The Negro in the French West Indies

Shelby T. McCloy
University of Kentucky

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UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY PRESS
To MY LATE WIFE, for whose invaluable aid in the preparation of this book I am deeply grateful.
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PREFACE

THIS STUDY gives a careful, objective account of the Negro in the French West Indies from 1635, the date of the formal French acquisition of the first of these islands, down to the present day. It is corollary to my earlier book, The Negro in France, published by the University of Kentucky Press in 1961. In both books the emphasis is upon social and cultural history, although some attention is given to the political and military. Both present a field which has not been treated previously in special studies. There are histories of the Negro, histories of each of the French West Indian former colonies, histories of slavery, but no book on the history of the Negro in the French West Indies.

The Negro has been at the focal point of world attention ever since the United States Supreme Court decision of 1954, and much that has been written has been propagandistic in character, with an end either to promoting the advantages of or to preventing the advance of the Negro. This book has no such end in view; rather, it is a presentation of what has actually happened in the past to the Negro in the French West Indies. The story of the white man in these islands has been passed by as much as possible, and only so much as would cast more light on the story of the Negro has been included.

Some printed matter and a wealth of manuscript material exist on the subject, chiefly in France. In the Archives Nationales, Paris, there must be six hundred cartons and registers of official correspondence that passed between colonial officials and the Ministry of the Marine, which had jurisdiction over colonial matters until the beginning of the twentieth century. In addition, there are several scores of
registers of clippings and writings in the marvelous Collection of Moreau de Saint-Méry which deal with French West Indian history during and shortly after the great Revolution of 1789-1799. Also at Paris are the Archives du Ministère de la France d'Outre-Mer, often called the Colonial Archives, where most of the colonial correspondence from 1815 to the present is placed. All the correspondence that has passed between French and colonial officials throughout the past may be found in these rich collections of manuscripts. Because the archival deposits in the colonies have been subjected to fire, not only during the Revolution but also later, the Parisian collections are much the greater.

I cannot claim to have examined all of this material. I have examined at least two hundred selected cartons and registers of the holdings in the Archives Nationales and perhaps two scores of cartons and dossiers of manuscripts in the Archives du Ministère de la France d'Outre-Mer. In addition I have examined all the printed material on the subject that I could find in both the Bibliothèque Nationale and the Archives du Ministère de la France d'Outre-Mer.

Most of my source material for this study was acquired during the latter part of 1960 and the academic year of 1963-1964 when I was resident in Paris. These visits to France were made possible by grants from the University of Kentucky. The grant for 1960 came as a result of my election as Distinguished Professor of the College of Arts and Sciences for the academic year 1960-1961, when I was freed from teaching duties. My second visit to Paris, in 1963-1964, likewise was made possible by the beneficence of the University of Kentucky, which gave me sabbatical leave as well as a Faculty Research grant. The university also gave me summer grants for research during both 1964 and 1965.

By way of acknowledgment and thanks, I wish to express my deep gratitude to the officials of my university for the financial aid they have rendered me, and to the French
archival and library officials for their many courtesies. To Mademoiselle Blanche Maurel I am obligated for helpful bibliographical suggestions; and to my old-time friend, Professor Thomas D. Clark, for his kindness in reading the proof to aid me during a long and slow convalescence.

Courtesy bids me to mention a meritorious recent book by the Dominican Père Antoine Gisler entitled L'esclavage aux Antilles françaises (xvii-xixe siècle): contribution au problème de l'esclavage, in Studia Friburgensis, nouvelle série 42 (Fribourg, 1965). I have not cited it, since it came but recently to my attention. Its author has read widely, more especially in the printed materials, and has quoted his sources at much length. He has chosen a more limited canvas than I have, dealing only with certain aspects of slavery and not with other aspects of Negro history.

Lexington, Ky.
Sept. 7, 1966

SHELBY T. McCLOY
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ONE THE INTRODUCTION OF SLAVES

French acquisition of West Indian colonies dates to the seventeenth century. France took Guadeloupe and Martinique in 1635 and in 1697 took the western third of Hispaniola, Saint-Domingue (hereafter designated "Santo Domingo"), by the Treaty of Ryswick. In 1635 France sent a few settlers to the two smaller islands and announced her intention of establishing permanent settlements. The two islands along with others had served previously as occasional bases for piratical attacks on Spanish vessels carrying gold and other cargo to Spain. France, England, and the Low Countries had never recognized Spain’s right to ownership in the Western world, and throughout the 1500's and into the 1600's corsairs of these nations in large numbers had plundered, with rich rewards, the Spanish gold shipments.¹

Already African slaves in rather considerable numbers had been brought to the New World by the Spanish and the Portuguese. The first are said to have been some Senegalese brought by chance by the Portuguese to the island of Santo Domingo early in the sixteenth century. They came to the notice of the benevolent bishop, Bartolomé de Las Casas; he proposed that they be used to work in the mines and the fields instead of Caribs, who were dying in great numbers under their heartless taskmasters.² H. P. Davis gives 1510
as the date for the introduction of African slavery by the Spaniards. On coming to the Spanish throne Charles V accepted as a state policy the importation and use of African slave labor for cultivation in the New World and set about to regulate it. Not more than 2,000 slaves were to be imported during any single year, and in time a color line was drawn and whites were forbidden to marry either Negroes or mulattoes. This ban never operated with complete effectiveness, and by 1719 mulattoes were said to have constituted fully 5 percent of the population. 3

A factor that encouraged the employment of slave labor was the introduction of sugar cane into the West Indies in 1505 from the Canary Islands. It rapidly became the most important crop and continued as such until after the era of the French Revolution, when the sugar beet came to displace it on the world market. 4 Coffee, too, was introduced early and came to be an important crop. Slave labor was considered necessary for the cultivation of both crops.

Not for a long period, however, did the slave constitute the only labor force. Until the early eighteenth century at least white engagés, or indentured servants, from Europe were also used. The French are said to have gotten the idea from the English, who made widespread use of them. 5 According to Moreau de Saint-Méry, perhaps the best informed scholar on the pre-nineteenth-century history of the French West Indies, the engagés were white slaves from

1 Herbert Ingram Priestley, France Overseas Through the Old Regime: A Study of Overseas Expansion (New York, 1939), chap. vii; Henri Bangou, La Guadeloupe 1492-1848, ou histoire de la colonisation de l’île liée à l’esclavage noir de ses débuts à sa disparition ([Aurillac, 1962]), 56-60.


4 Ibid., 12.

5 W. S. Holdsworth, A History of English Law (9 vols.; London, 1903 et seq.), has an admirable account of the English indentured servants.
France who sold themselves for a period of thirty-six months for labor in the colonies. Their incentive was to acquire a fortune—and a few did. They sold themselves to a ship captain, who in turn transported them and sold them to colonists for a sum that covered the cost of their passage. The *engagés* at first were put to cultivating the crops same as the Negroes, but it was found that they did not stand the heat nearly as well. Accordingly, they were eventually made foremen and were placed in charge of the Negroes, directing their work. Thus, with the passage of time they ceased to be competitors of the Negroes and lived apart from them altogether.

From the late seventeenth century the government prescribed that all colonists, at least in Santo Domingo, must employ a certain percentage of *engagés* along with their slaves. A royal ordinance of September 30, 1689, issued at the request of De Cussy, governor of the colony, required that each planter employ an equal number of slaves and *engagés*. De Cussy made the recommendation for the purpose of building up the white population; for some of "the great number of *engagés* who have been there" had remained after their period of service was ended and had acquired considerable property. Later, on August 3, 1707, another royal ordinance fixed the ratio of *engagés* to slaves on the plantations of Santo Domingo at one to ten. A report dated April 11, 1718, to the Minister of the Marine, who had custody of the colonies, from the governor and the intendant of the colony stated that although the ordinance of 1707 was still the law of the colony they had found it expedient to reduce the number of *engagés* by half, so that the ratio was now one *engagé* to every twenty slaves. These figures show clearly that the preference of the colonists was for slaves over

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6 Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Description*, I, 45-46.
7 Archives Nationales, Colonies, C9A 1.
8 Report by Chateaumorent and Mithon to the Minister of the Marine, *ibid.*, C9A 15.
engagés, although the reasons are not explicitly set forth. Apparently, the slave turned out more work, was cheaper (the planter had to pay all back wages to the engagé at the termination of the three years) and no doubt easier to discipline. After the first quarter of the eighteenth century there are few references to engagés.9

According to the late eighteenth-century colonial scholar and native of Martinique, Moreau de Saint-Méry, the slaves for the French West Indies were drawn from the western coast of Africa, from Dakar down to Angola, including also certain islands off the coast, notably the island of Juda, whence came some of the more savage slaves, the Aradas.10 The Senegalese, on the other hand, were very desirable. Moreau describes them as “tall and well built [and] agile.” He attributes to them also “an air of superiority.” Neighboring races were the Youloffes, whom Moreau praises for their height, beauty, and strength; the Bambaras, who were the tallest tribe in Africa; the Quiambas; the Mandingues; and the Bissagots. He describes several tribes of the Gold Coast (now Ghana) from which many slaves were brought to Santo Domingo. They were marked by their intelligence and had a slight yellowish tinge in their skin that led some to regard them as mulattoes. Even more of the slaves brought to Santo Domingo came from the Congo and Angola, all of whom were designated Congolese. The Congolese were well regarded, genial, inclined to song and dance, and good workers.11

9 Some important studies on the engagés have been made by M. Gabriel Debien in the 1940’s and 1950’s. In fact, he is apparently the only French scholar who has ever worked on them.

10 Description, I, 47-53.

11 My authority for this last sentence is Gabriel Debien, “Une indigoterie à Saint-Domingue à la fin du XVIIIe siècle,” Revue de l’histoire des colonies françaises, XXVII-XXXIII (1939-1946), 28-29. Not everyone, however, had this high opinion of the Congo Negroes. A certain Sr. Binau, an official in Santo Domingo, in a letter of Feb. 28, 1707, to the Minister of the Marine, referred to the Congolese as a “nation libertine et fainéant” which
THE INTRODUCTION OF SLAVES

Getting the slaves and transporting them to the New World was an operation by no means easy or open to small enterprise. They had to be caught, roped, marched long distances, put in compounds, and later driven or pulled aboard ship. Native chieftains who were allied with the king of France, as well as many helpers, were needed. They drew good money out of the enterprise, and the king of France made the native chiefs handsome gifts. He might invite the chieftain’s oldest son to spend a year in France with all expenses paid, that the youth might learn the language and be better prepared to assume his father’s place in the nefarious business at some future date. Ships designed to engage in the transport of hundreds of slaves of both sexes and of all ages had necessarily to be spacious and especially designed to accommodate them—not with the comforts of luxurious travel but with all available space utilized—and so constructed that the slaves could be chained and prevented from escaping either to jump overboard or to rise up and take over the ship. In short, the enterprise was a complicated, elaborate affair and demanded organization and capital. A series of trading companies, all apparently joint-stock enterprises having royal approval and initiative, came into being in the 1600’s and 1700’s to fill this need. Generally a company was granted monopolistic rights to supply a designated colonial area and drew a certain bonus for each slave transported. 12

The first of the several French trading companies created for the purpose of supplying slaves for the Caribbean

set a bad example for the other Negroes. Archives Nationales, Colonies, C 8.

colonies was the Compagnie des Isles d’Amérique, in 1635.\textsuperscript{13} The venture was not a success and collapsed in 1645. In 1664 Jean Baptiste Colbert organized the famous Compagnie des Indes Occidentales, which likewise lasted only a decade and was succeeded by the Compagnie de Sénégal (1674-1685), which in turn was followed by the Compagnie de Guinée.\textsuperscript{14} This last fell recipient in 1701 to the Asiento (the transport and sale of slaves to Spanish Central America) from which it might normally have derived great profit, but the hazards of war (that of the Spanish Succession, 1702-1714) prevented their introduction of more than a few hundred a year.\textsuperscript{15} From 1716 onward through the period of the Old Regime private shipowners might engage in the slave trade, paying to the French government 20 livres for each slave brought into the colonies.\textsuperscript{16}

Companies came and went. A new Compagnie des Indes came into existence in 1720 and continued in operation until 1769. At the same time there existed and participated in the slave trade the Compagnie Royale d’Afrique.\textsuperscript{17} Late in the century even foreign companies were allowed from time to time to ship slaves to the French colonies. Usually a higher tax on the sale of slaves was imposed on foreign vessels, and the French companies with government contracts generally got a bonus on each slave sold, whereas the French private shipowners did not.

The slaves were obtained through native kings or chieftains with whom the French government entered into alli-
ance and contract. These kings had officers who corralled
the men, women, and children in camps or pens. The
largest number were victims of war; others were prisoners
who had committed a misdemeanor, perhaps trivial, and
wives whose husbands were tired of them. Some fathers
reportedly sold their own children into slavery.\textsuperscript{18} The slaves
were marched to port, often a long distance, tied together
in a long chain with a forked stick fastened between the
necks of each two slaves.\textsuperscript{19}

In the ports prior to embarkation the slaves were washed
and were rubbed with palm oil; their teeth were washed,
their hair cut, their nails clipped, and they were given some
exercises, all in the interest of improving their appearance
so that they would fetch a good price from the shipowners.
Professor Gaston Martin rightly points out that in the
eighteenth century some attention was being given to
hygiene.\textsuperscript{20} A surgeon made an inspection to determine if
any were suffering from a communicable disease or were
pregnant. And before departure all were branded on the
chest with a design of the owner or of the ship.\textsuperscript{21}

Aboard the vessels, the men and boys were quartered
apart from the women and girls. Twice a day the slaves were
fed gruel, at about nine in the morning and four in the
afternoon. Each day they were visited by the surgeon who
checked them for signs of any contagious disease and who
had them rinse their mouths with a disinfectant. They were
also given baths: buckets of water were thrown on the men;
water for sponging was given the women. Often they were
allowed diversions on deck. Sometimes, however, there

\textsuperscript{18} Bangou, \textit{La Guadeloupe 1492-1848}, 102; Rinchon, \textit{La traite et

\textsuperscript{19} Bangou, \textit{La Guadeloupe 1492-1848}, 102. See illustration of this mode
of convoy, Rinchon, \textit{La traite et l'esclavage des Congolais}, facing 113.

\textsuperscript{20} Histoire de l'esclavage, 73-74.

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., 70; Bangou, \textit{La Guadeloupe 1492-1848}, 103. Both Martin and
Bangou explain the method of the branding.
were riots or suicides. Fourteen women aboard a ship in September, 1774, committed suicide in unison, by jumping overboard. The riots usually were quelled, but not always. In 1742 the Negroes aboard a crowded slaver anchored off the coast of Juda seized the vessel, killed part of the crew, and freed themselves. The captain, Blanchard, escaped through a window and made his way to another ship and eventually to Martinique.

The crossing from Africa to the West Indies normally required from two to three months, but its duration could range from five weeks to nine months, as wind and weather might dictate. The ships followed a triangular course, going first from Africa to the New World, thence to France with colonial products or ballast, and finally from France to the African trading post again, with money and food stocks for the next voyage.

Under such crowded conditions the slaves suffered a high rate of mortality. This varied from 5 to 34 percent according to the year, says Gaston Martin, with an average loss of 10 to 15 percent. Bangou, historian of Guadeloupe, places the average percentage at twenty. There was sometimes an epidemic, most often of smallpox. Vaccination did not come about until 1798 and in the eighteenth century smallpox was the most deadly disease. In April, 1717, the Caesar de Nantes with a cargo of 280 Negroes, enroute from Guinea to Santo Domingo, dropped anchor at Fort Royal, having eight cases of smallpox and thirty-five convalescent cases aboard. The intendant was greatly irked because the ship's

22 Martin, Histoire de l'esclavage, 70-73; Ducasse, Les négriers, 114-19. Ducasse paints a more dismal picture of the conditions than does Martin. On p. 117 Ducasse has a drawing illustrating the packed conditions of the ships.

23 Letter from De la Champigny, governor general of Martinique, to the Minister of the Marine, dated Jan. 11, 1743, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C8A 55.

24 Martin, Histoire de l'esclavage, 71; Bangou, La Guadeloupe 1492-1848, 105.
captain tried to avoid reporting these cases; it was the second ship that year to attempt to evade him in this manner. In a letter of February 20 the intendant reported that several slave ships recently had eluded health inspection and had carried epidemical diseases into the colony. He insisted that greater precautions must be taken.

In the eighteenth century scurvy was perhaps the second most frequent sailors' disease. It was not until about 1739 that the English physician John Huxham discovered that it could easily be prevented by the use of citrus juice and green vegetables in the diet, and it was yet two or three decades before this was generally known and accepted. One of the five ships with slaves that came to Martinique in 1738 had so many cases of scurvy that its captain was forced to stop there, although destined for Santo Domingo. All of its Negroes had it. After an agreement between the intendant and the governor general, the captain proceeded to sell the slaves in Martinique at the reduced price of 700 to 800 livres each.

It was to the interest of all concerned that the sale of the slaves take place as soon as possible after a ship's arrival in port. Notices were printed and posted and couriers were sent to inform certain of the most likely purchasers. The auction at first was commonly held on shipboard; in 1764, two slave markets were constructed on land. Once more the slaves were bathed, their hair cut, their faces shaved, and palm oil rubbed on their skin, so that they would appear at their best. The slaves were nude: the potential purchasers wanted nothing concealed. The purchase made, the slave was the property of the purchaser. But the arrangement of the terms of payment was often a very complex matter. In

25 De Varenne to the Minister of the Marine, April 22, 1717, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C8A 22.
26 De Ricouart to the Minister, Feb. 20, 1717, ibid.
27 Letter from De la Champigny, governor general, and De la Croix, intendant, to the Minister of the Marine, March 21, 1739, ibid., C8A 50.
the seventeenth century and to some extent in the eighteenth, the payment was almost always in barter—raw sugar, indigo, and the like, expressed in terms of weight. The method of payment provided shipowners with a cargo to be carried to France and they did not need to resort to ballast. But in the eighteenth century payment was more often made in cash or in letters of exchange to a bank in France. It had to be stipulated whether the money would be paid in French or in colonial livres, the latter having only two-thirds the value of the livre tournois. With the time demanded by these and other negotiations, a month might elapse before the slaves were all disposed of. The captain then might have a considerable quantity of paper to carry to French shipowners from planters already heavily in debt.28

The number of slaves carried on a vessel varied greatly. The normal load was approximately 300 or 400. In the archives I examined I found no reference to a number greater than 600. In July, 1686, a vessel belonging to the Guinean Company with 560 slaves aboard arrived in Martinique.29 On the other hand a Portuguese slave ship, captured by a French cruiser in Caribbean waters in 1670, had a cargo of only 200 slaves.30 In July, 1701, a slave ship belonging to the Company of Senegal landed in Martinique with a cargo of “only a hundred Negroes and some Negro boys.”31 The arrival of slave ships in the colonies was a most important concern to the Ministry of the Marine, and the

28 Martin, Histoire de l'esclavage, 75-80; Ducasse, Les négriers, 133-38.
29 Letter of July 8, 1686, from Dumaitz de Goimpy and the Comte de Blénac to the Minister of the Marine, Archives Nationales, Colonies, CS4 4, ff. 110-11. Some cases of smallpox were aboard.
30 Mémoire sur la prise d'un vaisseau portugais par un corsaire française, ibid., CS9 A 1.
31 Report of Robert, governor of Martinique, to the Minister of the Marine, July 14, 1701, ibid., CS9 A 13. This same report tells of a vessel from the Guinean Company arriving in late June with 500 Negroes, all of whom were sold within two days.
intendant and governor always reported the arrivals and the number of slaves aboard, and sometimes the prices paid.

Prices for slaves varied greatly with the supply and the demand for them. Wars, which reduced the supply, caused an increase in the demand and in the prices, and in the years to 1789 the prices paid for slaves gradually rose. But prices fluctuated greatly. For example, early in the latter half of the seventeenth century a Dutch ship is reported to have sold a cargo of Negroes from Guinea for 2,500 livres apiece at Martinique; however, at the close of the Seven Years’ War, when prices might have been expected to be high, an English vessel with 114 Negroes aboard was only able to get 615 livres apiece for them at Martinique. On the eve of the Revolution prices were considerably above this. The author of an anonymous and undated memoir written in Santo Domingo about that time reported that 13,000 slaves were imported into that colony each year and brought from 1,500 to 1,800 livres each. Moreau de Saint-Méry, however, reported that the value of a strong male slave in Martinique in 1789 was 3,000 livres. According to the governor general and the intendant of Martinique most of the sales on that island were on credit.

It is taken for granted that great riches were made from the slave trade, and the wealth of certain cities—Liverpool in England, Nantes, Bordeaux, La Rochelle, Le Havre and Rouen in France—is cited as indicative of this. What is not so well known, however, is that the wealth had to be spread widely. There were the African kings and their aides, the ship’s captain and crew, the colonial officials (several of

32 Report of De Lion, governor of Guadeloupe, to the Minister of the Marine, April 1, 1669, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C9A 1.
33 De Fénélon and De la Rivière, governor and intendant respectively, to the Minister of the Marine, Sept. 1, 1763, ibid., C8A 65.
34 Ibid., C9A 4; Description, III, 1297.
35 De la Champigny and D’Orgeville to the Minister of the Marine, Aug. 17, 1729, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C8A 40.
them) who demanded handsome presents, a government tax on the sale of a slave, announcements of the sale, and medical inspection of the slaves. There were also the dangers of shipwreck, piracy, fire, mutiny, and epidemics, any one of which could cause heavy losses. In short, the prosperity was shared very widely, as many fingers big and little were extended to snatch a piece of the pie.

An amazing thing about the slave trade in the French Caribbean area was that there was always an incessant demand for more slaves. From the mid-1600's onward until the outbreak of the great Revolution of 1789 there went up the clamor, "We need more!" The governor of Guadeloupe wrote in 1729: "The colonists lack Negroes; there has come only a single slave ship since I have. However they would well be sold." The governor of Santo Domingo wrote in December, 1770, saying that only two slave ships had come during the year to the southern part of Santo Domingo and that the colony could well use 25,000 more slaves. Martineau's governor and intendant in 1739 wrote complaining that for two years no slave ship had come to the island, except for three that came by Saint Pierre and passed on to Santo Domingo without even paying their respects to the intendant. "The need that we have of Negroes is only too real and too pressing . . ." They complained that Santo Domingo was being favored over Martinique. This most likely was true, for Gaston Martin remarks that up to 1740 more slaves had gone to Martinique than to any other French Caribbean colony; thenceforth it was to Santo Domingo that they went. The Marquis de Mirabeau, governor of Guadeloupe, wrote back in 1754 to the Minister

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36 See, for instance, Martin, *Histoire de l'esclavage*, 74-75.
37 Du Poyet to the Minister of the Marine, March 26, 1729, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C7A 11. He had been there a year at this time.
38 De Nolivos to the minister, Dec. 9, 1770, *ibid.*, C9A 138.
of the Marine saying that it was "absolutely necessary" that Guadeloupe have 30,000 more Negroes. They would triple the value of the colony. He complained that most of the slave ships went to Santo Domingo.\footnote{Letters of June 7 and July 30, 1754, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C7A 17.} By no means were these complaints isolated ones; the clamor for more slaves continued right up to the outbreak of the Revolution in 1789. And even then there was no movement to get rid of the slaves. The colonists expected some possible difficulties with the slaves but thought that the militia would easily control them.

