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TRINIDAD.

No. 1.

(No. 58.)

EXTRACT of a DESPATCH from Governor Lord HARRIS to Earl GREY, dated
Trinidad, 4th September 1846.

I HAVE been requested to transmit to your Lordship the accompanying Resolutions, which were agreed on at a meeting held at the town of San Fernando, in this island, and at which were present most of the proprietors and planters of the surrounding district.

Enclosure in No. 1.

TRINIDAD.

No. 1.

Governor
Lord Harris
to
Earl Grey,
4th Sept. 1848.

Encl. in No. 1.

San Fernando, Trinidad, 29th August 1846.

At a public meeting of proprietors, planters, merchants, and other inhabitants of the Naparima District, held at Michel's Hotel, San Fernando, on Saturday the 29th day of August 1846.

It was moved by the Honourable St. Luce Philip, and seconded by Dr. Meikleham, that Anthony Cumming, Esq. do take the chair, and that H. B. Darling, Esq. be requested to act as Secretary.

The following four resolutions were then proposed by the Honourable St. Luce Philip, seconded by Thomas Agge, Esq. and carried unanimously:—

1st. *Resolved*, That this meeting has learned with surprise and dismay, the propositions of the Right honourable Lord John Russell, for the settlement of the sugar question; and that, in the opinion of this meeting, honour, humanity, consistency, and justice alike forbade the Imperial Parliament to lend its aid in maintaining slavery in foreign possessions, by an equalization of duties on the products of slave and free labour.

2d. That, notwithstanding the change of opinion in Britain appears to preclude the hope that any preference will be much longer shown for the produce of free labour, this meeting trusts that the justice of the British Parliament will at least enable the colonists of this island to avail themselves of its natural resources by means of equitable laws.

3d. That this meeting desires no other laws for the regulation of agriculture, trade, and labour in Trinidad, than those existing in Great Britain, and is contented to adopt the principles contained in certain Resolutions brought forward by Mr. Hume, in the House of Commons, on the 23d June last, of which a copy is subjoined, as follows:—

"1st. That the improvement of the agricultural resources of the British West India Colonies is an object of great national importance, inasmuch as it would be beneficial to all Her Majesty's subjects engaged in their cultivation, and advantageous to the trade of the mother country, as by increasing the supply of produce, prices would be reduced, competition with the produce of slave labour would be increased, and this result would contribute in the best way towards the suppression of the slave trade.

"2d. That the restrictive policy hitherto pursued towards these colonies has not only failed to promote their prosperity, but has, by decreasing their resources, actually impeded its advancement, and that therefore other measures ought in justice to be speedily adopted, to prevent their suffering still further injury.

"3d. That all laws and regulations which interfere with the freedom of labour are alike injurious to the labourer and to the employer, as they prevent the former from obtaining employment with the full benefit of his industry, and the latter from seeking free labour wherever it may abound, and from realizing that fair profit upon capital which but for these restrictions might be advantageously employed; that, therefore, all such restrictive laws and regulations ought to be abolished, and that in future all practicable encouragement should be given to the introduction into these colonies of such immigrants as are best suited to the climate.

"4th. That all discriminating duties levied upon imports into these colonies should be abolished, and all unnecessary expenses therein reduced; that rum should be admitted into the United Kingdom at the same rates of duty as are charged on home-made spirits; and that the use of sugar and molasses should be permitted in all manufactures in which these articles can be employed.

"5th. That after the removal of the existing restrictions on labour; after the repeal of all discriminating duties on imports into the British West India colonies; and after sugar and molasses shall be permitted to be used generally in the United Kingdom, then all discriminating duties in favour of the produce of these colonies should, within a time to be limited, be repealed."

(70.)

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4th That