capital.

This consideration I hope will induce your Lordship to pardon the minute details into which I have entered, to show how dangerous may be a bias on the mind of any person enabled officially to state, as facts, circumstances which had been investigated in a manner so imperfect, arising perhaps from want of practical knowledge in the management and details of labour employed in West-India agriculture.

My colleague in his Report also states, that the Nottinghams "formerly cultivated cotton, but the price falling low, and the failure of their crops, occasioned them to discontinue the planting of it." They told me they had discontinued it on account of the low price, and the land being too good for the cotton plant; and they explained very satisfactorily how the good quality of the land affected the crop. But as they had land of different qualities, and the mode of pruning when the land is too good is well known, they convinced me, that if they had been more industrious, they could have cultivated cotton more profitably than the neighbouring proprietor of Beef Island, who, with only forty-six slaves in the field, and from about double the number of acres planted in cotton which Long Look had altogether, produced on an average of good and bad years, sixty-seven bales of cotton, which gave him even at the low prices of 1822, about 3½ per cent on his capital, including expenses and losses of every kind, and among these expenses was about 50*l.* sterling for taxes, which, being raised on slaves, the free people cultivating cotton did not pay. Nor does cotton pay the 4½ per cent duty. With such encouragement, it is seen, that, in Tortola, free labour could not be induced voluntarily to encounter that exertion in the easy cultivation of cotton, which gives 3½ per cent interest on agricultural capital, of which slaves formed the greatest part. Whereas in the case of the free negro he was both labourer and capitalist. In some years formerly, however, the proprietor of Beef Island had made as high as 15 per cent on his capital, considering slaves as stock; and during these years, the land of Long Look belonged to the Nottinghams, who were making nothing from it, in comparison.

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