

BARBADOS.

BY His Excellency Sir JAMES LEITH, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honorable Military Order of the Bath; Knight Commander of the Portuguese Royal Military Order of the Tower and Sword; Lieutenant-General in the Army; Colonel of the 4th West India Regiment; Commander of His Majesty's Forces in the Windward and Leeward Charibbee Islands, Trinidad, and the Colonies of Demerary, Essequibo, and Berbice, in South America; Captain-General and Governor in Chief of Barbados, Chancellor, Vice-Admiral, and Ordinary of the same; Governor-General and Vice-Admiral of Guadeloupe and its Dependencies, &c. &c. &c.

An Address to the Slave Population of the Island of Barbados.

IT appearing that the late INSURRECTION of the SLAVES in the Parishes of St. Philip, St. George, Christ Church, and St. John, was principally caused by the misrepresentation and instigation of ill-disposed Persons, who have been endeavoring to induce a belief that the Slaves were actually made free, but that the Manumissions were improperly withheld from them; I think it my duty, at once, to remove all misconception on a subject of so great importance for the tranquillity of this Colony, and for the well-being of the Slaves themselves.

I do not mean to enter into the origin and nature of Slavery, farther than to prevent you from erroneously supposing, that Bondage is your particular or exclusive lot.

Slavery is not the institution of any particular Colour, Age, or Country;—it has ever existed, and does still exist, among White as well as Black Men, in every quarter of the Earth.—That the Blacks of Africa have countenanced Slavery, and, with the Whites, have been its joint authors in the West Indies, is a fact personally known to all of you who have come from Africa under the compulsive transfer of your persons by your own Countrymen, by whom you were held in bondage in your Native Land, and were there disposed of as Slaves. That our humane and equitable Sovereign, and the British Nation, disapprove of the Traffic in Slaves from Africa, is known to all; as well as that it has consequently been prohibited by the Law, and has long ceased.

It is equally a fact, that the Black People of Africa still continue Slavery, not only among themselves, but that they daily barter their fellows of every age and sex, to any person who chooses to buy them; while Great Britain alone exerts her power to prevent an increase of Slavery, and to render those who now are unavoidably in that state, every practicable service which benevolence suggests. But the most wise and just men—the most humane and zealous advocates of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, who possess practical knowledge, and the most sincere friends of those who are actually in slavery, have considered their Emancipation (except in particular cases, as the Reward of Fidelity and good Conduct) to be morally impracticable; whether such a measure should regard the good order of the Community at large, or the well-being of the generality of the Slaves themselves.

What would be the fate of the Old, the Infirm, the Sick, the helpless Children, and a large proportion of your whole Body, who have been brought up to depend entirely upon your Masters for your subsistence, and from that circumstance, as well as from the want of knowledge as Artificers, and in other respects, would be little able to provide for your wants, if a rash measure of general Emancipation were at once to throw the Mass of the Slave Population into a new state of Society, under the flattering but fallacious name of Freedom, in reality, however, presenting only the dangers of general Disorder, and producing (except to a few) the Miseries of Confusion and Want, leading to the Commission of Crimes, and to the absolute Subversion of Public Order and Tranquillity? After contemplating such Danger to the Community, it is not necessary to go into the Origin and Nature of Slavery, in order to decide on the Impracticability of its Abolition where it actually exists, excepting by a wise and unremitting System of Amelioration, by which it will gradually produce its own Reformation.—By such means alone, and not by the attempt of a rash and destructive Convulsion, has Slavery imperceptibly, safely, and happily changed, in every Country where it had ever existed, but has now ceased, from the Beginning of the World to the present Time.

I have learned that a general belief had been mischievously propagated amongst you, that I was in possession of your Manumissions, and that my return to Barbados would have put you in possession of your Freedom. I can solemnly assure you, that my arrival has been one of the most painful periods of my life; when, in performing my duty, I have not only had to inform you of the cruel deception, by which the Economy of the State, and still more your own bitter Foes, have practised on both, but to feel myself called on by the offended Laws, to seek out and still to punish the Guilty.

Perhaps never was there a more delicate subject to touch on with you, than your condition as Slaves, especially under the unhappy circumstances in which too many of you have involved yourselves, and by which the Guilty had planned so much mischief to this Colony; but I shall never be deterred from promulgating Truth, when my duty points out the necessity, however difficult it may appear to give it effect.

I conjure you all, then, to return with cheerfulness to your Duties, where it will be infinitely more consistent with my desire to see you act from Reason than from Force. Every thing which the paternal Government of the Prince Regent can practically effect for your well-being, your progressive prosperity, and happiness, has been and will continue to be done. I appeal with confidence to yourselves, whether your Proprietors also have not generally done much to render your situations comfortable.

In that which regards my Authority, you may rely on a strict and watchful execution of my Duty in whatever regards your Interests: but do not allow me, in expressing the benevolent feelings which I shall ever entertain towards you, to mislead you into a belief, that I could for a moment permit you to resist, with impunity, the just exercise of that Authority which the Law has placed over you.

It is melancholy to think on the numbers of men who, in the late Insurrection, have lost their lives in the rash and wicked contest against the Laws, into which they allowed themselves to be hurried, without a shadow of hope that their efforts would have been successful against the powerful means within my command, for the preservation of public tranquillity.

