

## **A HERITAGE OF ONENESS**

*The 'Genesis of a Nation' Inaugural Lecture  
National Cultural Centre, Georgetown,  
6 May 1988*

**I** greet most specially the President of Guyana, my former colleague Hugh Desmond Hoyte, whose address yesterday in inaugurating this week of Commemoration was such a sparkling mixture of scholarship and statesmanship. In national political terms, it was a statement of historic proportions. And I salute as well the eminent Vice-President of India, Shri Shankar Dayal Sharma, who I last greeted in his Commonwealth Capital of New Delhi and am now pleased to join in welcoming to my Commonwealth Capital of Georgetown.

You have honoured me by the invitation to inaugurate this Series of International Conferences: 'The Genesis of a Nation', and to deliver the plenary address at this First Conference on 'The Origins and Development of the Indo-Guyanese'. It is an honour, and a special privilege, because these Conferences are more than a commemoration of things past; they must be a herald of fresh endeavour, perhaps ready to show itself in us, awaiting only articulation in such discourses as we begin today to give it permanence in our society.

This process of examining Guyana's roots—as distinct from, though obviously in the context of, the roots of its several peoples—is a quintessential element in our nation-building. That is why the title of this series—*The Genesis of a Nation*—is so apt. It looks to the beginnings of the wholeness of Guyana, not merely to the beginnings of the different elements within its society. This must be the central thrust of all you do together here in May and later in July. That it has taken over 150 years to embark on such discourses in an integrated way is itself a measure of the significance of this occasion.

But while I applaud unreservedly the timeliness of these Conferences emphasising the nation's beginnings, let me admit to a personal reservation over the labels 'Indo-Guyanese' and 'Afro-Guyanese'. I know they are a kind of transit station on the way from calling ourselves (and thinking of ourselves) as 'Indians' and 'Africans'; I wonder, however, whether we have not

travelled far enough already along this terminological path to have become simply 'Guyanese': Guyanese, it is true, whose ancestors came at different times, in different boats, from different places; who all acknowledge and honour those ancestral links and treasure the cultural variety that is their heritage; but Guyanese whose shared experience of finding ourselves for so long in the same boat has now subsumed those separate origins in an inseparable common identity. Indeed, it may be easier, less jeopardous, to talk of those separate origins, as we will do in this Series of Conferences, from a position of assurance that 150 years later, we have indeed arrived at that national identity.

That identity is in fact no longer an optional matter. As we explore, now and in July, the pathways that brought us to Guyana, it must be our basic premise—axiomatic and incontestable—that we all belong to Guyana and our West Indian region, and belong to nowhere else. Africa and India, both expect us to be first and foremost Guyanese. They know that Guyana is now the land of our ancestors; that to be true to ourselves we must first be true to the inheritance they bequeathed us of belonging to Guyana. And not only do they know this as an historical fact, they also value it as a present reality—one that allows new strengths to emerge for the Third World as a whole from our success in nation-building here. Africa and India share our need to make our several origins the genesis of a united Guyanese nation. As we relive the past in this Commemoration, let us not mistake it for the present or the future.

And there are further acknowledgements to make as we begin this process of reminiscence about Guyana's genesis. The first must surely be the reminder that 'in the beginning' were Guyana's Amerindian people. In slavery and indenture lay the genesis of modern Guyana; but there were other beginnings. This is an ancient land—as our Timehri figures bear witness—and here on the 'wild Guiana coast', before others came from Europe and Africa and Asia, dwelt its indigenous people. There once were other, earlier societies.<sup>1</sup> As a nation that has come to freedom out of colonialism, with our common experience of subjugation and alienation, it is specially incumbent on us not to be guilty of the arrogance of implying that our Guyana world began with us. It would be even worse to believe this; for then we would not merely be ignoring the historical wrong done to

those who were the victims of dominion before we were, we would be giving legitimacy to that wrong and making ourselves mimic men and women of our own oppressors.

And we must acknowledge, too, in no less unambiguous a manner, that while from Africa and India came the majority of Guyana's people, others came as well: from Europe and from China in particular. Britain and Holland shaped the beginnings of our nation as imperial powers and in governance that went beyond proprietorship; but Portuguese and Chinese came to labour and stayed on to belong and, in belonging, to contribute in notable ways to the nation's evolution. They, too, are part of its genesis. If, because of the commemorative structure of this series, Guyanese of Portuguese and Chinese origin are not spoken of as specifically as others, let it be clear from the outset that this does not signify a lapse either of memory or of judgement.

And, lest it go unsaid, let it be acknowledged as well that many contributed to the process of nation building who do not today fit into neat categories of provenance. Guyanese evolved from those who crossed the original ethnic lines have helped in fundamental ways to shape Guyana's character as a nation. That cross-ethnicity is the ultimate reminder that no one community has paramount claim to Guyana's past or preferential title to Guyana's future. In time, we shall all assuredly be one—whatever our beginnings or the instincts that seek to rule our ends. Much of what I have to say today is rooted in the perception that not 'otherness' but 'oneness' must be the hallmark of this commemoration: not difference, but sameness; not our time of arrival or the nature of the journeying, but the reality of our being here and the mutual need of living together.

In what follows in these Conferences there will be many opportunities to look in depth at particular aspects of indenture and slavery and, in the process, to enrich still further the treasury of scholarship that already exists. Such is not my ambition. I should like more modestly to set the scene for your discourses with some reminders of the overarching unity that was always implicit in the several twists and turns of slavery and indenture; twists and turns which, in themselves and by design, kept their victims in a state of vertigo: social, cultural, economic and, inevitably, political.

The occasion, of course, allows me to do no more than offer a vignette of the common history of bondage that 5 May and 31 July 1838 so uniquely symbolise. And, since my purpose is to highlight how much was common, how much was shared, I shall try to focus my reflections upon one of the many plantations that bear mute witness to the bitter taste of sugar to those who were most central to its production throughout the inglorious era of slavery and indenture: around Plantation Vreed-en-Hoop.

When the *Hesperus* arrived at the mouth of the Demerara River 150 years and a few hours ago, 70 of the 156 indentured immigrants then on board were bound to Vreed-en-Hoop. Fourteen of those who set out with them from Calcutta did not reach Demerara—the earliest victims of indenture.<sup>2</sup> Forty-three years later (on 1 January 1881), with the system in full flow, another ship—the *Ellora*—arrived in Demerara with another human cargo. Among them were a young widow and her son of nine bound also for Vreed-en-Hoop: my great grandmother and her young son.<sup>3</sup>

She would serve out her indenture and, in time, the young Daniel Ramphal would leave the plantations, in fact, leave Demerara for Berbice, where his son, my father, 'J. I.', would commence his life's work in education—and begin a family of which I would be the first born: in New Amsterdam. Vreed-en-Hoop has for me, therefore, a special relevance; but, as we shall see, its relevance to the genesis of the nation goes far beyond those personal links. Vreed-en-Hoop serves to tell the story of the unifying historical experience of slavery and indenture in a particularly dramatic way. To recall that shared experience I must first go back to the years before 1838, before the beginning of indenture; with Vreed-en-Hoop, however, always as a focal point.

Two and half years ago (in late 1985) I found myself in England's far north as the honoured guest of the ancient University of Durham founded in 1832 just before slavery's abolition. The occasion was a degree ceremony, and Durham's public orator chose Charles Dickens' Mr. Pickwick with a nice appropriateness to illustrate the 'oddity', as he described it, of 'how easily we may leave in obscurity the background to what we take for granted'. He made the point (in the style of public orators) that, while there can be no character in English fiction

better known and better loved than Mr. Pickwick, a close reading leads to the awkward conclusion that the accumulation of Mr. Pickwick's fortune has been connected with the slave trade: connected through an acquaintance whose office is in Liverpool, 'that metropolis of the Middle Passage', and whose sugar plantations—slave plantations—are in Demerara.

*The Pickwick Papers*, which first appeared in 1836, were set in the England of the 1820s. It was a serialised work which fused a journalistic style with the format of fiction and, like so much of Dickens' writing, was a biting social commentary on contemporary evils. We know that one of the characters in *The Pickwick Papers*, Alfred Jingle, was actually believed in Demerara 150 years ago to be based on the real Dr. Dodson of Plantation Vive La Force.<sup>4</sup> Could Mr. Pickwick's influential friend, his 'Liverpool acquaintance' with slave plantations in Demerara, have been Sir John Gladstone—Vreed-en-Hoop's owner?

By 1821, John Gladstone was already a Liverpool merchant of substantial means with something like a half of his fortune deriving from slave plantations in Demerara, among them, prominently Vreed-en-Hoop. It was a proportion that was to rise substantially.<sup>5</sup> Frustrated in his own desire to represent the Corporation of Liverpool in Parliament, John Gladstone was to have two of his sons go to Westminster—and William rise to be one of Britain's great Prime Ministers. William Gladstone came to Westminster in 1832 when the abolition of slavery was an inescapable political issue and one which, as events turned out, he had to face immediately. On 14 May that same year, Lord Howick, a former Under-Secretary of State of the Colonies, laid specific complaints in Parliament against the management of John Gladstone's sugar estate at Vreed-en-Hoop: alleging 'that the increase in sugar cultivation was in direct ratio with overworking and loss of life on the part of the slave population'.<sup>6</sup> William made the best of a bad job in his father's defence—a vindication of slavery Eric Williams was later to attribute 'more to filial feelings than Liberal principles'.<sup>7</sup> But, for the owner of Vreed-en-Hoop, this was not the first complaint to reach Westminster; nor was it to be the last.