In my extended reading in the archival material on this matter I have noticed but one protesting voice, one lonely Jeremiah, who thought that too many slaves were being introduced, that whites, and not the Negroes, should come in greater number. The official who set forth this view was De Pouançay, governor of Santo Domingo, in 1681. In a memoir of that year he urged that France continue to send engagés to cultivate the island rather than Negro slaves, as thereby the French element of the population would be enlarged. He would limit the slaves introduced into the colony in any one year to 150. The planters preferred the slaves, he said, because they were cheaper, but the hope of increasing the French element of the population lay with the engagés.\footnote{"Mémoire du Sr. de Pouançay concernant la colonie de l'isle de la Tortue, et coste de St. Dominique . . .,", \textit{ibid.}, C8A 1.} How different the future history of her West Indian colonies might have been had France pursued such a policy as De Pouançay recommended! The idea already had taken root that those colonies could be cultivated only with slave labor, and the force of that idea increased as the eighteenth century advanced.

The trend in racial strains in the colony of Guadeloupe illustrates well the story of all the Caribbean colonies. In
1671 the white population of the island was 3,083, the black 4,267, and the mixed bloods 47. In 1730 the whites had grown to 7,731, the Negroes and mulattoes to 27,739. (In this same year the number of engagés on Guadeloupe had been reduced to 175, whereas in 1662 it had been 800.) In 1789 the white population was 13,712, the slave (Negro) 89,523, and the free men of color 3,058. There were some free men in 1789 who were Negroes and some slaves who were mulattoes, but both groups were very small. Generally speaking, the slaves were Negro and the free men colored. On the outbreak of the Revolution there were six times as many Negroes and mulattoes as whites in the colony.\footnote{Alfred Martineau and L. Ph. May, \textit{Trois siècles d'histoire antillaise: Martinique et Guadeloupe de 1635 à nos jours} (Paris, 1935), 186, 192, and 200.}

The result was that on the eve of the Revolution fear of the great horde of slaves was felt in the hearts of some colonists. An American traveler to the Caribbean, in a book published in Switzerland nearly two decades before the Revolution, reported that some thinkers among the colonists in Santo Domingo feared that the Negroes would eventually "make themselves masters of the island and exterminate the whites."\footnote{Jacques Vincent Delacroix, \textit{Mémoires d'un Américain, avec une description de la Prusse et de l'île de Saint-Domingue} (2 vols.; Lausanne, 1771), II, 81. Delacroix did not agree with them, thinking the Negroes too servile.} But apparently they advocated no alternate course of action; they were as paralyzed as a bird being charmed.
During the first decades of slavery on the French Caribbean islands regulation of the institution appears to have been entirely in the hands of the slaveowners. As reports of abuses began to come into Paris, the government of Louis XIV decided that some constraining order needed to be issued, delimiting the rights of owner and of slave. In 1685 detailed royal ordinance, called the Code Noir, was issued which with certain later supplementary enactments regulated the life of the slaves down to the era of the French Revolution of 1789-1799 and, indeed, in most of the French colonies down to 1848.¹ For setting forth the status of the slave in the colonial period, and also for an explanation of much of the history of these French possessions, no other single document is so significant.

It seems well therefore to begin with a brief summary of the code. Strangely enough the code begins with discussion of religion. It stipulates that Jews and Protestants were not wanted in the colonies. The Jews already settled there were ordered to leave within three months or risk having their property confiscated and themselves imprisoned. Incidentally, this order seems never to have been carried out completely and in 1787 a large coffee plantation in Santo Domingo belonging to a Jew, Mardoché Mendes France, was
sold by him for the great sum of 1,060,000 livres. Protes-
tants were not directly ordered to leave but were informed
that expression of any religious views other than those of
the Catholic church would be punished. Already there were
forty-eight Protestants dwelling in Martinique, with their
families and slaves, a total of 1,067 persons. And in 1686,
the next year, a hundred other Huguenots left the Cévennes
and set sail to Martinique. Most of the Protestants, in
alarm, proceeded in 1686-1687 to leave the French islands
and go to English and Dutch islands nearby.

The code ordered all slaves on the islands baptized and
instructed in the Catholic faith. Moreover, all slaves bought
in the future, if not from Africa, were to be baptized within
a week. Sundays and feast days were to be observed by all
subjects, free and slave. No work was allowed from mid-
night to midnight, whether in the fields, sugar manufacturies,
or elsewhere, under the penalty of confiscation of both the
sugar and the slaves. Nor might any sales of goods take
place on these days, under penalty of seizure of the goods
and slaves and imposition of a fine.

Marriage was forbidden to all non-Catholics in the colo-
nies, and children from such unions were to be considered
bastards. Before marriage slaves must obtain the consent
of their masters, and curés were ordered to marry no slave
who did not have his master's consent. Slave children

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1 Two or three times during the 1700's the Code Noir was published in
book form, but the work is rare. The most convenient place to find it, at
least the ordinance of 1685, is in the collection of old French laws prior
to the Revolution of 1789 edited by F. A. Isambert et al., Recueil général
des anciennes lois françaises . . . (29 vols.; Paris, 1821-1833), XIX, 494-
504. In the preamble of the ordinance is an explanation why it was issued.

2 See Shelby T. McCloy, The Negro in France (Lexington, Ky., 1961),
29n.

3 "Extrait des lettres des îles de l'Amérique écrites depuis le 15 aoust
1686 jusqu'au 6e may 1687," Archives Nationales, Colonies, C8A 4, f. 267.
There are several other references to Protestants in this document, ff. 257,
Annales des Antilles, V (1957), 72.
belonged to the owner of the mother. If a child was born to a free parent and a slave, his status of free or slave would depend upon whether the mother was free or slave. If a free man should have several children by a slave mother, and he be unmarried, he should marry the mother, who would then be freed along with her children.

Slaves were forbidden to carry arms of any sort, whether gun, knife, or stick, unless sent on a hunting expedition by their master, in which case they must carry his written permission.

All gatherings or assemblies of slaves, whether by day or night, were forbidden. Violators were subject to the lash, branding with the fleur-de-lis, and, for repeated offenses, death. Masters who permitted other slaves than their own to assemble on their land were to be subject to fines.

Slaves were forbidden to sell anything belonging to their master without his written permission, whether it be sugar cane, fruit, vegetables, or anything else.

A number of articles prescribe the food and clothing which the master was ordered to provide for each slave. The code in this respect definitely supported the cause of the slave. Even the amount of the food and clothing prescribed is set forth. If owners did not furnish food or clothing as specified, the slaves were directed to report it to the procurator (procureur), who would take the matter before the court. Nor might masters abandon sick slaves or those old and infirm. In the event that such should be found, the slave was to be taken to the hospital where he would be treated and fed at a stated cost per day, at the master's charge.

Slaves might not own property. The slave himself and whatever he possessed belonged to his master. Yet, said the Code Noir, he might with his master's permission earn small amounts here and there and keep them. Apparently this was
a frequent practice, for I have read of some interesting cases. The government encouraged the practice.

Neither might slaves hold office or exercise any public function. They were completely without civil status. They might testify as witnesses in the courts but their testimony would have only auxiliary value, clearing up confused points but not acceptable as proof. Yet they might be brought into court to defend themselves from the accusation of crime, whether in complicity with their master or not.

The code made it a very serious offense for a slave to strike any member of his master's family. If blood was caused to flow, the penalty would be death. In fact, the striking of any free person was a serious offense and the sentence might be death. Robbery or theft, whether of animals or goods, was an offense to be punished according to the value of the thing taken and the circumstances. For lesser infractions the punishment would be the lash, for the graver ones death.

The fugitive slave would receive severe penalties. He would be adjudged "fugitive" if a month had elapsed since the day his master reported his absence to the court. For the first offense, the punishment would be the cutting off of one ear and the branding of the fleur-de-lis on one shoulder; for the second offense, the fugitive's jarret or hock would be cut and the fleur-de-lis would be branded on the other shoulder; for the third offense, punishment was death. For harboring a runaway slave a citizen would receive the severe punishment of a fine of 3,000 pounds of sugar for each day's protection.

The government would reimburse the owner of an executed slave. The amount of reimbursement would be determined by the estimates of value of the slave as given by two prominent citizens of the community, who in turn would be selected by the judge.

It is interesting that the use of torture or mutilation of
any part of the body was forbidden as a means of obtaining confession from a slave. (Such was permissible in France until 1780.) Nevertheless, masters might have the slave whipped before the court if they thought he merited it.

It is to be observed that the master did not have the power to put his slave to death. Article 43 of the code ordered that the master or commander (police) who killed a slave should be tried and the murder punished "according to the atrocity of the circumstances."

Slaves were declared to be property but families of slaves might not be seized and sold separately for debt if they belonged to the same master. All such sales were to be declared null and void. Nor might slaves, aged fourteen to sixty, who worked in the sugar factories, or on the indigo farms, or on other plantations, be seized and held for debts.

Finally came clauses pertaining to the affranchisement of slaves (Articles 55-60) which could be made by masters aged twenty or more. Affranchisement might be made for services rendered to the owner or to another member of his family, but the government did not indicate here whether it encouraged or discouraged the practice. As time passed the government was to show increasingly that it discouraged affranchisement.

Such were the terms of the Code Noir. The passage of time brought new viewpoints, new matters of concern, and it has been said that the Duc de Praslin, cousin of the Duc de Choiseul and Minister of the Marine, was occupied with the project of revising the Code Noir when displaced from office in 1770. 4 Praslin, like his cousin, was a friend of reason and humanitarianism, interested in betterment of conditions for the slaves.

Another official, the paymaster Marin, advocated some revision of the Code Noir in 1751, but his recommendations

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were rather to stiffen several features of the code than to relax them. He would curb affranchisements, stop interracial marriage, punish more severely slaves who revolted because of trivial complaints, and discipline more severely whites who aided runaway slaves. Nothing came of it however. In general the code was accepted as a satisfactory set of rules governing the relationship of owners and slaves.

Perhaps the clauses best observed were those pertaining to food, clothing, and shelter, although frequently owners were charged with niggardly treatment of their slaves. There was ample land for gardens and owners commonly allowed a satisfactory portion for each slave family. There the slaves grew manioc or cassava, a tuber of which they were fond and which constituted their chief food. In times of wholesale disaster resulting from earthquakes, hurricanes, or insect infestation, the colonial governments aided the needy, white and black, with importation, even as did the government in France. There was an earthquake in Martinique in 1728; Guadeloupe suffered a severe hurricane on the night of September 10-11, 1740; Guadeloupe experienced another on September 6, 1776 (the estimate of losses running to twenty millions); and on August 23, 1787, the same colony had yet another, imperiling the food supply of 100,000 slaves as well as that of the poorer whites; Martinique, in turn, suffered a food scarcity resulting from a hurricane of August 14, 1788. On all these occasions the colonial governments imported food for the needy.

One of those criticizing slaveowners for their treatment of slaves was paymaster (ordonnateur) Marin, in 1751. In a report to the Minister of the Marine, he remarked that most

6 De la Champigny and D'Orgeville to the Minister of the Marine, Jan. 2, 1729, ibid., C8A 40.
7 Ibid., C7A 14, ff. 35, 37, 42; also C8A 79.
owners treated their slaves humanely, but that some did not. For brutal treatment of slaves he recommended the establishment of a fine of 10,000 livres. 8

It was traditional for men in the eighteenth century to think that severe punishment would bring an end to crime and misdemeanor. Not until about 1770 did some of the more enlightened minds come to a different point of view. 9 The Code Noir prescribed severe penalties for the slaves—scourging, branding, clipping of the ears, hamstringing, and execution on the wheel and by burning. The archives reveal instances of all of these. As illustrative of the severity of justice meted the slaves, I can cite the burning of two Negroes—a man and a woman—in Santo Domingo in 1744 for their respective parts in the poisoning of some fowls belonging to the master of the woman. 10 Another Negress in Santo Domingo in 1787 was condemned to be hung for having tried seven times to burn a home in Port-au-Prince. 11 Torture was expressly forbidden by the Code Noir but in obtaining evidence in the 1744 case De Larnage, the governor general, unblushingly reported that he had employed whipping of the slaves to good effect. It was no doubt commonly used for this purpose.

Maurice Satineau, Negro author of Histoire de la Guadeloupe sous l'Ancien Régime (1635-1789), lists one brutal form

8 "Observations sur la plantation des vivres aux Iles du Vent," ibid., C7A 16. As brutalities, he considered the failure of an owner to feed his slave adequately and the refusal to let the slave use Saturday to work for himself.


10 Letter from De Larnage and Maillart to the Minister of the Marine, March 18, 1746, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C9A 68. The Negress was condemned to be burned alive, the Negro to be burned alive also, after having first been broken on the wheel.

of punishment after another that was administered to the
slaves of Guadeloupe prior to 1789. Several are forms that
I have never seen mentioned in the sources, such as the use
of pepper in a gag, the nailing of a slave by the ear, the
filling of a slave with gunpowder up to his lips, the pouring
of hot cane juice on the slave, the burying alive of a slave in
the earth up to his neck and then putting sugar on his head
to draw the flies, the closure of slaves in boxes and barrels,
and the forced eating of excrement and drinking of urine.
No doubt there were masters mean enough to resort to such
cruelties, but I did not observe reference to them in the
manuscripts of the times, nor do I think that Satineau cites
sufficient evidence. Colonial justice was brutal enough with­
out these refinements.

It is of interest that the king of France himself was a
slaveholder. In 1744, for example, he bought from the heirs
of the estate of the Marshal d’Estrées a large tract of land
in Santo Domingo, and with it twenty-seven Negro slaves.
He divided the land into twenty-five portions, sold twenty
of them, but retained one portion and the slaves. Runaway
slaves in certain cases became the possession of the king.
So, too, did slaves contracting leprosy. In 1728 a leper
colony was set up on the small island of La Désirade, a
dependency of Guadeloupe; it was maintained throughout
the eighteenth century. At the outset there were 125 lepers
in this settlement—twenty-two whites, six mulattoes, and the
remaining ninety-seven Negroes. There they were fed and
cared for by the state.

Santo Domingo and Martinique also sent lepers there.
Free white, mulatto, and Negro lepers were deported and
placed in the colony along with the slaves; the state assumed

12 Published in Paris in 1928. It is a serious work. Pages here concerned,
279-83.
13 Moreau de Saint-Méry, Description, III, 1250.
14 Alfred Martineau and L. Ph. May, Trois siècles d’histoire antillaise:
the expense of their maintenance. According to an account
written in 1769 by the Duc de Praslin, then Minister of
the Marine, the leper colony on La Désirade originated
from the practice of colonists of the neighboring islands
who brought their leprous slaves to the island and left them
there. Some of the slaves recovered and their former masters
tried to reassert their ownership of them. This, however,
the government refused to permit.15 Cases of leprosy in
Santo Domingo antedated 1728. In 1710 there were already
families afflicted with it in the town of Acul.16 The town
council ordered a physician and two surgeons to visit and
aid them. On the eve of the Revolution of 1789 a scandal
developed in connection with a certain Bontoux, purchasing
agent for the leper colony, who was accused of profiting
financially from his position. Investigation was made and
apparently he was found guilty.17 Conditions for the lepers
of this colony were the subject of severe criticism before the
Colonial Assembly of Guadeloupe in January, 1788.18

In 1786 there were fifty leprous Negroes on La Désirade,
of whom thirty-five were children who had recovered from
the malady. What should be done with them was a question
troubling those in charge; the government’s policy was not
clear. Twelve of the Negroes had been put to work at
cultivation of cotton for the presbytery, and six others were
assigned to serve in the hospital as orderlies. They repre­
sented, of course, unskilled labor and were put to any job
where they could serve. Let it be said that the Negroes
liked to work for religious orders, but they liked most of

15 “Extrait des registres du Contrôle. Copie de la lettre de Monseigneur
le Duc de Praslin, à M. d’Emery et de Peñier, datée de Versailles, le
8e Decembre 1769,” Archives Nationales, Colonies, C7A 43.
16 Moreau de Saint-Méry, Description, II, 619.
17 Letters by Foullon d’Ecotier and Clugny in Archives Nationales, Col­
onies, C7A 43.
18 “Procès-verbal des deliberations de l’Assemblée Coloniale de la
Guadeloupe, tenus au mois de Janvier 1788” (Guadeloupe, 1788),
28, Archives Nationales, Colonies, in C7A 43.
all to work for the government, for the work was lighter and the treatment better than that they usually received from individuals.

Several religious orders had slaves in the French Caribbean area—the Jesuits, Carmelites, Jacobins, Capuchins, and Brothers of Charity. Altogether they had from 3,000 to 4,000 at any time in the eighteenth century prior to the Revolution. The paymaster of Santo Domingo who was serving there in 1707 as intendant called the Jesuits “more proper for the colonies than the other religious orders,” saying that they taught the children both of the whites and the Negroes and that they also served the churches. In 1763, on the eve of their expulsion from French territory, the Jesuits had 300 to 400 slaves in Guadeloupe, and their annual income there was estimated at 50,000 livres. The Jacobins had 400 to 500 Negroes and an annual income of more than 100,000 livres. The Carmelites had 200 or more Negroes and an income of 50,000 to 60,000 livres. The Brothers of Charity had “more than 300 blacks” and an income of 50,000 to 60,000 livres. All these orders owned land, which the slaves cultivated. A law of 1721 had forbidden religious orders to have more land than they could cultivate with 100 Negroes, but all had ignored it, said a report of 1763. The intendant in Guadeloupe thought that perhaps an examination of their holdings should be made, even as in France the Choiseul government was doing in the case of the Jesuits. However, apparently none was made. The figures given were for Guadeloupe alone, the smallest and least prosperous of the three colonies. On both Martinique and Santo Domingo these orders must have owned as many slaves.

20 “Mémoire abrégé, ou réflexions sur l’état actuel de la Guadeloupe, et des changemens que l’on estime devoir faire dans ce gouvernement pour le bien de l’état et de la colonie,” ibid., C7A 23.
A few slaves belonged to the government and were placed at the service of the hospitals. The intendant of Martinique wrote from Fort Royal, its capital, to the Minister of the Marine saying that he had just obtained several Negroes to work for the local hospital—"4 beautiful and good Negroes," a fifth who had been a runaway for two years, a sixth who was "mediocre"—and the intendant was now looking for two Negresses who could do the washing for the hospital. The hospitals of the three colonies were few, situated in the larger towns, and perhaps did not exceed a dozen in number. All were served, where raw labor only was needed, by slaves; the nursing was probably done by Europeans.

Finally, there were a few slaves owned by Huguenots, and the colonial government as well as the government in Paris occasionally focused its concern on them. In 1726 an official in Martinique wrote a letter to Père Louis de Sainte-Catherine, head of the Carmelite order in Guadeloupe, telling of a Demoiselle Godet, a Protestant who had recently died, expressing government concern that "religionnaires" should renounce their faith. According to report, he proceeded to say, Protestants there neglected to send their domestics and slaves to the Catholic church, as they should. He then asked the good father to have his order work more actively with the Protestants and to see that they send their children and their Negroes to be instructed in the Catholic faith.

An accompanying extract from the registry office of Guadeloupe apparently illustrates the course of action that

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21 Besnard to the minister, Oct. 25, 1722, ibid., C8A 30.
22 The hospital at Saint-Pierre, Martinique, run by the Brothers of Charity, was served in 1722 by Negroes. Three did hall duty, six worked with the linen, six provided the wood, three served in the kitchen, one as baker, four Negresses in the laundry, two or three hunted eggs, several sought water, and still others had other chores. So wrote Frère Dubois, head of the hospital, to De Feuquières in a letter of Aug. 15, 1722, ibid., C8A 30.
23 Letter of April 1, 1726, ibid., C8A 35.
Blondel de Jouvancourt would suggest. A priest called on the sick daughter of this Protestant Godet. The girl pretended to be delirious and the priest left but later returned and ordered Godet to see that his daughter was converted to the only true religion. Godet made no promise and proceeded to ignore the matter. Whereupon the priest brought him a court order and forced him to sign it, saying that she should change to Catholicism. The extract does not report whether the order was carried out. The anecdote illustrates that the French brought their religious zeal and intolerance to the New World and let it affect life in the colonies.

In December, 1730, Protestantism was the occasion of further correspondence. This time the writer was De la Chapelle, paymaster in Guadeloupe, and once again he was concerned about the whites more than the Negroes. In fact, he remarked to the Minister of the Marine that the Protestants sent their slaves to the Catholic church rather faithfully and called the curés when they were sick and let the curés instruct them. But he added that the Protestants had a subtle way of undermining what the curés did. He asserted that it was "dangerous to let [them] multiply." He promised to send the minister at once a complete list of Protestants living on the island but said that he would take no action against them until he received orders. There was no further comment on the matter; officials evidently considered that it was better policy to ignore the Protestants.

All Negroes and mulattoes, free or slave, were subject to a poll tax, the capitation, except for a large number who were exempt either for what they were doing or because of those to whom they belonged. Officials in the colonial

24 "Extrait des registres du greffe civil et criminel de l'île Guadeloupe," ibid.
25 De la Chappelle to the Minister of the Marine, Dec. 15, 1730, ibid., C7A 11.
government, military officers, and religious orders and hospitals were granted exemption for a certain number of slaves. The intendant and the governor general of Guadeloupe in 1763 were allowed thirty exemptions each, the governors and paymasters twenty-four each, royal lieutenants eighteen, majors fifteen, captains twelve, engineers and artillery chiefs twelve, infantry lieutenants eight, ensigns six, and sergeants four. Religious communities were allowed exemption of thirty slaves for their settlement (habitation), twelve for their convent, and three for each member of the order. Individual owners of slaves were often allowed a certain number of exemptions, and report had it that they greatly abused the privilege. All free mulattoes and Negroes were subject to the tax, except for those who served in the militia.\textsuperscript{26} Altogether, several thousand Negroes and mulattoes in Guadeloupe alone were exempt. This was true also of the other French Caribbean colonies.

Not all those subject to the tax were taxed at the same rate. Free Negroes and mulattoes in Guadeloupe who were aged fourteen to sixty and who were not serving in the militia were taxed at 25 livres each. Slaves working in the cultivation and manufacture of sugar or as domestics in the towns and cities, or those who were hired out to work, were taxed at 25 livres a head. Slaves employed in the cultivation of crops other than sugar, such as cotton, cocoa, coffee, ginger, and manioc, were subject to a tax of only 15 livres. Those occupied in the raising of livestock were taxed at 10 livres. And for some unexplained reason workers in the \textit{guildiveries} (rum manufactures) were exempt altogether, at least up to the number of six.\textsuperscript{27} Another exemption,

\textsuperscript{26} "Mémoire abrégé ou réflexions sur l'état actuel de la Guadeloupe, et des changemens que l'on estime dovoir faire dans ce gouvernement pour le bien de l'état et de la colonie," \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{T}A 23.

\textsuperscript{27} "Ordonnance concernant l'imposition pour l'année mil sept cent quatre-vingt-cinq," drawn up by Clugny and Foulquier, \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{T}A 41.
reducing by half the tax to fathers of ten living children, was set forth in Article 20.

The capitation varied from colony to colony. Thus, in Martinique in 1787 the slaves working in the island's 324 sugar refineries were taxed at the rate of 18 livres each. Those working at the cultivation of coffee, cocoa, cotton, manioc, and other crops were taxed at 8 livres a head. Slaves residing or working in towns and cities were taxed at 25 livres, as in Guadeloupe, whereas the free men of color were taxed at only 15 livres each. According to this report, 43,080 persons were paying the capitation in Martinique, and the total of this tax was 632,703 livres. The money appears to have been held on the island and used wholly for colonial expenditures. The capitation, quite understandably, is often mentioned and discussed in the archival records.

There was also a tax on the importation of slaves, collected at the time of their disembarkation in the colonies. It was minute in amount as compared with the capitation. French ships bringing slaves paid a tax of 4 livres 10 sous on each slave, but foreign vessels paid 45 livres each. In 1788, a total of 651 slaves were brought to Martinique on French boats, producing a total in taxes of 2,821 livres. In July of that year twenty-two slaves were brought in on three British ships, on whom 990 livres were paid. The money from this tax seems to have gone to the French Ministry of the Marine.