I cannot omit to express my satisfaction at the good sense and feeling of so large a proportion of you, who rallied round your Masters and their families, when your deluded brethren so shamefully forgot the ties of Duty and Gratitude, where Benefits had been conferred on them.

I trust, however, that the example of those whose fidelity I have justly commended, even more than the fate of those who have lost their lives, and the returning reason of the deluded, will have me from the painful task of using the ample power at all times in my hands, to crush the Refractory and punish the Guilty.

It will indeed be to me a source of true gratification to witness the speedy return of general Confidence and Industry, and of that Comfort and Cheerfulness which so large a portion of you seemed to enjoy.

IN 1816 REBEL SLAVES
HOPED BRITISH TROOPS
WOULD HELP THEM GAIN A
FREEDOM ALREADY GRANTED

WRONG!
THEY WERE ROUTED
(ENDING AT
GOLDEN GROVE)

AFTER WARDS, THE
GOVERNOR OF BARBADOS
EXPLAINS SLAVERY AS
“INEVITABLE”

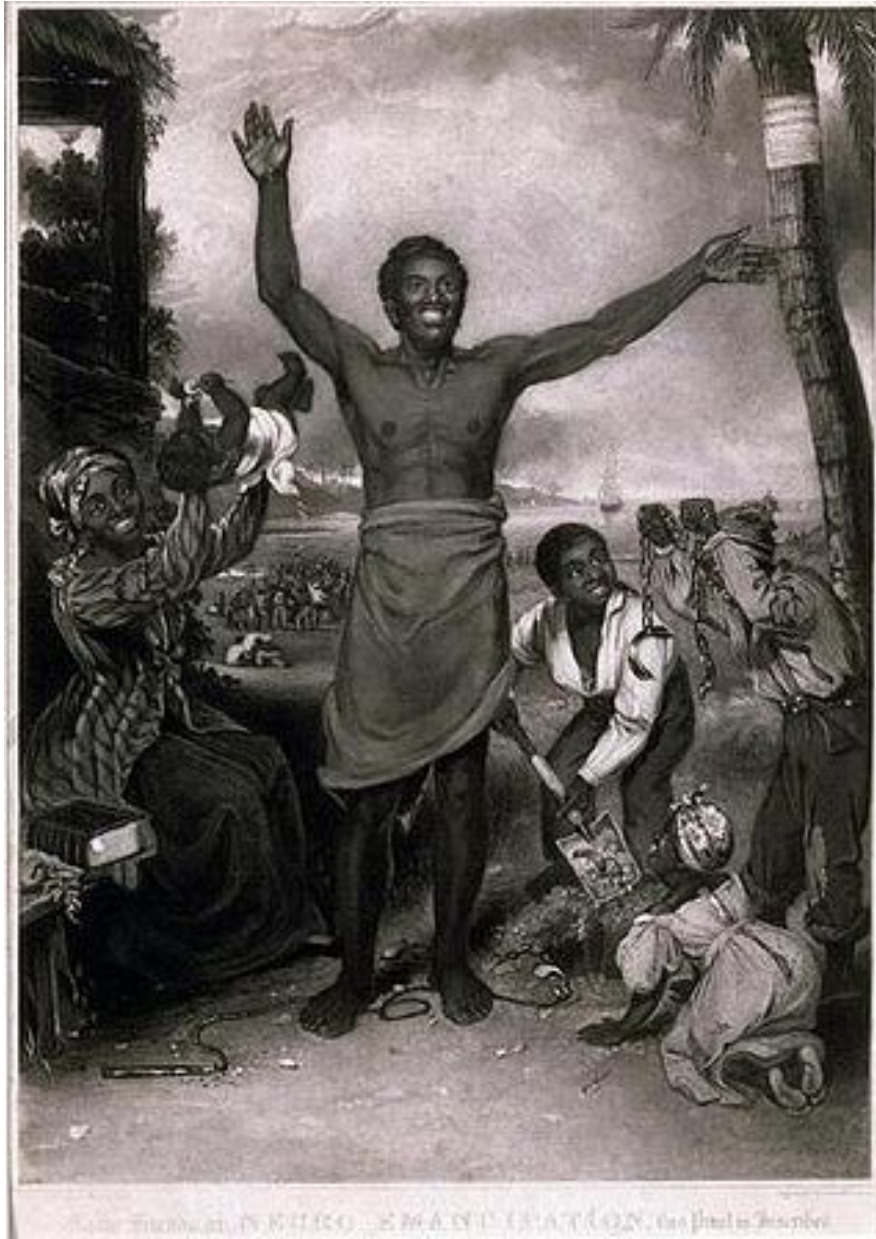


**WILLIAM WILBERFORCE'S
MOTIONS IN PARLIAMENT
ONLY ENDED THE SLAVE
TRADE IN SHIPS FROM
AFRICA**



WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

**SLAVERY ITSELF
CONTINUED ON
PLANTATIONS IN THE
WEST INDIES AND
WILBERFORCE AIMED
ONLY TO "AMELIORATE"
THEIR CONDITIONS BY
REGISTERING THEM**



SLAVES THOUGH IN
BARBADOS IN 1816
DEMERARA IN 1823
JAMAICA IN 1831/2
WANTED
FREEDOM

AS EACH REVOLT ERUPTED
SLAVERY BECAME MORE
UNECONOMIC AND
MORALLY IMPRACTICAL

**EMANCIPATION WAS
VOTED IN 1833:**
THE GOVERNOR'S WORDS
PROVED FALSE!