

COLONIAL OFFICE POLICY TOWARDS THE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF
THE LEEWARD AND WINDWARD ISLANDS, BARBADOS,
AND BRITISH GUIANA 1897-1921

MICHAEL JOHN BRECKIN
ROYAL HOLLOWAY COLLEGE

Thesis submitted for the Degree of Ph.D.



ProQuest Number: 10097442

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 10097442

Published by ProQuest LLC(2016). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

Abstract

The West India Royal Commission of 1897 advanced a number of recommendations intended to lift the West Indies out of their depressed condition and to shape their future economic development. This thesis examines the efforts made to implement those recommendations and the extent to which they influenced economic progress in the colonies of Barbados, British Guiana, the Windward and Leeward Islands. Particular attention is directed towards the recommendation that the labouring populations be encouraged to settle on the land as small proprietors. This proposal provided for the welfare of the largely Negro populations of the colonies, but it also threatened to upset the plantation-dominated nature of the agricultural economy. The Royal Commission believed that peasant land ownership could be extended only through the introduction of government schemes of land settlement. The considerations which underlay the success or failure of such schemes and of peasant proprietorship in general constitute the central theme of the thesis. Other aspects of the economy which are examined affected planter and peasant alike. Freight connections, choice of crops, methods of cultivation, availability of markets, and access to expert advice were considerations which determined the success of both plantation and peasant proprietary.

The Colonial Office role in the development of these colonies was limited and for the most part initiative rested with the colonies themselves. Questions of crop selection, or of the location for a settlement scheme, could only be decided by local experts. Furthermore, Joseph Chamberlain, the most influential Colonial Secretary of the period, as far as the West Indies were concerned, clearly believed in delegating responsibility to the local official. Nevertheless, when appropriate, the Colonial Office did play an active part. Its influence over shipping contracts was considerable, whilst the survival of the valuable Imperial Department of Agriculture, established in consequence of a recommendation of the Royal Commission, was entirely due to Colonial Office determination in the face of Treasury resistance.

CONTENTS

	<i>Abstract</i>	1
	INTRODUCTION	2
1	IMPERIAL POLICY TOWARDS THE SUGAR INDUSTRY	10
2	THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVE INDUSTRIES - A SURVEY	35
3	LAND SETTLEMENT: ST. VINCENT AND UNION ISLAND	51
4	LAND SETTLEMENT: ST. LUCIA AND CARRIACOU	77
5	LAND SETTLEMENT: BARBADOS, THE LEEWARD ISLANDS AND BRITISH GUIANA	97
6	EFFORTS IN AID OF PEASANT AGRICULTURE: THE WINDWARD ISLANDS	122
7	EFFORTS IN AID OF PEASANT AGRICULTURE: BARBADOS, THE LEEWARD ISLANDS AND BRITISH GUIANA	152
8	COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT: (1) SYSTEMS OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION	177
9	COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT: (2) INTER-ISLAND AND OCEANIC	212
10	WEST INDIAN MARKETS	245
11	AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION	281
12	CONCLUSION	300
	<i>Appendices</i>	
A	MAPS ILLUSTRATING LAND SETTLEMENT IN ST. VINCENT AND CARRIACOU	341
B	SALES OF LAND IN BRITISH GUIANA UNDER THE CROWN LAND REGULATIONS OF 1898	344
C	MAPS OF THE ISLANDS INDICATING THE ROAD SYSTEMS. MAP OF BRITISH GUIANA INDICATING RAILWAY AND STEAMSHIP COMMUNICATION	345
D	WEST INDIAN STEAMSHIP CONTRACTS	353
E	SUGAR PURCHASED BY THE ROYAL COMMISSION FOR THE SUGAR SUPPLY	354
	<i>Bibliography</i>	356

INTRODUCTION

During the late nineteenth century sugar provided, as it had for many years, the only significant industry in most of Britain's West Indian Colonies. As a cultivation the sugar cane was ideally suited to the Caribbean climate and grew well not only in the British colonies but also elsewhere, notably in Cuba and Puerto Rico. An important characteristic of cane cultivation was its labour intensive nature, requiring as it did more labourers to the acre than any comparable industry. This led to some difficulties. In certain colonies it was not easy to maintain a sufficient population to work the sugar estates efficiently; British Guiana suffered particularly in this respect, and to a lesser extent so did Antigua. Where an adequate population was maintained, the threat of widespread unemployment was always present. Even periods of mild depression caused substantial loss of employment with consequent distress among the labouring population and the possibility of unrest. Nor were periods of such depression in the sugar industry particularly unusual. Conservatism in production methods, particularly in respect of soil nutrition and cane varieties, had produced a tendency towards a gradual but steady fall in yield. In such circumstances the crop was especially vulnerable to cane disease which periodically attacked all the colonies causing sudden falls in output. In addition the different colonies had their own individual problems. The Windwards and Leewards, for example, were subject to hurricanes which caused floods and consequent crop destruction. One such hurricane struck Antigua in 1894, devastating the sugar crop. The provision of adequate drainage and sea defences also presented a problem in British Guiana, where flooding was caused not by hurricanes but by the low lying nature of the coastal sugar lands.

The cultivation of sugar was conducted on large estates or plantations, originally worked by slaves. Following emancipation, the free Negro population of the colonies continued to provide the principal labour force, though in some instances, notably in British Guiana, they were supplemented by indentured East Indian labourers, known as coolies. The dominance of the sugar industry gave the planters a position of great influence. The general welfare of the sugar colonies was to a considerable extent dependent on their attitudes and decisions. They were the strongest interest in most of the governments, and could frequently rely on the governors' support. The political unity of the planters was enhanced during the latter part of the nineteenth century, by the consolidation of estates. The tendency over some years had been towards the reduction in numbers and increase in the size of estates. This had led to an improvement in efficiency, and by the late nineteenth century it was no longer possible for the small farmer to compete against the large estates even in the production of the poorer muscovado(1) sugars. In fact the prospects for the European emigrating to the British West Indies were covered in considerable detail in the pamphlets issued by the Emigration Information Office in London; the one for the year 1896, for example, encourages settlement in the Windward Islands, particularly St. Lucia, but it emphasises that the prospects rested upon small-scale production of cacao, coffee, and other minor products for the United States' market. It is clear that sugar cultivation was entirely in the hands of large plantations.

As far as the labouring population was concerned, emancipation had had

1. Muscovado. Simplest form of soft raw sugar produced for many years in the West Indies. The sugar was obtained by evaporation and draining off the molasses after boiling in an open kettle. Factory crystals, which steadily increased in popularity with refiners at the expense of muscovado, were produced by the vacuum pan process. Hard crystals of sugar were encouraged to form either by cooling the sealed vessels after boiling, or by the introduction of fine sugar grains.

remarkably little effect. Economically the planters continued to dominate the lives of the freedmen, just as they had the slaves, by providing the only employment. Socially, though the fact of colour remained to distinguish the white planter from the black labourer, an element in the planter's supremacy had disappeared and he reacted by keeping the Negro labourer at an even greater distance than he had the slave. The gap between white and black, wide in economic, social, cultural and political terms, was maintained with determination by the European element. As intended, the gap was so wide that few Negroes could cross it. Any who did so without being pulled back by their fellows were accepted by the white community with sufficient enthusiasm to discourage them from returning to assist their brethren. Perhaps the most damaging feature of the situation was its apparent harmony. The two societies came into contact only in the economic sphere and here the planter supremacy was so complete that to outward appearances, contentment reigned on all sides. Only occasional ripples disturbed the calm surface, as when investigations after the Jamaican crisis of 1865 showed how blatantly the Negro could be exploited and how powerless he was to bring such abuse to light.

It was against this economic and social background that during the late nineteenth century, the West Indies found themselves confronted by new and formidable economic pressures. A depression which occurred in the mid eighties proved to be one of the most severe that the colonies had experienced. The planters attributed it entirely to the unfair competition of European beet sugar. Although the production of sugar from beet was more costly than from cane, modern production methods in Europe were threatening this advantage. Much more serious, however, were the export bounties offered by most European governments to their sugar producers in order to encourage output. Understandably

these bounties were the subject of continuous criticism from West Indian interests. During the last decade of the nineteenth century the situation in the West Indian colonies deteriorated considerably. A bounty war in Europe led to a very substantial increase in the level of bounties and to consequent over-production. In August 1894 the United States government passed a new tariff bill which terminated the existing reciprocity arrangement with the British West Indies. Colonial sugar entering the United States became dutiable and the West Indies lost their advantage in the best and most conveniently located market. At the same time a new and highly virulent strain of cane disease appeared among the crops.(1) The leading sugar colonies protested strongly against America's unilateral action, though they doubtless recognised that there was little that the Imperial Government could do. The same was not true of bounties, however, and the Colonial Office came under heavy pressure to take action against them. Although the West Indian case was tenaciously pressed both in the colonies and in Britain by the West Indian Committee(2), it met with little response while Lord Ripon remained Colonial Secretary.

The appearance of Joseph Chamberlain at the Colonial Office opened the door to a change of policy, though this was not at once apparent. However, Chamberlain did immediately agree to meet a deputation from the West India Committee to discuss bounties, an interview which Ripon had repeatedly refused. At this meeting, in November 1895, Chamberlain's attitude was sympathetic towards the sugar industry, but he maintained

1. Kew provided comprehensive advice for combating this outbreak, but consistent with their reputation for conservatism, the planters declined to act upon it
2. Established about 1750, the West India Committee was an association of individuals and companies interested in the West Indies, its object was to promote trade, industry and investment in the Caribbean. During the bounty crisis and at other times, the Committee acted in the capacity of United Kingdom spokesman for the planter interest

the previous government's policy by rejecting the possibility of countervailing duties. At this time Chamberlain believed that the best and perhaps the only practical way of removing bounties was to impress on foreign governments that their grants were in fact a subsidy to the British consumer. In Autumn 1896, faced with a further increase in bounties, Chamberlain was led to reconsider the position. It was now apparent that the bounty question was unlikely to be resolved through the spontaneous rejection of the system by the principal countries involved. Meanwhile the West Indian situation grew worse. The first concern of the Colonial Office rested with the peasant populations of the colonies. Particular concern existed in the case of the more congested colonies, such as Barbados. Consequently Chamberlain adopted a suggestion made some time previously by Arthur Pearson, an official in the West India Department, and requested a commission of enquiry in order to ascertain the exact conditions of the West Indies.

The West India Royal Commission of 1897 was chaired by General Sir Henry Norman, and included Sir Edward Grey and Sir David Barbour as Commissioners, Dr. Daniel Morris as scientific adviser and Sidney Olivier as secretary. It reported in August 1897, and the weight of evidence collected indicates a more thorough investigation than the duration of its enquiries would suggest.(1) The principal recommendations included the removal of bounties, though the Commissioners disagreed as to whether countervailing duties should be imposed to achieve this; improved communications and the adoption of crops other than sugar. Most prominent, however, was the recommendation intended to

1. The Commissioners spent seven days in Barbados, six in British Guiana and four in St. Vincent. Individual members of the Commission made short visits to other colonies, but not usually of more than one or two days duration.

safeguard the welfare of the labouring populations. The Commissioners proposed the settlement of the labourers on the land as small peasant proprietors and suggested that this might be facilitated through schemes of land settlement, administered and financed by the colonial governments. The Commissioners' views were influenced by the strong demand for land which they encountered amongst the peasantry. Less consideration appears to have been directed towards questions such as the suitability of the peasantry for the role of independent small proprietors; the extent and nature of the guidance and assistance which they would require; or the manner in which the survival of sugar might influence the progress of peasant settlement. The implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission and their effect on the development of the colonies is the subject of this thesis. Special attention has been directed towards the recommendation for peasant settlement, particularly by means of government settlement schemes. Following the Report, Imperial funds were obtained to assist the sugar industry, to improve steamship communication, to facilitate peasant settlement and road improvement in St. Vincent and Dominica, and to establish and maintain an Imperial Department of Tropical Agriculture. In addition the floating debts of the smaller islands were paid off, and until 1910 various islands in the Leeward and Windward colonies annually received grants to enable them to meet their ordinary expenditure.

In certain fields, notably that of steamship communication, the Imperial Government was directly involved and its role was immediately apparent, but in most cases this is not so. Particularly with regard to peasant settlement, initiative depended upon the attitude of the local administrations and the recommendations of the Imperial Department of Agriculture and for this reason much of the original correspondence between the Colonial Office and the colonies throws only limited light

on what was achieved. A much more satisfactory source for indicating the courses of action pursued are the annual reports of the Imperial Department of Agriculture's botanic stations in each island, and the collected administration reports of the colonies. These latter reports provide, for example, details of construction work by the colonial engineers' departments which facilitate assessments of internal communication; and from the reports of the Crown Lands departments, figures for the actual sale of land to the peasantry can be calculated. Since only in St. Vincent and Dominica were Imperial funds applied to road building or peasant settlement, and even in these cases initiative remained with the local administrations, the value of these reports is understandable. Use has also been made of the Imperial Department of Agriculture's quarterly journal, *The West India Bulletin*. Unlike the numerous pamphlets and the weekly *Agricultural News*, this journal was not technical and provides an indication of the progress made in agricultural matters in the various colonies. *The West India Bulletin* also contains detailed reports of the annual agricultural conferences. These conferences, to which reference is occasionally made in this thesis, provided an opportunity for discussion on aspects of agriculture and education among officials of the colonial governments, officers of the Imperial Department of Agriculture, and teachers. The conferences were held each year in a different colony and were usually chaired by the Imperial Commissioner for Agriculture. Such were the means by which the Imperial Department of Agriculture set about the task of promoting contact and understanding between the various groups upon whom the future of the West Indian colonies depended.

CHAPTER ONE

IMPERIAL POLICY TOWARDS THE SUGAR INDUSTRY

When Joseph Chamberlain appointed the Royal Commission of 1897 to inquire into the condition of the West Indies, the situation in these predominantly sugar-producing colonies was serious. Market prices for sugar throughout the world were low, due to a decline in costs and consequent over-production. The West Indian cane sugar produce, in particular, was faced with very difficult competition from bounty-fed beet sugar. Nevertheless, superficially, there was little reason to suppose that the West Indies would not survive this depression as they had the previous crisis between 1884 and 1887. At the root of the West Indian problem was the almost total dependence of the colonies on a single cultivation which was subject to sharp fluctuations in price; but from the viewpoint of the sugar planter the cause of the successive crises was the fierce competition of European beet-producing countries one with another. This competition took the form of ever-increasing bounties offered by European governments to their beet sugar exporters, contributing to the over-production and the fall in price. It was against these bounties that the main attack of the sugar planter was directed.

Strongly committed to the principles of free trade, the Imperial Government from the 1880s onward was disinclined to take retaliatory action against European beet sugar. This attitude was strengthened by the fact that the United Kingdom consumer was the greatest beneficiary under the bounty system. The alternative possibility of giving bounties to West Indian sugar exporters was equally unacceptable to the Imperial Government since it would have created an unwelcome

precedent, and exposed the West Indies to retaliatory action in neutral markets such as the United States. The maintenance of this attitude by the Imperial Government, however, did occasionally necessitate special provisions for the West Indian sugar industry if cultivation were to continue. In March 1895, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Ripon, remitted taxation on sugar estates in British Guiana, Trinidad, and the Leewards, as an exceptional measure for one year(1). More decisive action in respect of bounties was not taken despite numerous memorials from the colonies requesting such assistance(2). A European conference had been held in 1888 to examine the possibility of the universal abolition of bounties, but the resulting convention was never implemented, largely because the United Kingdom was not prepared to penalise bounty-fed sugar entering its markets. Thereafter the Foreign Office showed no inclination to enter further negotiations despite a growing feeling at the Colonial Office that greater efforts should be made(3).

In June 1895, Joseph Chamberlain took office as Secretary of State for the Colonies. Despite his acknowledged interest in colonial development and the wide business experience which he brought to his office, colonial policy in respect of the West Indian sugar industry showed little change. In fact Chamberlain was less inclined than Ripon to sanction government advances or similar assistance to planters

1. 111/473/19162 Ripon to Lees, 20 Nov. 1894
318/286/22837 Minutes by Joseph Chamberlain upon the situation in the West Indies 5 Nov. 1896
2. For example, 328/286/22847 West India Committee printed circular dated October 1896
28/238/17450 Hunte to Chamberlain, 20 Sept. 1895
111/488/25415 Petition from Colony of British Guiana to House of Commons dated November 1896
152/195/5068 Fleming to Ripon, 6 Mar. 1895
3. 111/482/16232 Foreign Office to C.O., 12 Sept. 1895
See also minute by Arthur Pearson on this despatch

without the strongest evidence of exceptional necessity. Such necessity, to both Ripon and Chamberlain, meant the threat of widespread unemployment rather than the financial embarrassment of the planter. However, it appears that opinion in the West India Department was becoming more sympathetic to the planters' case before Chamberlain became Secretary of State. In March 1895, Arthur Pearson wrote of the pending increase in bounties that '...circumstances may accrue in commerce as in arms where war is preferable to peace(1). In a similar vein in May, though overruled by Ripon, Edward Wingfield deliberately avoided committing the Imperial Government to a definite pronouncement against countervailing duties(2). These views at the Colonial Office were doubtless reinforced in August 1896 when Austria and Germany almost doubled their already considerable bounties. As a result of this action the credit of the West Indian sugar industry became still more insecure and a fresh wave of memorials reached the Colonial Office. Meanwhile Colonial Office enquiries about the possible development of alternative industries revealed few prospects.

In November 1896, Chamberlain determined on a Royal Commission to examine the condition of the West Indies and to make recommendations for the restitution of prosperity. In recommending the appointment of such a Commission, it is clear that Chamberlain had in mind primarily an investigation into the condition of the sugar industry; perhaps he also hoped for authoritative backing for a policy of securing the abolition of bounties, or of countering their effects by the threat of, or the actual imposition of, countervailing duties(3).

1. 152/195/5068 Minute by A.A.P., 21 Mar. 1895
2. 152/195/7570 Minute by E.W., 2 May 1895
3. 318/286/22837 Minute by J.C., 5 Nov. 1896

The terms of reference of the Commission also included an investigation into the practicability of developing alternative industries but it seems that Chamberlain had little confidence in such a policy, particularly in relation to British Guiana, Barbados, Antigua, and St. Kitts and Nevis(1). The Commissioners were unanimous in their report that a large proportion of the area under sugar cultivation could be profitably maintained if European bounties on beet sugar were abolished, and they urged strongly that to secure such abolition should be the aim of the Imperial Government. Only Sir Henry Norman, the Chairman of the Commission, was prepared, however, to recommend the extreme course of imposing countervailing duties(2). The main weight of the Commission's recommendations centred on the establishment of a peasant proprietary and alternative industries supported by measures such as the setting-up of a department of economic botany for the Leeward and Windward Islands, the encouragement of agricultural education, and the subsidising of steamship lines.

Chamberlain's initial reaction to the Commission's Report was to ignore the recommendations for alternative industries and, apart from recommending the use of Imperial funds to clear off the floating debts of the smaller islands, to centre his policy on securing the abolition of bounties by the imposition, if necessary, of countervailing duties. Chamberlain considered the threat to impose such duties as probably a sufficient negotiating weapon; he was not confident they would be effective if imposed. He argued in the

1. 111/479/15380 Chamberlain to Lees, 7 Sept. 1895
2. Report of West India Royal Commission 1898
C. 8655 Parliamentary Papers - L. Subsequently referred
to as Report of W.I.R.C. 1898

Cabinet that if his policy were rejected he would have no other course but to implement the recommendations of the Commission with regard to alternative industries, in which case his demand on Imperial funds would be very much larger than the £80,000 required to clear off the floating debts of the smaller islands; he regarded the Commission's estimated cost of their proposals of £410,000 over ten years as too low. In short, Chamberlain treated the maintenance, as far as possible, of the sugar industry and the development of other cultivations as alternatives; the Commission had regarded them as complementary policies. He pressed the former policy on the Cabinet, and in particular on the Chancellor of the Exchequer, by the threat of the very large expenditure which the latter policy would involve.

The emphasis which Chamberlain placed on the rehabilitation of the sugar industry reflected his lack of confidence in the policy of developing alternative industries, except possibly gold in British Guiana. He seems to have feared that the establishment of such industries would be costly and slow, and that once established they would be subject to the same dangers of over-production and falling prices and profits. No industry could employ as many labourers as sugar, and in the more heavily populated islands this was an important consideration. The collapse of the sugar industry would thus, in Chamberlain's view, lead to large grants in aid to maintain the administration, to unemployment, and to a possible breakdown of law and order. The sugar industry also ensured the retention of the white and Indian immigrant population whom Chamberlain and his officials regarded as most important for the future of the West Indies⁽¹⁾.

1. Memorandum on the Report of the West India Royal Commission by Charles Lucas, October 1897 884/5 no. 79

Moreover, although Chamberlain in many instances regarded the West Indian planters as unenterprising and too willing to lean on the Government, he also recognised a moral obligation towards them; nor had the Report of the Royal Commission shown them, as a class, to be wasteful or inefficient. He wrote to Norman: 'The British Government is morally bound as a matter of common honesty to take up the case of those interested in the sugar industry'(1). Chamberlain's policy of concentrating on the rehabilitation of the sugar industry had other advantages; notably the political advantage of winning the co-operation of the influential planter class in the West Indies, and dispelling the growing impression among them that a connection with the United States would be more advantageous than that with the United Kingdom.

In choosing to assist the sugar industry by securing the abolition of bounties, Chamberlain was influenced by the cheapness of such a policy and the lack of alternative ways of achieving the same aim. Export bounties, for instance, raised the threat of retaliatory action, and like any form of direct subsidy would assist both efficient and inefficient planters. Aid in the form of loans was limited by the planters' inability to provide adequate security. Moreover, the initiatives would all raise inconvenient precedents for other colonies and industries. On the other hand, the abolition of bounties would not only be cheap but would restore the conditions of fair competition to which Chamberlain was temperamentally committed and would encourage the flow of private capital by removing uncertainty and raising planter morale. Chamberlain attached great importance to the encouragement of private capital into the West Indies as a solution to her problems.

1. 318/290/24079 Chamberlain to Norman, 8 Nov. 1897

The eminent suitability of the colonies for sugar cultivation, reinforced by a very successful past record with the crop, convinced Chamberlain that only sugar was likely to attract private capital on a sufficient scale to reverse the current fortunes of the West Indies. It was probably with these considerations in mind, rather than in terms of markets, that Chamberlain evolved his policy. It is evident that he was aware that even total abolition of bounties would not create a secure market in the United Kingdom for West Indian sugar; and in the important New York market the West Indian producer would lose the benefit of the countervailing duty imposed by that country against bounty-fed beet sugar.

The Cabinet, however, declined to accept Chamberlain's recommendations regarding countervailing duties and he was forced back on the policy recommended by the Royal Commission regarding alternative industries. He continued, however, to place at the forefront of his policy assistance to the sugar industry; in January 1898 he informed the Treasury that Imperial assistance '...must be applied for the most part to the relief and support of the sugar industry'(1). His attempts to re-establish preferential agreement between the West Indies and the United States after the termination of the McKinley tariff were intended primarily to safeguard the Colonies' best sugar market. He also persevered in his efforts to obtain the abolition of bounties. It was Chamberlain's pressure in 1901 that led to the Imperial Government's participation in a new anti-bounty conference in Brussels.

1. The recommendations were made in a memorandum for the Cabinet, 8 Nov. 1897 Cab 37/45, no. 44. For Cabinet's rejection of Chamberlain's policy see 318/291/761 C.O. to Treasury, 24 Jan. 1898

This conference reached final agreement in 1902 and bounties ceased in September 1903. Chamberlain's policy was therefore ultimately realised but for the West Indies the outcome was disappointing. The United Kingdom market was not secured for the West Indian producer. The freight rates alone would probably have been sufficient to prevent this, but in addition the Brussels agreement permitted a sufficient margin between customs and excise duty for the European producers to retain the local markets(1). The attractiveness of the Canadian market for the West Indian exporter was only increased at the expense of that of the United States where the countervailing duties disappeared. In fact between 1902 and 1908, while the Convention retained its original form, West Indian total sugar exports declined from 270,081 tons to 225,745 tons. Chamberlain's hopes that private capitalists could be encouraged to invest in the West Indian sugar industry when fair trade had been established were not realised. This was perhaps the most serious failure of Chamberlain's policy as it is impossible to escape the view that the pressure which he brought to bear for bounty abolition was intended as much to promote investment as for any other purpose. A number of positive advantages also resulted from the Convention. Barbados, for example, was obliged to reduce her import duty on sugar from ten to two shillings per hundred pounds. More significantly, the Imperial and Colonial governments were prohibited under the clause against indirect bounties

1. The margin permitted under the Brussels Convention of 5 March 1902 amounts to £2.10s. per ton. All the contracting states except the United Kingdom and Holland availed themselves of this protection. In March 1916 the West India Committee claimed, unconvincingly, that this was responsible for the continued monopoly of the United Kingdom market by beet sugar producers. See 318/340/11710 West India Committee to C.O. 9 Mar. 1916 and the acknowledgement C.O. to W.I.C. 20 Mar. 1916

from providing guarantees of interest or capital on investments in the sugar industry. In May 1906, the standing committee in Brussels even ruled against government participation in loans at market rates of interest. After 1913 when the United Kingdom withdrew from the Convention, the Imperial Government nevertheless agreed to maintain its provisions, and it was not until 1917 that the colonies were effectively released from the terms of the Convention(1).

Chamberlain probably foresaw the manner in which the Convention would restrict the action of the Imperial Government. During the negotiations the representatives of the European beet-producing countries pressed the United Kingdom for firm undertakings against assisting colonial sugar: against this background Chamberlain telegraphed Lansdowne from Johannesburg: 'I should not object to the Convention breaking down if we were prepared to give the West Indies remission of sugar duty'(2).

In April 1902, following the agreement but prior to the Brussels Convention coming into force, Chamberlain obtained an Imperial grant of £250,000 for the West Indian sugar industry in order to maintain cultivation until bounties ceased. For the distribution of the grant, the colonies were divided into two groups according to the extent of their difficulties. The more hard pressed colonies of Barbados, St. Kitts, Antigua and Montserrat received relief at the rate of thirty shillings per ton. The grant was utilised by the colonial governments in several ways, for example cash payments to planters, loans and remission of taxation. Two interesting aspects of the grant involved assistance to peasant growers. In British Guiana the very capable

1. 318/343/63091 Balfour to C.O., 26 Dec. 1917
152/351/40198 Minutes by G. Grindle, 24 Aug. 1916
Followed conversation with officials of Board of Trade
and Foreign Office
2. 318/308/1571 Chamberlain to Lansdowne, 9 Jan. 1903

Governor, Sir Alexander Swettenham, utilised the Colony's £69,000 grant in the refund acreage tax, and evolved special arrangements to ensure that the cane farmer, who did not pay acreage tax, received a share(1). For a similar purpose Sir Walter Strickland, the Governor of the Leewards, obtained a supplementary grant of £1,000 which was distributed to mill owners in Nevis upon their undertaking to purchase annually for six years a minimum quantity of canes from tenants or peasant farmers(2). The application of the Barbados grant of £80,000 is also worthy of note. Rather than remit or refund taxation as was the most common course, the Barbados Government used the grant as additional security, together with the Island revenues, upon which to raise a loan of up to £200,000. The proceeds of this loan were distributed under the terms of the Plantations-in-Aid Act passed in June 1902(3). This enabled planters to borrow money at low rates of interest with a repayment period of five years. The Act was for one year only but was renewed with Colonial Office sanction in 1903, 1904 and 1905. By 1905, however, the Colonial Office was disturbed, not only by the constant renewal of a measure intended to be temporary, but also by the changes which were proposed in the Act. The original proposal was that planters should obtain loans under the Act only when they were unable to obtain them elsewhere. In fact Sir Frederick Hodgson's first intention was that estates requiring government aid should first come into Chancery(4). This provision was waived on account of strong opposition in the House of Assembly.

1. 111/532/22207 Swettenham to Chamberlain, 20 May 1902
2. 152/279/22422 Strickland to Chamberlain, 18 May 1903
3. 28/257/26836 Hodgson to Chamberlain, 20 June 1902
See also 257/24475 Hodgson to Chamberlain, 4 June 1902
30/36/26836 Barbados Acts no. 24 of 1902 Plantations-in-Aid Act 17 June 1902
4. 28/257/17819 Hodgson to Chamberlain, 14 April 1902
See also 257/19212 Hodgson to Chamberlain, 15 May 1902
257/19212 Chamberlain to Hodgson, 17 May 1902

In 1905, the Colony proposed modification to the Act in order to permit loans whether they could be obtained from other sources or not. In this form Alfred Lyttelton, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, was prepared to sanction only one further year, and even were the old form restored he was opposed to unlimited extension. Consequently in 1906 the acting Governor, Sir Samuel Knaggs, appointed a committee to determine the best means of appropriating the £80,000 Imperial grant. They recommended the continuation of the borrowing arrangements in a more permanent form under the name 'Sugar Industry Agricultural Bank'. Inevitably the board was made up predominantly of planters when this bank came into existence in 1907. However, it answered the principal Colonial Office objection since the Colonial Government's connection with the business of loans ceased(1).

The Imperial grant in support of the sugar industry was not made in an effort artificially to protect the industry in places where it did not pay. St. Vincent, for example, received no grant, though according to the terms under which the sum was distributed, it could have been entitled to as much as £1,200. When the Executive Council of Montserrat complained that its £600 was inadequate to re-establish the sugar industry, W. D. Ellis, in the West India Department, suggested that probably the best course was to allow the industry to die out. The intention was clearly to prevent the abandonment of

1. For details of the early years of this undertaking see *West Indian Bulletin* vol. IX 1908. F.J. Clarke, President of the Barbados Agricultural Society, 'Establishment and Working of the Sugar Industry Agricultural Bank at Barbados'.
30/38/9818 - Barbados Acts. An Act to Establish Sugar Industry Agricultural Bank, 20 Feb. 1907. To which was transferred the Imperial Free grant of £80,000

cultivation in areas where it was expected to survive once bounties had been abolished(1).

An important consideration in the survival of the West Indian sugar industry was the question of modernisation. Among the colonies under consideration only British Guiana and St. Lucia possessed, at the time of the Royal Commission, estates or factories with modern equipment capable of producing hard, or crystal, sugar. The other islands used far more wasteful but inexpensive machinery to produce soft muscovado sugar. There is no question that throughout the period and for some time before the demand for this kind of sugar was declining(2). For this reason there was considerable interest in most of the sugar colonies in the possibility of establishing factories capable of producing crystals. Immediately prior to 1897 the greatest interest had been apparent in Barbados. The Governor, Sir James Hay, was an enthusiastic supporter of the modernisation of the industry. Since, however, the planters of the Island lacked the necessary capital, he recommended to Ripon in September 1894 that the Government assist in the erection of central factories. Despite considerable opposition in the Legislative Council where the planters were not unanimous in their desire for a factory, a Bill authorising a Government loan was passed early in 1895. At the Colonial Office, Wingfield did not like the details of the new Act, nor did he feel repayment of the loan was adequately secured. Chamberlain agreed that land, building and machinery were unacceptable security in a colony

1. 321/211/19715 Minute by Montague Ommanney 20 May 1902.

For policy decision upon which application of Imperial grant was funded see also 318/211/17760 Lewelyn to Chamberlain, 21 April 1902 and associated minutes, in particular those of C.P.L. and J.C.

2. Report of the Royal Commission of Trade Relations between Canada and the West Indies 1910 Cd 5369 Part I, P. P. XI

where all values related to the sugar industry. The Act was held in abeyance but the question of the provision of a central sugar factory was referred to the Royal Commission. The Colonial Office concern at the Barbados proposals was doubtless heightened by the collapse in December 1894 of the St. Lucia central factory(1). Although purchased by a private syndicate this venture, which involved Government funds, was considered by the Colonial Office as a disaster. Their consequent suspicion of such schemes was illustrated more clearly in the case of Antigua, when in August 1895, Fleming suggested the possibility of the Island passing a central factory Bill. Olivier minuted his disapproval and the Bill was abandoned.

In its Report, the Royal Commission advocated the erection of central factories and recommended specifically an Imperially guaranteed loan of £120,000 for a factory in Barbados. The figure appeared inadequate to the Colonial Office and the advice of experts was sought. In the meantime, however, in July 1898 the Treasury agreed to the inclusion in the estimates for relief grants to the West Indies of a nominal figure for central factories, which was later fixed at £10,000(2). In September 1898 Hay forwarded proposals for a factory and associated rolling stock at a cost of £20,000. It was to be erected and controlled by the Colonial Government, and financed by a loan under Imperial guarantee(3). This scheme involved greater risk than that of attempting to interest private capitalists, and negotiations had already commenced between the Colonial Office and the most likely investor, Sir Thomas

1. 321/162/1375 Minutes by E.W., 25 Jan. 1895. Referring to the collapse of the scheme Wingfield wrote: '...so ends this unfortunate scheme, an object lesson to be borne in mind when similar projects are brought forward'

2. 318/291/16505 Treasury to C.O., 22 July 1898

3. 28/246/20822 Hay to Chamberlain, 3 Sept. 1898. See also minute by A.A.P. on this despatch

Lipton. Lipton showed most interest in Barbados but he also despatched a representative to Antigua in February 1899 to investigate the position. His greatest concern, which he explained to Selborne in a letter in August 1898, was that cane cultivation would at some future date be abandoned(1). He was also worried by the nature of beet competition, which certainly hardened Chamberlain's view that bounties should be abolished. Despite protracted negotiations which continued well into 1900, agreement could not be reached regarding the guarantee of capital, on which Lipton insisted; and finally, undoubtedly to Chamberlain's disappointment, negotiations ceased. The Barbados planters then attempted a scheme of their own for a central factory(2). The Colonial Office approved of the effort, but can hardly have been surprised when it failed.

The Brussels Agreement to abolish bounties and the interim Imperial assistance of £250,000 altered the situation with regard to central sugar factories and produced a fundamental difference of opinion at the Colonial Office. Pearson, supported by most of the governors and administrators concerned and by Imperial Department of Agriculture officials (3), produced a strong case for Imperial assistance beyond that already provided, in order to construct 'hard' sugar factories. It is evident that Pearson discounted the possibility of further private investment, or that the colonies could satisfactorily provide factories for themselves. Without such modernisation, he did not believe that the Islands of Barbados, Antigua or St. Kitts could

1. 318/298/21749 17 Aug. 1899 Collected correspondence with Sir Thomas Lipton. See, in particular, Lipton to Selborne, 30 Aug. 1898
2. 28/253/25053 Hay to Chamberlain, 9 July 1900, enclosing two extracts from the Barbados Agricultural Reported dated 21 June and 5 July 1900
3. 318/303/4223 Morris to Pearson, 15 Jan. 1902

satisfactorily compete even after the abolition of bounties. He acknowledged the risk of further Imperial expenditure in the colonies, but added significantly that the success at Brussels had not led to interest by private capitalists. Charles Lucas and Chamberlain felt that they could not ask Parliament for more funds so soon after obtaining the £250,000, though Lucas admitted the strength of Pearson's recommendations. Chamberlain wrote: 'I cannot ask for more at present, nor am I sure I shall ever ask for it. I think we shall have to wait to see the effect of abolition of bounties'(1). Possibly he was still hoping that his policy towards the sugar industry would bear fruit and that private investors would take a hand. If so, he waited in vain and for too long. The terms of the Brussels Convention, when finally determined, made Government assistance in any form impossible; and in the absence of private investment Barbados did not obtain her factory. The planters' demand for a factory in the Island was never unanimous, however, and there was indeed little sustained local pressure for it. The advantages to be expected were strongly emphasised by agricultural experts, notably Dr. Francis Watts of the Imperial Department of Agriculture; but many of the planters remained apparently unconvinced(2).

The Island of Antigua did, however, ultimately obtain a factory. It was located at Gunthorpe's and erected at the end of 1904 by the Mirrlees Watson Co., for the Antigua Sugar Factory Co. The initiative for the project came from the Governor, Sir Walter Strickland, after

1. 28/255/37377 Hodgson to Chamberlain, 11 Oct. 1901
See also minutes on this despatch particularly by C.P.L.
13 Sept. 1902, and J.C., 14 Sept. 1902
2. See discussion at Fifth Agricultural Conference held in
Trinidad in 1908. *West Indian Bulletin* vol. IX 1908

his predecessor, Sir Henry Jackson, had come close to concluding a similar arrangement. The Company undertook the project in return for a grant of £13,000 which was the residue of the Leewards' share of the £250,000 Imperial grant(1). The initial construction cost the Company £50,000 though later improvements increased this. The estates in the vicinity of the factory agreed to supply a minimum quantity of canes for fifteen years. Watts played a most prominent part in planning the construction of the factory, and the Colonial Government also assisted by the loan of a surveyor for the short section of railway. The factory was an immediate success in the opinion of the Imperial Department of Agriculture(2) and certainly a regular supply of canes was provided by the planters, who were apparently satisfied with the returns. There was in addition a grant of £3,000 made from the same source, to modernise the much smaller private factory of Bendal's serving the Belvedere group of estates.

The planters of St. Kitts were also eager to obtain a factory and the Colonial Government drew up a scheme in 1901 by which it would undertake to construct one(3). The Colonial Office, however, wished to await the outcome of the Antigua venture, and construction was indefinitely postponed. The terms of the Brussels Convention thereafter seriously curtailed the possibility of further factories by prohibiting government participation. For this reason the Colonial Office was forced to reject in 1911 a scheme for a second central

1. 28/255/37377 Minutes by A.A.P., 25 Oct. 1901, which confirmed the availability of funds from this source for factory construction
2. 318/314/5946 Morris to C.O., 3 Feb. 1906.
For details of the operation of the factory in its early years, see *West Indian Bulletin* vol. X 1909. L.I. Hanzell, Manager of the Factory, 'Five Years working of the Antigua Sugar Factory'
3. 152/263/24804 Fleming to Chamberlain, 29 July 1901
enc. Cox, Administrator of St. Kitts, to Fleming 24 June 1901

factory in Antigua, since a government guarantee of interest was an essential element of it(1). In October 1914 E. R. Darnley, an official in the West India Department, again brought forward the question of central factories in Antigua and St. Kitts following the Imperial Government's withdrawal from the Brussels Convention(2). However, the conditions on which the United Kingdom had withdrawn still prohibited a policy of government involvement in factory construction; it was considered advisable for the colonies to honour the terms of the Convention, as the United Kingdom had undertaken to do, to avoid retaliation in the markets of neutrals and allies. In August 1916, Antigua again advanced a scheme for a central factory involving a Colonial Government guarantee of interest. In the West India Department, G. Grindle expressed his annoyance at the Colonial Office still being bound by the Brussels pledge; but after consultation with Bonar Law, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, was prepared to sanction the guarantee out of colonial funds(3). However, the administrator anticipated opposition from Gunthorpe's Company and perhaps on account of this the scheme was not proceeded with. The only other factory construction which occurred was a totally private venture in St. Kitts. This factory was constructed in 1912 at Basseterre, and immediately encountered difficulties. Poor crops between 1912 and 1914 came close to crippling the factory and only the temporary high price of sugar after the outbreak of the War saved it.

1. 152/351/40198 Minute by J. F. Green, 24 Aug. 1916
2. 318/332/41130 Minute by E. R. Darnley, 24 Oct. 1914
3. 152/351/40198 Minutes by G. Grindle and A. Bonar Law, 24 Aug. 1916

The Colonial Office attitude towards the establishment of central factories is interesting. Initially Chamberlain, who favoured factories, was clearly deterred by the absence of the private capitalists upon whom he pinned his hopes; but subsequently, by awaiting the outcome of negotiations for the abolition of bounties, he was prevented by the terms of the Brussels Convention from resorting to any scheme involving Government assistance. When assistance for factory construction again became possible the situation had altered. Barbados, no longer faced with imminent crisis, had ceased to press for a factory; and in St. Kitts, notwithstanding the temporary effect of the War, sugar was slowly declining through poor crops, and the Imperial Department of Agriculture was encouraging instead the cultivation of cotton. In Antigua alone another factory might have been worthwhile, and here Bonar Law was prepared to sanction it; the reason for the failure to construct appears to have stemmed from local difficulties.

One of the less spectacular recommendations of the 1897 Royal Commission in fact proved to be perhaps its most valuable, namely the establishment of the Imperial Department of Agriculture. Much of the indisputable value of this Department in the West Indies resulted from the initiative and energy displayed by its first two Commissioners.

Dr. Daniel Morris(1) was agricultural adviser to the Norman Commission, and upon his retirement from the Department at the end of November 1908 he was succeeded by the almost equally enterprising Dr. Francis Watts(2). The Department was established at the end of 1898 with an

1. Later Sir Daniel Morris

2. Later Sir Francis Watts

annual Imperial grant for ten years of £17,000. The head office was at Barbados and direct control was taken of the Island botanic stations in the Leewards and Windwards, with an advisory capacity in respect of the local botanic stations of British Guiana, Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad. Morris considered the principal duty of his Department to be to improve and encourage the sugar industry, as well as to develop alternative cultivations where possible(1). A proportion of the Imperial grant was intended for cane experiments, notably in Barbados and British Guiana. The Department was soon, however, fulfilling the wide rôle envisaged for it by Kew. The most significant of its numerous publications were the quarterly *West Indian Bulletin* and the more technical weekly, *Agricultural News*. The Department was also responsible for the instruction and assistance of peasant proprietors.

In respect of sugar the main work of the Department was in experimentation, the combat of disease, and the distribution of better varieties of cane. This work was done with great efficiency and in November 1905, in preparing a case for continuation of the Departments' Imperial grant, Vernon, an official in the West India Department, was able to record improvements in the yield in Barbados of up to 24 per cent using the new seedling varieties(2). The most famous of these new seedlings, designated B.147, was grown throughout the northern islands. The Leeward Islands experimental stations at St. Kitts and Antigua were expanded, and their research under the direction of the Department encompassed scientific measurement of rainfall

1. 318/297/1504 Morris to C.O., 6 Jan. 1899
2. 318/312/39704 Minute by Vernon, 8 Nov. 1905

and the relative merits of pen and nitrogenous fertilisers. In view of the evident benefit of the Imperial Department of Agriculture the Colonial Office pressed the Treasury hard for a continuation of the grant after 1908. Reluctantly the Treasury agreed, but the grant was to be progressively reduced in the five years after 1908 to £7,000, and in 1913 it was to cease(1). Though the Colonial Office was clearly correct in attributing much of the West Indies' improvement to the Department, particularly the achievements of its scientists such as Bovell and Lefroy(2), there were difficulties during the early period. In March 1906, the Imperial grant paid to the local agricultural departments of British Guiana, Jamaica and Trinidad ceased. Although an understandable measure of economy it probably also reflected the jealousy which existed between these large autonomous departments and the Imperial Department. Between 1899 and 1907 Morris made only three visits to British Guiana though he filled the post of technical adviser to the Department. Of a somewhat different nature was the difficulty encountered in the Windwards. Faced with the prospect of a declining grant, the Governor, Sir R. Williams, seriously considered closing the Grenada botanic station and possibly the others. Morris complained to Lucas that Edward Drayton, the Administrator of Grenada, was largely responsible for this proposal, as the latter felt the Department was paying too much attention to the planters, to whom he was strongly opposed.

However, the Imperial Department survived intact and in 1910 the Royal Commission on Trade Relations with Canada emphasised in the strongest

1. 318/314/45611 Morris to C.O., 26 Nov. 1906

2. Maxwell Lefroy, who entered the Department immediately after leaving Cambridge, with no practical experience, conducted painstaking research on the destructive moth borer of sugar cane. The result of his work led to the first effective combat of this pest

terms the value of the Department and its need for continued Imperial assistance(1). The Colonial Office obtained from Morris a résumé of the work of the Department to support the Commissioners' view, and this was placed before Parliament in February 1911. The outcome was an Imperial grant for a further ten years in aid of the Department. The work of the Imperial Department both in respect of sugar and in other directions progressed, and as 1921 approached, the Colonial Office made efforts to provide for its further continuation. Despite suggestions, notably from Sir J. Chancellor of Trinidad, that the Department was of little use, the Colonial Office remained strongly convinced of its worth, an attitude supported by the evidence of progress with sugar and other industries. Efforts in the direction of obtaining private funds after 1921 were not promising. The provision of an Imperial grant was, however, facilitated by the re-organisation of the Department, and the increased colonial contribution which resulted from its combination with the agricultural college at Trinidad(2).

Among the colonies which continued to rely heavily on sugar(3) British Guiana encountered the greatest individual difficulties, and its sugar industry was assisted accordingly. Prior to 1897, the sugar industry of this Colony had been largely modernised by

1. Report of Royal Commission on Trade Relations between Canada and the West Indies 1910 Cd:5369 I sect XIII P.P. XI
See also memorandum by Sir J. Poynder Dickson-Poynder, (Lord Islington) immediately before leaving to assume Governorship of New Zealand, included at the end of C-5369 I
2. See page 297 also 318/367/42854
Treasury to C.O., 23 Aug. 1921 and 25 Aug. 1921. And minutes by E.R.D., 31 Aug. 1921 and by G.G., 28 Sept. 1921 which decline to press the Treasury further
3. B.G. Barbados, St. Lucia, Antigua and St. Kitts

private investment, but it was faced with the greatest difficulty in obtaining adequate labour, and with the constant battle against the sea. However, the Colony obtained indentured labourers from India, until such immigration ceased in 1917. Normally two-thirds of the cost of indentured immigration was met by the planters and one-third by the Colony. The planters' share was collected in the form of acreage tax. In November 1894 Ripon agreed the relief from this tax as an exceptional measure for one year, the deficit being met from Colonial revenue(1). The grant of £250,000 which Chamberlain obtained from the Imperial Treasury(2) was similarly utilised by Sir Alexander Swettenham for temporary relief from acreage tax. There is no doubt that until 1918 acreage tax remained a very serious drain upon the resources of the planters. Even more expensive was the provision and maintenance of the sea defences necessary to protect the flat coast lands upon which most of the cultivation took place. The Colonial Office avoided getting involved in the controversial issue of sea defences. In 1906, the east coast Demerara Sea Defence Ordinance, the first organised scheme, divided the cost between estates and villages on the coast, and the Colonial Government. This system was not at first accepted by the west coast planters who wanted the Government to bear the whole cost. In 1909, the Acting Governor, Charles Cox, set up a committee to examine the whole question. The outcome of its recommendations was a proposal in the Combined Court(3) that the Colonial Government should meet 80 per cent of the cost of all sea defence. The Colonial Office was opposed to the idea but

1. 111/473/19162 Ripon to Lees, 20 Nov. 1894

2. See page 18

3. The Combined Court: the Court of Policy, the Executive and Legislative, sitting in combined session with the Colony's financial representatives

thought in a local matter of this nature it should not interfere(1). Colonial Office concern at the probable eventual cost was well justified, and by 1914 it was evident that the east coast defence scheme alone would cost the Colony something over £400,000 to complete.

In 1914, the West Indian sugar industry came close to collapse. In Barbados the value of one ton of canes fell to 9s. 2d. and a hundredweight of muscovado sugar was worth only 12s. 3d. on the local market against 17s. the previous year. The War, however, saved the situation and the industry entered a boom. By the close of the War, sugar was fetching 16s. per cwt and Charles O'Brien, the Governor of Barbados, reported an increase in the value of canes in 1920 against 1914 of 110 per cent(2). The post-War slump of 1921 was equally sudden and sugar prices reached their lowest level for nineteen years in December of that year. The Under Secretary of State, Edward Wood, visited the West Indies early in 1922 and reported on the crisis. Although the depression encompassed all industries, Wood observed that many planters were abandoning sugar in favour of alternatives. Nevertheless sugar still employed more labourers than other crops, a large amount of British capital was invested in it, and its structure ensured the retention of the European element in the population which Wood believed essential. Consequently for many of the reasons which had persuaded Chamberlain of the necessity for saving the sugar industry, Wood advocated a

1. 111/572/22913 Hodgson to Crewe, 6 July 1910.
Also minutes by G.G. on this paper
2. 318/356/47298 O'Brien to Milner, 3 Sept. 1920

similar policy. He recommended as a first step favourable consideration of the West Indian request for increase in the United Kingdom preference on imports on West Indian sugar. He added that as in 1897, grants-in-aid might also be required.

The record of the sugar industry during the period under review was a far from satisfactory one. Within a relatively short period the industry was on three separate occasions, in 1897, in 1914 and in 1921, in immediate danger of collapse. However, it is difficult to see what more might have been done. Private capital did not flow into the British West Indies despite the efforts of the Colonial Office to provide the right climate for investment. In less than two years, between 1898 and 1900, 50 million dollars of private American capital were invested in Cuba and used to finance the first generation of 'super centrals'. Shortly after, in 1902, it was American capital again which opened the hitherto undeveloped eastern half of the Island by means of the spinal railway from Santa Clara to Santiago (1). In the British Caribbean Colonies the position was very different. British capital was attracted to areas with which the West Indies could not compete. The underdeveloped colonies, particularly in the Continent of Africa, offered greater potential for profit with a lower level of risk. Taking the period as a whole the most valuable contribution of the Imperial Government to the West Indian sugar industry was probably the establishment and maintenance of the Imperial Department of Agriculture. To exploit the improvements in sugar cultivation

1. For a description of the impact of American capital in Cuba see Courtenay, *Plantation Agriculture*

produced by the Department, the steamship line to Canada was subsidised(1). Although not a specific recommendation of the Royal Commission of 1897 this line contributed to the survival of the sugar industry. Upon this important connection rested the establishment of preferential trade with Canada which, though disorganised by the War, offered the best prospects for the long-term security of the West Indian sugar industry. It was a move, moreover, in which Morris as Imperial Commissioner for Agriculture played a principal part, and which Harcourt encouraged and defended against considerable opposition in the United Kingdom. Interest in the West Indian sugar industry by the Colonial Office, except for the Imperial grant secured by Chamberlain and his pressure for bounty abolition, was for the most part indirect, but it was not inconsiderable. It should be stressed, however, that it was the industry with which the Colonial Office was primarily concerned, providing as it did, in their view, the most important source of employment and wealth for the colonies concerned. For the planters, they often showed little sympathy(2).

1. See page 216

2. 28/300/3347 O'Brien to Churchill, 30 Dec. 1921. See also minutes on this paper by R.A. Wiseman in which he refers to the Barbados planters as '...a small white oligarchy actuated apparently by purely selfish and class motives'.

CHAPTER ONE

IMPERIAL POLICY TOWARDS THE SUGAR INDUSTRY

When Joseph Chamberlain appointed the Royal Commission of 1897 to inquire into the condition of the West Indies, the situation in these predominantly sugar-producing colonies was serious. Market prices for sugar throughout the world were low, due to a decline in costs and consequent over-production. The West Indian cane sugar produce, in particular, was faced with very difficult competition from bounty-fed beet sugar. Nevertheless, superficially, there was little reason to suppose that the West Indies would not survive this depression as they had the previous crisis between 1884 and 1887. At the root of the West Indian problem was the almost total dependence of the colonies on a single cultivation which was subject to sharp fluctuations in price; but from the viewpoint of the sugar planter the cause of the successive crises was the fierce competition of European beet-producing countries one with another. This competition took the form of ever-increasing bounties offered by European governments to their beet sugar exporters, contributing to the over-production and the fall in price. It was against these bounties that the main attack of the sugar planter was directed.

Strongly committed to the principles of free trade, the Imperial Government from the 1880s onward was disinclined to take retaliatory action against European beet sugar. This attitude was strengthened by the fact that the United Kingdom consumer was the greatest beneficiary under the bounty system. The alternative possibility of giving bounties to West Indian sugar exporters was equally unacceptable to the Imperial Government since it would have created an unwelcome

precedent, and exposed the West Indies to retaliatory action in neutral markets such as the United States. The maintenance of this attitude by the Imperial Government, however, did occasionally necessitate special provisions for the West Indian sugar industry if cultivation were to continue. In March 1895, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Ripon, remitted taxation on sugar estates in British Guiana, Trinidad, and the Leewards, as an exceptional measure for one year(1). More decisive action in respect of bounties was not taken despite numerous memorials from the colonies requesting such assistance(2). A European conference had been held in 1888 to examine the possibility of the universal abolition of bounties, but the resulting convention was never implemented, largely because the United Kingdom was not prepared to penalise bounty-fed sugar entering its markets. Thereafter the Foreign Office showed no inclination to enter further negotiations despite a growing feeling at the Colonial Office that greater efforts should be made(3).

In June 1895, Joseph Chamberlain took office as Secretary of State for the Colonies. Despite his acknowledged interest in colonial development and the wide business experience which he brought to his office, colonial policy in respect of the West Indian sugar industry showed little change. In fact Chamberlain was less inclined than Ripon to sanction government advances or similar assistance to planters

1. 111/473/19162 Ripon to Lees, 20 Nov. 1894
318/286/22837 Minutes by Joseph Chamberlain upon the situation in the West Indies 5 Nov. 1896
2. For example, 328/286/22847 West India Committee printed circular dated October 1896
28/238/17450 Hunte to Chamberlain, 20 Sept. 1895
111/488/25415 Petition from Colony of British Guiana to House of Commons dated November 1896
152/195/5068 Fleming to Ripon, 6 Mar. 1895
3. 111/482/16232 Foreign Office to C.O., 12 Sept. 1895
See also minute by Arthur Pearson on this despatch

without the strongest evidence of exceptional necessity. Such necessity, to both Ripon and Chamberlain, meant the threat of widespread unemployment rather than the financial embarrassment of the planter. However, it appears that opinion in the West India Department was becoming more sympathetic to the planters' case before Chamberlain became Secretary of State. In March 1895, Arthur Pearson wrote of the pending increase in bounties that '...circumstances may accrue in commerce as in arms where war is preferable to peace(1). In a similar vein in May, though overruled by Ripon, Edward Wingfield deliberately avoided committing the Imperial Government to a definite pronouncement against countervailing duties(2). These views at the Colonial Office were doubtless reinforced in August 1896 when Austria and Germany almost doubled their already considerable bounties. As a result of this action the credit of the West Indian sugar industry became still more insecure and a fresh wave of memorials reached the Colonial Office. Meanwhile Colonial Office enquiries about the possible development of alternative industries revealed few prospects.

In November 1896, Chamberlain determined on a Royal Commission to examine the condition of the West Indies and to make recommendations for the restitution of prosperity. In recommending the appointment of such a Commission, it is clear that Chamberlain had in mind primarily an investigation into the condition of the sugar industry; perhaps he also hoped for authoritative backing for a policy of securing the abolition of bounties, or of countering their effects by the threat of, or the actual imposition of, countervailing duties(3).

1. 152/195/5068 Minute by A.A.P., 21 Mar. 1895
2. 152/195/7570 Minute by E.W., 2 May 1895
3. 318/286/22837 Minute by J.C., 5 Nov. 1896

The terms of reference of the Commission also included an investigation into the practicability of developing alternative industries but it seems that Chamberlain had little confidence in such a policy, particularly in relation to British Guiana, Barbados, Antigua, and St. Kitts and Nevis(1). The Commissioners were unanimous in their report that a large proportion of the area under sugar cultivation could be profitably maintained if European bounties on beet sugar were abolished, and they urged strongly that to secure such abolition should be the aim of the Imperial Government. Only Sir Henry Norman, the Chairman of the Commission, was prepared, however, to recommend the extreme course of imposing countervailing duties(2). The main weight of the Commission's recommendations centred on the establishment of a peasant proprietary and alternative industries supported by measures such as the setting-up of a department of economic botany for the Leeward and Windward Islands, the encouragement of agricultural education, and the subsidising of steamship lines.

Chamberlain's initial reaction to the Commission's Report was to ignore the recommendations for alternative industries and, apart from recommending the use of Imperial funds to clear off the floating debts of the smaller islands, to centre his policy on securing the abolition of bounties by the imposition, if necessary, of countervailing duties. Chamberlain considered the threat to impose such duties as probably a sufficient negotiating weapon; he was not confident they would be effective if imposed. He argued in the

1. 111/479/15380 Chamberlain to Lees, 7 Sept. 1895
2. Report of West India Royal Commission 1898
C. 8655 Parliamentary Papers - L. Subsequently referred to as Report of W.I.R.C. 1898

Cabinet that if his policy were rejected he would have no other course but to implement the recommendations of the Commission with regard to alternative industries, in which case his demand on Imperial funds would be very much larger than the £80,000 required to clear off the floating debts of the smaller islands; he regarded the Commission's estimated cost of their proposals of £410,000 over ten years as too low. In short, Chamberlain treated the maintenance, as far as possible, of the sugar industry and the development of other cultivations as alternatives; the Commission had regarded them as complementary policies. He pressed the former policy on the Cabinet, and in particular on the Chancellor of the Exchequer, by the threat of the very large expenditure which the latter policy would involve.

The emphasis which Chamberlain placed on the rehabilitation of the sugar industry reflected his lack of confidence in the policy of developing alternative industries, except possibly gold in British Guiana. He seems to have feared that the establishment of such industries would be costly and slow, and that once established they would be subject to the same dangers of over-production and falling prices and profits. No industry could employ as many labourers as sugar, and in the more heavily populated islands this was an important consideration. The collapse of the sugar industry would thus, in Chamberlain's view, lead to large grants in aid to maintain the administration, to unemployment, and to a possible breakdown of law and order. The sugar industry also ensured the retention of the white and Indian immigrant population whom Chamberlain and his officials regarded as most important for the future of the West Indies⁽¹⁾.

1. Memorandum on the Report of the West India Royal Commission by Charles Lucas, October 1897 884/5 no. 79

Moreover, although Chamberlain in many instances regarded the West Indian planters as unenterprising and too willing to lean on the Government, he also recognised a moral obligation towards them; nor had the Report of the Royal Commission shown them, as a class, to be wasteful or inefficient. He wrote to Norman: 'The British Government is morally bound as a matter of common honesty to take up the case of those interested in the sugar industry'(1). Chamberlain's policy of concentrating on the rehabilitation of the sugar industry had other advantages; notably the political advantage of winning the co-operation of the influential planter class in the West Indies, and dispelling the growing impression among them that a connection with the United States would be more advantageous than that with the United Kingdom.

In choosing to assist the sugar industry by securing the abolition of bounties, Chamberlain was influenced by the cheapness of such a policy and the lack of alternative ways of achieving the same aim. Export bounties, for instance, raised the threat of retaliatory action, and like any form of direct subsidy would assist both efficient and inefficient planters. Aid in the form of loans was limited by the planters' inability to provide adequate security. Moreover, the initiatives would all raise inconvenient precedents for other colonies and industries. On the other hand, the abolition of bounties would not only be cheap but would restore the conditions of fair competition to which Chamberlain was temperamentally committed and would encourage the flow of private capital by removing uncertainty and raising planter morale. Chamberlain attached great importance to the encouragement of private capital into the West Indies as a solution to her problems.

1. 318/290/24079 Chamberlain to Norman, 8 Nov. 1897

The eminent suitability of the colonies for sugar cultivation, reinforced by a very successful past record with the crop, convinced Chamberlain that only sugar was likely to attract private capital on a sufficient scale to reverse the current fortunes of the West Indies. It was probably with these considerations in mind, rather than in terms of markets, that Chamberlain evolved his policy. It is evident that he was aware that even total abolition of bounties would not create a secure market in the United Kingdom for West Indian sugar; and in the important New York market the West Indian producer would lose the benefit of the countervailing duty imposed by that country against bounty-fed beet sugar.

The Cabinet, however, declined to accept Chamberlain's recommendations regarding countervailing duties and he was forced back on the policy recommended by the Royal Commission regarding alternative industries. He continued, however, to place at the forefront of his policy assistance to the sugar industry; in January 1898 he informed the Treasury that Imperial assistance '...must be applied for the most part to the relief and support of the sugar industry'(1). His attempts to re-establish preferential agreement between the West Indies and the United States after the termination of the McKinley tariff were intended primarily to safeguard the Colonies' best sugar market. He also persevered in his efforts to obtain the abolition of bounties. It was Chamberlain's pressure in 1901 that led to the Imperial Government's participation in a new anti-bounty conference in Brussels.

1. The recommendations were made in a memorandum for the Cabinet, 8 Nov. 1897 Cab 37/45, no. 44. For Cabinet's rejection of Chamberlain's policy see 318/291/761 C.O. to Treasury, 24 Jan. 1898

This conference reached final agreement in 1902 and bounties ceased in September 1903. Chamberlain's policy was therefore ultimately realised but for the West Indies the outcome was disappointing. The United Kingdom market was not secured for the West Indian producer. The freight rates alone would probably have been sufficient to prevent this, but in addition the Brussels agreement permitted a sufficient margin between customs and excise duty for the European producers to retain the local markets(1). The attractiveness of the Canadian market for the West Indian exporter was only increased at the expense of that of the United States where the countervailing duties disappeared. In fact between 1902 and 1908, while the Convention retained its original form, West Indian total sugar exports declined from 270,081 tons to 225,745 tons. Chamberlain's hopes that private capitalists could be encouraged to invest in the West Indian sugar industry when fair trade had been established were not realised. This was perhaps the most serious failure of Chamberlain's policy as it is impossible to escape the view that the pressure which he brought to bear for bounty abolition was intended as much to promote investment as for any other purpose. A number of positive advantages also resulted from the Convention. Barbados, for example, was obliged to reduce her import duty on sugar from ten to two shillings per hundred pounds. More significantly, the Imperial and Colonial governments were prohibited under the clause against indirect bounties

1. The margin permitted under the Brussels Convention of 5 March 1902 amounts to £2.10s. per ton. All the contracting states except the United Kingdom and Holland availed themselves of this protection. In March 1916 the West India Committee claimed, unconvincingly, that this was responsible for the continued monopoly of the United Kingdom market by beet sugar producers. See 318/340/11710 West India Committee to C.O. 9 Mar. 1916 and the acknowledgement C.O. to W.I.C. 20 Mar. 1916

from providing guarantees of interest or capital on investments in the sugar industry. In May 1906, the standing committee in Brussels even ruled against government participation in loans at market rates of interest. After 1913 when the United Kingdom withdrew from the Convention, the Imperial Government nevertheless agreed to maintain its provisions, and it was not until 1917 that the colonies were effectively released from the terms of the Convention(1).

Chamberlain probably foresaw the manner in which the Convention would restrict the action of the Imperial Government. During the negotiations the representatives of the European beet-producing countries pressed the United Kingdom for firm undertakings against assisting colonial sugar: against this background Chamberlain telegraphed Lansdowne from Johannesburg: 'I should not object to the Convention breaking down if we were prepared to give the West Indies remission of sugar duty'(2).

In April 1902, following the agreement but prior to the Brussels Convention coming into force, Chamberlain obtained an Imperial grant of £250,000 for the West Indian sugar industry in order to maintain cultivation until bounties ceased. For the distribution of the grant, the colonies were divided into two groups according to the extent of their difficulties. The more hard pressed colonies of Barbados, St. Kitts, Antigua and Montserrat received relief at the rate of thirty shillings per ton. The grant was utilised by the colonial governments in several ways, for example cash payments to planters, loans and remission of taxation. Two interesting aspects of the grant involved assistance to peasant growers. In British Guiana the very capable

1. 318/343/63091 Balfour to C.O., 26 Dec. 1917
152/351/40198 Minutes by G. Grindle, 24 Aug. 1916
Followed conversation with officials of Board of Trade
and Foreign Office
2. 318/308/1571 Chamberlain to Lansdowne, 9 Jan. 1903

Governor, Sir Alexander Swettenham, utilised the Colony's £69,000 grant in the refund acreage tax, and evolved special arrangements to ensure that the cane farmer, who did not pay acreage tax, received a share(1). For a similar purpose Sir Walter Strickland, the Governor of the Leewards, obtained a supplementary grant of £1,000 which was distributed to mill owners in Nevis upon their undertaking to purchase annually for six years a minimum quantity of canes from tenants or peasant farmers(2). The application of the Barbados grant of £80,000 is also worthy of note. Rather than remit or refund taxation as was the most common course, the Barbados Government used the grant as additional security, together with the Island revenues, upon which to raise a loan of up to £200,000. The proceeds of this loan were distributed under the terms of the Plantations-in-Aid Act passed in June 1902(3). This enabled planters to borrow money at low rates of interest with a repayment period of five years. The Act was for one year only but was renewed with Colonial Office sanction in 1903, 1904 and 1905. By 1905, however, the Colonial Office was disturbed, not only by the constant renewal of a measure intended to be temporary, but also by the changes which were proposed in the Act. The original proposal was that planters should obtain loans under the Act only when they were unable to obtain them elsewhere. In fact Sir Frederick Hodgson's first intention was that estates requiring government aid should first come into Chancery(4). This provision was waived on account of strong opposition in the House of Assembly.

1. 111/532/22207 Swettenham to Chamberlain, 20 May 1902
2. 152/279/22422 Strickland to Chamberlain, 18 May 1903
3. 28/257/26836 Hodgson to Chamberlain, 20 June 1902
See also 257/24475 Hodgson to Chamberlain, 4 June 1902
30/36/26836 Barbados Acts no. 24 of 1902 Plantations-in-Aid Act 17 June 1902
4. 28/257/17819 Hodgson to Chamberlain, 14 April 1902
See also 257/19212 Hodgson to Chamberlain, 15 May 1902
257/19212 Chamberlain to Hodgson, 17 May 1902

In 1905, the Colony proposed modification to the Act in order to permit loans whether they could be obtained from other sources or not. In this form Alfred Lyttelton, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, was prepared to sanction only one further year, and even were the old form restored he was opposed to unlimited extension. Consequently in 1906 the acting Governor, Sir Samuel Knaggs, appointed a committee to determine the best means of appropriating the £80,000 Imperial grant. They recommended the continuation of the borrowing arrangements in a more permanent form under the name 'Sugar Industry Agricultural Bank'. Inevitably the board was made up predominantly of planters when this bank came into existence in 1907. However, it answered the principal Colonial Office objection since the Colonial Government's connection with the business of loans ceased(1).

The Imperial grant in support of the sugar industry was not made in an effort artificially to protect the industry in places where it did not pay. St. Vincent, for example, received no grant, though according to the terms under which the sum was distributed, it could have been entitled to as much as £1,200. When the Executive Council of Montserrat complained that its £600 was inadequate to re-establish the sugar industry, W. D. Ellis, in the West India Department, suggested that probably the best course was to allow the industry to die out. The intention was clearly to prevent the abandonment of

1. For details of the early years of this undertaking see *West Indian Bulletin* vol. IX 1908. F.J. Clarke, President of the Barbados Agricultural Society, 'Establishment and Working of the Sugar Industry Agricultural Bank at Barbados'.
30/38/9818 - Barbados Acts. An Act to Establish Sugar Industry Agricultural Bank, 20 Feb. 1907. To which was transferred the Imperial Free grant of £80,000

cultivation in areas where it was expected to survive once bounties had been abolished(1).

An important consideration in the survival of the West Indian sugar industry was the question of modernisation. Among the colonies under consideration only British Guiana and St. Lucia possessed, at the time of the Royal Commission, estates or factories with modern equipment capable of producing hard, or crystal, sugar. The other islands used far more wasteful but inexpensive machinery to produce soft muscovado sugar. There is no question that throughout the period and for some time before the demand for this kind of sugar was declining(2). For this reason there was considerable interest in most of the sugar colonies in the possibility of establishing factories capable of producing crystals. Immediately prior to 1897 the greatest interest had been apparent in Barbados. The Governor, Sir James Hay, was an enthusiastic supporter of the modernisation of the industry. Since, however, the planters of the Island lacked the necessary capital, he recommended to Ripon in September 1894 that the Government assist in the erection of central factories. Despite considerable opposition in the Legislative Council where the planters were not unanimous in their desire for a factory, a Bill authorising a Government loan was passed early in 1895. At the Colonial Office, Wingfield did not like the details of the new Act, nor did he feel repayment of the loan was adequately secured. Chamberlain agreed that land, building and machinery were unacceptable security in a colony

1. 321/211/19715 Minute by Montague Ommanney 20 May 1902. For policy decision upon which application of Imperial grant was funded see also 318/211/17760 Lewelyn to Chamberlain, 21 April 1902 and associated minutes, in particular those of C.P.L. and J.C.
2. Report of the Royal Commission of Trade Relations between Canada and the West Indies 1910 Cd.5369 Part I, P. P. XI

where all values related to the sugar industry. The Act was held in abeyance but the question of the provision of a central sugar factory was referred to the Royal Commission. The Colonial Office concern at the Barbados proposals was doubtless heightened by the collapse in December 1894 of the St. Lucia central factory(1). Although purchased by a private syndicate this venture, which involved Government funds, was considered by the Colonial Office as a disaster. Their consequent suspicion of such schemes was illustrated more clearly in the case of Antigua, when in August 1895, Fleming suggested the possibility of the Island passing a central factory Bill. Olivier minuted his disapproval and the Bill was abandoned.

In its Report, the Royal Commission advocated the erection of central factories and recommended specifically an Imperially guaranteed loan of £120,000 for a factory in Barbados. The figure appeared inadequate to the Colonial Office and the advice of experts was sought. In the meantime, however, in July 1898 the Treasury agreed to the inclusion in the estimates for relief grants to the West Indies of a nominal figure for central factories, which was later fixed at £10,000(2).

In September 1898 Hay forwarded proposals for a factory and associated rolling stock at a cost of £20,000. It was to be erected and controlled by the Colonial Government, and financed by a loan under Imperial guarantee(3). This scheme involved greater risk than that of attempting to interest private capitalists, and negotiations had already commenced between the Colonial Office and the most likely investor, Sir Thomas

1. 321/162/1375 Minutes by E.W., 25 Jan. 1895. Referring to the collapse of the scheme Wingfield wrote: '...so ends this unfortunate scheme, an object lesson to be borne in mind when similar projects are brought forward'
2. 318/291/16505 Treasury to C.O., 22 July 1898
3. 28/246/20822 Hay to Chamberlain, 3 Sept. 1898. See also minute by A.A.P. on this despatch

Lipton. Lipton showed most interest in Barbados but he also despatched a representative to Antigua in February 1899 to investigate the position. His greatest concern, which he explained to Selborne in a letter in August 1898, was that cane cultivation would at some future date be abandoned(1). He was also worried by the nature of beet competition, which certainly hardened Chamberlain's view that bounties should be abolished. Despite protracted negotiations which continued well into 1900, agreement could not be reached regarding the guarantee of capital, on which Lipton insisted; and finally, undoubtedly to Chamberlain's disappointment, negotiations ceased. The Barbados planters then attempted a scheme of their own for a central factory(2). The Colonial Office approved of the effort, but can hardly have been surprised when it failed.