A considerable number of slaves were commandeered for service with the army engineers to work on the building and strengthening of fortifications. They served for indefi-

28 Observations des commissaires du commerce de la Martinique sur le procès-verbal de l'assemblée coloniale de cette isle, redigé le 14 janvier 1788 . . . (Saint-Pierre, Martinique, 1788), 1-2; Archives Nationales, Colonies, C8A 88.
29 "Etat des noirs importés par les batimens venant de l'étranger et des droits perçus . . . pendant les six derniers mois 1788," Archives Nationales, Colonies, C9A 90.
nite periods and their masters were relieved from paying taxes on them while they were so serving. This practice existed throughout the late seventeenth century, the eighteenth century, and into the nineteenth.\(^{30}\)

The economy of the colonies was almost entirely agricultural, and agricultural methods were primitive. It has been pointed out by two authorities on French colonial history that the hoe took the place of the plow as the instrument of cultivation, and that it continued to be used until after 1848.\(^{31}\) The colonies prospered largely because the European demand for Caribbean products was so great that they brought high prices and production never equaled the demand. The colonies also created a certain amount of crude manufactures, such as sugar refineries, rum distilleries, lime and brick kilns, tanneries, and indigo manufactures. Moreau de Saint-Méry gives a statistical presentation of the types of farming and manufactures that existed in Santo Domingo on the eve of the Revolution.\(^{32}\) In all of them the basic labor, of course, was slave.

Moreau de Saint-Méry also points out that in every colonial town or city there had developed a class of skilled workers and technicians, such as tailors, barbers, brick masons, carpenters, tinsmiths, and barrelmakers, which was composed largely of the free men of color and the free Negroes. A large number of these had been taken to France by their masters and there apprenticed to guild masters for the period of their stay. The expense of travel, instruction, and maintenance fell upon their masters, but it was small and their masters did not complain, for the

\(^{30}\) As an illustration, the Representative Assembly of Martinique in session on Nov. 12, 1793, ordered a levy of Negro labor to aid in the island's defense. “Extrait des registres des délibérations de l'Assemblée représentative de la Martinique. Séance du 12 novembre 1793 . . . ,” *ibid.*, CSA 102.

\(^{31}\) Martineau and May, *Trois siècles d'histoire antillaise*, 67.

\(^{32}\) *Description*, I, 111.
need of trained artisans in the colonies was great. The Negroes liked France and many found means of evasion and did not return to the colonies.\textsuperscript{33}

It was the government in Paris, not the planters, that took alarm at this practice, and ordinances were drawn up in the 1770's forbidding masters and their families to bring slaves to France and forbidding in France marriage between the races.\textsuperscript{34} The government in fact went further and ordered all Negroes and mulattoes who had not been long established there to leave France. Like many other French laws, it was not enforced. The government did not want the mixture of races to take place in France, hence this legislation. And the colonists, or at least many of them, were reluctant to see the Negroes return from France, charging that residence there rendered them impudent.\textsuperscript{35}

That all the towns and cities of the French Caribbean colonies came to have an ample class of artisans to handle the demands of a civilized society is strong evidence that a great deal of emancipation had taken place. The masters had taken their favorite slaves or their most gifted ones to France and after returning had emancipated some. Up to about 1715 the government had seemed indifferent, but afterward, and especially after 1760, it took an increasingly harsh attitude on the matter.\textsuperscript{36} In part it was evidently motivated by a desire to get the high monetary fee that was due the royal treasury from an emancipation, but its

\textsuperscript{33} On this, see McCloy, \textit{The Negro in France}, chaps. \textit{ii} and \textit{iii}.
\textsuperscript{34} A royal ordinance of Aug. 9, 1777, forbade owners to bring slaves into France, and an order of the Council of State of April 5, 1778, forbade marriage between whites and blacks in France; \textit{ibid.}, pp. 47-49.
\textsuperscript{35} This attitude was strongly expressed in a joint letter of Jan. 30, 1754, by De Bompar and Hurson, governor general and intendant of Martinique, to the Ministry of the Marine, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C\textsuperscript{8A} 60. The same attitude was set forth by De Vaivre, intendant of Santo Domingo, in a letter of Jan. 15, 1778, to the minister, \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{9A} 146.
\textsuperscript{36} Henry Lémery, "La Martinique au XVIIe siècle ou les révolutionnaires improvisés," \textit{Annales des Antilles}, III, IV (1955), 17.
THE CODE NOIR

chief objective was to maintain a large enough labor force in the colonies. The shortage of slaves owing to a high mortality rate was a grievous one, and it was difficult to get more slave importations. As a result, the affranchisements were made more expensive and difficult to obtain. An undated ordinance, evidently of 1732, by Governor General Fayet and the intendant, Duclos, related that many slaveholders for various reasons had emancipated their slaves without obtaining the required permission of authorities; hence these affranchisements were legally void, and the government threatened to seek out, confiscate, and sell the "emancipated" slaves for the benefit of the king. The ordinance also stated that it had become a custom to baptize many slave children as free. This too was prohibited, and a census of them was ordered, that they might be sold for the king's benefit. All curés and other clergy were warned to refrain from making such baptisms in the future. 37

Ironically, while the government was reluctant to see the affranchisement of Negro slaves, it was favorable toward that of a few Carib slaves. An intendant of Martinique in 1781 wrote that a royal order of March 2, 1739, freed any and all Caribs yet slaves. Some, however, had not been freed by their masters. Recently a few had been freed, and this had agitated the others. What should the intendant do? He asked for guidance. He commented that if they were freed their masters would lose the money invested in them, and he recommended their continuance in slavery. 38

Several years prior to this the governor of Martinique, Bouillé (the same general who later figured in the Varennes episode of 1791), wrote asking what should be done about a Carib slave belonging to a certain mulatto. The slave was worth only 2,000 livres but the mulatto had spent 8,000

37 Archives Nationales, Colonies, C6A 35.
38 De Peinier to the minister, ibid., C8A 80.
livres on him and if the slave were freed the mulatto would suffer a heavy loss. The outcome is not given. 39

Lafcadio Hearn has suggested that government hostility to marriage and concubinage between the races was a factor in bringing about the more stringent regulations on the affranchisement of slaves. 40 In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries wives did not commonly go from France to the colonies. Many colonists took Negro mistresses and in some instances married them. Some female engagés were sent out from France and married the colonists. The children born out of wedlock were quite commonly acknowledged by their fathers and were made heirs in the inheritance of property. On the eve of the Revolution of 1789 there was a group of fifteen or twenty of these natural sons of mixed blood resident in Paris, passing their time there on money that had come into their hands. To acknowledge his half-breed children brought no dishonor upon the father. Some white masters reportedly gloried in having black concubines. 41

They were aware, however, that they were flaunting ethical standards and social conventions. From the very outset it was conventional for master and slave, or white and black, not to mingle socially. Those whites violating the standards were termed mésalliés (mismatched). While society was willing to regard the concubinage of a white with a black as a small matter, it became a mountainous matter if one inherited a degree of Negro blood in his veins. To anyone with even the slightest degree of Negro blood the doors of white society were forever closed. A high post in the army or in the colonial administration could not be

39 Letter of Nov. 12, 1781, by Bouillé, ibid. Bouillé said that he had offered 2,000 livres to the mulatto but the latter declined, saying that he had expended very much more on the Carib.
40 Two Years in the French West Indies (New York, 1923), 338-41.
held by one with even a small degree of Negro blood. Moreau de Saint-Méry at the beginning of his excellent book, *Description . . . de la partie françoise de l'île Saint-Domingue,* gives a long discussion of this matter and defines some thirteen classes of white-black mixed bloods, called by such terms as quadroons, octoroons, griffies, and mamelukes. Even if a person had 127 parts of white blood in his veins as against a single black part, he would have been classed as non-white and excluded from white society.

It is easy to see where this attitude could lead. To be one of the poorest or most debased whites was deemed preferable to possession of high talent and mixed blood. This line of distinction was indeed made and followed, not occasionally but all the time. Three classes of society developed in the French Caribbean area—the whites, the men of color (mixed bloods), and Negroes. Moreau tells of theaters existing in the cities of Saint-Marc and Léogane, Santo Domingo, in the late 1700's. Each had a section of the hall reserved for the colored class; they might not sit with the whites. Cordial relations existed between the whites and the mixed bloods but the latter might never sit at table with the former. A mixed blood might invite a white to dinner but he would not “presume to sit” at the same table with him.

The mixed bloods in their turn aped the whites and looked down on the Negroes. There were some free men in both groups, with perhaps the greater portion of the colored class being free, whereas only a few of the Negroes were free. There were indeed some colored and some Negro

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42 See Baron de Wimpffen, *A Voyage to Saint Domingue in the Years 1788, 1789, and 1790* (London, 1818), 42. Vioménil, governor general of Martinique in 1789, aroused the indignation of the whites by embracing a mulatto at a public fete. Martineau and May, *Trois siècles d'histoire antillaise,* 152.
43 I, 86-100.
44 Ibid., II, 880.
45 Wimpffen, *Voyage to Saint Domingue,* 62.
slaveholders, and some men of the free colored class became wealthy. One such was Julien Raimond, an octoroon of Santo Domingo who went to France in 1785 and during the next decade played an important role in shaping colonial policy. As a result of slavery society in the French colonies came to be a sort of caste system, with sharp demarcations and privileges.

The Negro is a gregarious person; he enjoys company, in conversation, in games and dances, in work, in funerals. He enjoys above all the comradeship of his fellow Negroes, but he also enjoys, to a lesser degree, that of other races. He is thus pictured in the classic *Voyages aux Iles de l'Amérique* of Father Jean-Baptiste Labat.

Father Labat depicts the Negroes as being especially fond of dice, a game which they brought with them from Africa, and also of playing cards, an amusement they acquired by watching their masters. They wasted much time at these two sports but much more at the dance. It was their chief amusement, and the dance they enjoyed the most was the *calenda*, an African folkdance from the Guinea Coast, with lively movements and indecent gestures. The Negroes are shown spending days on end dancing the *calenda*. For rhythmic accompaniment they used two drums made by hollowing out the wood in two tree trunk segments, one slightly longer and much larger than the other, each covered at one end with the skin of a sheep or a goat. The larger drum, three or four feet long, was called the "large drum," the smaller the *baboula*. The larger drum sounded a steady beat, the smaller a much more rapid and vigorous one.
The dancers drew up in two lines facing each other, the men in one and the women in the other. With arms interlocked they alternately approached and retired from each other, often bowing, jumping, wheeling, pivoting, and using many gestures. One of the dancers would start a song, improvising as he went, and the other dancers would join in with a refrain. The two lines of dancers would come close enough together that they would strike thighs. Labat called their gestures “altogether lascivious.” It was a dance that could be continued for hours, even days. They danced it even in their churches and in religious processions. Ordinances had been issued to curb their dancing it, but without effect.\(^1\)

The Congo Negroes had brought with them to the New World another dance in which the dancers who participated, both men and women, stood still and merely raised their legs and their feet in rhythm. With this dance also there was singing, the leader composing a song that related some historic episode, the other dancers responding with a refrain. Father Labat reported that this dance had nothing of the shameful about it but added that the slaves did not care for it as much as they did the calenda.\(^2\)

The Negroes were very fond of music and many of them are reported to have made themselves a rude type of guitar, taking a dried gourd and over an opening cut in it placing a piece of hide that had been rubbed and scraped until it was like parchment. Above the skin they placed four threads of silk, or of the century plant, or of bird-gut. The music this crude instrument produced was poor but the Negroes liked it. A few Negroes owned violins with which they made money by playing for weddings.\(^3\)

There were complaints in Guadeloupe in 1765 that illegal masked balls were taking place which were attended by men

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\(^1\) Quoted in the *Revue Guadeloupéenne*, N.S. I (Jan.–Feb., 1947), 35-37.


\(^3\) *Ibid.*
of color, both free and slave, and Negroes. The masters always feared that assemblies would be used to promote rebellion and *marronage* (flight from work). Accordingly on February 9, 1765, the colonial administrators passed an ordinance forbidding all such dances and also the carrying of weapons, with heavy fines to be imposed on the Negroes, their owners, and on the merchants who sold them masks and weapons. Some whites, accused of providing their homes for these assemblies, were warned that the laws forbade this. The men of color were warned that they might not assemble for any reason, whether for marriages, feasts, or dances, under threat of a fine of 300 livres for the first offense and loss of their liberty for the second. Negro slaves were ordered not to assemble, under threat of scourging and branding with the fleur-de-lis for the first offense, “and the most grievous penalties in case of repetition.” These threats seem to have halted the movement.

Actually, there were very few forms of entertainment available to the slave or even to the free Negro. All meetings of slaves were forbidden. The slaves had little money to spend or to gamble with. They probably had no candles and were forced to go to bed at dusk. Even the church, which normally figures very much in the social life of people both primitive and cultured, manifested little interest in the slave. The Swiss traveler Girod-Chantrans, on his visit to the West Indies in the 1700’s, found the church neglecting the Negro, with few being married in the church and priests seldom confessing a Negro on his deathbed. The Baron de Wimpffen likewise portrayed a negligent church. Baptism often was postponed for children, even of the whites, until they were ten years of age.

4 “Ordonnance des admiers concernant les gens de couleur du 9e février 1765,” Archives Nationales, Colonies, C7A 25.
6 A *Voyage to Saint-Domingue in the Years 1788, 1789, and 1790* (London, 1818), 293.
Life held out so little for the slave that it is surprising that much the greater portion of them could be content and find happiness, as they did. They enjoyed working together and singing in the fields; they enjoyed conversing and dancing in the evenings; and they probably enjoyed an occasional meeting in the woods with a voodoo priest or medicine man. In general, they cooperated well with their masters in responsible positions as household servants. But of course there were many who fought back, either openly or cunningly. It was this group who became involved in rebellion or in crime of one type or another.

The most widespread of the slave crimes in the French West Indies was *marronage*, or desertion of their masters. The term is said to have come in all probability from a Spanish word, *cimarrón*. *Marronage* is an ancient thing. A classic example is the case of Onesimus, of the early Christian Greek community, who ran away from his master, Philemon, and went to the apostle Paul for sympathy and support, but whom Paul persuaded to return to his master. A distinguished scholar known for his studies on the French navy and colonies has stated that *marronage* was never very great. Never, for example, he says, were there more than 800 *marrons* in Martinique. This seems to be a large number to me; I doubt that there were ever more than 400 in Martinique at any given time. But no census was made and we are left largely to conjecture.

References to *marrons* in the seventeenth century are not many, perhaps because the number of slaves was not great. Moreau de Saint-Méry states that the oldest announcement of *marronage* of slaves in Santo Domingo was in 1703, yet

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in Volume II of the same work he mentions a band of twenty-five *marrons* who established themselves on the isle of Tortue, a small dependency of Santo Domingo, around 1679. There for a period the band massacred and pillaged, under the leadership of a Spanish Negro of much skill named Padrejan. Finally the whites became alarmed and twenty buccaneers went out and killed him and six others of his band.\(^\text{10}\)

The Spanish officials in the eastern part of the island of Santo Domingo were repeatedly accused by the French of abetting the *marronage* of French slaves. In a letter of October 18, 1685, De Cussy, governor of Santo Domingo, declared that within a year “more than 100” French slaves had become *marrons* and assassins, and that some had sought asylum in Spanish territory, where they were treated as though they were free.\(^\text{11}\) By no means, however, did all the *marrons* attempt to go to the Spanish colony; much the greater number stayed at home, seeking the woods and more inaccessible mountain tops where approach was difficult and hiding spots were numerous. For greater protection they gathered in bands, which were often quite large, consisting of several score members, and which maintained themselves by night raids on neighboring plantations for food and weapons. They welcomed new additions to their band but assassinated them upon the slightest show of falsity. These bands commonly had female members as well as male and were small organized societies existing within the larger colonial society. Some of their leaders were men of real ability.

The most famous *marron* prior to the Revolution of 1789 was François Macandal, a *marron* of Santo Domingo who had been born in Africa. According to one source, he lost an arm in a mill accident. After the accident he was made a

\(^{10}\) *Ibid.*, II, 666.

\(^{11}\) De Cussy to the minister, Oct. 18, 1685, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C9A 1.
caretaker of animals. For some reason he fled and became a *marron* for eighteen years, acquiring a great reputation as a poisoner. He was credited with having invented a poison that worked so fast that even dogs used in pursuit would die on the chase and with building up a network of poisoners that reached into all parts of the colony. All attempts to trap him seemed destined to failure.

But at length, in 1758, he was betrayed by a young Negro, who reported that he was at a certain plantation dancing with its slaves, and was captured. Taken to a Negro cabin, he was securely tied, and word was sent to officials in Le Cap telling of his capture. Then, according to one account, with their pistols on the table, the captors carelessly fell asleep. While they slept, Macandal, possibly with the aid of other Negroes, untied himself, opened a window, and escaped.

Dogs were brought into the manhunt. They picked up the scent and Macandal was recaptured. He was condemned by the Council at Le Cap, on January 20, 1758, to death by burning, the mode of death commonly given poisoners. Macandal had asserted that he would escape from his white captors and that he would not be burnt. He almost made good his boast. The scaffold to which he was chained gave way, and Macandal bounded over the fagots. Great excitement prevailed. Captured, however, by a band of Swiss troops who were there on guard, he was again tied to the scaffold and was burned. But rumor continued among the Negroes, even to the 1780's when Moreau de Saint-Méry was writing, that Macandal had escaped. The name Macandal became a byword in the colony and the Negroes were wont to call poisoners Macandals.

At the time of this episode a painter from Paris named Dupont was in Santo Domingo. He painted a portrait of Macandal and three of his chief accomplices while they were in prison. The pictures were taken to Paris and sold. The portrait of Macandal himself was purchased in Ver-
sailles by Moreau de Saint-Méry. It was an oil portrait “et très bon fait.”

In 1731-1732 there was an increased amount of marronage in Guadeloupe and the colonists were apprehensive of an armed revolt, but it did not get to that point. A large number of the leaders were taken prisoners, tried, and seven were executed, two in one place and five in another. It was hoped that the executions would have a subduing influence, but this does not seem to have happened, for several months later the number of marrons was still increasing and the king’s lieutenant on the island wrote the Minister of the Marine recommending that a body of free Negroes be sent to quell them, and that a recompense paid by the owner be given for the return of each slave taken.

The line of action suggested by Lieutenant De la Fond was the policy pursued during the latter part of the century. A company or a smaller unit of the militia, composed of the free men of color and small units of the maréchaussée, similarly composed, were sent after the marrons. They were eminently successful. The free men of color felt no ties of race or class binding them to the marrons. Quite the contrary, they considered themselves vastly superior, since they were free men, and they regarded themselves as being quite different in race since they were only Negro in part. Yet raids never completely put marronage out of existence. Moreau de Saint-Méry records that expeditions were sent against bands of marrons in the parish of Cayes de Jacmel, a rugged region marked with many caves and thus inviting to marrons, in 1702, 1717, 1728, 1733, 1746, 1757, 1761,

12 Moreau de Saint-Méry, Description, II, 629-31; Relation d’une conspiration tramée par les Nègres, dans l’île de S. Domingue: défense que fait le Jesuit Confesseur, aux Nègres qu’on suplicie, de révèler leurs fauteurs & complices (n.p., [1758]), 8.

13 Du Poyet to the minister, March 13, 1731, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C7A 11; De la Chapelle to the minister, March 15, 1732, ibid., C7A 12; and De la Fond to the minister, Nov. 19, 1732, ibid.
1776-1777, and 1781, with varying success, killing some, capturing others, but never exterminating them.\(^{14}\)

Moreau reported that in their measures of defense the marrons displayed much intelligence. In 1761 they constructed breastworks and in front of them dug a great ditch in which they drove pine spikes, covering them with boughs—a stratagem which they might have gotten from European military engineers or from animal hunters in Africa. When the militia was sent against them the marrons put on a dance in full view. The militiamen were infuriated and many jumped in the ditch to attack. Fourteen were crippled as a result.

Caves communicated with the marrons' headquarters, so that it was easy for them to escape when they so desired. In this particular hideout they had dug a well forty feet deep to supply themselves with water. Weapons and ammunition were bought for them by Spanish agents, even from the French, and they also used bows and arrows. They often captured Negroes on their expeditions and made slaves of them. It was reported that only one person, a Negress, ever escaped from them. They had a system of placing sentinels out in front of their stronghold, two at a spot, and these two communicated with two others, and so on. They fired upon any indication of trouble, and others relayed the warning. Sometimes they were forced to subsist on leaves and fruit, and they consequently suffered various ailments—dysentery and smallpox being listed as examples. No one knew the total number of marrons in Santo Domingo, but Moreau de Saint-Méry says that some estimated it as high as 1,800. Many marrons, he adds, had been born in the woods of marron parents. Indeed, there were some marrons sixty years of age who had never been anywhere but in the woods.\(^{15}\)

\(^{14}\) *Description*, II, 1131-36.

\(^{15}\) *Ibid.*
In 1722 the governor and the intendant of Santo Domingo recommended to the Minister of the Marine the use of two frigates to patrol the coastline of the colony at night and prevent the escape of Negro slaves in boats. What came of the suggestion is not reported, but similar suggestions were made as the century wore on, particularly in times of war, to protect plantations and towns near the shore from enemy raids. In 1715 two ships had been sent to aid the colonists of La Barbade against Negro marrons.

It was the opinion of one intendant that the main causes of Negro evasion were mistreatment and lack of food, both of them the responsibility of their masters. He reported that the governor agreed with him. No doubt the cruelty of many owners did provoke the flight of their slaves, but most of the slaves on the plantations did not attempt evasion; hence it must not be concluded that this was the only factor operative. The disposition of the slave was a second and possibly even more important factor. Some slaves were more amenable to discipline than others. Perhaps in every society in the history of man there have been the contented and the discontented. And often the discontented have not been those who have suffered the most.

The crime of the slaves that frightened the colonists most was poisoning. Reportedly the Negroes brought this practice with them from Africa. They used it much more upon their fellow slaves than upon their masters and their families. In fact, they rarely attempted to poison the whites but endeavored to destroy their master's wealth by killing off his slaves. Baron de Wimpffen, while on his visit to Santo Domingo in 1790, reported in a letter the poisoning of thirty-seven slaves belonging to one white owner. This owner had

16 Sorel and De Montholon to the minister, June 20, 1722, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C9A 20.
17 La Malmaison to the minister, Jan. 26, 1715, ibid., C7A 7.
18 Laporte-Lalanne, intendant of Santo Domingo, to the minister, June 1, 1752, ibid., C9A 90.
made plans to go to France and live on the income of his estate. He possessed forty slaves. The thirty-seven were poisoned, by strange coincidence, on the very day that he was to leave for France, and he was left virtually destitute. The story sounds as though it had been polished but stories similarly bizarre were reported by others. For example, in 1746 the governor of Santo Domingo wrote that he had lost 150 of his slaves since 1739, and that of these at least 100 had been the victims of poison. Pierre de Vassière, an early twentieth-century author of a good book on the society of Santo Domingo during the Old Regime, reports that "the most terrible scourge experienced in Santo Domingo and indeed all the old slave colonies [was] poison." He cites another instance of the owner's losing more than 100 slaves within eight months, all allegedly due to one Negro, who was caught with a bowl of arsenic and condemned to death on the wheel. Throughout the last half century before the Revolution of 1789 poisoning continued.