Let me recall the first occasion by way of a personal reminiscence. After reading Law at London, I returned to Georgetown in 1953 as a young Crown Counsel in the Chambers

of the Attorney-General, Sir Frank Holder. The Attorney-General then had supervision of the Magistrates Department and on my first day in the Public Buildings he put me under the wing of Guy Sharples—already a senior Magistrate—to take me on the rounds of the Law Courts to meet the Chief Justice and Judges and, eventually, the Magistrates. He was a man whose aptitudes and interests went well beyond the law, as those of you who remember his landscapes—some of them reproduced in Webber's *Centenary History of British Guiana*—will appreciate. As we did those rounds, Sharples made the point to me that it was on the site of these present courts that the Rev. John Smith had been detained in 1823 pending a trial condemned by all save the West Indian plantocracy as a tragic parody of justice; a trial which led to his conviction and eventually to his death in prison.<sup>8</sup> There is a place for argument about the overall role of Christian missionaries in the evolution of our nation; but Smith's Church is a permanent memorial to this man of God who saw in the slave only his fellow man. That moment of remembrance has always remained with me; for I have come to realise what I think Guy Sharples understood well and hoped I would realise one day: that recalling the events that brought Smith to his end in the cells of a Demerara prison was not just a leap over centuries but a backward glance along a continuous line.

The decade or so before the Abolition of Slavery Act was passed in 1834 was a particularly turbulent time throughout the West Indies: a slave rebellion had taken place in Barbados in 1816, a revolt in Demerara in 1823, an uprising in Jamaica in 1824, an insurrection in Antigua in 1831 and the much larger Jamaica revolt in Christmas of that year.<sup>9</sup> Eric Williams sums up well the situation that had been reached on the eve of emancipation:

In 1833, therefore, the alternatives were clear: emancipation from above, or emancipation from below. But EMANCIPATION. Economic change, the decline of the monopolists, the development of capitalism, the humanitarian agitation in the British churches, contending perorations in the halls of Parliament, had now reached their completion in the determination of the slaves themselves to be free.<sup>10</sup>

Nowhere in Guiana was that determination more evident than on some of Sir John Gladstone's plantations—estates of the Vreed-en-Hoop stable. The Demerara Revolt of 1823 really sounded the death-knell of slavery in Guiana. It was a mighty thunder clap in the gathering storm of slave rebellion. Its reverberations were felt far beyond Guiana's shores—not least because of the indescribable cruelty with which it was eventually put down.

The story of that Revolt has been told many times and its details are well known to this audience; but some elements bear retelling, especially today. On the evening of 18 August an uprising started on two estates on the East Coast of Demerara: Plantations Le Resouvenir and Success. The Revolt centered on the demand for immediate emancipation, which the slaves genuinely believed the Crown had approved but was being denied them locally—a belief substantially, if not yet technically, true. A contemporary account was set down by the artist, Joshua Bryant, in meticulous, if undifferentiated, detail.<sup>11</sup> Later accounts were given with a pro-planter bias by Rodway and, more sympathetically, by Webber.<sup>12</sup> A version which highlights the manoeuvrings at Westminster is in Robin Furneaux's recent work on Wilberforce.<sup>13</sup>

Those varying presentations reflect some of the disparate factors influencing the tortuous course of bondage in Guiana—factors that were to remain at work over the transition from slavery to indenture. The suffering of those crushed down by the system was of course the bed-rock factor. The ruthless efficiency of their oppression held in check the will to rebel; it never induced acquiescence across the board. Sugar was ever a bitter crop for those who toiled at producing it in Guiana's inhospitable conditions. But at least three other groups of actors would influence the outcome: the planters, the imperial government and the humanitarian movement led by men like Wilberforce and Thomas Buxton.

Too, often, and certainly for too long, despite the efforts of the Anti-Slavery Movement in Britain and individual voices of conscience at Westminster and in Whitehall—the British Government remained the protectors of the oppressors rather than the oppressed. British economic interests, the claims of kinship, imperial considerations: all stood in the way of the Government

at Westminster tipping the scales in favour of justice and freedom. When, occasionally, it did, it was often so half-hearted and reluctant an effort that the planters could continue to oppose, to stall and, sometimes, to prevail. The Demerara Revolt of 1823 was a classic example of this; but there were earlier victories of the planters: more pointed but just as pyrrhic. One of these deserves mention here both because of its intrinsic importance and because it has received inadequate notice in the literature to date.

One of the early successes of the Anti-Slavery Movement was securing the passing of the Slave Trade Abolition Act of 1807 over the fierce objections of the West India lobby and the sugar planters in the West Indies in particular. Emancipation would not come for another thirty years; but at least there was in sight an end to the pernicious trade in slaves. It has been estimated that starting with that Act of 1807, no less than 120,000 slaves were liberated from foreign slave ships between 1810 and 1846.<sup>14</sup> What is not well known is that the approaches to that Abolition Act of 1807 had been skilfully prepared by Wilberforce and his friends and that Guiana played a central role in the overall scheme.

Defeated on a succession of foreign slave trade Bills and despairing of progress through parliamentary action, the anti-slavery campaigners in Britain seized on the capture of the Dutch colonies in Guiana in 1803 to secure an executive order—the ‘Guiana order’ of 1805, authorised as a war measure—to abolish the slave trade to the captured Guiana colonies. They then deftly devised the Foreign Slave Trade Act of 1806 confirming the ‘Guiana Order’ and attaching to it all the provisions of previous defeated Foreign Slave Trade Bills.<sup>15</sup> The Slave Trade Abolition Act the following year became undeniable. The planters had been overcome; though, of course, the abolition of the trade did not render slavery itself illegal.

Wilberforce thus moved again on the Guiana front. When Berbice fell to the British in 1803 those sugar estates in the Colony which were the property of the Dutch Government became the property of the British Crown—along with the slaves attached to them.<sup>16</sup> The abolitionists seized the opportunity to put forward a plan for the actual administration of the Berbice estates on the basis of ‘such improvements as the Government itself... had recommended to the colonial Assemblies to adopt and enforce

upon private masters'; arrangements which 'could not... be safely left to the colonial Government, or to individual agents on the spot, without the intimate superintendance and control of some authority in England'.<sup>17</sup>

That 'authority in England' duly turned out to be Wilberforce and five others all appointed (on 23 April 1811) as Commissioners 'for the management of the Crown's estates in Berbice' and 'for the preservation, protection and improvement of the negro and other slaves belonging thereto'.<sup>18</sup> The Berbice estates were some of the worst anywhere—as my fellow Berbician, Edgar Mittleholzer so well dramatised in his *Kaywana* trilogy.<sup>19</sup> Among them was Dageraad—a name that has now passed into the history of Guyana and of slavery generally as a symbol of the bestiality of the system and the courage of its victims in resisting it.<sup>20</sup>

The attitude of the planters to Wilberforce's Berbice Commission was open hostility; even the Governor was opposed, urging the Crown to lease or sell the estates 'on almost any terms'.<sup>21</sup> Wilberforce's zeal to demonstrate the practicality of a more humanitarian approach was in sharp contrast. The first instructions of the Commissioners for improvements on the Berbice estates ran to seven closely printed pages. Typical of them was the direction that 'the cart-whip in the hands of the driver, as an instrument of compelling labour, should be laid aside'.<sup>22</sup> But the Anti-Slavery Movement had come too close to home for the liking of both the planters and the local administration. They struck out vigorously against Wilberforce and his Commissioners, and a campaign for the withdrawal of the Commission was conducted at high levels of influence. This time, the planters won.<sup>23</sup>

Withdrawal of the Commission was, of course, not politically feasible. Instead, by the 'Convention between Great Britain and the Netherlands relative to the Colonies of Demerara, Essequibo and Berbice' in 1815, the British Government agreed that the estates in Berbice would revert to their former owners—now identified, however, not as the Dutch Government but as the 'Berbice Association':<sup>24</sup> the proprietors whose monogram appears on the cover of Rodway's *History of British Guiana*. Wilberforce and his colleagues were aghast and pleaded against retrogression. Their principal agent wrote from Berbice in outraged distress: 'Methinks I hear the whip sounding again

without mercy'.<sup>25</sup>

But it was all to no avail; reform by example was not to be; the planters could not be fought in the lands where slavery flourished. Only emancipation would suffice; and for that the Anti-Slavery Movement had to struggle in London. The failure of the Berbice Commission demonstrated the neanderthal myopia of the planters, the immense strength of the West India lobby, and the malleability of the British Government; and it demonstrated as well the differing perceptions of those disparate factors that I talked about earlier.

On 15 May 1823, Thomas Buxton moved the following motion in the House of Commons:

That the state of slavery is repugnant to the British Constitution and to the Christian religion and that it ought to be abolished gradually throughout the British colonies with as much expedition as may be found consistent with a due regard to the well-being of the parties concerned.<sup>26</sup>

The Government's response was amelioration not abolition; but, through a series of resolutions, it directed that these reforms (like an end to the flogging of female slaves and the carrying of the whip into the field) be put into effect.<sup>27</sup> The planters and the Court of Policy procrastinated and prevaricated. The slaves knew change was at hand and sensed that the planters were resisting what were their rights. They felt they had to strengthen the hand of the Governor against the planters. They were only half right, but they moved, naively, to compel 'without bloodshed' but by a show of force the freedom which they believed the King had decreed to be theirs. The Revolt was crushed with frenzied brutality and followed by savage vengeance. Thirteen thousand slaves from 37 plantations had joined the rebels; it was a colossal show of strength; but they were badly armed and easily subdued.