The Brussels Agreement to abolish bounties and the interim Imperial assistance of £250,000 altered the situation with regard to central sugar factories and produced a fundamental difference of opinion at the Colonial Office. Pearson, supported by most of the governors and administrators concerned and by Imperial Department of Agriculture officials (3), produced a strong case for Imperial assistance beyond that already provided, in order to construct 'hard' sugar factories. It is evident that Pearson discounted the possibility of further private investment, or that the colonies could satisfactorily provide factories for themselves. Without such modernisation, he did not believe that the Islands of Barbados, Antigua or St. Kitts could

1. 318/298/21749 17 Aug. 1899 Collected correspondence with Sir Thomas Lipton. See, in particular, Lipton to Selborne, 30 Aug. 1898
2. 28/253/25053 Hay to Chamberlain, 9 July 1900, enclosing two extracts from the Barbados Agricultural Reported dated 21 June and 5 July 1900
3. 318/303/4223 Morris to Pearson, 15 Jan. 1902

satisfactorily compete even after the abolition of bounties. He acknowledged the risk of further Imperial expenditure in the colonies, but added significantly that the success at Brussels had not led to interest by private capitalists. Charles Lucas and Chamberlain felt that they could not ask Parliament for more funds so soon after obtaining the £250,000, though Lucas admitted the strength of Pearson's recommendations. Chamberlain wrote: 'I cannot ask for more at present, nor am I sure I shall ever ask for it. I think we shall have to wait to see the effect of abolition of bounties'(1). Possibly he was still hoping that his policy towards the sugar industry would bear fruit and that private investors would take a hand. If so, he waited in vain and for too long. The terms of the Brussels Convention, when finally determined, made Government assistance in any form impossible; and in the absence of private investment Barbados did not obtain her factory. The planters' demand for a factory in the Island was never unanimous, however, and there was indeed little sustained local pressure for it. The advantages to be expected were strongly emphasised by agricultural experts, notably Dr. Francis Watts of the Imperial Department of Agriculture; but many of the planters remained apparently unconvinced(2).

The Island of Antigua did, however, ultimately obtain a factory. It was located at Gunthorpe's and erected at the end of 1904 by the Mirrlees Watson Co., for the Antigua Sugar Factory Co. The initiative for the project came from the Governor, Sir Walter Strickland, after

1. 28/255/37377 Hodgson to Chamberlain, 11 Oct. 1901
See also minutes on this despatch particularly by C.P.L.
13 Sept. 1902, and J.C., 14 Sept. 1902
2. See discussion at Fifth Agricultural Conference held in
Trinidad in 1908. *West Indian Bulletin* vol. IX 1908

his predecessor, Sir Henry Jackson, had come close to concluding a similar arrangement. The Company undertook the project in return for a grant of £13,000 which was the residue of the Leewards' share of the £250,000 Imperial grant(1). The initial construction cost the Company £50,000 though later improvements increased this. The estates in the vicinity of the factory agreed to supply a minimum quantity of canes for fifteen years. Watts played a most prominent part in planning the construction of the factory, and the Colonial Government also assisted by the loan of a surveyor for the short section of railway. The factory was an immediate success in the opinion of the Imperial Department of Agriculture(2) and certainly a regular supply of canes was provided by the planters, who were apparently satisfied with the returns. There was in addition a grant of £3,000 made from the same source, to modernise the much smaller private factory of Bendal's serving the Belvedere group of estates.

The planters of St. Kitts were also eager to obtain a factory and the Colonial Government drew up a scheme in 1901 by which it would undertake to construct one(3). The Colonial Office, however, wished to await the outcome of the Antigua venture, and construction was indefinitely postponed. The terms of the Brussels Convention thereafter seriously curtailed the possibility of further factories by prohibiting government participation. For this reason the Colonial Office was forced to reject in 1911 a scheme for a second central

1. 28/255/37377 Minutes by A.A.P., 25 Oct. 1901, which confirmed the availability of funds from this source for factory construction
2. 318/314/5946 Morris to C.O., 3 Feb. 1906.
For details of the operation of the factory in its early years, see *West Indian Bulletin* vol. X 1909. L.I. Hanzell, Manager of the Factory, 'Five Years working of the Antigua Sugar Factory'
3. 152/263/24804 Fleming to Chamberlain, 29 July 1901
enc. Cox, Administrator of St. Kitts, to Fleming 24 June 1901

factory in Antigua, since a government guarantee of interest was an essential element of it(1). In October 1914 E. R. Darnley, an official in the West India Department, again brought forward the question of central factories in Antigua and St. Kitts following the Imperial Government's withdrawal from the Brussels Convention(2). However, the conditions on which the United Kingdom had withdrawn still prohibited a policy of government involvement in factory construction; it was considered advisable for the colonies to honour the terms of the Convention, as the United Kingdom had undertaken to do, to avoid retaliation in the markets of neutrals and allies. In August 1916, Antigua again advanced a scheme for a central factory involving a Colonial Government guarantee of interest. In the West India Department, G. Grindle expressed his annoyance at the Colonial Office still being bound by the Brussels pledge; but after consultation with Bonar Law, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, was prepared to sanction the guarantee out of colonial funds(3). However, the administrator anticipated opposition from Gunthorpe's Company and perhaps on account of this the scheme was not proceeded with. The only other factory construction which occurred was a totally private venture in St. Kitts. This factory was constructed in 1912 at Basseterre, and immediately encountered difficulties. Poor crops between 1912 and 1914 came close to crippling the factory and only the temporary high price of sugar after the outbreak of the War saved it.

1. 152/351/40198 Minute by J. F. Green, 24 Aug. 1916
2. 318/332/41130 Minute by E. R. Darnley, 24 Oct. 1914
3. 152/351/40198 Minutes by G. Grindle and A. Bonar Law, 24 Aug. 1916

The Colonial Office attitude towards the establishment of central factories is interesting. Initially Chamberlain, who favoured factories, was clearly deterred by the absence of the private capitalists upon whom he pinned his hopes; but subsequently, by awaiting the outcome of negotiations for the abolition of bounties, he was prevented by the terms of the Brussels Convention from resorting to any scheme involving Government assistance. When assistance for factory construction again became possible the situation had altered. Barbados, no longer faced with imminent crisis, had ceased to press for a factory; and in St. Kitts, notwithstanding the temporary effect of the War, sugar was slowly declining through poor crops, and the Imperial Department of Agriculture was encouraging instead the cultivation of cotton. In Antigua alone another factory might have been worthwhile, and here Bonar Law was prepared to sanction it; the reason for the failure to construct appears to have stemmed from local difficulties.

One of the less spectacular recommendations of the 1897 Royal Commission in fact proved to be perhaps its most valuable, namely the establishment of the Imperial Department of Agriculture. Much of the indisputable value of this Department in the West Indies resulted from the initiative and energy displayed by its first two Commissioners.

Dr. Daniel Morris(1) was agricultural adviser to the Norman Commission, and upon his retirement from the Department at the end of November 1908 he was succeeded by the almost equally enterprising Dr. Francis Watts(2). The Department was established at the end of 1898 with an

1. Later Sir Daniel Morris

2. Later Sir Francis Watts

annual Imperial grant for ten years of £17,000. The head office was at Barbados and direct control was taken of the Island botanic stations in the Leewards and Windwards, with an advisory capacity in respect of the local botanic stations of British Guiana, Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad. Morris considered the principal duty of his Department to be to improve and encourage the sugar industry, as well as to develop alternative cultivations where possible(1). A proportion of the Imperial grant was intended for cane experiments, notably in Barbados and British Guiana. The Department was soon, however, fulfilling the wide rôle envisaged for it by Kew. The most significant of its numerous publications were the quarterly *West Indian Bulletin* and the more technical weekly, *Agricultural News*. The Department was also responsible for the instruction and assistance of peasant proprietors.

In respect of sugar the main work of the Department was in experimentation, the combat of disease, and the distribution of better varieties of cane. This work was done with great efficiency and in November 1905, in preparing a case for continuation of the Departments' Imperial grant, Vernon, an official in the West India Department, was able to record improvements in the yield in Barbados of up to 24 per cent using the new seedling varieties(2). The most famous of these new seedlings, designated B.147, was grown throughout the northern islands. The Leeward Islands experimental stations at St. Kitts and Antigua were expanded, and their research under the direction of the Department encompassed scientific measurement of rainfall

1. 318/297/1504 Morris to C.O., 6 Jan. 1899
2. 318/312/39704 Minute by Vernon, 8 Nov. 1905

and the relative merits of pen and nitrogenous fertilisers. In view of the evident benefit of the Imperial Department of Agriculture the Colonial Office pressed the Treasury hard for a continuation of the grant after 1908. Reluctantly the Treasury agreed, but the grant was to be progressively reduced in the five years after 1908 to £7,000, and in 1913 it was to cease(1). Though the Colonial Office was clearly correct in attributing much of the West Indies' improvement to the Department, particularly the achievements of its scientists such as Bovell and Lefroy(2), there were difficulties during the early period. In March 1906, the Imperial grant paid to the local agricultural departments of British Guiana, Jamaica and Trinidad ceased. Although an understandable measure of economy it probably also reflected the jealousy which existed between these large autonomous departments and the Imperial Department. Between 1899 and 1907 Morris made only three visits to British Guiana though he filled the post of technical adviser to the Department. Of a somewhat different nature was the difficulty encountered in the Windwards. Faced with the prospect of a declining grant, the Governor, Sir R. Williams, seriously considered closing the Grenada botanic station and possibly the others. Morris complained to Lucas that Edward Drayton, the Administrator of Grenada, was largely responsible for this proposal, as the latter felt the Department was paying too much attention to the planters, to whom he was strongly opposed.

However, the Imperial Department survived intact and in 1910 the Royal Commission on Trade Relations with Canada emphasised in the strongest

1. 318/314/45611 Morris to C.O., 26 Nov. 1906

2. Maxwell Lefroy, who entered the Department immediately after leaving Cambridge, with no practical experience, conducted painstaking research on the destructive moth borer of sugar cane. The result of his work led to the first effective combat of this pest

terms the value of the Department and its need for continued Imperial assistance(1). The Colonial Office obtained from Morris a résumé of the work of the Department to support the Commissioners' view, and this was placed before Parliament in February 1911. The outcome was an Imperial grant for a further ten years in aid of the Department. The work of the Imperial Department both in respect of sugar and in other directions progressed, and as 1921 approached, the Colonial Office made efforts to provide for its further continuation. Despite suggestions, notably from Sir J. Chancellor of Trinidad, that the Department was of little use, the Colonial Office remained strongly convinced of its worth, an attitude supported by the evidence of progress with sugar and other industries. Efforts in the direction of obtaining private funds after 1921 were not promising. The provision of an Imperial grant was, however, facilitated by the re-organisation of the Department, and the increased colonial contribution which resulted from its combination with the agricultural college at Trinidad(2).

Among the colonies which continued to rely heavily on sugar(3) British Guiana encountered the greatest individual difficulties, and its sugar industry was assisted accordingly. Prior to 1897, the sugar industry of this Colony had been largely modernised by

1. Report of Royal Commission on Trade Relations between Canada and the West Indies 1910 Cd.5369 I sect XIII P.P. XI
See also memorandum by Sir J. Poynder Dickson-Poynder, (Lord Islington) immediately before leaving to assume Governorship of New Zealand, included at the end of Cd.5369 I
2. See page 297 also 318/367/42854
Treasury to C.O., 23 Aug. 1921 and 25 Aug. 1921. And minutes by E.R.D., 31 Aug. 1921 and by G.G., 28 Sept. 1921 which decline to press the Treasury further
3. B.G. Barbados, St. Lucia, Antigua and St. Kitts

private investment, but it was faced with the greatest difficulty in obtaining adequate labour, and with the constant battle against the sea. However, the Colony obtained indentured labourers from India, until such immigration ceased in 1917. Normally two-thirds of the cost of indentured immigration was met by the planters and one-third by the Colony. The planters' share was collected in the form of acreage tax. In November 1894 Ripon agreed the relief from this tax as an exceptional measure for one year, the deficit being met from Colonial revenue(1). The grant of £250,000 which Chamberlain obtained from the Imperial Treasury(2) was similarly utilised by Sir Alexander Swettenham for temporary relief from acreage tax. There is no doubt that until 1918 acreage tax remained a very serious drain upon the resources of the planters. Even more expensive was the provision and maintenance of the sea defences necessary to protect the flat coast lands upon which most of the cultivation took place. The Colonial Office avoided getting involved in the controversial issue of sea defences. In 1906, the east coast Demerara Sea Defence Ordinance, the first organised scheme, divided the cost between estates and villages on the coast, and the Colonial Government. This system was not at first accepted by the west coast planters who wanted the Government to bear the whole cost. In 1909, the Acting Governor, Charles Cox, set up a committee to examine the whole question. The outcome of its recommendations was a proposal in the Combined Court(3) that the Colonial Government should meet 80 per cent of the cost of all sea defence. The Colonial Office was opposed to the idea but

1. 111/473/19162 Ripon to Lees, 20 Nov. 1894

2. See page 18

3. The Combined Court: the Court of Policy, the Executive and Legislature, sitting in combined session with the Colony's financial representatives

thought in a local matter of this nature it should not interfere(1).. Colonial Office concern at the probable eventual cost was well justified, and by 1914 it was evident that the east coast defence scheme alone would cost the Colony something over £400,000 to complete.

In 1914, the West Indian sugar industry came close to collapse. In Barbados the value of one ton of canes fell to 9s. 2d. and a hundredweight of muscovado sugar was worth only 12s. 3d. on the local market against 17s. the previous year. The War, however, saved the situation and the industry entered a boom. By the close of the War, sugar was fetching 16s. per cwt and Charles O'Brien, the Governor of Barbados, reported an increase in the value of canes in 1920 against 1914 of 110 per cent(2). The post-War slump of 1921 was equally sudden and sugar prices reached their lowest level for nineteen years in December of that year. The Under Secretary of State, Edward Wood, visited the West Indies early in 1922 and reported on the crisis. Although the depression encompassed all industries, Wood observed that many planters were abandoning sugar in favour of alternatives. Nevertheless sugar still employed more labourers than other crops, a large amount of British capital was invested in it, and its structure ensured the retention of the European element in the population which Wood believed essential. Consequently for many of the reasons which had persuaded Chamberlain of the necessity for saving the sugar industry, Wood advocated a

1. 111/572/22913 Hodgson to Crewe, 6 July 1910
Also minutes by G.G. on this paper
2. 318/356/47298 O'Brien to Milner, 3 Sept. 1920

similar policy. He recommended as a first step favourable consideration of the West Indian request for increase in the United Kingdom preference on imports on West Indian sugar. He added that as in 1897, grants-in-aid might also be required.

The record of the sugar industry during the period under review was a far from satisfactory one. Within a relatively short period the industry was on three separate occasions, in 1897, in 1914 and in 1921, in immediate danger of collapse. However, it is difficult to see what more might have been done. Private capital did not flow into the British West Indies despite the efforts of the Colonial Office to provide the right climate for investment. In less than two years, between 1898 and 1900, 50 million dollars of private American capital were invested in Cuba and used to finance the first generation of 'super centrals'. Shortly after, in 1902, it was American capital again which opened the hitherto undeveloped eastern half of the Island by means of the spinal railway from Santa Clara to Santiago (1) . In the British Caribbean Colonies the position was very different. British capital was attracted to areas with which the West Indies could not compete. The underdeveloped colonies, particularly in the Continent of Africa, offered greater potential for profit with a lower level of risk. Taking the period as a whole the most valuable contribution of the Imperial Government to the West Indian sugar industry was probably the establishment and maintenance of the Imperial Department of Agriculture. To exploit the improvements in sugar cultivation

1. . For a description of the impact of American capital in Cuba see Courtenay, *Plantation Agriculture*

produced by the Department, the steamship line to Canada was subsidised(1). Although not a specific recommendation of the Royal Commission of 1897 this line contributed to the survival of the sugar industry. Upon this important connection rested the establishment of preferential trade with Canada which, though disorganised by the War, offered the best prospects for the long-term security of the West Indian sugar industry. It was a move, moreover, in which Morris as Imperial Commissioner for Agriculture played a principal part, and which Harcourt encouraged and defended against considerable opposition in the United Kingdom. Interest in the West Indian sugar industry by the Colonial Office, except for the Imperial grant secured by Chamberlain and his pressure for bounty abolition, was for the most part indirect, but it was not inconsiderable. It should be stressed, however, that it was the industry with which the Colonial Office was primarily concerned, providing as it did, in their view, the most important source of employment and wealth for the colonies concerned. For the planters, they often showed little sympathy(2).

1. See page 216
2. 28/300/3347 O'Brien to Churchill, 30 Dec. 1921. See also minutes on this paper by R.A. Wiseman in which he refers to the Barbados planters as '...a small white oligarchy actuated apparently by purely selfish and class motives'.

CHAPTER TWO

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVE INDUSTRIES - A SURVEY

Although the Colonial Office policy during this period favoured the sugar industry, the fact that sugar production could not be maintained on the same scale as previously led inevitably to experiments with alternative cultivations. It is doubtful if the diversification which resulted can be attributed directly to the recommendations of the 1897 Royal Commission as it is clear that the Commissioners failed to convince Chamberlain of the desirability of introducing new crops as a matter of policy. Indeed there were compelling reasons which dissuaded Chamberlain from such a view. Most of the cultivable land in the Colonies under consideration was better suited to the production of sugar than to any other crop. Furthermore, there was every reason for Chamberlain to believe that any redirecting of the agricultural economy of the Colonies would lead to a new all-dominant cultivation in place of sugar. Clearly this was not desirable. Although sugar appeared more vulnerable to adverse tariff policies, this was a disadvantage which Chamberlain was determined to remove. Expertise and capital equipment in the West Indies were both directed exclusively towards sugar. Most of the possible alternatives to sugar were of a more perishable nature and this would have exacerbated the most uncompromising of all West Indian problems, that of transport. Considerations such as these undoubtedly account for the low priority accorded by Chamberlain and his successors to the recommendation for diversification.

Nevertheless even in the colonies of British Guiana, Barbados, St. Lucia, Antigua and St. Kitts, which remained largely dependent on

sugar, experiments with new cultivations took place. The encouragement of these new industries stemmed almost entirely from the work of the Imperial Department of Agriculture. Since the selection of prospective crops rested wholly with local agricultural experts, even had the attitude of the Colonial Office been more sympathetic direct initiative would have been impractical. Furthermore, prior to the Royal Commission the Colonial Office had adopted the view that they could not press the cultivation of particular crops on individual planters(1), and this decision was never challenged. The development of new industries, like the modernisation of the sugar industry, was considered by the Colonial Office to be primarily a matter for private enterprise(2).

In consequence of this, little progress was made and neither in individual colonies nor collectively was practical diversification achieved. In addition to the purely agricultural difficulties which were encountered by the Imperial Department of Agriculture the attitude of the planters was an important contributory factor in this failure. It proved impossible, as Francis Watts complained in March 1915, to persuade them to raise a variety of crops; instead, perhaps understandably, they placed total reliance on the highest-paying cultivation (3). Consequently, even where new cultivations replaced canes the undesirable situation of almost complete dependence on a single crop was not overcome. Grenada provides a good example. The Island was in a more satisfactory condition than most in 1897 since sugar had already been abandoned and replaced by cacao. The prosperity of this crop, however, was so great that, except for some exports of spices,

1. 111/473/19153 Lees to Ripon 1 Nov. 1894, and minutes on this despatch indicating policy regarding alternatives to sugar
2. See, for instance 318/295/21302 W. Campbell to C.O., 13 Sept. 1898
3. Just as Chamberlain had anticipated. See 318/334/13775 Watts to C.O., 5 March 1915

the planters refused to attempt any other cultivations. This prevented the adoption of cotton on any appreciable scale despite the efforts of the Imperial Department of Agriculture.

The Islands of St. Vincent and Dominica were in a much more serious condition in 1897 following the virtual extinction of sugar. Here, Dr. Morris, upon taking up his appointment as Imperial Commissioner of Agriculture, directed his attention towards the possibilities for fruit export. The Royal Commission had recommended a fruit trade with the United States, perhaps guided by Morris's expert advice, but in practice the development of such a trade proved overwhelmingly difficult. Morris recommended a start with the export of bananas to the United States where sales prospects appeared promising. The development of exports of other fruits such as oranges, pineapples and coconuts was made impractical by the uncertain tariff policies of the United States in respect of such fruits. The difficulties of grading, packaging and freight were also considerable; and private enterprise and capital was not encouraged by the failure of previous schemes of a similar nature. Barbados, however, developed a promising trade in bananas with the United Kingdom, using Royal Mail Steam Company vessels despite their unsuitability for such shipments. From 18 bunches in 1902, the export to the United Kingdom from Barbados reached 15,236 bunches in 1904(1). Morris hoped that the trade could be extended to St. Vincent and Dominica, and possibly also to the other Windward Islands. Before anything could be achieved, however, the Barbados-United Kingdom trade collapsed following the termination of the Royal Mail contract in 1905(2). For the remainder of the period the export of fresh fruit, other than

1. 33 No. 113 Blue Book 1904. Introductory reference to Banana cultivation
2. See page 227

shipments of green limes, though from time to time attracting attention, was never of significance owing to the constant difficulties of packaging and transport.

Even before the collapse of fruit exports Morris was turning his attention more towards the possibility of reintroducing cotton cultivation into the West Indies. The crop possessed the advantage of having been successfully grown in the past, and it could often be grown as an alternative or even as a catch crop on sugar lands with benefit to both crops. Following the visit of Morris to the United States to study cotton cultivation, Barbados led the way with the opening at the end of July 1903 of a central cotton factory. Imperial funds were not involved as the Colonial Government provided the land and buildings, and financed the maintenance of the factory. Morris obtained through the British Cotton Growers' Association machinery and a grant for the purchase of seed. It was, from the outset, emphasised by the local administration and by Morris that the object of the factory was to utilise the limited waste land of the Colony, not in any way to displace sugar. Seed was obtained of the long-staple sea island variety from Carolina and promising returns resulted. During the 1904 season some 1,600 acres were planted in Barbados(1). Though this area was not substantially exceeded as the land was not available and the planters continued to concentrate upon sugar, the cultivation was successful and fetched higher prices than similar United States cotton. In 1905 the planters took over control of the factory and ran it as a co-operative venture(2). The success in Barbados encouraged most of the

1. 318/310/40680 Morris to C.O., 19 Nov. 1904
enc. Table indicating areas under cotton cultivation
2. 318/312/26364 Morris to C.O., 15 July 1905 enc. Extracts from meeting of planters held 7 July 1905. See also *West Indian Bulletin* vol. IX, 1908 F.T. Clarke President of the Barbados Agricultural Society, 'Origin and Establishment of the Barbados Co-operative Cotton Factory'

other sugar islands to persevere in experiments with cotton. In Antigua a private gin was constructed in 1903, and in St. Lucia several planters were encouraged to grow it experimentally. It did not prove very popular in either Island however, and in 1904 with cotton rising rapidly in popularity elsewhere, Antigua and its dependency of Barbuda planted only 530 acres and St. Lucia only 150 acres(1). Cultivation continued on a small scale in both Islands however, and in St. Lucia a private gin was erected at Castries. But by 1908 only 72 acres were under the crop in the Island(2) and a greater interest was being taken in limes. The mainland Colony of British Guiana proved unsuited to cotton cultivation. In St. Kitts and Nevis however, it rose rapidly in popularity. Morris estimated an area under cotton of between 2,000 and 3,000 acres in 1904 and he was proved correct(3). A private ginnyery was opened at St. Kitts in 1903 by Sendall and Wade, and two more were in operation by 1905. In Nevis the British Cotton Growers' Association assisted in the establishment of a gin in 1904(4). The Federal Government of the Leewards also took steps to encourage the growth of the cotton industry. In April 1904, Sir Walter Strickland reported the passing of an Act providing for loans to cotton planters(5). With the recovery of sugar, loans made under this Act were at first disappointing but the setback was temporary and the industry flourished. By 1911, the exports of cotton from St. Kitts and Nevis were worth £48,670, more than those

1. 318/40680, Morris to C.O., 19 Nov. 1904
2. 312/241/45836 Cork to Crewe, 20 Nov. 1908
3. 318/310/19706 Morris to C.O., 10 May 1904
4. See *West Indian Bulletin* vol. VII 1906 Dr. F. Watts, 'Cotton Industry in the Leeward Islands'
5. 152/284/14067 Strickland to Lyttelton, 4 April 1904.
154/12/8687 Leeward Federal Acts vol. 4 of 1904. An Act to regulate advance in Aid of the Cotton Industry, 22 Feb. 1904

from either Barbados or St. Vincent(1). The beginning of the War coincided with poor prices for cotton and an increased demand for sugar, but the Commissioner of Agriculture, Watts, felt that in both St. Kitts and Nevis cotton in normal times was a more profitable crop.

In St. Vincent the situation was different in that cotton was introduced not by private enterprise but by the Imperial Department of Agriculture in an attempt to re-establish some form of organised industry in place of sugar. In St. Vincent the arrowroot industry continued as it had for many years, but the constant risk of low prices and over-production made it unsuitable as the Island's major product. The conditions in which cotton was introduced to St. Vincent are interesting in providing a rare example of direct Colonial Office involvement in the development of a new industry. In February 1903 Morris suggested that Imperial funds allotted to St. Vincent for relief work following the eruption of the volcano Soufrière in 1902 should be used to introduce cotton cultivation. The sum he requested was £5,000 to provide machinery, buildings and seed(2). The Colonial Office initially felt this would be a misappropriation of the fund and refused to sanction it. In the West India Department Richard Vernon doubted also the value of cotton, employing as it did relatively few labourers in comparison with sugar. Morris persisted, pointing out the urgent need for organised industries. However, the Governor disagreed and in May 1903 in reply to a Colonial Office despatch Sir Robert Llewelyn expressed his opposition to the scheme recommended by Morris. Nevertheless by this time the Colonial Office had evidently reconsidered their original decision and Chamberlain sanctioned Morris's proposal

1. 318/325/1616 Memorandum by Morris, 17 Jan. 1911

2. 318/306/7579 Morris to C.O., 11 Feb. 1903

for expenditure from the relief fund(1). Chamberlain's intention in so doing was to stimulate cultivation in the Island, and the result was the construction of the St. Vincent central cotton factory. The new factory was opened in April 1904 with an expenditure of £2,512 met from the Soufrière relief fund(2). The outlay on construction was high but the factory was a large one containing eight gins. Its operations involved both the ginning of cotton for a fee and also co-operative shipping and sale. In its first factory season, St. Vincent produced its 'superfine' varieties - the highest-priced cotton in the Empire - a distinction which it retained throughout the period under review. From this promising start, cotton in the Island rapidly developed. By 1911 St. Vincent was producing cotton to the value of £44,237(3), and except for continuing production of arrowroot for which the Island was unusually suited, all cultivation gave way before cotton. Until 1911, this relieved the depression from which St. Vincent had been suffering, cotton providing a high level of employment and an increased revenue. The opposition of Morris to increased peasant settlement in the Island after about April 1906 rested to a large degree on the requirements of labour for cotton. The progress of St. Vincent agriculture during this period was not, however, a happy one. After about 1911 not only did the price of cotton decline

1. 318/306/17028 Llewelyn to Chamberlain, 26 May 1903.
Also Chamberlain to Llewelyn, 18 May 1903, Morris to Pearson, 13 Mar. 1903, and Morris to Lucas, 23 April 1903
The reaction of Vernon to the original request was consistent with the usual Colonial Office response when the merits of alternative cultivations were compared with sugar. The difference in this case lay in the fact that sugar was considered as irretrievably lost in St. Vincent
2. 321/223/29906 Administrator, St. Vincent to C.O., 26 July 1904
3. 318/328/7073 Watts to C.O., 10 Feb. 1912
enc. Report of Eighth Agricultural Conference, 7 Mar. 1912

until United Kingdom Government purchase during the War stimulated it, but the yield achieved in St. Vincent also fell. From a maximum in 1906 of 175 lbs of lint per acre it had dropped by 1911 to only 68 lbs(1). This was caused by the attack of diseases, erratic rainfall, and a declining soil fertility(2). By 1917 planters in the Island were increasing the area under sugar, which was considered by many of them, including the Acting Administrator, De Freitas, to be a more promising crop.

In Montserrat, as in St. Vincent, cotton was encouraged by the Imperial Department of Agriculture in an effort to establish an organised industry. It was successful and attained a position of paramount importance, the solvency of the Island resting upon it. Although early efforts were made with the lime industry, a hurricane in 1899 destroyed most of the stands. Nevertheless limes, in the hands of the private Montserrat Company, did recover and throughout the period a small output was maintained, but both Morris and Watts agreed that the industry was too precarious to form the mainstay of the Island. Instead the Imperial Department of Agriculture directed attention towards cotton, for which they considered some 4,000 to 5,000 acres in the Island to be suitable. In 1903 following their construction at St. Kitts, the private company of Sendall and Wade erected a ginney at Montserrat(3). From a planting in 1903 of 600 acres of sea island cotton, annual output by 1911 was 404,733 lbs with a value of over £30,000(4). Montserrat, like St. Vincent, suffered

1. 318/346/2229 Watts to C.O., 13 Dec. 1918 enc. Address on St. Vincent cotton delivered by Watts to the local Agricultural and Commercial Society on 19 Oct. 1918
2. 617 No. 17 1918 Report of St. Vincent Agricultural Department. Report on the Cotton Industry
3. *West Indian Bulletin*, vol. VIII 1906 Dr. F. Watts, 'Cotton Industry in the Leeward Islands'
4. 318/328/7073 Watts C.O., 10 Feb. 1912 enc. Report of Eighth A.C. 7 Mar. 1912

from an erratic climate, and particularly from drought, though for the most part the estates were able to combat this effectively, and apart from the vicissitudes of the market, cotton cultivation in the Island proved very successful.

In the small Leeward Island of Anguilla and in the Windward Island of Carriacou cotton was also the principal cultivation. In Anguilla it was established almost entirely through the initiative of Carter Rey, a planter(1). He established a gin in 1905 with the assistance of the British Cotton Growers' Association from whom he subsequently obtained loans. He also procured assistance under the Leeward Islands Cotton Industry Aid Act of 1904(2). As well as ginning peasant cotton, his own estate produced a high-grade crop. In contrast, Carriacou, where cotton had been cultivated for many years prior to its reintroduction elsewhere, persisted in the production of the inferior Marie Galantie variety(3). In 1904 Carriacou and Grenada raised only 32 acres of sea island out of 4,088 under cotton in the two Islands(4). The difference in the market price of the two varieties is illustrated by the returns for 1910. The value of the lint exported from Anguilla in that year was almost identical to that from Grenada and Carriacou. In obtaining this, however, Anguilla produced only 148,595 lbs of lint compared with 274,224 lbs from the two Windward Islands(5).

1. See page 159
2. See page 160. Also 154 no. 12 Leeward Federal Acts 8687 no. 4 of 1904. An Act to regulate advances in Aid of the Cotton Industry, 22 Feb. 1904
3. Marie Galantie cotton was a hybrid variety: short staple and ratooning
4. 318/310/40680 Morris to C.O., 19 Nov. 1904 enc. Table indicating the areas under cotton in the West Indies. The area in Grenada, though small, probably accounted for most of the sea island acreage
5. 318/328/7073 Watts to C.O., 10 Feb. 1912 enc. Report of Eighth A.C., 7 Mar. 1912

Lime cultivation developed into the principal industry of Dominica, though it was also conducted upon a smaller scale in Montserrat, St. Lucia and Carriacou. Dominica was ideally suited to fruit cultivation, and although the peasantry throughout the period continued to raise a quantity of cacao, the early plantation experiments of Rowntree & Company with this crop did not lead to large-scale production. Instead, following the success of experiments at the local botanic station with limes, this fruit, with the benefit of high prices, began from 1905 to oust alternative cultivations. The Imperial Department of Agriculture contribution to the Dominica lime industry comprised, for the most part, experiments to combat scale insects. However, as early as 1904 Morris informed the Colonial Office that he had no misgivings regarding the future of the industry. By 1910, the annual value of Dominica limes and lime juice was £54,931(1). The United States embargo on lime products from April to September 1918 did not much affect the plantations which exported most of their crop in the form of pipes of concentrated juice. The popularity of this cultivation never diminished and in 1921, the year when prices slumped, there was a record crop; even the peasants who had difficulty in disposing of the produce adopted limes to a considerable extent in preference to cacao. Montserrat continued throughout to ship a small quantity of limes, but for more positive efforts to encourage this crop it is necessary to look to St. Lucia. In March 1913, Harcourt approved the erection by the Colonial Government of a lime juice factory(2). This factory was opened in November 1913, and after an initial period of difficult competition with buyers in Castries, it proved a distinct

1. 318/325/1616 Memorandum by Morris, 17 Jan. 1911

2. 321/273/2545 Cameron to Sadler, 19 Dec. 1913

success. Probably stimulated by the success of St. Lucia in developing this lucrative minor industry, the efforts which had been made on a small scale since 1915 in Grenada were increased in 1918, apparently on the initiative of the local administration(1). No factory was constructed, however, and exports of fruit to the United States were difficult; also the high price of cacao was a further disincentive. Consequently the cultivation did not develop and the Colonial Office felt that its introduction, at this time, was misguided. Despite its triumph in St. Lucia, the crop, even at a more favourable time, might not have prospered in Grenada for it did not do so in the comparable conditions of Carriacou. A private lime juice factory was erected in the latter dependency in 1911 but, apparently because of crop disease, did not prove a success.

Prior to the 1897 Royal Commission the cacao industry of Grenada developed as sugar declined. It enabled the Island to achieve rapidly a sounder position than most of the other islands. In August 1900 Sir Alfred Moloney reported to Chamberlain that the prosperity of the cacao industry was permitting planters to meet their debts and a promising financial position was developing. Apart from the danger of dependence on a single cultivation which was illustrated by low prices immediately prior to the War, and again to a lesser extent during the United Kingdom embargoes on cacao imports, Grenada's position until the slump of 1921 was satisfactory. Cacao was the second-largest export of the West Indies, though the biggest producers were Jamaica and Trinidad. Grenada production rose steadily, undertaken

1. 321/300/2545 Haddon-Smith to Long, 2 Aug. 1918

by both planters and peasants, and the only assistance necessary from the Imperial Department of Agriculture was in the form of advice upon preparation of beans and the combat of disease. Probably because of this success in Grenada, it was almost universally recommended by the Imperial Department of Agriculture. St. Lucia maintained a small but declining output following the adoption of the crop by some planters during the sugar crisis at the beginning of the period. The peasants of Dominica likewise steadily reduced their cacao cultivation, and the process would probably have been more rapid but for the difficulties which they encountered in lime cultivation and the distribution by the Imperial Department of Agriculture of improved varieties of cacao plants.

The only remaining agricultural industry which grew to significant size during this period was rice cultivation in British Guiana. Rice was a staple diet in the Colony and elsewhere in the West Indies, consumed particularly by the East Indian population. In 1895, 34 million pounds were imported to British Guiana to the value of £142,000. By 1909 the import of rice was valued at only £7,000 and the Colony exported over eight million pounds valued at £50,000(1). This cultivation was almost entirely in the hands of East Indian peasant proprietors, though in view of its success the Colonial Government hoped that companies might become interested in large-scale planting. This did not occur to any significant extent though some applications were made by capitalists for leases for rice cultivation. Although it had declined slightly by 1921, in 1917 the area under rice was 58,090 acres compared with 77,828 acres under

1. 318/325/1616 Memorandum by Morris, 17 Jan. 1911

canes(1). The comparison gives a clear indication of the importance of rice, though the value of output per acre was much lower than that of sugar, which remained the predominant crop.

Throughout the West Indies a number of minor cultivations existed. The St. Vincent arrowroot industry provided a significant export during the whole of the period, and should not perhaps be considered a minor industry, though it lacked the security of market necessary for development(2). Limited cultivation of crops which were more extensively grown elsewhere was common in many colonies; for example, limes in British Guiana and cacao in St. Lucia. In addition to these crops and the ground provisions(3) of the peasantry, coconuts, coffee and rubber could be found almost universally. Sometimes these cultivations appear to hold great promise; in December 1902 Morris advised the Dominica planters to persevere with coffee because of the suitability of the soil. Similarly but equally unsuccessfully he recommended sisal in Montserrat. In British Guiana considerable interest was exhibited in rubber for some years. Elsewhere small cultivations continued in a healthy condition without ever growing to prominence, either on account of limited demand or difficulties of marketing. The onion cultivations of Antigua and Montserrat were of this nature.

1. 114 no. 162 1917 British Guiana Administration Reports Report of the Department of Lands and Mines
2. See page 271 Also 318/306/17028 Morris to C.O., 17 April 1903 and 318/279/9976 Minutes by E. R. Darnley, 17 March 1914
3. Ground Provisions, sometimes termed food crops, were those intended for local or inter-colonial consumption. They included all meal-producing plants, the most common of which were arrowroot, cassava, sweet potatoes, yams, eddoes, tannias, refuge and various other beans, legumes, red cow pea, white pigeon pea, broom corn, onions and rice. Sugar also might be termed a ground provision depending on the location and manner of the production

The extent of diversification which was achieved is attributable in a large measure to the work of the Imperial Department of Agriculture. No significant direct Colonial Office support for this Department was forthcoming. Indeed the Colonial Office was likely to look with disfavour on new cultivations, no matter how promising, if they appeared to represent competition for the sugar industry. Thus the position of the sugar planters remained remarkably secure. It was the force of economic necessity which led to new cultivations, not a desire to diversify. Occasionally individual initiative played an outstanding role, as was the case with Carter Rey in Anguilla. The production of cotton was stimulated by the important contribution of machinery and funds from the British Cotton Growers' Association. This may in turn have encouraged the colonial governments in financing the erection of factories. The principal contribution of the Colonial Office lay with its persistence, in the face of Treasury hostility or indifference, in securing Imperial assistance for a continuation of the Imperial Department of Agriculture(1), which invariably had a hand in every measure of agricultural development.

Beyond fishing and the raising of livestock, which except in British Guiana was primarily a peasant occupation, the only industries besides agriculture involved the extraction of mineral deposits. In the colonies under consideration the most important of these deposits was the gold of British Guiana. Chamberlain placed much hope in the potential of this industry, but in fact the goldfields soon became exhausted. From an output in 1897 of 121,490 ounces, by 1917 the figure

1. 318/319/30184 B.C.G.A. to C.O., 13 Aug. 1908 enc. Resolution. Lucas minuted on 20 Aug. 1908 '...we have had and shall have such a fight for funds to keep the Department going.' This minute led to: C.O. to Treasury, 4 Sept. 1908

had fallen to 29,538 ounces(1). The War was in part responsible as it made it difficult to dispose of gold and of the small quantities of diamonds that were mined. Nevertheless, despite the discovery of a new field in 1910 the annual figures for gold production indicate a steady decline. The discovery of bauxite in the Colony led to numerous applications for mining leases. After some misgivings on the part of the Colonial Office regarding the wide concessions requested, a lease was granted to the Demerara Bauxite Company in 1916. This was, however, the only one and further concessions were prohibited by Bonar Law until after the War in order to permit an assessment of Imperial requirements. Expert opinion differed as to the quantity of bauxite existing in the Colony, and its development was still under consideration at the close of the period. There was much speculation concerning the existence of further minerals, particularly oil, but survey was difficult and expensive and no significant discoveries were forthcoming.

In Barbados also there was interest throughout the period in the possible discovery of oil in commercial quantities. In July 1898 the West Indies Oil Syndicate asked for Imperial assistance but it was informed by the Colonial Office that the matter was one for private enterprise(2). In February 1904, a Bill which would have accorded to a single company a monopoly of potential oil exports was defeated(3); the Colonial Office would in any event have been unprepared to allow such an Act. The presence of oil in sufficient

1. 114 no. 130 1909-10 and no. 162, 1917-18 British Guiana A.R. Report of the D.L.M.
2. 28/246/18468 Hay to Chamberlain, 27 July 1898
3. 28/262/3885 Hodgson to Lyttleton, 17 Feb. 1904
See also 28/262/5853 Hodgson to Lyttleton, 17 Feb. 1904

quantities remained uncertain, though geologists' reports suggested that a small industry might be built up. Optimism remained, but test boring during the period did not meet with success. The only other mineral deposits of note were in the small Antigua-administered dependency of Redonda. The Island contained deposits of phosphate of alumina which were mined under licence, and exported by the Redonda Phosphate Company. As with the development of other industries the Colonial Office maintained the attitude that prospecting for and exploitation of minerals was a concern for private enterprise and capital. However, in the case of Barbados it was prepared, if necessary, to safeguard the interests of the Colony by disallowing an Act for an oil export monopoly. In somewhat different circumstances, Bonar Law forbade concessions for bauxite mining in British Guiana until its value to the Empire could be ascertained.

CHAPTER THREE

LAND SETTLEMENT: ST. VINCENT AND UNION ISLAND

When the West India Royal Commission of 1897 recommended the settlement of peasants on the land, the decision was in part one of immediate expediency, particularly pressing in the case of St. Vincent where the unemployment of large numbers of agricultural labourers seemed imminent. Such labourers would then be faced in the Commission's opinion with the alternative either of emigrating or becoming self-supporting by cultivating small plots of land on their own account(1). In fact so pressing did the Commission regard the situation in St. Vincent that it proposed the extreme measure of permitting the Island Government to purchase compulsorily estates suitable for peasant settlement. Looking beyond the short-term necessities of St. Vincent, the Royal Commission also recommended the general extension of peasant land ownership in the Caribbean colonies. The Commissioners did not make clear in their Report whether they expected these peasant settlers to follow a mere subsistence agriculture, or to contribute to the economic strength of the colonies by way of exports. The terms of the Report suggest the latter, but more conclusively Dr. Morris, an adviser to the Commission, and subsequently head of Imperial Department of Agriculture, constantly pressed economic crops on settlers(2). Nevertheless some grounds for doubt in this respect exist. Dr. Francis Watts, close associate of Morris and later to succeed him as Imperial Commissioner, wrote in December 1905 that the

1. Report of W.I.R.C. 1898 para.112

2. See pages 126 and 127

success of peasant settlements could not be judged by their exports(1). It is evident, however, that if peasant settlement was in any degree to replace plantation agriculture, then the collective wealth of these colonies could only be maintained if the peasants, like the plantation owners, produced for markets outside the West Indies. This consideration was reflected in the pressure which the local agricultural departments of the colonies under consideration usually directed towards small growers to raise economic crops.

The peasants could hold land under a variety of tenure, all of which, even the destructive practice of squatting, could be held to fall broadly within the Royal Commission's recommendation. Nevertheless the renting of Crown or private land could not lead to the development of a peasant proprietary which was the nub of their recommendation. Thus when planters, as they frequently did, pointed out that peasants could obtain land, they were thinking in terms of renting; but advocates of the peasant proprietary stressed the prerequisite of ownership which by providing the settler with a secure and long-term stake in the land would create the desire to improve holdings in respect of fertility, better crops, the construction of houses, and in other directions. Rented land was generally cultivated without regard to the future and wasted by the continuous production of provision crops without manure, which led to rapid loss of fertility. With regard to peasant purchase, however, there were a number of difficulties.

Private land was seldom offered for sale in small lots, and when it was

1. *West Indian Bulletin* vol. VII, 1906 Dr. F. Watts, 'Agricultural Industries of Montserrat'. A report forwarded by Morris to C.O., 11 Dec. 1905

few peasants could afford the price, at least without recourse to money-lenders which provided a poor start for the peasant landowner. In some cases, Crown Land was suitable for peasant settlement and in such cases, for example in British Guiana and St. Lucia, purchase was encouraged by the government(1). Normally, the absence of communications by road and the situation of such land near the centres of the islands, which precluded transport by sea, made the raising of crops other than provisions for local consumption impractical. The same disadvantage would have made government control, and agricultural department aid, difficult for large numbers of settlers. Perhaps the greatest drawback was that Crown Lands were not situated close to populated areas, for it was here that the demand for land existed. This is confirmed by the fact that if government settlement schemes involved the peasants moving far from their homes, their willingness to participate usually disappeared. For these reasons, most practical steps towards encouraging peasant settlement took place on estates especially purchased for the purpose by the colonial government, in areas where a demand for land was believed to exist. The estates were then divided and land settlement schemes set up, by which the peasant purchased his land over a period of several years. During this time the government retained control over the holdings, and settlers failing to cultivate properly, pay instalments punctually, or who were absent for longer than the permitted period, or otherwise infringed the regulations, could be rejected from the scheme. These regulations varied somewhat among the settlement schemes in the different colonies but certain features were common to almost all. Except in Carriacou and Union, absence from

1. See pages 84 and 110

the holdings was only permitted for short periods. Mortgages could not be obtained on allotments and alienation during the period of purchase was strictly prohibited. In practice, the schemes were self-financing in the long run; indeed some showed a profit, though this was not the original intention, and interest was only charged on overdue instalments in order to encourage prompt payment. In Carriacou alone was the greater prosperity of the peasants felt to justify a small interest charge on outstanding instalments. This had the desirable effect of producing substantial, and sometimes total, payment for the holding many years in advance. The finance for the original purchase of the land and for the administration of the scheme was provided by the reserve funds of the colonies concerned, except in the case of St. Vincent, which received an Imperial grant.

The first consideration in peasant settlement was the availability of land and here it is difficult to give precise figures. The area of land in the West Indies excluding Trinidad and Jamaica, was estimated by Dr. Morris in 1902 at 17,984,000 acres, of which about 84,000 acres, or less than one-third of the cultivable land, was being utilised. British Guiana possessed an additional 57,267,200 acres of which about 63,200 acres was beneficially occupied(1). Although sometimes extensive, for the reasons already indicated, Crown Land was usually unsuitable for peasant settlement beyond the level of mere squatting. In the exceptional locations where such land was suitable it was sold upon easy terms, though the scattered holdings which resulted made supervision and assistance difficult. The suggestion of a Commission in

1. Estimate by Dr. Morris in *Barbados Agricultural Reporter*
7 May 1902

the Leeward Islands in 1898 that the peasants who might participate in a settlement scheme should be permitted to choose their own land was dismissed as impractical by G. Whitfield-Smith, travelling instructor of the Imperial Department of Agriculture. The impracticality arose from Whitfield-Smith's perhaps unjustified belief that the peasants would '...probably select remote localities beyond the reach of roads(1)'. It is interesting that where Crown Land was popular little diminution in sales occurred when settlement schemes were inaugurated, despite the apparent competition. It is impossible to generalise regarding the availability to the colonial governments, of abandoned estates, suitable for establishing controlled settlement schemes. In St. Vincent the shortage of such land does not appear as a significant factor in settlement. In certain of the Leewards, however, and particularly in Barbados, it undoubtedly accounted in part for the lack of enthusiasm of the local administrations for government schemes of land settlement. But even in these colonies the opposition of planters, the apparent lack of interest on the part of the local government, and the limited demand for land from the peasants appear as equal or perhaps more significant factors operating against such schemes than the availability of land.

The other major factor in peasant settlement was the attitude of the settler himself, which scarcely lends itself to generalisation. The question is, however, of the utmost importance as it was a key factor in the comparative failure of land settlement in the West Indies, at least on the scale and of the nature that the Royal Commission had

1. 318/297/2918 Morris to C.O., 19 Jan. 1899. enc. a report on Montserrat

intended. Excluding Europeans, coloureds, and the small number of indigenous Indians of British Guiana, four main ethnic groups existed in the Caribbean, namely the Negro, the East Indian coolie, the Chinese immigrant and the native Carib. Of these groups only the former two are of any significance with regard to land settlement. The Caribs were restricted where they still survived to limited areas of reservations, and apart from very occasional casual labour in British Guiana on the cattle savannahs they were of no economic significance, and the Chinese, of whom a small number had entered British Guiana, were only rarely involved in agriculture, more usually filling the role of store-keeper or trader.

Persons of Negro descent were the predominant inhabitants of the West Indies; it was necessarily upon them that peasant proprietaries had to be based, and it was upon them that the experiment was in practice to founder. Reference to some of the characteristics of the Negro which foreshadowed the failure of settlement schemes can be found in the Report of the Commission itself. It described, for example, his disinclination to labour extending over a considerable period of time (1), though contrary examples could be cited; this characteristic was to prove not uncommon among settlers. The Commission also drew attention to the Negro peasant's generosity and carelessness as to the future, when in fact the need of a proprietor was frugality to acquire the capital necessary for success but unobtainable by mortgage on settlement grants; serious attention to the future was necessary to ensure the survival of the plot by the provision of windbreaks, adequate drainage, and the like. Perhaps the most important characteristic of

1. Report of W.I.R.C. 1898. Description commences para.113

all was the want of knowledge concerning cultivation which proved so difficult for agricultural instructors to instil. The migratory habits of a large proportion of the peasant populations were also damaging to settlement schemes. The scale of such migration is difficult to ascertain as records were not kept, but the population figures show a considerable discrepancy between the estimated population and that returned at each ten-year census. In every instance the explanation afforded by the Registrar General was that of migration between the islands, British Guiana, and favourite areas of high-wage work, such as the Panama isthmus, Surinam, Cayenne, the United States, and to a small extent Cuba(1). Some of these workers returned to their original homes for a proportion of the year, but the irregularity of such habits was considered incompatible with a peasant proprietary, and a large number of forfeitures in government schemes occurred through continued or repeated absence from holdings. Despite these characteristics, which were ultimately an important factor in restricting land settlement, there did exist a very genuine though limited demand for land in many of the colonies. In addition to existing peasant farmers it was seldom difficult to attract a certain number of labourers who were prepared to take up land on settlement schemes and conscientiously work their holdings. Unfortunately such groups normally proved to be a very small proportion of the labouring population, though there was no reason to believe at the outset that this would be the case. On the 30th March 1898 the African Association addressed a long memorial to the Secretary of State, Joseph Chamberlain, which praised the recommendations of the Royal Commission, especially those relating to peasant settlement. It advocated free grants of land in British

1. See Colonial Blue Books for the Reports of the Registrars on population statistics

Guiana and if possible elsewhere, and government financial support for the new settlers, apparently assuming that the chance to become peasant farmers would be eagerly seized by the labouring classes(1).

In practice, the East Indian coolie appears as a much more reliable settler, and it is perhaps unfortunate that his desire to remain with his fellow countrymen in distinct localities prevented his providing an example to the Negro settler. The very great success of East Indian settlement in British Guiana, mostly not in association with government settlement schemes, is an indication of the basically sound notion of peasant land settlement. It is true that in this Colony the coolie was assisted by the favourable nature of large areas for the production of rice, but even allowing for this the determination of the East Indian to make a success of his holding appears in sharp contrast to the apparent indifference of large numbers of Negro cultivators.

An examination of the various schemes of land settlement will illustrate the problems which existed within the individual colonies. On the 26th July 1898, the Colonial Office sent a circular despatch to the colonies under consideration, which indicated the general lines of action to be taken, and requested observations. Steps were already under way in St. Vincent because of the supposed crisis, but the despatch stated: 'there is probably no colony in the West Indies in which it might not be of advantage that the government should endeavour to increase the facilities for the settlement of land in small holding'. The Colonial Office went on to lay down instructions regarding any possible land settlement schemes. It was particularly important that

1. 318/293/7321 African Association to Chamberlain, 7 March 1898
enc. Printed Memorial

land for settlement was carefully selected and Chamberlain emphasised that the best available expert advice, and Colonial Office authority, should be obtained before any land was purchased. Proposed sites should be as near to markets and roads as possible and they should comprise a continuous line of settlement. In practice, considerations of this kind made it difficult to obtain suitable land when other obvious features were considered, such as soil fertility, wind protection, availability of water, and others; in many cases the choice became restricted to abandoned sugar estates. Considerable attention was also paid in the despatch to the need to prevent squatting, as far as possible. In a number of larger islands this proved to be extremely difficult, particularly in view of the limited staffs of many land departments. The despatch emphasised the damage done by the squatters to the soil and timber, and hence to water conservation; and it was also true, though not mentioned, that squatting which involved no payment of any kind reduced the attractiveness of legal settlement in the eyes of the peasant proprietor. Finally, the despatch stressed that permanent cultivation was to be encouraged rather than the mere production of food crops(1). This significant despatch did not lay the foundation for close Colonial Office interest in land settlement, except possibly in St. Vincent where an Imperial grant was involved. Elsewhere action or otherwise was left entirely to the local administration, and information on the progress of peasant settlement was received in London with little interest.

The first steps towards settlement in St. Vincent had already been

1. 318/294/17143 C.O. circular despatch, 26 July 1898

taken before 1898; and since this Island was to provide a model for later settlement schemes, it would appear the best starting point for a consideration of land settlement. The Island, in the centre of the Windward group, has an area of 85,000 acres of which in 1897 about 13,000 were under permanent cultivation. Probably only slightly more was cultivated in 1885 when the first scheme for land settlement was initiated. At that time the population was just under 41,000 and mostly situated on the estate lands close to the sea. The Crown Lands in the centre of the Island were mountainous and sloped heavily, reaching a height of 4,000 ft. at Morne à Garou and 3,000 ft. at the volcano Soufrière. It was upon these hilly Crown Lands interspersed with valley that the 1885 scheme was attempted(1). The experiment was not a success, partly because of the distance of the holdings from roads and markets, and partly also because of the nature of the hilly, wooded land selected. Flooding in 1896 prevented the payment of instalments and led the Royal Commission of 1897 to regard such land, at least initially, as unsuitable(2). The hurricane of 1898 effectively terminated the scheme and when it was recommended the following year it was upon rather different lines. The new land settlement scheme was from the outset intended as more than a simple scheme to alleviate distress among the peasant population. The importance of raising other than ground provisions was stressed by the Colonial Office. The unique feature of this scheme was the Imperial grant of £15,000 with which it was established. This sum, in addition to a similar grant to Dominica, was included in the Parliamentary supplementary

1. *W.T.B.*, vol.XIV, 1914 Gilbert Auchinleck (Superintendent of Agriculture, Grenada), G. Whitfield-Smith (Commissioner of Carriacou), Walter Bertrand (Land Officer, Grenada), 'Government Schemes of Land Settlement in Grenada and the Grenadines'

2. Report of W.I.R.C., 1898 paras.374-376

estimates for 1897-8 with the explanation that '...this amount is required to enable the Island Governments of St. Vincent and Dominica to make certain roads and settle labourers on the land as recommended by the West India Royal Commission'(1).

The St. Vincent Government wasted no time in initiating the scheme. Dr. Morris reached Barbados on the 3rd October 1898 and five days later he was in St. Vincent, to advise on land suitable for peasant settlement. His presence was in response to an urgent request from the Governor of the Windwards, Sir A. Moloney. The Agricultural Commissioner's report was presented to the Governor, and the Colonial Office instructed him to act upon it immediately(2). As a result during 1899 a number of estates, mostly on the leeward side of the Island, were purchased by the Government for land settlement. Although the Government possessed the power to purchase compulsorily under the Land Settlement Ordinance passed in January 1899(3), in most cases this was not necessary and the earliest acquisitions, the group of estates known collectively as Linley Valley and Cumberland Valley, were purchased by amicable agreement for £4,385. On the windward side of the Island, however, the estates of Richmond Hill, Park Hill and New Adelphi were compulsorily purchased in 1899. The total amount of land thus acquired in 1899 was 3,001 acres on the leeward coast and 1,386 acres on the windward(4). Purchase for land settlement was

1. 312/254/5831 Sadler to Crewe, 28 Feb. 1910 Proposals for utilising balance of grant. See also Darnley's minutes on this paper with history of the Land Settlement Fund
2. 318/293/25115 Morris to C.O., 28 Oct. 1898 C.O. to Morris, 15 Nov. 1898 and minute by C.P.L., 12 Nov. 1898. See also map in Appendix A
3. 262/24/2725 St. Vincent Acts, no.2 of 1899. An Ordinance to Authorise the acquisition of land for the establishment and location of smallholders and for other purposes connected therewith, 9 Jan. 1899
4. 321/193/32583 Thompson to C.O., 4 Nov. 1899

restricted to estates no longer in cultivation and whose acquisition was recommended by an expert of the Imperial Department of Agriculture. The acquisition of land for settlement was generally conducted without difficulties, the only expensive mistake which occurred involved the Mount Hope Estate in the Cumberland Valley, which was purchased and partly settled before it was discovered that it was unsuitable for a peasant proprietary owing to the effects of the 1898 floods.

As soon as the estates had been acquired the work of settlement began. Many of the new acquisitions already had settlers upon them; in these circumstances, following the general instructions of the Secretary of State, the sitting tenant was given the first option provided he could meet 25 per cent of the purchase price. Most existing tenants managed this though many argued initially their inability to do so. The manner of purchasing these estates was a varying down payment followed by ten equal instalments, commencing one year after initial occupation. The first work of survey and settlement commenced towards the end of 1899 and involved the Linley Valley estates of Rose Bank, Troumaca, Rose Hall and Belmont, and by September when the Administrator of St. Vincent, H. Thompson, forwarded a report of the work, some 70 persons had already been settled on these estates. At Hermitage in the Cumberland Valley the 20 or so existing tenants were to retain their land after survey. With regard to these Cumberland Valley estates an ominous note is struck in Thompson's report, for although the Convent and Belleisle Estates possessed a large quantity of bearing cacao, he wrote that '... the people are not showing any eagerness to take them up'(1). Generally, however, settlement proceeded with only minor

1. 321/193/32583 Thompson to C.O., 27 Sept. 1899

problems during 1899. The allotments offered to the peasants were of three types; first there were the agricultural allotments varying in size from three to ten acres, second, house or town spots of about 40 yards square, and third, a few acre lots for the poorer settlers who were unable to purchase full allotments(1). Although these allotments were intended primarily for agricultural labourers, as early as 1900 the Administration of St. Vincent, with the agreement of the Imperial Commissioner, recommended that the lots should not be restricted to agricultural labourers only but should be available to a small proportion of 'industrialists' or small tradesmen. Moloney added that the inclusion of a small percentage of persons within the scheme of a 'superior status' would be desirable, and at the Colonial Office Arthur Pearson minuted his agreement(2).

Before considering the first four years of the St. Vincent land settlement scheme up to 1903, which proved to be something of a watershed in its development, it is well to deal with the acquisition of the estates in the Buccament Valley. Faced with enthusiastic reports from the Imperial Department of Agriculture experts, the support of the new Governor of the Windwards, Sir R. Llewelyn, and of the Administrator of St. Vincent, Edward Cameron, the Colonial Office concurred in the purchase of estates in this valley(3). Only one recommendation to purchase was not proceeded with, namely the estate

1. *W.I.B.*, vol. XI 1910-11 W.N. Sands (Agricultural Superintendent), 'An Account of the Working of the Land Settlement Scheme in St. Vincent'
2. 321/200/23365 Moloney to Chamberlain, 4 July 1900 enc. Drayton's report on meeting of the Legislative Council, 5 April 1900
3. Though on all occasions the C.O. emphasised that expert advice was a necessary prerequisite to any purchase, see 321/208/29846 Llewelyn to Chamberlain, 24 Aug. 1901 and minutes upon this telegram.

of Rutland Vale, which was found to be still in cultivation; the Colonial Office expressed surprise that Moloney had ever recommended it in view of the Secretary of State's instructions against the purchase of such estates. Chamberlain approved the acquisition of Clare Valley and Questelles, including the separate settlement of Cooper's Bay, and these two joined the land settlement scheme near the close of 1901. With these purchases the initial scheme was complete, 5,060 acres having been acquired at a total cost of £14,706. Of this area, 3,247 acres remained after streams, forest reserves, building sites, roads, byways, township lots or extensions, and uncultivable land had been reserved. Such reservations were considered as a necessary reduction of the area for cultivation, and were a feature of land settlement schemes throughout the West Indies. The remaining land was divided into 633 lots averaging five acres, and 82 one-acre lots(1). The method of payment for estates has already been considered but equally important was the condition of enforcing residence on the holding. Except in special cases, the proprietor had to reside either on his allotment or in an associated township. A further provision was that during the time that instalments were being paid the settler was obliged to follow the instructions of the Imperial Department regarding all aspects of cultivation. Failure to adhere to any of these regulations could result in forfeiture of allotments.

The objections which the Royal Commission had anticipated from planters were forthcoming but were not strongly pressed. The most

1. *W.I.B.* vol. XI, 1910-11 W.N. Sands, 'An Account of the Working of the Land Settlement Scheme in St. Vincent' See also Appendix A.

likely explanation for this lay in the large population in St. Vincent relative to the area of cultivable land; though it began to decline after 1900, the reduction was scarcely noticeable. Although the planters objected in principle to the loss of any potential labourers, in practice adequate labour was available, certainly to industries requiring less workers than did sugar. The population was sufficiently large in the view of the Colonial Office for it to allow the emigration to Jamaica in 1902 of certain refugees from the Soufrière eruption, when they expressed this desire rather than settle on the land which the Colony was prepared to provide. Of greater importance than the attitude of the planters was that of the peasants themselves. They felt that the Imperial grant should make it unnecessary for them to pay for their holdings at all, and coupled with this was the belief that the Government would repossess their holdings as soon as they were under cultivation. For the latter reason many refused the free supply of plants and seeds offered by the botanic station. Another notable setback occurred in the period prior to 1903 with the double eruption of the Soufrière in May and September 1902, which among other things resulted in the settlers' alleged inability to meet instalments(1).

In practice the demand for land was not nearly as great as had been anticipated, and as was to be the experience elsewhere the desire for land often melted away when the land was actually made available. In other cases, settlers were quite unprepared to meet the requirement of one or other of the regulations for more than a short time. Out of the original area of 3,247 acres, some 272 acres comprising 50

1. Ibid. See also 321/219/33747 Melville to C.O., 10 Aug. 1903 and Lucas to Melville, 26 Sept. 1903

lots remained unsold as late as the end of March 1910. A more alarming feature in the early years than the failure of considerable areas of land to be taken up was the use made of much of land that was sold. The importance of planting permanent crops in preference to ground provisions was stressed by the Imperial Department of Agriculture and had also been emphasised in Chamberlain's despatch. To facilitate this the regulations directed that peasants should follow the recommendations of the agricultural instructors with regard to the planting of crops. This work, initially conducted by the curator of the botanic station, was in 1902 placed in the hands of a full-time agricultural instructor, Thomas Osment. The enforced absence of Osment from the allotments during parts of 1902 and 1903, while he was engaged in relief work following the Soufrière eruptions, probably did no more than strengthen the already firmly established tendency of the settlers to grow ground provisions rather than permanent crops. The position was further complicated by the encouragement given to the settlers of New Adelphi by officials of the Crown Lands Department to grow arrowroot and sugar cane. Such advice was contrary to the policy of the Imperial Department of Agriculture and Morris alleged that the only reason for it was that such cultivations offered a better prospect of instalments being met(1).

The failure to pay instalments was another unpromising feature in the early years of the St. Vincent scheme. The settlers claimed that their inability to meet these payments was due to the Soufrière eruption and to outbreaks of anthrax, but in his report for the year 1903, G. Kernahan, the St. Vincent Land Commissioner, expressed the opinion,

1. 318/306/31989 Morris to C.O., 14 Aug. 1903

supported by the Administrator, that, for the most part, the Negro peasant was unwilling to pay any money when a possibility existed of his retaining his holding without payments. In his covering despatch, the Administrator recommended that as forfeitures which had occurred during the year seemed to have had a good effect, a generally tougher line should be taken with the settlers in future. He wrote that '...it is an absolutely fatal thing in dealing with the Negro to make conditions and then not hold strictly to them'(1). It is also significant that these difficulties arose in connection with settlers who had been carefully selected by the Administrator on the recommendation of the Land Commissioner, a practice which ended in 1903 owing to the many duties of the Administrator. It is evident that by 1903, the settlement scheme was exhibiting certain unfortunate features, a failure to meet instalments and the transformation of the majority of the holdings into mere provision grounds being the most serious. It is of course possible that the volcanic eruptions were in part responsible, but since the former evil continued to grow despite an increased enforcing of forfeiture this would seem unlikely.

There was a slight increase in the area of the settlement scheme as a consequence of the Soufrière eruptions, when additional land at Clare Valley and the estate of Camden Park were obtained, both from relief rather than land settlement funds. A house plot and two or three acres were offered to individual refugees and the settlements were then administered by the Land Commissioner and Agricultural Instructor in common with the other estates.(2) The history of the

1. Ibid.

2. 617 no. 3 Report on St. Vincent Botanic Station.
Report on Land Settlement

land settlement scheme after 1903 is mainly concerned with the efforts of the departments involved to administer effectively the existing settlements without any possibility of their extension. The decision not to extend the scheme was the culmination of a number of factors. The existing settlement lands were not selling well and in May 1905, Llewelyn informed the Colonial Office: 'I have only acquired one estate since I assumed the administration of the government (Clare Valley and Questelles) and I have long been convinced that it would be a mistake to acquire any more estates in St. Vincent under the original plan of the land settlement scheme.' In fact, the amount of land on hand was sufficiently great for plans to be considered for disposing of it '...to other persons than those for whom the lands were originally acquired'. The situation was such that the Governor recommended no further survey of acquired estates and no settlement other than of lands already surveyed and laid out. He also advised '...a gradual winding-up of the Land Commissioner's and Survey Department', although he warned that the Agricultural Department should watch for some years the existing settlers. In his despatch to the Governor the Administrator, Edward Cameron, described the considerable efforts which had been made to sell the vacant allotments and the very poor response which had been forthcoming. The most interesting letter, however, was that of Kernahan, forwarded by Cameron to the Governor in May 1905, in which in support of the idea of inviting peasants from elsewhere to settle on lands available in St. Vincent, he wrote: 'I had before me the object of furthering the scheme as I considered that with Government help in the other Colonies a reliable class of peasant might be introduced here who would give a certain amount of stimulus to our peasant and thus our people would wake up to the fact that it is absolutely necessary to work and better themselves.' The proposal was not pursued, largely because Dr. Morris

felt that peasants from other colonies could not be attracted, or if they were, they would not be of the class desired. In fact the Imperial Commissioner had written to the Governor shortly before, expressing his view that the original intention of the land settlement scheme had been to afford support to persons thrown out of employment and that '...apparently all the people who desire land have now been provided' (1). The disinclination of the peasantry in St. Vincent and elsewhere to move away from their homes to new areas for settlement makes it possible, though unlikely, that had new estates in populated areas been acquired settlers might have been forthcoming. However, there were further substantial difficulties.

One of these concerned the condition of the roads on the existing settlements, the dilapidated state of which was continuously alluded to in the agricultural instructors' report(2). This subject is considered in greater detail in a later chapter but there is no doubt that the limited funds available for the maintenance and construction of roads was an important factor limiting the possibility of further extension of settlement. Another drawback was the lack of available land. Llewelyn explained in 1904 that the acquisition of further estates would mean interfering with plantations still in cultivation to which Chamberlain had objected. Chamberlain's successor, Alfred Lyttelton, remained strongly of the view that

1. 321/227/20490 Llewelyn to Lyttelton, 31 May 1905
enc. (1) Cameron to Llewelyn, 25 May 1905
(2) Collected correspondence between Cameron and Kernahan
(3) Cameron to Morris, 22 April 1905
(4) Morris to Cameron, 18 May 1905
See in particular Cameron to Llewelyn, 25 May 1905, and correspondence between Cameron and Kernahan. Also Morris to Cameron, 18 May 1905
2. 617 nos.3 and 4 Reports on St. Vincent Botanic Stations
Reports of Agricultural Instructor

estates still raising crops, even to a limited extent, should not be purchased for settlement, and the Colonial Office even rejected Llewelyn's suggestion that assistance might be given to peasants near Kingstown to purchase lots which they had rented privately for many years. Officials accepted Morris's view that the compulsory purchase of such lots would spoil the frontage of the estate and thus its use for cacao cultivation; they apparently ignored the fact that most of these tenants had been spoiling the frontage for over ten years at an excessive rent. More tenable in view of the history of peasant settlement was Morris's objection that these 'squatting tenants' were not the type of person to be encouraged as peasant proprietors(1).

The progress of the existing settlements was generally unsatisfactory. Although sales of allotments continued, in many years these were exceeded by the number of forfeitures; in 1907, for example, there were 17 sales and 20 forfeitures, and Kernahan complained that '...by forfeiture we are getting an accumulating area and consequently a corresponding money value lying idle, and the scheme is being held back by lands thrown again on our hands which we cannot dispose of as fast as we forfeit'(2). Despite these conditions, there were demands for land in other localities reflecting, perhaps, the disinclination of the peasant to move far from the district in which he had always lived. The Government, armed with an increasing balance in the land settlement account, did make some additional purchases, though only when they were as certain as possible that the land would be taken up. In 1911 Sandy Bay in the north-east of the Island was

1. 321/223/21317 Llewelyn to Lyttelton, 27 May 1904
2. 321/237/24214 Williams to Elgin, 10 June 1907
enc. Cameron to Williams, 4 June 1907; transmitting Kernahan's report on the Land Settlement Scheme for 1906-1907 dated 27 May 1907

acquired to resettle a number of Caribs, and the small estate of Lammes, a few miles from Barrouallie, was purchased for the residents of that village(1). In 1912 the 400-acre Belair, some three miles from Kingstown on the windward side, was purchased at a cost of £3,181 in response to strong demands from the residents of Calliaqua for land. The most noticeable feature of these new settlements was the very high proportion of applications made for house or town spots and the consequent reduction in demand for agricultural allotments. These house spots were small and can be dissociated from the growth of a peasant proprietary. Of the 355 lots sold on all settlements between 1910 and 1914, 157 were for house or town lots which were quite inadequate for the production either of subsistence or economic crops. The result of these purchases, however, was to bring the number of settled agricultural lots in 1914 to approximately 1,505 with an average area of five acres(2). By 1922 a further 320 acres sold on the settlement estates had brought the number of allottees up to about 1,600. New acquisition after 1914 was rendered practically impossible by the Colonial Office instruction that further payment from the Land Settlement Fund was prohibited. In February 1917 the Secretary of State, W. H. Long, informed the Governor that the Fund was to be wound up and the outstanding balance to be repaid to the Imperial Government. This was done and the first instalment was paid in August 1917 by the Colonial Agents. The history of the Fund is interesting. It arose out of the Imperial grant of £15,000 for the construction of roads and for land settlement in St. Vincent. In 1900 Chamberlain

1. See map - Appendix A; also 263 no. 34 St. Vincent Sessional Papers. Report of the Superintendent of Crown Lands 1911-12
2. *W.I.B.* vol XIV, 1914 G. Auchinleck and others, 'Government Schemes of Land Settlement in Grenada and the Grenadines'

ruled that it was to remain an Imperial Fund and not to be transferred to the Colony, but that all expenses in any way associated with land settlement could be charged against it. A similar grant made to Dominica was completely spent. Understandably the St. Vincent Fund, initially diminished by the purchase of estates, subsequently increased as settlers paid instalments. Surprisingly this had not been foreseen and there were lengthy discussions at the Colonial Office as to the future of the Fund. The generally accepted view in the Colonial Office with regard to Imperial grants was that if they more than sufficed for their purpose the balance was repaid. This course of action was implemented in 1917.

Before leaving St. Vincent, it is necessary to consider the settlement which occurred outside government schemes. It is difficult to estimate this accurately as a considerable proportion of it involved the individual renting land from private owners. The largest collective settlements which existed outside the government schemes were those situated close to Kingstown in the vicinity known locally as Stuart Greggs, and the Mesopotamia Valley(1). The limiting factor in the case of Crown Lands was the lack of access and the 38 miles of Crown Land traces which existed at the outset of the period had not been appreciably increased by 1922(2). Nevertheless, a number of peasants either purchased or rented land of this description for the raising of provision crops. At the 31st March 1915 there were 1,024 such landholders, most of them peasants, and an additional 39 had been added by 1922. These holdings probably comprised about 11,000 acres and were cultivated

1. 263 no. 36 St. Vincent Sessional Papers Report of Crown Land Department
2. 263 no. 34, 36 and 40 St. Vincent Sessional Papers Calculation based upon the figures contained in the reports of the Superintendent of Crown Lands and of the Crown Land Department

may be considered almost exclusively as provision grounds(1).