It was a mystery where they got their poison, for no one knew. Governor d'Estaing and Intendant Magon expressed to the Minister of the Marine in 1766 their opinion that it came from apothecary shops in the colonies, the surgeons often being careless and permitting their Negro helpers to handle their drugs. The two chief poisons used by the Negroes were arsenic and bichloride of mercury (sublimé). Both drugs were employed by physicians and surgeons in treating venereal disease, which was very common among the Negroes. The surgeons all too commonly let their domestics serve them as apothecaries. These domestics thus got access to the poisons and evidently sold them to the slaves. D'Estaing and Magon suggested that if arsenic and bichloride of mercury were banned from use the problem

19 A Voyage to Saint-Domingue, 301.
20 Saint-Domingue, la société et la vie créole, 238.
21 Ibid., 249, n. 4.
might be solved. Their suggestion does not appear, however, to have been followed. It was about this time that a Martiniquan Negro, Jean Mor, was burned in Rennes, France, for having attempted to poison his master, a young naval officer.23

A colonist of Santo Domingo, in 1788, maintained that more than 400 Negroes on his family’s plantation had been poisoned over the course of twenty-five years, and that he himself in two years time had lost forty-seven slaves and thirty mules. He had employed tortures on certain suspected old female slaves and had obtained confessions. But he was himself accused of murder.24 Evidently he had resorted to killing certain of the accused poisoners.

This case illustrates well the charge made in 1728 by the governor and the paymaster, De la Rochelar and Duclos, that an owner sometimes lost so many slaves mysteriously that, since he had no evidence that would convict the troublemaker in court, he considered himself obliged to pick the one he thought the poisoner and get rid of him in a private way. The owners justified themselves saying that if they did not so act their remaining slaves too would be poisoned.

The minister had inquired of these officials about the extent of sorcery in the colony and whether crime was not committed under its cover. They replied that there was some sorcery and that some crime went on under its guise but that most of the poisonings were not the work of sorcerers but rather of others “who know some ingredients (simples) with which they make their comrades die, without any being able to present juridical proof of it.”25

23 The details are reported in Shelby T. McCloy, The Negro in France (Lexington, Ky., 1961), pp. 59-62.
24 “Mémoire pour MM. les administrateurs de St. Domingue, par N[a]r le Jeune, fils, fils habt à Plaisance,” Archives Nationales, Colonies, F3 150 (Collection of Moreau de Saint-Méry).
25 Letter of April 14, 1728, to the minister, ibid., C9A 28.
The psychology of the poisoners is baffling. Allegedly they were motivated by a desire to harm and weaken their owners and their owners' families and had no ill will toward those of their own race whom they poisoned. Whoever their victims might be, there would be no difference in the punishment meted, if they were caught. And perhaps many of the poisoners had no access to the owner's kitchen or well. At any rate, they poisoned their fellow slaves, and sometimes the animals, with as much nonchalance as we would ants or insects. As for combatting this tendency through the church, writers of the period frequently remark that the church had little influence with the slaves.26

There existed another form of crime sometimes committed by the slaves that greatly frightened the colonists. This was cannibalism. There were very few instances, or even alleged instances, of its practice; the case with most details was one that occurred in Guadeloupe in August, 1737. Two reports on it were sent by colonial officials to the Minister of the Marine, one in a letter of February 4, 1738, by the military commandant, Mont St. Remy, the other a minute or resumé based on court records and resting upon an account of the paymaster, Marin. The victim was a white child, aged six, who "had lost the power of speech and had become an imbecile as a result of an earthquake in Guadeloupe two years previously." Whether the child was a boy or girl is not clear. The child was sent out to find its father who was at work in the field but got lost and was met by some Negro marrons. These took him to a wooded area nearby, where they were encamped. Most of the band were Mon-dongues, an African tribe given to cannibalism. They built a large fire, began dancing around it, cut off the child's head, placed it on a saber, and continued their dancing with great shouts. The child's body was cut into two parts, one of which they cut into small pieces and roasted for eating at

26 Ibid.
once, seasoning it with salt and pepper; the other part they put aside for cooking and eating the next day.

The judicial report, which is more elaborate in details, states that five Negroes had been condemned to be broken on the wheel and afterward burned because of the crime; also, they had been condemned to submit to the "question" (a form of legal torture) concerning accomplices. Two of the condemned had accused the other Negroes found guilty. The report says that apparently only five Negroes and one Negress had participated in the killing and eating. The case was not yet terminated.\(^{27}\)

Mont St. Remy in his report said that several cases of cannibalism had occurred in the colony, all the victims having been Negroes or Negresses except for this child. Some of the victims, he reported, were buried alive. Those convicted for the death of the white child had already been punished by the time of his letter of February 4. He reported that *marronism* was great in the island just then, sometimes as many as 300 assembling in their great camp.

Moreau de Saint-Méry, whom no one will charge as over-credulous, says that members of the African cannibal tribes, the Mondongues and the Mousombés, sometimes sold human flesh in Santo Domingo and cites as a case of cannibalism an old Negress found in 1786 near the city of Jérémie eating part of the body of a child. She was a midwife and hospital aide on a plantation. The owner observed that most of the Negro children born on this farm died during their first week and he had the woman spied upon. It was then that she was caught.\(^{28}\)

One might narrate many individual crimes and misdemeanors of which the Negroes and mulattoes of the French Caribbean colonies were guilty, but they would differ little from the crimes of other peoples. The Negroes of these colonies were accused of murder, robbery, debauch-

\(^{28}\) *Description*, I, 53-54.
ery, and, interestingly enough, of hoarding coins and of reckless driving, but the whites were guilty of the same legal infractions. At a later stage the Negroes were accused, and with reason, of incendiarism, but prior to the French Revolution of 1789 they appear to have used it but rarely.

Criminals and those guilty of misdemeanors were placed in prison, which was not always a place of surety. The prison at Cap Français, Santo Domingo, has been described as very insecure; criminals and slaves sent there by their masters were confined together; lack of sanitation prevailed. This was in 1770, and the examination was made by two members of the Superior Council of the city on the council’s orders. \[29\] This was seven years prior to the publication of John Howard’s *The State of the Prisons*, in which he called the attention of the public to the disgraceful conditions in English jails.

More information concerning the prison at Cap Français was given in a letter from the governor and intendant in 1772. The building was privately owned and rented to the government for 6,000 livres a year. It was so old and dilapidated that prisoners escaped with ease: from twenty-six to forty had escaped within the past six months. The jailor was suspected of conniving in the escapes. Prisoners were thrown together regardless of color and crime. The writers reported the need of both a better building and more spacious grounds; in fact, the intendant was already negotiating for the purchase of a plot of land and plans had been drawn for the new jail. \[30\]

Fifteen or sixteen years later it was much improved, as seen in the account of Moreau de Saint-Méry. Persons free were separated from slaves, and women from men. There were rooms on the first floor with beds; the other


\[30\] Letter of June 28, 1772, from De Vallière and Montercher to the minister, *ibid.*, C\[^9\A\] 141.
rooms were fitted up with camp cots. There were broad, well paved walks for prisoners to get their exercise and fresh air. The prisoners were allowed to walk both in mornings and in afternoons. The prison was equipped with running water. The only feature which Moreau criticized was the foul odor which resulted from the lack of sanitation. Unfortunately, torture was still used to get confessions and this prison was provided with a room for that purpose.

Slaves were tried and convicted of crimes in the same way as were the colonists. Those guilty of the most heinous crimes were hung, broken at the wheel, quartered, or burned, even as were the whites. The same laws and penalties prevailed in France. There too they were very severe. The Parlement of Bordeaux, for example, in 1716 convicted a weaver named Sandau of parricide and condemned him to have his hand cut off and his body broken and fastened to a wheel in a churchyard.

In the course of the eighteenth century the chain gang was instituted in these colonies, in answer to a demand for a form of punishment of misdemeanors which was more severe than lashing with the whip or branding with the fleur-de-lis, and at the same time less severe than capital punishment. It was based upon the galley of France and sometimes termed “galleys” in the sources. It was recommended for these islands in 1739 and 1763. Moreau de Saint-Méry describes the chain gang of Santo Domingo on the eve of the Revolution as an institution in which Negro convicts received better treatment than did the galley slaves in France. They were dressed better, given more liberty,

31 Description, I, 390.
32 "Catalogue des arrêts de portée générale du Parlement de Bordeaux, 1645-1790," Archives, dept. de Bordeaux, C 3788.
33 " Mémoire abrégé, ou réflexions sur l'état actuel de la Guadeloupe, et des changemens que l'on estime devoir faire dans ce gouvernement pour le bien de l'état et de la colonie," p. 18, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C7A 23.
and at night were placed in prison with the other prisoners.\textsuperscript{34} Apparently the chain gang was reserved for Negroes. In 1769 two French soldiers in Guadeloupe were condemned to the galleys and were shipped to France to serve their sentence.\textsuperscript{35} The galley or galleys of Negroes in Martinique was suppressed in 1789.\textsuperscript{36}

The Revolution of course brought about enormous changes in the punishment of crime, and in fact to some degree in what constituted crime. It is not possible to discuss them at this point.\textsuperscript{37} Suffice it to say that the laws of France enacted by the National Assembly and subsequent legislative bodies were operative in the colonies as well as in metropolitan France, and the changes were enormous. The people of France were making their own laws, and attempts were undertaken to remove racial barriers as well as class barriers.

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{34} Description, II, 391-92.} \\
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{35} Montedenoir to the Duc de Praslin, March 29, 1769, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C\textsuperscript{7A} 30.} \\
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{36} Address given before the General Assembly of Martinique on Dec. 10, 1789, by the Comte de Viomenil, \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{8A} 89.} \\
From the late 1600's throughout the Old Regime the Negroes and mulattoes of the French Caribbean islands played a part in the defense of these colonies against attack from enemy naval forces. And like the German barbarians who were incorporated into the Roman armies to defend the empire in the early Christian centuries, they played an ever increasing role. These far-away colonies appear to have been completely unmolested during the Thirty Years’ War and the War of Devolution, inasmuch as France had no strong naval power among her opponents like Britain or the United Netherlands, but the situation changed after 1672 when she had other countries to fight.

In 1676 the Dutch raided the small island of Marie Galante, a dependency of Guadeloupe, and seized a large number of slaves (thirty-eight of them belonging to the governor alone), much livestock, and plundered the cabins. The colonists were thrown into consternation, eight families left the island, and others talked of leaving. The governor in turn charged that some colonists had aided the enemy.¹

In the War of the League of Augsburg (1688-1697) Britain and Holland once again were aligned against France. In December, 1688, two enemy ships raided the coasts of Guadeloupe and Martinique, seized twenty Negroes, two
mulattoes, and some whites and pillaged the coast. Later, in January, 1690, the British raided Guadeloupe and Marie Galante, plundered, seized livestock, and took several Negroes. Another raid on Marie Galante was made by the British in April, 1691. The British hung one of their captives of this last raid, whereupon a Negro marron or a Carib quartered a British sailor who had fallen into French hands. The French governor of Marie Galante was very apologetic for this savage deed and disclaimed any part in it. 2

In one of three letters reporting the first of these raids, Hinselin, governor of Guadeloupe, stated that 150 Negroes were employed at strengthening the island's fortifications. Thenceforth throughout the period of the Old Regime there is almost constant reference to the use of slaves in performing rough work on the fortifications. They were pressed into service for a few months and then were returned to their owners, who were paid at a generous rate by the governor of the colony. On at least one occasion an owner offered more slaves to the government than he owned and when the offer was accepted he had to rent the use of some slaves belonging to his friends. He found it a profitable business venture. The slaves, too, seem to have liked the experience. Never have I seen a report of slave displeasure at being in the employ of the government. Slaves owned by the government had lighter duties and preferred this service to that under private ownership.

In 1693, during this same war, the British sent a very large fleet to attack the French islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe. In April Hinselin, governor of Guadeloupe, reported to the Minister of the Marine that the British

1 Two letters in Archives Nationales, Colonies, C7A 3, report the raid, one undated and unsigned, the other written June 20, 1676, by the governor of Marie Galante, Téméricourt.

2 Letters from Hinselin to the Comte de Blénac of Dec. 17 and 27, 1688, and Jan. 1, 1689; and letters from Auger to Blénac, Jan. 9, 1690, and April, 1691.
were besieging Martinique with "a powerful fleet" of thirty-six ships attacking Cul de Sac, four at Carbet, and eight or ten others standing by for aid where needed. He anticipated that Guadeloupe would be attacked next and had all the Negroes at his disposal working at strengthening the colony's defenses. In a later letter of May 12 he said that the fleet attacking Martinique consisted of seventy-five ships and 8,000 men.

Hinselin asked the minister for 300 guns with which to arm the Negroes for defense of the colony. So far as I have observed this was the first expression of a desire to use the Negroes as soldiers in defense of the colonies. It is not clear whether Hinselin wished to put guns into the hands of free Negroes or slaves, but it is doubtful that there were on small Guadeloupe 300 free Negroes within age limits to serve in its defense. Thus, the War of the League of Augsburg actively involved the French Caribbean islands and marked a milestone in white-black relations.

A little later there was a company of free Negroes in the militia of the new colony of Santo Domingo. Moreau de Saint-Méry reported that in 1697 this company marched from Cap Français to the defense of Cartagène. The commanding officer was Pierre d'Imba, himself a Negro.

During this war a singularly interesting letter of criticism was sent the minister by an army engineer stationed at Fort Royal, Martinique. On September 1, 1692, the engineer Caylus wrote criticizing the government practice of leasing slaves and paying so much per day for their services. The government had engaged a Sr. du Val to supply 100 Negroes at 12 sols per day. They did not work on Sundays; thus during the year they worked 313 days and brought Du Val

3 Letter of April 16, 1693, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C7A 4.
4 Letter from Hinselin to Blénac, May 12, 1693, ibid.
18,780 livres. The pay was excessive. Not only this, but the men were not the best that could be chosen. Du Val, Caylus points out, was only able to supply seventy Negroes of his own and had to lease the other thirty from their owners at 8 sols per day. Furthermore, one-tenth of the force of 100 had to work at something other than fortification: they had to provide vegetables and other food, get water and wood, and guard the cabins. Moreover, during rainy weather the band could not work, yet the pay of 12 sols a day continued, and he says that there had not been a day for four months without rain. In addition to these factors there was the colossal size of the job. It took two months to provide an efficient workshop, like that of Fort Royal, and it could not be transferred to protect Guadeloupe or Santo Domingo. The cost of operating the workshop at Fort Royal amounted in reality to 35,740 livres a year. Caylus' criticism of current practice was more astute, however, than his recommended change. He proposed the purchase of 100 slaves from the Company of Guinea—or rather he would have the company to provide them without any expense whatever to the government. Naively he appeared to consider that the Company of Guinea operated without expense.6

During the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-1713) a fleet of sixty vessels came into the Caribbean and in 1703 attacked Guadeloupe and Martinique. Aboard the vessels was a force of 5,000 troops commanded by General Codrington. Forty-four attacked Guadeloupe from April 2 through April 17, bombarding the coast and making several landing attempts. The British reportedly suffered heavy losses, estimated at 1,500 to 1,600 men. The French claimed to have lost only one officer, twenty to twenty-five men, and fifty wounded. Another reporter for the French gave the

6 "Discours sur les inconvenients des travaux du Roy à la Martinique; avec les remèdes qu'on y peut apporter," Archives Nationales, Colonies, C8A 7.
date of April 23 for the commencement of the attack and related that a company of Negroes, ninety-five in number, had part in the defense. The French had learned of the impending attack from a Negro whom they seized in a raid on the British island of St. Christopher.\(^7\)

The Negro company attempted to surprise a company of British troops at ambuscade, but the British were wary and lost only three men—two killed, the third taken prisoner.\(^8\)

The French evidently expected further attack later on in this war, as seen by activity of their Negro labor force and Negro militia in 1707. An attack was made in April, 1707, on a fort in Guadeloupe, but aside from some damage it seems to have had no significance.\(^9\)

During this war, however, less naval activity was seen in the Caribbean than in the War of the League of Augsburg. In two letters to the Minister of the Marine, Malmaison, an official in Guadeloupe, referred to the use of a Negro labor force—a practice which, he said, extended back to 1688, and he added that their work for the government came during the summer when they were not needed for cultivating the crops.

One of the Negroes who served in the militia in Santo Domingo at this time was a free Negro named Vincent Ollivier. Because of his great height he was presented to Louis XIV, who gave him a sword. Ollivier was very proud of it and wore it always, as well as his helmet. Rising to a captaincy he was received by the whites on the island at social functions, once sitting at a table with the governor general of Santo Domingo. His first fighting was with his

\(^7\) Auger to the minister, June 6, 1703; letter from La Potherye, May 19, 1703; and “Relation du siège de la Guadeloupe par les Anglais,” May 22, 1703, \textit{ibid.}, C7A 5.

\(^8\) “Relation du siège de la Guadeloupe et de secours donné par Monsieur de Cabaret . . .”, \textit{ibid.}

\(^9\) Bachelier to Pontchartrain, March 30, 1707; Malmaison to Pontchartrain, Oct. 19, 1708, \textit{ibid.}
master at Cartagène in 1697; later he fought under Claude, Duc de Villars for a period in Germany; and in 1779 he enlisted recruits for the ill-fated French naval expedition to take Savannah from the British. Moreau de Saint-Méry reports that he reached the approximate age of 120 years, drew a pension from the government, and was beloved of everyone. 10

Increasingly from the early 1700's onward, free Negroes made army service their career. It was the most inviting profession open to them. All could find an opening there, and the color bar weighed lightly if at all. On the Continent there was no prejudice in the army; in the colonies, the higher offices were commonly filled by whites. Occasionally a Negro or mulatto showed unusual capacity and was made an officer. Thus, Vincent Ollivier became a captain and Anthony Thomany a major. Both were free Negroes of Santo Domingo. 11 After the War of the Spanish Succession the number of free mulattoes and Negroes in the colonial militia steadily grew. The growth can be seen in some summary figures given by Moreau de Saint-Méry for the white and the colored troops stationed at Léogane in Santo Domingo. In 1718 there were stationed at Léogane 478 white troops and 91 affranchised Negro and mulatto troops; in 1730, 499 whites and 157 free Negroes and mulattoes; in 1765, 835 whites and 235 affranchised troops; and in the late 1780's, 500 whites and 520 affranchised troops. 12 The affranchised were increasing not only in the army but also in the skilled trades, a very large number having been taken to France by their masters prior to affranchisement and apprenticed to some guildmaster in order that they might learn a trade. 13

10 Description, I, 229-30.  
12 Description, II, 1111.  
During the eighteenth century the affranchised came slowly to occupy a position in society analogous to the middle class. The professions were closed to them by the law but the militia, the trades, and the avenues of business were open to them, and gradually they took advantage of the openings.

Little if any naval activity took place in the Caribbean during the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748), but there was the usual work of strengthening the fortifications, in which Negro workers had their part. From time to time the official correspondence refers to problems that arose concerning them. In 1722 the governor and the intendant of Martinique were stumped by the problem whether they could reimburse a certain slaveowner for his slave who had contracted pleurisy while working on lease to the government. The owner was loudly demanding reimbursement, but they could find no law or precedent for paying him anything. If the Negro had been put to death for a crime there would have been no question, but this was another matter. They wrote for enlightenment. 14

In 1739 the top officials in Santo Domingo became concerned over the cost of leased labor and thought that the state would find it more profitable to buy 200 slaves so as to have an adequate labor force. They pointed out the pros and cons of the matter but favored government ownership. 15 The government already owned slaves in the colonies. Why did it not use them? Moreover, vagabonds who were caught anywhere in the colonies without written permission from their masters were subject to seizure and, if not claimed within three months, were liable to sale, the money to go to the king. Why not have the government work these marrons? Probably, however, the marrons were

14 De Fouquières and Besnard to the minister, Aug. 10, 1722, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C8A 30.
a lazy, shiftless, uncooperative lot whose labor would not be worth the cost. Two years later (1741) Maillart, the intendant, was still suggesting that the government buy some slaves. This time he also suggested that it might use for the job slaves it already owned. He commented that he needed 300 more workers than he had available. He was paying at the rate of 9 livres a day all the workers that he could get. He had whites, mulattoes, and Negroes working for him but added the comment that most of them were poor workers.

The minister let these officials make their proposals but seldom acted on them. On this matter he did nothing. Time passed and in 1764 with new officials in the colony and a new Minister of the Marine in Paris the proposal was made again. This time the proposal was that the colony purchase 300 slaves to set up workshops for the Marine and for the cultivation of foodstuffs, as an experiment. The advocates were Governor D'Estaing and Intendant Magon. If the experiment did not work, they remarked, the slaves could be sold and the colony thereby reimburse itself.

An episode in the final year of the War of the Austrian Succession (1748) was the capture of the fortress Saint Louis in the colony of Santo Domingo by the British. Evidently it had put up a good defense and had won the respect of its captors, for, according to the terms of the surrender that were accepted by the officials of both sides in a council of war held at Léogane, the French troops which had defended the city were to be paroled and permitted to retain any Negro servants who were theirs, but other Negroes captured in the fortress were to become British property, to sell or use as they wished.

In the defense of this fortress Negro troops had fought in

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16 Ibid., C9A 55.
17 Letter of April, 1764, ibid., C9A 119.
18 "Extrait des minutes du greffe du conseil de guerre à Léogane . . .," dated in margin Oct. 25, 1748, item 13, ibid., C9A 80, also C9A 76.
sizable numbers. A French captain, asked how many French troops had been under him, replied that he did not know precisely but that he had "more free mulattoes and Negro slaves than whites." Such was the tendency in all the French Caribbean islands: France was depending more and more on Negro and mulatto militia.

The next war was that of the Seven Years (1756-1763). It was marked by the sending of a large British fleet of fifty-odd naval vessels and 8,000 men against Guadeloupe and the conquest of this island after a three months' siege, in 1758-1759. A large number of Negro slaves had been employed in 1758 at the repair and enlargement of entrenchments of certain French fortifications. However, the colonial officials were not able to get the number of laborers needed. Throughout the last several decades of the 1700's this was their continual lamentation. Not enough men for the defenses! On this occasion the governor of the colony, Nadau du Treil, hard pressed to get a sufficient labor force for the army engineers, called upon the Carmelite friars on the island to put some slaves at his disposal. The superior of the Carmelites wrote back saying that he did not know where his Negroes were ("le superieur des Carmes à qui j'écrivis, me fit reponse qu'il ne savoit où étoient ses nègres")—plainly a case of refusal or foot-dragging. It was not entirely a case of too little and too late, however. In September, 1757, the military commander of Guadeloupe, Leroy de Lapoterie, writing to the Minister of the Marine, told of the many improvements he had made to the crucial Fort St. Charles at Basse-Terre during the last three years, thanks to his labor force of "about 100 Negroes and masons [mulattoes]."

19 "Mémoire ou journal du siège de l'île de la Guadeloupe," 16; "Divers ordres donnés pour les préparatifs du siège à Mr. des lieutenans de roy, commandans de milices . . .," no. 14; "copie des lettres de Mr. le Gouverneur à M. le Général, écrites pendant la siège de la Guadeloupe," 47, ibid., C7A 19.