The clemency and overall restraint they showed while briefly in charge of the plantations was not reciprocated. Quamina, their leader, was killed in the revolt. Nearly 50 were hanged, three given the dreadful sentence of 1,000 lashes and condemned to be worked in chains, two for the remainder of their lives. Quamina's son, Jack, was among those hanged; his head, like

those of the others executed, was stuck on a pole for public viewing: in the words of the local *Gazette*, as 'a monument of personal guilt' and 'a caution against like criminality'.<sup>28</sup>

The Rev. John Smith was convicted by court martial of complicity in the Revolt. He was sentenced to death and died in the Georgetown Prison awaiting the outcome of a petition for clemency which the Governor had cautiously referred to the authorities in London.<sup>29</sup> The planters believed they had won again; but, had they? Re-enter Vreed-en-Hoop and John Gladstone! It was from the Gladstone estate of Success that the revolt had been initiated—on the middle walk dam on Sunday 17 August 1823. Quamina was from Success, and it was there that his son, Jack was also enslaved: a son who bore not his father's name but that of his master, Gladstone. It was on the adjoining estate of Le Resouvenir that the Rev. John Smith had his Bethel Chapel, of which Quamina was one of the leaders.<sup>30</sup> Jack Gladstone epitomised the reality of slavery; his execution was a symbol of the evil that sustained it; but in the halls of Westminster it was John Smith's 'martyrdom' that most spurred the anti-slavery cause. Despite the initial victory of the planters, the Demerara Revolt, in all its implications, dealt slavery a blow from which it never recovered.

But that, of course was not how Vreed-en-Hoop's owner would have seen those events. Wilberforce pamphlets calling for emancipation had been circulating on the estates. The local *Gazette* did not conceal the planters' wrath:

Perhaps the intriguing saints at home had a hand in it— if so, they will hear with disappointment and pain that a superintending and just providence has frustrated their diabolical intentions.<sup>31</sup>

The abolitionist cause was diabolical; the vengeance on the slaves was part of the interposition of a superintending and just providence: how cosy an inversion of right and wrong! Slavery was at its height when, in 1758, Voltaire wrote *Candide*: his satirical commentary on a philosophy of complacency and acquiescence—the supremacy of hypocrisy over truth, the pretence that however evil and abhorrent the state of individual things, 'this world of ours is the best of all possible worlds'.<sup>32</sup> Its

relevance for us could hardly be more pointed.

In one unforgettable incident, Voltaire pictured the innocent Candide entering Surinam and encountering a negro slave lying on the ground. The slave, who has lost both a hand and a leg, tells Candide that this is 'the price paid for the sugar you eat in Europe'. 'Oh Pangloss!', cries Candide, 'This is an abomination you had not guessed; this is too much. In the end I shall have to renounce optimism'. 'What is this optimism'; asks Candide's footman. 'Alas'. says Candide, 'it is the mania of maintaining that all is good when all is bad'. And Candide weeps as he enters Surinam.<sup>33</sup> By 1838, as the *Hesperus* entered Demerara, some things had changed; but not such basic attitudes as the supremacy of hypocrisy over truth, the mania of maintaining that all was good when all was bad.

Clinging to illusion as a prop for the *status quo*, emancipation to the planters was just an interlude in the story of sugar; an imposition they fiercely resented, but one which they had to overcome and continue in business. First, however, they would collect what was on offer: twenty million pounds sterling in compensation for emancipation—the equivalent today of close to one billion (US) dollars. The Guiana planters' share of this was £4,924,989 (nearly £5 million) for 82,824 slaves.<sup>34</sup> That was almost a quarter of the total compensation paid by the British Government on the abolition of slavery. Vreed-en-Hoop's owner John Gladstone, alone received almost £85,000.<sup>35</sup> The handwritten calculation of his father's Guiana slave compensation by England's future Prime Minister, William Gladstone, (in 1835) is a document that conjures up images of that time 150 years ago even more evocative than the sums it records<sup>36</sup> But, as Alan Adamson says in *Sugar Without Slaves*: 'It occurred to no one to compensate the slaves for their previous bondage'.<sup>37</sup> Of course it occurred to no one. Remember *Candide* and 'the mania of maintaining that all is good when all is bad'. In the 1832 debate in the House of Commons on the management of Vreed-en-Hoop, William Gladstone was recorded in *Hansard* as follows:

He deprecated cruelty—he deprecated slavery: it was abhorrent to the nature of Englishmen; but conceding all these things, were not Englishmen to retain a right to their own honestly and legally acquired property?<sup>38</sup>

So, on slavery's abolition, John Gladstone got £85,000; while his slaves got apprenticeship.

In Guiana, the apprenticeship code appears to have been the harshest of all, but that deferral of freedom was to last only four of the six appointed years.<sup>39</sup> Meanwhile, John Gladstone did not loiter. Supply and demand should have dictated a new economics of the sugar industry—increased wages for the freed slaves who chose to remain on the sugar plantations. But that would have meant higher costs, lower profits—perhaps, closure. Instead, the planters pocketed the compensation for their unpaid slave capital and set out to invent 'a new system of slavery'<sup>40</sup>—with Vreed-en-Hoop's John Gladstone leading the effort. In the beginning, it was not so much a strategy of replacing the entire labour force as a tactic of reducing the bargaining power of the freed slaves by having a reserve labour pool 'to use as a set-off'<sup>41</sup>—and the promise of enlargement if need be.

The English expatriate firm of Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co. worked from Calcutta. One of its members, F.M. Gillanders, was a cousin of John Gladstone's wife.<sup>42</sup> They had already supplied Indian labour to the sugar plantations of Mauritius. Through the family connection they offered their services to do likewise for Gladstone's Guiana estates at a cost of 'not one-half that of a slave'.<sup>43</sup> John Gladstone jumped at the offer; there might be problems in London where anti-slavery sentiment was still strong; but he had by now powerful political friends. There might be problems in India; but it was not lost on him that another Guiana proprietor, Andrew Colville—who owned Bell Vue estate—was a 'near relative' of Lord Auckland, India's Governor General.<sup>44</sup> He was to involve Colville in the enterprise.

I have now seen the full texts of that early correspondence between Sir John Gladstone and the Calcutta firm. They are every bit as bad as the contemporary account by John Scoble of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society suggested in his pamphlet on *The Deplorable Condition of Hill Coolies in British Guiana and Mauritius* published in 1840.<sup>45</sup> The full text of the principal letters is in an Appendix below (Appendix B).<sup>46</sup>

Let me interpose here a personal reflection encouraged by those letters to remind us of the way history permeates our lives, guiding destinies in mysterious and unseen ways, revealing the past through unseen links to the present. All of us in our lives

have been touched thus by the course of history. All of us are what we are because of its turnings centuries ago; we are here because those pathways brought us here. The correspondence to which I have just referred (Appendix B) shows that John Gladstone's letter to the Secretary of State forwarding his correspondence with Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co. was written in 1838 from Carlton Gardens, London. In June 1833, John Gladstone, abandoning his nomadic existence, though not yet his sugar interests in Demerara, bought as his London residence Number 6 Carlton Gardens—the address from which so much of those early negotiations, crucial to Guiana's future, was conducted. One hundred and forty-two years later to the month, in July 1975, I took up my appointment at the Commonwealth Secretariat in London and moved into the Secretary-General's residence—at 5 Carlton Gardens. Numbers 5 and 6 Carlton Gardens by then were in fact one, both incorporated into Wool House—sugar was no longer 'king'.<sup>47</sup>

How full a circle the wheel of history thus described! John Gladstone's letter of 1836 had started a system that would eventually bring my ancestors from India to Guyana—to the same estate of Vreed-en-Hoop he once owned. Three generations later, those very events would combine with others to take me to London in the service of a Commonwealth of which Gladstone could never have dreamt—to dwell at the address in London he had chosen for his own retirement. The moving finger of history, having written, does move on. But conjures of this kind help to remind us that every piece of history our actions inscribe today helps to determine the nature of tomorrow's entry and, in so doing, to bind the present to the future and the future to the past.

But let me return to those letters. What they show with starkness is that continuum of which I spoke earlier, the continuance beyond emancipation of that state of mind *Candide* had encountered in Surinam which accepted massive human suffering as a valid low-cost factor in the price of sugar. But it is, perhaps, the letter from Calcutta (6 June 1836) in response to John Gladstone's enquiry that most clearly reveals the underlying perception of 'otherness' which linked slavery and indenture and gave human bondage under both systems a common root:

We are not aware that any greater difficulty would present itself in sending men to the West Indies (than to Mauritius), the natives being perfectly ignorant of the place they go to or the length of voyage they are undertaking... The Dhangurs are always spoken of as more akin to the monkey than the man. They have no religion, no education, and in their present state no want beyond eating, drinking and sleeping; and to procure which they are willing to labour.<sup>48</sup>

Note what Tinker described as the ‘curiously proto Darwinian tone’; the same dehumanisation that had sustained slavery to the extent that the Anti-Slavery Movement had made a credo of the question: ‘Am I not a Man and a Brother?’ Once dehumanise the victim and any inhumanity becomes possible. In the accountancy of an Eichmann the Jews sent to Nazi gas chambers were not ‘people’ but ‘pieces’. Apartheid’s victims are much the same today in the eyes of the system. Indentured labourers, like slaves, were mere factors of production in the crudest sense. Indenture’s chains were of paper; but the mental condition which managed to justify bondage under each system was the same; and race was at the heart of both.