Situated amongst the St. Vincent Grenadines was the small 2,000-acre Island of Union. Its population fluctuated because a high proportion were seamen, but during this period the total remained around 15,000. For some years prior to the 1897 Royal Commission the privately owned Island had been in a condition of general decline. Its principal crop was an inferior strain of Marie Galantie cotton, and illicit wood-cutting had destroyed the 600 or so acres of natural forest. The Island was particularly lawless and a well-known refuge for rum-smugglers. Despite conditions which would appear to have made the Island an obvious candidate for Government acquisition it was not until 1905 that the possibility was considered, and then not in terms of a land settlement scheme, but as a step towards the union of St. Vincent and Grenada. Opposition, particularly from St. Vincent, caused the scheme for union to be shelved, and with it, for a time, all idea for the purchase of Union. The question was revived in 1910 by the Governor, Sir J. H. Sadler, who argued that the situation was going from bad to worse, that conditions resembled the Middle Ages, and that only Government acquisition could remedy matters(1). Sadler's views were influenced by those of the Administrator, Gideon Murray, who described the immediate danger of plague in the principal villages of Clinton and Ashton. This danger decided the matter in the opinion of the Colonial Office, and upon their recommendation the Treasury authorised the expenditure of £6,700 necessary for the purchase. The payment was duly made from the St. Vincent Land Settlement Fund,

1. 321/254/3956 Sadler to Crewe, 17 Jan. 1910

and the Island was acquired in 1910. Upon acquisition 606 acres were set aside for re-forestation, which was an urgent priority to increase the rainfall but which was destined to be repeatedly hampered by bush fires. The remaining 1,400 acres were divided into 350 lots of between two and five acres. Regulations for the purchase of these holdings were very similar to those in St. Vincent, though payment was spread over 12 years(1). By 1913, 266 of the lots had been sold and the condition of the Island, according to Whitfield-Smith, was unrecognisable. Particularly noticeable was the solid and permanent nature of the houses built by the settlers on the holdings, indicating a long-term attitude and sense of commitment rare on settlements. The Commissioner wrote in 1914 of Union that '...people are making a great effort to erect neat and sometimes pretentious cottages on their holdings(2). The total expenditure on the scheme was £7,015, and the absence of forfeiture and the ready demand for land are illustrated by the fact that by December 1920 the scheme was showing a profit of £500, with £2,071 still realised. Although not intended to be profit-making, these figures indicate the enthusiasm with which the peasantry approached the project. The lawless nature of the Island was transformed, and from 60 civil and criminal cases in 1909 the figure had fallen to six by 1911.

Perhaps the most important question which arises from the experience of St. Vincent concerns the extent to which the nature of government settlement schemes was responsible for some of their difficulties.

1. 263 no. 24 St. Vincent Sessional Papers Report of
Commissioner of the Southern Grenadines)
2. 263 nos. 34 and 36 St. Vincent Sessional Papers Reports
of C.S.G.

It is evident that in order to secure a permanent peasant proprietary raising economic crops in a satisfactory fashion, a considerable body of peasants prepared to follow direction and determined to make a success of their holdings was required. Administrators appear to have been unanimous in believing that the peasants attracted by the St. Vincent schemes were not generally of that calibre. The characteristics of the schemes which appear to have influenced the attitudes of the settlers are considered in a subsequent chapter, but some observations at this point may be appropriate. A recent study of small farming in the Island of Jamaica (1) has identified many similarities with the attitudes adopted in the early St. Vincent schemes. This is particularly true of the selection of crops for cultivation. Rented or leased land is seldom used by the peasantry for the raising of permanent crops. Furthermore it appears that permanence of holding is not related in the minds of the peasantry to the possession of title documents, but rather to custom and tradition. In the light of this it seems very probable that most government settlers did not feel secure in the possession of their holdings. Regulations and visits from instructors would have increased this feeling. Indeed the allotments could be forfeited and thus the settlers were perfectly correct in believing that limitations existed in their ownership. Therefore the raising of food crops may in part have been a consequence of the conditions of tenure, and not exclusively related to lack of agricultural knowledge and inherent conservatism. If, as seems possible, the question of possession was a restricting factor then it is likely that the better class of settler, for whom administrators sought in vain, may have been attracted more strongly to the agriculturally

1. Edwards, *An Economic Study of Small Farming in Jamaica* pp. 111-114

satisfactory Crown Lands. In the latter case government interference ended with purchase. It is certainly the case that sales of Crown Land continued and were apparently unaffected by the establishment of government schemes.

CHAPTER FOUR

LAND SETTLEMENT: GRENADA, ST. LUCIA AND CARRIACOU

The Island of Grenada has an area of 85,120 acres. Like St. Vincent it is mountainous, though with a greater number of streams and springs. Its highest point is the Grant Etang, a mountain lake 1,740 feet above sea level. The population in 1897 was approximately 60,500 and was almost entirely of Negro descent, with some 1,210 European and 1,960 East Indian immigrants. At the time of the Royal Commission the situation existing in Grenada was very different to that of St. Vincent. Sugar had already been largely discontinued as an industry of any importance in the island. This had resulted in a gradual diminution in the labour requirements of the Presidency and had resulted in some settlement by the more enterprising and ambitious peasants. In such circumstances, the Royal Commission had not recommended a grant to assist settlement; and although the new Governor of the Windwards, Sir A. Moloney, wrote to the Colonial Office in August 1897 making some general observations with regard to the applicability of settlement schemes in the island no further action was taken for some ten years.

The Grenada peasants shared similar characteristics with those of St. Vincent. For example they were, initially at least, suspicious of the Government; in 1897 W. Broadway, the Curator of the Botanic Station wrote that '...many looked on suspiciously at a government officer interested in their plots of ground, and others again wished he had fortunes with him to dispense among them'!(1) Reflecting the inertia

1. 104 no. 25 Grenada Administration Report 1897. Report on the Botanic Station

of the Imperial and Colonial Governments, the extent of peasant settlement in the island did not alter significantly between the date of the Royal Commission and 1910. In fact some representatives of the West India Committee suggested that it had decreased, though the Imperial Department of Agriculture in its report for 1911 produced figures intended to demonstrate that no decrease had in fact taken place. (1) These figures showed that in Grenada there were 7,096 persons holding areas of less than ten acres, covering in all 10,300 acres. Nevertheless, it is clear that the demand for land was not significant in these years, and the work of the Crown Land Department was confined for the most part to acquiring estates in the mountainous centre of the island to add to the forest reserves.

During 1909, certain changes in the conditions in Grenada led to serious reconsideration of the possibilities for a Government scheme of land settlement. To begin with there was an increasing amount of poverty in the island. A major cause of this was the high price of cacao which had encouraged the majority of the existing peasant cultivators, in contrast to those in St. Vincent, to adopt this cultivation, and the price of foodstuffs had thus greatly increased due to the inadequate local supply. The settlement of the peasants on the land appeared to offer a twofold answer to the problem since settlement would reduce the class from which paupers were most likely to arise, and also alleviate the food position if the new proprietors were encouraged to grow a large proportion of food crops. Thus it was that the new Governor, Sir James Hayes Sadler, found on taking up office that consideration had already been given to the purchase of the River Salé estate, and he sought the approval of the Secretary of State for this proposal. In

1. 617 no. 12 Report on the Grenada Botanic Station
Report on Peasant Settlement

seeking Colonial Office sanction Sadler cited the views of the Administrator, Edward Drayton, who stressed that most of the cultivable land was under cacao or nutmeg and that even when a peasant was able to purchase land, he planted cacao, thus accentuating still further the shortage of home-produced food crops. The purchase of expensive imported foods was difficult for many Grenadians, who did not enjoy the continuity of employment and income which was available in the sugar colonies. (1) The Colonial Office asked Dr. Morris for his views and at the same time expressed their preference for leasehold rather than freehold tenure which had been the form in St. Vincent schemes. Presumably their reason was the greater control which would be obtained over the holdings, but Morris felt this would have little effect and that the difference in tenure would lead to undue complications. Regretfully the Colonial Office abandoned the idea of leasehold, but because of the Commissioner of Agriculture's support for settlement, Sadler's proposals were approved. The Grenada Scheme followed a similar pattern to that of St. Vincent. Of the two islands, however, Grenada possessed a number of advantages. The situation was not as urgent and the Island had for some years possessed a group of successful small settlers. There were also the lessons learned in St. Vincent, especially the necessity for regular visits by the Agricultural Instructor in an effort to encourage the desired cultivation. From an agricultural standpoint, the worst evil of peasant proprietors on Government settlements, as illustrated in St. Vincent, was their tendency to grow nothing but soil-destroying surface crops; in Grenada the value of cacao could be expected to reduce this tendency and in fact great concentration was anticipated on cacao cultivation. (2)

1. 321/252/8522 Sadler to Crewe, 7 March 1910

2. 104 no. 36 Grenada A.R. Report of Crown Land Department

Early in 1910, a Land Officer, Howard Walwyn, was appointed and in the middle of the year the Secretary of State, the Earl of Crewe, sanctioned the expenditure of £5,000 from the Colony's Reserve Funds, for the purchase of land and the associated expenses of initiating a Land Settlement Scheme. Survey work was immediately commenced on the Government-owned estate of Morne Rouge in the south of the Island. The area of the estate was 98½ acres; one five-acre lot was reserved and the remainder divided into 33 lots of from two to five acres. In April 1911 a section of the contiguous estate known as True Blue was purchased and became known as Morne Rouge South in distinction to the existing settlement. Near the end of 1911 the latter estate was ready for settlement and the lots were advertised. Competition was initially considerable but many applicants were rejected in an effort to obtain a high class of settler. The method of payment was similar to that in St. Vincent, priority being given to those immediately able to pay 25 per cent of the price, the balance being divided into nine equal annual instalments commencing three years later; thus payment took twelve years in all. At the end of 1911 the estate of Westerhall in the south of the island with 295 acres was purchased, and the following year the adjoining estate of Calvigny Annexe with 50 acres.(1) In September 1913, Drayton, then Acting Governor, recommended to Lewis Harcourt, the Secretary of State, a request from the Executive Council for authorisation to spend an additional £2,000 on the purchase of the St. Cyr mountain estate of 344 acres situated in the parish of St. Andrews. The proposed purchase was in response to strong public demand from the inhabitants of the populous villages of Birch Grove

1. *W.I.B.* vol. XIV, 1914 G. Auchinleck and others, 'Government Schemes of Land Settlement in Grenada and the Grenadines'

and Capital. The estate was largely virgin forest and ideally suited to cultivation, backing as it did the forest reserves of the Grand Etang. Harcourt sanctioned the purchase and it was effected in early 1914. (1) St. Cyr, the largest of the settlements, became immediately popular, and little difficulty was experienced in obtaining settlers. One further addition was made to the scheme when in 1920 the 32 allotments of the new Westerhall estate were offered for sale to the public. (2) This estate was originally acquired for the settlement of returned soldiers of the Grenada contingent of the British West India regiment, but as they showed no inclination to take up the lots the land was added to the existing scheme and by the end of December 1920, 24 lots had been disposed of. In short some 900 acres were purchased for settlement for a total outlay of about £7,000.

Administratively the Grenada Scheme was certainly more successful than that of St. Vincent. There were forfeitures, usually for non-payment of instalments but occasionally for non-residence; in 1920, for example, there were 49 forfeitures and the following year 38. (3) The main problem in Grenada, however, was an agricultural one. The peasants were encouraged to grow provisions upon a substantial proportion of their holdings, though the Imperial Department of Agriculture hoped for permanent crops on the remainder. In fact practically the whole cultivated area of the holdings was planted in food crops which the agricultural departments claimed were not well grown by the peasants.

1. 617 no. 14 Report of Grenada (Agricultural) Department.
Report on Peasant Settlement
2. 617 no. 17 Report of Grenada A.D. Report of Peasant
Settlement
3. Ibid

This lack of interest in alternative cultivations may have been due to the fact that the ambition of many peasants was limited to supplying themselves and their families with perhaps a little for market. Two to five-acre lots were unnecessarily large for this purpose and beyond the capacity of an allottee to work. However, it seems more likely that the Grenada problem was exactly the same as that experienced in St. Vincent. The settlers were not prepared to undertake permanent cultivations until they were convinced of their absolute possession of their holdings. Nevertheless, speaking of the agricultural ability of Grenada to support a population three times its current size, Cherubim, the Agricultural Instructor, wrote in 1921 that the prize holding work was fair '....but until the average peasant realises that he cannot possibly obtain maximum returns without thorough work, and in this connection it might be mentioned that three quarters of an acre would call for continuous work from a sturdy peasant, just so long will there be large areas of improperly worked lands'.(1)

Regarding the details of Grenada settlement, the extent of land held by the peasantry in 1911 was 10,300 acres(2) and it does not appear that this was significantly increased by 1922. To this figure may be added the 900 or so acres of the Land Settlement Estates, making 11,200 acres. Some small increased settlement on Crown Lands did take place after 1916 following departmental changes and the closer supervision of Crown Lands by the Department of Works. Allowing for some slight settlement on private lands, peasant holdings in Grenada in 1922 could still not have exceeded about 12,000 acres out of a total of 77,000 acres, or 18.75 per cent of the cultivable land. Although this does not indicate

1. 617 no. 17 Report of Grenada A.D. Report of Agricultural Instructor
2. 617 no. 12 Report of Grenada A.D. Report on Peasant Settlement

the creation of a very numerous class of small peasant proprietors, in administrative terms the Grenada settlement was a greater success than its St. Vincent counterpart. There were relatively fewer forfeitures and a higher proportion of these were rescinded upon payment of arrears.(1) This indicated the greater value of land in Grenada, the better control of Crown Lands which prevented squatting, and above all, the desire of the peasant to retain his plot of land even if he could not easily pay his instalment, an attitude seldom found in his St. Vincent neighbour. It is not altogether surprising that the Grenada Scheme should have proved successful in this respect. The amount of land offered was less and the demand for it greater. Also the settlements were more widely distributed throughout the Island with Morne Rouge close to St. Georges; Westerhall and Calvigny on the south coast; and St. Cyr in the north at the foot of the Grand Etang. Not least of the advantages was the presence of Drayton, who had been closely connected with the settlement in St. Vincent and could apply his practical administrative experience.

The third island in the Windward group was St. Lucia with an area of 145,520 acres and a population in 1897 of 48,000, of whom some 2,000 were East Indians. A different problem confronted the Government of St. Lucia, although it was not less urgent than those of the other two Windward Islands. Like St. Vincent, St. Lucia had a problem concerning road communications, but a far more serious one.(2) The greater part of the island was totally inaccessible and although this area, situated in the centre of the island, was largely Crown Land and thus available for settlement, there was little demand for it owing to the lack of access

1. 104 nos. 29, 32, 36, 38 and 41 Grenada A.R. Report of Crown Land Department

2. See Appendix C

to any holdings which might be set up.(1) To meet the demand for usable land which was felt to exist in the Island, the Government set up in 1889 a Crown Land and Survey Department. The principal work of the Department was the settlement of the Crown Lands and especially the vacant land in the Colony, which consisted mainly of the many abandoned sugar and cacao plantations situated on the coast or in the valleys. These abandoned estates, for the most part lacking all claimants, were vested in the Crown by escheat, which however was a lengthy process requiring the careful survey and boundary marking of each estate. Nevertheless the new Department persevered and by 1900 12,215 acres had been dealt with.(2) This proved, however, inadequate to meet the demand for land, particularly as much that was acquired was only approachable by tracks which were unsuitable for carting produce.

Unable to obtain land in the Island, and also perhaps unwilling to work its land, a large proportion of the St. Lucia labouring population emigrated; sometimes for a proportion of the year, sometimes for a period of several years, sometimes permanently. The results of this exodus of a large proportion of the male population were serious; the birth rate fell and a condition of general agricultural depression set in. The notion of a peasant proprietary as a possible solution to this problem anticipated the 1897 Royal Commission, and was the principal reason for the existence of the Crown Land and Survey Department. In his report for 1898, R. Cropper, Acting Colonial Surveyor, outlined the aim of his Department as the formation of an independent class of peasant

1. 321/197/13003 Moloney to Chamberlain, 7 April 1900.
321/197/13007 Moloney to Chamberlain, 8 April 1900
2. 321/197/23345 Moloney to Chamberlain, 2 July 1900 enc. Report on the work of the Crown Land Department between 1896 and 1899.
See also 23347 Moloney to Chamberlain, 3 July 1900

proprietors.(1) By 1898 he was able to report that the suspicions of the people regarding the new Department were being overcome, and he expressed the belief that those now purchasing land would previously have left for the mines of Cayenne or the goldfields of Colon. It should, however, be indicated that the pressure of work on the Department was great, and that throughout the period it never had sufficient funds or staff to carry out its task. The principal necessity, stressed by the Department in each report, was the need for more byways to open and develop the country. In St. Lucia, the road system was always inadequate and never permitted of settlement upon the scale which might otherwise have been possible; while the demand for land in accessible areas often exceeded the supply.(2) The lengthy process which preceded escheat curtailed settlement on land already provided with roads, or where roads could most easily be constructed or repaired. The magistrate of the second and third districts, W. Palmer, described in his report for 1904 the eagerness with which lands were taken up, despite the price being considerably higher than that of land in the interior, for which little demand existed.

Notwithstanding the difficulties which stood in the way of development of the country, the Crown Land and Survey Department appears as the most important factor in the settlement of land in St. Lucia in the period under consideration. Settlement schemes did exist but only upon a small scale. Between 1895 and 1922 the Department settled 2,373 persons on an area of 25,331½ acres throughout the Island. By comparison, land utilised under settlement schemes comprised a quite

1. 256 no. 16 St. Lucia (Administration) Report 1897 and 1898.
Report of (Crown) Land) and (Survey) Department)
2. 321/197/23351 Moloney to Chamberlain, 5 July 1900
enc. R. Cropper's Report on the Crown Land and Survey Department
for 1899, dated 13 March 1900

negligible area. Despite this achievement, however, the emigration to the mines of Cayenne and to Colon continued undiminished. It seems, moreover, that the demand for land was in fact limited. For example at the outset of the War in 1914, to alleviate an expected food crisis, the Government granted small areas of Crown Land rent free to selected peasants for the production of food crops. The result was an immediate falling off in the annual demand for Crown Land, which the Department attributed to this policy. The limited demand for land lends weight to the commonly held view in St. Lucia that most of the peasants preferred working for wages to becoming peasant proprietors. It was this belief which led the Acting Governor, Philip Cork, in 1908 to propose a land settlement scheme whereby at the end of seven years the Government could pay the peasants a lump sum for their allotments, depending upon their condition. This would, in his view, provide an incentive for the peasants and a ready-made estate for the Colony which could be sold to a capitalist for plantation production.(1)

Even those peasants who preferred to remain in the Island and were prepared to work the land as smallholders exhibited the shortcomings common in St. Vincent and Grenada. The desire for accessible land was not always balanced by the willingness to pay instalments, or to put the land to its best use; between 1869 and 1922 there were 722 prosecutions for arrears in payments among Crown Land tenants. Among these approximately 70 per cent were found to be capable of making the payment.(2) In 1908 Cork attacked the system of outright sale to the peasantry and argued that in very many cases little beneficial use had been made of the allotments, the people merely planting vegetable food-

1. 321/241/47696 Cork to Crewe, 11 Dec. 1908

2. 256 nos. 22, 24, 27 and 29 St. Lucia A.R. s Reports of C.L.S.D.

stuffs on them, and living an easy life without much exertion and without improving their condition.(1)

The advantage to be gained from a land settlement scheme similar to that of St. Vincent rested on closer control, which it was hoped would ensure that the allotments were planted at least in part with desirable crops. The difficulty of enforcing such control and the attitude exhibited by peasants free from supervision make it unlikely that even had sufficient land been available the aim of a peasant proprietary producing economic crops would have been realised.

The only scheme which took place in St. Lucia which was intended to facilitate the controlled settlement of the labouring population on the land was foreshadowed by the allotment of parts of two estates acquired for purposes other than that of land settlement. The first of these, Union estate, was purchased in 1902 as a site for the Agricultural School. It was decided, however, to construct the school elsewhere and after some delay the new Governor, Sir R. Llewelyn, arranged for the land to be divided into lots and sold to the peasantry in the form of a settlement scheme. Initial enthusiasm to take up the land was not maintained and as late as 1911 some of the 64 lots were still available. At Malgré Tote, which was purchased in 1903, the story was similar. After construction of the asylum for which the estate was acquired, some 26 lots of agricultural land were offered for sale. By the end of 1904 most of the land had been sold, but again forfeitures and a rapidly declining demand meant that by 1910, land was vacant here also. Both these estates were cultivated exclusively in ground provisions, which was hardly surprising since they were without regular supervision from

1. 321/241/47696 Cork to Crewe, 11 Dec. 1908

the Agricultural Department.

When a planned land settlement scheme was initiated in St. Lucia during 1913 it was on a small scale, and perhaps because of the examples of Union and Malgré Toute, it was considered as very much on trial.

Referring to the St. Vincent scheme the newly appointed Land Officer, Archibald Brookes, wrote in 1913 that it was decided to give a similar

scheme a trial in St. Lucia.(1) The problem remained that of resisting the tendency of the labouring population to leave the Island, which Union and Malgré Toute had failed to achieve even in their immediate vicinity.

In February 1913 the estates close to the town of Choiseul, namely

Reunion, Valois, Le Riche, Campagnette and Cleonne, were purchased for the purpose of land settlement, and to provide an extension for the overcrowded villages of Choiseul. Cleonne, probably the old Reunion estate

Negro provision ground, was separate from the main estate, being situated in the highlands, and it was therefore sold separately;

Campagnette was almost entirely reserved because of the need for water preservation, and some 50 acres of the remaining land were reserved for

village extension. When further areas had been withdrawn for the experiment station which it was intended to associate with the scheme, and

for the old sugar works which were to be retained, only some 165 acres out of the total of 384 acres were available for land settlement.(2)

This was divided into 47 lots of from two to five acres. Among the

principal requirements in the regulations was that no settlement allot-

ment was to exceed five acres. As was the common policy in all land

settlement schemes preference was given to sitting tenants, in this case

1. 617 no. 14 Report of St. Lucia (Agricultural) Department.
Report of Land Officer

2. 617 no. 14 Report of St. Lucia A.D. Report on Land Settlement
321/277/4155 Sadler to Harcourt, 6 Jan. 1914
enc. Cameron to Sadler, 28 Nov. 1913

those who were willing to pay 20 per cent of the total purchase price, the remaining sum being paid in eight equal annual instalments commencing two years after issue of licence of occupancy.

The Reunion Scheme was most favourably located, being in the south of the Island adjacent to a heavily populated village. In addition every effort was made to encourage the settlers, notably by the construction of roads so as to give each allottee a right of way. Even prior to the sale of land in 1915 most of the lots had been rented on a temporary basis, and by the close of that year, 29 lots covering 101 acres had been sold.(1) Cultivation was almost exclusively in ground provisions, but because of the urgent demand for food, particularly in the town of Castries which was easily accessible by the coasting steamer, the Agricultural Department did not discourage the production of these crops. The area set aside for the village extension was also planted in food crops, for the high price of building materials resulting from the European War had curtailed any development there. The inflated price of foodstuffs kept the agricultural lots popular and by the close of 1916 Brookes was able to report that 36 lots had been sold, and the scheme was shaping sufficiently well for two additional lots to be added to it from the reserves.(2) It is, however, necessary to stress that the position of a settler on the estate, undoubtedly economically strong, was largely so because of certain advantages which it would have been prohibitively expensive to associate with all schemes. The proximity of the Experiment Station made possible the opening there in 1917 of a farine plant, which ensured a ready outlet for peasant cassava;

1. 617 no. 16 Report of St. Lucia A.D. Report on Land Settlement
2. 256 no. 24 St. Lucia A.R. 1916. Report on Reunion and on the Land Settlement Scheme

shortly after, the Government opened a ground provisions depot at Castries, and a special purchase scheme for peasants' sweet potatoes was inaugurated, securing to the grower the full benefit of the very high prices then obtaining. Out of reach of the coastal steamer, without good roads, without the Experiment Station, without the heavy demand and abnormally high prices of food crops, and without the pressure on the land provided by a densely populated area, most of the advantages in the scheme would have disappeared. Moreover in spite of these advantages the last lots tended to hang fire, though by 1920 Brookes reported that all the lots had been sold and that there were no arrears. In view of the advantages it is not surprising that the Land Settlement Scheme in St. Lucia was successful during this period; as soon as the prices of food fell, however, arrears appeared and pressure had to be applied to allottees, though it does not seem that in normal years they found payment difficult. In assessing its significance the small scale of the Reunion scheme should also be borne in mind. It involved forty eight persons out of a total of 2,421 peasant settlers,(1) and they held some 204 acres out of a total of 25,535 acres held by small growers in the Island. As was the case with the other Islands, the extent of the total land held which was actually under cultivation cannot be assessed, but in many cases it was probably not more than was required by each family for its own consumption. The extent of peasant settlement in 1922 amounted to about 17.5 per cent of the total land of the Colony. In part this small area of settlement was attributable to the lack of accessible cultivable land within the Colony; the Island possessed a hopelessly inadequate road system in 1920 of some 330 miles, and the Colonial Engineer received many requests for new or improved roads. The difficulty of access to cultivable land was considerable

1. Calculation based upon 256 St. Lucia A.R.'s nos. 16, 19, 22, 24 and 27. Reports of C.L.S.D. on grants of Crown Land either by outright purchase or deferred payment

but where peasant settlement was possible the large proportion of settlers exhibited tendencies with regard to payment and the production of crops very similar to those encountered in St. Vincent and Grenada. It is worth noting, however, that in St. Lucia, unlike St. Vincent and Grenada, the more remote Crown Lands were not popular, and settlement was focused almost entirely upon former plantation land. In part this certainly reflects the much greater size of St. Lucia and the total inadequacy of the Colony's road system. However, it also appears that the peasantry in St. Lucia was much less inclined to take up land, even for subsistence agriculture, than was the case in the other Windward Islands. The most satisfactory explanation for this rested with the determination of the peasantry to seek wage work outside the Island. This practice was perhaps more common in St. Lucia than in any other Colony.

No examination of land settlement in the Windward Islands could be complete without consideration of the scheme conducted in the Grenada dependency of Carriacou. The Island has an area of 8,466 acres and was once prosperous as the ruined but well-equipped sugar and cotton works bore witness. Cultivation ceased about 1870 and the condition of the Island and its inhabitants rapidly became serious. Most of the land either went completely out of cultivation or was let by absentee proprietors to individuals who then sub-let it under the *métayer* system.(1) The peasants spent part of the year on their allotments, but during the crop season most of them left for Trinidad; their emigration, however, unlike that of St. Lucia, was temporary, regular

1. Under the *Métayer*, or share system, a tenant worked his holding in return for a produce rent; this was usually half of his output although considerably higher rents were not uncommon. The system was widely used in the West Indies, being employed both by estates which leased land, and by absentee proprietors

and predictable. Nevertheless the situation was far from satisfactory, for although most of the land was available for legal tenantry, the peasants had no prospect of ever possessing it, though they might pay for it many times over in produce rent. The land remained in the possession of a small number of absentee proprietors who, together with their immediate tenants, were unable or unwilling to work the lands themselves. The Grenada Government faced in this dependency a rather more difficult problem than that facing the St. Vincent administration, for the sub-letting meant that the land was in fact beneficially occupied. The measures proposed by the local administration were consequently delayed by the time required to pass the necessary Acquisition Ordinance, though this finally came into force in February 1901. The Attorney General, Leslie Probyn, explained at length his new measure, strong objections to which were raised by the lessees of the estates.(1) Although compensation was allowed under the Bill, Probyn felt that no compensation could possibly satisfy them. The Government therefore decided that as general policy, although owners and lessees should be informed of the Government's intention to purchase, this should not take place until the expiration of the current lease.

Immediately after the passing of the Ordinance, George Whitfield-Smith, the travelling adviser of the Imperial Department of Agriculture, and Broadway, the Curator of the Botanic Station, visited Carriacou and, in agreement with the local peasants, recommended the acquisition of Beauséjour. Consequently in December 1902, Llewelyn, who was extremely enthusiastic about the project, informed the Colonial Office that the owners had accepted £2,667 for the estate.(2) Surveying took longer than

1. 321/203/4057 Llewelyn to Chamberlain, 17 Jan. 1901 enc. Probyn's report on Carriacou Land Settlement, 17 Jan. 1901
2. 321/210/52020 Llewelyn to Chamberlain, 1 Dec. 1902. See also Appendix A.

had been anticipated and was not completed until June 1903. The estate was low lying and excluding necessary forestry reserves, a considerable proportion was unusable mangrove swamp; through the remainder, by the close of 1904, the Department had laid 9,000 feet of drains. From the 705-acre estate, initially only about 140 acres were divided into small agricultural lots. The Governor's faith was, however, well placed, and though the lots were only put on sale in June 1903, by the close of the year they had all been sold.(1) The Land Settlement Regulation included two unusual features. The first of these was the charge of 5 per cent interest on all outstanding instalments of purchase money; and the second concerned permission to be absent from the lots and indeed from the Island for up to several months during the year. In a despatch of July 1903, Edward Drayton, the Grenada Administrator, explained these provisions to the Colonial Office. He stated that the Carriacou peasant was not in the impoverished condition of his Grenada counterpart, and was in a position to pay interest on what really amounted to a loan against the Colony's Reserve Fund. He also anticipated that the desire to go to Trinidad, when work on their own allotments was completed, would continue among the peasants, and he wrote that to compel them to reside altogether on their allotments would have seriously affected the success of the scheme.(2) The second settlement estate, that of Harvey Vale, was obtained in August 1903. The acquired lands proved a great success, for not only were they rapidly taken up, but they were worked in a very different manner to the settlement schemes elsewhere. From the beginning the attitude of the Carriacou peasant differed from that displayed in the other Islands, with the exception of Union, and in 1904 Whitfield-Smith, appointed

1. 104 no. 29 Grenada A.R. Report of C.C.D. 1903

2. 321/216/28856 Melville to Chamberlain, 10 July 1903

Commissioner of the Carriacou district, wrote that one of the most hopeful features of the Land Settlement Scheme was the number of neat wooden cottages which had been erected by the allottees on their lands during the previous year. Agriculturally also, the first impressions augured well for the future; Whitfield-Smith observed that '....the tendency to plant food products of a more permanent character (cacao) than the annual crops of peas and corn, bear striking testimony not only to the thriftiness of the Carriacou peasant but also to the rapid change of feeling that has come over him now he finds himself a virtual owner of the soil'.(1) The attitude exhibited by the Carriacou peasant encouraged the Colonial Government to expand the Scheme and at the end of 1904 a third estate was acquired under the Acquisition Ordinance.(2) By this time there were 242 settlers on the existing estates and the new acquisition of Belair added an additional 302 acres to the Scheme's 1,018 acres. The determination shown by the Carriacou peasant was common throughout the Island, and the reports of the Commissioner and Administrator attributed the success of the Scheme primarily to the peasantry. By 1908 only four lots (all house) out of 368 were unsold. One of the most interesting features was the manner in which the peasants prepared their lots, with a clear view to permanent occupation. They were carefully marked, and small but substantial houses were erected, which stood out in marked contrast to the type of shanty usually effected by the peasant cultivator of Grenada.(3) By 1910, with the Scheme approaching its conclusion, the Government began to consider a further extension; over 1,000 acres had been turned into a

1. 104 no. 29 Grenada A.R. Report of C.C.D. 1904
2. 321/221/43630 Llewelyn to Lyttelton, 13 Dec. 1904
3. 104 nos. 29 and 32 Grenada A.R. Report of C.C.D. 1904, 1907 and 1908

thriving well-cultivated series of peasant allotments.(1) The Secretary of State's permission was consequently obtained for the extension of the Scheme by means of the purchase of one of the estates originally considered, Mount Pleasant. The estate was duly acquired upon the expiration of the lease in January 1914. After survey this estate added 142 agricultural lots to the Scheme and by 1918 all but 22, of which 11 were agricultural, of the total of 555 lots had been sold.(2) From this it will be apparent that the new estate proved as successful as its predecessors, with the land rapidly taken up and industriously worked. At the conclusion of the Scheme over 2,000 acres had been acquired out of a total acreage in the Island of 8,466, or about 23 per cent.(3) Alone of the West Indian Islands, though Union was developing in the same direction, the small dependency of Carriacou had achieved by 1922 a peasant proprietary apparently consistent with that envisaged by the 1897 Royal Commission. It was not only the scale of the settlement but the character of the peasant which marked out the Settlement Scheme from others in the West Indies. In the much smaller Grenada Scheme with only 321 lots, between 1917 and 1922 there were 88 forfeitures; during the same period in Carriacou there were none.(4) In the entire history of the Carriacou Scheme there were less than 20 forfeitures, none of which was for arrears. The determined attitude displayed regarding the retention of holdings was matched by eagerness to take up land. In 1905 when the Belair lots were offered for sale, in one day

1. 321/252/8522 Sadler to Crewe, 7 March 1910
19702 Sadler to Crewe 1 June 1910
2. 104 no. 38 Grenada A.R. Report of C.C.D. 1918
3. *W.I.B.*, vol XIII, 1913 G. Auchinleck, 'Peasant Agriculture in Grenada', 607 nos. 12 and 17, 1911-12 and 1920 Reports of Grenada A.D. Report on Land Settlement in Carriacou
4. 104 no. 32 Grenada A.R. Report of C.C.D. 1905

the Land Officer received applications for 64 out of the total of 75 lots.(1) Even making allowance for the greater prosperity of the Carriacou peasant, Edward Drayton had little doubt as to the reason for their success when he wrote in 1910 'that the Carriacou peasant is of a better type than the Grenadian, he is more hard working and thrifty and more determined to improve his condition'.(2)

1. '104 no. 38 Grenada A.R. Report of C.C.D. 1905
2. 321/252/8522 Sadler to Crewe, 7 March 1910

CHAPTER FIVE

LAND SETTLEMENT: BARBADOS, THE LEEWARD ISLANDS
AND BRITISH GUIANA

Barbados has an area of 106,470 acres. Its population, despite optimistic estimates by the Registrar General, in fact declined during the period under consideration by 10,000 from about 182,000. The steady migration to the other islands and elsewhere prevented increased pressure on the land in an island which by West Indian standards was quite heavily populated. Attempts at organised emigration from Barbados were, however, never a success; in 1895 the Governors of British Guiana and Barbados considered the possibility of migration from the latter to the former Colony, but among other drawbacks was the attitude of the Barbadian, who showed little inclination towards organised emigration to British Guiana. Such an attitude was not unexpected by the Governors and its anticipation by Morris led to the rejection of a scheme to populate vacant land in St. Vincent with families from, among other colonies, Barbados. The apparent contentment of the Barbadian peasant was fortunate since no land settlement scheme was attempted, and in fact the settlement of the peasants on the land at all, even as tenants on private land, was upon a very modest scale.

In reply to Chamberlain's circular despatch of 1898 the Governor of Barbados, James Hay, wrote: 'I have laid your despatch before the Executive Committee and it has received a very full consideration, with the result that it was unanimously considered as inapplicable to Barbados under existing conditions.'¹ Barbados was a 'sugar island' and quite determined to remain so; a future Governor was to be most un-

1. 28/246/22944 Hay to Chamberlain, 26 Sept. 1898

popular when it was thought he was advocating Barbados abandoning or even significantly reducing its sugar production.(1) The political control which the planter element possessed in Barbados was only one factor impeding peasant settlement in the Island. There was little Crown Land and the price of obtaining other land was high. All Crown Land sold in the period was to companies, and its total value amounted to only £1,034.(2) There were 55 estates in Chancery in 1898, but the Imperial Government rescued the failing Plantations-in-Aid Act when Chamberlain allocated to Barbados £80,000 from the Imperial grant-in-aid of £250,000 made in 1902. Consequently even before the Brussels Convention the estates were back in production. Land was simply not available in Barbados. Even had it been possible to establish a peasant proprietary it would have been at the expense of estates the loss of which, even if only partially cultivated, would have been a more serious matter in Barbados, in view of its large population and employment problem, than it would have been in, for example, St. Vincent where such action had been prohibited by Chamberlain. In this connection, it is important to stress the labour-intensive character of the sugar industry and its employment potential. Beyond the need to retain plantations in Barbados to provide employment there was also the fact that no great desire for land seemed to exist in the Colony. In general, the Barbados peasant appeared to thrive without the necessity of land settlement; in terms of the total numbers requiring poor relief, after the middle of 1903 the figure dropped rapidly from the previous average of 6.6 per cent of the total population to 1.16 per cent in 1906 and 1.1 per cent in 1909. Although small fluctuations did occur it was not

1. 31 no. 97 Barbados (Sessional) Papers) 1909. See address of Sir G. T. Carter opening the Legislative Session, 1909-1910
2. 31 nos. 86 to 108 Barbados S.P. 1898 to 1922. Reports on Sales of Crown Land

until the collapse of sugar after about 1920 that expenditure on poor relief rose significantly.(1)

Naturally some purchase of land did take place by peasants in the Island. However, it was on a small scale, being restricted entirely to private sales, which the price of land tended to place beyond the reach of most potential small proprietors. No facilities existed to aid peasant agriculture except incidentally; and the work of the Botanic Station was almost exclusively concerned with sugar development. Government aid to the sugar industry, followed by an improvement in its prospects after the Brussels Convention, coupled with the need to provide employment, encouraged Barbados to proceed much as it always had.

Upon receiving Chamberlain's circular despatch of 1898, the Governor of the Leewards, Sir Francis Fleming, obtained lengthy reports from the Administrators and Commissioners of his Islands before he replied in February 1899. The material he enclosed gave a clear indication regarding the condition of the Colony and the prospects of settlement. The first island he dealt with was Antigua with an area of 69,120 acres. It was exclusively a sugar island and it was severely depressed, with its sugar uneconomically produced and with a rapidly declining population. The view of the Antigua planters whose opinion was sought varied, although they generally agreed; as did those of St. Kitts, that if sugar was to be revived a peasant proprietary was unnecessary although it might perhaps be tried as an experiment. Such an attitude on the part of the planters, who largely controlled the Antigua legislature, strongly suggested that they did not appreciate what was expected of a peasant proprietary. At the Colonial Office Sidney Oliver minuted that 'the

1. 31 nos. 86, 88, 91, 97, 100, 103, 106 and 108. Barbados S.P. Reports on Poor Relief. See also page 32

Antigua and St. Kitts planters seem hardly to grasp the notion of a peasant proprietary as established in Grenada; they all say "the labourer can get land" meaning he can get a bit on sufferance on any estate paying rent, a condition under which the negro could never do anything .(1)'

After the Brussels Convention interest in sugar quickly recovered in Antigua with the debate centred on central factories and the development of new strains of cane by the Imperial Department of Agriculture.

Despite a continuing fall in the population and some risk of a labour shortage, ideas for a land settlement scheme were shelved by the local administration until the First World War. Settlement had, however, taken place at the Government estate of Piccadilly, and advice had been given to the settlers over a course of several years prior to 1898.

The precedent had not been an encouraging one but in December 1916 Francis Watts, the Commissioner of Agriculture, wrote that the opposition and mistrust exhibited by the peasants towards efforts to assist their cultivation had previously made it inadvisable to initiate a land settlement scheme; in his view this attitude had now apparently disappeared and he advocated the survey and division of another Government estate, Sawcolt's. He recommended a scheme based upon that of Reunion in St. Lucia, and he emphasised the most essential feature of such a scheme was the need to carefully watch the settlers for some years; he wrote that the mere placing of the peasant on the land without supervision and control was of little service. The Commissioner's recommendations were adopted by the Antigua administration which by 1916 was greatly concerned at the high level of emigration from the Island. The estate was duly surveyed during 1917. It was situated in

1. 152/243/5369 minute by S.O., 4 March 1899

the south of the Island about seven miles from St. John's. It contained 234 acres but after extensive reserves, particularly forest catchments, only about 80 acres were available for cultivation. The scheme was under the control of the Curator of the Botanic Station. The regulations provided for lots not greater than three and not less than one acre, but this rule was dropped. Lots were paid for in ten equal annual instalments and the regulations contained the usual residence and alienation clauses.(1) Despite the difficulty experienced by allottees in purchasing lots of any size, after a year some 41 persons had taken up 57 acres, and by 1919 the figure had risen to 50 holding 66 acres.(2) Many of the allotments were only half an acre and the largest only one and a half acres. According to the Agricultural Department most of the crops were ground provisions for the allottees' personal consumption, but some did cultivate small quantities of sugar or cotton.

The Antigua administration measured the success of the Sawcolt's scheme in the degree of contentment created among the peasants, which would at least make their emigration unlikely. The increased cost of living caused by the war had resulted in a deterioration in the conditions in the Island, and the main concern of the Colonial Government was to increase the labourers' desire to remain there. Such incentive, the Agricultural Department believed, could be further increased by establishing small settlement schemes in each parish. It was their view that any scheme which would help to develop a contented peasantry would be a step in the right direction. They acknowledged, however, that it was only the more energetic and ambitious individuals who would take up land and work it according to any set rule or plan, but the

1. 318/338/60853 Watts to CO, 21 Nov. 1916
2. 617 no. 17 Reports of Antigua Agricultural Department 1918 and 1919 Reports on Land Settlement Scheme

Department felt that such men as did take up and successfully work the land were likely to be the natural leaders among the peasantry and their acquisitions of small-holdings would give them a degree of responsibility which should make them a valuable asset to the Island. Their idea of settlement schemes in each parish was, however, never attempted and it is unlikely that the finances of the Island would have permitted it. The scheme at Sawcolt's did appear to create satisfaction among the settlers, and probably in consequence reduced their tendency to emigrate. At least one prominent company in Antigua believed this to be so and in 1919 the Agricultural Department drew up regulations for a scheme of settlement on behalf of Henckell, du Buisson & Co., probably the largest sugar producer on the Island. The company initiated its scheme at the end of 1919 on Tomlinson's estate, close to their sugar factory at Gunthorpe's. Its regulations were practically identical to those of the Government scheme, and like the latter, within its limited objectives it proved a success.

The area occupied by peasant proprietors in Antigua in 1922 was very small. Sawcolt's had some 71 acres allotted, and even allowing larger settlement at Piccadilly, and a small amount of land purchased privately, the proportion in an island of over 69,000 acres was very small. Like Barbados, Antigua was a sugar island, its interest was in a plentiful labour supply, and the peasant population itself appeared to adopt wages as the primary measure of wealth. In the view of the Agricultural Department only a small proportion of the peasants would be attracted by settlement schemes, and the example of Sawcolt's indicated that the poverty of the Antigua peasant prevented him from acquiring enough land to produce much more than ground provisions for his own use. In relation to its size and the small amount expended upon it, the Antigua scheme was a success but as a step towards peasant proprietary upon any scale it was totally inadequate. The question once again arises, as in the case of the larger

Windwards, whether in the light of the Agricultural Department's opinion sufficient peasants could have been found of a suitable type to found a scheme of lasting value, even had larger financial resources been available.

In St. Kitts, an island of 43,520 acres, very similar conditions existed at the time of Chamberlain's circular despatch. Sugar was again predominant and the population was also steadily declining. If little settlement may be said to have existed in Antigua practically none existed in St. Kitts. R. Griffith, the Administrator, wrote in 1898: 'I was struck shortly after my arrival by the fact that there was practically speaking no small lots of agricultural land owned by the labouring or poor classes in St. Kitts. I commented on it at the time and was informed that agricultural land was too valuable to sell and that the estates possessed all the land upon which canes could be grown.' However, most estates did rent out land to their labourers, or supplied it sometimes under the 'half' or share system, with the peasant giving a proportion of his produce to the estate. Rented land had, of course, been available in Antigua but such tenure was far removed from the idea of a peasant proprietary, of which the essential feature was ownership of the land. With regard to this Griffith wrote that 'a very large proportion of the labouring classes do not want land to work, they want employment or what employment brings viz money(1)

1. 152/243/5369 Fleming to Chamberlain, 11 Feb. 1899
enc. (1) C.A. Shand to C.S. 24 Oct. 1898
(2) F. Foote to C.S. 26 Oct. 1898
(3) T. Foote to C.S. 27 Oct. 1898
(4) W. Whyham to C.S. 28 Oct. 1898
(5) W. Auchinleck (Colonial Treasurer) to C.S. 29 Oct. 1898
(6) A. Foster (Auditor General) to C.S. 1 Nov. 1898
(7) T.R. Griffith (Admin. St. Kitts) to Fleming 10 Dec. 1898
(8) E. Todd to R. Griffith 3 Sept. 1898
(9) B. Davis to R. Griffith 6 Sept. 1898
(10) J. Briggs to R. Griffith 5 Sept. 1898
(11) F. Wigley to R. Griffith 8 Sept. 1898
(12) G. Evelyn to R. Griffith 9 Sept. 1898
(13) P.A. Templar (Admin. Dominica) to Fleming 13 Dec. 1898
(14) E. Baynes (Commissioner Montserrat) to Fleming 18 Oct. 1898
transmitting Report of Committee on Peasant Proprietors in
Montserrat dated 7 Oct. 1898
(15) Morris to Fleming, 17 Jan. 1899
(16) Whitfield-Smith to Morris, 7 Jan. 1899

or wages.' Considering the existing conditions Griffiths did not advise a settlement scheme and his Executive Council was also in general opposed to the idea. Consequently no settlement scheme was attempted in St. Kitts except from some rather scattered sales in the vicinity of the Government estate of La Guérite.

The situation in the adjoining Island of Nevis, with an area of 32,000 acres, was somewhat different. It already possessed a considerable number of peasant settlers, who were either tenants or owners of their lots. Although a sugar island, Nevis was not dependent on imported provisions to the same extent as St. Kitts and Antigua, for the peasants grew a considerable quantity of food crops. Griffiths indicated that land was easily available for purchase or rent and that no necessity existed for the Government to interfere. Consequently no scheme was attempted in Nevis, and though it is impossible to assess the extent of settlement, it is reasonable to assume that any peasants who genuinely desired land did not find it difficult to obtain, for even when most of the land was taken up for estate production there remained the central highlands unsuited to sugar or cotton.

The case of Montserrat with an area of 30,080 acres was again dissimilar. It already possessed a significant number of peasant proprietors. Although they had suffered severely from the sugar crises, H. A. Nicholls, an Imperial Department of Agriculture expert, considered that they 'might successfully raise cacao or other products'. The Commissioner, Edward Baynes, and his Executive Committee, though encouraged by the general success of Montserrat's peasant settlement anticipated certain difficulties in its extension. Their view was shared by Nicholls, who wrote that 'the main difficulty is that of persuading the native labourer of the ultimate advantage of cultivating products which do not

give immediate return or to which he is not already accustomed.'(1)

In the Leewards progress towards peasant settlement was undoubtedly furthest advanced in Montserrat, and the report of the Executive Committee in 1898 was concerned with detail rather than the general question. It recommended provisions which would have enabled the peasants to select their own land rather than to have it selected by the Government, and though the wisdom of this was challenged by the Imperial Department of Agriculture, it did indicate considerable experience within the Island of the problems of peasant settlement. It is possible that had this interesting recommendation been implemented, though the character of settlement schemes would have been greatly altered, the tendency encountered for the demand for land to decline rapidly after the initiation of the scheme would have been reduced. Settlement in Montserrat was brought about by the steady disappearance of sugar coupled with the failure of alternative industries to replace it,(2) thus making a considerable amount of land available. But advantage was not taken of the period during which Montserrat was without large-scale agricultural industries, to promote any schemes for settlement on cheap land, and with the coming of cotton on an increasing scale after about 1906 and a consequent rise in land values the opportunity passed. In fact a plan was considered in 1902 but despite Colonial Office support the Treasury would not sanction the necessary expenditure of £1,000. The increased value of sea island cotton after the start of the First World War made settlement even more impractical, and in 1917 the Agricultural Department reported that 'on account of the very great

1. For the opinion of Baynes and his Executive Committee see 152/243/5369 Fleming to Chamberlain; 11 Feb. 1899
See in particular enclosure fourteen Baynes to Fleming 18 Oct. 1898
2. See pages 42 and 47

increase in the value of land generally brought about by the success of the sea island cotton industry, the feasibility of such a scheme, for the immediate future at least, may be considered to have altogether disappeared from view.'(1) The Department estimated the numbers of owners of land between one and six acres at 538 and those owning under one acre at 590. Some additional 35 owners in the north were little more than peasant proprietors making an approximate total in 1917 of 1,163. On their own properties they almost exclusively cultivated food crops, renting or working estate land under the 'half' system for the cultivation of cotton. No system of planned settlement was attempted in Montserrat and the availability of land outside any Government scheme was considerably reduced in the period under review by the increased value of land consequent on the growth of the cotton industry.

The Island of Dominica is large and mountainous with an area of 291 square miles. To some extent the situation in Dominica in July 1893 resembled that in Montserrat; in Dominica, however, the collapse of the sugar industry had been much more precipitous. Nicholls wrote in 1900 that with 'but one exception all the fine sugar estates that once existed were abandoned or cultivated with other products'.(2) The result was that a great number of peasant proprietors had come into existence with little or no supervision and disastrous results. The Administrator of Dominica, P. A. Templar, wrote in 1898 that '...the circumstances of the peasantry in Dominica are quite unlike those of the people of the other islands in the West Indies and no one that knows them can hold the opinion that it is desirable to multiply the number

1. 617 no. 16 Report of Montserrat Agricultural Department Observations on absence of a land Settlement Scheme
2. *W.I.B.*, vol. I, 1900 H.A. Nicholls, 'Agricultural Development in the Leewards'

of its resident land owners. There is hardly a family in this presidency which does not own or at any rate occupy, for many of them are squatters, a patch of land; and the curse of the Island as conducing to idleness and improvidence is the facility with which bare life can be sustained on the produce of these patches of land.'(1) Not surprisingly further settlement of any type was not advised by the Administrator; the problem in his view was the education of the existing peasant settlers into ways of thrift and towards the production of economic crops. Nicholls remarked upon the tendency of the peasants to leave a portion of their holdings to each child, resulting in the ultimate reduction of allotments to uneconomic sizes. The prize holding scheme held in Grand Bay in 1911 indicated this, for the old estates of Berricoa had originally been sold in lots of between ten and fifteen acres in 1893, but by 1911 practically all the inhabitants held areas of less than four acres, and a large proportion less than one acre. The opening, to some extent, of the centre of the Island by increased road-building made more Crown Land available, but in fact the demand from peasants for such land tended to fall during the period under consideration.

Examination of land settlement in Barbados and the Leewards between 1897 and 1921 indicates that the Antigua scheme at Sawcolt's was the only Government-organised settlement attempt, and in fact the only significant step to facilitate peasant settlement in any form. The indifference of the local administrations may be attributed largely to the opinion held by most planters that despite the Antigua experiment, Land Settlement schemes were generally of no assistance in retaining

1. 152/243/5369 Fleming to Chamberlain, 11 Feb. 1899.
See in particular enclosure thirteen P.A. Templar to Fleming,
13 Dec. 1898

labour for the estates. In some islands, particularly Barbados and Montserrat, the prohibitive cost of land was a further deterrent. The declining populations helped to reduce pressure on the land which prevented a situation analogous with St. Vincent from arising. To the apathy of the local administrations and of the Colonial Office may be added the generally unsatisfactory examples of the settlement which had already taken place; and particularly in Antigua and St. Kitts, the very small demand for land which appears to have existed. For example, Griffith wrote that in St. Kitts land suitable for provisions was available at very low rents but much of it was not taken up. In the Island of Dominica where no scheme for encouraging settlement was attempted it is clear that the Island was already extensively settled, and was exhibiting, in the view of officials, the worst features of uncontrolled settlement, namely failure to attempt more than a subsistence economy and the repeated subdivision of holdings. A situation similar to that existing in the Virgin Islands was evidently feared, of which the Commissioner wrote in 1896: 'the Virgin Islands now consist of a community of peasant proprietors; and the extinction of the European planter class and its substitution by the native lot cultivator had been of ruinous effect depriving the peasant of the stimulus to labour by the presence in the community of a superior class whose existence was incentive to emulation.'(1) In Montserrat the condition of unsupervised settlement never deteriorated as far as in Dominica, and though at the outset it was an easy matter for the peasant to obtain land this became less so as the work of the Imperial Department of Agriculture encouraged the growth of the profitable cotton industry. Nevis occupied probably the most favourable position in the Leeward group; in terms of peasant ownership it fell somewhere between the two extremes of the

1. 152/243/5369 Fleming to Chamberlain, 11 Feb. 1899.

See in particular enclosure seven T.R. Griffith to Fleming, 10 Dec. 1898

sugar islands and of Dominica. Plantation industries of sugar and cotton existed but as the highlands in the centre of the Island were unsuitable for their establishment, such land remained available for rent and sometimes for purchase throughout the period under examination.

The West Indian Colony of British Guiana had an area after the boundary settlement of 1899 of 89,480 square miles. As late as 1920 only 11,700 square miles were clear of forest, and of this the larger proportion was savannah suitable only for cattle-grazing. Throughout the period under consideration cultivation was restricted to about 130 square miles along the coast, and for a short distance inland along certain rivers and creeks. Although the development of the great hinterland of the Colony was strongly desired, a sufficiently large population to achieve this was never attained. In any case the interior was not suitable for peasant settlement since it was mostly uncultivable forest, or wet or dry savannah. The Colony had always had a problem of maintaining sufficient population, and the aversion of the Negro to working on the extreme coastal strip where the sugar estates were mostly located had resulted in the system of indentured immigration from India. This immigration declined from about 1894 and ceased completely in 1917. The effect upon the population of the Colony was serious and the need to retain the labouring population within the Colony figured predominantly in the efforts to facilitate settlement.

In 1898 the idea of peasant settlement was far from new in British Guiana, for land was both inexpensive and available in great quantities. Consequently the Court of Policy, which since the constitutional changes of 1891 was dominated less by the planter interest, required no assistance from the Royal Commission to recognise the value of peasant settlement, both as a means to utilise the cultivable land, and to

encourage a growth in population. While the Royal Commission was still visiting the various West Indian Colonies new Crown Land Regulations were under consideration in British Guiana, intended to make the acquisition of land, principally for the small cultivator, still easier. These regulations were passed in 1899 and came into practical application the following year. The regulations facilitated the sale of Crown Land which formerly, on account of the stringent conditions for sale attached to it, had been mostly leased or rented. Under the new regulations the land could be purchased under the instalment system in which case freehold was granted at the completion of the payment. At first there were no provisions regarding the beneficial occupation of the land, although these were later introduced.(1) The immediate effect was a considerable increase in the purchase of Crown Land; between 1899 and 1922 sales equalled 96574 acres.(2) In addition to the sale of Crown Land, there existed prior to 1898 the system which continued throughout the period of granting land to time-expired indentured East Indians, in commutation of their right to return passages. Such grants were, however, made from Colony rather than Crown Land. By 1913, 2,943 acres were held on six Colony estates in this fashion by East Indians. Despite this and the rather larger number who commuted for a money payment and purchased Crown Land, the total proportion who in fact commuted the right of return passage was very small, and as a result the Colony was deprived of many of the most successful type of small cultivators. The remainder of the Colony lands were mainly taken up by Negro cultivators, the East Indian generally preferring the wet savannah land of the rivers and creeks which were

1. 114 no. 87 1899 British Guiana Administration Report. Report of Lands and Mines Department
2. 114 nos. 61, 64, 68, 74, 87, 90, 94, 99, 103, 107, 112, 116, 121, 125, 130, 135, 139, 143, 148, 151, 154, 158, 162, 167, 172, 177, 184. British Guiana A.R.'s Reports of L.M.D. See also Appendix B

suited to rice cultivation. Between 1898 and 1922 about 1,500 lots of varying size were settled on Colony lands by Negro proprietors, but such lots showed the same characteristics as most peasant settlements throughout the West Indies. In 1912 it was reported that most of the lots, 75 in number, at Clonbrook had been forfeited. In 1914 there was serious trouble at Haig resulting from sub-letting, which had been permitted but had led inevitably to extensive arrears. Neither Colony nor Crown Land on the coast or near the coast was economically worked by the Negro farmer, who exhibited the characteristic tendency to produce only ground provision. On Crown Lands also the situation was much the same. In 1902, the Commissioner of Lands and Mines, W. Fowler, reported on visits to 1,060 tracts; of these he found only 20 per cent beneficially occupied, and excluding the East India settlements along the Pomeroon, Mahaica and Mahaicony, that 20 per cent was almost entirely in ground provisions. He wrote that 'they do little more with the land than grow sufficient vegetables for the support of their families. The majority lack stimulus to increased industrial activity, their wants being of the fewest and simplest, and readily supplied by the bounty of nature.'⁽¹⁾ In this connection it should be pointed out that the cane farmer only existed as the lessee of an estate and cannot therefore be properly considered as a proprietor. In 1922 the amount of Crown Land beneficially occupied was again 20 per cent of the area alienated, an improvement over the 16.6 per cent of the previous year.

The immediate effect of the 1898 Regulations was to increase greatly the demand for land over that which had existed under the old system of stringent Crown Land regulations and licences of occupancy. The

1. 114 nos. 154 and 99 British Guiana A.R. Report of L.M.D.

principal reason for this increase was probably the very low price charged for land, and the end of restrictions upon cultivation.

W. Fowler, the Commissioner of Lands and Mines, wrote in 1899 that 'in most cases the people apply for more land than they can possibly cultivate.'⁽¹⁾ As a result of his pressure, in 1900 the maximum area for a grant of Crown Land was limited to 25 acres. In 1912 it was further reduced to five acres which, in Fowler's view was 'quite as much as the average peasant proprietor can manage'.⁽²⁾ The ease with which land could be obtained in the Colony did not prevent a demand among the Negro population, as was the case in other colonies, for even cheaper land. As a result the Governor, Sir Frederick Hodgson, in deference to a resolution of the Combined Court, appointed a Commission in March 1906 to investigate the possibility of a land settlement scheme. The report of the Commission was placed before the Combined Court in August 1906 and the funds required to implement its recommendations were immediately voted. The scheme involved a completely free grant of four acres to any peasant who could demonstrate his inability to obtain work, and his willingness to cultivate small holdings. Difficulty was experienced with the initial selections of sites for the scheme but Hodgson pressed the matter and finally some 200 acres of suitable land was selected at Kaiabowry Creek, on the right bank of the Pomeroon, an area of known fertility. The scheme was a total failure: just one year later only seven applications had been received, and it was abandoned. It is not altogether surprising that the agitation for land proved to be largely unfounded. It was in any

1. 114 no. 87 British Guiana A.R. Report of L.M.D.

2. 114 no. 94 and 143 British Guiana A.R. Report of L.M.D.

case obtainable upon the easiest terms, and at this time a holding of 25 acres could be acquired for a nominal outlay of £4.14s. which included survey and allotment costs.

East Indian land settlement presents a very different picture.

Understandably these settlers tended to establish settlements composed entirely of their own race; they settled large acres, particularly low-lying river banks. The settlements were successful and were unquestionably the best peasant settlements in British Guiana. Much of this success was founded upon the production of rice, a crop of considerably greater worth than the vegetable ground provisions of the Negro farmer, of which it was the East Indian equivalent. An important difference did exist, however, in the fact that the East Indian produced not for personal consumption but for market. Another characteristic feature was the ability of the East Indian to cultivate the land in an efficient fashion with little supervision. Their most extensive settlements were on the lower reaches of the Pomeroon River and on the Mahaica and Mahaicony Creeks (Demerara), but holdings also existed in the wet savannah of the Apury (Demerara), Canje and Courantyne (Berbice). The steady and impressive rise in the acreage under rice was an indication of the rapid development of these settlements; allowing for fluctuation caused by adverse conditions in certain years, the area under this crop grew from 1,400 acres in 1904 to 21,920 acres in 1919.(1) This increase may be entirely attributed to the growth of East Indian settlements, primarily in the districts mentioned. In 1903 the oldest East Indian river settlement, that on the Pomeroon, had 34 per cent of its settled land in cultivation compared with a 20 per cent average for all Crown Lands held, and it is significant that this figure was achieved without

1. 114 references as for page 110, note 2

the production of rice, which for some time after its success elsewhere was not cultivated on the Pomeroon. When rice was introduced in this area several of the holdings developed second and third depths to provide for additional planting and for grazing cattle. The growth of the settlements on the Mahaica and Mahaicony Creeks was rapid; occupation was under the new 1898 Crown Land Regulations, and the area was first mentioned in the Report of the Lands and Mines Department in 1902 as a 'promising agricultural centre'. Only two years later Mahaica was cultivated to a depth of 21 miles, and Mahaicony to 13 miles. At the same time cultivation spread upwards from the Apury River; by 1913 the area was producing one-third of the rice of the Colony, and by 1917 the entire area between the latter river and the Mahaicony Creek, some 30 square miles, was occupied by small East Indian proprietors growing rice. In addition by 1922 some 17 miles of the Courantyne were held by East Indians, and as well as the Pomeroon, there were about 2,000 East Indian growers in the North Western District.(1)

A proportion of East Indians, of course, held Colony land, or rented from estates, but with regard to establishing a peasant proprietary they must have constituted a large proportion of those to whom 2,671 absolute grants of Crown Land were made between 1899 and 1922, particularly as all the land settled in the Mahaica - Apury district was Crown Land. An interesting feature of the East Indian holdings was the habit, also found on the best settlement schemes elsewhere, of constructing substantial houses on the lots; this normally indicated that arrears would be small, and settlement permanent. The almost exclusive production of rice on the East Indian Holdings, even on the Colony lands which were not so well suited to the cultivation as the

1. 114 nos. 103, 99, 107, 148, 162 and 158. British Guiana A.R. Report of L.M.D.

easily flooded savannahs, makes it difficult to assess the ability of the coolie settlers to produce other crops. The approach to house-building, however, coupled with the early success of the Pomeroon, prior to rice cultivation, suggest that even had the advantageous rice crop not been available the East Indian would still have made a success of his holding. In the event, the East Indian certainly proved a far more productive and valuable peasant proprietor than the Negro, and it was unfortunate for British Guiana that more could not be encouraged to remain in the Colony.(1)

It is difficult to attribute any progress towards settlement in British Guiana to the recommendations of the 1897 Royal Commission. Most settlement took place as a result of the 1898 Regulations which were under preparation prior to the report of the Commission,(2) and the only scheme which might have been inspired by those elsewhere in the West Indies was a failure. The conditions peculiar to the Colony were such, however, that the local Administration was persuaded of the value of peasant settlement if only in an attempt to obtain a labour supply to work the sugar estates. In practice many of the East Indian settlers who left the estate but remained in the Colony became full-time peasant farmers, and did little work on the estates. Nor is there evidence that the Negro farmer was significantly more inclined to labour on the estates. In contrast to the East Indian, he occupied land of a less wet and therefore more valuable nature, but made little

1. In 1917, when indentured immigration ceased, the coolie population was calculated at 134, 785, by 1922 it had already fallen by over 10,000. See 116 nos 265 to 291. British Guiana Blue Books, population statistics of Registrar General
2. Colonial Office despatches to British Guiana after Chamberlain became Secretary of State indicate considerable pressure in favour of a relaxation of Crown Land regulations. This policy received strong support within the Colony, notably from N. Darnell Davis, the Comptroller of Customs

use of it, declining to grow inedible crops such as cotton, and finding the processing of sugar too difficult. The mere subsistence economy which resulted from Negro settlement was of limited economic value to the Colony.

In most West Indian colonies the question of the return derived from the land by the peasant in comparison to that achieved by the plantation was central to the consideration of establishing a peasant proprietary. Except in British Guiana the area of land was limited and its beneficial use was thus a serious consideration. But because of the predominant cultivation of ground provisions, regarding which no records were kept, estimates of the productivity of peasant holdings were not normally possible. Nevertheless at the 1912 Agricultural Conference, using the figures provided by a recent prize-holding competition,(1) Gilbert Auchinleck, the Agricultural Superintendent of Grenada, estimated that 2,500 acres were under cacao on small-holdings in Grenada, producing a crop to the value of £10,000. In addition he calculated the Carriacou crop at £2,250, the quantity of sugar grown by peasants in the two islands at about £2,400, and their ground provisions at £4,174. Thus the total estimated value of peasant production in 1911 was £18,824, compared with a total plantation production during the year of £241,176. (2) This was a ratio of 1:12.8, compared with the ratio of land held of 1:4.85. From this it is apparent that the yield of estate lands was over two and a half times greater in terms of value than that of the peasant holdings. It is of course certain that the estates continued to occupy the most productive land but such a large discrepancy in output cannot be attributed to this factor alone. Though this

1. 617 no. 11 Report on Grenada Botanic Station. Report on Prize Holding Competition
2. *W.I.B.*, vol. XIII, 1913 G. Auchinleck, 'Peasant Agriculture in Grenada'

is only a single instance it is unlikely that these figures for peasant productivity in Grenada were ever exceeded in the West Indian colonies in this period, since not only were these the most advanced of the peasant settlements, but at this time they were producing principally for sale and the small quantity of ground provisions allowed by Auchinleck was for personal consumption. The East Indian cultivation in British Guiana must be excluded from this general judgement, for although the return from rice was not as great as that from cacao or sugar, it gained over both these crops by the utilisation of otherwise useless land.

With regard to the development of an area and the realisation of its greatest potential, therefore, the plantation system if it could be retained was more valuable, but of course this was not the only yardstick by which peasant settlement was judged. Particularly in St. Vincent, it was rather a question of a peasant proprietary or abandonment, than of a peasant proprietary or the plantation system. An examination of the comparative use made of the land does to some extent justify the attitude adopted in the sugar-producing colonies towards land settlement, which where it was implemented was intended primarily to arrest a decline in the populations and thus in the labour supply. The unfavourable comparison of peasant production with that of the estates perhaps also helps to explain the inertia of the local government towards facilitating peasant settlement when the recovery of sugar or the growth of new industries made the normally more labour-intensive system profitable.

The great variety of conditions which existed in the West Indies makes generalisation almost impossible, but it is clear that the type of permanent peasant proprietary raising economic crops which was intended

by the 1897 Royal Commission did not become a feature of the islands, or even of British Guiana, during the period up to 1921. In a number of cases no attempt was made to implement the recommendations in this respect, and sometimes doubt must be felt as to whether the nature of the Commission's proposals was fully appreciated. Their essential feature was that the peasant should own the land and thus have a strong personal stake in the long-term successful cultivation. Where a static or declining population reduced the pressure on the land, and sugar plantations provided employment and required labour, settlement was upon such a scale as to have been inadequate even to provide a worthwhile experiment. Such a situation was encouraged by the Imperial Government's continued determination that there should be no acquisition of private estates even if these were only partially cultivated. Another significant feature was the lethargy, doubtless encouraged by the planters, which was displayed by the local administrations.

The Island of St. Vincent was the site of the most determined efforts to implement land settlement, largely on account of the Imperial grant. Certain aspects of the development of the St. Vincent scheme must reflect some doubt upon the validity of the recommendations on this subject made by the 1897 Royal Commission. For example, the Commissioners' assessment of the demand for land, upon which their recommendations hinged, was not borne out by the experience of the settlement schemes. In almost every case land was still available on the original sites many years after the lots had first been offered for sale.⁽¹⁾ It is, of course, possible that the land was not offered in locations where the peasants were prepared to settle, perhaps because too much emphasis was placed upon agricultural suitability. This contention is supported

1. See page 65

by the relative success of the later St. Vincent settlements, when not only was the size reduced, but the demand for land was more carefully considered when sites were chosen.(1) It is unlikely, however, that this was the complete answer, for as early as 1903 Dr. Morris expressed his opinion that all the St. Vincent peasants who required land had been supplied, which suggests that demand at this time, even beyond the settlement schemes, was not great. This lack of demand was a feature elsewhere, and the price fixed for grants does not appear greatly to have affected it. Returned soldiers in St. Vincent, and in other colonies, who were offered free grants showed little inclination to take them up.(2) In British Guiana also the demand for land which apparently existed did not materialise when free grants were offered in 1906. The Administrator of St. Kitts expressed his opinion that it was wages not land that the labourer wanted, and Griffith's opinion would appear to have been largely borne out by continued emigration to high-wage areas even from colonies where land had been provided for settlement. Notwithstanding the disinclination of the West Indian peasant to move to new locations within his own island, it does appear that the Royal Commission was mistaken as to the extent and strength of the demand for land which existed in the West Indies.

It is also probable that the Colonial Office, the local governments, and the Imperial Department of Agriculture were equally optimistic in their belief that the peasants could easily be encouraged towards the production of crops with which they were not familiar. It is also understandable that the peasants clung to provision crops, for not only

1. 114 no. 184 British Guiana A.R. Report of L.M.D. This Colony also gave free grants of land to returned soldiers of the British Guiana contingent of the British West India Regiment

2. See pages 71 and 81

were they accustomed to them, but they provided food, and generally offered a small and immediate return in the easily accessible local market. The class of small producers of cacao in Grenada had developed gradually, and peasants elsewhere could not quickly be encouraged to raise such crops, particularly in view of the mistrust which they seem generally to have associated with official interest. Even the small settlements at Reunion and Sawcolt's produced only ground provisions. Although the limited size of holdings provided on these settlements increased the proportion which was cultivated, and they enjoyed better communications than was usual, their relative success was largely achieved by the official acceptances of provision crops.

The Reunion scheme in particular provided a good indication of the importance of easily accessible markets, and thus of good communications. It is also noticeable that in this scheme, as well as at Carriacou and Union, the size of the holdings was small and the consequent need to cultivate more intensely was probably a further factor in their success. The results achieved at Carriacou were the most striking. In some respects those peasants were fortunate, for the prompt payment of instalments, often for many years in advance, was made possible by greater prosperity than that of peasants elsewhere. Nevertheless the facility with which many of the peasants took to cacao was quite uncharacteristic of the attitudes found generally in the West Indian islands. The most likely explanation of this difference lay in the fact that for many years it had been the habit of a large number of the inhabitants of the Grenadines to work for part of the year on sugar estates on Trinidad, where they may well have developed a better impression of the benefits of land settlement than their neighbours. It was among the inhabitants of these small islands of Carriacou and Union and among the East Indians

in British Guiana that the recommendations of the 1897 Royal Commission came closest to realisation.