20 Ibid., C7A 17, f. 193.
Free Negroes and mulattoes were active in the militia defending the island, making up a total of four companies. One of the sources indicates that some whites were in these companies, but in the colonies this was contrary to custom prior to the Revolution of 1789.\textsuperscript{21} One of the Negro companies was commanded by the mulatto Louison, who stood very high in Nadau's estimation. The Superior Council of Martinique in a memoir sent to the governor general of the Caribbean, Beauharnais, praised the loyalty and zeal of the Negroes in this crisis. They wrote that "there is not found among them a single turncoat." Writing to Nadau, however, a royal lieutenant on Guadeloupe, Baulés, stated that many whites and blacks had deserted—in fact he remarked, "Half the island has deserted."\textsuperscript{22}

It was estimated that about 4,000 slaves had been lost during the siege, 870 by one landowner, Pinel, referred to as "ce millionnaire." His loss was estimated as equivalent to a million livres.\textsuperscript{23}

There were two episodes occurring during or after the siege which directly concern the Negroes. In one, Cantrizel, a French officer, promised freedom to sixty-four slaves if they would aid him in a certain fight with the British. The Negroes carried out their part of the engagement and Cantrizel in turn afterwards made good his. In the second episode, the French commander gave a louis d'or (gold coin valued about \$5.00) as a reward to a Negro who brought him the head of a British soldier whom apparently he had killed. Reflection made him realize that this action was but the encouragement of savagery. And lest other heads be

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{21} "Distribution des postes et nombre d'hommes qu'il y avait à l'attaque de la Guadeloupe les 23 et 24 janvier 1759," \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{T}A 22. Also Nadau to the minister, Feb. 23, 1759, \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{T}A 18.

\textsuperscript{22} "Memoire présenté à Monsieur le Marquis de Beauharnais . . .," \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{T}A 18; Baulès to Nadau du Treil, Feb. 26, 1759, \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{T}A 21.

\textsuperscript{23} "Memoire ou journal du siège de l'île de la Guadeloupe," \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{T}A 20, f. 169; "Mémoire abrégé ou réflexions sur l'état actuel de la Guadeloupe . . ." (1760), \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{T}A 23.
\end{footnotes}
brought to him he warned the Negro that there must be no further mutilations. 24 This did not stop the Negroes, however, from mutilating the British who fell into their hands. Therefore, he issued an order that all guilty of such mutilation in the future would be treated in like fashion. Evidently this order succeeded, but not before the British commanding officers sharply protested and asked the French commander if it was his policy to encourage such action and whether the fires over the countryside had been set by his orders.

The tendency toward barbarism, however, continued for some time. In the summer of 1763, at the close of the war, some Negroes in Martinique severely beat and robbed a certain Scottish Jacobite, Michael Fitzgerald, whom they left for dead. But he recovered and the French intendant, de la Rivière, gave him 200 livres and put him on a merchant vessel bound for Le Havre. 25 For the Negroes it was sufficient that he was British: they might vent on him their hatred.

Although companies of free Negroes and mulattoes had existed from the beginning of the 1700's, it appears that the term "militia" was not applied to them in Santo Domingo until the 1760's when two ordinances, one of January 15, 1765, and the second of January 1, 1768, defined its composition, its uniform, its form of service, and compensation. The first ordinance stated that free Negroes, mulattoes, and griffes (those born of unions of mulattoes and Negroes) might serve either as hussars (a form of cavalry) or as foot-soldiers (fusiliers). Their officers would be whites. Métis (those born of Negro-Indian unions) might serve as foot-soldiers or dragoons (soldiers who fought both on foot and on horseback). The second ordinance on the militia extended it, making service in it compulsory for all free Negroes and

24 Ibid., C7A 19; "Mémoire ou journal du siège de l'île de la Guadeloupe," ibid., C7A 20, ff. 148, 150.
25 De la Rivière to Choiseul, July 14, 1763, ibid., C8A 65.
mulattoes between the ages of fifteen and fifty-five. The officers were to be whites and all who served in the militia must equip themselves. The whites were not subject to this service; they could of course volunteer for it if they wished. The free Negroes and mulattoes accepted the compulsory service without protest and perhaps even with satisfaction, as it offered them a profession with dignity and some monetary return. Incidentally it was to fit them well for taking the field against the whites in the Revolution of 1789-1799.

In 1772 there were in Santo Domingo at least 441 royal slaves ("nègres du roy"), of both sexes and all ages. Of these, 371 were employed on a government project at the Môle St. Nicholas and 64 at Port-au-Prince. The governor and the intendant of the colony at this time did not think highly of the value of work done by the royal slaves and wrote a letter in October, 1772, urging the Minister of the Marine to sell them after the project would be completed. The proposal is interesting as having been exactly the opposite to what colonial officials in the past had recommended.

There was yet another war prior to the French Revolution and the Negroes and mulattoes took an active part. It was the War for American Independence (1776-1783). France entered it in 1778, after the battle of Saratoga. Immediately Martinique was besieged by a British fleet for four months. An official report stated that 850 men of color and 2,000 Negroes had a part in the defense. The 850 men of color

28 De Valière and De Montarcher to the minister, ibid.
29 "Etat d'approvisionnement nécessaire en vivres pour les troupes employées à la defense de la Martinique pendant quatre mois de siège," ibid., C8A 77.
are listed as being militia, the Negroes are not listed and perhaps were acting in the role of servants to the troops. The military regulations on the island in 1778 prescribed that thirty Negroes would serve each battalion, “to carry their tents, their food, their utensils, to make their soup, to cut their wood, [and] to build their cabins or huts.”

The other small West Indian possessions of France bristled with Negro and mulatto troops at this period. Sainte-Lucie had 200 defenders, half of them men of color, in addition to the militia who might be called in a crisis. And the island of Dominica issued an ordinance for the establishment of a company of militia in each of its ten parishes. In 1780, 400 Negro slaves were given arms and called upon to defend the small island of Antigues—one of the rare instances in which the French put arms in the hands of slaves. Also that same year on the island of St. Vincent 500 Negro slaves were impressed into the labor force engaged in erecting fortifications. In the excitement some Negroes and Caribs went about armed. The French commander consequently issued an order that any found carrying arms without permission would be severely dealt with.

The fear of attack by the British was not without foundation, for certain of the French islands were attacked. Sainte-Lucie was besieged along with Martinique and one of its plantations was raided. Several slaves were taken, others took flight.

Aside from the British attack on the French islands in 1778, there was another episode that revealed the increased role of Negro activity. This was the expedition of 1779

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30 “Ordre générale de service. Section 2e. Ordre générale de service pour la campagne,” art. 34, ibid.

31 Ordinance of Sept. 17, 1778, issued by Bouillé, art. II; and letter from Bouillé to the minister, Jan. 6, 1779, ibid., C8 A 77, 78.

32 “Etat de la garrison d’Antigues le 26 juillet 1780,” and letter from Blanchelande to Bouillé, Dec. 18, 1780, ibid., C7 A 79.

33 “Mémoire remis par Mr. de Boisville . . . ,” July 20, 1779, and letter by Montedenoix to the minister, Aug. 1, 1779, ibid., C8 A 78.
against Savannah, then held by the British. Serving under Count Charles Hector d'Estaing, leader of the French fleet, was a force of 545 free Negroes and mulattoes drawn from the Caribbean islands. Participating were Henry Christophe and many others who were to distinguish themselves in later years. Little was achieved, for the objective of the expedition, to wrest Savannah from the British, was not accomplished.\textsuperscript{34}

It may prove interesting to call attention to the zeal of the Negroes for a trial of strength with Britain. Bouill\'e, governor general of Martinique, had written in November, 1777, to the Minister of the Marine, reporting that sentiment in the colony was primarily for war. All felt certain war was approaching; many wished to serve in it. There were two companies of free men of color, about 200 in number, who wished to go as a group and who offered to serve without pay. Then Bouill\'e commented that the total number of the men of color in the island was 1,000, all well armed, well dressed, well trained, and he was sure that they would acquit themselves accordingly.\textsuperscript{35}

At almost every turn in the discussion of military matters in the French colonies during the 1780's one meets mention of the Negroes and mulattoes. They had come to be a large segment of the colonial forces, and in most of the developments they were participants. A regulation of 1783 provided that thenceforth all free men of color in Guadeloupe, aged fourteen to sixty, would serve in the militia of that colony.\textsuperscript{36}

In the construction of roads, fortifications, and military hospitals in all the Caribbean islands Negroes and mulattoes


\textsuperscript{35} Bouill\'e to the minister, Nov. 19, 1777, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C\textsuperscript{8A} 76.

\textsuperscript{36} \textit{Règlement sur les milices de la Guadeloupe}, Martinique, 1783, art. V, \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{7A} 40.
had a part. Earlier there has been mentioned the increase in the number of Negroes and mulattoes in the militia in one of the fortified points of Santo Domingo. Moreau de Saint-Méry gives figures for this military development for most of the parishes in that colony. The same story is evident in all the parishes. In the militia of the parish of Verrettes, for example, in 1730 there were 107 whites and 16 free Negroes and mulattoes; in 1766, 124 whites, 187 mulattoes, and 59 Negroes; about 1788, approximately 550 mulattoes, Negroes, and quadroons (for there was a company of quadroon dragoons). And in the parish of Saint-Marc there were, in 1730, 166 whites and 49 affranchised persons; in 1765, 332 whites and 178 affranchised persons; and in 1788, about 200 whites and 350 affranchised persons—Negroes, mulattoes, and quadroons.\textsuperscript{37}

These figures reveal that throughout the 1700's a great transformation had taken place in the colonial society of the Caribbean. Other changes, notably political, were destined to occur during the 1790's. Because they came with white opposition and bloodshed they attracted vastly more public attention. But in sober fact great changes had taken place during the century, bringing little protest and no bloodshed. Indeed it seems, \textit{mirabile dictu}, that the idea of employing the Negro and mulatto in the armed forces on a grand scale was originated and cultivated by the whites!

There was a second armed force in the French Caribbean colonies prior to the Revolution, and it too was to a considerable degree composed of free mulattoes and Negroes; indeed, it was largely mulatto. Its origin was at Léogane, Santo Domingo, in the early 1700's, according to an account rendered in 1722 by the governor and intendant of that colony. Its purpose was the pursuit of Negro \textit{marrons}, and

\textsuperscript{37} \textit{Description}, II, 862, 899. For other parishes, see pp. 913, 924, and 969. The same tendency is seen in them.
it consisted of a captain, a lieutenant, and some archers, who were to enjoy a portion of the spoils after the arrest of prisoners. It did not have permanent status but came together and made trips only as circumstances demanded. A second body was set up at Cap Français in 1722 and was constituted differently. It was a body with permanent footing and its members drew regular salaries. They were on duty throughout the year and were exempt from all corvées. Their chief duty was “to prevent the evasion of Negroes.”

The archers, fifty in number, were to serve on horseback. They were to be paid 45 livres a month and were to be responsible for providing their clothing, food, equipment, and even their horses. It was estimated that the cost of the service per year to the colony would be 30,000 livres, but the evasion of Negro slaves was said to cost many times this sum. Each year, according to report at the time, 1,000 or more slaves deserted and became marrons, and when evaluated at 1,000 livres each, their evasion cost the colony a million livres. The expense of 30,000 livres was therefore a small item in contrast. To meet the expense, the governor and the intendant expected to set up a tax of 50 sols a Negro each year.

Sorel and Duclos wished that the body consist only of whites, but if there were not sufficient whites they said that they would accept as archers free Negroes and mulattoes. They praised the endurance and fighting qualities of the mulattoes and assured the Minister of the Marine that at Cap Français the mulattoes did not associate freely with the Negroes. They stressed the necessity of a maréchaussée to arrest the wholesale desertion of slaves—often in bands of thirty or more at a time, all armed, so that it was impossible for individuals to stop them. 38

Moreau de Saint-Méry in his Description of Santo Do-

mingo on the eve of the Revolution gives a short history of the maréchaussée on the island and a description of its functions. There are some slight differences in his account. He gives 1721 as the date for the establishment of the maréchaussée, consisting of one company, which was formed to arrest army deserters in addition to Negro marrons. It did not last long, but marronage increased alarmingly, and so in 1733 a new maréchaussée was set up, to serve all the colony. It consisted only of free men of color. But in 1734 the rule was changed so that Negroes also might serve. Down to 1789, however, it was constituted wholly or almost wholly of men of color. Its headquarters were at Léogane and Cap Français. Its members wore a uniform of red and blue with silver buttons and carried for weapons a musket, a pistol, and a saber. The colonial maréchaussée strongly resembled the parent organization in France, where it was a highly respected, efficient mounted police force, empowered to make arrests throughout the kingdom. Moreau did not speak flatteringly of the maréchaussée in Santo Domingo, however, implying that its members were sometimes guilty of cupidity.

Its duties were the arrest not only of marron slaves but also of army deserters, and criminals, the protection of the Superior Council when it met, the conduct of criminals to the place of execution, the guarding of the courts, and the collection of taxes. Santo Domingo seems to have anticipated the other Caribbean islands in setting up its maréchaussée. Guadeloupe was proposing the establishment of one only in 1765 and made elaborate plans for it. In addition to the broad objectives listed by Moreau de Saint-Méry for it in Santo Domingo, the maréchaussée in Guadeloupe was to act in making arrests for the smallest misdemeanors, as the arrest of slaves for selling foodstuffs on the highways or in the

39 Description, I, 441-43. 40 Ibid.
towns without their masters' written permission. In addition to the chasing of marrons and army deserters, it was to prevent illegal assemblies of Negroes, masked balls, the carrying of clubs and Flemish knives, robberies and other forms of crime, and illegal commercial dealings. The organization would have white officers and be made up mostly of whites but would have some free mulattoes and Negroes—these last two to serve only on foot, the whites on horseback. The design of the proposal very clearly was to restrain the liberties and rights of Negroes and mulattoes in the colony which some whites carelessly had extended, for in the proposal mention is made several times of the aid and abetting of which many whites were guilty; the maréchaussée was to operate against them too. The officials planned for the establishment of seven brigades, six in Guadeloupe and one on the subordinate island of Marie Galante.\(^41\)

It is not certain whether this maréchaussée was actually brought into being on Guadeloupe, but it was undoubtedly needed. Marronage reportedly claimed "more than 600 slaves" a year on Guadeloupe, and there was much desertion by soldiers and sailors.\(^42\) The maréchaussée of Santo Domingo in fact did not eradicate marronage, and in 1789 the governor general wrote to Paris that he had found the province of the north "in a state of absolute abandon," and that a maréchaussée was needed badly.\(^43\) Since its foundation it had served long and well, though it had been subject to criticism from time to time. It was manned by the free men of color, either entirely or nearly so, although the whites used the organization to bolster their economic and political system by taking advantage of the differences between the

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\(^{41}\) "Mémoire sur la nécessité d'établir une maréchaussée à la Guadeloupe," April 12, 1765, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C7A 25.

\(^{42}\) Ibid.

\(^{43}\) Duchilleau to the Minister of the Marine, March 16, 1789, ibid., C9A 163.
men of color and the Negroes. Prior to the Revolution there were three classes in the French colonies—white, colored, Negro—but in giving military and police training to the last two classes, the whites paved the way for their own defeat in the Revolution that lay ahead.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ The work of the maréchaussée in Santo Domingo in the late 1700’s was praised by Joseph Alex André Le Bressier, king’s councilor, in a “Tableau de l’administration des isles sous le vent,” ibid., C⁸⁴A 91.
**Five Revolution in the Colonies**

The era of the French Revolution (1789-1799) has been by far the most significant period of history for the French Caribbean and yet it is the most difficult to discuss. It was much more than a contest between the black man and the white man, between slave and autocrat. Three races were engaged in the struggle for power—whites, mulattoes, and Negroes—each seeking its selfish objectives, though sometimes two would combine to gain victory over the third. And yet this explanation is too simple, for each of these three parties was split into factions. The poorer whites opposed the wealthier ones and in general sided with the mulattoes and Negroes in the hope of crushing the power of the greater whites. The free mulattoes (or men of color), who were affluent economically, were interested in the continuation of slavery, and desirous only of gaining rights which would give them the same status as that of the richer whites. The Negroes, some of whom already were free and slaveowners, had no desire to see slavery abolished, nor did all of the slaves themselves wish it. A few slaves chose to stay with their owners and go into exile with them, thus continuing through choice a position not far removed from slavery. Nor was this all. The colonial Revolution was very much affected by political and military intervention from Paris. Some of the com-
missioners and some of the troops sent over to allay the situation assumed a dictatorial attitude and did much to alter the course of events. The pattern of Revolution was not the same pattern in all of the colonies, nor was the outcome the same. Martinique and Guadeloupe ended up with a return to the Old Regime and to slavery, and Haiti (formerly Santo Domingo), though it had attained freedom from France and freedom from slavery, found itself saddled with virtual dictatorship and with compulsory labor laws.

In a short summation of events for a chapter like this one can only point out the main features. Contributing to the discontent that paved the way for revolution was the flood of antislave literature, in France after 1760, even though its readers in the colonies were few. In particular, the writings of the Abbé Raynal and Hilliard d'Aubertueil were known and had their influence. These two men had lived for a period in the Western world and had some firsthand acquaintance with conditions that they discussed. Raynal's *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes*, published at Amsterdam in 1770, became one of the most widely read books of the eighteenth century. It was critical of slavery and the slave trade and must certainly have been known to many readers in the Caribbean. Hilliard d'Aubertueil's book, *Considerations sur l'état présent de Saint-Domingue*, published later than Raynal's (in 1776), was widely read and was very definitely read in the colonies. It, for example, greatly influenced the octoroon agitator Julien Raimond.¹

Other influences were the occasional slave outbreaks in the colonies and the continual marronage. It is worthy of observation, however, that none of the marrons emerged

during the Revolution as a leader. The American Revolution of 1776-1783 also appears to have stimulated the French colonists to ask for some voice in colonial affairs, especially with regard to the establishment of colonial assemblies.

At the outset in the Revolution the whites and the men of color were aggressive and a clash was inevitable because of their rival desires. Two developments of the 1780's had brought the men of color to their position. One was the coming to France in 1784 of Julien Raimond, a wealthy octoroon of Aquin, Santo Domingo, to act as an agent of the men of color of his colony and to see if he could not get government support in bettering conditions for them—in fact, to get them equal status with the whites. For more than a decade Raimond remained in France and did remarkably well in representing his people.² The other was the foundation in France in 1788, by Jacques Pierre Brissot de Warville and Clavière, of an antislavery society, Amis des Noirs, patterned after a similar organization which Brissot had seen in London. Many eminent Frenchmen were members, including Louis XVI himself, and the body was very active, especially in the publication of pamphlets and in the promotion of political action. At first the men of color benefited from it more than did the Negroes.

The first irritant in the Revolution concerning the colonies arose in connection with representation in the Estates General. Those who made plans for the Estates General neglected to accord any representation to the colonies or to ask of them cahiers of grievances. The whites of Santo Domingo in their eagerness to participate drew up an elaborate cahier of grievances and elected eighteen deputies to represent the colony.³ These deputies presented the

² For an account of Raimond, see Shelby T. McCloy, The Negro in France (Lexington, Ky., 1961), 65-66 and passim.
³ It has been edited by Mlle. Blanche Maurel, Cahiers de doléances de la colonie de Saint-Domingue pour les états généraux de 1789 (Paris, 1933).
cahier of grievances, which was accepted, and asked for admittance, but this had to be declined until the Colonial Committee studied the matter. Interestingly enough, admission of the white deputies was challenged by deputies of the men of color from the colony. This challenge came from the men of color living at Aquin, where Julien Raimond and his brother had farms. In a letter of May 20, 1789, to the Minister of the Marine, the governor general and the intendant of the colony reported that some men of color of Aquin had written asking for admittance of their deputies as well as the white deputies. The white officials made no comment, evidently aware that it posed a delicate question. While the request of the mulattoes was not openly defiant, it nevertheless did carry defiance with it, inasmuch as space in the Estates General was limited and seats for both could not well be accorded. The Estates General decided the matter in favor of the whites, but it seated only six of their eighteen deputies. Then it proceeded to grant limited representation to deputies from the other colonies. Moreau de Saint-Méry, who has been cited several times already in this work, was one of two deputies admitted to represent Martinique.

This first clash was thus a victory for the planters but it turned out to be of limited significance, for dispute from the men of color continued and certain later decisions of the National Assembly favored them. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen favored them in saying that all citizens were to be treated equally before the law. But were the men of color citizens? Not in August of 1789, but by a decree of May 15, 1791, they were to have full civil rights provided that both of their parents had been free at the time of their birth. This act was a definite breach of

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4 Du Chilleau and De Marbois to the minister, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C9A 162. They were forwarding the letter to him.
6 Ibid., 184-85.
the principle of white supremacy which had always been dominant in the colonies.

Already Vincent Ogé, a quadroon of some affluence, one of a group of fifteen or twenty men of color from Santo Domingo who were living in Paris, had returned to Santo Domingo to lead a rebellion. He and Raimond had been two in a group of six that the men of color recommended as deputies in 1789 to the Estates General, later the National Assembly. Burning with zeal to render service to his cause, he had returned in October, 1790, to the colony to get the colonial officials to recognize the citizenship of the free men of color, which he thought was set forth in a decree passed by the National Assembly on March 28, 1790. Both the English antislavist Thomas Clarkson and the French antislavist Abbé Henri Grégoire, to whom he had revealed his plans to return, advised him strongly to desist. But Ogé rashly went ahead. Landing in the colony on October 21, he found that his co-conspirator Chavannes had already raised in arms several hundred men of color. They now struck two blows at white forces within a week. Their first was a victory but the second went sharply against them, and they fled. The leaders escaped to Spanish Santo Domingo, as marron leaders so frequently had done in the past, thinking that the Spaniards would not grant their extradition. But they misjudged the Spaniards, who were hostile toward the Revolution in France. Ogé, Chavannes, and fourteen others were at once turned over to the French authorities on the island. They were tried before the council at Cap and condemned to death, Ogé and Chavannes to be broken on the wheel, twenty-one others to die on the gallows, and seventeen others to be sent to the galleys.7

7 Gaston Martin, Histoire de l'esclavage dans les colonies françaises (Paris, 1948), 201-3; "Copie de la lettre écrite . . . par Don Francisco Nunes," Archives Nationales, Colonies, C9A 166; and letter from Blanchelande to the minister, March 14, 1791, ibid., C9A 167.
Their property, moreover, was confiscated. Perhaps, as suggested by some writers, the colonial authorities wanted to make an example of them, but their punishment was not unusual for the eighteenth century.

However, the affair did not have the effect of discouraging rebellion; on the contrary, it seems to have pointed out the need for collaboration between the men of color and the Negroes. Thus far there had been a great number of riots, burnings of homes and plantations, and unlawful assemblies, but for the most part only men of color had been involved. Santo Domingo, Martinique, Guadeloupe—all had experienced the smoldering hatred of the men of color. Mademoiselle Maurel thinks that it would have been a wiser policy for the whites to have compromised and granted equality to the mulattoes, at least to those that were free, for it was chiefly they who were giving the trouble. This policy, in fact, had been considered in 1786 by Luzerne and Marbois, governor and intendant respectively of Santo Domingo, in a letter to the Minister of the Marine, De Castries, at about the time of Raimond’s memoir which raised the question. Their letter does not mention Raimond, yet one wonders if their letter was not inspired by his action. The two officials favored the granting of full civil rights to the free mulatto class, but questioned whether this should be done, for in their opinion it would only embitter the whites and make the situation worse for the men of color. They did not believe that there were fifteen mulattoes in the colony who were both educated and interested in things political.

From the point of expediency it clearly would have profited the whites to have granted equal rights to the free men of color; they were too few to hold their position by numbers. For everywhere in the colonies, as in metropolitan France, law and order had come to be violated at will.

8 Maurel, ed., Cahiers de doléances, 67.
9 Letter of Sept. 25, 1786, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C0A 157.
Police and soldiery could not be counted on: some sided with one faction, some the other. The whites were regarded as aligned with the Old Regime and the king, the men of color and the Negroes with the revolutionists. As the Revolution wore on, the deeper and more sensitive became the lines of cleavage.