The original Gladstone letter was written on 4 January 1836; the reply from Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co. in Calcutta on 6 June that same year. The correspondence that followed in 1837 was to do essentially with the details of that initial voyage of the *Hesperus* and the *Whitby*. The *Hesperus* belonged to Gladstone’s firm—‘John Gladstone and Co.’. It was a three-masted barque, square rigged on the first and second masts and gaff rigged on the last. It was a mere 329 registered tons.<sup>49</sup> It was the *Hesperus* that brought the Gladstone labourers, most of them bound for Vreed-en-Hoop—the first real movement of people from the East Indies to the Western Hemisphere and, in particular, to the West Indies that Columbus had mis-named in 1492, convincing himself that he had reached Asia from the West. That was why he called the first people of the Caribbean—‘Indians’. But, between the voyages of the *Santa Maria* and the *Hesperus* were to pass nearly 350 years; and when the *Whitby* actually anchored in the Demerara River in the early morning of 5 May 1938 its Captain, James Swinton, would be singularly unaware of the

historic significance of the moment. It would be lost on him because the newcomers he had brought to the 'new world' were essentially 'cargo' not people; yet they were the very people of India Columbus thought he had reached three and a half centuries earlier.

However, there was more for Gladstone to do than merely arrange the transportation of these first immigrants from India to the 'New World'. By 1836, the planters were getting distinctly anxious about the situation that would arise after the apprenticeship system ended and slave labour was finally withdrawn from the plantations. In a letter of 23 February 1837, which he wrote (from Carlton Gardens) to Sir John Hobhouse, then President of the Board of Control (a copy of which he subsequently sent to Lord Glenelg, then Secretary of State for the Colonies), Gladstone set out the situation and the thinking of the planters with a frankness normally reserved for private correspondence.

A considerable Degree of Uncertainty prevails in all our West India Colonies whether the Apprentices, when the Period of their Services expires, on the 1st August 1840, will be disposed to hire themselves to work on reasonable Terms, and on a System of Continuance such as will ensure the regular Cultivation and Manufacture of the Produce, which it is considered can only be ascertained when that Period arrives. It is also thought that by obtaining the Services of other Classes of Labourers in the Interval, and for a Period beyond the Termination of the Apprenticeship, it may materially influence the Conduct of the Apprentices, and induce them more readily to meet the Wishes of their Employers; with this View Labourers have been sent from Germany, Madeira, Ireland, and elsewhere, but these Experiments have not succeeded, from the Influence of the Climate generally producing reluctance to labour, and increasing the Desire for Spirituous Liquors, which the low Price and Abundance of new Rum enables them to gratify.

—a desire, of course, which was perfectly legitimate and readily gratified among the planters themselves who invented that most potent of spirituous liquors, the 'Demerara rum swizzle', and

made it virtually a legend.<sup>50</sup>

That letter represented the beginning of the other half of Gladstone's preparation for the voyage of the *Hesperus* and the *Whitby*. He needed an assurance from the British Government whether an Order in Council or any other authorisation was necessary for the purpose of 'carrying this experimental measure into execution, in order to secure us against interfering or prevention by the authorities at Calcutta'. He had good reason to seek that assurance.

Already, on 27 June 1836, the Court of Policy had passed "an Ordinance for the Better Regulation and Enforcement of the Relevant Duties of Masters and Employers, and Articled Servants and Tradesmen in British Guiana". It had been transmitted by the Governor, Sir James Carmichael Smyth, to the Secretary of State with a statement that he had 'very little Doubt but that the several Enactments of this Ordinance (prepared as they are in the Spirit of perfect Equality and Reciprocity in compelling the Performance of the Engagements by which the Parties in question may severally be bound) will meet with His Majesty's most gracious Approbation'.<sup>51</sup> Again that same perception that all was good when all was bad. Such approbation was not forthcoming. Under pressure of the Anti-Slavery Movement, the political situation in Britain had become highly sensitised and the British Government was obliged to proceed with caution. In his reply to the Governor, of 31 October 1836, it fell to the Secretary of State, no less, to draw the Governor's attention to the reality that this legislation—which was to be the underpinning for the indenture system—really was ushering in a new system of slavery:

The general Effect of this Ordinance (wrote Lord Glenelg) may, with little Inaccuracy, be said to be to continue, in respect of all Persons who shall enter into Indentures of Apprenticeship, the existing Relations between the Employer and the apprenticed Labourer, although without the Intervention of a special Magistracy. The most material Exception is, that the Apprenticeship to be constituted under this Ordinance would not render the Apprentice liable to personal Chastisement in case of Misconduct.<sup>52</sup>

At least initially, that latter exception was to prove hollow—especially at Vreed-en-Hoop. In any event, this ‘Indenture Law’ was allowed to stand with a reduction in the period of indenture from seven years to three and the exclusion of any person recruited ‘on the Continent of Africa or in any of the adjacent islands, inhabited wholly or in part by the Negro race’.<sup>53</sup> So obvious was it to the authorities in London that what was about to begin was a new system of slavery that Africans simply had to be excluded from it if the Government was to have any chance of rebutting what Lord Glenelg described to Governor Carmichael Smyth (31st October 1836) as ‘a plausible, if not a just, Reproach against this Country of Insincerity in our Professions on that Subject’ (of slavery).<sup>54</sup> The system of bondage would continue; but with different bondsmen.

Yet even this did not suffice for the requirements of Vreed-en-Hoop and the plantocracy in general. John Gladstone returned to the charge arguing forcefully, in a letter to Sir Geo Grey of 23 March 1837, that:

it is only by a Supply being obtained of other free Labourers, to such an Extent as may incite Competition and induce our present ‘Apprentices to believe that it may become practicable to carry forward the Cultivation on a moderate Scale independent of their Aid, that they are likely to be influenced for such Terms of Remuneration as the Planters may be enabled to give them. ... We therefore (he concluded) would require Powers to enter into an extended rather than a shorter Period of Service, nor could we entertain a Hope of Remuneration, or to overcome the apprehended Difficulties, if the Hiring was restricted to a shorter Period than Five Years.<sup>55</sup>

Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co. had told Gladstone that they could supply Indian labourers at a cost ‘less than half that of a slave’. Nearly a year later (29 April 1837), Gladstone was representing the very opposite to the Secretary of State, namely, his certainty:

that the Labour of our present People has not cost us One Half of what we should have to pay for the Services of the Hill Coolies.<sup>56</sup>

He was inverting the cost factor to sustain the argument that a longer period of indenture was required to secure a reasonable return on the investment in indenture. The lives of our forefathers were being measured as in a counting house. But the Secretary of State yielded. On 19 August 1837, he instructed Governor Carmichael Smyth that as a result of the argument produced:

Her Majesty's Government have agreed to Mr. Gladstone's Proposal that the Terms of Apprenticeship of Natives of any Place within the Charter of the East India Company imported as Labourers into Guiana should be extended to Five Years.<sup>57</sup>

On 20th May 1837, Gladstone was able to write to his Calcutta recruiters:

I have now made the necessary Arrangements with the Colonial Department, and an Order in Council corresponding with them will be immediately published.<sup>58</sup>

He forthwith increased the order for Coolies from 150 to 200, and added a reminder in the numerate tradition of the merchandise trade:

One-third for the Messrs. Moss, Two-Thirds for me, to prevent any Difficulty when they arrive at Demerara (20th May 1837).<sup>59</sup>

An Order in Council of 12 July 1837 duly gave effect to this further amendment of the Guyana 'Indenture Law'; but the Order in Council was not published and did not come to light until 3 January 1838 when it was denounced in the *British Emancipator* (the official organ of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society) as 'giving birth to a new slave-trade'.<sup>60</sup> John Scoble of the Society, who was later to visit Guiana and write his celebrated exposure of *The Deplorable Conditions of the Hill Coolies*, and of 'the Nefarious Means by which they were Induced to Resort to British Guiana and Mauritius' was later to claim that this Order in Council:

gave a carte blanche to every villain in British Guiana, and every scoundrel in India to kidnap and inveigle into contracts for labour for five years, in a distant part of the world, the ignorant and inoffensive Hindoo!<sup>61</sup>

On the fly-leaf to that pamphlet Scoble quoted from the newspaper, *The Friend of India*, published in Calcutta, of 3 August 1839:

Under the colour of a Bill for protecting the Indian labourers, it is proposed to legalize the importation of them into the colonies. ... It was in this manner that the Slave-trade crept in, under the shadow of Parliamentary regulation; a race was then begun between abuses and legislation, in which legislation was always found to be in the rear. AND SO IT WILL BE WITH THE COOLEY TRADE. We must tread the same circle; and, after years of the most poignant misery, come to the same result, that in the case of the new, as of the old, trade, THE ONLY PATH OF SAFETY LIES IN ABSOLUTE PROHIBITION.

We were indeed to tread the same circle; but absolute prohibition was not to come for some eighty years.

Let there be no doubt whatsoever in our minds as we begin this Commemoration that what we are marking are stages in a continuous process of bondage which began with the induction of the first African slaves into the Guiana colonies and ended with the prohibition of indenture in 1917. It was one experience with differing shades of brutality, differing methods of coercion, but a common experience of human bondage. The condition of slavery in the days, for example, of the 1763 Rebellion at Magdalenenberg were very different from that of indenture in the end years of the system. As Dr. Basdeo Mangru has reminded us in *Benevolent Neutrality*, the fact that the slave was private property and that slavery implied permanence were basic differences—however much they tended to be overshadowed by the similarities.<sup>62</sup> Yet, at the moment of transition 150 years ago, apprenticeship so shaded into indenture that Brougham could speak in the House of Commons of ‘indentured apprenticeship’<sup>63</sup>

when referring to slavery between 1834 and 1838 and Lord John Russell could himself describe (and reject) indenture in 1840 as 'a new system of slavery'.<sup>64</sup> Apprenticeship was indenture; indenture was slavery; in an important sense, they were all one.