CHAPTER SIX

EFFORTS IN AID OF PEASANT AGRICULTURE:

THE WINDWARD ISLANDS

It was with widely varying degrees of enthusiasm that the West Indian governments(1) viewed the problems which faced their peasant cultivators. Some governments, notably those of the Leeward Islands, took little interest in these small settlers, leaving them practically unaided to face a diversity of problems. Since the Windward Islands' governments, particularly those of St. Vincent and Grenada,(2) were foremost in encouraging the growth of peasant settlement it is understandable that they led the way with schemes designed to assist their peasant proprietors. They also, of course, possessed a larger stake in the venture as they were the first to commit themselves to establishing controlled settlement schemes on government estates. The example provided by St. Vincent and Grenada was not, however, followed elsewhere. Some assistance was provided in St. Lucia, but other island governments exhibited a marked lack of interest in aiding peasant agriculture. This doubtless reflected to some extent influential planting opinion in these colonies, but it ran quite contrary to the recommendations of the 1897 Royal Commission and to Chamberlain's subsequent circular despatch.(3) The shortcoming of local governments in this respect was far more damaging to the prospects for achieving a thriving peasant landowning community than was their failure to introduce supervised settlement

1. The phrase here, as elsewhere in the study, refers to the governments of those colonies under consideration
2. See pages 59 and 78
3. 318/294/17143 CO circular despatch, 26 July 1898

schemes, for without such assistance the small landowner whether on government settlements or not could not be expected to prosper. The availability of land, the apparent demand for it, and the example of successful peasant proprietors led Sir Henry Norman's Commission to believe that the right conditions existed for peasant settlement. In practice, however, the realisation of the Commission's expectations depended upon the success of the peasant proprietor in crop production and marketing. Consequently it was in this respect, perhaps more than any other, that effective assistance and encouragement were crucial. Occasionally peasant settlers were so favourably placed that little or no government assistance or direction was necessary.(1) This was not usual, however, and in most cases where peasant settlers were without government assistance and supervision their holdings deteriorated into provision grounds. Although in some areas the production of food crops was desirable the Imperial Department of Agriculture did not generally encourage it. The Department's interpretation of the Royal Commission's recommendations evidently assumed that the peasant proprietors should contribute by way of exports to the prosperity of their colonies rather than follow a mere subsistence agriculture. In order to achieve this the local Agricultural Departments urged upon allottees the cultivation of economic crops for which a demand existed in markets beyond the West Indies.

The greater part of this and the next chapter deals with the direct assistance afforded to peasant proprietors by the local Agricultural Departments. Much excellent work was done by the officers of these Departments but throughout their success was limited by the absence of marketing and transport schemes, the lack of financial assistance during

1. For example, this was true of some settlers in Grenada, but more particularly of East Indian rice cultivators in British Guiana

the period in which economic crops came to maturity, and similar facilities which could only be provided by the local governments. In most instances assistance of this nature appears as essential for long-term stability and success. However, in some cases the initial reaction of the peasant proprietors may have contributed to governmental apathy and mistrust. Where facilities were provided there was frequently a marked disinclination on the part of the peasants, at least initially, to take advantage of them. No generalisation of the problems faced by small landowners and peasant settlers in the West Indies is possible. The diversity among them and the dissimilar conditions, even within one island, were too great. It is therefore necessary to examine the experience not only of individual colonies but also in some cases of the different settlements within each island. The first condition for successful peasant cultivation, before the provision of adequate facilities for marketing, freight or credit, was the production of suitable crops, and it is to this problem that attention will first be directed.

The most important experiment in land settlement in the West Indies in this period was in St. Vincent where a considerable number of peasant proprietors were established on Government settlements.⁽¹⁾ The problem of deciding which crops should be raised on these settlements taxed the officers of the St. Vincent Agricultural Department throughout the period under consideration. In some cases agricultural considerations, such as soil suitability, conflicted with the requirements of the local market. For instance, a considerable part of the Cumberland Valley settlement was precipitous and suffered from soil erosion; in these circumstances a soil-binding crop such as sugar cane was desirable, but

1. See pages 63 to 71

no cane works existed within a reasonable distance for processing the crop. A more serious, and indeed the central, problem was the extent of the peasants' interest and ability in raising crops which seemed to officials to be suitable on agricultural grounds. It is perhaps understandable that peasants should have been unenthusiastic about cultivations such as cacao and coffee which took anything up to ten years to reach bearing stage. Cacao was probably the most 'difficult'(1) of these crops, and in recommending it in St. Vincent and elsewhere in the West Indies, Agricultural Department officials were perhaps being unrealistic. They could, however, point to its successful cultivation by Grenada peasants and they no doubt hoped that the ten to sixteen years period of control which they would exercise over the St. Vincent settlements would provide sufficient time to instruct the settlers in its cultivation. Nor is there any evidence that Agricultural Officers insisted on specific cultivations on peasant allotments as would appear to have been within their rights during the period of purchase.(2) Experience proved, however, that cacao did not, in general, thrive in St. Vincent, and even when soil conditions were favourable it suffered from hurricane damage and peasant indifference.

The conflict between the demands of good agricultural practice and the

1. It is probable that the difficulty arose not from any characteristic of the cultivation, but from the wasteful agricultural practices of settlers and their unwillingness to adopt new methods, defects which were equally manifest in their cultivation of simpler crops such as sugar, and later cotton. With reference to the latter, for example, the ratooning of sugar year after year proved a tenacious practice, while in the case of cotton, settlers fired their fields at the end of the season, or, worse, left the stumps merely to rot. Nevertheless some peasants, even outside Grenada, seem to have worked cacao well. See particularly 617 no.4 Report on Dominica Botanic Station. In general, however, the crop was not popular outside Grenada.
2. 318/306/31989 Morris to C.O., 14 Aug. 1903. See also minute on this despatch.
321/223/26672 Llewelyn to Lyttelton, 13 July 1904

requirements of the local market, and the attitudes and abilities of the peasants were problems common to peasant settlements in most of the West Indian colonies, but St. Vincent also encountered more specific difficulties. These stemmed in part from the failure to appoint a full-time Agricultural Inspector until July 1902 when Thomas Osment was appointed. This omission hampered the local Botanic Station in its work of instruction, advice, plant distribution and similar duties. These tasks were, however, undertaken by the Curator and his deputy and it seems that at no time before Osment's appointment were the settlers without advice or plants. More serious were the eruptions of the Soufrière in May and September 1902 which caused a break in official supervision at what Morris regarded as a critical stage in the development of the settlements.(1) The eruption also led to some peasants leaving their holdings in the affected area and being unwilling to return to work them. By the early months of 1903, however, agricultural conditions in the settlement had returned to normal.

From their inception the outstanding and consistent feature of the St. Vincent settlements was the preponderance of the ground provisions in their cultivations. Naturally a part of each holding was expected to support the allottee and his family but as early as 1903 ground provisions were the principal crop on all the settlements and they remained so throughout the period under consideration. In 1906 Morris stressed the need to suspend further peasant settlement in St. Vincent as he feared that otherwise labour would be in short supply on the plantations which in contrast to the settlements were producing for export. He endorsed the view expressed in 1904 by Labord, the Acting Administrator in St. Vincent, that 'the unwillingness of the peasants

1. 318/306/5621 Morris to C.O., 30 Jan. 1903

to grow anything as a rule besides ground provisions considerably retards the advancement of the scheme, and unless close attention is paid to cultivation of a permanent nature the best years will slip by and the lands at the end of the sixteen years period will be impoverished without the object of the scheme having been realised.' Morris continued: 'in spite of the continued efforts of this department the planting of ground provisions which provide only a hand to mouth existence, is I regret to state, the chief use still made of the land under the land settlement scheme, and if St. Vincent is to depend entirely for its revenue on the efforts of a peasant proprietary, it is probable that the Colony will never attain to the position it once held.'(1)

Morris was perhaps taking an unduly pessimistic view, for some ground provisions were exported to Trinidad, St. Lucia and Grenada, especially after 1909 when, notably in the latter island, prices rose. Moreover on various St. Vincent settlements at various times in the period under review cacao, cotton and sugar were produced in significant quantities, though it is also true that the cultivations never achieved permanence or real importance. Their cultivation was fostered by the local Agricultural Department through the distribution of cuttings, seeds and plants, as well as manure and green dressing. In most cases small nurseries were constructed on the settlements, demonstration plots paid out, and the Agricultural Inspector travelled from allotment to allotment advising on types of produce, drainage, irrigation, pruning, mulching and other agricultural processes.

The crop initially encouraged by the Agricultural Department was cacao

1. 318/314/13283 Morris to C.O., 31 March 1906

and their efforts in this direction are illustrated by the fact that by 1910 over 53,000 cacao plants had been distributed free to peasant proprietors.(1) Yet in 1907 Osment described its cultivation at Linley Hall as 'bad'; out of 137 holdings with bearing trees, only 43 were said to have shown any improvement over the previous year. Osment referred to trouble in dealing with the peasants though he was not specific as to its nature, and to extensive attacks of night beetles which were inadequately controlled by the peasants' scanty application of Paris lime. Production never exceeded a few bags of cured beans each year, due mainly to poor cultivation and lack of interest on the part of the peasants. Cacao was initially more successful at Cumberland Valley where it proved the only suitable crop, the land being too precipitous for cotton and its location in relation to manufacturing facilities unsuitable for sugar. A small nursery was started in 1904, and the Department supplied large quantities of Paris lime and a hand sprayer to combat diseases. Although settlers tended their trees better than at Linley, they were also ravaged by the night beetle, and by 1907 out of 82 cacao growers only 35 exhibited trees showing any improvement since 1904.(2) By 1910 the cultivation was in a very poor condition, and several allottees were cautioned for neglect. Probably such warnings accelerated their tendency to reject cacao in favour of increased output of ground provisions. In 1921 the Agricultural Department recorded the most popular crops at Cumberland Valley as pigeon beans, tannias, yams, bananas and plantains. A token output of a few bags of cacao was produced annually from Park Hill but although a considerable number of cacao trees were already growing when the estate was settled

1. 617 nos. 1 to 11 Reports on St. Vincent B(otanic) S(tation) 1899 to 1910. Figures relating to Plant Distribution
2. 617 no. 7 Report on St. Vincent B.S. Report of Osment on the Land Settlement Scheme

the new proprietors did not care for them. A determined attempt to encourage the cultivation of cacao was made by the Agricultural Department at Richmond Hill. Eventually the high winds, tendency to drought, and lack of interest on the part of the settlers gradually led to the displacement of cacao by cotton, canes and arrowroot, although the Agricultural Department continued to press cacao on this settlement almost to the end of the period under review. As at Linley Hall disinterest and poor methods, notably in pruning, mulching and manuring, marked this cultivation, in spite of official advice and encouragement. In 1921 the total acreage under cacao in St. Vincent was estimated at between 1,500 and 2,000 acres, the greater proportion of which was on settlement estates.(1) A large part of the produce was consumed locally, only a small proportion being exported intercolonially.

The most successful permanent crop was cotton, which grew particularly well at Clare Valley and Questelles, and also at Linley and Richmond Hill; its cultivation was further stimulated by a crop purchase scheme.(2) By 1911 it was sufficiently popular to be making some inroads in areas usually given over to cane, or to ground provisions to which it was second in cultivated area; in that year it was estimated that on all the estates some 542 small growers had some area under sea island cotton and a further 282 were growing Marie Galantie.(3) Wet weather late in 1912 caused boll disease and very low yield, and the outbreak of the European War created further difficulties. Subsequently interest was restored by cotton competitions and even the high prices commanded by sugar did not reverse this trend. In 1918 when sugar prices were at

1. 617 no. 17 Report of St. Vincent A(gricultural) D(epartment) 1921 Report on Land Settlement
2. See page 133
3. 617 no. 11 Report on St. Vincent B.S. Report on Land Settlement

their highest 2,266 pass books were issued to small growers at the government ginnery,(1) indicating the number of persons who were producing some quantity of cotton. The post-War depression proved more damaging to peasant-grown cotton than the brief boom in sugar prices, the area under cultivation falling in 1921 by 54 per cent in the case of sea island and by 27 per cent in the case of Marie Galantie.(2)

Another popular crop was sugar cane though in many cases this can be considered as a ground provision since in its raw state it was a principal item of diet. It featured in practically every holding in every island and in 1911 half of the 2,000 acres under sugar cane in St. Vincent was on peasant holdings.(3) Its success was largely determined by proximity to manufacturing facilities. The absence of such facilities in St. Vincent discouraged its cultivation at Cumberland Valley, but it was grown at Linley, and at New Adelphi and Park Hill where it was treated and prepared for market at an old sugar-plant on the former estate. Both these settlements apparently took to the new seedling cane varieties, and instructions regarding pen manuring were readily applied with a resulting improvement in yield. The settlers on both these estates appear to have followed more diligently than elsewhere the recommendations of the Agricultural Instructor, throwing out old ratoons and planting new seedlings, and also applying pen and sulphate of ammonia fertilisers well before their contemporaries on other settlements. These estates were better suited for canes than other crops, and although fluctuating in popularity with ground provisions and arrowroot, cane production was profitably pursued through-

1. 617 no. 17 Report of St. Vincent A.D. 1918-1919 Report on Government Ginnery
2. 617 no. 17 Report of St. Vincent A.D. 1921 Report on Land Settlement
3. 318/328/7073 Watts to C.O. 10 Feb. 1912

out the period under review. Also at Richmond Hill cane cultivation was encouraged by the facilities for producing cane syrup offered by a small privately owned factory. At Cumberland Valley and Questelles a small sugar works provided a similar incentive to cane cultivation.

Low-grade arrowroot was also an important peasant cultivation throughout St. Vincent; in fact in 1906 it was reckoned as the largest individual crop on the peasant settlements. It had the advantage of providing either food or starch and its cultivation was encouraged by the formation of the Arrowroot Growers' Association which established minimum prices which were not abandoned until the onset of the post-war depression. Cassava was also a dual purpose crop. It was grown largely as a ground provision for conversion into farine but its rhizomes could also be manufactured into starch. With arrowroot it was the most popular crop at Park Hill and New Adelphi, the Government providing on the latter estate a plant for the manufacture of starch from either crop. The popularity of both sugar cane and arrowroot was not due to the encouragement of the Agricultural Department, which sought to reduce peasants' dependence on these two crops.

Two estates have not been mentioned in this survey of the general direction and development of peasant agriculture on the Government settlements in St. Vincent, namely Belair and Lammes. Neither figured prominently in the agricultural history of the period. Both primarily produced ground provisions and raised some cane and arrowroot; Lammes also grew small quantities of cacao and coffee. Belair canes were processed at a syrup works on the settlement while those grown at Lammes were sold as ground provision for eating in a raw state. In Union Island the main crop was ground provisions in the form of corn, peas and sweet potatoes. The economic crop was Marie Galantie cotton

and small quantities of sea island cotton. Although the Agricultural Department encouraged this cultivation it was in fact already established before the settlement was set up. The only notable peasant settlements outside the government schemes were at Mesopotamia Valley and at Greggs. In these areas ground provisions and Indian corn were most extensively cultivated. Setting aside the peasants' inclinations it is apparent that the potential progress of peasant agriculture in St. Vincent, as in other colonies, was dependent to a large extent on the facilities provided for promoting both individual crops and the general standard of cultivation. Of great importance in this respect was the provision of factories for the processing of arrowroot, sugar cane and cotton. A number of private starch works existed on the Island and the peasants appear to have encountered little difficulty in obtaining the conversion of their arrowroot and cassava. At a number of settlements the peasants also constructed their own crude grinding machines. The only Government assistance in this cultivation beyond the construction of the arrowroot mill at New Adelphi was the sinking of a well at Questelles.

In their sugar production also, the peasants had to rely for the most part upon estate mills, though of course canes could be sold for eating in their raw state. Government assistance with this cultivation involved the maintenance of the sugar works which existed on the Clare Valley estate at the time of purchase, and the construction of a similar muscavado mill at New Adelphi.(1) In the latter case a small charge was made for converting canes, but since ready sales of the converted products were obtained in the local market this did not discourage cultivation. The limited nature of Government aid in the popular

1. 617 no. 4 Report on St. Vincent B.S. Report on Land Settlement

cultivations of arrowroot and sugar may be explained by the fact that it was not the general policy of the Agricultural Department to encourage these crops but rather, where possible, to reduce the peasant dependence upon them. The encouragement of peasant cotton was considered as a step in this direction and government assistance was consequently greater.

When the Government Central Cotton Factory was first opened in April 1904,(1) cotton was not a peasant crop of any significance. By 1908, however, it was of much greater importance. In that year the peasant growers at Questelles, who had planted about 96 acres under the crop, combined on their own initiative and sold their produce direct to the cotton factory, receiving as a result much better prices than would have been obtained in the local market.(2) Their action demonstrated the possibilities of direct contact between the factory and the peasant growers, and in 1910 the St. Vincent Government initiated a scheme which placed on a permanent basis direct purchase by the factory of the peasant crop.(3) The system was a rudimentary one of co-operative profit sharing, but it proved an immediate success. A Government agent purchased the cotton paying a small amount on account, and later, following the sale of the ginned cotton, additional bonuses were distributed; the peasant ultimately receiving four-fifths of the profit. (4) The peasant growers of Clare Valley, Questelles, Linley and

1. Ibid. Report on Government Central Cotton Factory
2. 318/325/546 Morris to C.O., 6 Jan. 1911.
617 no. 9 Report on St. Vincent B.S. Report on Land Settlement
3. 617 no. 11 Report on St. Vincent B.S. Report on Government Central Cotton Factory
4. *W.I.B.*, vol. XI, 1910 W. N. Sands, 'Account of the Working of the St. Vincent Land Settlement Scheme'

Richmond took full advantage of this popular scheme. The arrangement produced an immediate increase in the quantity of peasant cotton purchased by the factory. From 67 bales in 1909 this rose to 212 bales in the first year of the scheme.(1) The Imperial Commissioner of Agriculture praised the arrangement not only because of the monetary advantage which it offered to the peasants, but also because he felt it would help establish a spirit of co-operation and lead to the '...formation of an industrious and intelligent class of settlers in the Colony'.(2) Unfortunately the extra work and responsibility, which fell largely on the local Agricultural Department but involved also the expense of establishing government purchasing agencies, was considered too great for similar schemes to be established. Consequently only one similar project was undertaken. This was associated with the existing cotton ginnery, and provided for the purchase of grain from small growers on a profit-sharing basis. Such encouragement of corn and maize was prompted by the apparent threat of imminent collapse of the cotton industry in the first years of the 1914-1918 war. Despite the subsequent recovery of cotton a small number of peasant growers took advantage of the facilities, though in most years their number did not much exceed one hundred, the produce being of proportionate size. By comparison, in 1917 for example, peasants supplied the seed for 39.6 per cent of the ginnery's output.(3) The success of the cotton profit-sharing purchase scheme is significant; the Agricultural Superintendent of St. Vincent felt that further schemes of a similar nature might have substantially increased the success of the Land Settlement Scheme.

1. In 1910, 824 peasant cotton growers disposed of their crop to the Factory under the new arrangement
2. 318/325/546 Morris to C.O., 6 Jan. 1911
3. 617 no. 17 Report of St. Vincent A.D. 1918-1919 Report on Government Central Cotton Factory

Beyond the cotton purchase project the Government provided negligible assistance in marketing other produce. The need for assistance was somewhat diminished by the nature of peasant cultivation, much of which found ready and accessible markets locally or intercolonially. Nevertheless the conditions in which permanent or economic produce might be encouraged did exist. For example, an effort was made early in the history of the settlements to develop a fruit trade with the United Kingdom, a project encouraged by Chamberlain and based broadly upon the recommendations of 1897.(1) Trial shipments were made initially in the most promising fruit, bananas, and although doomed ultimately to failure through the inadequacies of the Royal Mail Company service, the initial problems were internal and might have been overcome with Government help. The difficulty of packaging and carting this delicate fruit to the quay, and the necessity of arranging payment for the small growers upon delivery,(2) as was done in the case of cotton, were all directions in which the local Government might have assisted. In practice it was only with cotton and arrowroot that the peasants received any other guidance in marketing and this stemmed not from the Government but from the advice offered by the British Cotton Growers' Association and the local Arrowroot Growers' Association.

The task of improving the standard peasant agriculture rested entirely in the hands of the Instructors of the Agricultural Department. These officers were responsible for supplying plants and for supervising and instructing the settlers. Some small additional stimulus was provided

1. 318/290/24079 Chamberlain to Norman, 12 Nov. 1897
2. 318/312/28476 Morris to C.O., 29 July 1905
See also page 37. In the case of cotton, for example, a proportion was paid on account

by the annual agricultural shows,(1) where apart from the general categories special classes were provided for peasant cultivation and livestock. Although peasant competitors were usually few in number the quality of their produce was frequently high. A similar though more substantial attempt to improve peasant cultivation was provided by the prize-holding competitions. Although St. Vincent provided the model for these schemes they proved less successful there than elsewhere. The competitions resulted apparently from a suggestion made by the Governor of the Windwards, Sir R. Llewellyn, and the form adopted for them in St. Vincent was the model for the other islands.(2) Classes were divided according to cultivation and size of holding, and during the term of the competition the peasant received detailed advice from the Agricultural Instructor, sometimes assisted by other officers. At the specified time a panel of judges inspected the holdings and the appropriate prize money was then distributed. This prize money was obtained from a number of sources; in St. Vincent it was provided from the Land Settlement Fund. By later standards the first St. Vincent competition was not well conceived, for rather than specific crops, good cultivation in general was the object. It ran for only two years and was discontinued in 1906 because of the lack of interest displayed by the peasants. In 1913 a further competition was held, but was restricted to cotton. The success reflected the wisdom of the restriction, and the following year the competition was repeated, though confined to the estates on the leeward side of the Island. Once again it was a success and the Agricultural Instructor further commented that the lessons of 1913 had been well learned.

1. They were held throughout the period. For early examples and reports see 318/301/1870 Morris to C.O., 4 Jan. 1901: 3951 Morris to C.O. 16 Jan. 1901: 12772 Morris to C.O., 25 March 1901: 303/4223 Morris to C.O., 15 Jan. 1902: 306/3924 Morris to C.O. 16 Jan. 1903: 17025 Morris to C.O. 16 April 1903
2. 617 no. 7 Report on St. Vincent B.S. Report on Progress of Prize Holding Competition

The remaining aspect of peasant aid in St. Vincent concerns the establishment of agricultural credit banks or societies. As with prize-holding competitions, St. Vincent again led the way. The difficulty of providing facilities for peasants to borrow money cheaply so as to develop their holdings and improve their crops was the subject of much discussion within most colonies and also intercolonially at several of the annual Agricultural Conferences.(1) The first practical experiment was implemented in March 1909 with the opening of the private enterprise St. Vincent Credit and Loans Bank Ltd.(2) By December 1913 it had 440 members, almost all of them small landowners. The limitations of a single establishment, notably in terms of accessibility, were self-evident, but it was the peasants themselves who established St. Vincent's second credit bank. The enterprising settlers at Questelles, who had been the first to use the cotton ginnery, again led the way by founding in January 1911 the Questelles and Clare Valley Agricultural Society(3) It received a Government loan of £25 and in 1913 the formation of further societies was facilitated by an Ordinance 'for the registration, encouragement and assistance of agricultural credit societies under the Raiffeisen system'.(4) Societies of this type proved to be successful in St. Vincent partly because the single substantial return on the annual crops of the peasant facilitated easy repayment of loans. By

1. See particularly the Agricultural Conferences of 1907 and 1908. *W.I.B.*, vol. VIII, 1907 and vol. IX, 1908
2. *W.I.B.*, vol. XIV, 1914 F. Watts, 'Efforts in Aid of Peasant Agriculture'
3. 617 no. 11 Report on St. Vincent B.S. Report on Land Settlement
4. The Raiffeisen system, which originated in Western Europe, involved small credit banks operating on a co-operative principle. The shareholders were also the customers. The most notable, and perhaps objectionable, feature was the unlimited liability which led two committees, appointed in British Guiana during 1911 by Sir F.M. Hodgson, to proclaim the system as undesirable for that Colony. St. Vincent, however, persevered with the system and it was probably early successes here which led to the development of such banks elsewhere

1919 there were twenty-one societies with a membership of 1,660 and the Imperial Commissioner for Agriculture, Francis Watts, proclaimed that 'agriculture credit societies now appear to be firmly established in the Colony'.(1)

In summarising aid to peasant agriculture in St. Vincent, it is apparent that whilst there was some success, notably with cotton, far more could have been achieved particularly in respect of co-operative profit-sharing schemes undertaken by Government purchase. The success which attended the cotton scheme suggests that similar projects would have proved equally beneficial. The encouragement in this direction which local government alone was in a position to provide might also have reduced the peasant dependence upon ground provisions. The natural inclination of the peasant to raise these crops was reinforced by the simplicity with which they could be disposed of locally or intercolonially. Only if the products required in the more distant markets could be handled with equal ease might the peasant have been persuaded to cultivate them.

Peasant agriculture in Grenada differed somewhat from that in St. Vincent. In this Island the Government Land Settlement Scheme did not commence until 1910 but prior to that date, and to the Royal Commission of 1897, a considerable body of peasant proprietors had developed without Government supervision. These small growers, despite several detrimental agricultural practices, including the tendency to sweat the beans insufficiently, proved throughout this period to be quite efficient cacao cultivators, with an annual output of around 5,000 bags. The success of these small growers was undoubtedly one of the reasons

1. 517 no. 17 Report of St. Vincent A.D. Covering letter of Francis Watts

for the popularity of this crop in the eyes of the Agricultural Departments, notably that of St. Vincent. The peasant preoccupation with this crop also played a considerable part in the decision to establish the Government Settlement Scheme of 1910, since as a result of this concentration on cacao the Island suffered from a considerable shortage of home-grown ground provisions. Nevertheless, prior to the 1910 Settlement Scheme and for some time after its introduction the Government endeavoured to improve the standard of cultivation of the small cacao growers by means of a series of prize-holding competitions.

The intention with regard to the prize-holding competitions was to hold them in a different parish each year. The prize money was provided by the local Agricultural and Commercial Society, and the prime mover in the introduction of the competitions was the Imperial Commissioner, Dr. Daniel Morris. The success of the competitions in fact led to a greater number than was originally contemplated. The first was held in 1906 in St. John's, which had the largest proportion of peasant proprietors in relation to its cultivable area. The competition was sufficiently successful for it to be immediately repeated in the same parish at the close of the year, while plans were made for a similar scheme in St. David's. By 1910 when the Island's Land Settlement Scheme was initiated there were over 200 competitors involved in six cacao competitions covering all the Grenada parishes. The competitions in cacao continued until 1917 and during the last four years an average annual entry of 281 was achieved.(1) Yet in spite of the general success of the competitions and the enthusiasm with which they were usually greeted, the initial mistrust of the peasantry was not entirely dispelled. Tardiness in official visits, judging, or prize-giving could quickly destroy con-

1. 617 nos. 14 to 16 Reports of Grenada Agricultural Department 1914 to 1917. Reports on Prize Holding Competitions

fidence, and something of this nature caused the entries in 1911 to fall to only 137.(1)

The prize competitions revealed certain fundamental defects in the peasant cacao cultivation, notably poor drainage and manuring. Despite constant instructions and advice these two remained the most serious weaknesses of the small cacao producers throughout the period. With regard to drainage it appears that frequently the deterrent to better work was economy rather than neglect or disinterest. Other shortcomings in cultivation were the tarring of decayed trees, and the habit of firing fields to clear them; in fact neither practice was effective in combating the spread of cacao diseases. The latter custom was prohibited by law in 1913, but was still employed, and from time to time serious fires burned out large areas of cultivation. Pruning, the clearing of dead wood, and the apparent inability to combat certain diseases were other conspicuous failings. On the other hand, the work of the Agricultural Instructor, F. Branch, who was appointed in July 1905, led to certain improvements. One direction in which he met early success was in impressing on the peasants the need to sweat their cacao beans more effectively to produce a better finished product. He also achieved some progress in instructing peasants in the identification and treatment of thrips disease of cacao. But on balance the standard of cultivation reached by these advanced settlers left much to be desired, and the success of the competitions, during which cultivation undoubtedly prospered, failed to raise even the most productive peasant lots to the standards common on plantations.(2)

1. 617 no. 12 Report on Grenada B(otanic) S(tation) Report on Prize Holding Competitions. The Instructor, Branch, reported a fall in entries from a number in excess of 200 in 1910. He also indicated that the work done was not as good
2. W.I.B. vol. XIII, 1913 G. Auchinleck, 'Peasant Agriculture in Grenada'

The very success of the cacao competitions illustrated a fundamental weakness in the Grenada economy, namely the scarcity of local-grown ground provisions, and the consequent need for substantial imports. Ground provisions were little grown in 1910, and the continued concentration on cacao is indicated by the record cacao crop of 1917, a year moreover in which prices were showing some tendency to decline. In that year the Government, concerned as always by the lack of locally produced foodstuffs, inaugurated a Native Foodcrops Campaign.(1) This involved the encouragement by distribution, advertisement and instruction of all forms of ground provisions and corn. It was operated locally by small committees nominated in each parish and directed by a central board. The campaign achieved some success, food crops being more widely grown than previously, but a provision garden competition introduced to support it did not produce the desired result; the concept of a small highly cultivated plot was evidently not grasped by the peasants. The food crops campaign was renewed in 1918 and continued down to 1920, but the garden competition was replaced in 1918 by a full-scale ground provisions prize-holding competition which did effect some reduction in the area under cacao in favour of provisions. In October 1920 the Government opened a granary and ground provisions depot, and provided an advance of £500 to cover expenses.(2) The campaign, the new depot, and the increasing depression in agricultural prices led to an increased supply of home-grown foodstuffs although much still had to be imported. The growing depression in agriculture, which released land for food crops, was particularly significant in contributing to

1. For earlier concern see, for instance, 617 no. 10 Report of Grenada B.S.
617 no. 16 Report of Grenada A.D. Report on Native Food Crops Campaign
2. 617 no. 17 Report of Grenada A.D. 1920 Report on Government Granary and Ground Provisions Depot

the improvement since some remote coastal districts which had previously supplied provisions to the more populated areas ceased to do so following the termination of the coastal steamer service in 1919.(1) When this slump encompassed sugar, which many of the peasants had grown in increasing quantities as the price rose above that of cacao, the depression became even more widespread.

The concern of the Grenada government over the lack of home-grown provision crops was the main reason for its initiation of the Land Settlement Scheme in the middle of 1910. A principal object was to supplement the island food supply, the settlers being encouraged to raise ground provisions. As far as the economic or permanent crops were concerned, the Agricultural Department hoped that cotton might be cultivated on part of the holdings, and that the general direction of peasant agriculture would be towards a diversification of permanent crops, as well as the production of provisions to reduce imports. In the Grenada settlements sugar was easily the most popular crop. It was encouraged at Morne Rouge by the completion of a sugar factory, and at the Calvigny estate by the proximity of two muscavado works. Methods of production were rudimentary, and the good yield was an indication of the resilience and high sucrose content of the new seedling varieties, rather than of any significant advance made by the peasants. The allottees ratooned the new varieties of cane, thus slowly causing a deterioration, and as in St. Vincent it proved most difficult for the agricultural instructors to make any impression on the established practices of peasant settlers. Coconuts were another popular crop and here difficulty was encountered in preventing allottees from planting them in random fashion all over their holdings. With regard to

1. See page 189

permanent crops early experiments with cotton at Morne Rouge were not encouraging, and fruit growing was entered into only in an irregular manner by peasant proprietors. The other major cultivation on the holdings, apart from sugar, was provision crops. In 1913 it was estimated that on the Morne Rouge estates, 95 acres were planted in canes or ground provisions and only 3 acres in other crops.(1) The 1914 prize-holding competition, conducted in connection with the land settlement estates, indicated that an almost exclusive preoccupation with these cultivations was common to all settlements. The balance between the two crops was altered to some extent in favour of provisions as a result of the Native Food Crops Campaign in 1917. In so far, therefore, as the volume of imported ground provisions was reduced, and the local price stabilised, the aim of the 1910 settlement scheme was partly achieved. But concentration upon sugar, which was not discouraged by the Government, defeated attempts to bring about a diversified cultivation in permanent crops, and the Grenada peasant proved as resistant to change, and as steeped in damaging agricultural practices, as his St. Vincent counterpart.

Peasant agriculture was also generally hindered by the incidence of praedial larceny, which although not exclusive to Grenada presented a particularly serious problem there, especially in the south of the Island, around the St. Georges district. It discouraged promising smallholders, particularly those raising livestock. As at Linley Valley, the only St. Vincent estate to suffer praedial larceny on any scale, it bore most heavily on peasants who set the desirable example of working upon nearby estates, since they were absent from their holdings sometimes for a considerable period. On Government settlements where

1. 617 no. 13 Report of Grenada A.D. Report of Land Settlement Scheme

residence was a condition of occupation, which was usually the case, praedial larceny was less widespread.

The assistance which was rendered by way of agricultural advice and encouragement followed the St. Vincent pattern. In addition the Agricultural Department gave some aid in marketing. During 1912 a prize-holding competition was inaugurated on the lines of the Grenada cacao competitions, but directed towards the encouragement of maize, canes and tobacco. As with the cacao scheme the prize money was provided by the local Agricultural and Commercial Society. In 1917 the competition was replaced by one which sought to encourage ground provisions in general as part of the Native Food Crop Campaign. It produced some reduction in the area under canes, the decrease being most marked during 1918. Other examples of Government assistance were the establishment of a cotton ginney, which became operative in 1911, and which was intended to serve both planters and peasants.(1) Unlike St. Vincent, however, no form of co-operative profit-sharing purchase was attempted. Some of the most effective Government aid was directed to settlers within the Government schemes. A sugar factory was completed to serve settlers on the two Morne Rouge estates at a cost to the Government of £300.(2) It was rented annually to an allottee for £25 and he handled the canes of the other tenants, using the *métayer* system, in this case retaining half the produce for expenses and profit. This arrangement worked satisfactorily, but so great was the cane production that a number of peasants on estates throughout the Island erected their own sugar works. As with St. Vincent, where it was considered necessary road repairs were undertaken on all the settlements. In general,

1. 617 no. 12 Report on Grenada B.S. Report on Prize Holding Competition and Report of Agricultural Instructor
2. 617 no. 14 Report of Grenada A.D. Report on Land Settlement Scheme

Government assistance compared favourably with that extended in St. Vincent. No credit societies or profit-sharing purchase schemes were promoted. The Grenada Government did not, like St. Vincent, have the assistance of Imperial funds(1) and colonial revenues were inadequate for the scale of aid which the situation demanded. The truth of the matter was summed up in 1912 by the Agricultural Superintendent who pointed out 'that attempts to increase the efficiency of agricultural methods among peasants in small tropic (sic) countries must inevitably be expensive'.(2)

Before leaving Grenada some mention must be made of the settlement scheme conducted in the Island's Grenadine dependency of Carriacou.(3) When the Land Settlement Scheme commenced in this Island in 1903 the cultivation consisted of Marie Galantie cotton, corn and ground provisions. The crops were fairly successful and cotton cultivation was further facilitated by the Government restoration of the abandoned and ruined cotton ginney which purchased the cotton crop. In 1909 when a small agricultural station was opened at Beauséjour, greater aid and supervision became possible. Corn and cotton were found to be well grown, though unfortunately the Marie Galantie variety was of the short staple ratooning type. The custom with ground provisions, however, was to grow them in alternate rows between the corn and cotton, and thus shaded they were in poor condition. To encourage production of the main crops an annual prize-holding scheme for cotton and corn was commenced in 1910 and proved an immediate success. A prize-holding

1. 318/325/547 Morris to C.O., 6 Jan. 1911.C.O. decided that the Colony was sufficiently prosperous to erect its own gin
2. *W.I.B.*, vol. XIII, 1913 G. Auchinleck, 'Peasant Agriculture in Grenada'
3. See pages 91 to 96

competition for ground provisions was launched in the Island in 1918. The Agricultural Department also encouraged limes and these achieved a small degree of popularity, largely no doubt through the opening in 1911 of a private lime juice factory in Carriacou.(1) Their importance, however, never approached that of cotton and corn. The standard of cultivation was good with the exception of drainage and for most of the period under review the Carriacou peasant enjoyed relative prosperity. In 1921, however, the depression hit the peasant in this small Island harder than it did his Grenada counterpart, for although both cacao and sugar fell in value along with cotton, the Marie Galantie variety also found itself in difficult competition against a longer staple Peruvian strain. The price offered per pound fell in consequence from two shillings and three pence to five pence.(2)

In the last of the Windward Islands, St. Lucia, considerable efforts were made to foster peasant agriculture, and although a settlement scheme was not introduced until 1913,(3) at the outset of the period a considerable body of settlers on Crown Land holdings was already in existence, engaged almost exclusively in the cultivation of sugar cane and ground provisions. From 1899 onward, the Agricultural Department, by free distribution of plants, successfully directed the cultivation of these settlers towards limes, cacao and coffee, particularly the former two. By 1907, 20,670 free plants had been distributed, well over

1. 617 nos. 10 and 12 Report on Grenada B.S. Report on Carriacou Station
2. 617 no. 17 Report of Grenada A.D. Report on Carriacou by the Agricultural Instructor
3. See pages 88 to 91

half in the cultivations mentioned.(1) The efforts of the Department to stimulate cotton production in Choiseul and Laborie were less successful. Early encouragement was provided through the establishment of a cotton ginning machine and baling press by the joint contributions of the St. Lucia Agricultural Society and the Imperial Department of Agriculture. Peasant cotton was ginned free of cost in return for the seed. By 1902, about 100 acres were under cultivation, but the very adverse weather conditions in late 1903 and early 1904 caused the peasants to lose confidence in the crop. Although strongly in favour of cotton cultivation in the Island, the Agricultural Department acknowledged by 1907 that even free ginning, low-price seed, and free information and advice were insufficient incentives for the peasant to grow cotton except on the smallest scale. By 1912 there were only 19 acres under the crop,(2) though this was a significant reduction on the previous year, due partly to a prize-holding competition which stimulated increased interest in cacao.

It was, in fact, towards cacao that the Department directed much of its attention. The crop was a popular one, and it was estimated in 1907 that the majority of the thousand or so growers were peasant. The Agricultural Department encouraged its cultivation by free distribution of plants, by prize-holding competitions aimed at improving standards of pruning, thinning and draining, and by advice on both growing and preparation of produce for market. Although some progress was made in encouraging the adoption of modern agricultural methods, the Department commented in 1907 that there was a 'tremendous inertia and conserv-

1. 617 nos. 1 to 8 Reports on St. Lucia B(otanic) S(tation) 1899 to 1907. Figures relating to Plant Distribution
2. 617 nos. 11 and 12 Reports on St. Lucia B.S. Reports of the Agricultural Instructor

atism...to be overcome before actual results can be obtained'.(1)

Limes were another popular crop, and their cultivation was stimulated by the construction of a Government lime juice factory in 1913.(2) Consequently by 1918 the acreage under this fruit had almost doubled, reaching 4,224 acres, most of the increase being attributed to small growers. The factory was a profit-sharing venture, modelled on the St. Vincent Government ginnery, the peasant receiving an initial payment for his fruit, and the balance of his three-quarter share of the profits after the sale of the processed product. This arrangement freed the peasants from dependence on merchants, and from the fluctuating market price, and was clearly popular with them. Coconuts, like limes, increased in popularity, and by 1915 the two crops were making some inroads into the area under cacao. In 1918 consideration was given to the construction of a Government coconut factory, on the lines of the already successful lime factory, but as a result of the post-war depression the project was shelved.

It is evident that in the period down to 1918 some progress was made in encouraging St. Lucia peasants to diversify into permanent crops, notably cacao and limes. However, ground provisions remained an important part of their cultivation, and in 1915 sugar still remained the major peasant crop, production being further encouraged by the high prices of 1918 to 1920. Moreover the progress that was made did not stem the exodus of able-bodied males from the Island. This emigration was a matter of grave concern to the St. Lucia Government, and was considered as partly responsible for the poor state of the cacao holdings upon which the

1. 617 no. 7 Report on St. Lucia B.S. Report of the Agricultural Instructor
2. 617 no. 14 Report of St. Lucia A(gricultural) D(epartment). Report on the Government Lime Juice Factory

Administrator commented in 1911.(1) It was with the hope of reducing this tendency and attracting would-be immigrants that a Land Settlement Scheme was established at Reunion in 1913.(2) The Government aimed to provide cheaper land in a more favourable location, together with better facilities for aid, and some measure of control. The settlers planted mainly ground provisions and cane for which there was a ready market in Castries. This cultivation was encouraged by official policy, and allotments of unoccupied land at Reunion were given out free for the duration of the War, upon the applicants' undertaking to raise ground provisions. An experiment station and nursery was constructed close to Reunion to assist the settlers in this cultivation(3) and an old muscavado mill was put in order for the benefit of the allottees. In 1917 a farine plant was established on the estate, and the following year a Government granary and ground provisions depot was opened. The latter was an immediate success both as purchaser and supplier of all forms of vegetable and grain produce, dealing on average with 4,000 customers each month. This scale of operation was facilitated by a Government subsidised monthly steamer service between Micoud on the windward side of the Island Praslin and Castries, which supplemented the irregular sailing vessels. The degree of success achieved at Reunion emphasises some of the conditions necessary for successful peasant cultivation. To the enthusiasm of the settlers for the crops grown was added the proximity of a market, good communications, adequate

1. 617 no. 12 Report on St. Lucia B.S. Report on Prize Holding Competition
2. See page 88
3. 617 no. 16 Report of St. Lucia A.D. Report on Reunion and Land Settlement Scheme

agencies for processing, purchase and supply, and nearby facilities for instruction, demonstration and advice.

It remains to consider three further aspects of Government assistance. Mention has already been made of the prize-holding competitions. Four were held, in 1910, 1911 to 1912, 1917 to 1919 and in 1920, in order to stimulate better agricultural practices in the cultivation of cacao and limes. The Agricultural Department encountered suspicion similar to that in Grenada. One elderly competitor, who was finally induced to enter the second competition, was reported as saying: 'he was "afraid to do so" but of what he was not sure except that it was the Government.'

(1) Officials felt that such mistrust was being overcome and that work done in the competitions was good.

An initiative which originated in St. Lucia was the establishment of demonstration plots of about an acre in extent at various localities in the Island. These were associated in the first instance with the unsuccessful attempts to promote cotton cultivation. They were a natural development of the experiment plots controlled by the botanic stations, which were a feature of all the islands, and which were frequently established at the settlements as well as at the botanic stations themselves. Although initially intended for research they were also useful for demonstration. The first of these plots specifically intended for demonstration was in connection with cacao, and was established in St. Lucia during 1902 at Beauséjour; its success was immediately evident. The Agricultural Instructor believed that in one year it had achieved more than all his verbal instructions. He wrote that '... nearly every cacao proprietor in the vicinity has begun to fork and

1. 617 no. 12 Report on St. Lucia B.S. Report on Prize Holding Competition

prune.'(1) By 1906 these demonstration plots were scattered all over the Island, for the most part adjacent to main roads, and where possible on the least promising and least fertile land.

Agricultural credit societies grew rapidly after 1915 with Government encouragement. By 1918 all ten districts in the Island possessed a society, and Government loans to them totalled £2,229. But by 1920 certain disturbing features were apparent, particularly the failure to repay loans, and the lack of interest in, or support for, the societies by members once they had received their loan or, in the case of the better class of member, repaid it.(2) In 1920, following several cautions, one society was wound up, and final warnings were issued to the others. The relative failure of credit societies in St. Lucia contrasts with their success in St. Vincent. One contributory cause was probably the cultivation of limes. Orchard crops tended to run peasant borrowers into difficulties over repayments, largely because the returns from cultivations of this kind did not come in a single substantial payment.

1. 617 nos. 5 and 3 Report on St. Lucia B.S. Report of the Agricultural Instructor
2. 617 no. 17 Report of St. Lucia A.D. 1920. Annual Report of the Inspector of Agricultural Credit Societies

CHAPTER SEVEN

EFFORTS IN AID OF PEASANT AGRICULTURE:

BARBADOS, THE LEEWARD ISLANDS

AND BRITISH GUIANA

Peasant agriculturalists in Barbados enjoyed little encouragement during this period. The local agricultural department concerned itself almost exclusively with experiments in sugar and the distribution of improved varieties of canes to the plantations. Occasionally small quantities of provisions plants and cotton seed were also distributed. In an effort to encourage cotton cultivation the Government did provide financial assistance for the establishment of a ginnery. Since this ginnery purchased quantities of peasant cotton the contribution of the local Government certainly promoted peasant cultivation. However, the cotton ginnery provides the only example of such assistance. Beyond this no special facilities were established for helping peasant cultivators, the great majority of whom were, in any case, tenants on sugar estates rather than land owners.(1) The only other encouragement which peasant agriculturalists received was provided by the annual agricultural shows. As was the case elsewhere special classes intended to encourage peasant growers were provided at these shows which in the case of Barbados commenced in 1901 with a show held at Blower's Plantation at Hopewell. Some general and rather vague opposition was reported by Morris but was quickly overcome(2) and thereafter such shows proved a

1. See, for instance, the show at Todd's Plantation 318/306/3924 Morris to C.O., 16 Jan. 1903
2. 318/301/3951 Morris to Chamberlain 31 Jan. 1901. The opposition apparently appeared only at the first Barbados show which was held at Hopewell. Its precise nature is not disclosed but Morris complained that '...the most extraordinary statements were made to the people, as to the objects in view'. Unfortunately he does not state them

success, often with planters supplying the prizes for the peasant cultivation.

In its eminent suitability for sugar the Leeward Island of Antigua resembled Barbados, and here again aid for the peasants was of a very limited nature. Until 1917 there was no settlement scheme, and even after that date there was only the small Government settlement at Sawcolt's, and the private one at Tomlinson's. With the exception of the sugar factory, which will be considered shortly, the assistance afforded to the peasants was restricted to the distribution of plants, and the advice provided by the Agricultural Department.(1) Although sugar was the predominant crop throughout the Island the peasants did raise other produce in small quantities. To assist and encourage such cultivation in 1900 the Antigua Botanic Station laid out a peasant garden on one-tenth of an acre. This was planted with a variety of crops as an example to the peasants, many of whom (inefficiently) cultivated similar small plots. It was discontinued in 1905 but by that time had realised a net profit of about £6, which would of course have been increased in the case of a peasant working for himself and without the need to pay wages.(2)

On the larger peasant holdings the most popular crops during the early years of the period, apart from the ubiquitous sugar cane and ground provisions, were citrus fruits, especially limes.(3) In spite of this

1. 617 nos. 1-17 Reports of the Antigua B(otanic) S(tation) and A(gricultural) D(epartment). Figures relating to Plant Distribution
2. 617 no. 7 Report on Antigua B.S. Section on the Station Gardens
3. 617 nos. 2 and 4 Reports on Antigua B.S. Plant Distribution. In 1901 out of a total distribution of 6,465 plants, 5,323 were limes

the efforts of the Agricultural Department were initially directed towards encouraging cotton, and they met with some early success. By 1907 there were about 120 acres under the crop on peasant allotments.(1) The cultivation, however, did not prosper. By 1910 it had substantially declined and in contrast to St. Vincent the Department now spoke of cotton as a 'difficult' crop in the Island and certainly not suited to peasant cultivation. Despite the prevalence of cotton diseases, which were responsible for the decline, it did grow moderately well in some locations, and there was a minor revival of interest among peasants during 1917 and 1918: in the latter year, of the 279 bales exported, 54 were peasant produce. By the close of 1918 over 200 peasants were engaged in cotton growing, although all were confined to the favourable areas, namely the St. Paul's, St. Philip's and English Harbour districts of the Island. Despite the absence of Agricultural Instructors to assist these peasants they persevered with the crop until the slump of 1921. In 1919, 152 of these small growers combined to sell their crop to the Island's Cotton Growers' Association, sharing expenses and profits under a simple co-operative arrangement.(2)

Associated with cotton, and frequently exceeding it in area, were the other minor crops of the peasants, such as onions, limes and coconuts. These crops were produced entirely for the local markets, though onions, and the small quantities of pineapples which were raised, could have found attractive markets elsewhere but for the difficulties of shipping

1. 617 no..8 Report on Antigua B.S. Report of Agricultural Instructor
2. 617 no. 17 Report on Antigua A.D. 1918-1919. There was a greater proportion of peasant land under cotton in comparison to plantations than would appear the case from these figures, since the latter achieved a better yield per acre than did the small growers, the ratio being about 19 to 11

and the indifferent packaging of the peasants. In short, Government aid for minor cultivations was limited to encouragement and advice, though the Government granary which was erected in 1915(1) and enlarged in 1918, did purchase some peasant maize.

It is hardly surprising, since sugar was the principal crop in Antigua, for plantation and peasant alike, that Government aid should have been concentrated upon it. The history of the Island's sugar factories is dealt with elsewhere,(2) and in this section consideration will be given only to their role in assisting peasant growers. Of the two factory establishments, one was situated at Gunthorpe's and was the property of the Antigua Sugar Factory Co. Ltd; it was constructed with the aid of an Imperial grant and commenced production in 1905.(3) The other, much smaller, was on the Belvedere group of estates at the location known as Bendall's. It received a smaller Imperial grant and commenced work in time for the 1903 crop. Both these factories were bound by the contract under which they obtained their Imperial grants to purchase, if tendered a minimum quantity of peasant canes. The contractual obligation was complex, but in the case of Bendall's it provided for a minimum yearly purchase of 1,500 tons for a period of up to twenty years, the contract being fulfilled when 22,500 tons had been purchased. The Gunthorpe's commitment was similar, but the annual figure was 4,500 tons and the aggregate 75,000 tons. To determine the price to be paid for peasant canes a Board was appointed by the Government, with the Agricultural Superintendent as chairman. Payment was based upon the

1. 617 no. 15 Report of Antigua A.D. Section on Government Ginnery and Granary
2. See pages 24 and 25
3. 617 no. 7 Report on Antigua B.S. Report on Central Sugar Factory

value in Antigua of 4½ pounds of sugar for every 100 pounds of canes delivered, with an absolute minimum of seven shillings and sixpence. In its annual reports the Agricultural Department stressed the difficulty of transport which often faced peasant cane growers, but, as was frequently the case, no special facilities were provided.(1) Despite this drawback the factories clearly stimulated peasant cane cultivation, and by the outbreak of War in 1914 Bendall's had exceeded its 22,500 tons quota, though it continued to purchase peasant canes under the same system. The peasantsupplying Gunthorpe's suffered more from the effects of droughts, notably in 1913 and 1914, but nevertheless in its first eight seasons the factory took 20,764 tons of peasant-raised canes.(2)

In order to assist peasant cultivators further, particularly those raising canes, from 1907 onwards land was reserved for them at Skerrit's and at the Government-controlled estates of Clare Hall. Allotments could be rented on easy terms, but since they could not be purchased the arrangement was evidently not intended as a scheme for land settlement. As anticipated in these areas canes were again predominant, and despite the constant threat of droughts the small cultivators' confidence in this crop never wavered. In 1912, a rather dry year, and a bad one for root disease, the Agricultural Department's report commented that '... it is interesting to report that even peasant growers now make enquiries at the experiment station as to the merits of the various varieties.'(3) In fact the most popular types with both planters and peasants were Seely seedling, and the perennial B.147. Although inevitably a quantity

1. The Antigua Sugar Factory Co. did construct a short railway but this was of little assistance to the peasants
2. *W.I.B.*, vol. XIV, 1914 F. Watts, 'Efforts in Aid of Peasant Agriculture.'
3. 617 nos. 7 and 13 Report on Antigua B.S. Report of Curator

of muscavado was annually produced the main outlet for peasant canes was the two factories at Gunthorpe's and Bendall's and the regular purchase of the peasant crop continued with only minor seasonal fluctuations until two years of drought brought a serious decline in 1921. Periodic droughts of this nature occurred very largely because of the denuded state of the Island. Over a period of many years the peasants had destroyed the forests of the interior to obtain timber and charcoal.(1) This practice was largely eradicated by 1900 but the Agricultural Department's efforts towards re-afforestation encountered little success, mainly on account of the poor soil, and the high winds against which the new trees had no protection.

An examination of St. Kitts - Nevis involves the study of three islands in which peasant agriculture followed somewhat different paths. In St. Kitts during this period sugar remained the principal industry both for the planter and for the small number of peasant proprietors who grew anything other than provisions crops. The latter disposed of their canes to the Basseterre factory, but no special facilities were provided for them. A second factory to the north of the Island would have assisted the small growers very considerably, particularly in respect of carriage. A proposal to provide such a factory was considered towards the close of the period under review, but the project was abandoned, like so many others in the West Indies, in 1921. Even the substantial cotton output which was achieved in certain years did not indicate, as was the case in the neighbouring islands, substantial peasant cultivation, for in this case most of it was grown as a catch crop on sugar estates. In deference to the Island's main crop the principal work of St. Kitts

1. For an example of efforts at re-afforestation see 617 no. 5 Report on Antigua B.S. The nature of the problem is described in 617 no. 7 Report of Antigua B.S.

Botanic Station at La Guérite was experimenting with cane varieties.

Of much greater significance with regard both to numbers and agricultural development were the peasant proprietors of Nevis and Anguilla. At the outset of the period the staple of Nevis, like that of St. Kitts, was sugar but from the time of the erection in 1904 of a privately owned cotton ginnery in the Island, this new cultivation prospered steadily at the expense of sugar.(1) In 1906 about 25 per cent of the 2,200 acres of cotton in the Island was peasant grown.(2) The difficulty of transporting sugar canes to the Basseterre factory in St. Kitts discouraged cane cultivation, and cotton consequently continued to grow in importance. Nor did bad seasons deter the peasants. Normally during such periods they merely increased the proportion of ground provisions, rather than attempt new crops. By 1910 it was evident that the main problem of the peasant growers in Nevis was the absence of any organisation for ginning or marketing their produce. Attempts by Francis Watts, the new Commissioner of Agriculture, to arrange a co-operative purchase scheme with the cotton ginnery were delayed by the War, the effect of which was temporarily to stimulate sugar production at the expense of cotton. With the revival of the latter towards the end of 1915 Watts made further attempts to arrange a system of purchase by the ginnery. The negotiations were hampered by new owners, who were unsympathetic to peasant enterprise.(3) Watts was, however, able to reach an agreement with a private buyer who arranged to purchase the entire peasant crop on a profit-sharing basis. This assured the grower of 5

1. *W.I.B.* vol. VII, 1906 F. Watts, 'Cotton Industry in the Leewards! Early in 1904 Mr. E. Connel constructed three gins in Nevis
2. '617 no. 7 Report of St. Kitts-Nevis B(otanic) S(tation) Report on Nevis
3. The Purchase of the Nevis Ginnery by Messrs. Gillespie was detrimental to peasant enterprise

cents per pound initial payment for clean seed, and subsequently a bonus bringing him a total of 80 per cent of the profit. By 1918 Nevis had 3,000 acres under cotton, a substantial proportion of it peasant grown.(1) The slump of 1921 reduced the area to 1,000 acres, and with cotton unremunerative the peasants again fell back on ground provisions.

The history of the cotton industry in the adjoining island of Anguilla was much more encouraging, due almost entirely to the efforts of one man, Carter Rey. During 1902 when various experiments with cotton were being conducted elsewhere, he established two cultivation plots in the impoverished island of Anguilla. At that time the few inhabitants scratched a living from a soil impoverished by drought, or worked the salt pond. Early in 1905 Rey constructed two gins at Warblake estate, one of which was supplied by the British Cotton Growers' Association.(2) To support this venture the Agricultural Department obtained, and distributed free, 300 lbs of rivers sea island seed. The new industry showed such promise that for a short time between 1905 and 1909 a third ginnery was operating at Rhode. From the outset peasants took enthusiastically to the cultivation, and produced a considerable proportion of the Island's crop, which was purchased on a profit-sharing basis by Rey and ginned at his factory at Warblake. In its first season in 1905-1906 the factory produced 191 bales of 200 lbs each, of which 131 were produced from the 94,713 lbs of lint which the peasants brought in for ginning and shipping by the factory. The peasants were evidently very satisfied with the price paid by the factory, and the following year an outstanding crop was produced. Prices, however, were not as good and

1. 318/334/37517 Watts to C.O., 27 July 1915. See also 617 no. 17 Report of the St. Kitts Nevis Agricultural Department)
2. *W.I.B.*, vol. VII, 1906, F. Watts, 'Cotton Industry in the Leewards'

this was reflected by a reduced area under cotton in 1908. The setback proved to be temporary, however, and generally the industry thrived. To facilitate further the production of cotton, Rey obtained a loan in 1910 from the British Cotton Growers' Association and used it to make advances to small growers. This proved successful and became a regular feature of his support for the Anguilla cotton industry. The 1910 crop illustrated the importance of the peasant producer, for of 390 bales exported, 269 were from peasant cotton.(1) In April 1911 an official of the Imperial Department of Agriculture reported that the Island was unrecognisable as that of ten or twelve years before, such a substantial improvement had taken place.(2)

Another interesting feature of the Anguilla cultivation was the excellent yield per acre which the peasants achieved, in a large measure attributable to the system Rey developed for the supply of seed. Each season he selected cotton from his best bearing field, ginned it separately, and reserved the seed for his own fields and those of the peasants for the coming season. Mention must also be made of the British Cotton Growers' Association who gave Rey every assistance and encouragement, from supplying his first gin, to making loans which enabled him, in turn, to make advances to small growers. At the meeting between representatives of the Association and Dr. Watts, in October 1913,(3) the former expressed their satisfaction at the organisation created by Rey and suggested its extension to other islands; in particular they

1. 617 no. 6 Report on St. Kitts Nevis B.S. Report on Anguilla by Mr. Carter Rey. Rey's factory ginned an additional 31 bales from the neighbouring island of St. Martin
See also no. 11 Report on St. Kitts Nevis B.S.
2. 318/325/10975 Watts to C.O., 13 March 1911
3. 318/330/34340 B.C.G.A. to C.O., 2 Oct. 1913 enc. report of meeting with Watts on 5 Sept. 1913

stressed the advantages with regard to sales in England, which resulted if the crop was transported in cargoes of economic size rather than, as was frequently the case with peasant production, numerous small shipments.(1) Rey showed his concern for the well-being of the small growers during the bad season of 1915 when the cotton market was disturbed. Although the factory continued as before, Rey took every opportunity to encourage the peasants to grow ground provisions. Two Imperial Department of Agriculture officers who visited the Island during the year reported in the most favourable terms regarding his efforts in this direction. With the recovery of cotton, Anguilla again prospered until the 1921 slump brought a great reduction in area under cultivation; to make matters worse the year also saw the appearance of the pink boll worm in considerable numbers. The achievement of Rey in Anguilla was a great tribute to his personal vigour and enterprise, but also indicated the progress that could be achieved by way of peasant aid, and more especially assistance in marketing and shipping. In a small wretched island Rey developed a peasant-based enterprise which was looked upon as a model by the British Cotton Growers' Association.

The history of Montserrat in this period is mainly concerned with the search for industries for both peasant and planter, to take the place of sugar, followed by the subsequent steady rise of cotton cultivation. Despite Dr. Morris's recommendations in 1899 and 1901(2) that a land settlement scheme was required in the Island no land was obtained for

1. The principal customers of the B.C.G.A., the Fine Spinners and Doublers of Manchester, would not accept quantities of less than five bales unless of superfine standard. 617 no. 14 Report of Montserrat A(gricultural) D(epartment)
2. 318/297/2918 Morris to C.O., 19 Jan. 1899.
4032 Morris to C.O., 19 Jan. 1899.
318/301/17837 Morris to C.O., 6 May 1901

this purpose and consequently a large proportion of the peasant cultivators during this period rented their land from estates, frequently producing under the métayer system.(1) On the evidence of the Montserrat Agricultural Department the 1917 land tax roll indicated that only about 1,025 small growers owned their own land.(2) Both peasant proprietors and tenants grew principally ground provisions, canes and limes. The ready market created by the Montserrat Lime Juice Company was encouraging the cultivation of the latter crop when in 1899 a hurricane practically destroyed all the Island's lime stands. Despite some years in which reasonable quantities were produced, as a peasant industry the crop never recovered. Following this disaster the peasants fell back on ground provisions and cane which could be sold locally. Although the firm of Sendall and Wade had set up experiment plots and a gin in 1902(3), cotton did not initially become popular among either the planters, who still concentrated upon limes, or the peasants, who continued to cultivate the sugar cane. During the period up to 1905. onions and paw-paws were other popular peasant cultivations. The former remained so throughout the period, but in 1904 the market, such as it was, for papain collapsed, due to massive production in the East, and the buyers of crude juice in the Island practically suspended operations.(4)

In the conditions of considerable hardship which followed the collapse of the papain market the Agricultural Department induced a few peasants to plant cotton. The cultivation met with immediate success and in 1906 at least 150 small cultivators planted the crop, 170 ordered seed

1. See page 91, note 1
2. 617 no. 16 Report of Montserrat A.D. Report on Peasant Cultivation
3. The Ginney was situated at Dagenham
4. 617 no. 5 Report of Montserrat B(otanic) S(tation)

for 1907, and the local Agricultural Department predicted that at least twice that number would plant. The report of the Botanic Station for 1906 indicated that both Curator and Agricultural Instructor were kept busy visiting peasant growers and 'endeavouring to influence them to adopt the best methods of cultivation. There is reason to believe that these visits are much appreciated, that the change in the attitude of the peasant towards cotton cultivation has been most marked within the last twelve months and he no longer speaks hopefully of the sugar cane as a cultivation.'(1) Cotton continued to increase in proportion to ground provisions, canes, onions and limes. By 1908 there were 800 peasant growers with a total of 520 acres under the crop. From this they raised and sold to local merchants 2,719 lbs of seed cotton of an approximate value of £1,672. Three years later the peasant cultivation had increased to 803 acres, of which about 600 acres represented land actually owned by the peasants.(2) Apart from the good returns the ease of local sale made the crop more attractive than onions or papain which it largely replaced. Montserrat was exceptional in the capacity and readiness of its local merchants to purchase peasant cotton. This may have been due, in part, to the popular superfine quality of the Colony's crop. No special facilities were established for the marketing of peasant cotton, though occasionally, as in 1913, some of the peasants combined to ship their crop. This was greatly appreciated by the British Cotton Growers' Association who pointed out their difficulty in rapidly disposing of

1. 617 no. 7 Report of Montserrat B.S. Report of A(gricultural) I(nstructor)
2. 617 nos. 9 and 12 Report of Montserrat B.S. Report of A.I.

cotton, other than superfine varieties, unless it was shipped in commercial quantities. Cotton cultivation survived the unsettled period at the outset of the European War, and by 1917 high prices had made it more popular than ever. All available land was planted with the crop and the Government felt it was necessary to encourage the production of food crops although it took no specific measures towards this end. There was consequently no noticeable reduction in cotton and although 1918 was a bad year for the crop, drought and blister mite being particularly damaging to the peasants' cultivation, there was no reduction in small growers' orders for seed from the Department for the following year. During the boom years of 1919 and 1920 still more land came under the crop, but in 1921 came the collapse with prices slumping and most of the year's crop remaining unsold; the peasant reaction was to turn once more to papain.(1)

The assistance provided for the peasants in Montserrat was limited to the work of the local Department. The Agricultural Instructors visited the holdings regularly,(2) but there was little significant improvement in the standards of cultivation. In unfavourable years, particularly 1918, it was the peasant cultivations which suffered, the estates overcoming adverse market or natural conditions without much difficulty. Nevertheless the peasant demand for cotton seed from the Department was maintained, as was that for onion seeds which were imported from Tenerife and distributed at a low price. The only other aid received by the small cultivators stemmed from the research work done at Harris

1. 617 no. 17 Report of Montserrat A.D. Report of A.I. The Agricultural Instructor reported a reduction of the acreage under cotton of from 3,200 acres in 1920 to 2,070 acres in 1921
2. 617 nos. 1 to 17 Report of Montserrat B.S. and A.D. Reports of A.I.

station on the Windward coast, the most successful of the Island's three experiment stations.(1) Here considerable advances were made in the strains of ground provision plants for distribution to the peasants, notably in cassava and tannias. In general, the position of the peasant cultivator, based after 1906 to a large extent on cotton, was until 1921 a relatively sound one. It would, however, in the view of the local Agricultural Department have been still better had Morris's recommendations for a peasant proprietary been accepted by the Leewards administration as financially practicable. The Department argued that too few peasants owned their own land, and both in this respect and in that of peasant aid the record of official policy in the Island during this period falls short of the recommendations of the Norman Commission.

In some respects the conditions in Dominica at the start of this period were more promising than elsewhere in the Leewards. The peasants in the islands had always produced some quantities of cacao, and the considerable peasant proprietary which had become established as the sugar estates collapsed had taken up this cultivation.(2) At the 1899 Agricultural Conference a leading expert expressed the opinion that 'the greater portion of the large cacao shipments (from Dominica) comes from their holdings, but unhappily they are greatly wanting in knowledge of the proper principles of agriculture and of the best way to prepare their produce.'(3) Officials hoped that instruction and training by the Agricultural Department would improve this. In 1900 a start was made, and with assistance from Rowntree and Company, who owned several

1. The other stations were Grove and Olveston
2. See pages 44 and 106
3. *W.I.B.*, vol. I, 1900 H. A. Nicholls, 'Agricultural Development in the Leewards'

estates in the island, six experiment plots were laid out.(1) These plots were regularly tended, and in 1902 increased to nine in number. To supplement them the Agricultural Instructor held lectures in various locations, dealing with all aspects of the cultivation, including the preparation of beans for market. By 1905 the Department considered that the example of these plots was producing some results; Joseph Jones, the Curator of the Botanic Station, felt that in Dominica and elsewhere such experiments had 'gradually although very slowly, materially affected the minds of the peasants, who are in easy reach of any of these plots, as during the last year much more attention has been paid to pruning and manuring, and in some cases draining, than heretofore.'(2) To stimulate what was a satisfactory, and in some locations the only possible peasant crop, the Government inaugurated in 1908 a series of prize-holding competitions.(3) They were conducted annually, three being held consecutively in La Pleine and attracting seven, twenty-two, and thirty-seven entries. This district was selected because of the large number of peasant cultivators, and the poor yield caused by close planting. An experimental competition was also held at Grand Bay in 1908 but serious efforts were not made in this district until 1911. In that year a competition attracted twenty-four entries, and the competitors in this highly fertile area followed instructions faithfully, even removing trees to prevent packing, though significantly unable to decide for themselves which should be removed. Although successful and favoured by the Agricultural Department the prize-holding competitions were discontinued after 1913. Cacao remained a popular crop, though there was some decline in its cultivation, mostly in favour

1. 617 no. 1 Report on Dominica B(otanic) S(tation) Curator's Report
2. 617 no. 5 Report on Diminica B.S. Curator's Report
3. 617 no. 10 Report on Dominica B.S. Report on Prize Holding Competitions

of limes, especially after the hurricanes of 1915 and 1916. By 1919 the exports of this crop from the islands had fallen to about two-thirds of the figure during 1909 to 1912, the largest proportion still coming from peasant holdings.(1)

Excluding ground provisions, cacao, and the small cultivations of rubber trees, the only other peasant crop of note in Dominica was fruit. Although some quantities of oranges were grown, by far the greatest interest was in lime production. This was not encouraged by the Agricultural Department as a peasant crop because no facilities existed for marketing the produce. In contrast to peasant growers of cacao for which crop there were local buyers, peasants raising fruit faced insuperable problems of packaging, grading and freight. Thus in some years, although considerable quantities were grown by small cultivators, the bulky nature of the lime crop weighed heavily against the peasant producer. In addition the absence of a Government factory for limes obliged the small producer to sell only unprocessed fruit, thus depriving him of a principal advantage of the lime, namely the wide range of forms into which it could be converted. Consequently when in April 1918 the United States placed an embargo on citrus fruits, it was the small grower who suffered.(2)

Beyond the prize-holding competitions for cacao and the general assistance of the Agricultural Department, little was done to assist the peasant proprietor. It is true that this statement would apply to the

1. 617 no. 17 Report of Dominica Agricultural Department 1919 - 1920. Report of Agricultural Instructor
2. See page 272. Also CO 617 no. 17 Report of Dominica A.D. 1918-19 Curator's Report. The embargo was lifted in September so it did not affect the export of concentrated juice, but green limes and raw juice suffered.

Leewards as a whole in this period but it is especially surprising that nothing was done to assist the cultivation of limes in Dominica, which in most years after 1906 were more profitable than cacao. Moreover conditions for a peasant proprietary were promising, for some settlements already existed at the beginning of the period. In fact the Agricultural Superintendent wrote in 1919 that '...matters instead of improving have stagnated over a period of several years. If the Dominica peasant had received the assistance which has been freely given over a long period by the Windward Islands Government to the small growers of Grenada, St. Vincent and St. Lucia, there is every reason to believe that the economic situation of the island would be much stronger than it is today.'(1) He spoke particularly of the need for co-operative lime factories to encourage the peasant grower towards this orchard crop.

In the mainland colony of British Guiana the motives behind peasant settlement differed from those encountered generally in the Leewards and Windwards, since the intention was to stimulate population growth. St. Lucia faced a somewhat similar problem, though smaller in scale. Nevertheless the efforts made in British Guiana to aid small cultivators followed the general pattern. In this colony, however, a Board of Agriculture appointed in 1901(2) controlled instructors, and directed all aspects of peasant aid, while the Colonial Engineer's Department, responsible for grants of Crown Land and licences of occupancy, also had officers visiting many of the tracts to estimate the extent of cultivation. In fact peasant aid was very limited, and the efforts

1. 617 no. 17 Report of Dominica A.D. Report of Agricultural Superintendent
2. 114 no. 99 British Guiana Administration Report Report of Colonial Engineers Department 114 no. 103 British Guiana A.R. The Board was established 20 July 1901

that were made met with little success. The redeeming feature of the Colony in this respect was the spectacular achievements of the East Indian cultivators. The great majority of these were time-expired indentured labourers who were encouraged to commute their rights to return passages in exchange for a cash payment or for land, as part of an unsuccessful Government effort to stimulate a rise in population. During the period under consideration the East Indian settlements, mostly situated on the Pomeroon, Apury, Canje and Courantyne forged ahead of all the others in the West Indies. As early as 1900 the Colonial Engineer spoke favourably of their prospects. His predictions were fulfilled, and although they received no special assistance beyond advice and encouragement these settlements were well cultivated and prosperous. Nevertheless, even allowing for this, the enthusiasm and determination with which the East Indian developed and utilised his holding was in marked contrast to the Negro farmer. By 1917 there were seven privately owned factories dealing with the West Indian rice crop, indicating the progress which had been made since 1914 when only one factory had been operating. The Colonial Engineer's Department produced annual estimates of the area cultivated on all peasant holdings as a percentage of the acreage held. At the outset of the period this figure was twenty per cent, and at the close forty per cent.⁽¹⁾ Much of the improvement may be attributed to the East Indian holdings, where cultivation was as high as seventy per cent or eighty per cent, though also to the reduction in 1912 of the maximum area of peasant holdings of Crown Land, in an effort to bring a greater proportion into use.