Perhaps for the colonies, the most significant developments after the Ogé rebellion were the sending of commissioners from France and the entry of the French into war with the British. The first commissioners were sent into the colonies in 1791-1792 for the purpose of seeing that the laws promulgated in France by the National Assembly and Legislative Assembly were put into operation. It was hoped that they would bring peace and stability. The first commissioners to Santo Domingo sent out in February, 1791, were not a forceful group and had little influence. But the second, sent out in 1792, had one man of dominant personality and determination, Léger Félicité Sonthonax, who was to become a colonial dictator, another Robespierre. Ailhaud, more conservative than the other two, found that Polverel and Sonthonax stood together on all matters and outvoted him. Consequently, he resigned after a short time. Polverel was an agreeable soul who let Sonthonax make all the decisions. And Sonthonax was determined to have his way on all matters and was prepared to use whatever methods were necessary to obtain it.

Immediately after they had landed in Santo Domingo the three commissioners issued a proclamation, dated September 24, 1792, in which they said that thenceforth only two classes of men would be recognized by them—the free and the slaves. Slavery would continue, for it was needed by the colony. But they would put into effect the laws of April 4 and June 22, 1792, setting forth full citizenship to the men of color and giving the commission the power to dissolve the colonial assembly and to suspend any laws made by it which
were injurious to peace or to the French nation.\textsuperscript{10} For four years Sonthonax was to be at the helm in politics in Santo Domingo, except for a few months in 1794, and no laws were to be made that he disapproved of, while many of those adopted were due wholly to him.

He might reassure the slaveowners as he did in the Proclamation of September 24 that slavery would continue, but actually he was a bitter enemy of slavery and moved slowly and steadily toward emancipation, which he gave on August 29, 1793, several months prior to emancipation in all the French colonies by the National Convention in the decree of February 4, 1794.\textsuperscript{11} Polverel reportedly was caught by surprise by Sonthonax's decision to take this action and gave his consent grudgingly; nevertheless, he gave it. The edict went immediately into effect, and it overwhelmed the whites and their influence.\textsuperscript{12}

The occasion for this sudden and drastic action by Sonthonax was the arrival on May 7, 1793, of a new governor, Galbaud, whom the whites hoped would send Sonthonax and Polverel back to France. The two commissioners had come to be loathed by the greater whites. But the commissioners by clever attack quickly destroyed their opponents' hopes. They declared Galbaud incapable of being governor inasmuch as he was a landowner—a thing forbidden by the decree of April 4. Galbaud acquiesced and went aboard the frigate \textit{Normandie}. On June 20 a brawl developed between a colored soldier and a white sailor, which set off a display of anger by 1,200 sailors who demanded the shipment to France of the two commissioners and the seating of Galbaud. A street fight ensued and the supporters of Galbaud were on the point of winning when

\textsuperscript{10}“Proclamation au nom de la nation, de la loi et du roi,” \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{9,A} 168.
\textsuperscript{11}For a detailed account of this edict by Sonthonax, see J. B. Saint-Victor, \textit{Haiti, sa lutte pour l'émancipation} (Paris, n.d.), 157-59.
Sonthonax and Polverel, realizing the desperate situation, sought to animate their supporters by promising them their freedom. They ran to the prisons and released their partisans who had been arrested by the whites. The supporters of the commissioners thereupon set fire to the churches, the museums, the *hôtel de ville*, and the nicer homes of Cap François. The whites panicked and sought refuge in their remaining buildings and on the vessels in the harbor. More than 500 were killed, their bodies thrown to the sharks. Property damage was estimated to run into hundreds of millions of livres. There were only 1,800 soldiers and sailors to defend the whites, while 30,000 slaves opposed them. It was at this time—or rather nine days later—that Sonthonax, realizing the desperate situation, issued his proclamation according freedom to all the slaves in the colony.  

The terms of the edict are interesting and reveal much thought; in fact they anticipate certain features of the British Emancipation Act of 1833. Not all slaves were left free to desert their work; to the contrary, most of them were to continue at their present occupation for a period of time, differing according to age, sex, and employment, and to receive wages for it. All former slaves, however, were to receive tickets of freedom.  

The act, of course, ruined the slaveowners and led them to look elsewhere than to metropolitan France for aid. According to the Haitian historian Saint-Victor, the outcome was the signing of an alliance between the white colonists and the British field commander, Adam Williamson, on September 13, 1793. By its terms Britain agreed to invade the colony, restore peace and order, maintain the Catholic religion, and, in the event that the colony would fall to her at the end of the war, to continue the laws that had been

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13 Account by Saint-Victor, *Haiti, sa lutte*, 155-57. The greater number of buildings in Cap François were burned and one of the loveliest cities of the Western world was largely destroyed.

14 Saint-Victor sets forth the provisions of the thirty-seven articles.
REVOLUTION IN THE COLONIES

in force there before the war. As for the men of color, they would be treated in like manner as the men of color in the British colonies.\textsuperscript{15} The greater number of the free men of color on the island supported the whites in this move, but many of their leaders did not, including Rigaud, Pinchinat, Beauvais, and Lepointe. A total of eight hundred signed a statement of their loyalty to France but of their hostility to Sonthonax and Polverel. Some of the men of color were so bitter toward Sonthonax that they plotted to kill him.\textsuperscript{16}

The British proceeded at once to invade the colony with a force of 870 men under General Whitlocke, who announced the British intention to restore slavery in event of success. For several months they fought stubbornly to wrest the colony from Sonthonax and Polverel but were unsuccessful.\textsuperscript{17}

Sonthonax and Polverel adroitly decided to ask the National Convention in France to ratify their proclamation granting freedom to the slaves and the other enactments they had made during their year in the colony. They sent as agents in these matters three deputies to the National Convention, a white named Dufay, a mulatto named Jean Baptiste Mills, and a Negro (born in Africa) named Mars (Jean Baptiste) Belley. In sending these men Sonthonax and Polverel were aided by Genet, French minister to the United States.\textsuperscript{18} They arrived in France about the first of February, 1794, and succeeded in their mission to a degree that hardly the rosiest dreamer could have imagined. On February 4 they attended the National Convention for the first time and were not only granted the right to sit as deputies but were asked to report on current conditions in

\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Ibid.}, 162-63.  
\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Ibid.}, 165-67.  
\textsuperscript{17} A good contemporary account of the British invasion is by Bryan Edwards, an English historian who lived in Jamaica. It is entitled \textit{An Historical Survey of the Island of Saint-Domingo, together with an account of the Maroon Negroes in the Island of Jamaica; and a History of the War in the West Indies, in 1793 and 1794} (London, 1801).  
\textsuperscript{18} Blanche Maurel, \textit{La vent du large; ou, le destin tourmenté de Jean-Baptiste Gérard, colon de Saint-Domingue} ([Bruxelles, 1952]), 295-96.
Santo Domingo. This they did with skill, telling of the British invasion of the isle, of the whites’ defection, and of the Negroes’ loyalty in defense. So deeply moved were the deputies that they took the almost unprecedented action of decreeing on the spot, without sending the matter first to committee, the emancipation of all slaves in the French colonies. The approval was unanimous. Enthusiasm approaching hysteria reigned. The Abbé Grégoire said later in his Mémoires that not even the warmest supporters of the Negroes had anticipated anything like it. 19

After this Sonthonax and Polverel were able to remain in power in Santo Domingo until the late summer of 1794, when they were arrested by order of the National Convention, taken to France, and tried. They arrived in France on the eve of the Thermidorian Reaction. 20 They were acquitted of the charges against them, and after some months Sonthonax was returned to the colony where he continued to exercise a degree of power for two more years.

While these events had taken place in Santo Domingo, what had happened in the other colonies? In the earlier years of the Revolution Guadeloupe suffered very little turbulence and disorder. The Baron de Clugny, governor of Guadeloupe, had written on March 19, 1791, that thus far not a drop of blood had been shed in that colony because of the Revolution. On some matters he had yielded to the demands of those he called “brigands,” and in so doing he had avoided violence. For example, he had allowed them to seize Port Louis, and they had lost prestige in so doing. 21


20 Report by Chambon, the naval lieutenant sent to make the arrest and bring them to France, written in Paris on 17 Thermidor an II. It gives elaborate details of the arrest and return. Archives Nationales, Colonies, CCA 9.

21 Letter of March 19, 1791, to the Minister of the Marine, ibid, C7A 45.
A little later, on May 21, 1791, Clugny wrote telling of an uprising that was to have taken place on May 15, planned by an unnamed mulatto who was to be aided by eighteen Negroes. They had bought guns on a neighboring isle and they were to set fire to the towns of St. Anne and Point-à-Pitre and the houses on many plantations. Clugny learned of this plot only on May 16 and proceeded to arrest all those involved. He did not explain why the plotters did not carry out their plans. 22

Still later, in December, 1792, another plot by the mulatto Mondésir Grippont to seize the fort at Basse-Terre was nipped in advance. A Negro participant betrayed the group, telling everything. The writer of the letter, one Devero, said that many mulattoes went about armed and indicated that they were far from content. 23 This restlessness on the part of the men of color on Guadeloupe continued into 1793 but no uprising took place and relative quiet prevailed.

The situation was different on Martinique. There the acts of violence during the years 1790 and 1791 equaled or exceeded those on Santo Domingo. On September 19, 1790, a clash occurred near St. Pierre between mixed troops and some conservative forces. Four of the mulatto forces were killed and eleven were made prisoners. 24 In November two Negro insurrectionists were caught, tried, and shot. 25 Also in November came reports that fires had been set to several plantations in the neighborhood of St. Pierre and Fort Royal, the two leading cities on the island. 26 Negroes and mulattoes were charged with collaborating in their incendiarism. Often

22 Letter to the minister, ibid.
23 Devero to the minister, Dec. 14, 1792, ibid., C8A 100.
24 “Extrait de divers lettres écrites de St. Pierre ile M/que, à plusieurs négociants de cette ville de Marseille,” ibid., C8A 96. This extract was sent on to the Minister of the Marine in Paris, in the hope of getting aid for the colony.
25 Guignod to the deputies from Martinique, Nov. 7, 1790, ibid., F3 35 (Collection Moreau de Saint-Méry).
26 Guignod to the deputies from Martinique, Nov. 15, 1790, ibid.
their burnings were accompanied by pillage and murder; arson, however, was their chief weapon. Half a century before the days of General Sherman in the American Civil War the Negroes and mulattoes of the French West Indies were using it very effectively. Constantly the sources of this period mention the burning of homes and plantations.

Like Santo Domingo, Martinique received in 1791 some commissioners from the Legislative Assembly, whose purpose was to restore peace and tranquility. The four who were sent to Martinique soon split into radical and conservative factions—Lacoste and Magnyot taking the radical stand, and Linger and Montdenoix the conservative. The rift became so great that the two radical members resigned, headed back to France, and took with them the more important papers of the commission. Linger and Montdenoix appealed to the island authorities to recover these papers but did not succeed in getting them. Apparently the commissioners with the most audacity had the best chances of success.

The Revolution simmered along in Martinique until 1794. Then came invasion by the British. The edict of emancipation in 1793 by Sonthonax and Polverel did not affect Martinique and Guadeloupe, whereas that by the National Convention of February 4, 1794, came too late. Already both islands were in the hands of the British, who had no intention or interest in introducing emancipation, since their own sugar islands in the Caribbean were worked by Negro slaves. Throughout the remainder of the war, 1794 to 1801, Martinique was quiescent under British rule. With Guadeloupe, however, it was another story. She was destined to go somewhat the same way as Santo Domingo.

The cause of British collapse in Guadeloupe was the invasion by a small French force in early June, 1794, headed

27 Linger to the minister, Dec. 22, 1791, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C8A 97.
by a young, inexperienced commander named Victor Hugues. Actually he was but one of several commanders of the expedition, but his qualities of personality and judgment opened the way for his dominance almost from the start. Born in Marseille July 21, 1762, Hugues was only thirty-two years of age at this time. Physically he was far from impressive—a short, stocky man, with spindly legs, long arms, pocked face, brusque manners, a Provençal accent, and rapid speech. He had received little education, but when younger he had sailed as cabin boy to Mexico and the Caribbean. He settled for a while in Santo Domingo, where he joined a lodge of Freemasons and acquired a small fortune which he lost in 1791 as a result of arson and the political strife. He even got elected to the provincial assembly of the west, but in October, 1792, he gave it up and sailed back to France where he entered into various revolutionary activities. Hugues was one of those persons especially made for revolution: he had little to lose and all to gain and had enough audacity to accomplish the work of three or four normal men. Despite his lack of education and experience, Hugues' reputation was enough to cause Saint-André to choose him for a commanding position in the force which sailed from Ile d'Aix on April 23.

His expedition had only 1,153 men, whereas the British, under seasoned Admiral John Jervis, had a force of 10,000, partly on Guadeloupe and partly in their fleet supporting the landed troops. Luck was with the French when they arrived on June 2, for the British naval force was temporarily absent. A council of war of the French leaders was called at once. Leissegues, nominal leader of the little fleet, proposed a policy of harassment of the British, while Hugues advocated an immediate, surprise attack. Hugues' plan was adopted.

The British were caught by surprise, and those in close range of the landing fled to a nearby fort. A night attack followed. On June 6, four days later, the French made a
second night attack and captured the fort. The English had to give up Pointe-à-Pitre as well as the Fort Fleur d'Epée, but they still had strong forces on the island. Jervis brought up his fleet on June 11 and attempted for about three weeks to recover Pointe-à-Pitre, but on July 4 he removed his troops stationed in that part of the island, known as Grande-Terre, and sailed away. After several weeks the entire island was in French possession.28

Hugues had not been in supreme command of the expedition, but in all the councils of war his quick, incisive decisions and his boldness quickly placed him in command. For the next four years he was the ruler of Guadeloupe. He was appointed agent particulier, and although for a time there were two other agents—Lebas and Goiraud—through most of the period only Lebas signed papers with Hugues as agent particulier. Probably Lebas filled a role like Polverel in Santo Domingo, and Hugues, like Sonthonax, enjoyed virtual dictatorship. This view is supported by many sharp letters of criticism directed at Hugues which were sent to the Minister of the Marine after several years.

Guadeloupe remained firmly in French hands throughout the remainder of the war. French laws, including the Edict of Emancipation of February 4, 1794, were enforced. The slaves were freed; most of them, prompted by their feelings of dependence, had remained with their former masters. Nevertheless, much land previously cultivated now lay idle, showing that many Negroes confused independence with laziness.29

Victor Hugues and Lebas thought highly of the capability of the Negroes and gave many of them civil and military

28 The story is related in great detail by Saint-Croix de la Roncière in his biography, Grandes figures coloniales: Victor Hughes le conventionnel (Paris, 1932), 327, a careful study resting in large part on archival material. Why Roncière wrote his hero's name "Hughes" is inexplicable, for Victor himself wrote it "Hugues." Hugues was French by birth, not Welsh.

29 Proclamation of 22 Pluviôse an VII, by Desfournaux, agent particulier after Hugues, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C7A 51.
jobs. They realized that the greatest handicap faced by the Negroes was their lack of education, and in a letter of Nivôse an VI to the Minister of the Marine they urged that the government should "organize public instruction" for them. But they did not describe further the education that they would provide, or how it would be given.\textsuperscript{30}

Perhaps one reason that Victor Hugues and Lebas remained in office as agents particuliers for Guadeloupe was the praise they gave themselves in their reports.\textsuperscript{31} The thickness of the laudatory ointment is not evident until one has read some of the biting criticism by enemies and victims of Victor Hugues, such as one by Littée,\textsuperscript{32} deputy to the Directory, or several by Thouluyre Mahé, a well-educated colonist,\textsuperscript{33} or one by an anonymous white citizen of Guadeloupe.\textsuperscript{34} Some of the complaints were blistering. Critics discovered, however, that it was wise not to voice criticism unless they were willing to go to prison. The fact that rebellion broke out on two island dependencies of Guadeloupe, St. Martin's during Frimaire an V (1797) and Marie Galante during Frimaire an VI (1798), is evidence that there was some sharp discontent.\textsuperscript{35}

It was no doubt this severe criticism which led the Ministry of the Marine in Paris to demand Hugues' recall in 1798 and his replacement by Edme-Etienne Desfourneaux, a general and former Chouan. Desfourneaux was sharply critical of Hugues in several letters that he wrote to the Minister of the Marine, charging that conditions on the

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., C7A 49, ff. 240-41.
\textsuperscript{31} See for instance the report of Victor Hugues dated in the margin "5 floréal an 7" (April 24, 1799) and entitled "Compte rendu au Ministre de la Marine et des Colonies par Victor Hugues sur sa mission à la Guadeloupe . . . ," ibid., C7A 51.
\textsuperscript{32} Letter of 1 Ventôse an IV (Feb. 20, 1796), ibid., C7A 49, f. 127.
\textsuperscript{33} Letters of 2 Ventôse an IV, 5 Frimaire an V, and 22 Frimaire an V, ibid., ff. 133-43.
\textsuperscript{34} Letter to the minister, 1 Nivôse an VII (Dec. 21, 1798), ibid., C7A 50, ff. 196-97.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., C7A 49, ff. 58-59 and C7A 50, ff. 4-11.
island were chaotic when he took over the reins of government. Hugues learned that he would be called on by the Ministry of the Marine to defend his rule in the island and so he proceeded to write a defense twenty-seven pages long. Both it and a two-and-a-half-page resumé, this latter a synopsis prepared by the ministry, depicted Hugues’ administration as a great success.\(^{36}\) It was sufficient to bring him acquittal. Shortly afterward he was given a post in Guiana but was never again in Guadeloupe.

Desfourneaux also was to run into difficulties. Though highly critical of all that Victor Hugues had done, he narrated with glowing praise what he himself had done. Before long, however, critics were denouncing his rule and calling him an incompetent. Enough complaints were sent to Paris to persuade the ministry to remove him and summon him to trial. The order for his arrest was issued in Paris on 18 Vendémiaire an X (October 12, 1801). It came only after an insurrection had developed in the colony, in which the opponents of Desfourneaux had removed him from power and a new government had been set up by the party of the coup d’État, the party of Magloire Pelage, a military general.\(^{37}\) It came as something of a shock to the French to learn that the political power in two of the colonies had fallen into the hands of a mulatto and a Negro, both of them former slaves—Pelage and Toussaint Louverture. In the trial of Desfourneaux the French showed themselves greatly concerned over the causes of the coup.

Santo Domingo, like Guadeloupe, had evolved since 1794 into strong-man rule, or rather it had evolved again into a state approaching dictatorship, for already by 1794 Sonthonax had enormous power. In 1794 he had been sum-


\(^{37}\) A mass of material on this episode is to be found in \textit{ibid.}, \textit{C7A} 54.
moned to France to defend his rule in the colony, which he did satisfactorily. That he had espoused the cause of the Negroes against the whites and the men of color brought little objection from the Convention. In 1795 he was sent back once more as a commissioner to the colony, along with four others—Julien Raimond, Roume, Giraud, and Leblanc. But Sonthonax was never again to exercise the same power he had enjoyed in 1793-1794. In Raimond and Toussaint Louverture he was to find opponents who had great ambition and who were not willing to play a role subordinate to his. Raimond, however, was not to give him worry, for he had been away from the colony for more than a decade and he did not have the contacts he once had. Nor did many in the colony appreciate what he had done for it in Paris. Very quickly he faded out of the inner circle.

The chief competitor was the Negro general, Toussaint Louverture, born a slave in 1746 on a plantation belonging to the Comte de Noé. His father had been a chieftain's son in Africa, of the Arada tribe. Toussaint's intelligence won him the favor of his overseer, who made him his coachman. Toussaint, moreover, got an old free Negro to teach him French, history, and geography. Later he read Abbé Raynal's *Histoire philosophique* in which a Negro messianic figure was predicted. In 1791 when revolt became rather general in the colony he joined the Spanish army, and rose to high rank by 1794, when he deserted and joined the French. This switch in service is reported to have resulted from an interview with General-in-Chief Lavaux, who made a secret agreement with him. As part of the agreement Toussaint was at once made a brigadier general. His extraordinarily rapid rise was to continue. The first of his advances upward was in 1795 or 1796 when he intervened in a power contest between Lavaux and the mulatto general, Villate, rescuing the former and putting him under his

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obligation. Toussaint by this clever move actually made himself the leading general in the colony.

Next Toussaint adroitly got rid of Sonthonax by having him elected as a deputy to the Council of Five Hundred in Paris and when Sonthonax showed reluctance to go forced him to do so. Sonthonax sailed from Santo Domingo on August 25, 1797, and ceased to hold influence in the colony.\(^{39}\) A third step of importance was to get rid of General Hédouville, the leading French general in the colony, who had not long been there. His departure was in October, 1798. Before he sailed, however, Hédouville issued a warning to the inhabitants that Toussaint intended to gain independence for the colony, a step fraught with danger.\(^{40}\)

Toussaint was now actually dictator in the colony. He made and enforced the laws and there was no one to question his power except for the agent particulier, Roume, political representative of the French government. Roume was not a strong man. He was an enthusiast for the Revolution, during which he had been assigned a mission to the Caribbean. He now saw the tendency of Toussaint's actions and warned his government of it, but the French government was at war with Britain and could not send troops. Moreover, there were many in France who admired General Toussaint. Had not the government in 1796 awarded him and three or four other colored and Negro generals each a magnificent saber and a costly pair of pistols, with an inscription on the saber handles?\(^{41}\) Roume made some protests to Toussaint concerning his policies, whereupon Toussaint imprisoned him and his family in a rural hut at Dondon in the interior of the country, under military guard. There Roume and his family spent several months. Meanwhile, Toussaint ruled without interference from anyone,


\(^{40}\) Ibid., 196-98.

\(^{41}\) Sonthonax to Martial Besse, letter of 24 Frimaire an V, Archives Nationales, Colonies, CC\textsuperscript{9}A 12.
except for a rival mulatto general, André Rigaud, who controlled a part of the province called the South, where the mulattos held power. After a few months Rigaud and his mulatto leaders were forced to flee to France. Meanwhile, Toussaint gave the colony a new constitution and entered into peace negotiations with Britain. For both these acts he later was to be charged with treason. His strong rule in the island brought tranquility and most of the colonists were pleased with it.

As for Roume, after several months with the aid of a faithful Negro domestic he was able to get a message to Edward Stevens, consul general of the United States, and arrangements were made for Roume and his family to go to the United States. Toussaint’s dealings with Roume were marked with indifference and even contempt. He seemed to have predicated all his actions on the continuance of war between France and Britain and on the assumption that France could not or would not send a force against him. But how much could a slightly educated military leader who had lived all his life on a distant island of the western Atlantic be expected to know of the might and wealth of Europe?