But the truest testimony to the bondage in continuum that May and July 1838 marked was not that given by words in the British Parliament but the experience of those who were to labour on the sugar plantations. Like the slaves before them, Indian indentured labourers had first to endure their own passage across the *Kala Pant*<sup>65</sup>—The Black Waters—their own diaspora, not so unlike that earlier pernicious traffic in human cargo. Arthur Seymour has described the Middle Passage in these terms:

A ferry of infamy from the heart of Africa  
Roots torn and bleeding from their native soil  
A stain of race spreading across the ocean.<sup>66</sup>

And so, indeed, it was. It remains an apt description of the ferry that was to succeed it, beginning with the *Hesperus* and the *Whitby*, crossing from the heart of India, spreading another stain of race across the ocean.

And the identity of experience continued beyond the journey into the labouring—an experience in its totality well described by Hugh Tinker as an 'exile into bondage'.<sup>67</sup> Perhaps the truest symbol of the unbroken chain between slavery and indenture was the tenement range or 'logie' of the inherited 'nigger yard': the squalid, foul, degenerate, huddled pens that passed for housing for slave and indentured labourer alike. 'Nigger Yard', 'Coolie Yard', 'Bound Yard' were all one, only the labels changed to match the changing style of servitude.<sup>68</sup> Like the slave, the Indian immigrant was subject to the coercion of the whip and to the new coercion of criminal law applied for labour offences such as absenteeism and lack of identity documents which were not crimes under the general law.<sup>69</sup> No wonder the Royal Commission in 1870 described the indentured Indian as trapped by the law, 'in the hands of a system which elaborately twists and turns him about but always leaves him face to face with an impossibility'.<sup>70</sup>

In his Foreword to Walter Rodney's *A History of the Guyanese*

*Working People, 1881-1905*—a history whose central thesis was that shared common experience between indenture and slavery—George Lamming sums up the cruel realities of indenture thus:

Indentured labour was bound labour. It was deprived of all mobility and was therefore condemned to provide that reliability of service a crop like sugar demanded. The planter class, with the full permission of the metropolitan power, had given itself the legal right to deploy this labour as it pleased. As Rodney emphasises, here, with great relevance to many a contemporary situation, what the ruling class could not acquire by the normal play of the market forces had now been appropriated through legal sanctions. Indentured Indian labour was enslaved by the tyranny of the law that decided their relations to the land where they walked, and worked and slept.<sup>71</sup>

Rodney himself emphasised the link with characteristic penetration:

... indentured labour had as its ultimate function the guaranteeing of planter control over the entire labour process ... this alone justified the continuation of indentureship, irrespective of the cost to the individual proprietor and to the general taxpayer ... More than anything else, it was the regimented social and industrial control which caused indenture to approximate so closely to slavery.<sup>72</sup>

In his original letter to Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co. of 4 January 1836, John Gladstone had painted a picture of life on Vreed-en-Hoop (or any of his other estates) which was not merely an embellishment of reality but a total travesty of truth:

Our Plantation Labour in the Field is very light; much of it, particularly in Demerara, is done by Task Work, which for the Day is usually completed by Two o'clock in the Afternoon, giving to the People all the rest of the Day to themselves. They are furnished with comfortable Dwellings and an Abundance of Food; ...They have

likewise an annual Allowance of Clothing sufficient and suitable for the Climate; there are Schools on each Estate for the Education of the Children, and the instruction of their Parents in the Knowledge of their Religious Duties. Their Houses are comfortable and it may be fairly said they pass their Time agreeably and happily.<sup>73</sup>

He was describing slave labour and promising those same idyllic conditions to those who took the place of the slaves. The same conditions did prevail for the newcomers; but they were hardly idyllic. Indenture, like slavery, was rooted in massive self-induced illusion of the kind *Candide* encountered in Surinam: 'the mania of believing that all is good when all is bad'.

Only a few years later, John Scoble was to reveal the conditions at Vreed-en-Hoop which the passengers of the *Hesperus* actually encountered. Complaints had been made to the Governor that they were being ill-treated and an enquiry resulted. Scoble was by then in Guiana and imposed himself on the proceedings. The result was a devastating indictment of conditions at Vreed-en-Hoop. Flogging and confinement were proved beyond all dispute. Two of the women who gave evidence (both presumably freed slaves) spoke in these terms:

According to Rose:

They appeared to me as severely punished as my matties were, during the apprenticeship; when flogged, they were flogged with a cat, the same as was formerly in use; they brought all from the sick-house together, and took them to the negro-yard to be flogged; they were tied to a post.

Elizabeth Caesar said:

The Coolies were locked up in the sick house, and next morning they were flogged with a cat-o'-nine-tails; the manager was in the house, and they flogged the people under his house; they were tied to the post of the gallery of the manager's house; I cannot tell how many licks; he gave them enough. I saw blood. When they were flogged at manager's house, they rubbed salt pickle on their backs.<sup>74</sup>

The report of that enquiry was dated 2 May 1839. By 3 August, Gladstone was writing to the Marquis of Normandy that:

The people continued cheerful and contented; but evil disposed persons have recently gone among them, and have endeavoured to create a bad and dissatisfied feeling, in which they have partially succeeded, as is at present too generally the case in England, where similar effects are produced by the Chartists and others, among the lower classes.<sup>75</sup>

The truth is it needed no 'evil disposed persons' to persuade those trapped by the 'Gladstone experiment' to flee its horrors. Perhaps the most pathetic story of all is that of the twenty indentured labourers landed by the *Whitby* who, trying to escape from Plantation Highbury in April/May 1839, 'cut their way, due east, for many miles through the bush, in the hope of reaching Bengal';<sup>76</sup> plaintive resonances of that first Gillanders letter: 'the Natives being perfectly ignorant of the Place they agree to go to, or the length of the Voyage they are Undertaking'.

Not much had changed in the Vreed-en-Hoop stable from the days of Jack Gladstone and the 1823 revolt. By now, however, its squalid realities were becoming a problem for its owners' son—the future Prime Minister of England. John Gladstone sold up: Vreed-en-Hoop went in July 1840 for £53,000. 'The Coolies', he remarked, 'are excellent bait for effecting the sales':<sup>77</sup> 'pieces', not 'people'. With the proceeds, Gladstone set up a trust for his children, including William: Demerara contributing to the future British Prime Minister's financial independence, though he protested at the time that 'this increased wealth so much beyond my needs with its attendant responsibility is very burdensome, however on his part the act be beautiful'.<sup>78</sup> The meaning of Vreed-en-Hoop is 'Peace and Hope'. 150 years ago it helped to bring both to the Gladstone family; but neither to the children of slavery and indenture.

On the final division of Gladstone's estate in 1848, the house in Carlton Gardens went to William.<sup>79</sup> John Gladstone had never lived in Guyana; but the sale of Vreed-en-Hoop, and later Success, was, in a sense, his act of retirement from Demerara and the West Indies. He left behind, however, the legacy of indenture

which he had begun with the *Hesperus* in 1838, and which resumed in 1845 despite the earlier protestations of Lord John Russell. For 80 years after that first arrival, indenture would tread the same circle towards prohibition as slavery had done before emancipation.

In 1929, the Rev. C. F. Andrews—Gandhi's trusted friend—visited Guyana and my parent's humble home in New Amsterdam. My father had managed the Berbice end of his visit to Guyana and he in turn was interested in J. I.'s efforts for the education of Indian girls; efforts that were to contribute to the withdrawal four years later of the Swettenham Circular which since 1904 had retarded the education of the daughters of indenture. That evening in New Amsterdam I was still a tearful infant not yet a year old. It is now part of family lore that the old priest took me in his arms, quieted the crying and gave me his blessing.<sup>80</sup> My mother, at least, had hope for me thereafter. Later, in 1936, C. F. Andrews, at the end of a sentimental visit to Fiji, placed his faith in the 'powers of recovery' of the indentured Indians.<sup>81</sup> That power of recovery—what I have earlier in this Lecture called 'the process of renewal'—was a power and a quality which the children of Indian indenture shared with their brothers and sisters of African descent who are the children of slavery in its cruellest form. When Martin Carter proclaimed:

From the nigger-yard of yesterday I come with  
my burden  
To the world of tomorrow I turn with my strength.<sup>82</sup>

he spoke for all who were the victims of both slavery and indenture; he spoke of all who shared in Guyana the common experience of bondage and, out of bondage, in the genesis of the nation. And he spoke with truth of hope well justified. How the children of slavery and indenture would use their powers of recovery however, what pathways the process of renewal would follow, would depend in large measure on whether slavery and indenture were indeed perceived as the unifying experience that it was. This process of renewal was crucial to Guyana's future; it, too, was part of the genesis of the nation.

But something else needs to be acknowledged. Indenture could not have thrived if the many who came had not first felt the need to leave. When everything is said about the deceit and

coercion and sometimes outright kidnapping of indentured immigrants, there remains the uncomfortable reality that the great majority who crossed the *Kala Pani* did so because of a desperate urge to escape from destitution and despair. Crushed down by poverty, by landlessness and landlordism and, for some at least, by the hopelessness of the caste system, they were in flight from bondage. What the fraudulence and iniquity of indenture did was to lure them from one trap into another; they exchanged a familiar servitude at the base of the Indian economic and social system for the even more alienated inequality of plantation serfdom. Their escape from bondage would turn out to be exile into bondage of another kind.<sup>83</sup>

Yet it was not a meaningless exchange. Although the shackles of the plantation system were not easily cast off, and despite the exploitative and lifeless character of indenture, there was always the prospect of eventual release and renewal: a prospect not vouchsafed them in the ancestral home of 19th century India—as some who returned discovered. Certainly, for the generation that would follow, after the ignominy of indenture would come opportunity. There are many lessons here; among them the sobering one that the arrival of the *Hesperus* and the *Whitby* are worthy of commemoration for the additional reason that, in a paradoxical way, that arrival, along with slavery's abolition, was the beginning of recovery in a more ultimate sense—the sense in which together they marked the genesis of the nation.