In contrast, the Negro peasantry on the evidence of the local officials showed no inclination to raise more produce than was required by them-

1. 114 nos. 103 and 182 British Guiana A.R. Report of the Lands and Mines Department

selves and their dependants, or to cultivate permanent crops. As the sugar industry of the Colony recovered after 1902 from the depression, little or no progress was made by the cane farmers. Situated on or near the coast, their holdings adjoined sugar estates, to which their produce was sold. Such a location, made necessary by the need for nearby factories, was not favourable for the growth of a peasant proprietary, since the expense of drainage was in most cases prohibitive. There was constant friction between the planters and the peasant farmers regarding the payment for canes, and though it was clear that some form of regulated sliding scale to cover market fluctuations was needed, none was agreed. In 1904 an effort was made to interest the small growers in cotton cultivation. A Cotton Growers' Association was established at Berbice and a sugar planter provided an area of drained and empoldered land; free seed was made available, a prize scheme organised, and even free freight to England for a year was offered.(1) The response was negligible; the report of the Agricultural Board commented upon the '...long established distaste on the part of the ordinary creole farmer to embark upon the cultivation of other than edible products.'(2) This view was reinforced by the failure of the Land Settlement Scheme at Kaiabowry Creek, which evoked only the smallest response, despite offers to pay the settlers for clearing and empoldering their holdings in such a fashion as to ensure them of a steady income until their crops came to bear, and also by the supply of free tools.(3)

Apart from the instances mentioned, peasant aid was limited to visits

1. 114 no. 103 British Guiana A.R. Report on Berbice District
2. Ibid. Report of the Board of Agriculture. In this context 'creole' was intended to refer only to those of Negro descent
3. See page 112

by Agricultural Inspectors to the holdings, and after 1914 to the development of agricultural credit societies, stimulated by their success in St. Vincent. In 1915 there were three societies with 280 members; by 1917 there were twenty-four with 4,078 members. By 1922 the number of societies had risen to twenty-seven possessing a paid-up capital of £14,731.(1) Their business was almost entirely with small cultivators, growing paddy, canes and ground provisions. A further small example of peasant aid was the Government lime, rice and corn factory, set up in the vicinity of Ondurneeming school for the benefit of the pupils, but to which the local villagers sold some fruit.(2)

The limited scale of peasant aid, confined in the main to advice, largely reflected the needs of British Guiana peasant agriculture. The highly successful East Indian cultivators seem to have required no more than this, while the Negro peasantry showed no disposition to respond to even the limited experiments in cotton and land settlement. Their main cultivation was in ground provisions, which were the predominant crop on most holdings, the colony being self-sufficient in this respect. It seems clear that they benefited little from the advice and instruction of officials, for if the latter's reports are accepted the standard of cultivation of what permanent crops they grew was, in general, poor. Canes were a principal crop in Demerara, and some quantities of coconuts and coffee were grown on farms. In some locations these were well cared for, but mostly they were in a neglected condition. Very small fruit cultivations also existed, mostly pears and bread-fruit, though these were frequently attacked by diseases. In Essequibo, coffee and cacao were grown in limited areas, but

1. 114 nos. 154, 162 and 184 British Guiana A.R. Reports on Credit and Co-operative Banks
2. 114 no. 162 British Guiana A.R. Report of the Board of Agriculture

they were almost invariably badly tended, though despite the absence of tillage, pruning and mulching the plants were usually healthy and produced a small annual yield. The peasant farmers in Berbice and the North Western District also cultivated these crops, and in addition grew rubber, a hardy tree which unlike coffee and cacao was apparently unaffected by the not infrequent inundations which occurred on some holdings. Mostly the cultivation was not kept in good condition, with such operations as thinning, splitting, mulching and above all drainage, ignored. There were exceptions and from time to time efforts were made to follow instructions, but this was not common. The conditions within British Guiana were different from those of the other colonies, not only because the encouragement of land settlement was intended to stimulate a population growth, but also because unlimited quantities of cultivable land existed. Nevertheless both the limited assistance offered and the conservative reaction of the Negro peasantry to advice and aid possibly encouraged by an intolerant attitude on the part of some officials, were features common throughout the Colonies under consideration.

In considering the aid afforded to small peasant proprietors in this period, the most striking inadequacies appear with regard to the preparation and marketing of crops. In August 1921 the Trade Commissioner in Trinidad wrote that whilst the West Indies enjoyed certain climatic and associated advantages '...it is also unfortunately true that where those conditions do not exist, West Indian products find some difficulty in competing with other tropical territories. This is chiefly because the cost of marketing the products is high, crops are grown on borrowed money, generally by small proprietors, transport to the coast or factory is slow, difficult and relatively costly.'(1) But schemes for Government-

1. 318/369/42021 Department of Overseas Trade to CO, 20 Aug. 1921 enc. Report on economic and financial condition of the British West Indies June 1921

controlled co-operative marketing involved great expense; even where a factory was not required, agents to handle purchases, and Agricultural Department officers to supervise selection, grading, packing and transport, were costly items. In the main only where the peasants themselves could be induced to combine and market collectively were such schemes viable.(1) Regarding the choice of crops the situation was somewhat more involved. Cacao, for example, was a successful crop among established peasant proprietors in Grenada, but did not fare well among the St. Vincent peasantry, despite a similar climate and apparently similar conditions of cultivation. In general, newly established settlements produced provisions to the exclusion of all other crops.(2) Occasionally this was desirable, but in most cases it ran contrary to the development of the peasant agricultural industries which were necessary both for the financial stability of the Colonies and for a thriving peasant landowning community of the type apparently envisaged by the 1897 Royal Commission. The scattered nature of the allotments which existed outside Government settlement schemes made the work of the Agricultural Instructors more difficult. Generally these officers appear to have carried out their work of instruction effectively, though the extent to which they understood and sympathised with the conservative attitude of the peasantry is uncertain. It is clear that most officials regarded the peasant cultivations as bad and backward; and they usually considered the peasants as intolerant of advice. Doubtless, there was much truth in their opinions. However, it is question-

1. For example in St. Vincent the Questelles peasants indicated their willingness to market collectively before the Government took the step of introducing an official scheme. See page 133
The small cotton growers of Antigua combined in a similar fashion. See page 154
2. See pages 126 and 142 for conditions on the St. Vincent and Grenada settlements respectively. Ground provisions were the only cultivation of note on the St. Lucia settlements at Union, Malgré Tout and Reunion

able whether the official view as to the correct cultivation was right in every case. Also some of the backward peasant methods which Agricultural Instructors found so tiresome may have contained some practical basis. In Antigua in 1915 the Agricultural Department complained of the difficulty of obtaining a suitable instructor since he required not only technical knowledge but the ability '...to understand the peasant thoroughly, not an easy matter, so as to be in a position to look at the subject from the peasant's point of view'(1). A more extreme view was noted in 1918 by the Imperial Department of Agriculture mycologist, P. Nowells, who wrote that the Dominica Agricultural Superintendent was '...doubtful as to the usefulness of agricultural instructors, his view being that the peasants would not be receptive of any advice to modify their present methods'.(2) In fact, the various Agricultural Departments met with different degrees of success but for the most part, even on land settlement schemes, the standard of peasant cultivation did not appreciably improve during this period. Where the peasants were induced to try forking, draining, manuring and other similar practices, the efforts were often shortlived, and seldom were Instructors successful in explaining to growers the reasons behind such operations. Perhaps the most significant indication of the peasant attitude in this respect was the disinclination often exhibited by smallholders to take advantage of the facilities which were provided.

In some places it proved difficult to promote settlement at all despite apparently favourable conditions for it. Regarding land settlement in Grenada, Gilbert Auchinleck, the Agricultural Superintendent,

1. 617 no. 15 Report of Antigua Agricultural Department Superintendent's Report
2. 318/346/55296 Watts to C.O., 17 Oct. 1918 enc. Report of a visit to Dominica and Montserrat by the Government mycologist

described the difficulties in disposing of lots: '... we can only conclude', he wrote, 'that the average peasant in Grenada prefers a precarious living in his own parish to a better one in another district.'⁽¹⁾ Such an attitude was not unique to Grenada, and it is evident that despite the willingness to find work outside their own islands, peasants were not normally prepared to take up land on a permanent basis which was not offered in their immediate vicinity. This attitude, whether or not justified, appears as one of the most significant contributory factors in the limited success of land settlement. On the settlement estates where peasants were induced to take up land, they frequently did so clearly with little thought beyond the raising of the most elementary provision crops. Had land settlement schemes been attempted in the Leewards on any scale it is unlikely that they would have fared better than those which were established in the Windwards. The greatest defect in the latter islands was the lack of adequate assistance provided for the existing peasant proprietors, especially in Grenada, who appeared to form the nucleus of a promising peasant community. To this criticism Anguilla was a notable exception. The undoubted advantages of cultivation in a small area were fully realised by Rey, and his co-operative venture indicated the success which could be achieved by profit-sharing schemes. It should, however, be emphasised that the Anguilla experiment was very much a private venture, and in 1911 an official of the Imperial Department wrote of Rey's excellent results: '...perhaps it has not been quite realised as to the amount he has at stake in this effort of his, which has so much benefited the cotton growers of Anguilla.'⁽²⁾ The Reunion scheme of St. Lucia also met with some success, though here, unlike Anguilla,

1. *W.I.B.*, vol. XIII, 1913 G. Auchinleck, 'Peasant Agriculture in Grenada'
2. 318/325/10975 Watts to C.O., 13 March 1911

the peasants cultivated almost entirely ground provisions. The degree of Government aid which made the small Reunion scheme successful, whilst indicating the direction in which assistance was most beneficial, was clearly financially impractical as a recognised necessity for all settlement. Nevertheless had the finances been available for more schemes of this type, assisted by improved credit facilities, it seems at least possible that the small settlers would have developed more closely towards the type of peasant proprietor envisaged, despite their general attitude towards cultivation.

CHAPTER EIGHT

COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT:

(1) SYSTEMS OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Examination of the internal communications of the West Indian Colonies under consideration indicates a greater uniformity of purpose on the part of the local administrations than is apparent in other aspects of the development of these colonies during this period. The mainland Colony of British Guiana must be excepted from this statement, if only on account of the unique though impractical plans to open its vast hinterland. In the Islands, except for Barbados which possessed an inefficient light railway, internal communication was provided either by road, or by a variety of coasting vessels. The comparative use made of these two forms of transport with regard to both passengers and freight is, in the absence of any records, impossible to assess. It is evident, however, that in addition to the subsidised coasting steamers possessed by certain of the Islands(1) a considerable number of sloops and schooners obtained an apparently satisfactory return from providing an offshore transport system. It is also obvious, in view of the volcanic terrain of the Islands and the resulting steep gradients, that peasant holdings or estates adjacent to the sea would benefit in respect of both time and cost through conveying their produce by coasting boat. In the case of agricultural areas further inland roads provided the only means of marketing produce, and their condition or availability therefore dictated whether such areas could be utilised for other than subsistence agriculture. Unfortunately none

1. For example see pages 188, 195 and 201. See also Appendix C for maps illustrating the road systems of the Colonies

of the islands, with the possible exception of the small dependency of Carriacou, possessed adequate financial resources to establish or maintain an efficient road system. Apart from the capital outlay involved, the annual cost of maintenance, on account of the Caribbean climate and the geographic character of the islands, placed an adequate network of main road or first-class by ways far beyond the financial capacity of any of the islands. In the absence of Imperial aid only limited progress could be made in establishing such a network. The road surfaces in the West Indian colonies during this period were usually composed of an earth binder which, even at its best, was subject to rapid erosion. As a result the roads required frequent maintenance to repair rutting and potholing. They were also subject to very severe damage in the event of floods. Nevertheless efforts were made to improve or extend the road systems in almost all of the colonies, with, in some localities, the work having as its object the development of new areas of peasant or plantation cultivation. Occasionally, for example in St. Lucia, a major road scheme was inaugurated at the expense of developing short service roads from existing highways, when the latter appeared as a more worthwhile project in terms of agricultural development. In general, however, the various Public Works and Colonial Engineer's Departments did well with limited funds, particularly as it was invariably road building and maintenance that suffered first in times of economic stringency.

In 1898 St. Vincent suffered a serious hurricane, and the subsequent relief fund was largely used in improving the roads of the Island. In the normal way the roads of the Colony were maintained by three 'way wardens' in each parish, who were appointed by the Governor, and received an annual minimum sum specified in the Road Ordinances. The injection into this antiquated system of what the Colonial Office

called 'hurricane money' put St. Vincent's two hundred or so miles of roads, by ways and bridle paths into better repair than ever before, and the Administrator, H. Thompson, put forward a strong case for maintaining them in that condition by a new system of supervision. The Colonial Office was sympathetic but as the £5,000 required annually to operate the proposed scheme, which involved a permanent staff of an inspector and five superintendents, was far beyond the means of St. Vincent, Chamberlain advised him instead to endeavour to make the existing system of assessment for land tax more effective(1). This proved impracticable for the system was becoming year by year less workable as estates were subdivided and broken up into numerous allotments. The Island's roads began immediately to revert to their previous indifferent condition, an inevitable decline in the absence of a much increased road grant for maintenance and supervision. Before the close of 1899 Thompson informed the Colonial Office that he doubted whether he would be able to answer a petition from the inhabitants of the Layou and Buccament Valleys for road repairs in their vicinity for funds were unlikely to be available. The rapidity with which the roads degenerated in St. Vincent after the improvement following the hurricane of 1898 was described by the road wardens in a report following the volcanic eruptions of 1902. This report on the highways, which was requested by Llewelyn, indicated that the roads only a few years after Thompson's repairs were in a dilapidated condition. To put St. Vincent's 214 miles of roads and by ways in good repair would have cost, in the view of the wardens, £12,470 made up of £5,100 for the 133½ miles of the windward district, and £7,370 for the 81½ miles in the leeward.

1. For details see 262/24/24845 St. Vincent Acts. no 14 of 1900
The Highway Ordinance, 15 Nov. 1900

The cost on the windward side would probably have been higher except that the main highway, which commenced on the eastern borders of Kingstown and ran through St. George and North Charlotte to the sugar works of Langley Park estate in the Carib country, was in fairly good condition. A significant feature of the road wardens' report was their estimate that the annual maintenance cost per mile for the Colony's roads would be from £10 to £20, according to the nature of the road, producing a total annual expenditure on maintenance of £2,934(1). The Governor believed that although the £12,470 needed for repair would have to be spread over several years, the figure required annually for maintenance could be provided, primarily from the Land Tax with small additions from the revenue derived from export duties. In practice, such sums proved to be beyond the resources of the Colony, especially as after 1905 the revenue provided by the Land Tax was considerably reduced when the Executive Council abolished it in respect of Crown Land tenants(2). The shortage of funds for maintenance of roads in St. Vincent is in fact a recurring theme in the reports of the Crown Lands Superintendent and the Colonial Engineer throughout the period under review(3), and it was a problem which applied equally to the Colony roads and those serving the Crown Lands and settlement estates. As late as 1917 annual expenditure

1. 321/223/21319 Llewelyn to Lyttelton, 30 May 1904. The Windward district comprised 30 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles of main roads; 52 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles of first class by ways and 51 miles of second class by ways.
The Leeward district comprised 25 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles of main roads; 22 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles of first class by ways; 33 $\frac{2}{3}$ miles of second class by ways.
2. 263 no.31 St. Vincent Sessional Papers. It was abolished only in respect of tenants; purchasers continued to pay. The reason which prompted the Executive Council to take this action was their feeling that as the Crown Lands in the highlands were practically without roads it was unreasonable to exact a contribution for their upkeep
3. For example 263 no.34 1911-12 and no.36 1914-16

on maintaining the entire road system was only £1,760(1) compared with the road warden's estimated necessary expenditure in 1902 of nearly £3,000.

The problem of maintaining the road system was not merely a question of annual recurrent expenditure. In spite of the improvements following the hurricane of 1898, large expenditure continued to be required for making good years of neglect, for bringing the main roads up to an adequate standard of repair, and metalling them, as well as improving the minor roads in respect of drainage, gradient and width(2). The metalling of roads emphasised a major problem in St. Vincent, namely the vulnerability of the 'earthbound' road surfaces to the heavy annual rains and storms which were a feature of the climate. In 1921 experiments were made to find a more effective 'binder' than earth though financial stringency caused their abandonment in 1922. The real answer, at least for the main roads, lay in metalling, but as late as 1919 the principal windward highway was still not completely metalled when work on it was suspended once more for lack of funds. In view of the Island's financial situation there was no possibility of the minor roads, especially those serving the Crown Lands and settlement estates, being metalled. Consequently it was the repair of roads after storm damage which was one of the most pressing problems.

On the land settlement estates acquired by 1903 there were some sixty-nine miles of main and minor roads, and in addition a considerable number of cart tracks, the upkeep of which was obviously

1. 263 no.36 1917-18 Report of the Superintendent of Public Works)
2. One of the few examples of a major improvement scheme in St. Vincent in this period was in 1917 when a loan financed project for the substantial reconstruction of the Windward Highway was undertaken. However it remained incomplete in 1922

essential if the peasants were to be encouraged to produce permanent crops which necessitated marketing. The Imperial grant of £30,000 to St. Vincent and Dominica had been for both roads and land settlement, with no apparent qualification that the St. Vincent grant of £15,000 should be for land settlement only and the Dominica grant for roads only. In May 1904 Llewelyn successfully requested permission from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Alfred Lyttelton, to appropriate £1,000 out of the balance of £4,138 remaining from the Imperial grant after the purchase of estates for settlement, to cover reconstruction of roads throughout the Island(1). Although the roads were mostly kept open, the funds were quite inadequate for them to be put into really good condition. In 1915 the annual expenditure on maintaining the thirty-eight miles of road serving the Crown Lands settlements and the sixty-nine miles of roads on the Government settlement estates was less than £4 per mile, which was a totally inadequate figure in view of the climatic conditions of St. Vincent. By the 31st March 1910 the Crown Lands Department had spent £6,572 on these roads(2), and their report still referred to the need for further expenditure and of the poor condition of the roads that served the Crown Lands and settlement estates. The cost of upkeep of the roads serving the settlements remained a substantial annual charge against the Land Settlement Fund. The Fund was established with the unexpended portion of the Imperial grant. Despite efforts made in 1906 to make the peasants responsible for sections of the roads abutting on their allotments, the cost of most of the work had to be met from the Fund, and although a further £8,000 was spent between 1910

1. 321/223/21317 Llewelyn to Lyttelton, 27 May 1904
2. 263 nos. 30-34 1898-1910 Minutes of the Executive Council and Report of S.P.W.

and 1922 on Crown Land and settlement roads, the Colonial Engineer was still forced to report in 1919 that the repair of flood damage had to be postponed owing to want of '...labour and funds'(1). Floods were a particular menace to the settlement estate roads and so serious was the situation after storm damage in September 1911 that Lewis Harcourt, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, sanctioned a special grant from Colony funds of £320 for the repair of the roads on the settlements at New Adelphi, Park Hill and Cumberland Valley. The principal road in the Cumberland Valley settlement was not repaired until the close of 1912, and it was again flooded in 1916 when a section of the main road of the Questelles settlement was also destroyed. In 1919 roads in the Linley Valley, Cumberland Valley, and Lammessettlements were again very extensively damaged by storms. In the years after 1918 maintenance of all roads was further hampered by a sharp rise in the cost of labour and materials, so that the largely increased grants from the colonial revenue of 1920 and 1921, £2,885 and £2,844 respectively(2), did not represent any increase in the level of real expenditure.

Although funds for the maintenance of the St. Vincent road system were never in the opinion of local officials adequate throughout the period under review, it seems that for most of the time roads, serving both the Crown Lands and the settlement estates as well as those elsewhere, were maintained in a usable condition, and that the major problem was the temporary closure of roads as a result of storm damage. No evidence has been found which suggests that

1. 263 nos. 34, 36, 40. Reports of S.P.W. and of the Colonial Engineer
2. 263 no. 40 1920 and 1921 Reports of the Colonial Engineer

inadequate road construction and maintenance were significant obstacles to settlement on the acquired estates. For instance, there are a few examples of requests from settlers on these estates for additional roads. A road improvement scheme was undertaken in the Buccament Valley between 1908 and 1910(1) in order to serve settlers on the newly surveyed Crown Land allotments, and various small road and bridge building schemes were put in hand during the period at Richmond Hill, Clare Valley and Park Hill. As in the case of maintenance, road construction on the settlement estates was financed from the Land Settlement fund, and although it was on a limited scale this factor does not seem to have significantly impeded settlement. It is, of course, impossible to estimate to what extent the uncertainty of the roads, particularly after floods, discouraged the peasant proprietors from cultivating the permanent cash crops encouraged by the Imperial Department of Agriculture.

Where cultivation was close to the sea or produce could more easily be carted there, coastal boats provided the best means of internal transport. The Colonial Office recognised this fact. In 1910 they recommended the Treasury to sanction expenditure from the Land Settlement fund to acquire the land for a jetty at Fairhall needed to give access to the settlement estates, on the grounds that in St. Vincent the sea largely took the place of roads and thus fell within the terms of the Imperial grant(2). St. Vincent operated no subsidised coasting steamer, and it does not appear that there was any marked agitation for such a vessel although one abortive scheme was

1. 263 no. 34 1909-10 Report of Superintendent of Crown Lands
2. 321/254/34973 Sadler to Crewe, 27 Oct. 1910

attempted in September 1899. Private sloops and schooners provided an adequate freight service, and the recognised advantages of seaborne communication are further illustrated by the fact that between 1897 and 1922 canoes delivered the mail on the leeward side, and were only superseded by motor cars on the windward coast towards the close of the period.

Before leaving St. Vincent some mention should be made of the roads in the small dependency of Union Island, which was acquired by the Government for land settlement in 1910. In 1904 the total road mileage in Union was $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles;(1) by 1922 it was $15\frac{1}{2}$ miles(2). Lack of finance was again a limiting factor in road construction. Upon acquisition of the Island a detailed survey of the roads was carried out and in 1911 the Commissioner, G. Whitfield-Smith, reported that a great deal of work was needed upon the Island's highways. The limited resources of the dependency made any extensive road programme impossible, so instead an effort was made to construct a section of new road each year, in addition to the necessary maintenance. In this fashion an excellent start was made, and by 1914 the principal road in the island, linking the towns of Ashton and Clifton, had been widened and generally made suitable for wheeled traffic. The other tracks in the Island were steadily improved and new roads were cut. By 1920 there were 13 miles of roads, though in that year heavy rain in October and November caused considerable damage and closed some sections. Generally, however, the island was less susceptible to storm damage than St. Vincent, and the steady building programme had led by 1922 to a significant increase in the road mileage of the dependency in relation to its size and need.

1. 321/254/34973 Llewelyn to Lyttelton, 30 May 1904
2. 163 no. 40 1921 Report of the Commissioner of the Southern Grenadines

The island of Grenada experienced similar problems with regard to roads as those of St. Vincent though, in general, both in respect of maintenance and new construction, a greater continuous effort was made in Grenada. In 1899 there were 402 miles of roads upon which £6,500 was expended in maintenance, or just over £16 a mile. This was, however, a high figure for the period. Expenditure on maintenance was as low as £2,839 in 1906 and even 1921 when prices of labour and raw materials had risen steeply it was only £4,670(1). As in St. Vincent repair of storm damage was a major problem, and additional expenditure was required in Grenada for the construction or repair of bridges. The improvement of road surfaces was an urgent necessity, and more seems to have been achieved in Grenada in this respect than in St. Vincent. Efforts were concentrated on the macadamising of main roads. Between 1900 and 1906 sections of the Grand Etang road were so treated, and in 1907 and 1908 main roads especially in the southern and eastern districts were further macadamised. At the same time work was carried out during these years on widening main roads and improving culverts and drains. In 1914 the main roads were in a sufficiently good condition for the Government to introduce a '...motor, mail and passenger service' to supersede the previous horsedrawn coach which had delivered mail throughout the Island. In addition to this improvement to the main public roads of the Colony it seems that the Crown Land tracks were also maintained in an adequate condition.

With regard to construction and improvement of other than main roads the Governor of the Windwards, Sir A. Moloney, as early as 1900

1. 104 nos. 25, 32 and 41 for 1899, 1906-7, and 1921-2 Grenada Sessional Papers. Report of the Public Works Department

proposed that additional work should be undertaken on a gradual year by year plan aimed ultimately at achieving a complete road system in the island(1). In general, such a policy was followed by the Public Works Department down to 1917, but throughout the period much greater importance was attached to the reconstruction and surfacing of main roads than to the construction and improvement of minor roads. After 1917 funds were sufficient only for maintenance, and construction practically ceased. But between 1913 and 1915, in particular, the Public Works Department did direct considerable effort towards the construction of new minor roads as well as improving main roads. Especially significant in this connection was the expenditure of £400 in 1913 to provide tracks to the various individual lots of the Westerhall and Calvigny settlements and to provide outlets for these two estates(2). Generally the Grenada settlement schemes appear to have been better served by roads than their St. Vincent counterparts. Some, notably the St. Cyr mountain estate, were actually bisected by main public roads; as well as facilitating settlement this limited the necessary additional construction to the provision of feeder roads. The expenditure on such construction does not suggest extensive work at Calvigny and Westerhall and probably the most substantial of the feeder roads constructed were the two half-mile tracks provided on the Morne Rouge estate in 1912. The main roads serving the estate were naturally included in the general efforts of the Public Works Department to improve the condition of Grenada's public roads, but it appears that the acquisition of estates for settlement frequently accelerated the treatment of the associated main roads. In 1912

1. 321/195/26673 Moloney to Chamberlain, 26 July 1900

2. *W.I.B.* vol. XIV, 1914 G. Auchinleck and others, 'Government Schemes of Land Settlement in Grenada and the Grenadines'

immediately after the purchase of the estate the main road through Westerhall was repaired. More significantly, in 1921 when major works of reconstruction had practically ceased, the roads serving the new Westerhall estate which was added to the settlement scheme in 1920 received similar treatment. In these circumstances it appears unlikely that lack of communications was a factor discouraging potential peasant proprietors from taking up holdings on the Government Schemes. The expenditure on such communications was not large but it appears to have been adequate taking into account the existing road system and its relation to the settlement estates. The absence of petitions from peasants for improvements to settlement tracks bears this out and the same satisfactory access to roads seems to have been the case with settlers outside the Government Schemes. The latter doubtless benefited from the Colony's general efforts towards road improvement.

As was the case with St. Vincent much produce was transported by sea. In addition to the numerous sailing vessels registered at St. George's and Grenville, the Island Government subsidised, until 1919, a coasting steamer of the Royal Mail Company. This vessel linked St. George's with the country districts, and ran weekly services to Carriacou.

In 1918 the subsidy was £1,138, though the Royal Mail Co. still considered that an additional £2,000 was required to cover their annual loss on the service. Commenting on the Company's request for this increased subsidy the Governor, Sir George Haddon-Smith, informed the Colonial Office in October 1918 that the improvement in roads and the provision of a Government motor service had greatly reduced the necessity for such a vessel for mail and passengers; also the planters had informed him that most of their produce was already shipped by sloop or schooner, and all could be sent in this way. In his view the Carriacou service could likewise be conducted by sailing ship. On these

grounds he recommended against an increased subsidy(1) and the subsidised service was discontinued in 1919. The end of this service was welcomed by the Colonial Office as an indication that the colonies could dispense with the increasingly expensive Royal Mail Co. services. Neither does it appear that this termination resulted in any significant disruption of transport facilities.

The small island of Carriacou, a dependency of Grenada, possessed a good system of some 54 miles of road at the outset of the period. In 1904 the Carriacou District Ordinance was passed which placed the roads under the control of a single responsible officer; the administration hoped thereby to reduce the cost of maintenance which stood at about £15 per mile. In that year the Commissioner claimed that '...for its size Carriacou possesses probably one of the best road systems to be found in the West Indian Islands'(2). The new ordinance achieved its primary object of economy and it proved possible to reduce the maintenance expenditure on roads from £782 in 1904 to £590 in 1905 without, in the view of the Commissioner, lessening its effectiveness(3). Although the vote for maintenance and repair of roads subsequently fluctuated between £500 and £600, it proved adequate throughout the period to keep the roads in good condition in spite of occasional adverse weather conditions.

To a much greater extent than St. Vincent and Grenada, the remaining island in the Windward group, St. Lucia, was seriously in need of a road system which would open up the interior of the island. Its area

1. 321/300/49336 Haddon-Smith to Long, 17 Sept. 1918

2. 104 no. 29 1904 Report of Commissioner Carriacou District

3. 104 no. 32 1905 Report of C.C.D. .

of 238 square miles considerably exceeded that of St. Vincent and Grenada, yet in 1900 it possessed only 288 miles of roads and by ways(1). In addition the roads which did exist ran principally along the coast, and inland only sufficiently far to serve the sugar estates. Although during this period road building was mainly directed towards the opening of the interior, pressure was still apparent from the sugar planters for the expenditure of considerable sums upon works of benefit only to their estates. In 1906 Philip Cork, the Administrator, described at length the conflict between the established sugar interests and new lime and cacao planters regarding the expenditure of £5,000 available from surplus funds, and allocated for road construction(2). The sugar planters wanted at least half of this figure spent upon bridges in the immediate vicinity of their estates, while the lime and cacao planters argued that as there was only enough money to carry out the most urgent works, it should all be expended upon giving access to the interior. Only by the formation of a committee containing representatives of both groups was agreement finally reached. This conflict of interest was not apparent in either Grenada or St. Vincent partly on account of their geography but also because of the decline of sugar. Neither was the question of the adequacy of roads of the same significance in respect of peasant settlement, for in Grenada most peasant proprietors had established themselves in relation to the existing road system and in St. Vincent they were principally located on abandoned sugar estates and so likewise were within the area already served by roads.

The need to provide access to the interior was recognised by the St.

1. 256 St. Lucia Sessional Papers no.16 1900. Report of (Crown) (and) and Survey Department)
2. 321/232/39915 Llewelyn to Elgin, 11 Oct. 1906
enc. Cork to Llewelyn, 15 Sept. 1906

Lucia government, and it was to this end that most road building efforts were directed in the period under review. In 1898 a survey established the most suitable route for a road linking the leeward and windward coast roads between Dennery and Castries, to take the place of the existing inadequate track. An unmetalled highway known as the Goldsworthy road was completed in 1900 at the low cost of £650(1) and land was readily taken up near to it. Subsequently considerable progress was made in the construction of by ways and access roads to facilitate settlement on Crown Land by improved approaches and outlets to existing settlements, or by providing access to unoccupied tracks in the back valleys. In part such construction was financed by revenue from land sales. For example, in 1898 the Mabouya Cul-de-Sac track was opened, and work was commenced on a road from Soufrière to Micoud; some ten miles long, the latter passed through fertile Crown Land and was intended to serve as an outlet to settlers at Micoud who were virtually cut off as a result of their harbour being steadily blocked by coral deposits. In 1900 work began on a connection between Ravine and Soufrière thus providing an outlet for small settlers at Piton Flore. In 1901 a start was made on the extension of the Babonneau road towards Marquis to serve as an outlet for peasants at De Chaffen and Desvolières. Similarly in 1902 a road linking the Cul-de-Sac and Roseau valleys was commenced in order to serve as an outlet for settlers in the heights of the Roseau Valley, and the Desruiseau-De Mailly and Dennery-Errard extensions were started.

The provision of adequate funds for road maintenance was the major problem in St. Lucia as elsewhere, and work was often delayed by the contract system used for both maintenance and construction. Lack of

1. 321/197/6774 Moloney to Chamberlain, 10 Feb. 1900

metalling and the simple type of surface binding used meant that road surfaces were subject to severe damage after heavy rainfall, making maintenance difficult and expensive. But in spite of fluctuating grants, the roads appear, in general, to have been adequately maintained. It is clear, however, that the tentative progress of new construction in these early years was small in relation to the overall problem of access to the interior. Writing in 1906 Cork pointed out that the fertile valleys of the island were still practically untouched, and the interior tracks which did exist ran along the crests from point to point rather than down into the valleys. The most fertile areas from Castries to the Pitons in the west and from Micoud to a point between Dennery and Gros Islet in the east possessed only the most limited road service. The main valleys, Cork wrote, of Cul-de-Sac, Mabouya and Roseau possessed good communication for a few miles back from the sea, as far as the sugar factories reached, but beyond that the road ceased. Cork concluded that '...the wealth of St. Lucia is contained in these valleys and is yet to be developed.' It would seem that the main need was for secondary roads running inland from the coast rather than for major carriageways connecting the chief towns. It was this strategy which influenced the recommendations of the Committee appointed in 1906 and representing the various interests in the Island(1). These recommendations were accepted by the Legislative Council which, in line with Cork's strategy, in 1907 voted £5,000 from surplus funds for roads from Roseau to Anse-la-Ray, from Canaries to Houelmon, and Troumassee through Beauchamp, as well as the extension to the Anse Canot and Errard by way(2).

Considerations of revenue checked road construction in St. Lucia between

1. 321/232/39915 Llewelyn to Elgin, 11 Oct. 1906

2. 321/236/24064 Cork to Williams, 18. Sept. 1907

1912 and 1914. In 1915 a Road Loan was raised but the proceeds were spent almost entirely on the improvement of existing main roads rather than opening new areas of cultivation. This policy of the Administrator, Gideon Murray, was criticised by the Governor of the Windwards, Haddon-Smith, who pointed out that the Goldsworthy road between Castries and Dennery on which by 1918 £14,935 had been spent was an excellent road but '...far in excess of the use to which it will be put'(1). Some new construction was undertaken under the second Road Loan raised in 1918, notably the linking of the Ravine-Soufrière byway with the Goldsworthy road, but in general the broad policy followed between 1915 and 1921 was to use the proceeds of both Road Loans to improve existing main roads, often to an unnecessarily high standard, rather than undertake new construction. It is probable that this policy was mistaken for many of the main highways, notably Goldsworthy, were only utilised for carting produce along limited sections. Water transport was often more rapid. For instance, Haddon-Smith argued that no land transport could compete with the frequent and cheap water transport between Dennery and Castries. Similarly the coast road from Castries to Soufrière was twenty-seven miles whereas by sea it was only twelve miles. It seems that the available funds might have been better spent providing byways and service roads running inland from the coast to existing or potential areas of settlement as recommended by the Committee of 1906. Nevertheless the achievement in St. Lucia probably compares favourably with that in St. Vincent or Grenada though it is also true that the need was more pressing. Between 1897 and 1920 the road mileage of the island increased from 228 to 330 miles. Over thirty miles of this increase was achieved by 1902. Thereafter the main phases of construction were between 1907 and 1910, and 1918 and

1. 321/300/11863 Haddon-Smith to Long, 12 Feb. 1918

1920, influenced by the availability in the former case of surplus revenue funds and in the latter case of loan funds. The obvious shortcomings, the pressure from road users, both peasant and estate owner, and the interest of the local officials help to account for the greater achievements in St. Lucia.

In respect also of the availability of funds the Public Works Department of St. Lucia was more fortunate than those of St. Vincent or Grenada, and this very fact emphasises the inconsistent nature of the policies adopted towards this most important aspect of development. Where local initiative was forthcoming and financial conditions permitted, some progress in internal communications was made. But it could be easily retarded by temporarily adverse financial conditions, road construction and maintenance being normally one of the first items of expenditure to be cut back. Unfortunately in St. Lucia, although greater interest was manifest in road development than in St. Vincent and Grenada, local policy decisions diverted resources from the construction work necessary to facilitate settlement to the more prestigious and spectacular but probably economically less beneficial improvement of main roads. It is, moreover, improbable that even in St. Lucia, where (in the Windward Islands) there was the largest expenditure on road construction in this period, much stimulus was given in practice to settlement by the construction of new roads. The success of the Land Settlement Scheme was due to its proximity to a shipping point and the consequent ability of the settlers to take advantage of the well developed coasting service(1). Probably the most notable feature

1. 256 no. 24 1916 Report of Colonial Engineer. See also
pages 149 and 195

of road construction in this period was the absence of any overall policy direction from the Colonial Office, which might have led to a more consistent and long-term view being adopted. Neither was there, except for St. Vincent, any provision of Imperial funds by loan or grant, which might have enabled an adequate long-term programme to be implemented.

As in Grenada, in addition to the numerous local sailing craft, St. Lucia subsidised a Royal Mail Company steamer to provide a regular coastal service. At the outset of the period under review two steamers were employed, offering services for freight and passengers between Castries and Vieux Fort and between Castries and Dennery. The contract was renewed in 1899 with an expiry date at the end of July 1902.

In July 1901, in anticipation of the expiry of the contract, and because it was clear that the Company intended to ask for an increased subsidy if a new contract was agreed, the Colonial Office approached Sir Alfred Jones of Elder Dempster. The latter was, however, unwilling to tender for the coastal service, so the Colonial Office negotiated a further contract with the Royal Mail Company(1). In view of the increased subsidy on which the Company insisted the Government decided to dispense with the service to Dennery. For a subsidy of £1,500 it obtained a service similar to that of Grenada, comprising a daily run from Castries to Vieux Fort, calling at Soufrière, Choiseul and Laborie. After 1906 the contract lapsed but the service continued on the basis of three months notice of termination. Despite a steady increase in freight rates the Company again asked for a higher subsidy in 1918. The St. Lucia Government, like that of Grenada, felt that

1. 321/206/26122 Llewelyn to Chamberlain, 29 July 1901.
See also minutes on this despatch

local craft could carry out the service and considered this preferable to paying the higher sum requested. H. M. Darnley, an official in the West India Department, minuted his approval of the attitude to the Company. He felt that it should maintain the local services to feed the heavily subsidised main service between Trinidad and the United Kingdom rather than '...try to obtain subsidies on the basis that the coastal services ought to be self supporting'(1). In July 1919 the St. Lucia subsidised local service was withdrawn, but the Colony immediately employed its own steam tug on the service. Except for a short period in 1921 it successfully carried out the old service in respect of mails, and supplemented the cargo facilities offered by local sailing vessels.

In Barbados, which remained throughout the period a sugar island, there was no necessity, as in St. Lucia, to reorientate the road system to serve peasant settlers, nor were there new areas for development. The reports of the Public Works Department suggest that the roads were sufficiently well maintained to provide for the shipment of produce. At the outset of the period the roads received an annual maintenance grant of £5,450(2). This grant was apparently reduced in the middle years of the period but by 1916 was re-established at the old figure. The limited evidence makes it impossible to assess the extent of new construction, but the indications are that little took place, and the existing facilities offered by roads and local sailing craft appear to have been satisfactory. The same was not true of the Barbados Light Railway which served a number of sugar estates between Bridgetown

1. 321/301/49338 minute by H.M.D., undated. Minute paper dated 12 Oct. 1918
2. 31 Barbados Sessional Papers nos 86 and 87. Reports on Public Works 1897-98

and Belle Plaine, a distance of twenty-four miles. In serious financial difficulties, it was sold in 1908 to the Foreign, American and General Investment Trust Company. This did not resolve the matter and the line was compulsorily closed in June 1916 as unsafe. The planters within the area served by the railway, however, considered the line to be of the greatest importance and successfully pressed the House of Assembly to authorise Government purchase. After difficult negotiations with the Company the purchase did take place but the line was never an economic success and remained a constant drain on the resources of the Colony.

In the Leeward Islands, with the exception of Dominica, there was evidently little new road construction. In Antigua, for example, efforts centred upon the maintenance of the existing road system, which it seems fulfilled satisfactorily its principal role of moving produce, for the most part from the sugar estates. The Government's estate of Sawcolt's, the location of the 1917 Land Settlement Scheme, appears also to have been adequately served by roads, though the production mostly of ground provisions for personal consumption reduced the necessity for numerous carting tracks. The Governor, Sir B. Sweet-Escott, appointed a Committee in June 1906 to examine and make recommendations regarding the roads of the Island. The main outcome of its report was the appointment of three inspectors to provide better supervision for the 180 or so miles of road(1). As with Barbados, however, little appears to have been done to increase the mileage within the island.

The road systems of St. Kitts and Montserrat likewise attracted little

1. 152/291/39981 Sweet-Escott to Elgin, 3 Oct. 1906.
152/330/11528 Sweet-Escott to Harcourt, 21 March 1912

attention from the Island administrations during this period, and it is evident that no significant road construction took place in these islands. Both possessed better roads than Nevis, where the annual expenditure upon maintenance was unrealistically low. In 1912 a severe condemnation of the roads of Nevis by a Colonel Cotton was forwarded to Harcourt by Sweet-Escott. The Colonial Office view was that Cotton was exaggerating, but nevertheless they considered that there was '...no kind of public work which we can more usefully encourage than proper road construction'(1). This sentiment was not implemented in practice, and as with the Windwards neither policy direction nor Imperial assistance in the form of loans or grants was forthcoming. Consequently, except in Dominica, little was achieved in the Leeward Islands during this period, principally for want of adequate finance, but also because in most cases the existing road systems despite their limitations largely fulfilled their purpose by providing transport for relatively short distances between the areas of sugar and cotton production and the sea. At the coast a considerable number of vessels were available in each of the Leeward Islands. Their operation was restricted by few regulations, and they provided in most cases a more efficient internal transport service than the roads.

In the Leewards the exception with regard to road development was Dominica. This island exceeds in area that of the other principal members of the group combined, and size alone necessitated a more extensive road system. Apart from the problem of providing such a system the difficulty of maintaining it was a major consideration in

1. See also minutes on this despatch by R.W. 23 April 1912, Cowell, 24 April 1912 and Grindle 24 April 1912. In 1912 the roads of Nevis were maintained at an average cost of £8 per mile compared with £25.10 per mile in St. Kitts

view of the climatic conditions of Dominica with its periods of torrential rain. Thus at the outset of the period the island was confronted by the need not only to extend its limited road mileage to encourage the development of the interior, but also to provide with very limited resources for the satisfactory maintenance of the existing, and of new, highways. In practice, the limited funds available placed the solution of the road problem beyond the means of the Island. The Imperial grant recommended by the 1897 Royal Commission was made available for Dominica, and was totally expended upon road construction. A most interesting description of the work carried out under the £15,000 grant was forwarded towards the end of 1906 by L. P. Hodge, at that time the assistant Colonial Engineer of British Guiana, but formerly closely associated with road construction in Dominica. Hodge's account is interesting in that it throws doubt upon the wisdom of expending the grant, as had been done, on a single road running across the Island. Since roads of this nature did not in practice result in the development of substantial areas, there was weight in Hodge's argument. The situation resembled that in St. Lucia for Hodge wrote of Dominica that settlement '...had been and will be from the sea upwards; consequently the Crown Lands will be best developed by short roads running up the valleys from the sea, down which produce can be quickly conveyed to a coastal steamer'(1). Although an Imperial grant was made, the manner of its application was determined by the local administration of the Island, and the officials involved preferred the more prestigious undertaking to the less spectacular though probably more beneficial small construction.

The Imperial grant was rapidly expended on the main road, and further

1. 111/552/41695 L.P. Hodge to C.O. 12 Nov. 1906

funds for construction and maintenance became increasingly necessary. In 1913 Sir Hesketh Bell, the Governor, in an effort to provide funds for road construction pressed through the Legislature an amendment to the Public Road Act of 1888 (1), whereby a road tax was levied. The following year the Administrator, Edward Drayton, obtained Harcourt's approval for his proposed abolition of the road boards, which he regarded as inefficient, and for the establishment of a Surveyors Department. These efforts, though indicative of considerable local interest in road construction, produced little practical achievement. The difficulties of road maintenance continued, as they did almost throughout the period, to impede significant new construction. In fact the funds which were available proved inadequate even for the maintenance of the Colony's 300 miles of road(2). This was illustrated in 1918 when a Committee set up by the Administrator reported that the roads were in a serious condition. The problems of torrential rain, a sparse population spread over a wide area, and the long stretches of unprofitable land which the road traversed between the centres of cultivation had not been satisfactorily tackled. The Committee described the widespread discontent among planters and peasants over the poor conditions of the roads, which were described by all classes of the Island's cultivators as '...bad, very bad, or neglected'(3). The depression in lime prices after 1920 prevented any possibility of the Committee's sweeping recommendations being implemented. Consequently by the close of the period Dominica had made practically no progress towards an improved

1. 152/335/25198 Hesketh Bell to Harcourt, 25 June 1913
2. 152/361/30258 Minute by G.F. Plant describing the Island as 'a heart-breaking place in which to have to maintain roads'.
17 July 1918.
73/23/20696 Dominica Acts no 10. of 1914 An Ordinance to provide for the repair and Preservation of the roads 9 March 1915
3. 152/361/54964 Machaffry to Merewether, 23 Oct. 1918

funds for construction and maintenance became increasingly necessary. In 1913 Sir Hesketh Bell, the Governor, in an effort to provide funds for road construction pressed through the Legislature an amendment to the Public Road Act of 1888 (1), whereby a road tax was levied. The following year the Administrator, Edward Drayton, obtained Harcourt's approval for his proposed abolition of the road boards, which he regarded as inefficient, and for the establishment of a Surveyors Department. These efforts, though indicative of considerable local interest in road construction, produced little practical achievement. The difficulties of road maintenance continued, as they did almost throughout the period, to impede significant new construction. In fact the funds which were available proved inadequate even for the maintenance of the Colony's 300 miles of road(2). This was illustrated in 1918 when a Committee set up by the Administrator reported that the roads were in a serious condition. The problems of torrential rain, a sparse population spread over a wide area, and the long stretches of unprofitable land which the road traversed between the centres of cultivation had not been satisfactorily tackled. The Committee described the widespread discontent among planters and peasants over the poor conditions of the roads, which were described by all classes of the Island's cultivators as '...bad, very bad, or neglected'(3). The depression in lime prices after 1920 prevented any possibility of the Committee's sweeping recommendations being implemented. Consequently by the close of the period Dominica had made practically no progress towards an improved

1. 152/335/25198 Hesketh Bell to Harcourt, 25 June 1913
2. 152/361/30258 Minute by G.F. Plant describing the Island as 'a heart-breaking place in which to have to maintain roads'.
17 July 1918.
73/23/20696 Dominica Acts no 10. of 1914 An Ordinance to provide for the repair and Preservation of the roads 9 March 1915
3. 152/361/54964 Machaffry to Merewether, 23 Oct. 1918

road system. Understandably the Imperial road failed to encourage settlement in the rain-soaked and heavily overgrown interior. The expenditure of the Imperial grant on this undertaking was probably misguided, and the remaining funds available during the period were totally inadequate for any significant new construction, or even for satisfactory maintenance of the existing system.

A strong feeling existed in Dominica at the outset of the period favouring the establishment of a coastal steamer service, in addition to the sailing vessels which collected cargo in the manner described by Hodge. During 1896, a Mr. Harris from Dominica proposed initiating a coastal service, but though wishing him every success, Chamberlain felt his scheme too nebulous and insecure to warrant any official grant (1). In May 1900 the matter was again brought forward, this time officially, when the Governor, Sir F. Fleming, supported a recommendation from the Administrator, Bell, that the Royal Mail Company be approached with a view to the provision of a coasting service. The Colonial Office wanted to wait until the broader question of the mail contact had been settled, but in July 1901, under pressure from the Colony, it initiated negotiations with Alfred Jones. The Elder Dempster Company, however, proved unwilling to tender and an agreement was consequently concluded with the Royal Mail Company. The Colonial Office concurred only reluctantly in this contract and their reservations proved well founded for the original subsidy of £900 increased rapidly until by 1914 it stood at £2,000(2). Nevertheless, the Island Government felt that the heavy seas on the windward coast made the service indispensable since sailing vessels could not replace it. In fact the once weekly run of

1. 318/286/1798 Wingfield to Harris, 17 Feb. 1897 also 25188
Wingfield to Harris, 14 Dec. 1896
2. 152/341/28479 Drayton to Best, 11 July 1914

the vessel appears to have been quite inadequate for agriculturalists on the northern seaboard. Thus in coastal communications, as with roads, Dominica suffered from inadequate facilities, and it was to these shortcomings in respect of transport that the 1918 Commission on roads attributed the general backwardness of the Island.

The problems of development through improved communications encountered in the mainland colony of British Guiana were upon a vast scale. In the Windward and Leeward Islands combined, the total area available for cultivation, but in fact uncultivated, was in 1899 about 285,000 acres, and far more if the area suitable for cattle grazing were included (1). Two additional factors not apparent elsewhere influenced the development of communications to this vast hinterland during this period. The first was the necessity of increasing the population, both to provide labour for the existing estates, and to make possible the profitable agricultural development of the interior. The second was the large sums annually expended on coast defence which might otherwise have been available for road and rail construction. These considerations, in addition to the very substantial expenditure which was associated with all schemes for developing communications in the hinterland, placed such development beyond the resources of the colony. For the practical schemes of internal development which were projected Imperial assistance was a prerequisite, and for this reason attention will first be directed to the more tractable problems of communications within the occupied coastal areas of the colony.

The inhabited and cultivated area of British Guiana was estimated in

1. 318/297/9218 Morris to C.O., 19 Jan. 1899

1899 at 325,000 acres, and in 1922 was somewhat greater as a result of the extension of East Indian cultivation. It was served by road, rail and sea and river communications, all of which were maintained and improved as far as the finances of the colony permitted between 1897 and 1922. If we exclude private sections serving mines, there existed in 1897 two road systems in the colony, namely the public roads and the sugar estate roads. The former, which included Crown Land traces, were administered by the Department of Lands and Mines until 1905 when the Public Works Department took charge. The latter system was maintained by the sugar estates which received an annual grant for the purpose. In 1898 this was fixed at 4s. 2d. for every 5½ yards, though by 1901 it had fallen to 2s. 1d. After 1909 the Colonial Engineer's Department became responsible for all roads in British Guiana(1). During the early years of the period, up to about 1903, the principal work of construction involved short sections intended to improve access to the diamond and gold mining areas(2). In its maintenance of the 224 miles of public roads the Department of Lands and Mines was handicapped by a declining grant. This was raised substantially in 1905 when the Public Works Department took over the roads, but the effect of earlier inadequate expenditure was evident. The new authorities claimed that many roads were so overgrown that vehicles could not pass, and in other cases the surface had been totally worn away. The work of repair was concentrated in the agricultural districts, though repairs were also carried out on the Georgetown roads

1. 111/572/25996 Hodgson to Crewe, 5 Aug. 1910. This was intended at least in part, to ensure that the sugar estates were not liable to expenditure in excess of the grant. However the move was not generally welcomed by estate proprietors, who were concerned at the authority vested in the Colonial Engineer's Department.
2. 114 British Guiana Administration Report no. 74
Report of (Lands) and (Mines) (Department)
114 no 94 Report L.M.D. For example the road linking Barima and Barama in the North Western District: the extension of the Potaro-Mazaruni road; work upon Potaro Konawarak connections

and on the Courantyne highway. The Department attributed much of the rapid progress to the abolition of the system of contract work; but it is evident that the steadily increasing grant was the most significant factor. By 1909 this grant had risen to £27,565 compared with £10,221 in 1902(1). The increased funds available were directed in the first instance towards improving the existing roads. Nevertheless considerable new construction was also possible and in 1909 the Colonial Engineer took over about 278 miles of public roads and 48 miles of mining roads(2) compared with about 220 miles of public road in 1898.

The first year in which the Colonial Engineer's Department was responsible for roads saw little construction, and in 1910 the road grant suffered considerably as a result of the need for economies in public expenditure. Thereafter until 1917 the grant apportioned to roads fluctuated and was invariably exceeded by that for sea defence. Nevertheless it proved sufficient not only for progress on surface metalling but for some extension and road reconstruction to take place. During 1912 construction commenced upon a road direct to the Pomeroon beyond 'Better Success', to improve the outlet from this thriving, predominantly East Indian, area of cultivation. The following year a bridle path in the Essequibo district was extended to provide for the carting of produce. The year 1914 saw the initiation of major efforts in connection with road work, the Combined Court making a special vote for reconstruction and repair work on six roads. Principal among these were sections on the Berbice river, between More and Lighttown and also on the Demerara east bank. Road work continued upon an increasing scale, aided from 1917 onwards by a rising grant which

1. 114 no. 30 Report of the (Colonial) Engineer and no. 99 Report of L.M.D.
2. 114 no. 130 Report of C.E.

in 1921 reached £119,544(1). Although it declined sharply when the depression set in, the roads were stated by the Colonial Engineer to be in a good condition at the close of the period.

In addition to roads the colony was served by short sections of railway. In January 1896 the Demerara Railway Company entered into a contract to extend its track, already running between Georgetown and Mahaica, as far as Berbice. Four years later in January 1900 the Company informed the Governor of its inability to fulfil this contract, although a similar extension to Essequibo was satisfactorily made. Chamberlain instructed the Governor, Sir Walter Sendall, not to accept the failure to complete the line as a default, which would have involved the Government in purchase of the line(2). After lengthy negotiations during which the Company endeavoured to force the Government to take responsibility, a new contract was concluded in April 1901 and construction of the line continued. Even with the new extension the railway was not a financial success and under the terms of the contract cost the colony £12,500 annually(3). However, in 1902 the Superintendent of the Lands and Mines Department spoke enthusiastically of the facilities offered by the new sections of line to the promising East Indian settlements at Mahaica and Mahaicony. He pointed out that the track crossed both these creeks within easy reach of the most remote holdings. At the beginning of 1918 the Combined Court recommended a Committee of Enquiry to advise upon the possibility of the Colony acquiring the railway. This followed increasing discontent

1. 114 nos 151 and 182 Report of the Treasury
2. 111/517/2332 Sendall to Chamberlain telegraph, 21 Jan. 1900.
See also Ommanney to Sendall, 21 Jan. 1900
3. 111/616/8305 Collet to Long, 21 Jan. 1918. Under the original contract the Colony made good the deficit if the Company failed to realise 4% on its invested capital each year

concerning the irregular and inefficient service, and the apparent disinterest of the Company in improving matters. Despite these strong feelings it was not until 1921 that the Colony purchased the railway (1), and early in 1922 it was placed in the hands of the Colonial Transport Department, established for controlling both railway and steamers. The depression and consequent lack of freight ensured that the railway, even under new management, remained an unprofitable concern. The only other railway construction during the period concerned a short line from Wismar on the Demerara to Rockstone on the Essequibo, for which the Land Department carried out the survey in 1897. The limited extent of rail transport in the colony made it impossible to duplicate the successful Trinidad arrangement by which cane farmers enjoyed free freight. The value of this system was pointed out in 1902 by the Superintendent of Lands and Mines; it might, had the railways existed in the right locations, have freed the cane farmers from dependence on renting and cultivating the extremely expensive coast lands.

In view of its geographic configuration it is not surprising that sea and river transport played an important part in the communications of British Guiana. In most locations, rivers provided the only means of access to the hinterland, and most of the mining roads of the interior linked navigable water or were directly constructed to a shipping point(2). The grant for road maintenance was consequently partly expended in keeping clear these creeks and waterways. But steamships and sailing craft also played an essential part in transporting cargo from the agricultural areas of the colony. In 1898 the Colonial Government concluded a contract with the local firm of Sprostons

1. 318/369/42021 Department of Overseas Trade to C.O., 20 Aug. 1921

2. For example the Potaro-Mazaruni extension

to provide a steamship service under subsidy(1). The service was satisfactorily conducted by Sprostons but one of its most important features was a run up the Berbice river to transport produce, and in May 1903 the Governor complained that this resulted in an annual loss of £694 because insufficient cargo was forthcoming. Unless the 56,000 acres of privately owned property on the river could produce more freight the Government threatened to discontinue the subsidy. In 1909 the request for a subsidised steamer on the Pomeroon was rejected on account of the unwillingness of the resident farmers, mostly East Indian, to enter into an agreement, under penalty, to provide a minimum quantity of cargo for each steamer. In fact the river was probably well served with transport, for an earlier private arrangement with Sprostons had collapsed in 1896 on account of competition from sloop owners. In June 1913 Sprostons' contract was renewed until July 1924 but this was preceded by a decision of the Combined Court in March that the Colony should establish a Government steamer service. For this purpose the Court voted £41,666 to provide for the purchase of six steamers(2). Competition between Sprostons and the Government service was ended in June 1916, when by agreement with Sprostons, the Government took over the services from Georgetown to Suddi and Bartica, and that from Bartica to Matope(3). The colonial steamer service was incorporated in the Colonial Transport Department in January 1922; despite its financial success it could not balance the Department's substantial annual loss on the railway. It is apparent that the steamer services were successful and for the most part well utilised. The situation of most of the East Indian holdings made communication by

1. 111/503/12905 Sendall to Chamberlain, 22 May 1898
2. 114 no. 151 Report of the Treasury
3. 111/606/34813 Egerton to Bonar Law, 4 June 1916.
See also Appendix C map of steamship services

steamship attractive, though notably in the case of the Pomeroon and doubtless elsewhere much cargo was carried by private sailing vessels.

Beyond the occupied coastal areas little was accomplished in penetrating the interior. Some limited communication was made possible in a few localities by short sections of mining road. The Barima-Barama track, for example, quickly attracted a small resident population and the Peters Mine road to Cartabo Point was utilised as a general means of access to the Puruni. In general, however, even the mining areas relied for the most part upon river transport, which was difficult and costly. This absence of satisfactory communications severely curtailed the possible development of the extensive grass-covered savannahs which were ideally suited to cattle grazing. It was, however, to promote cattle farming that the only construction of any note for the development of the hinterland during the twenty-five years under consideration occurred. This concerned the construction of a cattle track running from the large Annai savannah to the Yawakuri, a tributary of the Berbice. The Combined Court sanctioned the raising of a loan for the construction in August 1917 but the sum was insufficient and Melville, the Commissioner of the Rupununi, together with other cattle farmers in the area, provided the balance. The track was well conceived, particularly as savannah land stretched some fifty miles north of the Yawakuri, bridging the distance to the Berbice steamer terminus at Koomacka, and to within half a day of Sprostons' Malali Demerara terminus. The Colonial Office welcomed the scheme as a small but not unimportant contribution towards the development of the hinterland of the colony.

Despite a number of proposed schemes there was little progress towards a development of the hinterland over and above the cattle track. Since

the resources of the colony were clearly inadequate for the major undertakings involved in the penetration of the interior Chamberlain endeavoured to attract private investment. He instructed Sir Walter Sendall, the Governor, in May 1900, to give every encouragement to capitalists interested in opening up the interior(1) and following this a number of schemes were put forward and enquiries made. In 1904 an anonymous New York capitalist stated his interest in the construction of a line of railway from Bartica to Brazil. The Colonial Office was sceptical, especially as he was not the first to consider such a line. Their doubt was well founded and the scheme came to nothing. In 1913 E. W. Greaves, representing an unknown capitalist, put forward proposals for a railway to the interior to run west of Essequibo from Rockstone. Again the Colonial Office doubted if it was a serious proposal, and again they were proved correct. In the absence of private capital the only possibility for the development of the interior rested upon the availability of Imperial funds. In January 1914 the Governor, Sir Walter Egerton, did make plans for the construction of a railway into the interior upon this basis. These plans were dropped on account of the War, though not before Harcourt, in a despatch in April 1914, had laid down the only terms upon which the Imperial Government would consider a loan to the colony. He emphasised that '...the Secretary of State would need to be in a position to exercise in the last resort complete control over the railway and the spending of the Colonial revenues, as well as over all the legislation before he could take the responsibility of submitting to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury any proposal for a loan to the colony.' Egerton and his Colonial Secretary Cecil

1. 111/518/16357 Chamberlain to Sendall, 29 May 1900

Clementi were in favour of the suspension of the constitution which these stipulations implied, in return for an Imperial loan as soon as the international situation again made consideration of development schemes, particularly the railway, feasible. In fact in 1916 while Egerton was in England, Clementi sent a paper to the Colonial Office advocating reversion to Crown Colony Government to facilitate development. In his minute on this despatch, Greene suggested, as Lucas had done somewhat earlier, the possible alternative of Crown control over the hinterland whilst the existing constitutional arrangements were maintained in the occupied coastal section of the colony(1).

When, however, the possibilities of development were again considered at the beginning of 1921 Viscount Milner, the Secretary of State, felt that the general problems of the development of the Colony extended far beyond the mere need for access to the interior. The necessity to increase the population, for example, he felt to be a prerequisite of improved internal communication; and the new Governor, Sir Wilfred Colet, concurred. Further, Milner believed that the already occupied areas required more roads and transport facilities, better drainage and sanitation, and the completion of the permanent sea defence scheme, as a springboard for the penetration of the interior. To inaugurate a proper period of development in the colony Milner believed about £3,000,000 was required. This sum could be raised through the Crown Agents on the London market, but a necessary condition in his view was that the Secretary of State should be placed in a position to guarantee the payment of both the principal and of the interest on the loan without having to depend upon the concurrence of the Combined

1. 111/606/39876 Clementi to Bonar Law, 21 July 1916
enc. 'History of the British Guiana Constitution'. Egerton wrote the despatch in which he recommended the construction of the railway (See map in Appendix C) on 5 Jan. 1914 after a journey to the interior which lasted from 2 Sept. 1913 to 1 Nov. 1913

Court. It is evident that Milner required control not only of the finances of the colony, which implied reform of the constitution, but also of the programme of development undertaken, and he intended to make these conditions known publicly in the colony. However, in the face of an impending general election, Colet advised against this and the period under review closed without further developments.

The failure to undertake development of the interior of British Guiana in this period should not overshadow the progress which was made in the cultivated areas of the Colony. The roads were well maintained and considerable new construction was carried out, and a number of regular steamship services were established. As was the case in the earlier examples studied in this chapter, this progress was not assisted by Colonial Office guidance which might have produced a more concerted long-term policy, nor by Imperial funds which would have been required to make such a policy effective.

CHAPTER NINE

COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT :

(2) INTER-ISLAND AND OCEANIC

The diverse interests of the different West Indian colonies which made their commercial negotiations so difficult⁽¹⁾ presented a similar obstacle to the provision of the satisfactory communications which were an essential feature in the search for markets. When to this difficulty is added the substantial distances involved in serving the West Indian colonies collectively, it is hardly surprising that so much dissatisfaction and friction arose over the whole question of steamship communication. The need to consider the colonies collectively arose partly from considerations of economy and partly from the limited nature of the markets open to them. With regard to the latter the colonies considered regular communication was essential with the United Kingdom, with Canada, which became increasingly important, and with the United States. These countries provided the bulk of the West Indian import and export trade. As far as the colonies under consideration were concerned the communications with the United States during this period were adequate. Although in October 1898 the provision of a fruit service to the United States was seriously contemplated by the Colonial Office, it never came into being, and would probably have been little utilised, for at least eight separate shipping lines made calls at various West Indian ports

1. See pages 247 to 263

while *en route* to or from the United States(1). The consequent frequency largely compensated for some lack of regularity or shortage of cargo space.

In the case both of the United Kingdom and Canada, the position was less satisfactory. Much of the latter's trade ran via New York and the value of a direct line between the Dominion and the West Indies depended entirely upon reciprocal trade between the two areas. Even after about 1910 when Canada was the main sugar market of the West Indies and the colonies in return took an increasing quantity of Dominion flour the direct service never became remunerative and was conducted throughout under subsidy. Likewise the fast United Kingdom - West Indian service was made possible only by means of subsidies, although to some extent this was only necessary because the service was intended primarily for mail and passengers rather than freight. The Colonial Office made efforts to combine a cargo service with the mail, but the requirements of a rapid mail and passenger service

1. The Quebec Line - from New York every fortnight, to New York fortnightly via Barbados, St. Lucia and the northern islands.
The Booth Line - from New York every ten days and return from Brazil. Occasional stops.
The Lloyd Brasileiro Line - from New York every four weeks and return from Brazil. Occasional stops.
The Hamburg-American Line - occasional to and from Brazil. Occasional stops.
The Royal Dutch West India Line - from New York fortnightly to New York via Barbados and Trinidad monthly.
Also making occasional stops from Brazil only.
The Lamport and Holt Line.
The Prince Line.
Additional lines touching several of the islands on a variety of routes:
Elders and Fyffes Ltd.
Booker Line
Demerara and Berbice Steamship Co.
'La Veloce'
Navigazione Generale Italiana
Trinidad Line
United Fruit Company

were so at variance with those for carriage of freight that even at its best the arrangement never proved satisfactory. To supplement the main line United Kingdom - West Indian mail boats a second subsidised, but totally separate service was evolved, linking the various West Indian colonies with each other and ultimately with the main line packets at a convenient port of transshipment(1).

Steamship transport for its agricultural products was the lifeline of the West Indies and as the United States market with its good communications with the Caribbean was progressively closed to much of the colonies' produce the difficulty of providing adequate transport became increasingly complex. The difficulties involved in the provision of shipping facilities were illustrated by the disagreements between the Imperial Government, the colonies and the steamship lines. At the time of the 1897 Royal Commission the United Kingdom and the West Indian Colonies jointly subsidised a line of steamships serving the West Indies. This subsidy provided for the direct United Kingdom - West Indies service which, since 1842, has been in the hands of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company(2). The company offered no facilities beyond those for the carriage of mails and passengers; though it did provide an inter-colonial service which connected with the main line oceanic steamers. Consequently within the terms of reference of the Royal Commission, Chamberlain included an examination of the effects of the Company's monopoly and the extent to which its limited service encouraged the export of fruit to the United States rather than to England. A further line of steamers was provided by Canada and connected her east coast

1. See Appendix D .

2. Elsewhere referred to as 'the Royal Mail Company'

ports with the West Indian Colonies. The Canadian line was run by the Halifax Steamship Company of Messrs. Pickford and Black, but unlike the Royal Mail Company's line, it was principally for transporting cargo rather than passengers. Beyond emphasising the need for generally better communications the Royal Commission specifically recommended, despite Chamberlain's inclinations, the encouragement of a trade in fruit with the United States. Chamberlain apparently accepted their general recommendation but would clearly have preferred the fruit trade to be developed with the United Kingdom rather than the United States(1). Consequently in May 1898(2) when the General Post Office informed the Colonial Office that notice was due if the Royal Mail Company contract for the service between the United Kingdom and the West Indies was to be terminated at the end of June 1900, Chamberlain recommended termination followed by advertisements for tenders for a new service, in which he hoped to incorporate greater commercial facilities. In July, however, the Treasury intimated that it was prepared to consider only schemes based upon the recommendations of the Royal Commission and no wider undertakings would be considered until these had been implemented(3). The result was that the existing Royal Mail Company contract was renewed for an additional five years.

On the 14th October 1898 the Crown Agents called for tenders for four services based upon the findings of the Royal Commission. The first was to provide a fortnightly service between Trinidad and St. Kitts(4).

1. 318/290/24079 Chamberlain to Norman, 12 Nov. 1897
2. 318/291/11309 Treasury to C.O., 20 May 1898
enc. G.P.O. to Treasury, 4 May 1898. See also C.O. to Treasury, 26 May 1898
3. 318/291/16038 Treasury to C.O., 18 July 1898
4. The service to be provided between Port of Spain and Basseterre was to run: Grenada, St. Vincent, Barbados, St. Lucia, Dominica, Montserrat, Antigua, Nevis to St. Kitts

The speed was immaterial but the service was intended to provide regular internal communication. The second service, likewise fortnightly, was to link Trinidad, British Guiana, Barbados and Canada. Vessels were to be of adequate size and maintain an average speed of at least ten knots. The object of the service was '...to encourage trade in sugar and other products between the West Indian colonies specified and the Dominion of Canada'(1). The other two services involved the development of the fruit trade. The first was for a line between St. Vincent, Dominica and the United States or Canada in accordance with the recommendations of the Royal Commission, and the second was for an improved service between Jamaica and England. Although the latter was satisfactorily arranged the proposal for a St. Vincent and Dominica service was withdrawn pending further consideration and was in fact never implemented. With regard to the other services the tender of Pickford and Black which combined the Canadian and inter-island service in one schedule was accepted. The contract was arranged to run for five years from 1st July 1900 thus terminating at the same time as the United Kingdom mail contract with the Royal Mail Company. The annual subsidy to Messrs. Pickford and Black was £27,000, the cost being divided equally between the Imperial Government and the Dominion(2). The service which the Company undertook involved five steamers running from St Johns and Halifax to Georgetown, Demerara and return. The basic service was fortnightly with calls at Bermuda, the Leewards, the Windwards, Barbados, Trinidad, Tobago and British Guiana on both south and northbound routes. Alternate steamers did not call at

1. 318/291/23924 Crown Agents to C.O., 24 Oct. 1898

2. 321/195/3564 Moloney to Chamberlain, 12 Jan. 1900

any of the Leeward Islands, nor at St. Vincent, Grenada or Tobago on the outward journey, or at the latter two on the return voyage. In respect of the scheduled times of arrival and departure the Company carried out a largely satisfactory service, no mean achievement in a round trip occupying considerably longer than a month(1).

In March 1898, prior to the call for tenders, the Royal Mail Company forwarded to the Colonial Office a memorandum regarding the economic feasibility of improved inter-island communication, and the possibilities for developing shipments of fruit to the United Kingdom or United States(2). They drew attention to the failure of Scrutton's fruit service to the United Kingdom and of Turnbull Stewart's efforts in respect of the New York market. The Company took the view that owing to the limited amount of systematic fruit growing which took place in the Islands, they could not generally be relied upon to produce a sufficient cargo to make a service worthwhile(3). In its experimental shipments in 1889, the largest consignment of bananas which Turnbull Stewart Company had been able to obtain for the New York market from Trinidad and Grenada was 60 bunches. At the time of its memorandum the Company stated that with the exception of Barbados, practically the only fruit shipped was in the form of occasional packages sent to friends in the United Kingdom through their mail

1. The colonies despatched quarterly returns to the Colonial Office respecting the punctuality and efficiency of the Pickford and Black service. On the whole these were favourable
2. 318/293/6135 Royal Mail Co. to Lucas 17 March 1898
enc. letter from the acting Superintendent in Barbados dated 6 Nov. 1897
3. In this respect it is significant that the contract of Elder Dempster for the shipment of Jamaican fruit to the United Kingdom involved a guarantee by the Colony of a minimum quantity of cargo

vessels(1). In the case of Barbados a Mr. Greenage did make experimental small-scale shipments of various fruits which appeared promising. Unfortunately bananas, the most promising fruit for sale in the United Kingdom, could not last the journey without special facilities in the form of cool chambers being built into the vessels. In general terms, however, the Company's memorandum was not discouraging regarding the possibilities of shipping fruit to the United Kingdom, particularly in respect of certain islands. St. Lucia, for example, shipped quantities of mangoes to Bridgetown by sailing craft, and until the United States duty curtailed the trade, Dominica had exported a variety of fruit by way of the Quebec Steamship Company to New York. Consequent upon this assessment of the trade potential of the West Indies the Royal Mail Company tendered for three of the services advertised, the inter-colonial, the Canadian, and the Jamaican service to the United Kingdom. In each case they were unsuccessful, the Jamaican contract being awarded after some confusion to the Elder Dempster Company as has already been mentioned.

The Royal Mail Company thereupon made a number of alterations in its existing service in what appears as a rather belated attempt to extend the scope of its limited facilities. One of the minor changes which the Company made indicates how inter-colonial rivalries made it difficult to arrange satisfactory steamer itineraries in the West Indies. The Colony of Barbados enjoyed a favoured position for it

1. 318/293/6135 Royal Mail Co. to Lucas, 17 March 1898
In fact a few small experimental shipments of oranges from St. Vincent by the Royal Mail Co. to the United Kingdom had taken place. Similar exports to the United States were discouraged by the duty of one cent per lb. on all fruit except bananas

was the local headquarters of the Royal Mail Company, it was the first and last port of call of the ocean steamers, and it was also the port of trans-shipment, where the ocean steamers were loaded with the mail collected from the vessels serving the islands. Early in 1902 the Company decided to make Trinidad a port of call for the main line steamers. This was in no way to affect the Barbados position and in May, Sir Frederick Hodgson, the Governor of Barbados, informed the Colonial Office that he had no objection to the change. When the new itinerary commenced, however, on 9th July it was found that the revised services required offices in Barbados to be opened on a Sunday to handle the correspondence. The Colony objected strongly and the Company replied by threatening to move the port of trans-shipment and to cease to make the Colony first and last port of call. A small matter, but indicative of the disagreements which constantly arose as alterations which benefited one colony produced unexpected inconvenience elsewhere.