This, then, was the situation in 1800 in the French colonies of the Caribbean, after ten years of riots, murders, incendiarianism, plunderings, and military invasion. Martinique, troublesome in the early years of the Revolution, was quiescent under British rule and slavery was still in effect. Guadeloupe had experienced British invasion in early 1794 but was shortly retaken by a small but determined French force led by Victor Hugues of Marseille. Slavery there had been abolished and a large element of the Negroes had left their hoes in the fields and decided that the world owed them a living. In Santo Domingo, where the Revolution had been most keenly felt, most whites had either been

42 For more details, see McCloy, *The Negro in France*, 104-5.
exterminated or had emigrated; the mulattoes and Negroes were clashing again after an alliance in the early 1790's; and a former slave named Toussaint Louverture had emerged as a dictator after a career almost as remarkable as any that history can record. In France at this same time another dictator who would gain world fame had emerged, and events of 1800 were so enmeshed that the two men found themselves blocking each other's pathway. A military clash was inevitable.
THE EXPEDITIONS OF LECLERC AND RICHEPANSE

The year 1802 saw two expeditions from France invade the unruly West Indies, one under General Charles Victor Emmanuel Leclerc, brother-in-law of Napoleon, the other under General Antoine Richepanse. Their purpose was to quell uprisings tantamount to independent dictatorship in Santo Domingo and Guadeloupe. In each case the island leader had continued to pledge allegiance to France but his actions had given grounds for an entirely different conclusion. The hands were those of Esau but the voice was that of Jacob. The colossus in Santo Domingo was Toussaint Louverture, whose military experience had begun only in 1791, but whose power in the colony by 1800 had become absolute. Napoleon's government had two grievances against him. The first concerned Toussaint's imprisonment of Roume and his family. Roume was the agent particulier, or commissioner, in the colony, and his power was supposed to transcend that of the military leader. The second grievance concerned a new constitution which Toussaint had drawn up for the colony and his negotiations with the British. In all these, he was exceeding his authority. War with Britain had prevented Napoleon from acting earlier, but upon opening peace preliminaries in late 1801 (peace was signed at Amiens on March 25, 1802), he rapidly made plans to send the expedition of Leclerc.
The expedition of Leclerc was prepared rather quickly, though not without much consideration of some matters. Thought was given to how they would approach Toussaint, how they would act in the event of his refusal to recognize them, what disposal would be made of him and his family, and what would be done with the other Negro and mulatto leaders of the colony. Little attention was given to financial support and provisioning. For many months Roume and other colonists in exile had written lengthy memoirs to the government describing the leaders in Santo Domingo, telling how they might be conquered and what should be done with them when conquered. Briefly, it was suggested they be shipped out as exiles—anywhere, it did not greatly matter.\(^1\)

Hector Daure, ordonnateur (quartermaster general) of the expedition, whose duty it was to work out many practical details, reported that Leclerc’s army when it sailed from Brittany consisted of 25,000 men. They were almost without money and food, yet they were undertaking a very risky enterprise. Napoleon had asked Daure to take the post of ordonnateur, even as he had done on the Egyptian expedition, and Daure agreed. The fleet sailed on 23 Frimaire an X (December 24, 1801) and after an uneventful voyage came within sight of Santo Domingo on February 1, 1802. Two days later they passed Cap Français, one of the two chief ports of the colony.\(^2\)

\(^1\) See, for instance, a letter from Roume to Leclerc of 21 Ventôse an X (March 11, 1802), Archives Nationales, Colonies, CC\(^{1B}\) 2. Carl Ludwig Lokke, “The Leclerc Instructions,” Journal of Negro History, X (Jan., 1925), 84. Lokke says that for two years French officers in Paris had given thought to an expedition. One sees evidence of it in a cahier that had been drawn up for Leclerc on 29 Floréal an IX (May 19, 1801), in thirteen pages, by Dambrugese, commissioner of the Marine. “Note relative à la colonie de St. Domingue . . .,” Archives Nationales, Colonies, CC\(^{8A}\) 28.

\(^2\) “Compte rendu de l’administration générale de St. Domingue par le Gen. Hector Daure . . .,” ibid., CC\(^{1B}\) 13. Later during the expedition Daure was colonial prefect. Lokke (“The Leclerc Expedition,” 85) says that the fleet left Brest on Dec. 14, 1801, and that the troops numbered
A large element in Leclerc's army consisted of the Polish Legion, a body of volunteers who had enlisted under the French tricolor after their own land had suffered its second and third partitions in 1793 and 1795 at the hands of Russia, Prussia, and Austria. They numbered apparently 2,000 or 3,000 and were destined to a brutal fate.  

A second factor of interest in the composition of the troops is that it carried some mulatto officers who had sought refuge in France and now were returning, gladly, to help in restoring peace to the colony. Pétion and Villate, both mulattoes, were thus given minor commands. Toussaint's son and his stepson, Isaac and Placide, accompanied by their tutor, Coisnon, from the Institution Nationale des Colonies, bore a letter from Napoleon to Toussaint. Napoleon wished to offer Toussaint peace but was prepared to fight if he were unwilling to give in and accept Leclerc as captain general.

Napoleon's instructions to Leclerc as drawn up on October 31, 1801, provided that not only Toussaint but all the rebellious Negro leaders of Santo Domingo were at first to be flattered and treated with kindness but later imprisoned and sent to France. Toussaint was to be arrested even though he swore loyalty to France, indeed on that very day, and so too Dessalines and Moyse, as the most dangerous and least trustworthy of the Negro chiefs. All were to be placed aboard a frigate and sent to France. In the event of

20,000. Mlle. Blanche Maurel, Le vent du large; ou, le destin tourmenté de Jean-Baptiste Gérard, colon de Saint-Domingue ([Bruxelles, 1952]), 375-76, puts the day of sailing from Brest as Dec. 10, 1801, under Villate-Joyeuse, and says that other units were to join him at sea, but owing to bad weather they did not join him until their arrival at Santo Domingo.

3 The records in the Archives Nationales carry the name of every soldier who went on the expedition. One is staggered at the large number of Polish names.


5 Lokke, "The Leclerc Instructions," 94-95.
Toussaint’s refusal to yield and swear allegiance to France, he was to be declared a traitor and taken with force. All Negro and white collaborators with Toussaint were to be arrested, imprisoned, and deported, the white collaborators to Guiana, the Negro and mulatto to Brest or to Corsica, depending on whether the latter had given trouble or not. Those who had cooperated were to be sent to France, the others to Corsica. Any white women who had “prostituted themselves to Negroes” were to be sent to Europe. Finally, if Toussaint, Dessalines, and Moyse should offer resistance and be taken with arms in hand, they were to be shot.\(^6\)

Toussaint was notified of the fleet’s arrival and came to witness it. Seeing the great array, he was convinced that the French expected war. He decided to resist and sent out an order to all parts of the colony calling for the burning, pillaging, and destruction of cities and countryside. He also called for the assassination of the whites.\(^7\)

The first attempt to land was at Cap François, commonly called Le Cap, in early February. Henry Christophe, a free Negro born on the British isle of St. Christopher, later to become famous as Emperor of Haiti, was in charge and refused to obey Leclerc’s order to submit. Instead, he ordered the burning of the city.\(^8\) In the face of this refusal, Leclerc made no attempt to force a landing but proceeded to Port Margot, west of Le Cap, and there disembarked without trouble. Almost at once, however, he returned to the burned city and made it his headquarters.\(^9\)

Already, prior to his sailing to Le Cap, Leclerc had divided his fleet into four parts. Retaining one under his own immediate command, he placed the others under the French generals Rochambeau fils, Kerversau, and Boudet,

\(^6\)Ibid., 95-96.
\(^7\)Maurel, Le vent du large, 376.
\(^8\)Paul Roussier, “Lettres de général Leclerc addressés au Premier Consul at au Ministre de la Marine au cours de l’expédition de Saint-Domingue (1802),” Revue de l’histoire des colonies françaises, XXIV (1936), 120.
\(^9\)Ibid.
each of whom was to make a separate landing. Leclerc's strategy, as ordered by Napoleon, was to occupy the coastal towns and cities in the first two or three weeks, then send out striking forces from these bases to destroy any large units of the enemy yet resisting, and third, after yet more time had elapsed, to send out small units to run down scattered enemy groups who had taken to the hills and woods. By this strategy Napoleon was convinced that all opposition would be crushed.

For a time all went well for Leclerc. The army had made a successful campaign and appeared to be winning. Virtually every Negro general in rebellion had turned in his sword and submitted, taking the oath of allegiance. By mid-June Toussaint likewise had done so. It was not that Toussaint had no soldiers; according to figures sent to Paris, his forces consisted roughly of 38,000 men, plus the 9,000 from Rigaud's army, now that Rigaud had been crushed. There were sufficient troops to defend the island; it was simply that at this time they lacked the will to fight. Leclerc began to send to France and Corsica boatloads of the surrendered Negroes and mulattoes regarded as dangerous. It appeared that the conquest was about complete.

But already another enemy had arisen which would snatch victory from French hands. An epidemic of yellow fever had begun. According to Hector Daure, it had commenced in late April or early May, 1802, yet nowhere does he or anyone else (save Villaret-Joyeuse in a letter to the minister on September 23, 1802) call it by the term "yellow fever."

11 Ibid., 62.
It was called simply "fever" or "malady" or "epidemic." No one knew what caused it—in fact no one was to know until the dawn of the twentieth century, when the American physician Walter Reed, studying the malady then rampant in the Panama Canal Zone, proved that it resulted from the bite of a mosquito of the stegomyia type. Daure said of it: "The germ spread in a frightening manner. Within a month death reached all parts of the isle . . . [with] thousands of victims." Daure organized an elaborate ambulance service. Hospitals already existing were enlarged, and new ones were built. Some, however, were set afire by the enemy; on the night of February 18 [1803] a hospital at Le Cap was burned and many of the convalescents killed. The enemy also burned some convalescent hospitals that Leclerc had erected on the nearby Île de Tortue (Turtle Island). Leclerc considered this island a quiet retreat where his enfeebled soldiers might regain their health. The mortality rate of the fever was high and those who survived as convalescents were for weeks unable to stand the strain of fighting.

Another problem facing the French was the need of a meat diet to restore the convalescents to fighting strength. But the supply of animals on the island was small because of the almost constant warfare that had afflicted it since about 1793. And most of the animals that did exist had been driven into the interior by inhabitants who wished the French no good. And so, as Leclerc set about to solve his many problems, new ones developed. The Fates seemed to oppose the expedition.

The epidemic in 1802-1803 was not confined to Santo Domingo but was widely spread in the Caribbean area. It was present in Martinique and Guadeloupe and certain other islands, but the Negroes and mulattoes of the area

15 Daure, "Compte rendu . . . ," Archives Nationales, Colonies, CC9A 31. The first fifteen or twenty pages of this long report deal with the epidemic.
were very largely immune. Those who fell sick and succumbed were almost entirely European; whites who lived on the island suffered the least. Hardest hit were the fresh recruits from Europe; hundreds of the Poles were reported to have been its victims.\textsuperscript{16}

The hospitals were unable to accommodate all the sick, even though enlargements were made to some and new ones were erected. It was necessary to commandeer homes, especially the larger and better ones. The inhabitants appear to have complied with willingness. Even some cabins were used for hospitals.

Leclerc quickly foresaw a possible shortage of physicians, surgeons, and pharmacists and issued a general order declaring that all members of these professions must consider themselves subject to call to meet the emergency. In his account of the Leclerc expedition Daure praised the “health officers” for their faithful service. Many of them contracted the malady and died. Leclerc had brought with him eight physicians, eighty-nine surgeons, and twenty-one pharmacists.\textsuperscript{17}

A modern scholar, Paul Roussier, has given us some summary figures on the malady as it affected Leclerc’s army. He says: “Of 35,000 men arrived in Santo Domingo during the period of command by General Leclerc, more than 21,000 died of sickness and approximately 7,000 perished in the combats.” The epidemic, according to him, turned the expedition “into disaster.”\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{16} The anonymous author of an anti-French report on the Leclerc expedition, said to have been Boyron Tonnère, remarks that “the Poles were mowed down by the maladies, one buried them by hundreds in vast trenches”–“Liberté ou la mort. Mémoire pour servir à l’histoire d’Hayti, an premier de l’indépendence,” \textit{ibid.}, CC\textsuperscript{9B} 27. Villaret-Joyeuse in a letter of 1 Vendémiaire an XI (Sept. 23, 1802) referred to the epidemic as making “great ravages” on Martinique. He called the malady “une fièvre inflammatoire, qui prend souvent les principaux caractères de la fièvre jaune.” \textit{Ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{8A} 105.

\textsuperscript{17} “Compte rendu,” pp. 85, 88n, \textit{ibid.}, CC\textsuperscript{9B} 13.

\textsuperscript{18} Roussier, “Lettres du général Leclerc,” 102.
To climax the evils brought on by the malady, Leclerc himself contracted it and died on 11 Brumaire an XI (November 2, 1802). The news of his death is reported to have brought rejoicing to the Negroes and mulattoes of the colony who had been sullenly hostile to Leclerc’s expedition from the outset. Leclerc appointed as his successor General Rochambeau fils, one of his subordinate generals, at that time stationed in the Spanish part of the island, which by the Treaty of Basle (1795) had fallen to France. Almost a month elapsed before he arrived at Le Cap and assumed the position of captain general.

Meanwhile, Negro leaders were defecting from their allegiance to France and slipping away to join the opposition. This opposition had been developing since the late summer. The first to steal away was a nephew of Toussaint, Charles Belair. Before long Dessalines, the mulatto Clairvaux, and others had done likewise. By the spring of 1803, according to Rochambeau, La Plume was the sole Negro general who remained loyal to France. Apparently even the mulatto chieftains whom Leclerc brought with him from France also deserted. Everywhere the Negroes resorted to fire, plunder, and murder, methods that the Africans had always used. Even hospitals were not spared. The havoc was great. Leclerc is quoted as saying that he might have coped successfully with the epidemic but that the Negro and mulatto uprising was too much for him. Perhaps so, but Leclerc did not live long enough to appraise thoroughly either movement. Both epidemic and insurrection continued to mount after his death. Daure reported that at the time of Leclerc’s death Dessalines, Maurepas, and Christophe were still loyal. Daure dated the great defection from 20

Vendémiaire an XI (October 11, 1802), when Maurepas with two half-brigades of colonials deserted at Le Cap at 2:00 A.M., creating fear among his loyal troops.22

Not a few of the French troops also deserted, among them many of the Polish soldiers. The morale of both soldiers and officers fell greatly. Rochambeau reported to Paris this great dejection, commenting that what was needed was the arrival of fresh troops from France.23 Leclerc had appealed to Decrès and Napoleon for reinforcements and supplies of various types almost from the day of his landing but had gotten nothing. He was shamefully neglected. Some reinforcements did land in early 1803; Rochambeau in a letter of early March reported their arrival and added that almost to a man they were sick in the hospitals.24

The epidemic continued not only throughout 1802 but also throughout 1803 and even into 1804. The yellow fever, though endemic throughout the Caribbean area, seldom reached epidemic proportions, but the times it did were generally in time of war. But it has never taken so frightful a toll as in 1802-1803. The French found themselves fighting not only a cunning, courageous foe, willing to resort to any weapon or brutality, but also even the very elements of nature.

Short of men for completion of his conquest, Rochambeau, also cruel and unscrupulous, purchased 1,500 bloodhounds to run down his stealthy foes, but the dogs turned out to be of little value.25 By his willingness to resort to measures of this type Rochambeau acquired the reputation for great cruelty. But with time favoring them, the Negroes

23 Rochambeau, report of 11 Ventôse an XI to Decrès, Minister of the Marine, ibid., CC9A 34.
24 Letter of 11 Ventôse an XI, ibid. A total of 43,000 soldiers were sent on the expedition. Davis, Black Democracy, 86.
and mulattoes gave no letup in their efforts. That Rochambeau was able to continue his fighting as long as he did was perhaps the result of supplies that he was able to receive from the British and Americans. Renewal of the war between Britain and France in 1803, however, saw the termination of British aid.

To all intents and purposes the war terminated in a severe attack on the slender force of Rochambeau defending Le Cap on 26 Brumaire an XI (November 25, 1803) by Dessalines with his vastly superior body of 2,400 men. That night Dessalines offered Rochambeau a truce, and the next day the latter accepted it. The French agreed to evacuate the forts and arsenal within ten days; they were to be granted transportation to Jamaica by the British. Rochambeau and the French complained of insulting, brutal treatment from Dessalines and his men, but in part it seems to have been invited by their tardiness in the evacuation of Le Cap. Dessalines, however, was a very cruel man who hated the sight of a Frenchman, indeed, of any white person. Too many have recorded acts of his fiendishness to reserve any doubt on this point.

The surrender of Le Cap affected only the French troops of that area; there was another division in the former Spanish part of the island, commanded by General Kerversau. Rivalry developed between him and General Ferrand as to who should succeed as captain general. Ferrand, the more

26 "Extrait du registre de declaration tenus au Bureau de l'inscription maritime à l'île de Rhé, le six pluviôse an XI," Archives Nationales, Colonies, CC9A 36.

27 Elaborate details are given in a seventeen-page account entitled "Extrait du journal du Lieutenant de vaisseau Babron, embarqué sur la Surveillante," ibid.

28 A lengthy account of his brutality is recorded by the surgeon, François Beaumont, who escaped from the island in 1805 through the aid of an American sea captain and was taken to New Orleans. His report, "Déclaration que fait François Beaumont," written in New Orleans on March 29, 1805, is ibid., CC9A 41.
aggressive, seized the position, claiming it on the basis of seniority in age. Kerversau thereupon resigned and asked Ferrand for permission to leave the island, Ferrand sarcastically replied that if he did not care to serve as an officer he might enlist as a soldier. Kerversau left. Ferrand as captain general continued gamely to resist for more than a year the forces which Dessalines sent against him. He thought that the French might yet recover the colony, but in this he was foolish. Surprisingly, however, a small group of his men continued to maintain a footing in the island until 1809.

Meanwhile, a group of Negro and mulatto military leaders assembled at Gonaïves on January 1, 1804, and proclaimed the colony's independence and changed its name from Saint-Domingue to Haiti, the old Carib name for the island, meaning "mountainous." They chose Dessalines, their military leader, as governor general for life and conferred on him almost dictatorial power in making war and peace and in giving him the right to choose his successor. France's most highly prized colonial possession thus established its independence in the same manner as had the British American colonies some three decades previously.

The remnants of the French troops which surrendered at Le Cap, as well as large numbers of white and mulatto civilians from Santo Domingo, took refuge in Cuba. A letter from the Spanish chargé d'affaires in Paris, written January 30, 1805, and addressed to Minister of External Relations Talleyrand, set their number at 18,213. The writer reported that he had received his information from the governor of

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29 Long report from Kerversau to the Minister of the Marine dated 20 Pluviôse an XII, ibid., CC9A 37. See also a letter from Ferrand to Dubarquier, dated 28 Frimaire an XII, ibid., CC9A 40.

30 Jean Savant, Recueil des sources pour servir à l'histoire de la tentative de reconquête de Saint-Domingue (Paris, 1956), 77; McCloy, The Negro in France, 106.

31 Davis, Black Democracy, 90-91; Leyburn, The Haitian People, 32.
Cuba. Some of these refugees later went to the United States; others were captured or drowned in their attempt to go there. For example, five shiploads of French troops from Santo Domingo embarked from Cuba in 1804 for the ports of Norfolk and Baltimore, but only two met with success. One vessel with 300 men aboard was lost at sea; two others were captured by the British.

If white refugees left the colony by the thousands for safety in Cuba or in the United States, mulatto and Negro deportees had been sent out by the hundreds, perhaps the thousands, by Leclerc and Rochambeau in the years 1802-1803. The intention of Leclerc was to send 4,000 or 5,000 of the "troublesome" leaders to France, Corsica, Elba, or Guiana, according to the category in which they fell—mulattoes to France, Negroes to the islands, the white men to Guiana, the white women to France. Those guilty of atrocities were to be sent in irons and kept in them; the others were to be granted much freedom. In some cases, wives were to be allowed to accompany their husbands. Thus the family of Toussaint Louverture were sent to Brest with him, but on a different vessel and unknown to him. Those exiled to France were to sail for the port of Brest, where one of the chief offices of the Marine was located, and from there sent, if recommended, to some other part of France. The topmost leaders were to be sent to places well in the interior, according to Leclerc's instructions, so that they might not escape and make their way back to the colony. Those sent to Corsica and Elba were to be consigned either to a chain gang or a prison ship. This incar-

32 Archives Nationales, Colonies, CC9A 41. Also, letter from General Audibert to General Ferrand, dated 8 Messidor an XII, ibid. A French official in Guadeloupe estimated the refugees on Cuba at 30,000. "Quelques idées sur l'île Espagnole de Cuba par Alexandre Joseph Lambert, Inspecteur coloniale de la Guadeloupe, 1807," ibid., CC9B 27.
33 "Extrait d'une lettre de Mr. Pinchon, chargé d'affaires de France, près les Etats Unis, au Ministre de Relations Extérieures . . .," ibid., CC9A 38.
ceration was ordered not so much as punishment for what the unfortunates had done as it was to render the colony less prepared to resist French resubjugation by removing the troublemakers. It turned out to have very little value, partly because Leclerc failed to send some of the more desperate leaders, like Dessalines, Maurepas, and Paul Louverture (brother of Toussaint), even though he had pointedly been warned in advance that they were not to be trusted. Leclerc, however, thought that he could pick out those to be trusted and those not to be trusted. In this he overrated his ability.

From June, 1802, the deportations by ship from Santo Domingo got under way and thenceforth for about a year there was a constant stream of them. Every frigate, every transport as it returned to France for further service, carried a contingent of Negro and mulatto deportees—sometimes as few as one or two or three, other times as many as two or three hundred. Two large cartons of manuscript material concerning these deportations, giving the most minute details, may be found in the Archives Nationales (Colonies CC9A 32 and FC5B 30). One document, dated “St. Domingue, 1802” and entitled “Liste nominative des Nègres remis à l’hospice de Pontenezen par ordre du préfet maritime,” gives the names of sixty deported Negroes who were placed in this internment hospital or detention house at Brest. Forty-nine had come on the Foudroyant and were designated as scoundrels (scélérats); four had come aboard the Furieuse; one aboard L’Union; four, called “brigands,” on Le Conquerant; and two, likewise designated “brigands,” on L’Aigle. The four aboard the Furieuse and the two on L’Aigle were destined for the prison ship at Toulon. The place of birth and often other details for each deportee were given. Three whites sent by Leclerc were designated “scoundrels.” Their fate would have to be considered further, and so too that of three who had signed
Toussaint's constitution. Elsewhere, there is this comment on forty-nine brought aboard the Foudroyant: "These forty-nine blacks are either some robbers or true insurgents; certain ones have been officers and are guilty of great crimes, such as the slaughter of whites, etc. They are almost all Congo or Arada by origin."

Because of the high number of deaths from yellow fever among the crews of vessels, Leclerc gave permission for the use of some of the Negro deportees as sailors, but he cautioned: "it must be remembered that they are dangerous prisoners. They have been chosen as among the most dangerous in the colony. They should be employed in France in the interior of the country and not in the ports where they might escape back to the colony."

Officials in France seemed hardly to know what to do about the exiles. To Caffarelli, préfet maritime at Brest, whose duty it was to carry out these orders of Leclerc, these "dangerous" Negroes and mulattoes, designated as robbers and assassins, were just some unfortunates. However, he reported to the Minister of the Marine on the deportees and stated that he was putting Leclerc's orders into execution. Occasionally he asked of the minister more explicit directions. To the officials in France the orders from Leclerc seemed extreme and impractical.

A branch of the Marine office in Paris wrote to the consuls that so many Negroes and mulattoes were arriving in Brest as to menace the city health facilities. Men, women, children, white and black, with and without authorization, were arriving there and in other ports, creating a major problem. The official discusses groups of these deportees and the disposition being made of them. Sixty blacks from

34 Ibid., CC9A 32.
35 "Extrait d'un état nominatif des passagers existans et morts à bord du vaisseau le Foudroyant arrivé de St. Domingue, cet état certifié à bord du vaisseau du Foudroyant en rade de Brest le 6 fructidor an 10 . . . ," ibid.
36 See, for instance, his report of 19 Vendémiaire an XI, ibid.
Santo Domingo termed "brigands," who had come on various vessels, had been transferred to Corsica. Twenty-four Negroes and mulattoes termed "assassins" or "incendiaries" had been shipped to Elba, to be incarcerated in the prison ship. Fifty others had not yet been transferred because they were awaiting further orders. Likewise, seventeen others, including eleven Negresses and four Negro boys, had arrived but the papers on them had not reached the officials at Brest. The writer then states that within three months a total of 1,500 or 2,000 would arrive from Santo Domingo, and perhaps a similar number from Guadeloupe. The Spanish, the Americans, nobody wanted these scoundrels, cutthroats, firebugs. The writer holds up his hands, so to speak, and asks the consuls what is to be done with this "scum of the colonies," these potential carriers of the plague which has decimated Guadeloupe and Santo Domingo. 37

He adds that in addition to all these they had received some forty-odd whites deported with the Negroes as troublemakers, with hands and feet shackled, but with no report or orders. Temporarily they had been placed in Portenezen.