You and I, my generation and the one that followed, are heirs to a formidable tradition of individual effort for recovery. That effort gathered momentum in the end years of the nineteenth century and reached a high point in the 1920s and 1930s as the capacity of the children of slavery and indenture for self-improvement enlarged directly through education—education which they rightly prized almost above all else. In the families of each of us is that record of striving upwards, of working assiduously, often quite modestly, but always steadily towards the goal of self-improvement—a generation for whom the work ethic became an almost natural element of the process of survival.

We have a lot to retrieve from those years, and from the traditions of our parents' generation. When I went to London in 1947 to study Law, my father went with me. He was fulfilling his

own life-long ambition to be a lawyer and had already done most of the first part of the Bar exams in Guiana. In the six months it took me to settle down and tackle one subject at the Bar, he had passed his finals. I was 19; he was 44. He hardly practised law, and I would guess that he was a better teacher than he would ever have been a practising lawyer; but he had fulfilled that driving urge for further education—for betterment, fulfilment of potential. And that was typical of his generation. Can we use this Commemoration to recapture some of that enthusiasm for learning? Unless I am much mistaken, we are in danger of going in another direction—making a culture of the pork-knocker's materialist dream. Yet *El Dorado* always was a city of the mind.

And there are other victories for human fulfilment still to be won in Guyana, as in many countries. In the last decade in particular, international economic conditions have been cruelly harsh for developing countries and have taken a heavy toll of vulnerable economies like ours. But we must admit also that mistakes have been made. The richness of our natural resources, good levels of education and the resourcefulness of our people should have provided greater resilience. Venturing out boldly in largely uncharted waters and remembering the exploitation and repression that was so much a part of our history, we had to be pioneering and, therefore, to risk making mistakes. But we would be bad pioneers if we fail to admit to such mistakes, and to learn from them—as others are doing throughout the world, including major nations like the Soviet Union and China. To fail to do so is to fall far behind, and it will be little comfort then to applaud our consistency if it be consistency in error.

But the need not to fall behind is even more pointed in the context of this Commemoration; because the challenge that faces developing countries, Guyana included, is not merely the challenge of economic development, but the fact that in failure lies the danger of returning to a new dependency—a new kind of colonialism—deriving from economic weakness: a return along the path from whence we have come. We cannot afford such retrogression; and circumstances surely are now propitious for renewal and a real leap forward. The vision we have of a prosperous Guyana is not an empty one. It is attainable with sustained effort at economic and political reform; with continuing endeavour to liberalise the environment so that Guyanese

can give of their best; with positive action to remove insecurity and fear on the part of all sections of our society. But leadership and good direction are not enough. Much must be contributed by the people of Guyana in a great movement of change and reconstruction.

Relevant to that process of rebuilding, is a cardinal lesson from the events of 150 years ago: the lesson that a special obligation devolves on us as the children of slavery and indenture and colonialism. It is the obligation to ensure that no trace of servitude lingers or re-emerges in our society under whatever guise. The legacy of bondage is a continuing one; one which only a vigilant society can eradicate. Wherever racism, oppression, intolerance, authoritarianism, dominion of whatever kind, encroaches on human freedom it stalks in the shadow of slavery and indenture. We must never allow ourselves the complacency of believing that their shadows have been lifted for all time from our country or our region; we must be vigorous in ensuring that they never fall again upon us from any quarter.

In truth, slavery and indenture have left Guiana a legacy of challenge. Almost everything about them—about the systems themselves and about the linkages between them—emphasised difference and prompted division. How else but with resentment could newly freed African slaves react to immigrants arriving to deny them the right to the economic betterment which should have been the very fruit of freedom? Yet, how were the new arrivals to escape the fate of being pawns in a game of life and death they endured but scarcely understood? ‘You make human beings the subject of your commerce, as if they were merchandise, and you refuse them the benefit of the great law which governs all commercial dealings—that the supply must ever adapt itself to the demand’: thus Brougham (quoting Pitt) inveighed in vain at the very start of Indian indenture to Guiana.<sup>84</sup> Slavery, apprenticeship, indenture were ingredients of a poisoned brew which left a toxic residue of race. From that cup, we must decline to sip; for us to do so would be to stage the final act in a tragedy of others’ making played out by ourselves. Far better, to create a propitious denouement of our own: one that denies a victory to ‘otherness’ and makes our national motto of ‘one people’ reflect not just a pious hope but a present living reality.

If this Commemoration—now and in July—is to fulfil its highest purposes, it must help us to rise to the real challenge that events 150 years ago have bequeathed to us: the challenge truly to make those events the genesis of a nation. We will be able to do so only when we understand truly that slavery and indenture were a continuum, that their victims shared a common experience of bondage, that the same history which tempts us to mutual alienation created a primordial kinship—a heritage of oneness we have been prone to squander but need ceaselessly to cherish and enlarge. Beyond genesis, that surely must be the final revelation.

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21. *Report of the Commissioners appointed for the Management of The Crown Estates in the Colony of Berbice*, op.cit., p. 6.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 25-31.
23. S.S. Ramphal, *Some in Light and Some in Darkness: The Long Shadow of Slavery* (Third World Foundation, Monograph 12, 1983), pp. 9-12.
24. Convention Between Great Britain and The Netherlands, relative to the Colonies of Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice (London, 12 August, 1815), *British and Foreign State Papers*, Vol. 3, 1815, (Ridgway, London, 1838), pp. 394-5.
25. *Report of the Commissioners appointed for the Management of The Crown Estates in the Colony of Berbice*, op. cit., pp. 21-22.

26. Rodway, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 222-3.
27. Furneaux, op. cit., pp. 414-6.
28. Bryant, op. cit., pp. 44-90, 109-111 and plates 1, 11 and 12; Rodway, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 226-44; Webber, op. cit., pp. 146-50. Also local *Gazette* of 4 September 1824.
29. Bryant, op. cit., pp. 94-5; Furneaux, op. cit., pp. 416-18; Webber, op. cit., pp. 150-51.
30. Rodway, op. cit., Vol II, pp. 226-7.
31. The *Gazette* of 28 August 1823, cited in Rodway, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 240.
32. Voltaire, *Candide*, tr. John Butt, (Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, England, 1987).
33. Ibid., pp. 84-86. Also, David Brion Davis, "Slavery and 'Progress'" in Christine Bolt and Seymour Drescher (eds.), *Anti-Slavery, Religion, and Reform: essays in Memory of Roger Anstey*, op. cit., pp. 351-266, at p. 351.
34. Alan H. Adamson, *Sugar Without Slaves: The Political Economy of British Guiana, 1831-1904* (Yale, Massachusetts, 1972), p. 31.
35. Checkland, op. cit., pp. 300-1.
36. See Appendix A for a facsimile of the calculation as it appears in Checkland, op. cit., p. 320.
37. Adamson, op. cit., p. 31.
38. *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates* Third Series, Vol. 18 (30 May to 1 July 1833), 3 June, 1833, p. 335.
39. W.L. Burn, *Emancipation and Apprenticeship in the British West Indies* (Jonathan Cape, London, 1937), p. 43.

40. Lord John Russell, see *infra*, n. 64.
41. Appendix B, letter of 4 January 1836, from John Gladstone to Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co.
42. Checkland, op.cit., p. 121.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 318.
44. Letter of 10 March 1837 from John Gladstone to Gillanders, Arbuthnot and Co., (1838) 13 *Colonial Papers Parliamentary* No. 2, House of Commons No. 232, 22 March 1838, p. 5: 'Mr. Colville is a near connection of Lord Auckland, your Governor General, to whom he will write on the subject.'
45. John Scoble, *Hill Coolies: A brief Exposure of the Deplorable Condition of the Hill Coolies in British Guiana and Mauritius—and of the Nefarious Means by which they were Induced to Resort to these Colonies* (Harvey and Darton, London, 1840).
46. In the face of growing pressure from the abolitionists in London, hostility from the Governor (Sir James Carmichael Smyth) in Demerara, and with the British Government considering whether to stop immigration of Indian labourers altogether, John Gladstone felt that the best way to satisfy the Secretary of State and prevent such a decision was to send him copies of his instructions to Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co., together with the entire correspondence, and with permission to publish: see, Checkland, op. cit., p. 323. The correspondence was eventually published as House of Commons No. 232 of 22 March 1838: see, (1838) 13 *Colonial Papers Parliamentary* No. 2. Included in Appendix B is the covering letter from Gladstone to Lord Glenelg, along with his initial letter of 4 January 1836 to Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co. and the reply to it of 6 June 1836 from Calcutta.
47. For a broader treatment of such convergences see, S.S. Ramphal, *'Roots and Reminders: reflections on Slavery, Indenture and, Apartheid—and some personal conjunctures'*, op. cit.