In May 1903, the General Post Office again informed the Colonial Office that notice was due if the Royal Mail Company contract was to terminate in two years' time. The Post Office was satisfied with the existing service, but Arthur Pearson made it clear in his reply that the Colonial Office was not, and that Chamberlain wanted greater commercial opportunities encompassed in a new contract(1). The Pickford and Black Canadian contract was also due for re-examination at the same date, though the original contract allowed for indefinite extension without alteration up to 1910. Before enquiring whether the Canadian Government was prepared to continue payment of its proportion

1. 318/309/18035 G.P.O. to C.O., 15 May 1903

of the subsidy, the Colonial Office arranged for a full discussion of the West Indies' requirements at a meeting of Governors held in London during September 1903. Although the Colonial Office hoped that this conference would provide a valuable indication of the divergent needs of the colonies, it did not expect that companies, other than what it regarded as the unenterprising Royal Mail Company, would tender for a new service, though they hoped that Alfred Jones of Elder Dempster might be encouraged to do so.

Before the London meeting which took place at the Colonial Office on 17th September, the acting Governor of Barbados, Sir S. Knaggs, forwarded the report of a Committee which had already looked into the Island's requirements in any new contract(1). It advocated an extension of the previous contract to provide for emigrants travelling to Santa Croix, Puerto Rico and Cuba, but the principal recommendation was that any new service should include accommodation for the carriage of fruit so as to assist the efforts of the Imperial Department of Agriculture in the development of such a trade with England. The direct line with Canada, it was admitted, had carried little Barbados freight but the continuation of it was strongly urged in the report, with a view to the possible extension of the fruit trade to the Dominion also. The importance which Barbados attached to this trade was again stressed by Sir F. Hodgson at the Colonial Office conference. The conference was chaired by the Under Secretary of State, the Duke of Marlborough, and in addition to members of the West India Department and a representative of the Royal Mail Company, Sir G. Strickland, Sir R. Llewelyn, Sir F. Hodgson and Sir C. Knollys

1. 318/309/35660 Knaggs to Chamberlain, 24 Aug. 1903.
With the papers are the minutes of the conference held at the Colonial Office on 17 Sept. 1903

represented their colonies. In defence of the old services the Company claimed that in addition to the carriage of mails every effort had been made to foster trade with the United Kingdom and '...to help forward any new industry that shows any sign of responding if it is helped'. Hodgson admitted that the Company had been helpful in respect of the transport of Barbados fruit but he felt that '...mails take far too prominent a place in the contract.' Barbados wanted more commercial facilities such as were provided by Elder Dempster between the United Kingdom and Jamaica. Strickland complained of the irregularity of the Royal Mail Company steamers but the main interest of the Leewards lay with the Canadian service. The Windward Islands disliked the existing service, and previously in 1902 Llewelyn had advised strongly against its continuation and claimed that '...the Royal Mail has not kept pace with the times.' However, much of this feeling probably stemmed from the St. Lucia jealousy of Barbados as headquarters and port of shipment. At the conference Llewelyn seized the opportunity to press the claims of Castries the largest port in the West Indies and a coaling station, against the shortcomings of the open roadstead of Bridgetown(1).

All the Governors were in favour of the continuation of the Canadian service, though a number of improvements were requested. Both Strickland and Llewelyn wanted an extra boat during the sugar crop, though the former, at least, recognised the difficulties of this without an increased subsidy. It is clear that the Pickford and Black service was uneconomic in a number of respects; for instance, Canadian flour transported to New York by train and then on to

1. For further indications of the views of the Windward governments see 321/216/38766 Melville to C.O., 7 Oct. 1903

Barbados by the New York steamers cost less in the Colony than did the same flour shipped by Pickford and Black. In many instances the same was true of West Indian sugar to Canada. The expense of the service was further increased owing to the production by some of the islands of unrealistic quantities of cargo for the Canadian steamers. Strickland suggested that it would be cheaper to run an internal service with a port of trans-shipment, as did the Royal Mail Company, in order to collect '...the three bags and ten bags, the five tons and twenty tons. So many stoppages would not be required, and really it is ridiculous to see a steamer worth from £20 to £60 a day demurrage stopping for four hours to pick up seven bags of sugar on which the freight is perhaps ten shillings. It cannot pay for the wear and tear of the anchor gear'(1).

The most interesting idea which arose at the Conference was that of making Halifax the port of trans-shipment for all steamers. By this system the United Kingdom mail would also have run via the Dominion. The essence of this proposal was again to be advanced some seven years later by the Royal Commission on Trade Relations between Canada and the West Indies. The proposal was rejected after some discussion on account of the increased time which would be involved in shipments to and from the United Kingdom. It was felt that West Indian sugar already went principally via New York because the freight rates were lower and the crossing faster. Although this was undoubtedly true, as the New York market declined in importance with the growth of Canada, an increasingly strong case could be made for Halifax as the port of trans-shipment. Not only would the communications of Canada

1. 318/309/35660 Minutes of Conference. See also 28/261/42108 Hodgson to Lyttelton, 3 Nov. 1903

with Britain and the West Indies have been improved but the transatlantic vessels would have been sure of cargo, mail and passengers. However, the Conference determined to keep the services separate, though the Colonial Office felt some small advantage might be derived from one company undertaking both contracts as this would remove unnecessary competition, a position finally achieved after 1913.

After establishing that the two services were to remain separate the Colonial Office obtained Treasury sanction for a continuation of the Imperial contribution towards the Canadian service(1). They then informed the Dominion of the services which they considered necessary for the West Indies. The first involved rapid communication between Trinidad, British Guiana and Canada, calling at only one or two other West Indian ports. In addition there was to be an inter-island service linking up all the colonies, and the third line was to be a direct mail service with the United Kingdom. The Colonial Office indicated the desirability of a single company tendering for all three services, though in the event the Royal Mail Company was the sole tenderer for the United Kingdom mail service. But the main reason for the despatch was to establish the willingness of the Dominion to continue its subsidy during a further five years from July 1905. A satisfactory reply from Canada led to renewal of the Pickford and Black contract for an interim period of one year, the provision for such an extension having been made in the original contract of 1900. The conference had indicated that there were many shortcomings in the service provided under the 1900 contract and though there had been some success in promoting trade, considerable doubts had been expressed regarding the value of the service in its existing form. The Barbados Chamber of

1. 318/309/42695 Treasury to C.O., 24 Nov. 1903

Commerce complained that the service was of little use since there was no guarantee that there would be any room for Barbados freight. In respect of cargo space there can be little doubt that the service heavily favoured the northern colonies(1). Pickford and Black themselves complained of the lack of freight offered at certain of the islands at which they were obliged to make stops, notably Grenada, St. Vincent and Tobago. In these circumstances it appears strange that the contract was renewed even for a limited time without substantial alterations, though this was doubtless on account of Colonial Office attention being directed towards the difficulty of providing a new United Kingdom mail service. Also it appears likely that in renewing the Canadian contract in its old form, the Colonial Office was ensuring that some regular inter-island communication was retained even should the United Kingdom mail contract prove unnegotiable.

The crisis over the United Kingdom mail service arose initially from the greatly increased subsidy which the Royal Mail Co., the sole tenderers, asked for the contract, the only new feature of which involved the provision of suitable accommodation for the carriage of fruit(2). This question of the transport of fruit, particularly bananas which required cool storage, was, however, a very prominent consideration. Prior to the expiration of its contract on 30th June

1. The advantage enjoyed by the northern colonies was of course dependent upon the Canadian steamers being sufficiently empty to take on cargo before being completely unloaded, and upon that cargo being of a non-perishable nature, since it could remain in the vessel for periods of up to one month. In practice these conditions do not generally appear to have been encountered, but the protests from Barbados stemmed largely from the uncertainty that cargo space would be available rather than its actual absence. By 1910 the northern colonies were protesting in a very similar fashion that on the northbound run to the Dominion no cargo space remained for them, it having been totally utilised by the large southern sugar producers
2. 318/311/12026 G.P.O. to C.O., 5 April 1904
C.O. to G.P.O., 11 April 1904

1905 the Royal Mail Co. had been sympathetic towards the development of an export trade in fruit, but only when they could be assured of sufficient cargo. The new contract called for the provision of accommodation for fruit as one of its terms and this, combined with an already unremunerative service, led the Royal Mail Co. to request a subsidy of £100,000 for five years, an increase of £15,000 on their previous subsidy. The Colonial Office contacted the colonies to obtain their views regarding an increase in their contribution towards the subsidy. They unanimously concurred with the Colonial Office that in view of the substantial increase in subsidy the service should be dispensed with. Only Barbados showed any inclination towards making an increased payment and when the full extent of the Company's new demands became known the House of Assembly reconsidered the question and in January 1905 the Governor, Sir G. Carter, informed Lyttelton that though the colony was prepared to continue its annual contribution of £4,000 it was disinclined to provide any increase(1). The Treasury, which was equally unwilling to provide an additional £15,000 to an already substantial contribution, accepted the Colonial Office suggestion that the system of subsidy should be abandoned and the best terms possible made with the Royal Mail Co. upon some alternative basis.(2) Before this was done, however, the Colonial Office learned privately that Elder Dempster was now prepared to tender for the service at a lower figure than that of the Royal Mail Co. As a result early in 1905 tenders were again called for, and ultimately four were received. Only one of the three Royal Mail Co. tenders was considered to meet the requirements specified in the service, and this was discounted by the Company's other stipulations which amounted to a partnership with

1. 28/264/1457 Carter to Lyttelton, 14 Jan. 1905.
30449 Carter to Lyttelton, 10 Aug. 1905.
See also 2585 Carter to Lyttelton, 13 Jan, 1905 and
1200 Carter to Lyttelton, telegraph 12 Jan. 1905
2. 318/313/5150 Treasury to C.O. 16 Feb. 1905

the Imperial Government.

The Elder Dempster tender seemed a good one, requiring a subsidy at the same rate as the previous Royal Mail contract and providing not only cool storage in the mail boats, but as the Treasury pointed out an additional fortnightly service of freight steamers with cold storage. The Treasury, G.P.O. and the Colonial Office all approved of the acceptance of this Elder Dempster tender subject to the concurrence of the colonies. In fact the Jamaican Legislature had already expressed a preference for the Royal Mail Co. in spite of the cheaper tender of Elder Dempster(1), and it is evident that this feeling was general throughout the colonies. As soon as they became acquainted with the new advertisement for tenders in early 1905 the merchants of Berbice, British Guiana petitioned the Colonial Office to reconsider the Royal Mail Co. tenders on the grounds that the Company had for so long served the West Indies. The merchants' attitude was supported by the colony's Executive Council who, Hodgson informed Lyttelton in April 1905, were doubtful whether Elder Dempster could satisfactorily fulfil the requirements. In Barbados the House of Assembly urged the Colonial Office towards consideration of the revised offers of the Royal Mail Co. The smaller colonies took a similar view and numerous petitions were received from commercial and agricultural societies, though many were based on purely sentimental

1. Relations between Jamaica and the Elder Dempster Co. were not good, apparently because Sir Alfrd Jones' steamship line had not, in the view of the Colony, adequately resisted the increasing control of the United Fruit Co. of the United States. The fruit contract was not renewed in 1912, and the antipathy of Jamaica may have played a significant practical part in the rejection by the Colonies of the Elder Dempster mail tender

grounds. Ultimately the colonies refused to accept the proposed contract with Elder Dempster, although they were evidently aware that it represented the only possible regular direct mail service with the United Kingdom. Sentiment alone is inadequate to explain this attitude, but the strong objections of Jamaica coupled with the doubt sometimes expressed concerning Elder Dempster's ability to conduct the service satisfactorily appears to have been the grounds for the colonies' rejection of the proposed service.

Despite a sometimes unconstructive attitude on the part of the colonies and the problem in dealing with their differing interests, a much closer Colonial Office interest was manifest with regard to improved steamship communications than was the case in most spheres of West Indian economic development. Chamberlain and his successor, Lyttelton, both pressed the G.P.O. for greater commercial facilities to be incorporated in the United Kingdom mail service, though the intransigent attitude of the Royal Mail Co. resisted their efforts. The Colonial Office also attached great importance to the Canadian service, despite its serious limitations, and successfully provided for its retention after 1905 by obtaining agreement from the Imperial Treasury and the Dominion for a continuation of the joint subsidy.

The end of the Royal Mail Co. contract mail service with the West Indies in 1905 brought considerable inconvenience, and Algernon Aspinall, closely concerned at the time as Secretary of the West India Committee, wrote that '...it was obvious at the outset to those acquainted with the requirements of the West Indian trade that the absence of a regular mail service would be most prejudicial, and so it proved to be'(1).

1. Algernon F. Aspinall, *The British West Indies*, p. 81

The immediate effect of the termination of the contract was the withdrawal by the Royal Mail Co. of its inter-colonial service, though it continued to carry the transatlantic mails on a poundage basis. On account of this, the larger colonies, which were served for freight by a number of United Kingdom carriers(1) and could alternatively send their mails via Canada or the United States without excessive delay, were not too seriously affected. Commercially the most detrimental effect was the cessation of the developing Barbados banana trade to the United Kingdom which had been steadily increasing despite the absence of any special facilities. In December 1905 Dr. Morris complained of the lack of freight for this promising export, but the Colonial Office was only able to advance the rather negative reply that if sufficient fruit were produced by the colonies other shippers might take up the matter. The smaller islands were more seriously affected by the cessation of the inter-colonial service; and the development of fruit exports from St. Vincent to the United Kingdom towards which Morris was directing his energetic attention, received a fatal blow(2). There was little, however, that the Colonial Office could do beyond continued negotiations with the Royal Mail Co.

Meanwhile the Pickford and Black Canadian contract, renewed for one year in 1905, again became due for renewal. This service was of enhanced importance since the Royal Mail Co.'s withdrawal as it provided

1. The lines connecting the West Indies and the United Kingdom by means of vessels capable of carrying freight were:
Royal Mail Steam Packet Company Direct - London from Southampton (limited freight facilities)
Direct Line of Scruttons - London fortnightly
Direct Line of Prentice, Service and Henderson - Glasgow every three weeks
Leyland Line - Liverpool twice monthly
Harrison Line - Liverpool monthly
East Asiatic Line + London every four weeks
2. 318/312/28476 Morris to C.O., 29 July 1905

inter-colonial communications as part of the service with Canada. Despite general misgiving over the value of the Canadian service as a means of shipping cargo to the Dominion, not least on the part of Pickford and Black who were concerned over the irregularity with which freight was forthcoming, the contract was reviewed in 1906 for a further four years(1). In an attempt to improve efficiency, however, a new itinerary was evolved by the Company with the assistance of Morris, which resulted in the omission of the calls at Grenada and Tobago. Although statistically justified upon commercial grounds this resulted in Grenada being cut off from the rest of the Windward group. Llewelyn protested immediately though he probably weakened his argument somewhat by claiming that the trade between Canada and Grenada was substantially greater than was obviously the case(2). Nevertheless, the Colonial Office did acknowledge the unfortunate circumstances of the Island, but despite hopes that some arrangement could be made to include Grenada, the Island was not in fact again included in the itinerary under the Pickford and Black contract.

The position would doubtless have grown more difficult but for the conclusion in 1907 with the Royal Mail Co. of a new inter-colonial contract, the outcome of lengthy negotiations between the Colonial Office and the Company. The service, as it eventually came into force on 1. September 1907, comprised a fortnightly run from Barbados to British Guiana calling on the return at Grenada and St. Vincent, and a second two-weekly connection with the northern islands calling on the return at St. Lucia but not at the other Windward Islands. The

1. 318/314/13455 Morris to C.O., 31 March 1906
2. 321/230/24915 Llewelyn to Elgin, 23 June 1906.
The weight of Grenada protests was also diminished by the fact that neither this nor other West Indian colonies contributed by way of subsidy to the service

Royal Mail Co. guaranteed to meet her own, now unsubsidised oceanic steamers at least four times out of five at the port of trans-shipment which was to be either Bridgetown or Port of Spain(1). The last point led to difficulty with Barbados, which throughout sought to maintain her favoured position and wanted a guarantee that Bridgetown would remain the port of trans-shipment throughout the ten-year duration of the contract. The cost of the subsidy of £25,000 was divided equally between the colonies and the Imperial Government and when negotiations with the colonies commenced in August 1906 arrangements were rapidly concluded. Even the Windwards who protested at the failure of the proposed service to provide inter-island communication within their Colony considered it preferable to nothing and quickly voted the necessary subsidy. The Leewards who had been faced at first with the probability of only a monthly service under the new contract had their wishes met when both services became fortnightly. Complications arose when the Barbados House of Assembly upon reconsideration decided the subsidy was too large, and threatened to discontinue it. Barbados in fact was still enjoying reasonably satisfactory transport facilities, but the Windwards, already poorly served, were seriously alarmed at the prospect of losing the new service almost before it had begun. The Governor, Sir Ralph Williams, wrote to the Colonial Office: '...I am and always have been imbued with the feeling that by far the greatest factor in the improvement of the West Indian Islands is easy communication'(2). The Colonial Office, however, made it clear that the new service depended upon whether Barbados would provide £3,500 towards the subsidy, and Governor Knaggs

1. 28/268/29025 Knaggs to Elgin, telegraph 30 July 1907.
See also 26776 Knaggs to C.O., 26 July 1907 and C.O. to Knaggs
27 July 1907

2. 321/234/6748 Williams to Elgin, 2 Feb. 1907

felt that the only way this could be achieved was through a guarantee that Bridgetown would remain the port of trans-shipment for the duration of the contract. The Colonial Office knew they could not force such a condition on the Company and even Aspinall of the West India Committee agreed that it was unreasonable. Finally Knaggs put a compromise proposal before the Legislature which was accepted; under its provision Barbados was to provide the subsidy only as long as it should remain the port of trans-shipment.

The new services appear generally to have been quite successful except perhaps in the case of the Windwards. In September 1907 Williams wrote privately to Lucas informing him that Pickford and Black had again refused to consider making stops at Grenada. The Colonial Office, however, felt that it could not press the Company, particularly as the Windwards were served under the new Royal Mail Co. inter-colonial contract and by Crystals steamers running between Trinidad and New York. Nevertheless it is true that the Windwards lacked in 1907 not only southern communication with Trinidad and British Guiana but also connections one with another. Until 1910 no further complications arose in respect of the subsidised lines in the West Indies. In that year, however, the Pickford and Black contract finally expired and a fresh crisis arose over the Royal Mail Co. transatlantic service which since 1905 had not been conducted under contract or subsidised.

The service of the Halifax Company of Pickford and Black terminated at the end of June 1910 and coincided with the deliberation of Lord Balfour of Burleigh's Royal Commission on Trade Relations between

Canada and the West Indies(1). The Royal Commission made a close examination of the requirements with regard to communications between the Dominion and the West Indies. However, as the termination of the existing contract would clearly precede the report of the Commission, Balfour, in anticipation of its findings, wrote to the Colonial Office, stressing the importance of retaining the Canadian market for the West Indies(2). He emphasised the view of the Commission that any disruption of the steamship service, even if only temporary, would severely tax the colonies; they therefore recommended an interim extension of one year in the existing contract. The Colonial Office accepted this recommendation and obtained Treasury agreement for the Imperial contribution to the subsidy for a further year. In their final report the Commissioners strongly advocated a continuation of the Imperial contribution to the subsidy for the Canadian service(3). Despite the great importance attached to the direct Canadian service by the Royal Commission, it was clear that the West Indies were not prepared to pay towards it. In opening the Barbados legislative session of 1909 the Governor, Sir G. Carter had proclaimed that '...the present value of trade does not warrant any material contribution by the West Indies as subsidy either to any shipping or cable company'(4). This view was maintained strongly by Barbados and when at the close of 1910 the Colony was asked for its observations on the recommendations of the Royal Commission, it stressed again its

1. See page 260
Royal Commission on Trade Relations between Canada and the West Indies Cd.5369 Part I, Cd.4991 Part II Cd.5370 Part III. 1910 P.P.XI
2. 318/323/6933 Balfour to C.O., 22 Feb. 1910.
Forwarded to Treasury, 20 April 1910.
See also 318/43814 Morris to C.O., 23 Nov. 1905 for observations on the effect of the cessation of the service
3. Royal Commission on Trade Relations, Cd.5369 I para. 160
4. 131 no. 97 Barbados Sessional Papers Sir G.T. Carter's speech opening the Legislative Session 1909-10

disinclination to provide any subsidy(1).

The principal recommendations of the Royal Commission for improving the Canadian service provided for a new itinerary intended to speed up the service, a provision to reserve cargo space (for the intermediate ports) the absence of which had been a source of much complaint and the addition of extra steamers during crop time. Their other recommendations were mainly items of detail involving free embarkation, cool storage and separate accommodation for bananas and citrus fruit. In fact the old contract was extended twice more, in 1911 and in the following year while the matter was discussed at the Ottawa Conference of 1912. A permanent service was finally established in 1913 to run until 31 October 1919. After 1911, despite the Royal Commission's recommendations, the Imperial Government ceased to subsidise the service, and the Dominion took over the total payment except for a small subsidy from St. Vincent and St. Lucia to ensure their inclusion. Although the exports to Canada from these two islands were small, St. Lucia wanted the coaling trade and St. Vincent, unlike most of the other islands, lacked direct contact with New York and thus received her flour by means of the direct line from Canada. There was also agitation in Grenada for inclusion in the permanent contract, and the Administrator, Drayton, informed the Colonial Office in February 1913 that even if Grenada was not a party to the trade agreement she would anyway offer a subsidy for inclusion in the steamer service. The wisdom of this policy on the part of the Windward Islands was demonstrated during the latter part of the War when the Royal Mail Co. inter-colonial service ceased, and the

1. 28/275/36840 Burdon to Harcourt, 17 Nov. 1910

Canadian service once again provided the only regular internal communication. Commercially, however, the shortcomings of the service remained and were outlined at the Ottawa Conference of 1920(1). They were very similar to those which attracted the attention of the 1910 Royal Commission.

Examination of the requirements of the Canadian freight service by the Royal Commission coincided with fresh difficulties over the Royal Mail Co. services in which, on account of the Imperial subsidy to the inter-colonial route, the Colonial Office was more directly concerned. This time the difficulty involved the oceanic service, which had not since 1905 been conducted under contract or subsidised. In 1910 the Company gave notice of the termination of this part of their service as it was unremunerative, and in December the direct link between Southampton and Bridgetown ended with the Royal Mail steamers calling instead at the Danish island of St. Thomas, which consequently became the port of trans-shipment(2). The Royal Commission on Trade Relations took advantage of the break in the direct service to include in their recommendations the suggestion that the United Kingdom mail route should run via Canada(3). This would have improved communications with Canada and given additional grounds for an Imperial grant. It was, however, quickly rejected by the West Indian colonies, and a Mail Conference to discuss the position was held in Barbados in November 1910(4). Representatives of the West Indian islands and British Guiana were present at the Conference and a unanimous resolu-

1. See pages 276 and 277

2. 152/319/34887 Sweet-Escott to Crewe, 25 Oct. 1910.
See also 263 no. 34 1910 St. Vincent Administration Report.
Report on the Foreign and Colonial Mail Service

3. Royal Commission on Trade Relations Cd.5369 I paras.161 to 165

4. 28/275/35274 Bardon to Harcourt, 16 Nov. 1910.
See also 36840 Bardon to Harcourt, 17 Nov. 1910

tion was forwarded to the Imperial Government regarding the desirability of re-establishing a fortnightly direct service. The service was made possible by the offer of a £20,000 subsidy by Trinidad, which figure was finally reduced to £19,000. The Imperial contribution was fixed at £40,000, and increased by total colonial contributions of £35,500. A contract was arranged with the Company in January 1911 for a subsidy of £88,000 in which was included the existing inter-colonial service(1). It was to run for seven years and terminate concurrently with that service. Barbados offered a substantially larger contribution than she was in fact required to pay in an unsuccessful attempt to retain her position as first and last port of call and port of transshipment. Instead, with Colonial Office concurrence, Port of Spain became the headquarters of the Company.

The decision once again, as in 1903, that the United Kingdom service should not run via Canada, was probably misguided. Even had the United Kingdom mail service partially duplicated the Canadian service, the case for an Imperial grant for the Canadian West Indian service would have been substantially strengthened by the requirements of the G.P.O. and would probably have resulted in an improved Canadian service. The Royal Commission on Trade Relations emphasised the importance of the Canadian market, and with an increasing sugar consumption and the success of reciprocity negotiations, the future of the West Indies was considered by the Colonial Office to lie with the Dominion. There was also the fact that though a rapid passenger and mail service between the United Kingdom and the West Indies might

1. 263 no. 34 1910 St. Vincent Administration Report
Report on the Foreign and Colonial Mail Service

have been lost, that route was much better served by freight carriers than was that from the colonies to Canada.

The new Canadian contract for the direct and inter-colonial services was negotiated in 1913 against the background of the recommendation of the Royal Commission, and was won by the Royal Mail Co. The service appears from the outset to have had serious shortcomings. In 1911 Morris expressed fears that the new service would be totally concerned with sugar and offer little inducement of alternative produce. This appears to have been the case but even certain of the sugar islands found the service inadequate. In 1914 St. Lucia complained that '...the steamers of the Royal Mail Canadian line call only once a month on the outward voyage and as a rule have little space for shipments from this port'(1). The new contract, however, had been in operation only a short time when the outbreak of war made shipping arrangements very difficult. The Royal Mail Co. complained that war risk insurance on the United Kingdom route was prohibitive, and that the Canadian line, which relied principally on the sugar shipments from Demerara to Canada, had lost its main source of revenue with the purchase by the British Government of almost the entire crop. The first practical action of the Company was to increase substantially the freight rates charged on cotton to the United Kingdom. Following strong representations from the British Cotton Growers' Association they reduced the rate slightly and arranged for alternative steamers to call at Liverpool rather than London, thus reducing the rate for this service by the amount of the additional freight charge to London. Despite this G. Murray, the St. Vincent Administrator, pointed out

1. 256. no. 24 1914 St. Lucia Administration Report.
Report of the Comptroller of Shipping

the loss which the new rates were causing to both peasant grower and planter, but the Association could offer little hope of a further reduction of freight rates or of better prices. The conditions under which the United Kingdom service operated deteriorated, however, and by the middle of 1915 the Company proposed reducing the fortnightly transatlantic service to a monthly one. Naturally the colonies protested and Barbados threatened to discontinue her subsidy which stood at £4,000. Ultimately, however, the House of Assembly reconsidered and agreed to continue the payments, which in view of the Colony's dislike of the 1911 contract was perhaps surprising. British Guiana retained her fortnightly service by utilising the French monthly packets running between St. Nazaire and Cayenne. As well as reducing the transatlantic service, the Company discontinued its associated inter-colonial service, and for the second time in two decades the Canadian service became the principal regular inter-colonial communication. Though a number of French, Dutch and United States vessels, in addition to British freight carriers, served the colonies, several connections relied entirely upon the Royal Mail Co. Canadian vessels. The Windward Islands obtained increased calls from these vessels and the statistics of Port Castries show that in 1916, fifty-two calls were made against twenty-four the previous year. Most of the other colonies were normally rather better served than the Windwards and all appear to have made satisfactory communication arrangements based on the Canadian service and supplemented by the calls of other vessels.

The slump in agricultural products which followed the War made the steamship communication position still more difficult. In June 1920 meetings were held by a Shipping Committee in Ottawa made up of West Indian and Dominion representatives as part of more general discussions

regarding reciprocal trade arrangements(1). The attitude of the colonies towards improved communications with Canada was not encouraging. The Leewards did not even send a representative to the discussions, and before the negotiations began, Sir Wilfred Collet informed the Colonial Office that British Guiana would not subsidise the Canadian West Indian service without extensive alterations to provide greater speed, and the Colony was anyway more concerned with improved United Kingdom connections(2). He amplified the view of the Colony later, by pointing out that the Canadian market was currently of little value, since all the sugar was shipped to the United Kingdom. It is clear that during the war the United States and United Kingdom markets had grown to greater importance than that of Canada(3). Nevertheless from an unpromising beginning the Committee did ultimately come to an agreement. The more ambitious schemes which involved routes via the West Indies between the United Kingdom and Canada, or a United Kingdom service running to certain colonies with Canada providing an interlinking service to the others were rejected in favour of improvements to the existing service. The principal objections to the service were similar to those of 1910. The large southern colonies found the service far too slow, while the smaller northern ones complained that no cargo space or passenger accommodation remained by the time the vessels reached them on the northward journey. It was finally decided that the most satisfactory service would be a weekly departure, alternating between Halifax and St. John's rather than calling at both on each trip, with every other steamer going express

1. See page 278

2. 318/353/7739 Collet to Milner, 6 Feb. 1920 .
See also 11907 Collet to Milner, 6 Feb. 1920

3. See pages 267 to 274

from Bermuda to Barbados instead of calling at all the islands. The Canadian delegates undertook to arrange such a service within three years to replace the extended current one, using freight ships of the Canadian Mercantile Marine. The colonies agreed to provide 25 per cent of the cost, or £27,000, whichever was the smaller(1). As with the previous Canadian service no Imperial subsidy was involved, and the Colonial Office consequently took no part in the negotiations, leaving the arrangements entirely to the Dominion and the colonies.

At the same time as these arrangements were being made for the Canadian West Indian service the Royal Mail Co. announced the termination of its United Kingdom service on 21st August(2), the service having already been extended beyond its contract termination in 1918. The Company complained that not enough cargo was forthcoming to make the service worthwhile, but Collet informed the Colonial Office that there had been numerous protests over the erratic nature of the service and '...unless they can run regularly they will never get much cargo'(3). The Governor of the Leewards, on the other hand, believed that large quantities of cotton were shipped through the Company and he was unable to understand how they had made a loss. The Colonial Office immediately attempted to arrange an interim service while awaiting the deliberations of the Imperial Shipping Committee sitting at the time in London, and to permit time for the negotiation of a permanent contract. However, both the Treasury and the colonies were disinclined to pay the subsidy for a temporary service and none was

1. 318/361/32291 Undated memorandum by Amery on West Indian Canadian Conference at Ottawa 31 May to 18 June at which he was present, Minute by H.N.D., 2 July 1920.
See also 318/356/44199 Haddon-Smith to Milner, 3 Sept. 1920
2. 318/355/41697 Merewether to Milner, 30 July 1920
3. 318/355/39976 Collet to Milner, 30 June 1920

arranged. The efforts of the Colonial Office to determine the requirements of the colonies were answered by despatches describing widely differing services often of the most elaborate and complex nature. Although the Colonial Office recognised that the extreme demands of the West Indies could not be met they nevertheless produced for the Imperial Shipping Committee a lengthy and significant memorandum containing their justification for the existence of a subsidised service between the United Kingdom and the West Indies. The Colonial Office argument rested upon the growing influence of the United States and the inability of Canada alone to counteract this. At the same time they wished to demonstrate the continued interest of the United Kingdom in her West Indian colonies. The colonies were depending almost entirely on French and Dutch lines to maintain their contact with the United Kingdom and whereas the supersession of the British service was an understandable war measure, the Colonial Office claimed that '...our failure to resume it in any shape will be interpreted as a sign that our hold over these colonies is weakening'(1). The Secretary of State, Winston Churchill, asked for a new service to commence during 1922-3, and pointed out that the Canadian line would provide the inter-colonial connections and an Imperial subsidy would be required only for the main line service(2). The Imperial Shipping Committee offered no objection to a call for tenders on this basis but at the close of the period no Cabinet decision had been made and the transport of mails and passengers had passed entirely into the

1. 318/359/52457 Treasury to C.O., 23 Oct. 1920.
Memorandum by Wiseman on the justification of a subsidy for a passenger service between the West Indies and the United Kingdom
3 Nov. 1920. Memorandum sent to the Treasury 18 Nov. 1920
2. The Colonial Office pressed for an Imperial contribution at a rate of about $\frac{2}{3}$ of the total subsidy which they estimated would cost the Imperial Treasury at least £90,000 per annum

hands of the French and Dutch companies(1).

The great interest and concern shown by the Colonial Office in both the Canadian and United Kingdom services arose, of course, in part from the need to subsidise them, but the fact that they received a subsidy is indicative of the importance which the British Government attached to them. The freight service with the United Kingdom was throughout quite good. Even during the war when the Royal Mail service was disrupted, Haddon-Smith was able to suggest three lines by which the General Post Office might despatch Grenada mail. The drawback to these services was the lack of speed which precluded the transport by them of perishable commodities. The Colonial Office recognised this disadvantage, but despite efforts, particularly on the part of Chamberlain and Lyttelton, it proved impossible to incorporate commercial facilities in the high-speed mail service(2). As a result, excepting the Jamaica service, the development of West Indian fruit exports to what would have been a most favourable market was never possible. Despite its occasional efforts the general lack of enterprise exhibited by the Royal Mail Co. was a constant discouragement to the Colonial Office and others who sought to improve the commercial connection between the United Kingdom and the West Indies. The

1. 111/639/38981 Clementi to Churchill, 6 July 1921 .
The Royal Netherlands West India Mail Company conducted a fortnightly service to Barbados and Trinidad via Southampton which served the needs of the Windwards.
See 321/316/43569 Haddon-Smith to Churchill, 11 Aug. 1921 .
In addition the French Compagnie Général Transatlantique was prepared to supply a second outlet for St. Vincent see 321/318/29454 Haddon-Smith to Churchill, 10 June 1921.
In August 1921 Clementi, the acting Governor of British Guiana, informed the Colonial Office that the establishment by the Dutch of a service to connect Surinam by means of coastal steamers with the Dutch main line at Paramaribo would completely replace the old Royal Mail Co. Service so far as British Guiana was concerned

2. See pages 37 and 213

Canadian service also was never really successful. Throughout, much Canadian trade ran via New York, mostly in the hands of the fortnightly Quebec line, and the development of the Dominion as the principal West India market was limited by the absence of a better service. Halifax and St. John's were inadequate ports for serving the Canadian markets and were responsible for much of the difficulty. In addition both Pickford and Black and the Royal Mail Co. found it impossible to meet the requirements of all the colonies, and the consequent compromise met the requirements of none. The West Indian attitude towards the Canadian service was throughout unenthusiastic, perhaps reflecting the easy and cheap transport by way of New York. The initiative for the maintenance and improvement of the service stemmed invariably from the Colonial Office or the Dominion, and until the 1920 Conference the colonies were unprepared to make any contribution by way of subsidy. In 1903 and 1910 they resisted the suggestion that the United Kingdom service should run by way of Canada, a move which would undoubtedly have encouraged closer commercial relations with the Dominion, and if implemented, would have helped to balance to some extent the increased influence of the United States during the war.

Beside the services of the main lines, subsidised or not, some of the Islands made individual arrangements of a purely local nature. A launch served as the Grenadine mail boat and a subsidised service was provided between Montserrat, Antigua and St. Kitts. Nevis obtained, at a subsidy of £6 per trip, a fortnightly connection through the Compagnie des Bateaux à Vapeur de la Guadeloupe with the French island. The Colonial Office encouraged such arrangements and was prepared to examine any scheme which might benefit communications in this difficult part of the world. In 1920 the Bermuda and West Atlantic Air Co. contacted the Colonial Office with a view to the establishment of an

air mail service. Feeling at the Colonial Office was that this was an unrealistic proposal, and so it proved to be, but Amery minuted: 'I wouldn't put off an interesting experimental link like this if they hanker after it'(1).

In considering West Indian communication some mention should be made of cables and wireless. The establishment of connections of this nature was favoured by the colonies largely because they would have made possible prior notification of the arrival of steamers. Examination of the possibilities of providing this form of communication was considered by the 1910 Royal Commission and again by the 1920 Shipping Committee at Ottawa. The West Indian cables which did exist were run by the West India and Panama Co. but the service it provided was subject to frequent delays and the source of much complaint. After 1905 the decision to abandon St. Lucia as a military base meant the end of any possibility of Imperial assistance for additional cable construction in the West Indies. In 1910 the Royal Commission stated that the West India and Panama Co. was unstable and unreliable and they recommended substantial changes in the system(2). These involved public ownership of new cables from Halifax to Bermuda, and Bermuda to Jamaica. New cables were also recommended between Bermuda, Barbados, Trinidad and possibly British Guiana. Communication with the east islands was to be provided by wireless as the bed of the Caribbean in this area was unsuitable for the maintenance of reliable cables. The finances were not, however, available for such sweeping development and through the period little was done. In September 1920,

1. 318/361/34025 minute by J. Amery , undated probably 21 July 1920

2. Royal Commission on Trade Relations Cd5369 I para.206

the United States Western Union Co., who had obtained permission to land their cable from North to South America at Barbados, agreed to carry the island's traffic and reached an agreement with the West India and Panama Co. regarding the service. Also in September the Governor of Barbados opened the British Western Telegraphs Co.'s new cable to Para in Brazil.

Wireless stations proved generally more successful, though it was principally the stimulus of war which led to their establishment in many of the colonies. Barbados began to look seriously into the provision of a wireless station in September 1909 but though discussions and negotiations dragged on, it was not until November 1914 that a station manned by volunteers and using equipment loaned by Harrison College came into being. During the War, however, this station and others proved their value commercially. It was therefore decided by the Imperial Government that when the Admiralty ceased to operate the stations they could be handed over to the colonies for continued commercial use. Wireless came too late for its real value to become apparent in the period reviewed, its development in the West Indies being associated with the exceptional circumstances of war, but at an earlier date the efficient notification of the arrival of steamers would have removed one of the most common criticisms levelled against West Indian steamship companies.

CHAPTER TEN

WEST INDIAN MARKETS

This chapter is primarily concerned with identifying the main export markets available to the West Indian producer, and with an assessment of their relative importance. Any examination of West Indian exports during this period must inevitably concentrate upon the markets of the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States. However, as a preliminary to considering these principal but distant destinations for West Indian produce, a brief survey of the markets which existed within the West Indies appears appropriate.

Such local markets were of a necessarily limited character since although during the period under review various colonies specialised to some extent in specific cultivations, the climatic similarities created essentially the same agricultural propensities. For the most part, therefore, demand within the West Indies depended upon the inadequate supply of locally grown foodstuffs in particular areas. Viewed statistically, such inter-colonial trade was inconsiderable(1) but nevertheless some produce, mostly of peasant origin, did find satisfactory outlets, and general indications of the flow of such trade is possible. For example, throughout the period peasant food crops from St. Vincent found ready sales in Grenada and the Grenadines. In 1904 with the St. Vincent Land Settlement Scheme still in its infancy, Osment wrote that cassava and ground-nuts from the settlements yielded good prices in the inter-colonial market.(2) Cattle also was exported

1. For example 321/267/20589 Sadler to Harcourt, 1 July 1912
2. 617 no. 5 Report on St. Vincent B(otanic) S(tation) Report of Curator

locally from the Island, and the following year, 1905, the Agricultural Instructor described the losses which resulted when an outbreak of anthrax prevented this customary trade. In particular years, such as 1908 and 1909 when prices on the St. Vincent market were poor, Grenada invariably offered a more lucrative outlet for peasant produce. At other times, when the St. Vincent market was more buoyant proportionally less produce would find its way to the neighbouring Island. Cacao provided an exception since there was little interest in the crop in St. Vincent. Throughout the period it was the common practice of the St. Vincent peasants to export to Grenada the small quantities of cacao which they produced. Despite efforts in various colonies during the War to improve local output of foodstuffs, most notably in Grenada itself, (1) St. Vincent ground provisions never failed to obtain good returns in the neighbouring islands. (2) Trinidad and St. Lucia also competed for St. Vincent produce particularly tannias and sweet potatoes. In the case of St. Lucia, however, a more regular trade was conducted with Barbados: in 1913 the Comptroller of Shipping at Castries wrote that '...the sailing vessels were chiefly schooners and sloops trading between this colony and Barbados'. (3) The trade was principally in fruit, though on the return voyage the sailing vessels brought U.K. freight for St. Lucia which had been landed at Bridgetown. In the period prior to the outbreak of the First World War, Grenada's inter-colonial exports were confined almost entirely to small quantities of cacao and spices. These were shipped principally to Barbados, British Guiana and Trinidad. The most significant outcome of the War, for

1. See pages 141 to 143
2. 617 . no. 17 Report of St. Vincent Agricultural Department Report on Exports
3. 256 no. 24 St. Lucia Sessional Papers 1913. Report of the Comptroller of Shipping

Grenada, was a substantial increase in exports to Trinidad which rose from £2,432 sterling in 1910 to £78,569 in 1919.

The Leeward Islands found in Barbados their best and most lucrative inter-colonial market. Onions, in particular, were shipped in some quantity from Montserrat and Antigua to the latter Colony. Dominica also shipped to Barbados, but in this case the product was limes and the quantity small. The Leewards sent their produce, mostly onions, to a number of other local markets: St. Kitts, for example, shipped considerable quantities to Trinidad as well as Barbados. In 1916 Antigua, enjoying probably the most diversified inter-colonial markets, exported to Barbados, Trinidad and Grenada. The following year her products were available also in Martinique, British Guiana, St. Lucia and St. Vincent. In fact, such was the value of Antigua to Barbados at least, that the latter colony made special arrangements to extend its reciprocal agreement with Canada to cover Antigua. However, of all the produce marketed within the West Indies during this period, the rice produced in increasing quantities in British Guiana was the most significant. Although the records of inter-colonial trade are poor, it is clear that in terms of monetary value British Guiana rice was the most important product by a substantial margin. This was borne out by events in the post-War era. In January 1918 when the export of flour from the United States ceased, and that from Canada was reduced, the retention of rice by British Guiana caused difficulty not only in British but also in French and Dutch West Indian possessions.

Of far greater concern to the West Indies than the minor inter-colonial markets were those to which they shipped the bulk of their produce, namely the markets of the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States. Until a few years prior to the 1897 Royal Commission, the most important

market for West Indian sugar and other produce was that of the United States, the main port of entry being New York. This market had the advantage of plentiful steamship communication,(1) and was geographically well placed since the relatively short distance of shipment resulted in lower freight rates than could be obtained to any other market of comparable size. A further incentive existed between 1891 and 1894 when the West Indies received preferential treatment under the agreement known as the McKinley reciprocal treaty. In such circumstances, little effort was made to cultivate alternative or additional markets. Moreover the prospects for alternative markets did not appear promising. The United Kingdom was largely closed to West Indian sugar by the competition of European beet producers assisted by export bounties, whilst the other possibility, the Canadian market, was considered by the colonies as of inadequate size in view of the scale of West Indian sugar exports. In 1894, however, the situation was radically altered by the legislative action of the United States Senate in passing a new tariff Bill, subsequently known as the Dingley tariff. Under this new fiscal arrangement the United States placed a duty on all imported sugar regardless of the existing McKinley convention. James Hay, the Governor of Barbados, writing in July 1894, informed Lord Ripon, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, of the damage which the pending Dingley tariff would cause to Barbados; he wrote that the new legislation '...very materially concerns this island; indeed the moment it was received here it sensibly affected the local sugar market.'(2) The termination of the McKinley convention caused protests

1. See page 213

2. 28/235/13972 Memorial of Barbados Chamber of Commerce, Aug. 1898

from all the colonies.(1) Under section 4 of the new Dingley tariff, reciprocal arrangements could not involve a tariff reduction of more than 20 per cent, which compared unfavourably with the 100 per cent, or free list status enjoyed by West Indian sugar under the McKinley Schedule. Nevertheless most of the colonies favoured discussions with the United States based upon the new tariff. The resulting negotiations between the United Kingdom and the United States, represented respectively by Sir Julian Pauncefote and Edward Kasson, were protracted and complicated. Although they were not commenced until late 1897, initially they were regarded by Chamberlain as a most important aspect of his policy for the rehabilitation of the West Indies. Thus early in 1898 with Cabinet backing he obtained Treasury approval in principle for a grant of nearly £300,000 to enable the West Indian colonies to remit import duties on the scale considered necessary to negotiate a satisfactory agreement with the United States.(2)

At the outset of the negotiations the Colonial Office had agreed that any reciprocity agreement should be extended to include products other than derivatives of sugar. Even so there were colonies which stood to gain little from a renewed agreement with the United States, and in the latter stages of the negotiations it proved possible to restrict discussions only to those colonies which would benefit from reciprocity. The complexity of the negotiations stemmed in part from changing attitudes towards the Dingley tariff within the United States. Colonial Office officials believed that it had originally been introduced with

1. Much of the protest resulted from the alleged disregard of the United States Government for the McKinley Convention clause requiring six months' notice of termination, except, and this was overlooked by the colonies, in the case of legislative action by either party.

2. 318/291/761 C.O. to Treasury, 24 Jan. 1898

the intention of forcing the West Indian colonies to remit duties on such imports from the United States as beef and pork in return for United States remission of duties on West Indian sugar. By the end of 1897, however, the tariff was increasingly seen in the United States in terms of protection for the home sugar industry and as a source of revenue.(1) Pouncefote initially hoped that the United States would accept the remission of duties on certain of their imports which had been granted by the West Indian colonies under the 1891 McKinley convention, in exchange for the maximum 20 per cent remission of duty on West Indian sugar imported into the United States. Such an arrangement would have been acceptable to the Colonial Office so long as the preferences on West Indian sugar were not extended to any third country, although in fact the West Indian concessions under the McKinley tariff had been in return for sugar being placed on the free list. The Colonial Office calculated that the 20 per cent remission of duty would be worth £1 7s. per ton on muscavado and £1 11s. per ton on the factory crystals from Trinidad, British Guiana and St. Lucia. It considered that this would be more than the yield of any countervailing duty. However, as the negotiations proceeded it became clear that the United States sought remission of duty on articles such as textiles and hardware of which the United Kingdom was the principal supplier, and which had not been included in the 1891 Schedule. In February 1899 Pouncefote informed the United States negotiator that '...the Secretary of State for the Colonies to whom these proposals have been submitted, is of the opinion that the terms offered as regards the Leeward Islands, St. Lucia and St. Vincent are too onerous to be entertained by him on behalf of the governments of those countries.'(2) For similar reasons

1. 111/497/26755 Henning to Chamberlain, 13 Dec. 1897. See also minutes by S.O. 17 Dec. 1897, E.W. 15 Dec. 1897 and J.C. 16 Dec. 1897

2. 318/296/3331 F.O. to C.O., 13 Feb. 1899

the British Government was unprepared to accept the proposals on behalf of British Guiana and Barbados. These two colonies and St. Lucia, however, expressed a desire to continue negotiations.

The efforts of St. Lucia to reach a reciprocity agreement with the United States were rather unrealistic and consequently of short duration. The Colony could not afford the potential loss of revenue which such an agreement would have involved and furthermore the Colonial Office had instructed that a substantial reserve fund should be built up.(1) For British Guiana and Barbados the prospects were rather better. In July 1898 Sendall forwarded details of the intended concessions to be made by British Guiana together with indications of how the revenue loss would be recouped.(2) These were approved by the British Government and accepted by the United States, which in return offered a 12½ per cent preference for British Guiana sugar and other products. At the same time a similar draft treaty was being negotiated by Pauncefote on behalf of Barbados whereby the United States granted again a 12½ per cent reduction in duty on cane sugar and its derivatives, also on certain other products such as fruit, vegetables and asphalt, in return for free entry or reduced duty on a variety of American exports.(3) The draft treaties were criticised by commercial interests in the United States and ratification by the Senate was delayed. In March 1901 the United States Government requested a further extension of one year for ratification and in March 1902 a further six months' extension was sought. Matters were finally brought to a head by an agreement which the United States concluded with Cuba in

1. 321/206/35519 Llewelyn to Chamberlain, 21 Sept. 1901 and 37387 Llewelyn to Chamberlain, 7 Oct. 1901
2. 111/513/20442 Sendall to Chamberlain, 19 July 1899
3. 318/296/3331 F.O. to C.O., 13 Feb. 1899

early 1903. A clause in this agreement extended to Cuban sugar and tobacco the maximum 20 per cent reduction on import duty under the Dingley tariff but prohibited the United States from offering to the similar products of any other country a rate of duty below the flat rate imposed by the 1897 Tariff Act, which was essentially similar to the Dingley tariff. The effect of this agreement was to end the negotiations for reciprocity on behalf of British Guiana and Barbados. The failure was especially felt in Barbados where opinion was strongly in favour of such an agreement. However, the manner in which these negotiations collapsed was characteristic of United States policy towards the West Indian colonies, and indicated that little reliance could be placed upon the outcome of any negotiations conducted with that country.

Until the Brussels Convention abolishing bounties came into force on 1st September 1903, the United States still remained the most advantageous market for West Indian sugar on account of her policy after 1897, of penalising bounty-fed sugar. This led to a substantial reduction in imports into the United States of German beet sugar, and undoubtedly encouraged the European beet producers towards the negotiation of an anti-bounty convention. In February 1900 Dr. Morris wrote that Canada would advance little as a West Indian market while the United States imposed countervailing duties and Canada did not.(1) The situation changed with the coming into force of the Brussels Convention, and from this time on the Canadian market progressively developed to become the principal destination for West Indian sugar products. A number of factors contributed towards this. As far back as 1866, Canada had advanced suggestions for closer trade with the West

1. 318/298/3527 Morris to C.O., 17 Jan. 1900
enc. *The Maritime Merchant* of Canada

Indian colonies. These overtures had been unsuccessful as had later efforts. In 1897, however, Canada granted a tariff preference to certain United Kingdom products, and the following year this was extended to the West Indies. By this arrangement the West Indies enjoyed a reduction of 25 per cent in import duties and British West Indian sugar was allowed into Canada under British preferential tariff rates which in 1900 were raised to $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. The removal of bounties altered the market situation, since the United States penalisation of European bounty-fed beet sugar, which had proved of greater value to the West Indies than the Canadian preference, ceased. The comparative value of the Canadian market immediately increased; moreover, in the same year, a surtax was imposed on German beet sugar imports into Canada which practically excluded that country's sugar. The United States at the same time concluded her reciprocity treaty with Cuba and further treaties with the Philippines and Puerto Rico. The Colonial Office considered the surtax upon German beet to be the principal feature in the attractiveness of the Canadian market,(1) but probably of equal importance was the considerable increase in the Canadian consumption of sugar which stood in 1899 at 104,000 tons and had increased ten years later to 185,000 tons.(2) Before this growth the limited size of the Canadian market had been a discouraging factor for those interested in West Indian trade. Llewelyn wrote in March 1905 that until '... the population of Canada has increased sufficiently to take all the sugar, rum, cacao, spices, arrowroot, fruit, etc. grown in the tropical West Indies, I fear no general preferential trade arrangements will be found practical.'(3) His view was shared by others, notably by Dr.

1. 318/318/4886 Morris to C.O., 28 Jan. 1908.
See also minutes by C.P.L., 3 March 1909 and G. Grindle, 23 Feb. 1908
2. Royal Commission on Trade Relations Cd. 5369 I
3. 321/225/13201 Llewelyn to Elgin, 27 March 1908

Morris.

The West Indies were fortunate to find in Canada an increasing market for their principal produce, at a time when the policy of the United States, previously their main market, was distinctly hostile. This was particularly important when the abolition of bounties failed to create a favourable market for West Indian sugar in the United Kingdom. In March 1916, the West India Committee complained that the foremost objection to the Brussels Convention had been that the signatories '...were permitted to maintain a difference between the customs and excise duties of £2 10s. per ton. All the contracting states except Holland and Great Britain availed themselves of this protection to their home sugar industries, which has enabled them to retain their hold upon the markets of the United Kingdom.'(1) The West India Committee's protest was unrealistic. A far more intransigent problem was geographical remoteness which dictated that the natural markets for the West Indies must always be in the United States or Canada rather than across the Atlantic. In fact the abolition of bounties would have been a positive disadvantage to the West Indian colonies in view of the resulting termination of the United States' countervailing duty, had it not been for the subsequent policy of that country in effectively limiting her market for West Indian sugar by favouring the produce of Cuba and Puerto Rico regardless of the bounty question. Chamberlain undoubtedly foresaw this and in January 1903, before the Brussels agreement was signed, he wrote '...I should not object to the Convention breaking down if we were prepared to give the West Indian colonies remission of sugar duty. This would involve less responsibility.'(2) An associated

1. 318/340/11710 West India Committee to C.O., 9 March 1916
2. 318/309/1571 Memorandum by J.C. on the Sugar Convention, 12 Jan. 1903

difficulty which arose from the anti-bounty convention was the prohibition on indirect bounties which prevented any form of Imperial aid in the construction of factories or improved machinery in the colonies.(1) Since the Canadian market encouraged raw or semi-refined sugar rather than grocery sugar this consideration was of less importance than it might otherwise have been. Nevertheless it is difficult to discover any practical advantage to the West Indian sugar producer, certainly in respect of markets, which resulted from the convention of September 1903. The failure to increase their share of the United Kingdom market in sugar, and the progressive closing of the United States market, forced the West Indies to look to Canada, not from choice but from necessity.

In these circumstances it is not surprising that the Canadian market advanced rapidly in importance. In 1902, the value of sugar exported to Canada by Barbados, for example, was £122,199; by 1905 the value had increased to £206,007.(2) The Governor, transmitting the Barbados Blue Book for 1907, wrote that '...under the preferential treatment accorded by Canada to British colonies the exports of sugar to the Dominion continued to increase in quantity and value and those to the United States of America to diminish.' Although not commented upon by the Governor sugar exports from Barbados to the United Kingdom similarly declined; in 1907 they amounted to only £66,910.(3) Though sugar was by far the most important, the other exports of Barbados followed a similar pattern. The year 1907 saw the most impressive increase in

1. See page 24
Also 152/351/40198 Acting Governor Best to Bonar Law, 2 Aug. 1916, and minute by G.G., 6 Sept. 1916, 21 Sept. 1916, and 30 Sept. 1916, by J.F.N. Greene, 13 Sept. 1916
2. 28/266/31877 Carter to Elgin, 27 Aug. 1906
3. 28/271/38307 Acting Governor Blackwood to Crewe, 1 Oct. 1908

Canada's consumption of all Barbados produce, the value of the latter reached £318,617 compared to £243,225 in 1906, whilst total exports to the United States fell to £50,000 from £149,258.(1)

There were, however, shortcomings to the Canadian market. In the first place no formal agreement existed and the preference accorded was therefore somewhat uncertain. In the second place, the Canadian sugar refiners were a sufficiently powerful political group to affect materially the nature of the preference accorded by the Dominion, which was weighted in favour of raw or semi-refined sugar. The possibility of the West Indian colonies concluding a reciprocal agreement with Canada created a number of difficulties despite its apparent desirability. When in 1907 Dr. Morris, following a visit to Canada, proposed an unofficial conference between the Dominion and the West Indies, the Colonial Office expressed doubts as to the desirability of such a conference. They were concerned at the difficulty of identifying satisfactory products upon which the West Indies could offer reciprocal advantages, and also over the problem of the diverse requirements of the individual colonies. Lucas was in no doubt, however, of the general advantages of a formal reciprocal agreement. In March 1908 he minuted '...if the West Indies are to have a future within the British Empire I believe it will be with Canada.'(2) Among the colonies also there was disagreement. The Windwards considered that they derived little benefit from the advantages offered by Canada and were lukewarm about a reciprocal treaty. In March 1905 Llewelyn had described the general feeling in his Colony as being that Canada lacked '...the go ahead enterprise of the United States'. In the same despatch the Administrator

1. 28/268/33907 Knaggs to Elgin, 31 Aug. 1907
2. 318/318/4886 Morris to C.O., 28 Jan. 1908
See also minutes by C.P.L., 3 March 1908 and by G.G., 23 Feb. 1908

of St. Lucia had reinforced the Governor's view. The planting and mercantile interests in the Island were concerned at the effects of possible United States retaliatory action if any specific reciprocity treaty between Canada and the West Indies were concluded, since the price of sugar on the Canadian market depended upon the price offered in New York. In view of the fiscal policy of the United States there appeared a danger of her deliberately depressing the price by further preferential arrangements with Cuba and Puerto Rico. In addition the political influence of the Canadian refiners ensured that only low-grade sugar received the advantageous $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent preference; the higher grades which made up a large proportion of St. Lucia's exports suffered a prohibitive duty. In St. Vincent, however, which was not a sugar producer of any importance, the attitude to a formal reciprocity agreement with Canada had been one of indifference, since her principal crop was sent to the United Kingdom.(1)

When as a result of Morris's proposal of 1907 the question of possible reciprocity came to the fore, the attitude of the Windwards was unchanged, though St. Vincent and St. Lucia were rather more inclined to reciprocity than was Grenada. Barbados, the prime mover with regard to promoting reciprocal preference between Canada and the colonies, consulted the Windwards early in 1908 upon the possibility of such preference. Grenada, which exported no sugar, and had she done so would have contravened the Brussels Convention,(2) opposed such preference as of no value, and possibly detrimental. St. Lucia and St. Vincent approved

1. 321/225/13201 Llewelyn to Lyttelton, 27 March 1905
2. Owing to the fact that the duty charged by Grenada on sugar imports exceeded that permitted to sugar exporters under the terms of the Brussels Convention.

of reciprocity in general terms, but for different reasons. St. Lucia still exported little to Canada, but felt the Dominion would provide a useful safeguard, at least for raw sugar, should the United Kingdom and United States markets become still less favourable. St. Vincent simply took the view that she would lose nothing by such an agreement and might possibly gain. The Governor of the Windwards, Ralph Williams, complained to the Earl of Crewe, the Secretary of State, that he felt he was '...driving three separate horses (in) the same team all anxious to go their several ways and it will be next to impossible, unless Your Lordship decides definitely against the principle of preference suggested, to bring these several islands of this Government into line on the subject.'(1)

The unofficial conference proposed by Morris was held in Barbados in January 1908, and the host Colony and the Leewards quickly indicated their desire to enter a reciprocal agreement with Canada. Thus on 1st May, Bickham Sweet-Escott, the Governor of the Leewards, wrote to Crewe expressing the wish of the Leewards to conclude an arrangement with Canada even if the only other participant was Barbados, and he emphasised the need '...to secure for the Colony of the Leeward Islands the permanence of the preferential treatment which in Canada its sugar now enjoys'.(2) The Colonial Office clearly favoured inter-colonial preference, their view being put strongly by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Winston Churchill, speaking in Manchester prior to the Colonial Conference of 1907. However, no attempt was made to minimise the difficulties in the way of such preference. Lucas, for example, was clearly prepared for political opposition when he wrote in March 1908:

1. 321/239/25460 Williams to Crewe, 25 June 1908
2. 152/305/21657 Sweet-Escott to Crewe, 30 May 1908

'...H.M.G. are not pledged to crusade all over the Empire against preferences which have nothing novel in them, and to override representative legislatures for their purpose'.(1) Moreover the practical situation was complex. The representatives of the Canadian Government at Barbados apparently took the view that the West Indies should make concessions to Canadian produce in return for the preference already accorded by the Dominion. The possibility existed furthermore that the Dominion might reach an agreement with Germany which would probably involve the removal of the 25 per cent surtax on German beet sugar. Such a possibility was viewed with alarm by the sugar colonies, and in September 1908 Hodgson forwarded a resolution from the British Guiana Chamber of Commerce which emphasised the gravity with which the possible termination of Canadian preference and the removal of the 25 per cent surtax on German sugar was viewed by the mercantile interests in the Colony.(2) On the other hand, the Canadian request for reciprocal preference was acceptable to British Guiana and during 1908 the Combined Court approved a preference to imports from Great Britain and British possessions including Canada;(3) this in fact went beyond the offer made by Barbados which was dependent upon increased Canadian preference.

The acceptance in principle of reciprocity by the sugar colonies, and, excepting Grenada; the absence of opposition from the other colonies, resulted in the passing at the unofficial Barbados Trade Relations Conference of a resolution favouring, in general terms, the mutual

1. 318/318/4886 Morris to C.O., 28 Jan. 1908.
See also minute by C.P.L., 3 March 1908 and by G.G., 23 Feb. 1908
2. 111/562/36391 Hodgson to Crewe, 15 Sept. 1908
3. 111/562/33846 Hodgson to Crewe, 15 Sept. 1908.
Forwarding resolutions of Combined Court

reduction of tariffs. Nevertheless practical arrangements remained as difficult as ever. On 28th April 1908 the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for the Colonies, Seely, stated in the House of Commons that while such reductions were favoured on general grounds by the British Government the differing views and wishes of the colonies made specific plans immediately impractical. It was therefore agreed that the whole question of the volume of trade between the West Indies and Canada, its potential growth and the best means for encouraging it, should be referred to a Royal Commission.(1)

The Royal Commission on Trade Relations between Canada and the West Indies finally issued its Report in September 1910. Its chairman was Lord Balfour of Burleigh, and its members the Hon. William Stevens Fielding, the Hon. William Paterson, Sir John Poynder Dickson-Poynder and Sir Daniel Morris. For a year prior to the Royal Commission's report the Canadian refiners had been permitted by the Canadian Government to import foreign sugar under the British preferential rates to the extent of one-fifth of the refined sugar they produced. This right, known as the 20 per cent concession, was considered by the Commission to be the most important single issue in the situation. It had satisfied the moderate element of the Canadian refiners and further concessions to the refining interest were not contemplated by the Canadian Government. The West Indies, however, wished to negotiate arrangements based upon the abolition of the 20 per cent concession. The West Indian feeling regarding the Canadian refiners was indicated by Sir Gilbert Carter, the Governor, opening the Barbados Legislative Session of 1909 when he said that '...the Dominion Government, like its powerful neighbour the United States, works on protectionist lines and it

1. Hansard 4th Series vol. 187 1087-1088. See also 318/321/26756 C.O. to Royal Commission on Trade Relations, 7 Aug. 1909

would appear that a particular tenderness is manifested towards the Canadian sugar refiners, who there is good reason to believe are more than adequately protected under the existing tariff.' Failing the settlement of this question Carter believed it would be '...better to retain complete freedom of action'.(1) The Royal Commission, however, attached the greatest importance to the Canadian market, where the preference produced, in their opinion, between nine shillings and fourteen shillings per ton above the price which would be obtained otherwise. The Commissioners attributed to the Canadian preference, combined with the effect of the Brussels Convention of 1903, the security of the West Indian sugar industry '...the want of which threatened it at one time with extinction.'(2) On the question of the West Indian concessions to the Dominion, the Commission recommended a 20 per cent reduction below general tariff rates on principal Canadian produce imported into the West Indies; such preference was to be a condition for the abolition of the 20 per cent concession. The Commission also placed much emphasis upon the necessity for improved steamship communication.(3) Through such improvement, and through any concessions which Canada might be prepared to make to West Indian fruit, arrowroot and cacao, it was hoped that the non-sugar-producing colonies of St. Vincent, Grenada, Dominica and Montserrat would obtain an advantage. Of these colonies only Dominica shipped predominantly to the United States, but the Commissioners felt that retaliatory action by that country was unlikely on account of the accepted view that such arrangements were internal affairs of the British Empire.(4) The

1. 31 no. 97 Barbados Sessional Papers. Speech of Sir G. Carter opening Legislative Session 1909
2. Royal Commission on Trade Relations Cd5369 I para.49
3. See page 232
4. Royal Commission on Trade Relations Cd5369 I para.122

importance attributed to the Canadian market by the Commission was entirely justified. By 1910 the annual volume of trade of the West Indian colonies was about £20 millions, with Canada accounting for about one-tenth of it, predominantly in the form of imports from the West Indies. Ten years previously total trade between the Dominion and the West Indian colonies had not exceeded £500,000.

The Colonial Office accepted the views of the Commission and staunchly defended the principle of preference against attacks in Parliament. Their case was prepared in anticipation of an attack in the House of Commons in February 1911, when Harcourt intended to reply that '...sugar has always been the sport of tariff systems in all protectionist countries. West Indian sugar has found itself shut out of the United States market and only enjoys the great benefits of the Canadian market during Canada's pleasure. In fact those benefits have been materially reduced by recent changes in the Canadian tariff(1) and it is one of the objects of the proposals of the Commission to restore them to their original position. In the market of the United Kingdom the West Indian producer enters into competition under the serious disadvantage of distance with the highly organised beet sugar industry of the continent. The West Indian colonies depend for solvency on the sugar industry and any serious blow to this industry involves the risk that many of the islands will return to the condition of dependence on the Imperial Treasury.'(2)

As a result of the Royal Commission, a reciprocal agreement between

1. A reference to the twenty per cent concession
2. This statement of policy was clearly prepared for Harcourt's use during the debate on the King's Speech in February 1911. See 318/326/4019 Minute by H.R.C., 8 Feb. 1911. However it does not appear to have been delivered in the House of Commons at this time; see Hansard 5th Series vol, 21

Canada and the West Indian colonies was concluded early in July 1912. Canada undertook, pending legislative ratification, to abolish the 20 per cent concession and to extend preference to certain products of the West Indies other than sugar; in return, the West Indian colonies conceded a rate of preference for certain Dominion produce of four-fifths of their respective general tariffs. Publication of the agreement was delayed so as to limit the time for agitation from the Canadian refiners, and in view of the proposed preference for additional products, possibly also the Ontario and British Columbia fruit growers. The West Indian Committee was divided over the issue; at least one prominent member pressed the Colonial Office to disallow the agreement on the grounds of possible United States retaliation. This view was not, however, widely held, and the Colonial Office pointed out that it carried little weight since the tendency of United States tariff legislation was in any case to shut out one West Indian product after another in furtherance of the policy of preference to Cuba and Puerto Rico. The Colonial Office, which in any case approved of the arrangement, believed also that it would be difficult to withhold sanction of it on account of the unanimous unofficial and commercial opinion in favour of it, '...and of no other possible solution of the sugar question'.(1) Since the initial unofficial conference in Barbados in 1908, the Colonial Office had stressed that expressions in favour of reciprocity should come from the community at large and not from the colonial governments. This condition was clearly fulfilled in the case of the Canadian agreement, and irrespective of the feeling of the British Government that closer trade relations were desirable, it is clear that concern was felt in London at the tendency of certain groups within the colonies, on any occasion when their commercial wishes were

1. 318/329/15570 Sturge to Harcourt, 19 May 1912.
See also minute on Joseph Sturge's letter by H.R.C., 21 May 1912

opposed, to advance the theory that they would be better off under the progressive rule of the United States.

Recommended and approved by a Conference held in Ottawa in 1912, the reciprocal agreement finally came into force on 2nd June 1913.(1) Commercially, from the viewpoint of the West Indies, the agreement primarily benefited the sugar producers, though at Ottawa much stress was laid on the advantages to be derived from improved communications. It was in this direction that the non-sugar-producing islands looked mainly for their advantage. St. Vincent, for example, unlike most of the islands, was without a New York connection and consequently encountered difficulties in obtaining flour, on the other hand the Colony exported to the Dominion only small quantities of sugar, her principal exports of cotton and arrowroot going direct to the United Kingdom. In these circumstances St. Vincent adhered to the agreement, largely to obtain Canadian flour more cheaply, but also as H. R. Cowell, an official in the West India Department, minuted in July 1912 because the Canadian agreement was '...justified by the overwhelming necessity of the West Indian sugar industry, and the adhesion of St. Vincent, the Colony grows little sugar, may be conceded for the sake of uniformity'.(2) Grenada, which had nothing to gain, stood out from the negotiations until April 1913 when the Legislative Council voted 11 to 3 in favour of inclusion, no doubt seeking the improved steamer service.(3)

1. 318/331/18987 C.O. to Board of Trade, 2 June 1913.
C.O. to Governor of Newfoundland, 10 June 1913
2. 321/269/24866 Sadler to Harcourt, 17 July 1912.
See also minutes on this despatch
3. 321/271/13214 Sadler to Harcourt, 17 April 1913

Among the advantages which it was hoped would stem from the agreement of 1912 was the development of a fruit trade between the West Indian colonies and Canada. The new Commissioner of Agriculture, Francis Watts, was anxious to promote such a trade. The United Kingdom market, he believed, was limited on account of distance. However, he noted that the Barbados export of bananas to the United Kingdom had grown from 18 bunches in 1902 to 35,452 bunches in 1905 before collapsing for want of transport facilities. He argued from this that much could be achieved, not only by Barbados, but also Grenada, St. Vincent, Dominica and St. Lucia by way of export of bananas to Canada. He felt that other fruits, such as the limes of Dominica, and to a lesser extent those of Montserrat, as well as grapefruit, pineapples and oranges might be shipped profitably to Canada. The increasing number of tariffs in force in the United States would be a further encouragement in this direction.(1) In February 1911 Watts forwarded recommendations on these lines to the Colonial Office, but officials felt, and the Commissioner admitted, that the development of such a trade depended not only upon Canada removing, as she had done, fruit imports other than from the West Indies from the free list, but also upon the goodwill of the large companies, notably the United Fruit Company, which controlled fruit imports into Canada. Such imports, even where they were initially the produce of the West Indies, were almost invariably made by way of the United States. Where a direct trade did exist as in the case of the United Fruit Co.'s trade from Jamaica there was dissatisfaction with the arrangement. However, the prospect for development of a fruit trade was looked upon as an important feature of the agreement by those West Indian colonies which stood to benefit little in any other respect. Notwithstanding the hopes that an extension of trade in other products

1. *W.I.B.*, vol XI, 1910-11, F. Watts, 'Observation on the Fruit Trade'

might be facilitated, the 1913 reciprocal trade agreement between Canada and the West Indian colonies was essentially a sugar agreement aimed at assisting the West Indies' principal export which again found itself threatened by unremunerative markets. The West Indian colonies sought to retain on a permanent basis the benefits conceded by Canada since 1897. As Cowell minuted in 1911 the sugar islands '...must under present conditions get their sugar to Canada, the United States market not being open to them'.(1)

Until the outbreak of the War in 1914 West Indian products, other than sugar and fruit, enjoyed rather more secure conditions in the matter of markets. Among exports of St. Vincent, Montserrat, Nevis, Anguilla and Carriacou, cotton grew to a position of considerable importance. Although less important it also featured in the exports of a number of other islands, chiefly Barbados and St. Kitts. Almost all was shipped to the United Kingdom; until 1917 by the British Cotton Growers' Association and thereafter also by the Fine Spinners' Association.(2) St. Vincent's arrowroot, except where converted to farine, went likewise to the United Kingdom but despite the efforts of the Island's Arrowroot Growers' Association it suffered periodic depressions as a result of over-production. Grenada's cacao also was similarly exported largely to the United Kingdom and considerable hardship resulted during the War when the Imperial Government limited the import of this crop, and much had to be sent to the less advantageous New York market. The lime exports of Dominica went almost entirely to the United States carried by the Quebec Steamship Co.; thereafter an indeterminate quantity was re-exported to Canada.

1. 321/257/30173 Cameron to C.O., 13 Sept. 1911 .
See also minute by H.R.C., 14 Sept, 1911
2. 318/344/5829 B.C.G.A. to C.O. 29 Jan. 1917

The outbreak of war was to disrupt both the established export patterns and the new agreement with Canada. With regard to the latter, returns reaching the Colonial Office after 1914 showed increases in the trade with Canada(1) but it was impossible to establish the real value of the preference on account of the abnormal conditions. It is, however, clear from returns provided by Barbados in 1915 that the Canadian refiners were justified in their claim that the price which they paid for West Indian sugar was only fractionally lower than that at which they could obtain non-preferred sugar. Though the figures are not available it seems probable that Barbados, likewise, was receiving only a slight advantage by purchasing Canadian rather than United States flour.(2) The difficult conditions created by the War, particularly the limited availability of freight, but also the measures adopted by the Imperial Government to ensure adequate supplies of sugar and cotton, make it more practical to follow the course of West Indian exports by products rather than by markets.

The usual supplies of beet sugar to the United Kingdom ceased or became unreliable upon the outbreak of War and a special body, the Royal Commission for Sugar Supply, was established to purchase both beet and cane.(3)The threat of shortage led in 1915 to a prohibition on the export of West Indian sugar except to the United Kingdom or to British possessions. The immediate consequence of the War, however, was a rapid rise in the market value of sugar. This particularly affected the Canadian

1. 321/285/27915 Minute by G. Plant, 17 June 1915.
See also 297/38030 De Freitas (acting Admin. St. Vincent) to C.O., 25 June 1917;
308/11948 Haddon-Smith to Milner 22 Jan. 1920;
312/33694 Admin. St. Vincent to Milner, 8 June 1920;
28/294/56601 O'Brien to Long, 14 Oct. 1918;
111/612/39128 Collet to Long, 6 July 1917
2. 28/286/27911 Probyn to Bonar Law, 28 May 1915
3. See Appendix E

market and the Dominion became still more attractive to West Indian producers. In September 1914 Egerton told the Colonial Office that the sale price of sugar f.o.b. Georgetown for Canada and the United States was considerably above the price given by the United Kingdom Government. Such was the increased value of sugar in overseas markets that before the close of 1914, Egerton was obliged to make provision for the retention of a fixed percentage within the Colony for local consumption. Initially this was fixed at 10 per cent.(1) This retention at first caused the Royal Commission for Sugar Supply some concern. However, in January 1916, the Commission frankly admitted that the West Indies could obtain far better prices in the Canadian market, while they themselves could purchase Cuban sugar more cheaply.(2) This admission did not prevent some feeling that the Commission did not deal equitably with the West Indian producer, and instances were cited by merchants and planters of free auctions in which United Kingdom sugar and confectionery manufacturers, bidding against each other for West Indian crystals offered prices far in excess of the Commission's level. Even damaged crystals resold by the underwriters were said in 1916 to enjoy a price about two shillings per cwt above the Commission's level for sound sugar.(3) When these matters were placed confidentially before the West Indian Committee, however, they expressed the view that in general the Commissioners dealt fairly with the West Indian producer, and that the United Kingdom market was simply

1. 111/596/35629 Egerton to Harcourt, 29 Aug. 19
2. 318/340/3228 Royal Commission for Sugar Supply to C.O., 20 Jan. 1916
3. 318/341/13622 Crum Ewing to Steel Maitland, 14 March 1916.
See also Steel Maitland to Crum Ewing, 20 March 1916 and
C.O. to West India Committee, 30 March 1916 and W.I.C. to C.O.
31 March 1916

not an advantageous one for the sugar colonies.(1)

The problem for the West Indian producer occurred when demand in the Canadian market, particularly for muscavado sugar, gradually declined while export to the United States was still prohibited. The Royal Commission was not prepared to allow export to the United States which the sugar interest requested simply on the grounds of lack of demand in the Dominion, though they were prepared to sanction it if freight to Canada was not available, providing the refiners gave an undertaking that the produce was for consumption in the United States or Canada.(2) An exception was made in the case of Jamaica towards the middle of 1916, presumably because this Colony had no direct communication with Canada, but a similar concession was refused to British Guiana. In September 1916 the right to export to the United States, in the absence of freight facilities and upon guarantee from the American refiners not to sell outside the United States except to the Royal Commission, was extended to the Leewards, Barbados, British Guiana and Grenada.(3) The exclusion of St. Lucia from this provision was presumably on account of satisfactory freight conditions, or adequate returns in the Canadian market, preventing any agitation on behalf of that Colony for such freedom. Such was the situation in respect of West Indian sugar exports until the close of the war. During these years the crop experienced boom prices; following the 1914 slump from 17s. 0d. to 12s. 3d. per cwt locally, the prices offered for crystals rose progressively from late 1914 to 43s. 0d. in 1916 and by the end of the War reached

1. In early 1914 when sugar prices were depressed, standing at about 12s. 3d. per cwt for factory crystals, and before the substantial improvements in the prices offered in Canada and the United States the colonies shipped only some 43,000 tons to the United Kingdom
2. 318/341/19657 Royal Commission for Sugar Supply to C.O., 26 April 1916
3. 318/341/44647 Royal Commission for Sugar Supply to C.O., 8 Sept. 1916. See also C.O. to Messrs Czarnikow, 19 Sept. 1916

60s. Od.(1)

The experience of the cotton industry was similar to that of sugar, though in its case the increase in prices did not occur until the later years of the War. During 1915 the industry was scarcely remunerative; St. Vincent and Anguilla, in particular, were seriously affected.(2) Despite arrangements for maintaining a minimum price for West Indian sea island cotton of 14d. per pound the situation was far from encouraging. It improved slightly in January 1916 when the minimum price to be paid by the Fine Spinners' and Doublers' Association, practically the only purchasers of West Indian cotton from the British Growers Association, was reconfirmed. Then in 1917 the position improved dramatically. The year began well for the West Indies when the British Cotton Growers' Association came into conflict with their customers over the prices at which cotton was purchased and resold. As a result of this the Fine Spinners commenced direct purchases in competition with their former suppliers. In addition the United States sea island crop failed, and the small quantity which was produced was retained by that country following her entry into the War. The Imperial Government consequently took steps to purchase the West Indian output.(3) The limited production of sea island, the shortage of the Carolina crop, and the confusion resulting from two separate buyers in the West Indies led the Government to commandeer the whole of the cotton crop. Export was prohibited up to 31st August 1918 except to the United Kingdom. Prices under this arrangement varied according to quality from 42d. per lb to 32d. per lb.

1. 318/369/42021 Department of Overseas Trade to C.O., 20 Aug. 1921
2. 318/334/11229 Watts to C.O., 17 Feb. 1915.
See also 13775 Watts to C.O., 5 March 1915
3. 318/342/47144 Watts to C.O., 1 Sept. 1917.
See also minutes on this despatch

In 1918 prices were slightly raised but owing to the cessation of hostilities the crop was not required, and was disposed of to a number of spinning firms.

The prices for cacao, the Grenada staple, behaved in a similar fashion. From a price of 72s. per cwt in 1913 cacao fell to only 58s. in 1914. However, by the close of the first year of War it had risen to 82s. and though not as remunerative in terms of return per acre as sugar, it closed the War at a profitable 90s. per cwt.(1) Despite these favourable prices, the Colony experienced some difficulty with regard to markets. Only a small quantity of the crop was exported to Canada and the new reciprocity arrangement benefited the Island only to the extent of an improved steamer service and the opening of a branch of the Royal Bank of Canada. In 1915 prices were abnormally good in New York and of the Colony's annual output of close to 80,000 bags about three-quarters was sold in that market. Grenada's dependence on the American market was increased between 1915 and 1918 when the United Kingdom placed an embargo on cacao imports. Although during these years prices in New York remained good, Grenada undoubtedly suffered to some extent from the loss of her traditional cacao export market in the United Kingdom.

In addition to cotton the arrowroot industry was of great importance to St. Vincent. The market for this commodity was almost exclusively in the United Kingdom. Prior to the War fluctuations in prices, largely caused by over-production, had led to the formation of the St. Vincent Arrowroot Growers' Association. Despite this, at the start of the War the industry was, in common with most others, depressed. In early 1916 the position appeared critical. Although a good harvest was anticipated

1. 318/369/42031 Department of Overseas Trade to C.O., 20 Aug. 1920

in the coming season, large quantities of the previous crop remained unsold. The Administrator reported in January 1916 that about 11,000 barrels to the value of about £20,000 were unsold on the London market,(1) and he requested Government assistance, perhaps in the form of Admiralty purchase, to remedy the situation. Although matters subsequently improved the relatively depressed condition of the United Kingdom arrowroot market throughout 1916 stimulated increased exports to Canada. Under the reciprocal agreement of 1912, the value of the Island's total exports to Canada had increased by 1915 only to £3,595 from the 1913 figure of £1,107. However, in 1916 they rose abruptly to £10,801 with increased arrowroot shipments providing a major contribution. Recovery of the United Kingdom market after 1916 prevented the trend continuing and in 1918 St. Vincent's exports to Canada stood at £11,751. This figure was less than half the value of exports from the Island to the other British West Indies and only a fraction of the £144,618 value of exports to the United Kingdom.(2)

The limes and citrus products, which were the principal export of Dominica, were not greatly affected by the War and continued to go almost exclusively to the United States. The only notable event which occurred during the war years was an embargo placed on citrus fruits by the United States between April and September 1918. This seriously curtailed the export of fruit from Dominica which declined from 41,243 barrels in 1917 to only 7,760 barrels the following year. Raw juice was also somewhat affected, but the largest shipments, those of concentrated juice did not commence until September and thus escaped without

1. 321/297/38030 De Freitas (acting Admin. St. Vincent) to C.O.
25 June 1917
2. 263 no. 36 St. Vincent Sessional Papers 1913-1918.
1918 Report on operation of Reciprocal agreement with Canada

reduction.

As a consequence of the good prices obtained for the principal products of the colonies there was little interest during the War in minor industries. The attitude in British Guiana, summed up in the Customs Report of 1916, accurately reflects a state of affairs common to the other colonies; N. Darnell Davis, the Comptroller of Customs, wrote: 'I fear so long as sugar continues to sell at the satisfactory price it does today and so long as trading in rice with the West Indian islands continues on its present remunerative scale, so long will traders refrain from building up a trade in minor industries.'⁽¹⁾ The implication of the Comptroller's comment, that in different circumstances merchants would be more inclined to develop alternative or minor cultivations, is difficult to accept. There is little evidence of efforts to promote minor industries even in less advantageous times, but no doubt the prices commanded during the War for sugar products reinforced the conservatism of agriculturalists.

The immediate post-War years were dominated by the question of Imperial Preference and of the further encouragement of the West Indian Canadian trade, and by the deep depression in primary product prices. The United Kingdom Finance Act of 1919 provided for a general reduction of one-sixth from the full rate of tariff for Empire products. This Act preceded the general collapse of prices for West Indian products, though even before it concern was being expressed in respect of certain commodities. In May 1919 the Commissioner of Agriculture, Dr. Watts, informed Viscount Milner, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, that great apprehension was felt with regard to sea island cotton prices in the

1. 111/612/39128 Collet to Long, 6 July 1917

near future. Arrowroot fell quickly in price and in March 1920, George Haddon-Smith, the Governor of the Windwards, reported that the steady demand on the London market had ceased and consequently almost the entire 1919 crop remained unsold.(1) Sugar alone remained profitable throughout 1920, but the inevitable collapse in prices occurred the following year. In Grenada, the local price for cacao fell between April 1920 and March 1921 from \$26 per 110 lbs to \$7; most of the previous year's crop had been purchased locally and exported to the United States by Trinidad merchants attempting to balance their own imports. The lime industry of Dominica suffered a similar fate during the latter part of 1920.

In the course of the war, the United States had developed considerably not only as a market but also as a supplier of the West Indies,(2) and its increased commercial influence in the area was a cause of concern to the Colonial Office. Officials doubtless hoped that increased preference in the Canadian market would provide an effective means of counteracting this tendency. In fact, however, the limited tariff advantages offered after 1919 by the United Kingdom combined with disadvantageous exchange rates for United States currency made the market of the United Kingdom itself temporarily more attractive than that of the United States. Nor was it the United States alone that suffered. In March 1920 Wilfred Collet reported that most of British Guiana's sugar output was shipped to the United Kingdom rather than to Canada. In fact British Guiana was not particularly satisfied with the prices obtained in the United Kingdom either, and in August 1920 Collet complained

1. 321/312/13747 Haddon-Smith to Milner, 14 Feb. 1920
2. 318/367/12953 Draft memorandum by Churchill on the West Indian Steamship Service, 10 June 1921.
See also Treasury to C.O., 16 March 1921

that Cuban sugar re-exported from the United States was obtaining better prices in the United Kingdom than West Indian sugar. In general, however, the colonies welcomed the preference, though as had been the case with Canada prior to 1913, they were concerned that the policy lacked the status of a confirmed agreement for a specific period of years; they also hoped that the level of preference could be increased. The latter possibility was to have been discussed at a conference in Trinidad which would have been attended by Edward Wood, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary, in 1922, but owing to the mistaken impression among the colonies that federation was to be discussed, most refused to send representatives and the conference was abandoned.(1) In November 1921, the Colonial Office took the initiative and pressed the Board of Trade over the question of increasing the preference. The reason for this was the possibility of the United States' preference to Cuba which, in the view of the West India Department, might so stimulate the Cuban industry that labour would be drawn away from the British colonies. The Board of Trade was unsympathetic, fearing that colonies other than the West Indies would agitate for similar treatment and discounting the Colonial Office argument that Cuba would attract colonial labour. Nevertheless in January 1922 Wood made it clear that the Imperial Government would accede to the wishes of the colonies in one respect by confirming the preference for a period of ten years. The newly appointed Secretary of State, Winston Churchill, confirmed this in the House of Commons on 23rd February 1922 and he stated that the object of the British Government was to encourage further capital into the West Indies and thus stimulate production.(2) In fact the Government fell from power before the agreement was implemented and it was not until 1925

1. 318/365/62391 Merewether to Churchill, 15 Dec. 1921

2. Hansard 5th Series vol. 150 2150-2151

that the 10-year arrangement was brought into force. Algernon Aspinall, the Secretary of the West India Committee, protested in March 1922 that the one-sixth remission of duty was inadequate to compete with Cuban sugar, which enjoyed a substantial preference in the United States market, and of which considerable quantities were available for re-export.(1)

The continued encouragement of trade between Canada and the West Indies, which led to a Trade Conference in Ottawa at the end of May 1920, was strongly favoured by the Colonial Office. The early overtures came from Canada and even before the end of the War it is clear that individuals saw great possibilities in Canadian - West Indian trade. They argued that these possibilities had not previously been realised because preferences were too low, steamship freight had been slow and it had been more expensive to ship to Montreal and Toronto through Halifax than by way of New York and Boston. If a better service was provided and Halifax was developed so as to serve Montreal and Toronto the trade was felt to hold great promise.(2) Following a visit to the West Indies by the Canadian Under-Secretary for External Affairs, Mr. Keefer, the Colonial Office circularised the Colonies on 4th February 1920 stating that the Imperial Government had no objection to negotiations aimed at closer trade relations and increased preference.(3) An increase in trade with Canada provided a means by which the Colonial Office believed the growth of United States commercial influence in the West Indies

1. 318/373/12435 Aspinall to C.O., 14 March 1922
2. 318/347/7295 A. Drummond to Long 18 Jan. 1918.
See also A. Drummond to Long, 10 July 1918
enc. with first letter a copy of the *Monetary Times* of 4 Jan. 1918
3. 318/360/8089 C.O. circular despatch 13 Feb. 1920.
See also telegraph circular which preceded despatch, 4 Feb. 1920

might be curtailed. However, Canada had lost ground during the War. Lower cargo rates, reduced war risk insurance, and above all, the availability of freight to the United States had made this market more attractive for West Indian exports. Haddon-Smith, the Governor of the Windwards, wrote in March 1920 that there had been a great increase of trade with the United States and as a result that country was 'looked upon as the natural market for these islands'. (1) The increase in imports from the United States was perhaps more significant. The Commissioner of Overseas Trade in Trinidad stated that by 1918 Barbados and British Guiana obtained nearly 40 per cent of their imports from that country. Of manufactured goods, the United States imports comprised about two-thirds, whereas prior to the War the United Kingdom had shared equally in this trade. (2) Colonial Office concern over United States commercial expansion in the Caribbean, reinforced by general considerations of economic development, shaped its policy into one of seeking to channel West Indian trade towards the United Kingdom and Canada by means of increased Imperial preference and improved steamship communications. The anxiety felt at the Colonial Office was apparent in the evidence of R. A. Wiseman, an official in the West India Department, to the Imperial Shipping Committee in October 1920. He described the growing economic influence of the United States as a result of which it was out of the question to leave the matter of subsidised steamship communications to Canada alone. (3) In a memorandum to the Cabinet in June 1921 Churchill wrote that '...the West Indies at present strongly desire to remain within the British Empire but they can hardly maintain

1. 318/353/13811 Haddon-Smith to Milner, 1 March 1920
2. 318/369/42021 Department of Overseas Trade to C.O., 20 Aug. 1921
3. 318/359/52457 Treasury to C.O., 23 Oct. 1920 .
Memorandum by Wiseman, forwarded to Treasury, 18 Nov. 1920

this attitude if they have become reduced to a position of profound economic dependence upon the United States.'(1)

The Ottawa Conference which opened on 31st May 1920 was concerned both with improved communications and with new preferential arrangements. With regard to the latter, the old system of scheduled lists of preferred produce was rejected in favour of a general preference, with certain articles receiving a specific rather than an *ad valorem* preference. Such articles were sugar, cacao and coffee and in the case of Canadian exports, flour, alcoholic beverages and tobacco. After some negotiation Canada agreed to give a 50 per cent general preference, while among the West Indian colonies Barbados and British Guiana gave 50 per cent and the Leewards and Windwards 33 per cent. In this form, despite considerable opposition in Canada, the agreement was signed on 15th June 1920 and came into force on 10th May the following year. In compliance with Colonial Office directions the West Indian colonies extended the preference granted to Canada to the rest of the Empire, though until the Colonial Office requested the withdrawal of the condition, the Leewards made the extension provisional upon reciprocity. Canada, however, did not extend its preference to the Empire as a whole, and the Colonial Office, though regretting this, did not press the matter.

The period under review thus ended as it had begun. The full weight of agricultural depression was relieved only by the optimism of a new trade agreement with an old market. Yet even the Canadian arrangement had little that was novel in it, representing as it did a further effort by the Dominion to wrest from the United States a more substantial share of West Indian trade. Throughout, the United States with its good freight

1. 318/367/12953 Churchill memorandum on West Indian Steamship service, 10 June 1921

connections and frequently advantageous prices was able to attract West Indian exports almost at will. Unfortunately this market proved totally unreliable since the United States was ready to penalise the produce of the colonies whenever it suited her purposes. The fickle nature of American policy contributed very considerably to the West Indian failure to establish long-term trade links and secure markets. The nature of West Indian products caused further difficulties. Sugar was a valuable export, but it was also the sport of tariffs, and notwithstanding the recommendations of the 1897 Commission the West Indies collectively continued to rely upon it. The question which therefore arises is whether, had the West Indies diversified, their position would have been more secure. Although a conclusive answer to this is impossible a number of factors do suggest that a substantial improvement would not have resulted. A number of islands did swing away from sugar, though instead of diversifying in terms of the range of cultivations they tended to replace sugar by a single commodity upon which they relied to an almost equal degree. These alternative products encountered difficulties, sometimes of a lesser degree, but of an essentially similar nature to those which beset sugar. Taking arrowroot as an example, over-production was the problem and a wider variety of cultivations, whatever the difficulties of growing them, was the only answer. An added complication in this case was almost total dependence on the United Kingdom market. The prices obtained by all West Indian produce fell steeply in 1914 and although they recovered during the War, this slump and that of 1920 does not suggest that wider diversification would in fact have released the West Indies from the serious financial effects of periodic declines in the general price of agricultural products.

Much of this chapter is understandably concerned with Canada. Before

the 1913 agreement, Lucas minuted his opinion that the future of the West Indies lay with the Dominion. However, Canada never accepted a very wide range of products, which as well as discouraging diversification meant that except for sugar most West Indian exports found better markets elsewhere. In some respects this eased the situation for had Canada encouraged a greater range of goods, very substantial improvement would have been required in the transport facilities, so as to make freight to Montreal cheaper by way of Halifax than Boston. This could not have been achieved without substantially increasing the already considerable subsidy paid by Canada for the steamship service to the West Indies and the related inter-colonial service. Nevertheless at the close of the period under consideration the Canadian market was becoming wider and the question of freight facilities was receiving attention. Diversification directed towards the United Kingdom market would have created even more acute problems. Only by the offer of very inflated subsidies would steamship companies have been tempted to provide the necessary services. Many commodities demanded entirely different treatment and handling, some such as citrus and non-citrus fruits, could not even be shipped in the same vessel. Apart from increasing the expense of subsidies this would have aggravated the constant protest of the steamship companies that individual islands could not provide sufficient cargo. Taking these considerations into account improved communication with Canada appears in retrospect as a more pressing need than does diversification. Neither would have saved the West Indies from depression in 1920, but long-term security could only be achieved by a general swing away from the United States. In such circumstances and in view of the formidable freight difficulties associated with the United Kingdom, the colonies' future appeared to rest not only with Canada, as Lucas had commented, but with the produce that Canada could and would accept.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

'In conclusion it must be stated that an agricultural scheme, like most things, to ensure success requires financial support and until such is forthcoming the above defects cannot be rectified and consequently the attempt of agricultural instruction in primary schools as a means of benefiting an agricultural colony is doomed to failure.'(1) This depressing statement closed the equally depressing report on St. Vincent elementary schools for the year 1921. It briefly sums up two decades of frustrated efforts to improve agricultural education in the West Indies, efforts frustrated largely through lack of finance. The value of an education in practical agriculture, particularly with regard to the development of peasant proprietaries, was obvious. For instance, the work of the Agricultural Instructors would have been far easier had their assistance been required only to guide settlers already well versed in the rudiments of modern methods of cultivation. It also appears likely that peasants with a sound grounding in agriculture would have been more easily encouraged to undertake individual work as settlers upon their own holdings, rather than as estate labourers where their success as agricultural workers depended upon the constant skilled supervision of foremen. During the earlier years of the period under consideration the Imperial Department of Agriculture at least, recognised the value of training pupils to fill the role of peasant proprietors. In 1899 Nicholls, speaking at the Agricultural Conference, stressed the need in the Leewards for improved agricultural instruction

1. 263 no. 40 St. Vincent Sessional Papers. Report of Inspector of Schools

as a prerequisite of successful peasant settlement. The older men he felt could not be instructed but, he concluded '...the younger generation can be got at and taught to make the most advantage of their holdings.' In his Presidential Address to the Conference three years later Morris indicated the value which he felt would be derived from the agricultural schools which had been established at St. Vincent, Dominica and St. Lucia, and he stated that the seventy pupils at the three institutions were selected wherever possible from the sons of small proprietors. Morris spoke again in a similar vein at the 1907 Conference at Jamaica, though he did so against a background of little progress in the field of agricultural education. His general disillusionment with the St. Vincent Land Settlement Scheme, where he felt the land was inefficiently worked, lent a new urgency to his words: '...as I have already pointed out, not only in the West Indies, but in all agricultural communities, the need of the hour is the education of the rising generation in the knowledge of how to obtain from the soil those products for which there is a good demand in the markets of the world.'⁽¹⁾ As the years passed and the land settlement scheme did not prove the success that was hoped, educational efforts turned more towards providing knowledgeable estate workers and, at higher levels, foremen and overseers.

Before considering the efforts which were made to provide specialised agricultural education some indications of the difficulties attendant upon general education in the West Indies appear necessary. The elementary or primary schools were the mainstay of the system, since only

1. *W.I.B.*, vol. I, 1900 H.A. Nicholls, 'Agricultural Development in the Leewards'.
Vol. III, 1902 Presidential Address of Morris at the Conference of 1902.
Vol. VIII, 1907 Presidential Address of Morris at the Conference of 1907

a limited number of children progressed beyond this stage. Throughout the West Indies only a very small proportion of these primary schools were run directly by the Government; most were privately administered but financially dependent upon Government grants determined by attendance figures. The majority of these schools were denominational, and they appear to have functioned at least as efficiently as Government schools. Perhaps more so, for in June 1898 Sir Alfred Moloney, the Governor of the Windwards, informed Chamberlain that the aided schools in St. Lucia were less expensive and more efficient than the Government schools; he therefore proposed to transfer the latter to the Anglican Church.(1) The number of Government schools was small; some colonies had none. Grenada had the most, possessing ten in 1896 and eleven by 1921.(2) There were no serious educational drawbacks in the denominational system, certainly not in the sphere of agricultural teaching, though Olivier noted in 1899 that the St. Lucia schools were almost entirely administered by the Roman Catholic church, using French teachers, which ran contrary to the general policy of Anglicising the Island. However, even in this respect, the Governor of the Windwards, commenting twenty years later, felt that the benefits outweighed the disadvantages. He wrote, '...personally I am convinced that these islands at present stand in need of the denominational system; there is only one thing that can form the moral character of the people here and that is religion'.(3) Only over the considerable problem of obtaining teachers was the denominational character of the schools of some disadvantage. In 1917 the St. Vincent Inspector of Schools complained that religion

1. 321/184/14008 Moloney to Chamberlain, 6 June 1898
2. 104 nos. 25 and 41 Grenada Sessional Papers. Report of Inspector of Schools
3. 321/301/5695 Haddon-Smith to Long, 31 Dec. 1918
see also 321/184/14008 Moloney to Chamberlain 6 June 1898

played too important a part in the choice of teachers in the aided schools. However, he weakened the force of his argument by at the same time describing the difficulty of persuading teachers to leave their own immediate area and take posts elsewhere, which was certainly as important a factor in the shortage of teachers. The lack of teachers was undoubtedly the most pressing problem during this period, and the alternations of educational codes, and the passing of new ordinances did nothing to remedy it. The difficulty arose, as did so many in the West Indies, because of the limited funds available. The larger colonies suffered equally with the smaller islands over the inadequacy of grants for education. In a circular despatch to the West Indian Colonies of 11th May 1899 Chamberlain indicated that the vote for education should not be increased, though he suggested that a larger proportion might be devoted to 'industrial agricultural teaching'.(1)

The financial limitations to which education was subject in the West Indies is illustrated by the experience of Barbados and British Guiana. In 1899 the latter Colony voted an annual grant in aid of about £21,465 to support 210 schools with an average attendance of 16,165.(2) It was only with difficulty that financial resources were made available to bring the number of schools up to 223 by 1908 and the average attendance to 18,457. In 1909 the Colonial Office reluctantly allowed an increase of seven per cent in the vote following sustained pressure from school managers and teachers, and also from elected members in the Combined Court. Despite subsequent increases in average attendance and in the number of schools the vote did not rise significantly again until the

1. For a typical reaction see:
111/513/23276 Sendall to Chamberlain, 17 Aug. 1899.
See also minutes on this despatch
2. 114 no. 78 British Guiana A(dministration) R(eport)
Report of the Treasury

end of the period.(1) When the 1909 provision for an increased grant was made in British Guiana, Hodgson expressed the view that the finances of the Colony could not absorb a continued increase in the expenditure on education. In the same year Gilbert Carter, the Governor of Barbados, expressed a similar view in respect of his Colony when referring to the recommendations of an education committee set up by his predecessor, Knaggs. He commented briefly that '...it is hardly probable that a sum of nearly £8,000 can at present be added to the expenditure on education'.(2) It is significant that prominent among the recommendations of the committee were a new salary scale for both primary and secondary school teachers and the development of agricultural education.

The shortage of teachers was especially pressing in the small islands, though the evidence suggests that it was less acute in the Leewards than in the Windwards. The morale of teachers in both colonies was generally low. Official reports conveyed the same depressing message year after year. In 1913 Skinner, the Inspector of Schools, recommended an additional vote in St. Kitts as remuneration for pupil teachers. He wrote, '...if the Presidency can afford to increase the grant by £300 it may go some way to relieve the pressure and allay discontent.'

(3) He emphasised that his remark applied equally to Antigua. Both his predecessors and his successor made essentially similar recommendations with equally little result. The Dependency of Barbuda was in an even worse position for it proved quite impossible to obtain an assistant in such a small and isolated island for an annual salary of only

1. 114 no. 182 British Guiana A.R. Report of the Treasury
2. 28/273/38905 Carter to Crewe, 15 Nov. 1909
enc. Copies of the Report of the Education Committee
3. 152/335/17819 Hesketh Bell (acting Governor) to Harcourt, 1 May 1913. enc. Report of the Inspector of schools on the primary schools in Antigua and St. Kitts

£10. The experience of the Windwards was similar. The salaries of teachers remained poor throughout and the availability of men of sufficient education suffered in consequence. In 1899, when reviewing the dismal condition of St. Vincent education in the aftermath of the hurricane Vernon minuted that inefficiency was normal owing to the lack of funds to provide apparatus and adequate pay for teachers and pupil teachers.(1) The situation in the Island never improved, though the difficulties were obvious and were from time to time examined with a view to making improvements. As late as 1921 great difficulty was experienced in replacing three teachers who had left St. Vincent in the same year. The constant shortage of teachers common to all the islands in this group led in many cases to the employment of a poor class of teacher. Referring to the pupil teachers in St. Lucia, the Inspector of Schools wrote in 1913 that '...the only excuse for the continuance (sic) of some of them on the staff is that it is really Hobson's choice, there is no one else any better to be had.'(2) For just a brief period in Grenada the situation appears to have improved. The report for 1900 suggested that there were teachers who were finding it difficult to obtain posts. However, this report is unique and almost immediately the Island found it necessary to fall back on the usual policy of endeavouring to improve teaching standards and encourage pupil teachers. These pupil teachers were of the utmost importance, as upon their numbers and ability rested the future of education. Unfortunately, it appears that in more than one colony the rather complex grant and bonus system led to lower pay for assistant teachers as the schools became

1. 321/200/33149 Moloney to Chamberlain, 24 Sept. 1900.
See also minute by Vernon, 19 Oct. 1900
enc. Drayton to Moloney, 15 Sept. 1900 with report of Inspector
of Schools in St. Vincent for 1899
2. 256 no. 24 St. Lucia Sessional Papers. Report of the
Inspector of Schools

more efficient; as Haddon-Smith complained in November 1917, this resulted in '...a dearth of good assistants capable one day of becoming head teachers'.(1) The shortage of good and particularly of enthusiastic teachers was to reflect seriously upon efforts to establish agricultural education as a regular subject.

A rather different problem arose over the question of the attendance of children at school. In a number of colonies compulsory education either existed or was introduced during this period in an effort to increase the number of children actually attending school compared with the number on the rolls. There were several reasons for children failing to attend school, the most prominent of course being the use of child labour both on estates and peasant holdings. In this context it should be pointed out, however, that attendance statistics are not entirely reliable since many parents sent their children to school only for the afternoon and such pupils were not recorded. Nevertheless as late as 1921 when Merewether, the Governor of the Leewards, on Colonial Office instructions examined the whole question of attendance at schools in his Colony, he became firmly convinced that the employment of children was the main factor in the decline in attendance which was then occurring. In support of his conclusions Merewether directed Colonial Office attention towards the failure of a scheme put forward in 1919 by which it had been intended to raise the level of fines imposed for contravening the compulsory education ordinance. Planter opinion in the Leewards had strongly disapproved of such a plan. In St. Kitts the planters stated they would oppose any measures which reduced their use of child labour; in Antigua a member of the Executive Council, commenting on a suggestion that the minimum age for compulsory education

1. 321/296/59925 Haddon-Smith to Long, 5 Nov. 1917

should be raised to twelve, observed '...that if that were done the planters might as well close their estates'.(1) In this matter at least planter and peasant found themselves in agreement, for the establishment of peasant proprietaries led to no increase in school attendance. In 1920 when the average attendance in the St. Vincent Grenadines was forty eight per cent, that in Union Island was only thirty-three per cent;(2) the Inspector of Schools wrote that '...it would seem that the establishment of a peasant proprietorship of small holdings affects school life adversely and perhaps this is to be expected as the children's labour is utilised in various ways on the holdings of their parents.'(3)

Even where the difficulty of persuading or forcing parents to send their children to school was resolved, other problems remained. For example, efforts to enforce the payment of school fees immediately produced a marked fall in attendance. In many instances, no doubt, this was simply a reluctance to provide the sum demanded, but not in every case. It is apparent that in times of hardship even parents favourably disposed towards schooling chose to absent their children rather than send them poorly clothed or ill-equipped.(4) In addition to these commonly shared problems were others peculiar to individual colonies. British Guiana provides the best, though by no means the only, example. For instance, despite the legal requirement in the latter Colony that any estate with more than thirty children of school

1. 152/377/32315 Merewether to Churchill, 2 June 1921
2. All attendance figures are given as percentages of the total number of pupils on the roll
3. 263 no. 40 St. Vincent Sessional Paper. Report of the Inspector of Schools
4. 321/227/7487 Llewelyn to Lyttelton, 21 Feb. 1905
enc. Report on primary schools

age was bound to maintain a school, only a low proportion of East Indian children attended.(1) The reason was the exclusion from the compulsory education ordinance together with other legislation of East Indians who had been in the Colony less than ten years, in order to allow time for adaptation to their new environment. Again in British Guiana the absence of roads or tracks made enforcement of attendance totally unreasonable in the less accessible districts. Very occasionally, as with Grenada in 1900, the general picture of gloom is lifted. The Montserrat Inspector of Schools reported in 1909 that there was a strong desire on the part of parents to have their children instructed.(2) Unfortunately he was unable to offer any explanation for this tendency. However, in that year Montserrat had an attendance figure of 50 per cent which was better than the average for the Leewards, and by 1911 it had reached 54.3 per cent which was the highest average figure for the group. Thereafter, with occasional fluctuations, Montserrat retained leadership in this respect.

The adoption of the principle of compulsion in education did not greatly affect the situation. In the Leewards, as a whole, where compulsory education was introduced in 1890, attendances improved to reach 48.9 per cent in 1896 but then declined seriously to only 42.8 per cent in 1905. The following year Lucas minuted: '...if we had not compulsory education I would not be in favour of it, but having got it, I would prefer to keep it and let it be loosely administered rather than abolish it.'(3) In February 1909 the Colonial Office discounted the possibility of altering the system which it then considered was working adequately.

1. 111/590/32381 Egerton to Harcourt, 18 Aug. 1913
2. 152/319/34881 Sweet-Escott to Crewe, 25 Oct. 1910
enc. Report on primary schools
3. 152/291/41655 Minute by C.P.L., 22 Nov. 1906

From this it would appear that the Colonial Office was easily satisfied for neither in the Leewards nor elsewhere in the West Indies was there any evidence to indicate that a system of compulsion produced significant results. Grenada tried it in 1898, but the Ordinance immediately became a dead letter. Not deterred Sendall introduced compulsion in British Guiana in 1900 using unpaid helpers rather than paid officials to enforce it. As Edward Wingfield, head of the West Indian Department, predicted at the time, the Ordinance proved unenforceable. In July 1920 Grenada made a determined effort to improve the situation. A new Compulsory Attendance Ordinance was passed and strenuous attempts were made to enforce it.⁽¹⁾ The outcome, however, was as disappointing as ever. No solution was found, (perhaps none existed), and the increases in attendance figures, compared with the numbers on the rolls, improved scarcely at all during this period. British Guiana did achieve an apparently outstanding figure of 80 per cent in 1921 against 59 per cent the previous year, but on closer examination it is evident that this was due entirely to a fall in the number of pupils on the roll. In Barbados the attendance figure was 56 per cent in 1906 and exactly the same figure eleven years later. St. Vincent recorded the same attendance figure of 48 per cent in 1920 as in 1910 though, as in the case of British Guiana, and for the same reason, there was a steep rise in 1921. Aside from Montserrat, St. Lucia and Grenada appear to have made the most progress, and by the close of the period could point to a genuine improvement of about ten per cent over their respective attendance figures for 1897 of 53 per cent and 52 per cent. Although development in this field can only be considered disappointing, had there been a substantial improvement it is difficult to imagine how adequate facilities and finances might have been provided.

1. 103/25/45123 Grenada Acts no. 11 of 1920. An Ordinance to amend the Law relating to compulsory Elementary Education, 11 Aug. 1920

Within the elementary school system agricultural education hinged upon two considerations. The first concerned the training of teachers and the second the establishment of school gardens; the latter figured prominently in the efforts of the Imperial Department of Agriculture, its purpose being to make agriculture a practical rather than a theoretical subject. When the matter of training teachers was raised at the 1899 Agriculture Conference the difficulties at once became apparent. Barbados complained of the expense which would be incurred and British Guiana observed that although an interest in agriculture was often exhibited by teachers, only three schools had introduced it into the curriculum.(1) The Imperial Department of Agriculture persevered, and in 1900 launched a short course of lectures to elementary school teachers in Barbados. Subsequently similar courses were conducted in most of the other islands. On the whole these lectures appear to have been quite successful. Moloney informed Morris in February 1900 with respect to the course that '...the attendance of teachers was all that could be desired and the proceedings passed off to my entire satisfaction.'(2) As a result further courses were held from time to time in various colonies. Even in the initial period, however, the training of teachers was not an unqualified success. At the 1902 Agricultural Conference, Professor Harrison of British Guiana stated that the Colony's scheme for training teachers, conducted eighteen months previously, had collapsed after a few lectures when the trainee teachers went on strike.(3) He also pointed out how difficult it proved in British Guiana to run such courses because of the distances involved. In 1907 the course held

1. In that year, British Guiana possessed 210 elementary schools
2. 321/195/6769 Moloney to Chamberlain, 12 Feb. 1900
enc. Moloney to Morris 30 Jan. 1900
3. The trainees apparently considered that the extra work involved in the course and the difficulties of attending it did not carry adequate remuneration

in Antigua failed on account of lack of interest and a consequent fall in numbers. Much more serious was the long-term failure of the courses to achieve their principal object, although in this respect other weaknesses of the education system, particularly shortage and poor quality of teachers, contributed more to the lack of success in establishing agricultural education. Speaking generally of science teaching, including agriculture, in the Leewards in 1917, Watts stated: '...I feel, however, that the matter is not on a sound footing in most of these small islands for there are great difficulties in obtaining teachers and the equipment for teaching.'(1) In St. Lucia in 1908 the Agricultural Superintendent stressed the amount of work which was still required in the teaching of agriculture and he indicated that only a limited number of schools offered it as a subject. In the St. Vincent reports of 1919 and 1921 the Inspector of Schools complained that teachers did not take sufficient trouble in teaching agriculture, though he admitted that many lacked practical knowledge. 'Some teachers,' the Inspector wrote in 1919, 'do not take a sufficiently serious view of the importance of agricultural teaching.'(2) In Grenada in 1916 the Inspector commented on the unfortunate fact that agricultural education was confined to the parish of St. George's. No evidence has been found which illustrates the experience of the larger colonies of British Guiana and Barbados but the emphasis given to the questions of training teachers and of greater concentration upon agricultural instruction in schools at the 1922 Education Conference suggest these problems were general.(3)

1. 318/342/63605 Watts to C.O., 20 Nov. 1917
2. 263 no. 40 1919 and 1921 St. Vincent Sessional Papers.
Report of the Inspector of Schools
3. 318/371/5627 Haddon-Smith to Churchill, 10 Jan. 1922

Closely associated with the teaching of agricultural theory was the need to develop practical ability. In this direction, Morris indicated in July 1899 that he entertained the highest hopes of the value of school gardens where teachers and children could carry out practical operations.(1) The efforts made in this direction were considerable, but success ultimately depended upon the enthusiasm of individual teachers, and in some instances upon the availability of suitable plots. In the Leewards, for example, by 1905 some twenty-five school gardens had been established,(2) but only in the face of the greatest difficulties; not only were there limited funds available for supplying tools, and for rough preparation and fencing, but in a number of places land was found to be unworkable on account of drought. The Inspector of Schools in the Leewards concluded his report for 1905 by advising that no further establishment of school gardens should be encouraged for the present. His recommendation was not heeded and by 1910 the number had increased to thirty-six(3) though the difficulties were reflected by a poor standard of work in the majority of cases. In other colonies, notably where the development of gardens created fewer problems, determined efforts were made to encourage them. A circular was sent to all Grenada school managers in July 1902, calling on them to support schemes for establishing school gardens, for which advice and assistance would be provided by the Agricultural Instructor. However, the annual result grant of £1 or £2 was evidently insufficient to encourage a good management of gardens and results were disappointing. Consequently, following a heated meeting of the Grenada Board of Education in March 1905, a

1. 318/297/17373 Morris to C.O., 24 June 1899
2. The figures for individual islands were:
Dominica - 5; Montserrat - 6; Antigua - 7; Nevis - 3; St. Kitts - 4
3. The figures for individual islands were:
Dominica - 4; Montserrat - 6; Antigua - 12; Nevis - 6; St. Kitts - 8

different approach was adopted and a statement was issued warning managers of schools with plots attached, '...that on the 1st June 1905 they will be required to make serious efforts to work the school plots established in connection with their schools, and on failure to do so their total grant will be reduced by a sum not exceeding 10 per cent of the total'.(1) How successful this might have been in the long term is impossible to say; early in 1907 the new Governor, Ralph Williams, after consultation with the Colonial Office, suspended the new primary education ordinance passed by his predecessor Llewelyn, and due to come into force on 1st April, because he considered it unworkable in Grenada. When by 1910 the confusion which this created had been overcome, and a new code had been decided upon, the Inspector of Schools reported that the school plots had almost gone into disuse. His efforts to revive them were unsuccessful. By 1913 out of fifty-three schools only three had gardens, and indeed only five offered agriculture in any form as a subject.(2) By 1921 the number of plots had risen only to five, and practically speaking agricultural teaching in the form of object lessons had ceased in Grenada schools. In St. Lucia the establishment of school gardens was curtailed for some time by bad relations between the agricultural and education departments. Once under way, however, progress was rapid and the number of plots increased from two in November 1902 until only six of the island's forty-four schools were without gardens by the end of 1905.(3) It quickly became apparent that establishment of school plots was only the first step. In St. Lucia interest rapidly

1. 104 no. 32 1905 Grenada Sessional Papers Report on Primary Schools by the Board of Education
2. 104 no. 36 1913 Grenada Sessional Papers Report of the Inspector of Schools
3. 321/222/6716 Llewelyn to Lyttelton, 6 Feb. 1904
318/312/39704 Morris to C.O., 23 Oct. 1905
See also minutes on this despatch

waned despite the existence of the gardens, and by 1916 only fifteen of the Island's fifty-two schools still offered agriculture as a subject in any form.(1) The experience of St. Vincent was exactly similar. Unlike St. Lucia, it was difficult to obtain suitable land, nevertheless by the end of 1905, ten plots had been established.(2) Thereafter progress ceased, by 1919 there were only eleven gardens between thirty-six schools, and the Inspector complained that the '...lack of accompanying practical work has reduced the subject (agriculture) to mere rote learning'. By 1921, the number of gardens had fallen to just nine.(3) Everywhere the pattern was repeated and enthusiasm created by the Imperial Department of Agriculture gave way to lethargy once the gardens were established.

Information on the larger colonies is again scant, but in the Leewards and Windwards the establishment of school gardens, which seemed to hold so much promise as a means of instilling practical training, proved a dismal failure. A comment made by G. Grindle at the West India Department in June 1913 remained true throughout the period: '...what the West Indies are really suffering from', he wrote, 'is too much literacy and too little technical and manual education.'(4) He was not alone in this view and 'bookishness' and the wrong emphasis in the choice of curricula were frequent criticisms. Nevertheless, though more attention might have been given to agricultural education, this subject, like all

1. 617 no. 16 Report of St. Lucia Agricultural Department 1916-17
Report of Agricultural Instructor
256 no. 24 St. Lucia Sessional Papers. Report of the Inspector
of Schools
2. 318/312/39704 Morris to C.O., 23 Oct. 1905
3. 263 no. 40 St. Vincent Sessional Papers 1919-21
Report of the Inspector of Schools
4. 318/331/18807 Minute by G.G., 6 June 1913

others, suffered mainly on account of the limited grants available for teachers and schools, which necessarily reduced opportunities and incentive. In this respect the most accurate comment was that of Haddon-Smith, following the 1921 Agricultural Conference in Trinidad, when he informed Churchill that: '...education has been starved for lack of funds.'(1)

Above the level of the primary schools some attempts were made to provide a higher standard of agricultural knowledge among selected students. In its most basic form this merely involved a greater concentration upon the subject in the science classes of the grammar or secondary schools. The importance of botany and agricultural instruction in such classes was stressed by the Imperial Department of Agriculture, and in consequence efforts were made in the grammar schools of St. Kitts, Antigua and later Grenada, as well as at those of the larger colonies.(2) In the islands of St. Vincent, St. Lucia and Dominica specialised agricultural schools were established to provide this more advanced education. The Dominica school was completed early in 1900 and opened soon after, notwithstanding disagreements between Dr. Morris and the Governor, Fleming, over details. The two Windward Islands' schools followed soon after, St. Vincent's being financed jointly by the Imperial Department of Agriculture and from the land settlement fund. The schools appear to have operated satisfactorily, offering places for about

1. 318/371/5627 Haddon-Smith to Churchill, 10 Jan. 1922
2. 321/239/19831 Williams to Crewe, 12 May 1908.
See also 45834 Drayton to Cork, 21 Nov. 1908.
W.I.R., vol. X, 1909 F. Watts, 'Systems of Agricultural Education.'
152/291/37728 Sweet-Escott to Elgin, 30 Aug. 1906.
111/513/23276 Sendall to Crewe, 15 Nov. 1909 also
541/26516 Swettenham to Lyttelton, 11 July 1904
616/25581 Collet to Long, 16 April 1918 enc. Report of Committee on Education.
28/273/38905 Carter to Crewe, 15 Nov. 1909.
318/357/14106 Watts to C.O., 18 Feb. 1920.
342/63605 Watts to C.O., 20 Nov. 1917

fifteen to twenty-five pupils chosen by examination from the primary schools.(1) They were, however, expensive and efforts were made to reduce the cost by discontinuing the practice of boarding and clothing the boys, who consequently could only attend if they lived close to the schools. A less expensive system, which was introduced in St. Kitts and Antigua in order to supplement the grammar school classes for selected agricultural students, was known as the cadet system. Under this arrangement which was first tried in 1907, and later adopted elsewhere, notably at Grenada in 1915, the cadets attended only the science classes at the grammar schools and spent the remainder of the time studying practical agriculture at the botanic or experiment station.(2) On the whole this system appears also to have worked well though it had limitations; fewer pupils could be trained, and perhaps because of the uncertainty as to places and occasional difficulties over grants, the cadetships were sometimes vacant. In October 1917 Watts commented that the training at the agricultural schools was superior to that available through the cadet system. After considerable discussion the agricultural schools combined to form a single West Indian Agricultural College which was established at Trinidad in 1922.(3) The Imperial Department of Agriculture was merged with this College on the 1st April 1922 to create a single unit. The new arrangement was recommended by

1. 321/193/22050 Thompson to Chamberlain, 1 Aug. 1899.
206/35512 Llewelyn to Chamberlain, 21 Sept. 1901.
617 no. 8 Report on Dominica Botanic Station. Report of the Agricultural School and
Report on St. Lucia Botanic Station, Report on the Agricultural School.No. 9 Report on Dominica Botanic Station. Report on the Agricultural School.
No. 10 Report on St. Vincent Botanic Station. Report on the Agricultural School.
2. *W.I.B.*, vol. XII, 1912 F. Watts, 'The Cadet System in Antigua and St. Kitts'
3. 318/369/42021 Department of Overseas Trade to C.O., 20 Aug. 1921

a special committee set up by the Secretary of State.(1) Most of the colonies made financial contributions, though British Guiana stood out, believing that the new establishment had little to offer. A number of companies concerned in the West Indies also contributed and were represented on the College board. The close of the period thus saw the West Indies embarking on yet another effort to encourage agricultural education which local experts considered fundamental to the well-being of these purely agricultural colonies. No consideration of this subject would be complete without a brief mention of the reading classes in agriculture which were held in most of the botanic stations after about 1907. They were intended primarily for estate employees, particularly overseers and foremen, but little enthusiasm was shown by these people, nor did planters encourage their workers to attend. In some colonies the courses were discontinued or run only occasionally; elsewhere they became an integral part of the cadet system.

Agricultural education advanced scarcely at all during this period. What successes there were, were invariably short-lived. In respect of primary schools, the most important field, agricultural education, in common with other subjects, suffered through lack of funds and teachers, lack of incentive, and often lack of pupils. There were also frequent complaints of the difficulty of obtaining text books though in the opinion of the Imperial Department of Agriculture this was not a major factor. The interest shown by pupils appears in many cases to have been considerable and Charles Martin, the Inspector of Schools in the Leewards, wrote in February 1905 of agricultural education in that Colony that '...it appeals to children who show little aptitude for

1. 318/372/5005 Watts to C.O., 6 Jan 1922.
318/369/42021 Department of Overseas Trade to C.O., 20 Aug. 1921

the ordinary subjects of instruction.'(1) From this, the question arises of the value of the ordinary subjects of instruction to the West Indian peasant, whether estate labourer or proprietor. At the higher levels it seems agricultural training, except possibly in the rather expensive specialised schools, was not enthusiastically sought. Neither the cadet system, and certainly not the reading classes proved able to promote sustained interest in agricultural education. It is difficult to see what more might have been done, doubtless peasant and planter alike believed in the old methods of cultivation, methods, which were best learned on the allotment or the plantation. Nevertheless the general lack of interest in agricultural instruction must be considered short-sighted in colonies whose solvency was constantly threatened and which depended entirely upon successful cultivations.

1. 9 no. 66 Antigua Sessional Papers Report of the Inspector of Schools

CHAPTER TWELVE

CONCLUSION

Although seeking to examine the overall economic progress of the West Indies during the period under review, this thesis has been particularly concerned with the question of land settlement. Whilst there was nothing novel in a policy of encouraging such settlement, the concept of government-financed and administered settlement schemes was a new departure. However, in this field the success, both of the traditional policy and the new, was dependent to a large extent upon the attitude of the settler. Throughout, the term peasant has been used, just as the Royal Commission used it, to identify the class of society from which settlers would be drawn. It is, therefore, highly desirable to establish the definition accorded to the term 'peasant'. Such a definition is not easy. In a world-wide context anthropologists have differed considerably in their interpretation of the peasant and of peasant society. It is true that the problem of definition is easier in the limited context of the West Indies, but it would be wrong to suppose that all West Indian societies encompassed by a general definition of peasant were of similar composition, and even more erroneous to attribute to the various administrative officers who used the term 'peasant' the same intended meaning. Also, whatever definition is employed there will be, inevitably, individuals who are very close to but not quite within that definition. Such persons or groups of persons must be included or otherwise according to actual circumstances. For the purposes of this thesis the peasant has been taken to be an individual for whom agriculture provides a livelihood and a way of life, but who is not concerned in such agriculture primarily as a business for profit-making. Re-investment in the same or alternative

business ventures, and the attitude to the land that it represents capital, places the individual outside the category of peasant.

Although generally satisfactory, this definition does require qualification in a number of specific instances. The East Indian, as has been shown, for economic, social and other reasons cannot be considered in the same terms as the Negro peasant. Many East Indians, settled in similar circumstances to the Negro peasantry, attained a status above that of peasant during the period under review,(1) nevertheless such persons have been considered as peasants throughout. A particular feature of Carriacou and Union was the dual or mixed economy of agriculture and some form of marine pursuit. In many instances shipbuilding or fishing was the principal occupation, and its importance remained even after land had been taken up under a peasant proprietary scheme. In this case the life style of the individuals concerned, and the great importance which the land held in their economy, has justified their inclusion as peasants. For a similar reason small shopkeepers or merchants who were induced to take up land under peasant proprietary schemes have been classified as peasants whether or not their immediate background falls within the definition adopted.

The broad objective of settlement schemes was clear. The Royal Commission considered them as the only means by which peasant land ownership could be promoted.(2) The schemes were intended to be permanent and were not simply a convenient means of tiding over a difficult period. Furthermore they were to exist side by side with the plantations

1. See pages 114 and 115
2. An opinion repeated in the Report of the West Indian Sugar Commission of 1930, see para. 68

and to contribute to the wealth of the colony through exports. Beyond this, however, the Royal Commission provided remarkably little guidance to facilitate the detailed interpretation of their recommendations. Many questions were left unanswered. Should permanency be judged by a particular peasant continuing in possession of his holding or simply by that holding continuing in cultivation? How far was it necessary or desirable for government aid or interference to continue after purchase of a holding was completed? What was the ideal numerical balance between peasant proprietaries and plantations? To what extent should exports be demanded even at the risk of alienating peasant land owners? These and similar decisions confronted the administrators who were to implement the settlement schemes. It is scarcely surprising, therefore, that in practice the specific objectives of schemes varied from settlement to settlement. For example, in some of the cases examined, exports were counted, at least initially, as of secondary importance; elsewhere the entire success of a scheme was judged, from the outset, upon the production of cash crops. Such divergent aims might have presented difficulties in determining the success or failure of government settlement schemes. In practice, however, this was not the case. Statistically, the figures speak for themselves,(1) but even when purely local objectives are adopted as the yardstick for measuring success, the verdict remains the same. Peasant proprietaries established on government schemes of land settlement in the colonies under review were, during this period, a failure. White administrators and

1. The extend of land held by peasant proprietors on land settlement schemes in 1922 as a percentage of the total cultivable land in each colony was as follows:

Union Island	70%
Carriacou	23%
St. Vincent	8.8%
Grenada	1.2%
St. Lucia	0.14%
Antigua	0.09%

In other colonies no land was held under government schemes in 1922

advisers seldom, if ever, achieved a real understanding of Negro attitudes. Without some harmonious interchange of ideas the shortcomings which the Negro associated with government settlement schemes (and indeed with government-sponsored schemes of any sort) and those which the white administrator associated with the Negro could never be resolved. The schemes associated with Carriacou and Union were undoubtedly the most successful. There was a permanency of holdings and proprietors, financial administration presented no difficulties and the crops cultivated were considered by the Imperial Department of Agriculture to be quite suitable. However, this was not a consequence of enlightened administration, but rather of a more enterprising and determined attitude on the part of the peasants. The very small white element in Carriacou and Union doubtless helped matters. More significant, however, was the dependence of the peasants on a mixed economy which evidently made them more responsive to the opportunities offered by land ownership. Wisely these peasants were permitted to continue their wider economic pursuits, which indicates that the administration had become aware of the importance of peasant co-operation. However, it seems ironic that the advanced attitude exhibited by the Carriacou peasant, which was in no way a product of enlightened government policy, should prompt a Grenadian official to describe his as a 'better type' than his Grenada counterpart.

Although the reasons for failure elsewhere have been well defined,⁽¹⁾ they were never fully understood. Even Daniel Morris, an advocate of peasant proprietaries, and probably the most knowledgeable person concerned in their introduction, was himself mistaken upon at least one fundamental issue. Early in the history of the St. Vincent scheme

1. See pages 65 to 86 and 107 to 112

he believed, on the evidence of vacant holdings, that all those requiring land had been supplied. Later, however, a considerable demand was found to exist in another part of the Island. He, and one may assume almost all other administrators, failed to appreciate the lack of peasant mobility, misled no doubt by the apparent paradox of high emigration. A further contributory factor in the fluctuating demand for land, and one which was likewise overlooked, may be readily identified. Throughout this period, and after, the demand for land remained high both in Jamaica where it was almost impossible to obtain, and in Barbados, where it was very difficult. In these islands the ownership of a holding carried with it social distinction and prestige, an attraction which disappeared as soon as government action made land ownership relatively easy. An insoluble problem perhaps, but nevertheless one that should certainly have been recognised. In fact no official mention of it appears until the 1945 Royal Commission.(1)

It has been stressed that the East Indian settler in British Guiana represented a special case and cannot be considered in the same light as the Negro proprietor. Yet even the agricultural and consequent economic success of the East Indian holdings is partially explained by a number of advantages which the coolie proprietor enjoyed compared to his Negro counterpart. Much of the land occupied by the East Indians was suitable only for rice. The question over which crop was to be cultivated could never become a point of conflict. Indeed rice represented to the East Indian the same category of crop as did ground provisions to the Negro. Yet in the former case the administration applauded and encouraged its cultivation.(2) Official visits to East

1. Report of West India Royal Commission, 1945, Cmd. 6608, Ch.V para.14
2. Initially as an import substitute, subsequently as a valuable export

Indian holdings were rare and little effort was made to modernise traditional methods of agriculture; presumably the level of progress realised was judged satisfactory.

The official approach to Negro holdings was in sharp contrast to this policy of *laissez faire*. Government officials never appreciated the high priority accorded by the peasantry to the raising of subsistence crops. The production of a certain quantity of foodstuffs was considered very necessary. Allottees were expected to support themselves and their families from the produce of their holdings, and inevitably this meant there would be some surplus for disposal at the local market. However, it was never intended that the holdings should become exclusively provision grounds which, in practice, was exactly what most of them became. The problem was not new. Only a few years before the 1897 Royal Commission, Sir Henry Blake had encountered it in Jamaica. His unsuccessful answer had been to offer a cash incentive for producing permanent crops. Now a different approach was attempted, with organised assistance and supervision being introduced as an integral part of the settlement schemes. It too failed, and the question arises whether peasant proprietaries cultivating cash crops could ever be introduced in this manner.(1) It is true that there were examples of successful peasant proprietors in Trinidad, Grenada and elsewhere, but the origin of these was very different. They had come into being as 'home grown' institutions. Holdings acquired in this manner were valued by the peasantry. There was no official interest or connection, and the possessors of such land were considered by their fellows to have risen in social status by virtue of their acquisition, an attitude significantly lacking on almost all government settlements.

1. The 1945 Royal Commission did not believe that they could be developed in this way, see Report of West India Royal Commission, 1945, Cmd.6607 Ch.XXV, para.49

The peasant view is not difficult to understand. Informed on the one hand that they were the owners of their holdings, they were at the same time subject to several regulations. Perhaps most objectionable were the directions as to what they might or might not grow on the allotments. Even to the more enlightened and experienced white administrators in the colonies, and certainly in London, such control was essential. The peasants viewed it otherwise. Suspicion of the regulations and of government officials or agricultural instructors was widespread. To the peasantry they clearly represented a limitation upon their ownership. The condition of most holdings reflected this attitude.(1) In practice it appears unlikely that any great distinction could have been discerned between a government settlement and squatters' holdings nor in all probability even between the former and a plantation Negro provision ground from the pre-emancipation era. Of course the reasons for this extended beyond the odium of the government connection. The peasantry had not been educated into their new role as landowners. No political or social changes paved the way or even accompanied the economic change. Yet the peasants were expected overnight to acquire the foresight, forethought and above all conscience of European-style small landowners. The only guidance they received was exclusively agricultural, and that moreover from a source they mistrusted. By virtue of individual ability and determination, a number of peasants were successful in achieving the desired transformation. However, this was neither true nor could it be expected of the great majority. The 1945 Royal Commission criticised the attitude of the peasantry, both over work conducted on their holdings, and on their approach to financial commitment. (2) More recent commentators, notably O'Loughlin,

1. Security of land tenure remains important in this respect, see Edwards, *An Economic Study of Small Farming in Jamaica* pp. 78 and 114
2. Report of West Indian Royal Commission, 1945, Cmd.6608, Ch.VI, para. 14

have adopted a similar view.(1) However, criticism of this nature does not take into account the far-reaching changes in behaviour which land ownership implied. It is with this consideration in mind that the peasant reactions to new social demands as well as to agricultural advice must be judged.

The conservative attitude which the peasants adopted towards the introduction of new agricultural processes was encountered by Imperial Department of Agriculture officials throughout the colonies. Even if the peasant mistrust of officialdom is ignored the new settlers were poorly equipped for offering a positive response to innovation. Following emancipation, the continued control of the labour market had enabled the plantocracy in most of the islands and in British Guiana to prevent the Negroes from moving away from the estates. This had several consequences, some of which have been examined. Agriculturally it meant that the only cash crop with which many peasants were familiar was sugar. The provisions they raised themselves were cultivated according to customs handed down from generation to generation with a minimum of change. Nor did the example of the planters encourage the peasants to experiment. The large estates had a long-standing reputation for conservatism in agricultural practices; even many years after the introduction of the Imperial Department of Agriculture this attitude had far from disappeared. It would have been strange indeed had the Imperial Department of Agriculture proved more successful in introducing new ideas among an illiterate Negro peasantry than among the educated white plantocracy.

The problem was a twofold one. Initially it was difficult to establish

1. O'Loughlin, *Economic and Political Change in the Leeward and Windward Islands* p. 104

communication between an ill-educated Negro peasantry and white advisers. Although never recorded it seems certain that many over-worked Agricultural Instructors were intolerant of what they considered the backward, ignorant practices of the Negro. Even when a more enlightened approach was adopted, trust and understanding were difficult to maintain. A careless word or a tardy visit could undo months and perhaps years of patient work. The other aspect of the problem was that of impressing on the peasant the value of specific crops, and cultivation methods with which he was unfamiliar. Some appeared illogical, the desirability of leaving a minimum distance between cacao trees, for example, instead of planting the greatest possible number. Others, such as providing drainage, applying fungicides or manure, seemed to offer little tangible return for much hard work. Neither of these problems was ever satisfactorily solved.

Imperial Department of Agriculture and government officials spoke of the need for better education for the peasant proprietor. Certainly the illiteracy of the settler proved a stumbling block. A better general education would probably have encouraged the children of peasant settlers to adopt a more sympathetic attitude towards outside advisers. Better teaching of agriculture would certainly have facilitated later generations of settlers in understanding and acting upon agricultural advice, and might also have favourably affected the attitudes of their parents. But in all the colonies reviewed education of this nature was sadly lacking.(1) The teachers were not qualified to teach agriculture and the low pay and lack of incentives discouraged them from introducing such subjects. Furthermore, the problems which beset West Indian education in general particularly affected agricul-

1. See pages 291-299 Little had been achieved by 1945, see Report of West India Royal Commission, 1945, Cmd.6608, Ch.III, para.14

tural teaching, namely poor buildings and facilities, shortage of books and the absence of contact with modern educational thought. In the latter case the Imperial Department of Agriculture could provide the technical knowledge, but not the up-to-date teaching methods. It is possible to criticise West Indian educational policy, so far as it existed for doggedly maintaining the fallacy that two unskilled labourers could do the work of one skilled, but it cannot be blamed for the fundamental shortcoming, namely lack of funds. In education, and particularly in agricultural education, as in so many other things the West Indian colonies simply could not afford a more efficient system. To provide for the long-term education of the peasant proprietor in a manner which might have altered significantly his entrenched attitudes, was far beyond their budgetary capacity.

A further factor, which adversely influenced settlement was the lack of peasant mobility. In one direction or another its consequences were apparent on almost every settlement. In most parishes within the islands examined, the wide network of social relationships which in other developing rural societies frequently link several villages and provide a balance to the essentially territorial basis of peasant societies was absent. Inter-marriage between families in different parishes was not common in the West Indian islands. Nor did the more or less independent economic fields of activity widen the geographic sphere of the average peasant. Subsistence agriculture, with the surplus usually going to a very local market or shipping point, encouraged parochially insular characteristics amongst the peasantry to a marked degree. In such cases, only when economic pressures or outside incentives reached a high level would the peasant be persuaded to move. Understandably the move was then usually permanent and to the locality offering the highest rewards. A distant parish in the same island was

as distant as Colon or Panama, and less attractive. The behaviour patterns and, in the anthropological sense, the network of the Carriacou and Union peasants indicate that this was not quite universally true. These relatively small and largely infertile islands encouraged a greater interest among the peasant population in seaborne pursuits, with fishing and transport services predominant. This created a greater mobility and contact with peasantry elsewhere, and led eventually to many peasants following a mixed economy and working as agricultural labourers in nearby islands to which they were already accustomed to travel and which offered attractive if not exceptional wages during part of the year. A pattern of behaviour dictated by circumstances resulted in these peasants enjoying a relatively more wealthy position than their counterparts in the larger islands. Perhaps even more important in the history of land settlement in these islands, the economic experience of these peasants was immeasurably widened. For example, it seems reasonable to believe that the sight of successful peasant proprietors in Trinidad made a greater impression on the Carriacou peasant than any amount of government advice or assistance. It appears also that the Grenadine islanders were exposed to similar influences, since they exhibited far less of the natural conservatism and suspicion so manifest elsewhere.

The nature of economic development in Union and Carriacou made transport cheap and inter-island journeys a commonplace; nevertheless it would be wrong to assume that these peasants did not share with their larger island brethren an attachment for home. Some emigrated permanently, but for most the migration was only temporary and coincided with a specific event, such as harvest time in Trinidad. In view of the shortage of employment in Carriacou and the difficulty in obtaining fertile land, it is hardly surprising that many peasants were eager

to take up land when it was offered under a peasant proprietary scheme.(1) The success in Carriacou and to a less marked degree in Union may be attributed to several causes, though the comparative contribution of each cannot be ascertained. The greater wealth of the Carriacou peasant arising from his mixed economy, the example of settlers in Trinidad, and the scarcity value of land in the Island have all been noted. Less readily analysed is the effect of the small European element in Carriacou compared with that found elsewhere. It is clear that the fears which the Colonial Office had always held and continued to hold throughout this period of the consequences of a declining white population in the West Indies were not realised in Carriacou. On the contrary, the peasantry appears to have been basically law abiding. Praedial larceny, a curse elsewhere, declined to the extent that holdings with growing provisions could safely be left during much of the day. It is also evident that either for this reason or in consequence of a knowledge of conditions elsewhere, the Carriacou peasant was more receptive to official advice and interest than any other Negro peasantry under consideration in this thesis. Peter Wilson has shown that in Carriacou the focus for male social life tended to be distinct from the household and land to a more marked extent than in other Caribbean islands.(2) This may have been significant in further modifying the attitude of the Carriacou peasant to the land. In the other areas examined, the characteristic approach of the Negro peasantry to the land, no matter on what terms it was held, exhibited the aspect of a well-worn struggle simply to raise subsistence crops, the battle against the land which anthropologists

1. See pages 93 and 94

2. P. Wilson, *Crab Antics*

have described in peasant societies throughout the world. The land, as an opponent, fulfils almost a social and cultural role yet remains an economic necessity of life. In Carriacou, economic dependence rested upon alternative industries and thus this function of the land had been removed. Hence its acquisition could be viewed with a much greater sense of achievement. This theory appears to gain strength from the aggrandisement which the Carriacou and Union peasants brought to their small-holdings, an apparently unique example amongst the Negro peasantry under examination of pride of possession.

It has been, throughout, far easier to describe the practical shortcomings in the manner in which land settlement schemes were applied than to identify the intangible pressures which influenced them. The concept of peasant settlement as envisaged by the Royal Commission involved a very considerable economic revolution. By contrast, the acquisition and settlement of the land by individual members of the peasantry, which occurred in some measure in all the colonies, was on a very limited scale and was moreover a gradual process. It was checked both consciously and unconsciously by the plantocracy, who could often limit the available land and who, until the sugar crisis reached its height and in some instances even after that, maintained a large measure of control over the labour market. Consequently any land acquired by peasants was upon the sufferance of the plantocracy and constituted no change in the economic or social structure. However, the establishment of government land settlement schemes, regardless of the consent of the plantocracy, and having as an object the replacing or supplementing of the plantation system, was something entirely different. The economic balance would have been changed had the schemes succeeded, and changed far more abruptly than in areas where peasant settlement had been encouraged to develop more spontaneously. The peasantry would

have ceased rapidly to be a factor of production controlled by the planters. The prosperity of the colonies would have depended, perhaps to a considerable extent, upon the initiative and goodwill of the new landowners. Implicit in the role intended for the peasants were issues beyond that of economics. It has already been noted that no schemes for political or social development were introduced to ease or educate the peasant into his new position. Even had such schemes been attempted, the situation in which it was intended to place the peasant proprietor, namely acting on advice, and raising and exporting cash crops, assumed a very significant degree of progress since emancipation. However, for the peasantry as a whole this assumption was inaccurate. If anything, emancipation had locked the peasant into a more introverted stratum of society than previously, in which his contacts with the European race were very few. The latter had reacted to emancipation and the weakening of their supremacy by keeping the Negro labourer at an even greater distance than they had the slave. They buttressed their economic supremacy by social and cultural separation as well as political influence.

If not entirely sympathetic to the planters' points of view the Colonial Office was prepared to concede both their economic importance and their social necessity. Throughout the period under review the Colonial Office was steadfast in maintaining the paramount importance of strengthening the European element in the West Indies. Even today some anthropologists insist upon the inferiority of the Negro race.(1) During, and of course before, the period covered by this thesis such

1. W. C. George, *Race, Heredity and Civilisation*
See also the correspondence of J. C. Carothers in the *Journal of Racial Science* 1951

views were much more widely held.(1) In all, considering the social and economic interests of the planters and the opinions held at the Colonial Office, as well as the expense and inherent danger in change, it is understandable that no schemes for the social development of the Negro were promoted. Yet without such development of Negro society, the peasant was wholly unprepared to take on the position and responsibilities of an independent proprietor. Nor, in a strictly practical sense, could he be expected to evaluate and subsequently make use of the facilities which were provided for his assistance. The frequently justified association in the minds of the peasantry of planter interest with the administration must go far in explaining the attitude adopted towards white officials. Mistrust on the part of the Negro was as much the outcome of experience as of inherent conservatism, to which it was usually ascribed. Negro contact with white authority had been limited for the most part to managers, overseers and drivers. It was not the intention of such people to win the confidence of the Negro labourer; instead they acquired a reputation for exploiting him. In these circumstances it was natural for the peasantry to associate all white officialdom with a measure of exploitation. This view was doubtless strengthened by the Agricultural Instructor's interest in peasant methods of cultivation, which must have conjured up memories or stories of the behaviour of the plantation task force overseer. Even today influences of this nature remain difficult to assess. During the period under review they were almost totally ignored. This helps to explain the continued pressure for further settlement schemes from

1. For example, A. H. Keane, *The World's Peoples. A Popular Account of their Bodily and Mental Characters Etc.*

observers who failed to appreciate the full complexity of the situation.(1) Unfortunately theory and practice remained widely separated. If the history of land settlement in these colonies proves anything, it proves in the examples of Carriacou and Union that success comes with flexibility of attitude and better understanding on both sides. In the larger colonies, with their bigger and more powerful white element, such understanding required long and patient development and could not be created in a few short years.

Whilst in the majority of cases the land settlement experiment was not a happy one, failure in a broader sense is more apparent in the absence of schemes than in the fate of those which were attempted. Efforts to establish peasant proprietaries were upon such a limited scale as to scarcely justify the conclusion that this recommendation of the Royal Commission had received a reasonable trial.(2) One question, therefore, which needs to be considered is why so little was attempted. Certainly part of the answer lies in the discouraging early failures, but this is inadequate as a complete explanation. A Colonial Office circular despatch stating the desirability of extending peasant ownership of land(3) elicited the trite observation from Barbados that it was simply not applicable to their Colony.(4) In lesser degrees, usually determined by the extent to which sugar dominated the economy, the other colonies responded in a similar vein. Of course this was no more than the Royal Commission had anticipated when in its report it expressed

1. Even Sidney Olivier appeared strangely insensitive to consideration of this nature. See Report of West India Sugar Commission, 1930, Cmd. 3517, para.68
2. Ibid, paras. 64-68
3. 318/294/17143 C.O. circular despatch, 26 July 1898
4. 28/246/22944 Hay to Chamberlain, 26 Sept. 1898

the opinion that the planters would obstruct settlement. On occasions it was necessary to have recourse to legislation authorising compulsory purchase of estates and this may easily be interpreted as further evidence of planter opposition. Although to a considerable extent the planter element appears as the villain of the piece, any such conclusion does require some qualification. There is practically no evidence of planter obstruction to settlement schemes once they were initiated. As has been demonstrated, they failed for quite different reasons; reasons for which the planter could be considered only partially and indirectly responsible.