48. Appendix B.
49. *Liverpool Registry Book of Shipping*, 1842, entry No. 20 (built at Shields, 1834); Gladstone gave its measurements as 334 tons, see his letter of 10 March 1837, *supra*, n. 44. The *Whitby* was a three-masted sailing ship (contra Light's despatch of 5 September 1839, which suggests it was a 'barque', *supra*, n. 2) of 347 tons, built at Whitby in 1837; see *Lloyds Register of Shipping*, 1838, entry No. 140.
50. (1838) 13 *Colonial Papers Parliamentary*, House of Commons No. 180, 2 March 1838, *British Guiana and Mauritius*, p. 23. And see, for example, J.W. Boddam-Whetham, *Roraima and British Guiana* (Hurst and Blackett, London, 1879), p. 129: "Demerara and swizzles are inseparably connected in my mind.... The exact time for indulging in a swizzle has not been clearly defined but as a general rule in Demerara it is accepted whenever offered. It is taken in the morning to ward off the effect of chill, before breakfast to give a tone to the system, in the middle of the day to fortify against the heat, in the afternoon as a suitable finale to luncheon, and again as a stimulant to euchre, and a solace for your losses. Before dinner it acts as an appetizer, and it is said that when taken before going to bed it assists slumber."
51. (1838) 13 *Colonial Papers Parliamentary*, House of Commons No. 1980, *op. cit.*, at p. 3.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
53. *Ibid.*, pp. 14, 21 (Order in Council of 1 March 1837).
54. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
55. *Ibid.*, pp. 25-6.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

58. (1838) 13 *Colonial Papers Parliamentary*, House of Commons No. 232, 22 March 1838, p. 5.
59. Ibid.
60. Scoble, op. cit., p. 7.
61. Ibid.
62. Dr. Basdeo Mangru, *Benevolent Neutrality: Indian Government Policy and Labour Migration to British Guiana 1854-1884* (Hansib, London, 1987), p. 234.
63. *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, Third Series Vol. 40 (16 January to 20 February 1823), 29 January 1838, 597.
64. In a despatch of 15 February 1840 to Governor Light, Lord John Russell, in refusing to sanction an Ordinance of the Court of Policy authorising £400,000 to be raised for immigration purposes gave as the Government's reasons: "Admitting that the mortality of the Hill coolies first sent may have been accidental, I am not prepared to encounter the responsibility of a measure which may lead to a dead loss of life on the one hand, or, on the other, to a new system of slavery". He went on to argue that the relative cheapness of labour in India favoured the growth of sugar there: "the plantation will be found for the labourer and not the labourer for the plantation." Adamson, op. cit., p. 43.
65. *Kala Pani*: a term originally used for the penal settlement of Port Blair on the Andaman Islands in the Bay of Bengal. Initially, 'life imprisonment' convicts were sent there; later the term came to be used to signify a 'land of no return'.
66. Arthur Seymour, 'First of August' in *Selected Poems of A.J. Seymour* (Georgetown, 1983), p. 12.
67. Hugh Tinker, *A New System of Slavery. The Export of Indian Labour Overseas 1830-1920* (Oxford University Press for the Institute of Race Relations, London, 1974), p. 60.

68. Rodney, op. cit., pp. 36-39.
69. Tinker, *A New System of Slavery*, op. cit., p. 105.
70. *Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Enquire into the Treatment of Immigrants in British Guiana*, 1871 (Cmd. 393), cited in Tinker, *A New System of Slavery*, op. cit., p. 224.
71. George Lamming in Foreword to Walter Rodney, *A History of the Guyanese Working People 1881-1905* (John Hopkins University Press, London, 1981), p. xxii.
72. Ibid., p. 39.
73. Appendix B.
74. Scoble, op. cit., p. 16.
75. Ibid., p. 19.
76. Ibid., p. 20.
77. Checkland, op. cit., pp. 325-6.
78. Shannon, op. cit., p. 99.
79. Checkland, op. cit., p. 368.
80. Susan Sanders (ed.) Unfinished Memoirs of J.I. Ramphal, (unpublished typescript). See, also, Hugh Tinker, *The Ordeal of Love*, pp. 235 and 243 citing C.F. Andrews, *An Interim Statement Concerning East Indian Conditions in British Guiana* (Colonial Office, File 111/689/75141 of 1930).
81. Tinker, *A New System of Slavery*, op. cit., p. 381. See, also, C.F. Andrews, *India and the Pacific* (Allen and Unwin, London, 1937), cited in Tinker, *The Ordeal of Love*, op. cit., p. 285.
82. Martin Carter, 'I come from the nigger yard' in *Poems of Resistance from Guyana*, (Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1954), p. 38.

83. For a discussion of this aspect of the indenture system, see Tinker, *A New System of Slavery*, op. cit., pp. 52-60.
84. *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates* Third Series, Vol. 41 (22 February to 28 March 1838), 6 March 1838, 427.

APPENDIX (A)

John Gladstone's slave compensation

British Guiana Compensation

Class.	Number.	Rate.	Amount of Comp.
1. Head People	63	£ 87. 3. 0 1/4	£ 5506. 7. 11 1/4
2. Tradesmen	42	£ 68. 8. 0 1/2	£ 2872. 17. 9.
3. Inf. Tradesmen	12	£ 38. 0. 1/4	£ 456. 0. 3.
4. Field Labourers	756	£ 64. 8. 4 3/4	£ 48741. 27. 3.
5. Inf. ditto	250	£ 36. 0. 5.	£ 9005. 4. 2.
Children	139	£ 19. 0. 0.	£ 2641. 0. 0.
Invalids &c.	47	£ 11. 8. 0.	535. 16. 0.
	<u>1309.</u>		<u>£ 69718. 13. 4 1/4</u>

  

$\begin{array}{r} \text{£ } 53. 5. 2 \frac{1}{2} \\ 58. 12 \\ \hline \text{£ } 2. 83 \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 1309) 69718 \text{ (53£} \\ \underline{6545} \\ 4268 \\ \underline{392} \\ \text{£ } 341 \\ \underline{5820} \\ 13 \\ \hline 1309) 68853 \text{ (55£} \\ \underline{6545} \\ 238 \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 637 \\ \underline{288} \\ 3456 \\ \underline{6} \\ 1309) 3460 \text{ (2 1/2£ nearly} \\ \underline{2618} \\ 842 \\ \underline{1368} \end{array}$
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Per caput £ 53. 5. 2 1/2 nearly.

William Gladstone's calculation of his father's slave compensation from Guiana

**Note :** To the above would be added some £15,000 as Gladstone's share of the compensation for slaves he 'owned' jointly with Robertson Gladstone and George Grant.

**APPENDIX (B)**

**Correspondence on Indian Indenture**

COPY of a LETTER from JOHN GLADSTONE ESQUIRE to  
LORD GLENELG—With Enclosures  
(as recorded in Colonial Papers: Parliamentary—1838)

Carlton Gardens, 28th February 1838

My Lord,

Agreeably to what passed Yesterday, when we had the Honour of an Interview with your Lordship, I now beg to enclose for your Perusal Copies of the Instructions which I transmitted to my Correspondents at Calcutta, authorizing them to provide and engage a limited Number of Hill Coolies, who were disposed to emigrate as free Labourers to British Guiana, for the Purpose of being employed on our Plantations there, under the Order in Council dated the 12th July last, together with their Letter which replied to the first of mine. I have not yet heard of the Ship's Arrival there on board of which they were intended to embark, but expect to do so daily. As the Instructions given by Messrs. Davidson, Barkley, and Co., and Mr. Colville, were in all respects similar to mine, we think it unnecessary to trouble your Lordship with Copies of them, but we enclose one of a Letter received by them from our Correspondents at Calcutta. Should it be your Lordship's Wish to have these Papers laid upon the Table of the House of Lords, and printed for the Use of their Lordships, it is not only agreeable to us that this should be done, but our Hope that it will be adopted. To these Papers we solicit your Lordship's Attention as connected with a Measure which we consider to be one of vital Importance to the West India Colonies; believing, as we do, that unless such or other Means are adopted to promote the Emigration of free Labourers to be employed in their future Cultivation, their productive Advantages are likely to be greatly diminished if not wholly lost to the Mother Country, particularly in the Colonies of Jamaica and British Guiana, from the Period in 1840, when the Negro Apprenticeship will terminate. It is a

Subject in which we are deeply interested as Planters and Merchants. We speak advisedly; and beg to invite further Enquiry, if desired, that Evidence might be produced at their Lordships Bar in support of these Statements.

I have the Honour to be,

on behalf of Messrs. Davidson, Barkley, and Co.,  
Mr. Colville and myself,  
My Lord, yours, &c.

(signed) JOHN GLADSTONE.

To the Lord Glenelg,  
&c. &c. &c.

(Enclosures of Mr. Gladstone's Letter 28th February, 1838.)

- (1) -

COPY of a LETTER from JOHN GLADSTONE Esquire to  
Messrs. GILLANDERS, ARBUTHNOT, and Co.

Liverpool, 4th January 1836.

Dear Sirs,

I met with an Accident here about Three Weeks ago, which confined me to the House, from which I am now recovering, and hope in a few Days to be able to return to Edinburgh; this will account to you for using my Son's Pen for writing in place of my own.

I observe by a Letter which he received a few Days ago from Mr. Arbuthnot, that he was sending a considerable Number of a certain Class of Bengalees, to be employed as Labourers, to the Mauritius.