The Royal Commission was probably correct in the opinion that ultimately a workable balance could be achieved with land divided between peasant proprietaries and large plantations. Nevertheless the two did not readily operate in harmony. The examples of the Virgin Islands, and of Cuba and Puerto Rico after the introduction of American capital, exhibit instability in such a system and the tendency of one system to dominate the other. A greater and more immediate fear in the minds of the planters was the threat to their labour supply. It was the realisation of this fear in St. Vincent that turned Morris, a life-long advocate of peasant settlement, against its further development. Even in theory it is difficult to understand how the labour supply in the vicinity of a plantation could fail to be affected by a successful and thriving peasant proprietary. The solution of the Royal Commission to this problem appears quite unrealistic. The Report suggested that at periods when a full labour force was required on the plantations, this would be supplied by the peasant proprietors themselves. In fact, with the peasants raising cash crops, and like the plantations, concentrating attention on the highest paying cultivation, high labour demands would occur simultaneously on plantation and smallholding. Far from

providing labour the peasant proprietors might even compete for it against the plantations. Whether or not the planters were justified in their fears was perhaps of less importance than the fact that they expressed such views strongly and openly. The planters used the influence of their powerful interest in the local administrations to reject or amend schemes as they were put forward.(1) In this policy they were largely successful, but their success depended on the failure of the Colonial Office to oppose them.

The situation was clear yet the Colonial Office took no steps either to resist the planters or to oblige the Colonial governments to introduce measures for peasant settlement regardless of their opposition. In adopting such a negative attitude, particularly in view of the ample warnings they had received, the Colonial Office in effect acquiesced in the action of the planters. The strength of the Colonial Office belief in peasant settlement and the desire to see it widely implemented has already been considered. From the viewpoint of the planters the situation was complicated only by the remote possibility that peasant settlement might discourage emigration and thus in the long term improve the labour situation. However, in most cases the planters did not incline to this view, tending instead to follow the alternative argument described above. The economic fact of planter dominance in the labour market had never been challenged by the legal fact of emancipation. The planters considered this situation essential to the successful operation of the large estates, and it was unlikely to undergo any change whilst they remained unified and the Negro labourer remained economically weak. In the colonies under consideration the promotion of peasant settlement represented the first apparent threat

1. 152/243/5369 Fleming to Chamberlain, 11 Feb. 1899.
See in particular enclosure seven, Griffiths to Fleming, 10 Dec. 1898

to planter autonomy in this field. Under no pressure, save that of general recommendations, and at the height of an economic crisis it would have been incredible if the planters had voluntarily surrendered their position. Indeed, considering their views, they cannot be criticised for declining to give up the only factor of production then under their control, namely their dominance of the labour market.

In the colonies examined, the period of Chamberlain's tenure at the Colonial Office stands out. Thereafter, with a few notable exceptions, the stage is held by the colonial administrations and not by London. In part this was the direct consequence of Chamberlain's policy. He initiated a long-term scheme for the recovery of the West Indian colonies in which Colonial Office direction and guidance was not fundamental. Since Chamberlain's successors were prepared in the main to follow his policy, its guidelines call for some examination. The cornerstones of this policy for West Indian recovery were the survival of sugar wherever possible and the creation of a climate attractive to the investment of new capital.(1) To achieve these objects he was prepared to sacrifice certain of the recommendations of the Royal Commission; with others he was in any case in disagreement. What he did not do was to consider the recommendations as inter-related and dependent one upon another, as was intended by the Commissioners. Instead he treated each recommendation separately, adopting some and rejecting others. He diverged from the majority opinion in the strength of his sustained pressure for bounty abolition.(2) In the short term he was not convinced of the economic benefits, but removal of bounties would raise morale, improve credit and perhaps pave the way for the

1. See pages 14 and 15

2. See pages 16 and 17

Also H. C. Geerligs, *Cane Sugar Production, 1912 to 1937* p. 16

introduction of fresh capital. Consistent with his policy towards the sugar industry but contrary to the recommendations of the Commissioners was his approach to agricultural diversification. He had little confidence in alternative industries, except possibly gold in British Guiana, and was only prepared to promote them in areas where sugar could not be maintained. In the latter case development was entirely a local matter, largely in the hands of the Imperial Department of Agriculture. It is noticeable that in adopting such a policy Chamberlain was in agreement with opinions held in the West India Department. Also, in justice to his successors it is clear that the factors which promoted him to this decision did not significantly change during this period and to some extent are still applicable today.

The intentions of the Royal Commission were that the dependence upon sugar should be significantly reduced. To achieve this the introduction of new cultivations would have needed to be upon a considerable scale. Chamberlain was unquestionably correct in believing that the total cost of this would far exceed the expense anticipated by the Commissioners. In agricultural terms alone the problem was formidable. Moreover new cultivations would have highlighted the need for new marketing and freight facilities, aspects which were not considered in sufficient detail by the Royal Commission. For example, if diversification was actually achieved, all the concepts upon which West Indian shipping was founded would require fundamental revision. It was quite unrealistic for the Commissioners to recommend what were in effect only superficial improvements. Even the arrangement of a satisfactory itinerary and schedule for the collection of the single crop of sugar proved scarcely possible. It would have been quite beyond reach had the products varied. Many fruits could not be packed together on

board freight vessels,(1) and others demanded special storage facilities.(2) In consequence of this and the complexities of arranging itineraries, vessels would frequently have run at a loss. This in turn would have led to heavy demands on the Imperial Treasury for subsidies, for no planter would undertake new cultivations without first being assured of marketing facilities.

Whilst the whole question of West Indian shipping clearly weighed heavily with Chamberlain and his successors, there was a further, equally important aspect to the problem of diversification. In the case of the islands best suited to produce sugar, the crop continued to offer advantages over alternative cultivations, except when it was subject to unfavourable tariffs. As recently as 1963, Castro's efforts in Cuba proved that in some locations, whatever political power is brought to bear, nothing can replace the sugar cane.(3) The removal of bounties and growing confidence in the Canadian market did much to strengthen sugar relative to other crops notwithstanding the ever-present threat of depression. In the circumstances it proved understandably difficult and frequently impossible for the Agricultural Departments to convince planters of the advisability of reducing their acreage under sugar. Nor, for the above reasons, is it clear that many of the Agricultural Departments themselves were convinced of the desirability of reducing sugar. Only in colonies where the crop was no longer viable would planters undertake alternative cultivations with any determination, and even then the result which the Royal Commission

1. Citrus and non-citrus fruits could not be carried together
2. For example, bananas required cool storage
3. For a description of the efforts in Cuba to replace sugar, see Guerra y Sanchez, *Sugar and Society in the Caribbean - an Economic History of Cuban Agriculture*

had hoped for was not achieved. Instead of diversification, a single high-paying crop simply replaced sugar as the dominant cultivation, an outcome which the attitude of the Imperial Department of Agriculture invariably encouraged, and which, in view of the problems of shipping, was probably fortunate. The widespread retention of sugar also offered certain positive advantages which influenced Chamberlain and his successors. It employed more labourers to the acre than any alternative cultivation. Perhaps even more important it ensured the retention of the white element, the spectre of whose disappearance persistently haunted the Colonial Office.

Above and beyond the practical difficulties, there existed the question of whether the Colonial Office should press specific crops upon individuals. Obviously without such pressure planters would not be inclined to adopt new crops. Yet compulsion would in some degree involve the Colonial Office in responsibility for the cultivations it favoured, which would have been an unprecedented and untenable position. A further difficulty was likely to arise over the loss of money invested in sugar machinery, which because of its specialised nature could not be applied to any other industry. In some colonies, for example British Guiana, the sums involved were considerable and claims for compensation, whether or not they were justified, were certain to be forthcoming. Planter goodwill, the importance of which the Royal Commission had stressed, would have been endangered and perhaps lost. The latter was a circumstance which the Colonial Office was anxious to avoid at all costs, and which may also have influenced their opinion on peasant settlement. If the white element was alienated or reduced, investment would have been discouraged.

These factors disinclined Chamberlain from following the recommendations

of the Royal Commission on the subject of diversification.(1) Nor was he convinced by their arguments of the desirability of increased peasant settlement. His policy placed the initiative for this firmly in the hands of the local administrations. In fact Chamberlain's approach to peasant settlement was very similar to that which he adopted over the recommendation for diversification. Both he treated as local issues requiring local consideration, with a minimum of central guidance. Not surprisingly the fate of the two recommendations likewise was similar. The colonies were informed that the Colonial Office thought the recommendation sound,(2) but no further action was forthcoming except in St. Vincent. Chamberlain may have been discouraged by the reaction to his circular despatch. It is more likely, however, that he was attracted to the cheapness of a policy in which the local administrations would provide the funds, and would therefore require to be fully convinced of the desirability of a scheme before initiating it. In so doing he probably made deliberate use of the dominance in the local administrations of the planter element which had declared its hostility to peasant settlement. The almost complete absence of comments by Chamberlain on the subject suggests that he may have been temperamentally opposed to it. Indeed the concept of development through a multiplication of smallholdings was far removed from the large undertakings and schemes to which Chamberlain was inclined. However, his view was shared by most other members of the West India Department: only Olivier remained strongly sympathetic towards measures for promoting peasant settlement.(3) For Chamberlain's successors,

1. See page 35

2. 318/294/17143 C.O. circular despatch, 26 July 1898

3. See Report of West India Sugar Commission, 1930, para. 68

during the period under review, the question of encouraging peasant proprietary schemes scarcely arose. The efforts which had been made had proved largely abortive and even advocates of settlement were becoming disillusioned. In view of the attitude of the local administrations it was clear that Imperial funds would be a prerequisite for any schemes. Such considerations determined the fate of peasant settlement.

The importance of freight connections and shipping has already been noticed in connection with agricultural diversification. However, so fundamental were these considerations to the West Indian economy that they represented the most significant factors in the development of the colonies during this period. The success of smallholdings and plantations alike depended upon the existence of satisfactory freight facilities. Financial constants meant that little could be done to develop, or even in some cases to maintain, the roads.(1) Understandably it was the peasant holdings which suffered most in consequence. However, the problem was not solved even when the road system did provide adequate access to the ports. The output of the smaller islands was insufficient to warrant regular steamer services and in practical terms this alone is adequate to explain their lack of progress. Chamberlain and Lyttelton both realised the limitations imposed by the absence of ocean shipping connections. Each attempted to arrange for fruit shipments in the Royal Mail vessels conducting the rapid passenger and mail service between the West Indies and the United Kingdom, but neither was successful.(2) The company was doubtful of the prospects for fruit shipments and demanded a greatly increased subsidy to which

1. See chapter 8

2. See pages 219 to 225

the Imperial Government was unwilling to agree. The Elder Dempster Company, which had greater experience in transporting fruit, offered more acceptable terms. However, the company already conducted a fruit service for Jamaica and had come into conflict with the Colony concerning it. The objection of Jamaica to any further contract with the company, and the long connection which had existed between the West Indies and the Royal Mail Company, rallied the colonies against Elder Dempster.(1) Consequently no arrangements were made for commercial fruit exports to the United Kingdom. West Indian sales of fruit in the Canadian market were likewise beset by transport problems, particularly as the requirements of a fast fruit service were so much at variance with those for sugar shipments. However, the demand for fruit in the Canadian market was never as great as in the United Kingdom and United States. Furthermore, as the period progressed, the United Fruit Company secured such a grip on United States and Canadian fruit sales that the shipping difficulty could no longer be considered as the overriding problem.

In the case of sugar, the expanding demand of the Canadian market and her favourable reception of West Indian sugar products was of crucial importance, particularly in view of the hostile tariff policy of the United States. There were limitations to the Canadian market, notably in the restricted range of products in demand. There existed, for example, little or no possibilities for sales of cacao or cotton. But without doubt the greatest problem was again transport facilities. West Indian

1. See pages 226 and 227

shipping went naturally to the ports of Halifax and St. John's, while the principal Canadian markets were in Montreal and Quebec. Within Canada, the facilities connecting the east coast ports with the more developed and populous regions were inadequate. This shortcoming was an important reason for the difficulties encountered in establishing direct communication between the West Indies and Canada. Montreal and Quebec were in fact better served by the United States port of Boston than by Halifax or St. John's. A large number of vessels passed through the West Indies from South America *en route* to Boston, and their inadequacy in terms of regularity was compensated by their frequency.(1) Unlike the direct line which was arranged between the West Indies and Canada, the South American vessels did not depend upon West Indian sugar for cargo. In these circumstances it is clear why the line between the West Indies and Canada had to be conducted throughout under subsidy.

The importance of the direct line between Canada and the West Indies in developing the Canadian market was emphasised in 1910 by the Royal Commission on Trade Relations.(2) However, only a short while later the Imperial Government withdrew its subsidy to the line and the whole cost fell on Canada. The West Indian colonies themselves do not appear to have appreciated the value of the Canadian connection. Even after it was clear that no commercial facilities could be incorporated in the service between the West Indies and the United Kingdom, the colonies twice rejected the suggestion that the service should be run by way of Canada. Had this plan been adopted, communication with Canada would have been strengthened and doubtless the vessels would have been better

1. See page 213 note 1
2. See pages 232 and 233

utilised on the passage from Canada to the United Kingdom. The West Indian insistence upon the direct mail service, in view of their economic circumstances, appears as shortsighted, providing as it did more of a luxury than a necessity. Canada was well suited to the West Indian sugar product, encouraging raw sugar, thus aiding the colonies, which were unable to refine to grocery standard, and even taking quantities of muscovado. Greater efforts should therefore have been directed towards securing this market. Improved communication ought to have been a priority but it never was. Neither is it true to suggest that the situation in respect of steamship communication was not understood at the Colonial Office. In March 1908, Charles Lucas, then head of the West India Department, wrote with great clarity and foresight that the future of the West Indies within the British Empire rested with Canada.(1) However, with financial considerations in mind, the Colonial Office sought to maintain the minimum in terms of shipping rather than embark on the costly, but in the circumstances very desirable, course of total re-organisation.

The question of whether central factories were required in particular colonies was, almost throughout, a popular subject for debate amongst planters and local administrations. Unlike shipping, however, it was not a subject with which the Colonial Office was closely concerned. Following Chamberlain's initial efforts, the decision was evidently taken to treat the subject of factories as a matter for the colonies themselves. This approach was entirely consistent with the policy adopted by the Colonial Office in other areas of West Indian development; however, in this case the terms of the Brussels Convention left

1. 318/318/4886 minute by C.P.L., 3 March 1908

little scope for Imperial assistance.⁽¹⁾ In practice, the justification for factories rested with the increasing demand from refiners for hard crystals and the corresponding decline in the market for soft muscovado. Shortages during the First World War arrested this tendency only temporarily.

Prior to 1897 St. Lucia and to a certain extent British Guiana had already introduced the modern machinery necessary to take advantage of the changing market trends. The St. Lucia venture was in the form of a central factory for which the Colonial Government had provided most of the finance. Unfortunately the scheme collapsed through poor organisation and inadequate supply arrangements. The factory and its machinery were sold at a considerable loss. The unsatisfactory outcome of this experiment caused the Colonial Office to view with distrust similar schemes advanced by colonial governments. Nevertheless as the Royal Commission indicated, the collapse of the St. Lucia factory could not be interpreted as discrediting the concept of central factories. In British Guiana the geographical location of the plantations, dictated by the terrain, precluded a central factory system. However, the amalgamation of estates had paved the way to modernisation and the introduction of new machinery. Furthermore, experience in British Guiana proved that modern equipment not only produced a more marketable product but also was less wasteful of canes and therefore represented a saving in production costs.

The debate which arose in the other sugar colonies concerned the question of whether the high initial cost associated with introducing factory machinery was justified. That such machinery, if purchased,

1. See pages 18 and 24

would be employed in a central factory was not questioned. Indeed considering the sums involved and the financial situation of the colonies, central factory schemes did represent the only possibility for the introduction of new technology. The operation of a central factory rather than individual factories on estates or groups of estates was also clearly more economic. The saving in production costs of which the new machinery was capable only became significant when the comparative volume of output was substantially increased. Also, although set-up costs for a modern factory were far higher than for a soft sugar mill of comparable capacity, the proportional increase of costs with output was much smaller. In terms of economy of scale the soft sugar process constituted a perfect divisibility whilst the crystal factory provided an increasing return. It is therefore apparent that even had the capital been available to permit individual planters to invest in factory machinery, this would have been an unwise venture in any colony where a central factory might be established, since the rate effect of increased output on costs would have been sufficiently large to prevent any non-optimum plant from competing with the central factory.

In practice the advantages of the central factory were clearly demonstrated in the success of Antigua.⁽¹⁾ The St. Kitts factory fared less well. However, no satisfactory comparison can be made between the sugar-producing colonies because the profitability of sugar varied so greatly from island to island. The large capital investment required for a central factory could only be justified in those colonies where sugar remained the most profitable industry. In such cases modernisation undoubtedly improved competitive ability in world markets. By the close of the period under review, most colonies which could claim to be

1. See pages 25 to 27

primarily sugar producers had some modern equipment: only Barbados had none. The latter's natural advantages permitted a more leisurely consideration of the question, but even in this self-confident Island, the more enlightened planters realised, in times of depression, how restricted had become their market. Nevertheless the extent of modernisation was woefully inadequate in view of the role which the industry continued to play in the welfare of the West Indies. In Cuba and Puerto Rico, United States capitalists emphasised the absence of technical innovation in the British colonies, by showing what could be achieved through the large-scale introduction of modern machinery.

The principal reason for the lack of progress in the British West Indies in respect of industrial innovation was the failure of capitalists to invest. Initially it is difficult to escape the impression that this reluctance was closely associated with the Colonial Office decision to retain sugar as the main industry. Lipton, for example, described the principal deterrent in his mind as being the possibility that the sugar industry would collapse, with the loss of any fixed capital invested in it.⁽¹⁾ In reality, however, the situation was far more complicated. It is true that the survival of sugar made it likely that any British capital invested in the West Indies would be drawn, at least initially, towards that industry. Chamberlain, not unfamiliar with business ventures in that part of the world, was doubtful whether any industry could provide sufficient incentive for investment, but nevertheless he was evidently hopeful that some capital might be attracted into sugar. Whilst this possibility existed Chamberlain was obliged to press for the abolition of bounties regardless of the economic consequences, as an indication of the willingness of the Imperial Government to protect

1. J.C. Papers 14/3 Packet D. Summary of correspondence between Lipton and Chamberlain 1900

British capital which was already invested or which might be invested in the industry. In fact, as Chamberlain had feared, the sugar industry remained in too tenuous a position to attract outside capital.(1)

Neither was the situation improved by those actively involved in the industry. The constantly changing opinion in Barbados, for example, as to whether the Island did or did not require a central sugar factory, must in itself have discouraged any potential investors.

The problem of securing satisfactory markets and their distance from the West Indies contrasted unfavourably with the advantageous position enjoyed by United States investors in Cuba and Puerto Rico. As United States demand increased, and agricultural production was stimulated in those areas favoured by her tariff policy, the weakness of the West Indian position became more apparent. Limited markets and difficult transport were poor grounds upon which to encourage investment. These considerations applied equally to alternative cultivations. As the fickle nature of United States tariff policy became obvious, any possibility of capital investment in perishable commodities, the most obvious field for diversification, disappeared. The unfavourable reaction of capitalists towards the West Indies during this period is all the more understandable in view of the strong competition from more attractive areas.

1. The excessive security demanded by Lipton illustrates this point. Ommanney wrote of Lipton's proposals '...the railway and the wharves being in the case of Antigua, mere accessories to the Central Factory, I think Sir Thomas Lipton should undertake the construction and making of the whole installation. If so, he had better find the capital. A guarantee of interest presents no difficulties, but to give him security for the whole or part of his capital is less easy. I would offer him one or the other; he cannot reasonably expect to be made safe all round.'
- J.C. Papers 14/3 Packet D Undated memorandum by Ommanney

The final question requiring consideration is that of how well the West Indies fared in comparison to British colonies elsewhere. Immediate comparisons are difficult because of the obvious fact that no two colonies shared precisely similar economic circumstances. The injustice of contrasting Colonial Office policy in areas governed by different economic conditions is clear. Nevertheless some comparison of Colonial Office objectives and involvement in colonies with similar economic problems is practical. An analysis of this nature appears to fall into two parts. The first concerns the question of the extent to which the economic problems of undeveloped colonies were sacrificed by attention and resources being directed towards strategically and politically more significant colonies. The second and more straightforward question concerns the comparison between treatment afforded to similar economically backward colonies.

Concerning the first of these questions, there can be little doubt that for both Chamberlain and his Liberal successors, South African policy demanded the greatest attention. For Chamberlain this merely reflected the level of British investment, and the potential profits or losses, compared with similar factors elsewhere in the Empire. Elgin and Churchill added to this the desire to accelerate the grant of responsible government to the Transvaal and Orange River Colony.⁽¹⁾ Also, a characteristic of the Liberal administration was a ministerial interest extending to Campbell-Bannerman himself in Imperial matters whenever such issues caught the popular imagination. It is perhaps unnecessary to add that this ministerial interest did not extend to decisions concerning economic policy in less prestigious areas. However, the

1. Hansard 4th Series vol. 152 22-23, 19 Feb. 1906

evidence is insufficient to justify the assumption that this lengthy preoccupation with South Africa was at the expense of other colonies. The most that may be said is that it did occupy a great deal of Colonial Office attention during the most formative years of the period under review - years during which a more ambitious economic policy for the West Indies was not perhaps beyond the bounds of possibility.

A further factor which is perhaps worthy of note at this point, is the remarkable degree of continuity between Liberal and Unionist administrations in Imperial affairs during this period.(1) That such continuity was a feature in the West Indies, albeit a rather negative feature, has already been seen. However, it was scarcely less apparent, even in areas of far greater direct involvement. The Liberals did in fact engineer Britain's repudiation of the Brussels Convention, just as upon a rather different scale but for exactly the same reasons they abolished caravan tolls in the Gold Coast. Neither event was of great economic consequence and as far as practical measures were concerned policy remained remarkably consistent. Although statistically the Liberals were rather more successful in opening the Treasury purse strings for Imperial purposes, the general rule was always complete self-sufficiency within the colonial administrations. Even Churchill, who temperamentally was perhaps closer to Chamberlain's policy of development than anyone else, was concerned over expenditure. He criticised the increased costs of administration in Gambia in 1907,(2) refused to co-operate in the proposed through telegraph from Alexandria to Mombasa and noticed officially that they were over-free with money in the Sudan. The tenures

1. See R. Hyam, *Elgin and Churchill at the Colonial Office*

2. 87/196/1747 minute by W.S.C., 11 Feb 1907

at the Colonial Office of Chamberlain, Lyttelton, Elgin and Crewe provided the best opportunities for a more adventurous West Indian policy, assuming such a possibility ever existed in view of the financial constraints. It is therefore interesting to notice indecision in Imperial policy at this date. In 1906 the extension of settlement in Kenya was encouraged by Churchill; two years later Seely not only discouraged it but was considering the repatriation of existing settlers.(1) Similarly the entry of the Boers was encouraged in 1906, discouraged in 1908. In Nigeria a great extension of western education was planned in 1906 and 1907, but instead in 1908 the development of Moslem education was undertaken.(2) Whilst direct parallels to this did not occur in the West Indies a similar hesitancy and tentative approach were apparent. Both Unionist and Liberal administrations shared a tendency in colonial affairs to appreciate far more readily what they should not do than to determine the steps that should be taken.

Despite the similarities in the approach of the Colonial Office to under-developed colonies, it is clear that in certain specific directions the West Indies did fare particularly badly. However, this was not entirely a consequence of Colonial Office action. Many similarities existed between the West Indian colonies and those of West Africa. Despite the development of the Ashanti goldfields and the exploitation of mineral deposits of coal and tin at Enugu and Jos, the long-term welfare of the colonies rested upon the establishment of sound agricultural industries as a foundation for future economic development. The question of land tenure and its significance in agricultural development provides an obvious ground for comparison between these two colonies. In both areas during the period under review the Colonial Office policy

1. 533/43/15172, memorandum by Ellis, 1 May 1908
2. Hyam, op. cit., p.530

was to maintain the *status quo*. The economic arguments in favour of maintaining the plantation system in the West Indies have already been examined.(1) It would be unrealistic to criticise the Colonial Office for failing to introduce large-scale peasant settlement in the West Indies in superficial consistency with policy in the Gold Coast and Nigeria where development of the plantation system was retarded by a prohibition against dispossession of existing peasant landowners.(2) It was one thing to safeguard existing peasant landholders against white acquisition and quite another to establish peasant proprietors at the expense of the large-scale industry. Furthermore, in strictly economic terms it does not appear that output was improved by the maintenance of small native farms. The yield and quality of cocoa from comparable areas was always lower in British West Africa than in the Cameroons, where the sparsity of population led to development of the plantation system. Notwithstanding the differences between them, the Colonial Office could have pointed to the West African experience as justification for its West Indian policy of maintaining the plantation system. The attitude of shipping companies provided another point of similarity between the two groups of colonies. The United Fruit Company established its own banana plantations in Columbia, at least in part owing to the unreliability of small growers in Jamaica. For exactly the same reason shipping lines in West Africa were disinclined to frequent ports which depended largely on peasant produce. Perhaps most significant of all was the similarity in the pattern of investment. As late as 1913 eight per cent of British overseas investment was concentrated in South Africa and only two and a half per cent in the whole of the

1. See, for example, pages 70-82, 122-124, 130-151, 162

2. Hyam, *op. cit.*, p.397

rest of British Africa.(1) To a large extent this reflected the value of South Africa, but it was also considered by the Colonial Office and by capitalists to reflect the level of white presence. Taken together, similarities such as these suggest that the guidelines which led to a rather negative policy in the West Indies were borne out by experience elsewhere, notably in West Africa.

It is not possible to proceed far in a comparison of West African and West Indian development during this period without encountering two important factors influencing the former colonies. One was the impact of the railways and the other the development potential of the colonies within the traditional economic system. Railway building in British West Africa was as spectacular as it was successful. The Colonial Office rejected the idea of private concessions and actively encouraged construction of lines financed by public loans. The railways were a financial success, even the expensive Southern Nigeria railway showing a substantial surplus by 1913. Much of the railway construction was completed early in the period under review. The Lagos to Ibadan and the Sekondi to Kumasi lines were completed in 1900 and 1903 respectively. Among the principal constructions, by the end of the First World War, only the Dakar - Niger line and the Accra - Kumasi line to join the Northern Nigeria railway were not completed.(2) The effect of these constructions upon the economy was enormous. Not only did gold exports rise dramatically but the new cash crops of cocoa, cotton, groundnuts and rubber followed suit. The possibilities of the railways extended beyond facilitating the extraction of minerals and

1. S. H. Frankel, *Capital Investment in Africa* Table 28

2. M. Crowder, *West Africa under Colonial Rule*, pp. 275-278

inflating the profits of the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation. The British Cotton Growers' Association directed perhaps its greatest attention towards Northern Nigeria, and supported by the vested interests of Lancashire pressed hard for a railway to develop cotton growing. The Association was far more active in its pressure for Imperial assistance in West Africa, Uganda, Nyasaland and the Sudan than it was in the West Indies. The potential of these areas for quality cotton production was far greater and it was this with which the Association was concerned. Their case was strengthened by the sympathy of the Liberals with the Lancashire cotton industry. In fact it is possible that this consideration strongly influenced Churchill's interest in railway construction in both West and East Africa.(1) Although the Colonial Office justified railway building on administrative and strategic grounds, it appears it was fully convinced by the arguments of the British Cotton Growers' Association and the Lancashire manufacturers. Thereafter the Colonial Office remained particularly sympathetic to approaches from the Association, notably in Uganda(2) and over the great Gezira cotton-growing scheme.(3) A typical example of the impact of the railways is provided by the coffee and cocoa exports of the Gold Coast; from a figure of 80 lbs in 1891 exports reached 13,000 tons in 1908.(4) In the West Indies there was no stimulus to the economy which in any way compared to railway construction in West Africa. Although the geographical situation was quite different, for the West Indies the development of seaborne freight connections was as

1. Hyam, op. cit., p.452

2. See Report on the Introduction and Establishment of the Cotton Industry in the Uganda Protectorate, 1909, Cd. 4910, para.8

3. See A. Gaitskill, *Gezira, a Story of Development in the Sudan*

4. Crowder, op. cit., p. 282

vital as railway penetration of the interior was for West Africa.

The hard truth is that one offered a profitable return and the other an apparently inevitable loss.

Railway building and the consequent rapid growth of British West Africa produced a highly favourable shipping situation. The variety of products, the land surplus economy, and the numbers of European, Lebanese and Syrian middlemen encouraged the shipping lines to take a far more favourable view of West Africa than of the West Indies. Colonial Office interest was quite unnecessary, except to regulate the growth of shipping rings. Steamship communication remained an insoluble problem in the West Indian economy for both planter and peasant. This reflected not only the internal problems of the West Indies but also the lack of incentive offered by an economy already operating at full capacity within its existing framework. It is scarcely surprising that the Colonial Office looked favourably on railway construction in an area where the value of exports rose from seven and a half million pounds sterling in 1900 to twenty-five and a half in 1914,(1) particularly when this growth occurred within the traditional domestic economy. The West Indian economy had had its day whilst the West African one was just beginning.

The Colonial Office approach to the development of agricultural processes and to education in West Africa was very similar to that encountered in the West Indies. In the improvement of agricultural methods the importance of local initiative was again essential.(2)

1. From tables in A. Pim, *The Financial and Economic History of the African Tropical Territories*
2. Crowder, op. cit., pp. 374-380

vital as railway penetration of the interior was for West Africa. The hard truth is that one offered a profitable return and the other an apparently inevitable loss.

Railway building and the consequent rapid growth of British West Africa produced a highly favourable shipping situation. The variety of products, the land surplus economy, and the numbers of European, Lebanese and Syrian middlemen encouraged the shipping lines to take a far more favourable view of West Africa than of the West Indies. Colonial Office interest was quite unnecessary, except to regulate the growth of shipping rings. Steamship communication remained an insoluble problem in the West Indian economy for both planter and peasant. This reflected not only the internal problems of the West Indies but also the lack of incentive offered by an economy already operating at full capacity within its existing framework. It is scarcely surprising that the Colonial Office looked favourably on railway construction in an area where the value of exports rose from seven and a half million pounds sterling in 1900 to twenty-five and a half in 1914,(1) particularly when this growth occurred within the traditional domestic economy. The West Indian economy had had its day whilst the West African one was just beginning.

The Colonial Office approach to the development of agricultural processes and to education in West Africa was very similar to that encountered in the West Indies. In the improvement of agricultural methods the importance of local initiative was again essential.(2)

1. From tables in A. Pim, *The Financial and Economic History of the African Tropical Territories*
2. Crowder, op. cit., pp. 374-380

On the whole the Agricultural Departments of West Africa were slower to act than their West Indian counterparts, probably indicative of less critical conditions. As in the West Indies, a good deal of attention was directed towards scientific investigation and the provision of specialised services. However, the Gold Coast administration was slow to improve the quality of cocoa exported, and in Northern Nigeria the potential value of groundnuts was not appreciated before 1907. As has been seen, such promising cultivations received far more rapid evaluation and trial in the West Indies. Elsewhere in Africa the same pattern was repeated. The Uganda cotton industry was close to collapse before Hesketh Bell rescued it in 1907. The introduction of experiment plots, distribution of plants and seeds and similar practices common to the West Indies were likewise a feature of West African agricultural development, and they met with very similar degrees of success and failure. However, in one respect at least the agricultural departments of West Africa enjoyed a significant advantage over their West Indian counterparts. The land surplus practices of the West Indian peasantry which were so damaging in terms of deforestation and soil erosion were, when encountered in West Africa, highly beneficial. Indeed such practices were largely responsible for the great export boom in groundnuts and cocoa. Another feature common to West Africa and the West Indies was the occasional example of peasant initiative. At Larteh in Ghana farmers raised £2,000 in 1914 for the construction of a wooden bridge. Between this date and the close of the period under review, the progressive cocoa farmers of this area spent over £10,000 on roads to supplement the government system.

The most notable fact about West African education was the change in policy brought about by Lugard when he discovered that far from creating contentment among the native population as he had at first anticipated, education in fact multiplied the class he most abhorred, the 'trousered

blacks'. On a practical level very little was accomplished during this period. The government established the Bo school in Sierra Leone in 1905 and later the Katsina college in Northern Nigeria. For the most part, however, education was left entirely to the various church missions. The establishment of the office of director of education in the different colonies depended on local decisions. The Gold Coast had one as early as 1890 but it took until 1911 in Sierra Leone.⁽¹⁾ The local differences and inconsistencies were strongly reminiscent of the West Indies. Chance circumstances dictated development as frequently as did deliberate policy. As with the practice of agriculture so with education, the West Indian pattern was repeated. A general absence of Colonial Office initiative giving way in some cases to a deliberate policy of non-interference was as much the fate of West Africa as of the West Indies.

The comparison with West Africa illustrates the particular advantages of these colonies over the West Indies. However, the approach adopted by the Colonial Office was the same, dictated as it was by similar considerations. The efforts of the West Indies to manage their own affairs during this period were limited by their inability to escape from the restrictions imposed by internal budgetary considerations. The financial barrier was obvious elsewhere. It is perhaps most clearly seen by the extent to which all development came to a halt in 1921, illustrating the obvious point that whatever was achieved within the West Indies, in the final analysis the fortunes of these colonies were determined outside in the world commodity markets. The Colonial Office attempted little more than a delaying action to stave off economic decline. No serious attempt was made to remedy fundamental

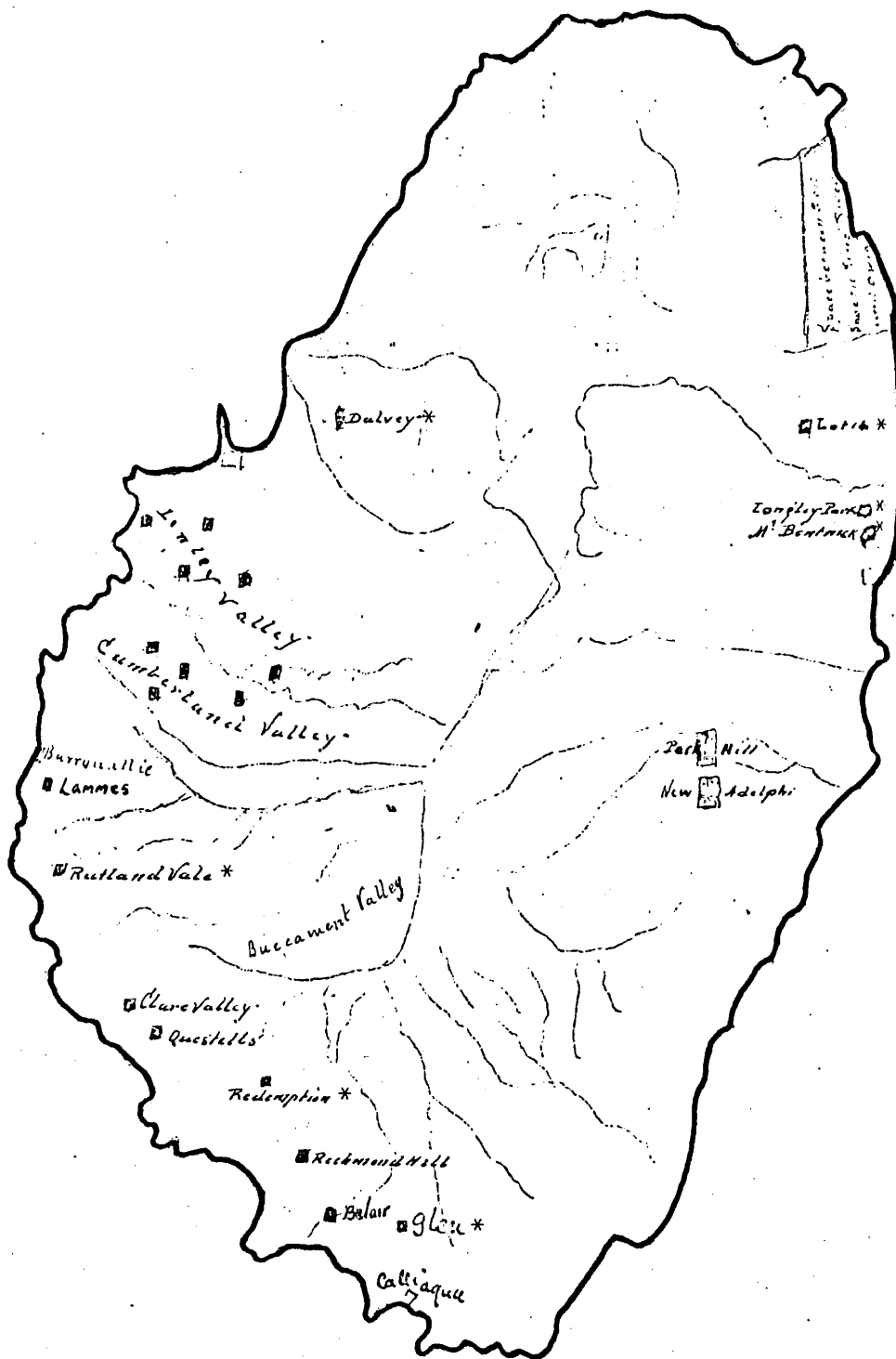
1. Crowder op. cit., 276 to 284

weaknesses, but as Chamberlain may have feared, in a world-wide context, the West Indian problem was perhaps insoluble.

APPENDIX A

1. Contemporary map of the Island of St. Vincent indicating the location of the Government land settlement schemes. These settlements were the only ones to be established and financed by means of Imperial funds.

2. Contemporary map of the Island of Carriacou indicating the layout of estates. This Island achieved the greatest success with land settlement experiments.



List of estates acquired for settlement purposes.

Cumberland Valley - Heritage, Grove, Spring, Convent and New Works.

Linley Valley - Troumaca, Belmont, Rose Bank and Rose Hall.

New Adelpi

Park Hill

Richmond Hill

Clare Valley and Questelles

Belair

Lammes

Sandy Bay (for carib settlement)

* Acquisition not proceeded with

APPENDIX B

Land sales in British Guiana under the Crown Land Regulations of 1898

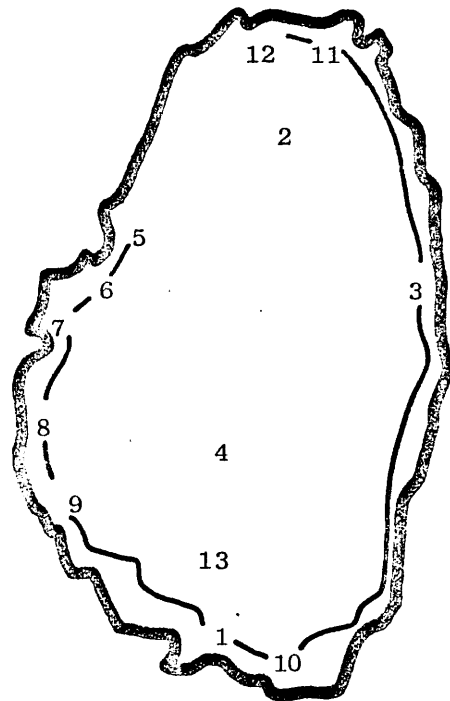
The following table of grants and licences of occupancy was compiled from the annual reports of the Department of Lands and Mines. The absolute grants include those made to peasant settlers as well as concessions for cattle rearing.

Year	Grants	Area of grants(acres)	Licences of Occupancy	(seldom granted for land settlement purposes)
1899	144	12731	68	
1900	184	11314	46	
1901	142	6714	42	
1902	147	6733	5	
1903	284	9022	45	
1904	134	3884	74	
1905	137	3634	58	
1906	99	3411	55	
1907	170	6502	45	
1908	158	4605	43	
1909	120	3898	17	
1910	150	8452	35	
1911	104	2634	22	
1912	187	7569	37	
1913	228	2687	19	
1914	71	856	After 1913 licences for the purpose of land settlement ceased.	
1915	5	91		
1916	20	138		
1917	11	14		
1918	11	368		
1919	2	10		
1920	1	5		
1921	62	472		
1922	100	831		
Total	2671	Total 96574		

APPENDIX C

1. Maps of the West Indian islands, indicating the locations of the principal roads.

2. Map of British Guiana indicating railway and steamship communication.

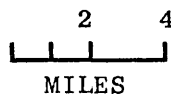
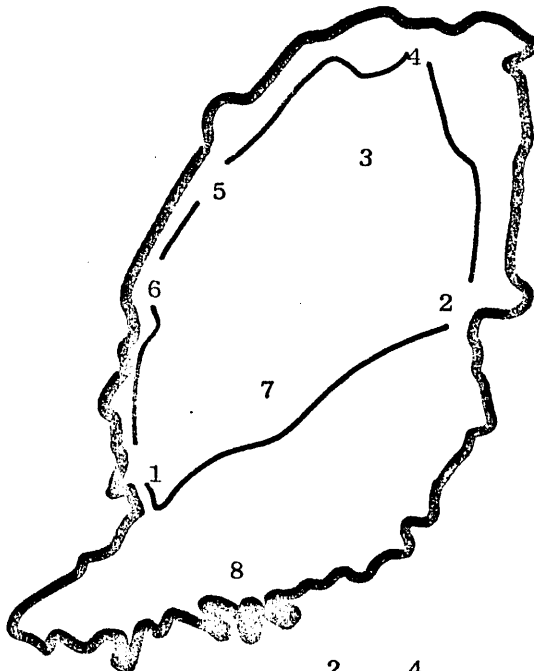


St. Vincent

1. Kingstown
2. Soufrière Volcano
3. Georgetown
4. Grand Bonhomme
5. Richmond
6. Chateaubelair
7. Troumaka
8. Barrouallie
9. Layou
10. Calliaqua
11. Owia
12. Fancy
13. Mesopotamia Valley

Average Temperature: 66-88°F

Average rainfall: 101.3 ins

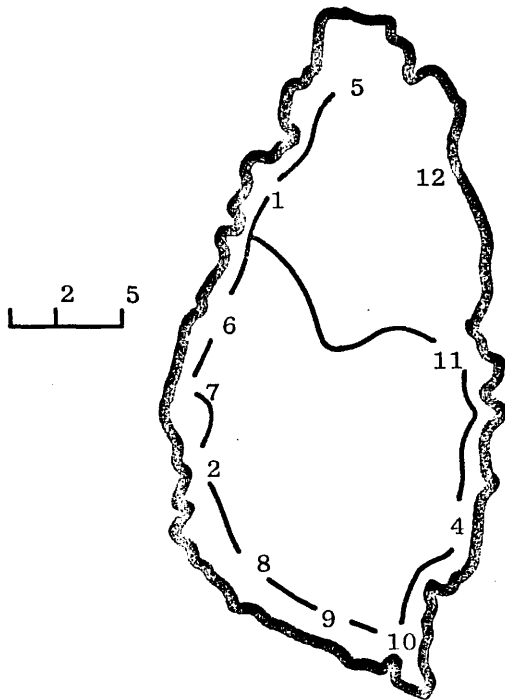


Grenada

1. St. Georges
2. Grenville
3. Mt. St. Catherine
4. Sauteurs
5. Gouyave
6. Grand Roy
7. Grand Etang
8. Calvigny

Average Temperature: 82°F

Average rainfall: 107 ins
(extreme regional variation)

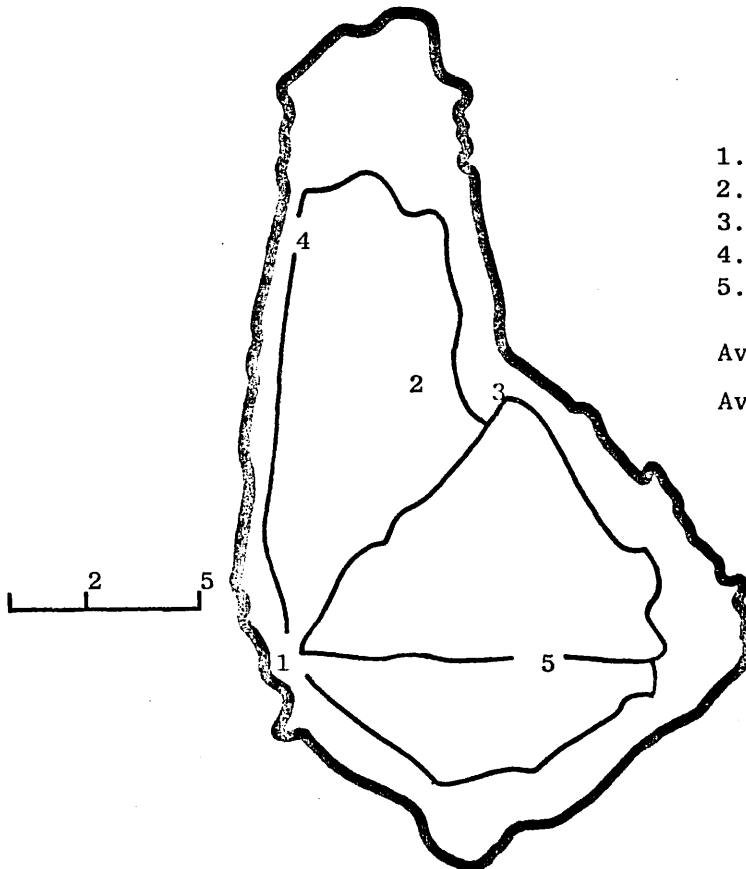


St. Lucia

1. Castries
2. Soufriere
3. Morne Gimie
4. Micoud
5. Gros Islet
6. Anse La Raye
7. Canaries
8. Choiseul
9. Laborie
10. Vieux Fort
11. Dennery
12. Grand Anse

Average Temperature: 80° F.

Average rainfall: 91 ins

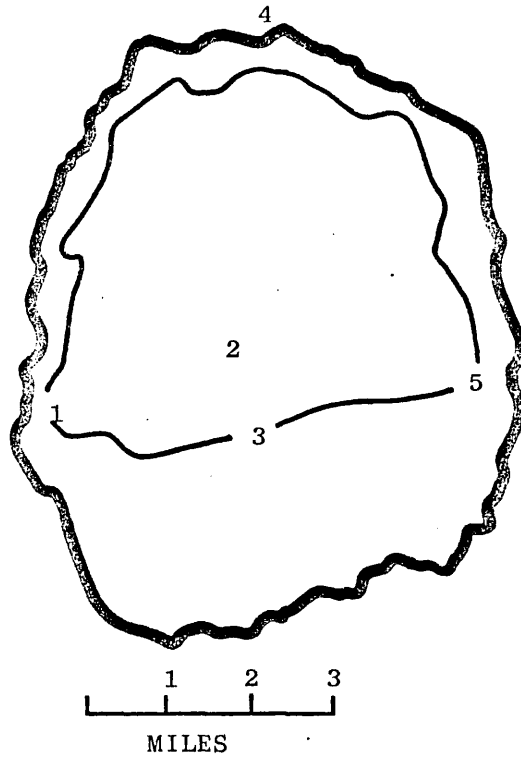


Barbados

1. Bridgetown
2. Mt. Hillaby
3. Bathsheba
4. Speightstown
5. Bentley's

Average Temperature: 65-86° F

Average rainfall: 60 ins

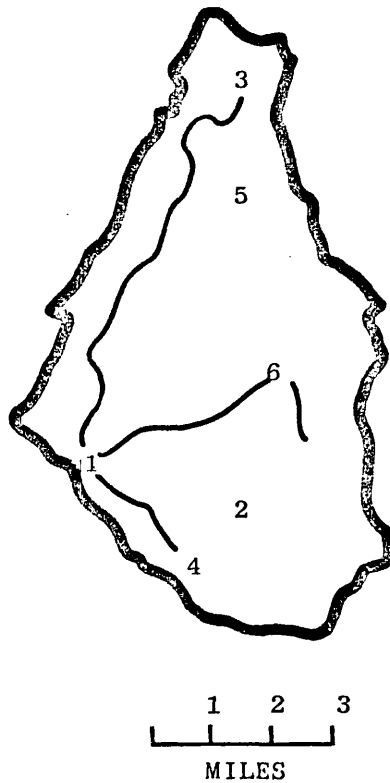


Nevis

1. Charlestown
2. Nevis Peak
3. Hermitage
4. Newcastle Bay
5. New River Estate

Average Temperature: 82^oF

Average rainfall: 41 ins



Montserrat

1. Plymouth
2. Soufrière Volcano
3. Silver Hill
4. St. Patrick's Village
5. St. John's Village
6. Harris Village

Average Temperature; 81^oF

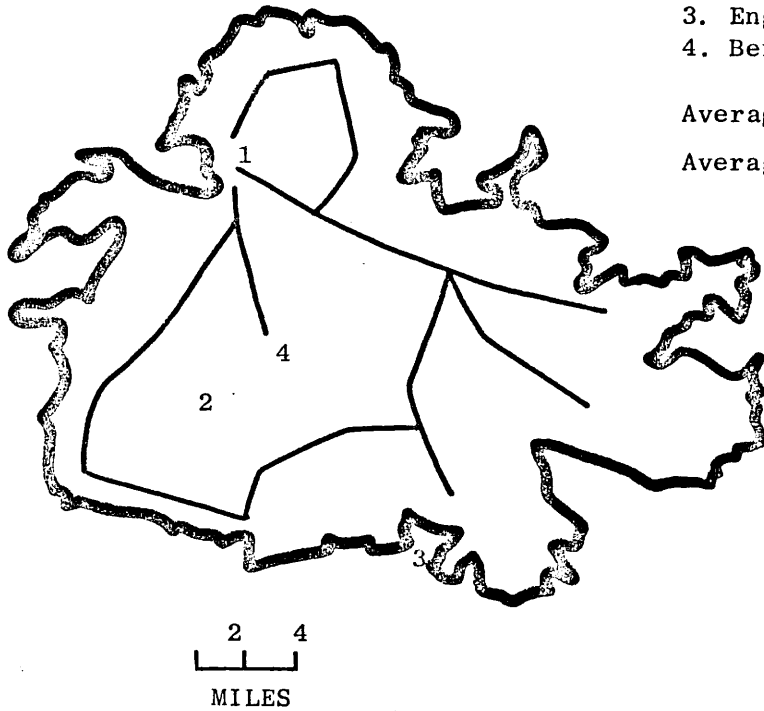
Average rainfall: 94 ins

Antigua

1. St. Johns
2. Boggy Peak
3. English Harbour
4. Bendals

Average Temperature: 84° F.

Average rainfall: 44 ins

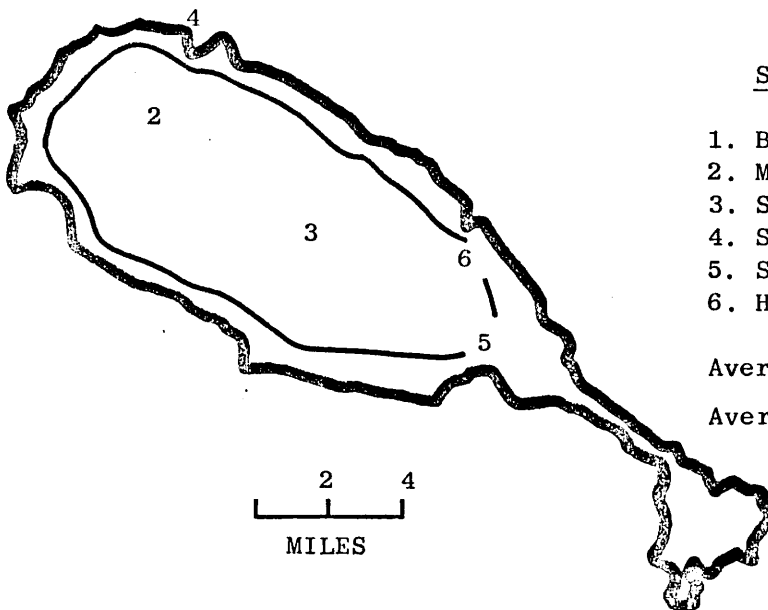


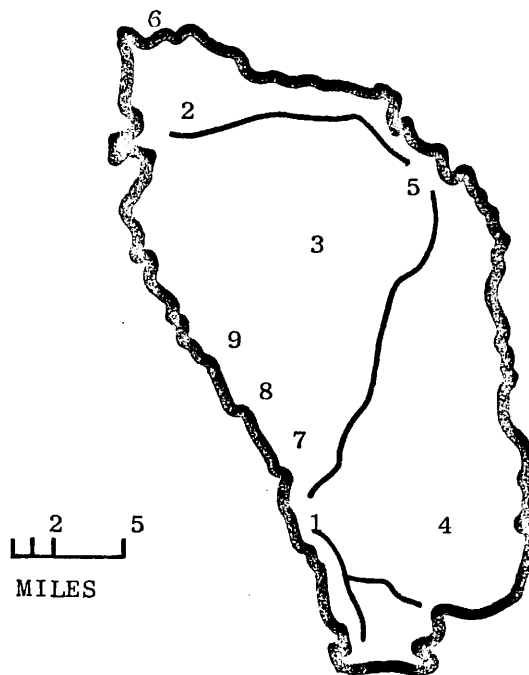
St. Kitts

1. Basseterre
2. Mt. Misery
3. South East Range
4. Sandy Bay
5. Sugar Factory
6. Hermitage Estate

Average Temperature: 78-85° F

Average rainfall: 38 ins





Dominica

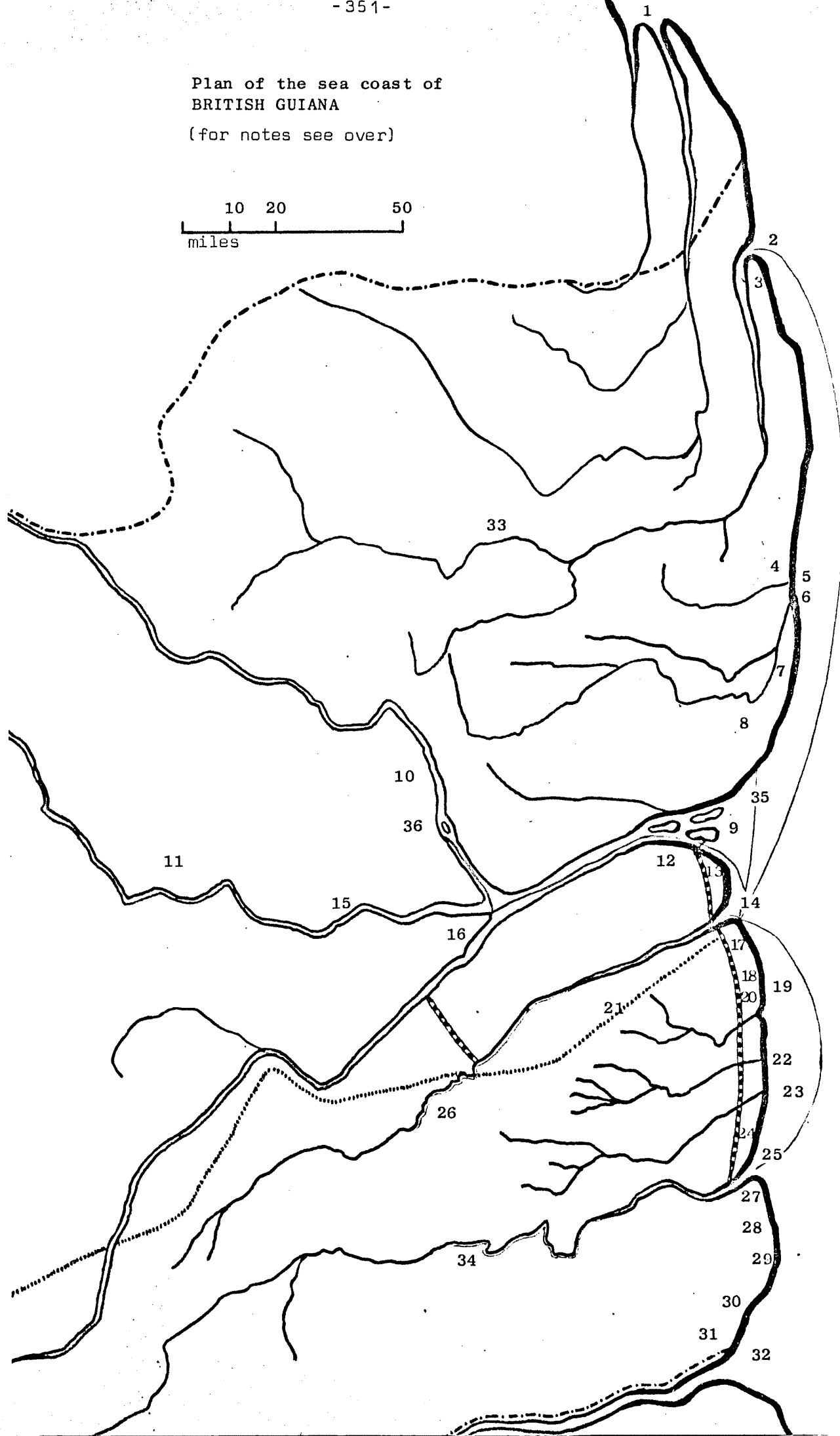
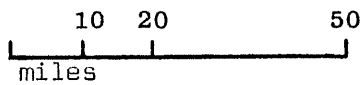
1. Roseau
2. Morne au Diable
3. Morne Diablotin
4. Morne Watt
5. Marigot
6. Cape Melville
7. Mahaut
8. St. Joseph
9. Salisbury

Average Temperature: 70-90°F

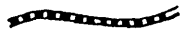
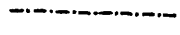
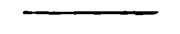
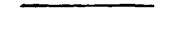
Average rainfall: 113 ins

Plan of the sea coast of
BRITISH GUIANA

(for notes see over)



Plan of the Sea Coast of British Guiana

Railway
Boundary
Gov. Steamers
Sproston's Steamers

1. Barima River
2. Waini River
3. Morawhanna - Steamer Terminus
4. *Santa Rosa Sugar Estate*
5. Maruka River
6. Pomeroun River
7. *Marlborough Sugar Estate*
8. *Anna Regina Sugar Estate*
9. Essequibo River
10. Cuyuni River
11. Diamond & Gold Workings
12. Tanka
13. *Vreed en Hoop (La Jalousie) Sugar Estate*
14. Demerara River
15. Mazaruni River
16. Bartica - Steamer Terminus
17. Georgetown
18. *Buxton and Friendship Sugar Estates*
19. Mahaica River
20. *Grove Sugar Estate*
21. Line of Proposed Railway
22. Mahaicony River
23. Apury (or Abary) River
24. Rosignol
25. Berbice River
26. Molali - Steamer Terminus
27. New Amsterdam
28. *Rose Hall Sugar Estate*
29. *Friendship Sugar Estate*
30. *Clonbrook Sugar Estate*
31. *Skeldon Sugar Estate*
32. Courantyne River
33. Barama River
34. Coomaka - Steamer Terminus
35. Suddio - Steamer Terminus
36. Matope - Steamer Terminus

Average Temperature (coastal plain) : 75 - 85°F

Average rainfall (coastal plain) : 80 - 110 ins.

APPENDIX D

West Indian Steamship Services and Contracts

Main line transatlantic service between the West Indies and the United Kingdom.

1842-1905 Royal Mail Co. contract service subsidised jointly by the Imperial Government and the West Indian Colonies. - £85,000 per annum.

1905-1910 Royal Mail Co. carried mails on a poundage basis without contract or subsidy.

1910 Service discontinued.

1911-1918 Royal Mail Co. contract service subsidised by the Imperial Government (£40,000) and the West Indian Colonies - £88,000 per annum.

This subsidy also provided for the existing inter-colonial service.

1915 The above fortnightly service reduced in frequency to monthly.

1918-1920 Temporary renewal of above service.

Inter-Colonial and Canadian Service

1900-1905 Pickford and Black Halifax Steam Ship Co. contract service combining an inter-colonial service and a Canadian service subsidised jointly by the Imperial Government and the Government of the Dominion of Canada - £27,000 per annum.

1905-1906 The above service renewed for one year as provided under the terms of the contract.

1905 Royal Mail Co. inter-colonial service, which had to run in conjunction with the main line service, was withdrawn.

1906-1910 Pickford and Black contract service of 1900 renewed for a further four years.

1907 Royal Mail Co. inter-colonial service, ten year contract, subsidised jointly by the Imperial Government and the West Indian Colonies - £25,000 per annum. In 1911 this service was combined with the new Royal Mail Co. main line service.

1910, 1911, 1912 Interim one year extensions in the Pickford and Black inter-colonial and Canadian service.

1913-1919 Royal Mail Co. inter-colonial and Canadian contract service subsidised by the Government of the Dominion of Canada.

1915 Royal Mail Co. inter-colonial service (1907 contract) discontinued..

APPENDIX E

Details of the sugar purchased for consumption in the United Kingdom by the Royal Commission for the Sugar Supply.

Sugar by-products purchased by the Commission, principally from Brazil, Peru and Venezuela, are not included. Similarly omitted is the small quantity of sugar purchased on behalf of certain Allied Governments.

RAW SUGAR

	<u>Western Hemisphere</u>						TOTAL	
	1914-15	1916	1917	1918	1919	1920	1921	(tons)
	(tons)	(tons)	(tons)	(tons)	(tons)	(tons)	(tons)	(tons)
Cuba	450,907	549,485	750,598	883,607	577,532	489,841	100,000	3,831,970
<i>British West Indies</i>	72,170	4,960	66,756	66,301	61,653	95,284	-	367,664
San Domingo	3,459	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,459
Costa Rica	-	-	1,634	-	-	-	-	1,634
Brazil	1,491	6,509	4,076	-	-	29,948	-	42,024
Peru	10,348	43,240	39,988	40,838	77,836	88,876	-	301,306
Europe	14,632	-	9,996	-	-	20,820	-	45,448

Eastern Hemisphere total (mostly Java) - 1,586,488 tons

WHITE SUGAR

	<u>Western Hemisphere</u>						TOTAL	
	1914-15	1916	1917	1918	1919	1920	1921	(tons)
	(tons)	(tons)	(tons)	(tons)	(tons)	(tons)	(tons)	(tons)
U.S.A. & Canada	260,438	239,994	57,897	44,202	252,967	14,355	-	869,853
Argentina	28,527	-	-	-	-	-	-	28,527
Peru	690	-	-	-	-	-	-	690
Costa Rica	696	-	-	-	-	-	-	696
<i>British West Indies</i>	-	-	14,003	-	1,250	-	-	15,253
Russia	2,140	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,140
Spain	486	-	-	-	-	-	-	486
Europe	58,678	-	9,849	3,000	15,699	-	-	87,226

Eastern Hemisphere total (mostly Java & Mauritius) - 1,721,567

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. MANUSCRIPT SOURCES

A. *Official Colonial Office Records*

- C.O. 318/285-374 West Indies general
- C.O. 111/500-645 British Guiana
- C.O. 28/245-302 Barbados
- C.O. 152/240-348 Leeward Islands
- C.O. 321/183-320 Windward Islands

B. *Private Papers*

Joseph Chamberlain Papers (Birmingham University Library) -
selected items

2. PRINTED PRIMARY SOURCES

A. *Parliamentary Papers*

- 1898, L, C. 8655. Report of the West India Royal Commission
- 1907, LXXXVII, Cd. 3565. Report on the Brussels Sugar Convention.
- 1909, LIX, Cd. 4910. Report on the Introduction and Establishment of the Cotton Industry in the Uganda Protectorate.
- 1910, XI, Cd. 4991 - II. Report of the Royal Commission on Trade Relations between Canada and the West Indies.
- 1910, XI, Cd. 5369 - I, Cd. 5370 - III. Report of the Royal Commission on Trade Relations between Canada and the West Indies.
- 1930, VIII, Cmd. 3517. Report of the West India Sugar Commission.
- 1945, VI, Cmd. 6607. Report of the West India Royal Commission.
- 1945, VI, Cmd. 6608. Report of the West India Royal Commission. Report on Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry and Veterinary Matters.

B. *Colonial Office Records*

- C.O. 854 Circular Despatches
- C.O. 31/86-108 Barbados Sessional Papers
- C.O. 114/61-187 British Guiana Sessional Papers
- C.O. 104/25-41 Grenada Sessional Papers
- C.O. 263/30-43 St. Vincent Sessional Papers
- C.O. 256/16-29 St. Lucia Sessional Papers
- C.O. 9/66 Antigua Sessional Papers
- C.O. 74/43 Dominica Administration Reports

C.O. 617/1-17 Imperial Department of Agriculture annual reports on botanic stations and agricultural departments

C.O. 33/106-132 Barbados Blue Books

C.O. 116/265-291 British Guiana Blue Books

C.O. 106/90-116 Grenada Blue Books

C.O. 256/77-102 St. Vincent Blue Books

C.O. 258/93-118 St. Lucia Blue Books

C.O. 157/10-36 Leewards Blue Books

C.O. 30 Barbados Acts

C.O. 113 British Guiana Acts

C.O. 103 Grenada Acts

C.O. 262 St. Vincent Acts

C.O. 154 Leeward Federal Acts

C.O. 73 Dominica Acts

C. *Parliamentary Debates*

Fourth Series and Fifth Series - selected volumes

D. *Periodicals*

West Indian Bulletin volumes I - XIV. The quarterly journal of the Imperial Department of Agriculture

3. SECONDARY SOURCES

A. *General Books*

Adamson, A. H., *Sugar without Slaves. The Political Economy of British Guiana, 1838-1904* (New Haven, 1972)

Amery, Julian, *The Life of Joseph Chamberlain* vol. IV, (London, 1951)

Anene, J. C., *Southern Nigeria in Transition 1885-1906. Theory and Practice in a Colonial Protectorate* (Cambridge, 1966)

Aspinall, Algernon, *The British West Indies* (London, 1912)

Beachey, R. W., *The British West Indian Sugar Industry in the late 19th Century* (Oxford, 1957)

Bell, Sir H., *Glimpses of a Governor's Life, from diaries, letters and memoranda* (London, 1946)

Bodelson, C. A., *Studies in Mid-Victorian Imperialism* (London, 1960)

Bolt, C., *Victorian Attitudes to Race* (London, 1971)

Bruce, Sir Charles, *Milestones on my long Journey. Memories of a Colonial Governor* (Glasgow, 1917)

Bruce, Sir Charles, *The Broad Stone of Empire. Problems of Crown Colony Administration, with records of Personal Experience.* (London, 1910)

- Chambers, R., *Settlement Schemes in Tropical Africa* (London, 1969)
- Clayton, E. S., *Agrarian Development in Peasant Economies. Some lessons from Kenya.* (Oxford, 1964)
- Clementi, Cecil, *A Constitutional History of British Guiana* (London, 1937)
- Courtenay, P. P., *Plantation Agriculture* (London, 1965)
- Crowder, M., *West Africa under Colonial Rule* (London, 1968)
- Cudjoe, S. D., *Aids to African Autonomy. A Review of education and politics in the Gold Coast* (London, 1949)
- Demas, W. G., *The Economics of Development in Small Countries, with special reference to the Caribbean* (Montreal, 1965)
- Drummond, I. M., *British Economic Policy and the Empire 1919-1939* (London, 1972)
- Edwards, D., *An Economic Study of Small Farming in Jamaica* (Glasgow, 1961)
- Eisner, Gisela, *Jamaica, 1830-1930. A Study in Economic Growth* (Manchester, 1961)
- Frankel, S. H., *Capital Investment in Africa. Its course and efforts etc.* (London, 1938)
- Gaitskell, A., *Gezira, A Story of Development in the Sudan* (London, 1959)
- Garvin, J. L., *The Life of Joseph Chamberlain* (London, 1934)
- Geerlings, H. C. P., and R. J. P., *Cane Sugar Production, 1912-1937* (London, 1938)
- George, W. C., *Race, Heredity and Civilisation* (London, 1961)
- Gordon, S. C., *Reports and Repercussions in West Indian Education 1835-1933* (Bristol, 1968)
- Greenfield, S. M. *English Rustics in Black Skin* (New Haven, 1966)
- Guerra y Sanchez, R., *Sugar and Society in the Caribbean - an Economic History of Cuban Agriculture* (New York, 1964)
- Hatch, J., *The History of Britain in Africa* (London, 1969)
- Helleiner, G. K., *Peasant Agriculture, Government, and Economic Growth in Nigeria* (New Haven, 1966)
- Hyam, R., *Elgin and Churchill at the Colonial Office* (London, 1968)
- Jones, G. H., *The Earth Goddess; a Study of native farming on the West African Coast* (London, 1936)
- Keane, A. H., *The World's Peoples. A Popular Account of their Bodily and Mental Characters etc.* (London, 1908)
- Lewis, G. K., *The Growth of the Modern West Indies* (London, 1968)
- Lowenthal, D., *West Indian Societies* (Oxford, 1972)
- Lucas, C. P., *A Historical Geography of the British Colonies, vol. 2 The West Indies* (Oxford, 1890)
- Macmillan, W. M., *Warning from the West Indies* (London, 1936)
- Morrell, W. P., *British Colonial Policy in the Mid-Victorian Age* (Oxford, 1969)
- Mowat, R. B., *The American Entente* (London, 1939)

- Neumark, S. D., *Foreign trade and economic development in Africa* (Stanford, 1964)
- Newbury, C. W., *British Policy Towards West Africa. Theory and Practice in a Colonial Protectorate* (Oxford, 1965)
- Olivier, Sidney, *White Capital and Coloured Labour* (London, 1910)
- O'Loughlin, C., *Economic and Political Change in the Leeward and Windward Islands* (New York, 1968)
- Parry, J. H. and Sherlock, P.M. *A Short History of the West Indies* (London, 1963)
- Perham, M., *Africans and British Rule* (Oxford, 1941)
- Pim, Sir A., *The Financial and Economic History of the African Tropical Territories* (Oxford, 1940)
- Redfield, R., *Peasant Society and Culture* (Chicago, 1956)
- Samuel, H., *Memoirs* (London, 1945)
- Smith, M. G., *Kinship and Community in Carriacou* (London, 1962)
- Taussig, F. W., *The Tariff History of the United States* (New York, 1931)
- Webber, A. R. F., *Centenary History and Handbook of British Guiana* (Georgetown, 1931)
- Wilgus, A. C., *The Caribbean: Its Economy* (Florida, 1964)
- Will, H. A. *Constitutional Change in the British West Indies* (London, 1963)
- Williams, E., *Capitalism and Slavery* (Carolina, 1945)
- Wilson, P. J., *Crab Antics* (New Haven, 1973)
- Winks, R. W., *Canadian - West Indian Union: a forty-year Minuet* (London, 1968)

B. Articles

- Clarke, P. F., 'The end of Laissez Faire and the politics of Cotton' *The Historical Journal*, XV, pp. 493-512
- Dumett, R. E., 'Joseph Chamberlain, imperial finance and railway policy in British West Africa in the late nineteenth century' *The English Historical Review*, XC, (April, 1975), pp. 287-321
- Hardy, S. M., 'Joseph Chamberlain and Some Problems of the "Under-Developed Estates"', *The Birmingham Historical Journal*, XI, pp. 170-190
- Hawke, G. R., 'The United States Tariff and Industrial Protection in the Late Nineteenth Century', *The Economic History Review*, (Feb. 1975), pp. 84-99
- Sheridan, Richard B., '"Sweet Malefactor": The Social Costs of Slavery and Sugar in Jamaica and Cuba, 1807-54', *E.H.R.* (May, 1976), pp. 236-257
- Will, H. A., 'Colonial Policy and Economic Development in the British West Indies, 1895-1903', *E.H.R.* (April, 1970), pp. 129-147