You will probably be aware that we are very particularly situated with our Negro Apprentices in the West Indies, and that it is a Matter of Doubt and Uncertainty how far they may be induced to continue their Services on the Plantations after their Apprenticeship expires in 1840. This to us is a Subject of great Moment and deep Interest in the Colonies of Demerara and Jamaica. We are therefore most desirous to obtain and introduce Labourers from other Quarters, and particularly from Climates something similar in their Nature. Our Plantation Labour in the Field is very light; much of it, particularly in Demerara, is done by Task Work, which for the Day is usually completed by Two o'clock in the Afternoon, giving to the People all the rest of the Day to themselves. They are furnished with comfortable Dwellings and Abundance of Food; Plantains, the Produce of the Colony, being the most common, and preferred generally by them, but they have also occasionally Rice, Indian Corn Meal, Ships Biscuits, and a regular Supply of Salt Cod-fish, as well as the Power of fishing for themselves in the Trenches. They have likewise an annual Allowance of Clothing sufficient and suitable for the Climate; there are Schools on each Estate for the Education of the Children, and the Instruction of their Parents in the Knowledge of their Religious Duties. Their Houses are comfortable, and it may be fairly said they pass their Time agreeably and happily. Marriages are encouraged, and when improper Conduct on the Part of the People takes place there are public Stipendiary Magistrates, who take cognizance of such, and judge between them and their Employers. They have regular Medical Attendance whenever they are indisposed, at the Expense of their Employers. I have been particular in describing the present Situation and Occupation of our People, to which I ought to add, that their Employment in the Field is clearing the Land with the Hoe and, where required, planting fresh Canes. In the Works a Portion are occupied in making Sugar and in the Distilleries, in which they relieve each other, which makes their Labour light. It is of great Importance to us to endeavour to provide a Portion of other Labourers whom we might use as a Set-off, and, when the Time for it comes, makes us, as far as it is possible, independent of our Negro Population; and it has occurred to us that a moderate Number of Bengalees, such as you were sending to the Isle of France, might be very suitable for our Purpose; and

on this Subject I am now desirous to obtain all the Information you can possibly give me. The Number I should think of taking and sending by One Vessel direct from Calcutta to Demerara would be about 100; they ought to be young, active, able-bodied People. It would be desirable that a Portion of them, at least One Half, should be married, and their Wives disposed to work in the Field as well as they themselves. We should require to bind them for a Period not less than Five years or more than Seven Years. They would be provided with comfortable Dwellings, Food, and Medical Attendance; they would also, if required, be provided with Clothing, or Wages to provide themselves, which, for the able-bodied, would not exceed Four Dollars per Month, and in that Proportion for Females and their Children as they grow up; a free Passage would be given to them to Demerara, where they would be divided, and Twenty to Thirty placed on One Plantation. I do not know whether the Class referred to are likely to be of a particular Caste, and under the Influence of certain Religious Feelings, and also restricted to any particular Kind of Food; if so, we must endeavour to provide for them accordingly. You will particularly oblige me by giving me, on Receipt, all the Information you possibly can on this interesting Subject, for should it be of an encouraging Character I should immediately engage for One of our Ships to go to Calcutta, and take a limited Number to Demerara, and from thence return here. On all other Subjects I refer you to Letters from the House; and always am,

Dear Sirs,  
Yours truly,

JOHN GLADSTONE.

Since writing so far it has occurred to me, that in bringing Lascars from India Security is required that they shall be returned to the Country. I do not know whether this would extend to any particular Caste being brought to the West Indies, or whether it is applicable in the Instance you have mentioned of those sent to the Mauritius. Several Importations from the Madeiras and Azores have taken place into Demerara, and so far with good Effects on the Minds of the Blacks.

- (2) -

COPY of LETTER from Messrs. GILLANDERS,  
ARBUTHNOT, and Co. to JOHN GLADSTONE Esquire

Calcutta, 6th June 1836.

Dear Sir,

We beg to acknowledge your Letter of the 4th January, referring to your Desire to procure Natives from this part of the World to work upon your Estates in the West Indies, and in some Degree render you independent of the Negro Population at the Termination of the present System; and it is with Regret we find that at the Time the Letter under Reply was written you were suffering from an Accident, the Effects of which, however, we hope ere this are entirely gone.

Within the last Two Years upwards of Two thousand Natives have been sent from this to the Mauritius by several Parties here under Contracts of Engagement for Five Years. The Contracts, we believe, are all of a similar Nature; and we enclose Copy of one, under which we have sent 700 or 800 Men to the Mauritius; and we are not aware that any greater Difficulty would present itself in sending Men to the West Indies, the Natives being perfectly ignorant of the Place they agree to go to, or the Length of the Voyage they are undertaking. The Tribe that is found to suit best in the Mauritius is from the Hills to the North of Calcutta, and the Men of which are all well-limbed and active, without Prejudices of any Kind, and hardly any Ideas beyond those of supplying the Wants of Nature, arising it would appear, however, more from Want of Opportunity than from any natural Deficiency, of which there is no Indication in their Countenance, which is often one of Intelligence. They are also very docile and easily managed, and appear to have no local Ties, nor any Objection to leave their Country.

In the event of your determining to introduce these People in the West Indies and sending a Ship for them, a Contract such as the one enclosed, if approved of, or modified or enlarged as you may think necessary, may be entered into with any Number of Men you would wish us to procure, and this Contract upon landing the Men in the West Indies and being registered at the Police Office, would we conclude give your Managers sufficient

Power to insist upon their performing any reasonable Task they may be set to. Such has been the Case in the Mauritius, and in one or two Instances where the Men have been idle or lazy, they have been punished by the competent Authority. It would perhaps avoid After-discussion were the Currency in which the Men will be paid, and its equivalent Value with the Rupee, stated in the Contract. The best Period for procuring and shipping the Men is, in our cold Season, between the Months of November and April, and the Instruction to procure the Men should precede the Ship about Two Months, to give Time to collect them; we should of course not be able to find a Cargo for the Ship, but some morghy Rice might be sent, which with a little Care would keep for Three Years.

The Security taken by Government here upon taking Natives to England is to protect the East India Company from Loss in the event of Natives being left in England without the Means of Subsistence or of finding their Way back, in which Case the Company are bound to provide for them until a Passage to India can be procured, but no Guarantee is required upon sending Men elsewhere; as however the Colonial Government will probably make the Importer enter into an Agreement that these Men shall be no Burden to the Colony, a Provision is made in the Contract to withhold so much of their Allowances as will pay their Passage back, should it be found necessary to discharge them before their Period of Service has expired.

We fear we should not find so many as Half of the Number provided with Wives; as, however, our Friends at the Isle of France have always discouraged the Men being so accompanied, we are not very well able to say how far the Women might be induced to go.

Our Letters from the Isle of France speak very favourably of the Men hitherto sent, many of whom our Friends write to us have their Task completed by Two o'clock, and go home, leaving the Negroes in the Field.

We are not aware that we can say any more on this Subject, unless we add, that in inducing these Men to leave their Country, we firmly believe we are breaking no Ties of Kindred, or in any way acting a cruel Part.

The Hill Tribes, known by the Name of Dhangurs, are looked down upon by the more cunning Natives of the Plains, and they

are always spoken of as more akin to the Monkey than the Man. They have no Religion, no Education, and in their present State, no Wants beyond Eating, Drinking, and Sleeping; and to procure which they are willing to labour. In sending Men to such a Distance, it would of course be necessary to be more particular in selecting them, and some little Expense would be incurred, as also some Trouble; but to aid any Object of Interest to you, we should willingly give our best Exertions in any Manner likely to be of Service.

We are,  
Dear Sir,  
Yours very faithfully,

GILLANDERS, ARBUTHNOT, and Co.

P.S.—You will observe, upon reading over the Form of our Contract, that it is registered in our Police Office, and authenticated by One of the Magistrates, in whose Presence the Document is signed, after the Nature of it has been explained to the Parties in their own Language.

(Signed)      G., A., & Co.

COPY FORM OF CONTRACT alluded to in preceding Letter.

Between the undersigned \_\_\_\_\_ acting on behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ of Mauritius, and the Natives whose Names are hereunto affixed, the following Agreement has been entered into by the several Parties binding themselves to the Observance of the Conditions thereof:

1st. The Natives agree to proceed to the Isle of France, to work as Labourers there, upon a Sugar Estate the Property of \_\_\_\_\_ and to remain there, if required, for the Time of Five Years.

2dly. The Passage of the Natives to the Mauritius shall be paid by \_\_\_\_\_ who shall also provide a Passage again to this Country, at the End of Five Years, for each Native who may then wish to return; but if any Individual, from any Cause, should be discharged or leave the Employment of \_\_\_\_\_ before the Expiration of Five Years, such Individual shall have no Claim on him for a Passage.

3dly. The Pay of the Natives shall be fixed at the Rate of Five Rupees per Month for each Man. The Labour required from them will be that of digging Holes, weeding Canes, working in the Sugar-house, repairing Roads and Bridges, or otherwise making themselves useful, according to their Ability, as \_\_\_\_\_ may order them; the Quantity of daily Labour required from each to be fixed by the Manager of the Property; the Pay of One Sirdar shall be fixed at Seven Rupees per Month, and that of One Mate Six Rupees, and Boys at Three Rupees per Month.

4thly. As \_\_\_\_\_ must be responsible to Government that the Natives shall not be a Burden to the Colony, in the event of their being discharged or leaving their Employments, One Rupee per Month shall be retained from the Pay of each Individual, until there shall be a sufficient Sum to provide a Passage for each to Calcutta; should no such Contingency take place, the Money shall be restored at the End of Five Years.

5thly. In addition to the Pay as above fixed, Food and Clothing shall be supplied to each as follows—

Fourteen Chettacks of Rice (about 2 lbs.), Two Ditto of Dhall, Two Ounces of Salt, and some Oil and Tamarind, daily; and annually for each, Clothing as follows; Two Dhooties, Two Blankets, One Jacket, and One Cap.

6thly. Each Individual shall receive Six Months Pay in advance, for which he shall give an Acknowledgement here; their Pay to commence from the Date of their going on board the Ship.

7thly. The Nature of this Agreement (which shall be registered at the Police) is such, that each Native is individually responsible for the Observance of its Conditions by every one whose Mark it bears; and it is further agreed, that while in Hospital from Sickness or any other Cause, the Pay is stopped during such Time.