Even two priests had been sent from Santo Domingo in chains—Balthazar Corely and Maximilien Bellette Blactot—who had been implicated in colonial politics. They were to be turned free in Europe when parishes were found for them, and they were to reside in the commune where placed. 38

So terrible had been the effect of the epidemic on the ship crews that the Foudroyant, sailing from Santo Domingo in the summer of 1803, had been obliged to use sixty-three Negroes as sailors, inasmuch as its crew had been reduced to 362 men. These Negroes were described as "very bad subjects, drawn from the prisons," and the naval officers

37 "Rapport aux consuls de la République," made by the Bureau des Colonies of the Ministry of the Marine, 23 Vendémiaire an XI, _ibid._

38 Caffarelli, _préfet maritime_, in a letter to the Minister of the Marine, dated 6 Vendémiaire an XI, _ibid._
were warned to be on their guard. The ultimate fate of these deportees is not clear. It is known that they were dispersed in France and the islands of Corsica and Elba as requested by Leclerc. The greatest number left in France were held at Brest and certain other ports like Toulon and Rochefort. The majority were left in prison ships; the others were confined in prison camps and worked in chain gangs. But accommodations for so many were not to be had and one reads reports of officials demanding to be told what to do. Enlargements of quarters for deportees were started on Corsica and Elba. One is not surprised that officials were little interested in Leclerc's orders. The problem was all the more exasperating when no papers accompanied the Negroes. The officials accordingly relaxed and let some of the detained go free, and others doubtless were let go after the fall of Le Cap in late 1803. Gradually, it would appear, most of them made their way back to their homeland, now Haiti, where they could enter into stormy politics once more.

What part in this revolution was played by Napoleon's plans to restore slavery in Santo Domingo? There is much confusion on this matter. Leclerc stated on landing in the island that he did not plan to restore slavery, and he reported elsewhere that Napoleon had never discussed with him the possibility of restoring it. If Napoleon had such designs while launching the expedition it appears that he kept them well masked. It is true that during the late summer of 1802 word came to the colony that General Richepanse had restored slavery in Guadeloupe, and that it had an explosive effect on the former slaves in Santo Domingo. The Negroes were infuriated and adopted the resolution "Live free or die," which animated them during the next year-and-a-half

39 "Extrait d'une lettre du préfet maritime de Brest sous la datte du 4 fructidor an XI," ibid.
of their struggle. Leclerc called it the greatest blunder that could have happened and said that it was really the source of all the opposition he encountered. This is not to say that Leclerc did not take steps that pointed in the direction of the restoration of slavery at some future date, or that Napoleon did not apprise him of his plans in that respect later in 1802. It is only a half-truth however to say that Leclerc was sent to Santo Domingo to restore slavery and that it was opposition to this that defeated him.

The situation in Guadeloupe was like that in Santo Domingo only in part. There on 29 Vendémiaire an X (October 21, 1801), a clique of discontents headed by the mulatto General Magloire Pélage, military leader in the colony, had risen and overthrown Captain General Lacrosse who had replaced the agent Desfourneaux some months previously. The new junta accused Lacrosse, as they had Desfourneaux, of weak, arbitrary rule, had placed him for a period aboard a prison ship, and then had sent him off to Denmark aboard a Danish vessel. Meanwhile leaders of the revolt held a meeting and set up a group of four with Pélage as their chief, to run the colony. Pélage was the natural choice, inasmuch as he was the head of the army in Guadeloupe. He was now in a position comparable to that of Toussaint. Like Toussaint, he did not claim independence. He and the other members of the junta professed loyalty to France and sent a report of their overthrow of Lacrosse to the Minister of the Marine, as if they were acting under his orders.

The expedition for Guadeloupe under Richepanse also set forth from Brest a little later than Leclerc’s, on 11 Germinal an X (April 2, 1802). It was en route thirty-three days. On the afternoon of 16 Floréal (May 5) it sailed into

the harbor of Pointe-à-Pitre, where cannon boomed their welcome. A schooner with commissioners of the provisional government aboard came to greet the fleet and to bring General Richepanse a letter from Pélage conveying assurance that the island extended “perfect submission to the Consular government.” Pélage had a band play a popular song, “Where can one better be than in the midst of his family” (Où peut-on être mieux qu’au sein de sa famille), and he himself waited on the quay to greet the general-in-chief and to renew his protestation of allegiance. Instead of showing the defiant attitude of Toussaint, Pélage took all possible means to demonstrate his “loyalty.” Richepanse, more aggressive than Leclerc, ordered Pélage to evacuate the fort at once, as he intended to disembark his men. “Pélage in retiring repeated the cries of ‘Vive la République,’ ‘Vive Bonaparte,’ ‘Vive le Général Richepanse,’ and thus gave new proof of his submission.” The French troops thus disembarked without hindrance. When landed, Richepanse ordered them at once to draw up in battle formation and marched them to the chief place in the city, himself at their head. Then he sent detachments to occupy three forts about the city and other detachments to other forts. Thus he marched a large part of his army at once to occupy that half of the island where he considered the major fighting was bound to occur.42

Condescending further, Pélage drew up his men in battle array before one of the forts for review by himself and the French officers and directed the French to disarm his men. This act was so unpopular with his own troops that at once 350 of them fled to Basse-Terre, where they joined revolters under the leaders Palerme, Ignace, and Massoteau. Richepanse, however, was not willing to trust Pélage, despite his

42 A long thirty-page report drawn up by General Ménard to the Minister of the Marine, not dated but of the late summer of 1802, entitled “Le chef de l’Etat-Major général de l’armée au Ministre de la Guerre,” Archives Nationales, Colonies, C7A 57.
ostentatious professions of loyalty, and at once had him and some of his fellow officers at Pointe-à-Pitre confined aboard the *Fougueux*. Then Richepanse sailed with his residue of 1,800 men for Basse-Terre, where he expected battle.

Two days later they came to Basse-Terre where the mulatto General Delgrès was commander. Delgrès ordered his cannon to fire on the fleet. Pélage at once wrote him a letter ordering surrender and had it taken ashore by an aide. This aide was greeted by cries of derision by a multitude of Negro men and women who yelled incessantly, "Vivre libre ou mourir!" When handed the letter, Delgrès proceeded to tear it in pieces without reading it, denounced Pélage as a traitor, and had the aide imprisoned. Seeing that the harbor was well fortified with cannon and that disembarkation there would be very costly, Richepanse had his vessels moved to other ports nearby where his men were disembarked without difficulty. Nevertheless, they were fired upon by Negroes with muskets; indeed, musket fire continued throughout the night.43

After landing, Richepanse adopted a policy of caution, partly because large bodies of armed Negroes were assembling at Dolé and Matouba. Moreover, temporarily the two French forces were isolated from each other, but the arrival of a large French squadron at Sainte-Marie established communication. Thenceforth for several weeks there was a series of small engagements, in most of which the French were the victors. Finding that he needed more cannon, Richepanse asked Johnston, British governor of Jamaica, to sell him some, which Johnston did. Johnston also offered retreat on his island to the French women of Guadeloupe who were now refugees. It may be remarked that the Negroes resorted heavily to incendiarism. Gradually the French conquered Basse-Terre and its forts, the rebel

forces falling back on Grand-Terre. As they retreated the Negroes used the scorched earth policy. Soon the Negroes were driven also from Grand-Terre. Though the war was one of small scale, it was bitterly contested. Ignace, one of the Negro leaders, surrendered and then proceeded to kill himself. Gobert, the French general to whom he had surrendered, had his head cut off and exposed to view. Pélage, who fought with the French, saw one of his sons shot down at his side. An attempt was made, moreover, by two Negroes to kill Pélage, without greater success than to shoot off an ear.

The only episode of interest in this war of small engagements was the firing of the mine at Fort Matouba, the last engagement of real significance. Near Fort Matouba was a plantation named Anglemont, high and very difficult of access, which the Negroes used both as an arsenal and as a recruiting center. Hearing of its importance, Richepanse made plans to attack it. To take it he resorted to stratagem. He sent a small force bearing flags like those of the Negroes and yelling repeatedly the Negro slogan “Vivre libre ou mourir!” The trick worked, and about a dozen French penetrated the fort itself and spiked a cannon. Hardly had they done so than the Negro chieftain Delgrès, losing hope, ignited the arsenal and blew up the entire fort. Five hundred or more fellow Negroes were blown to bits. Rumor had it that Delgrès had been badly wounded in a knee and decided on suicide by blowing himself up. The other Negroes, hearing of his intention, locked hands and shouted aloud, “Point d’esclavage, vive la mort!” (No slavery; long live death) as the powder exploded and terminated the fight.44

Writing his report in the late summer, General Ménard thought that most of the fighting had ended. The mulatto Palerme, the leader of those still resisting, was in the woods

44 Ibid.
of Sainte-Lucie or Martinique. The war had been fought, Ménard observes, in a "burning climate," a rugged terrain, and against soldiers three times more numerous than the French—soldiers who scorned death in their fanaticism for liberty.\(^{45}\)

Richepanse barely lived to see the victory of his men. His death, following an illness of sixteen days, occurred in early September, 1802. Whether it was from the yellow fever as was that of Leclerc is not reported. The epidemic did prevail also in Guadeloupe and the troops of Richepanse suffered badly from it. In mid-June he had written a letter to Lacrosse, who was awaiting the outcome of events on the nearby island of Marie Galante, saying that a third of his men were unfit for combat purposes and that he did not see how he could conquer Guadeloupe with such slender forces.\(^{46}\) He had just learned of the arrival of General Boudet with a force of 200 men from Santo Domingo and hoped that Boudet would consent to their use. He was also writing Bertin, colonial prefect of Martinique, asking if he might possibly get some supplementary forces from him. Lacrosse returned to Guadeloupe from Marie Galante in early August, shortly before the death of Richepanse, and resumed his post of captain general as ordered by the Minister of the Marine.\(^{47}\)

A few bands of marauders still gave the French trouble. Hiding in the woods or on the higher mountains, they made raids on the cultivated parts of the island, taking cattle, vegetables, and edible roots with them. In reporting on them to the Minister of the Marine, General Ménard, temporary successor to Richepanse, expressed his respect for the courage and determination of these colored warriors.

\(^{45}\) Ibid.

\(^{46}\) Richepanse to Lacrosse, 17 Prairial an X, and Lacrosse to Decrès, 24 Fructidor an X, \textit{ibid.}, C\(^7\)A 56.

\(^{47}\) Lacrosse to Decrès, 24 Fructidor an X, \textit{ibid.} See also, Lacrosse to Decrès, 17 Thermidor an X, \textit{ibid.}\
They were courageous, ambitious, and talented. Ménard did not think that deportation of them would have much effect. He indicated that they still numbered about 600 and were armed about half with muskets, half with pikes and cutlasses. By the spring of 1803 they had been reduced to perhaps a score, following two chiefs, one of whom was Palerme. A new captain general, Ernouf, had replaced Lacrosse and pursued a policy of amnesty to all the rebels who would lay down their arms and report to authorities. Nearly all had done so. The revolt had terminated.

The fighting had been difficult for the French as their forces had greatly dwindled, because of enemy attack and the terrible epidemic which their leaders called more deadly than the enemy. For a period in the summer of 1802 the French generals did not see how they could possibly win. Their situation at that time appeared to be more precarious in Guadeloupe than in Santo Domingo. Nor were they able to obtain reinforcements from other colonial sources. Villaret-Joyeuse, the new captain general of Martinique, wrote in September, 1802, to Lacrosse saying that he deeply regretted his inability to accord him the reinforcements he had asked but he had lost "more than 60" troops from the epidemic, 300 others at the moment were sick with it in the hospital, and he dared not cut down his already slender forces in the face of menacing trouble on his island. Apparently it was the desperate action of Delgrès in firing the mine that tipped the balance of forces in favor of the French. Thenceforth a more hopeful note was discernible in the French letters.

As in Santo Domingo, large numbers of the rebellious leaders were deported. Richepanse before his death made plans to do this but died, leaving Lacrosse to carry out the

48 Ménard to Decrès, 24 Fructidor an X, ibid., C7\A 57. He refers to the "frightful epidemic" whose ravages had been much more severe than the enemy.
49 Ernouf to Decrès, 21 Floréal an X, ibid., C7\A 59.
50 Letter of 4 Vendémiaire an XI, ibid., C7\A 56.
idea. Some 1,900 Negro and mulatto prisoners were assem­bled on eight or ten ships—ships evidently that had brought over the army of Richepanse—and Captain Maucomble, placed in command, was directed to sail first for New York and the American coast and there dump as many as he could without endangering Franco-American relations, then to head for France and the Mediterranean. But inasmuch as the First Consul had issued an order that no Negro or mulatto should be disembarked on the Continent, he should not deposit any in a French port without receiving a specific order to do so from the First Consul. Lacrosse sug­gested as possible places to dump them the Ile de Rhé, off Brittany, or the Iles d'Hères, in the Canaries. The deportees should be distributed in a number of vessels and placed under military guard so that they might not take over the vessels. If any Negroes or mulattoes should happen to be in the crew or guard on these vessels, they should be deported also. Before deportation, however, he suggested that examination should be made of the specific charges which had been made against the prisoners, and that those against whom there were no significant charges should not be deported. Moreover, he recommended that all workmen in skilled trades—like masons, carpenters, wood workers, barrel makers, and blacksmiths—should be retained in Guadeloupe. He would exempt these up to a total of 400. The rest, the dangerous crowd, should be deported and should be confined to the hold of the ships.51

The ships from Guadeloupe carrying deportees sailed in groups rather than as a unit.52 Some ships sailed singly for destinations on the mainland—Guiana and New York—to see if the deportees might be deposited there and then headed for a French port. Thus the Formidable, carrying 223 deportees, landed at Toulon in late October, 1802, after

51 Lacrosse to Maucomble, 3 Vendémiaire an XI, ibid.
52 See “Extrait de la correspondance des Capitaine Général Préfet Coloniel et Commissaire de Justice de la Pluviôse an XI,” ibid., C7A 59.
attempts had been made to unload them on the American mainland. Certain other vessels—the frigates *Romaine*, *Volontaire*, and *Salamandre*—went as a unit to New York before sailing for France. It is possible that some vessels from Guadeloupe joined in with others from Santo Domingo and sailed together for France. Certain it is that a great number of vessels from the two colonies arrived in French ports about the same time, and that detention facilities there were swamped. They had sailed in the late summer or early autumn and arrived in late October or November.

A report from Caffarelli, *préfet maritime* at Brest, wrote on 9 Brumaire an XI (October 31, 1802) saying that eighty-three deportees from Guadeloupe, along with ninety from Santo Domingo, of both sexes, some mulattoes, some Negroes, were confined in hospitals at Brest, and that 978 others from both colonies were quarantined on three ships in the harbor. From 1,500 to 2,000 deportees were brought to French ports from Guadeloupe.

Some vessels carrying deportees for disembarkation in the United States or Guiana returned to Guadeloupe. In a letter of 30 Frimaire an XI (December 21, 1802) Lacrosse wrote the Minister of the Marine that the *Consolante* had returned from New York and New England after futile attempts to dispose of 180 deportees. He awaited orders on where to send them next.

Oddly, more than sixty rebel farmers of Guadeloupe surrendered in the late summer of 1802 and requested deportation. They asked to be sent to New England. General Ménard, to whom they surrendered, granted their request provided that each would turn in a gun before embarking.

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53 The *préfet maritime* at Toulon to the Minister of the Marine, 6 Brumaire an XI, *ibid.*, CC9A 32; and Lacrosse to Decrés, 21 Frimaire an XI, *ibid.*, C7A 56.


56 Ménard to Decrés, 14 Vendémiaire an XI, *ibid.*, C7A 57.
Among the earliest deportees were Pêlage and forty-two others who had taken an active part in the overthrow of the colonial government of Captain General Lacrosse on October 2, 1801. They were sent as prisoners to Brest and thence to Paris, where they were confined in prison to await trial. The death penalty was to be asked for all. The name of Pêlage headed the list; after his came the names of the other three members of the self-styled "provisional council"—Frasans (white), Corneille (mulatto), and Danois (mulatto). An "Act of Accusation" set forth the charges against them. What happened to the others is not indicated, but Pêlage was acquitted, surprisingly enough. His defense rested upon the claim that he had acted to halt the intolerable government of Captain General Lacrosse. Never had he made a remark or taken an action that could definitely be classed as treasonable. Operating in his favor were his undisputed meritorious career in the army and also his ostentatious welcome of General Richepanse when the latter's force landed at Pointe-a-Pitre. Despite the appearance of treason, it could not be proven to be so. Thus he went free, returned to the army, and was killed fighting under the Tricolor at Vittoria, Spain, in October, 1812.

A special tribunal was set up in Guadeloupe in the winter of 1802-1803 which tried 165 accused criminals. Sixteen of those tried were whites; the remainder were Negroes. Twenty-seven men of color were condemned "to be broken alive on the wheel or hung," one was to be banished and his home torn down, and eighty-five were condemned to chains, to be scourged, and to be exhibited in public. Various other sentences were given. The court asked for more information on yet thirty-six other cases.

57 "Etat nominatif des 43 individus actuellement en détention à Brest à bord des vaisseaux Le Redoutable et le Fourgueux....", ibid., C7A 56.
58 "Supplément à l'Extrait de la correspondance du Capitaine Général, entrée pour 17 Pluviôse" (an XI), ibid., C7A 59.
But severity was not confined to only one side. If cruel punishments were inflicted, much brutality had been shown by the Negroes and mulattoes. The most conspicuous instance of brutality was the assassination of twenty-three whites at Sainte-Anne on the night of October 6, 1802, at the hands of eighty Negroes, led by two whites of low character, Barsse and Millet de la Girardièrèe, the latter a former military officer who had been decorated with the order of St. Louis. Pillage was the incentive of the Negroes. The two whites were caught and tried; Barsse was broken on the wheel and burned alive, Millet was sentenced to be exposed naked in an iron cage and killed with a sharp sword.\(^\text{59}\)

The insurrection in Guadeloupe ended differently from that in Santo Domingo. Whereas in the latter it was the rebels who won and declared independence, in Guadeloupe the government was victorious and restored slavery. The defeated Negroes were told to go back to their masters. Kerversau later made the remark that slavery was restored in Guadeloupe without the word's being mentioned.\(^\text{60}\) Lacrosse, in a letter to the Minister of the Marine in early December, 1802, stated that he had not yet announced the consular orders for the return of slavery and the slave trade, fearing that the time was not favorable.\(^\text{61}\) An act restoring slavery indirectly had been issued on September 21, 1802. All persons of color and all Negroes who had been free prior to 1789 or if freed by a special act of affranchisement subsequently were asked to present themselves within three months to the colonial prefect, with all papers showing their titles to land, for verification and recording. Failure to do so would render a person subject to classification as a

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\(^{59}\) Lacrosse to Decrès, 2 Brumaire an XI, \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{7}A 56; T. Oriol, \textit{Les hommes célèbres de la Guadeloupe} (n.p., 1935), 270.

\(^{60}\) Report on the civil administration of Guadeloupe from 1759 to 1810, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C\textsuperscript{7}A 70.

\(^{61}\) Letter of 11 Frimaire an XI, \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{7}A 56.
vagabond. All laborers were required to carry pass cards and surety cards, as in the days of slavery. All persons not in possession of such cards when halted and asked for them would be considered vagabonds. If a servant were sent on a mission, he must carry a written order signed by his master, stating his age, sex, and the number of his pass card.

To enter or leave the island a passport and permission were needed by a person of free status. This requirement had been little observed during the Revolution and no doubt had been responsible for much of the chaos of that period. Ship captains were ordered not to carry passengers who lacked papers of authorization, and in event of violation they were to be fined heavily. Foreign ships bringing passengers whose papers were not in order would be subject to seizure and confiscation. The outcome of this legislation was to confine the worker and subject him more to the domination of his master.

Thus the rebellion of Pelage and the mulattoes on Guadeloupe collapsed, several thousand men were killed and around 2,000 others were deported, slavery was restored, and stern rule was reintroduced. The bid for power by the mulattoes collapsed. In Santo Domingo independence was proclaimed, the name of the island was changed, the white from the tricolor was discarded, and with great enthusiasm but no money and without cultural facilities an enthusiastic little people defiantly set themselves to carve out their own destiny.

62 Order of 22 Fructidor an X, *ibid.*, C7A 57.
63 *Arrêté* of 21 Vendémiaire an XI, *ibid.*, C7A 58.
64 Notice by Lacrosse, 3 Vendémiaire an XI, *ibid.*
On Martinique and its dependencies of Tabago and Sainte-Lucie the decree of the National Convention of February 4, 1794, abolishing slavery had never been put into effect, inasmuch as these territories fell into British hands almost immediately and the British preferred to leave the institution of slavery intact. Martinique was indeed the most quiescent of the three largest French Caribbean islands during the period of the French Revolution and Napoleon. It produced no great revolutionary leader nor any attempt at revolution. It was not devoid of revolutionary sentiment, and more than once rumor had it that trouble was brewing. But the feared revolt did not develop.

Rumor of an impending plot was reported in late October, 1802, by Villaret-Joyeuse, the captain general of Martinique and dependencies, in a letter to Bertin, colonial prefect of these islands. Villaret had received the news from a Negro escaped from Saintes. The mulattoes of Santo Domingo and Guadeloupe were to aid those of Martinique in seizing power. Villaret also had word of it through a letter from General Lacrosse. Consequently he had increased his police by forty men, designating them a Gendarmerie Coloniale, with functions of a National Guard.

Villaret also cut down the number of mulattoes in uniform,
and reduced the power of those remaining to a mere auxiliary
force. 2 It is surprising that the populace of the island welcomed the French back to Martinique after eight years of British occupation, but apparently the slaves harbored no animosity toward their old masters. Both Fort de France and St. Pierre celebrated the occasion with illuminations. The Negroes shared in the festivities. Even though a law had been posted announcing the renewal of the slave trade, the Negroes shouted “Vive la republique!” 3 But it must be borne in mind that slavery had continued in operation during all the past years. If the Negroes were glad to see the French return, it was in part because they could talk with them and understand them.

Among the great slaveholders in Martinique was the religious order of the Dominicans, which in 1803 still possessed 800 slaves, although in 1802 it had sold about 200. The slaves of this order for the most part worked on a sugar plantation; some served a hospital in various ways. 4

Hardly had the French regained possession of the island than two ships, one with headquarters in Le Havre and the other with home port in Bordeaux, arrived in Martinique bringing 410 slaves from Guinea. The question of government prizes and duties now came up again and Bertin, prefect of Martinique, proposed the renewal of conditions in 1783. 5 The attitude of the Minister of the Marine was sought, both on this and another matter. Twenty-three Negroes from Guadeloupe had been imprisoned for trouble-

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1 Villaret-Joyeuse to Bertin, 8 Brumaire an XI, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C8A 105.
2 “Ordonnance pour la formation d’un corps de gendarmerie à pied et à cheval,” ibid.
3 Villaret-Joyeuse to the Minister of the Marine, ibid.
4 Lascallier to the Minister of the Marine, dated 19 Germinal an XI, and Ponce René Champroux to Bonaparte, Germinal an XI, ibid., C8A 108. The sale of the 200 slaves was involved in a scandal that concerned Père Trepsac and elicited much interest.
5 Bertin to the Minister of the Marine, ibid., C8A 106.
making on the tiny island of Saintes, and someone had smuggled them into Martinique where they were working for three men. These three new owners had been brought into court and confessed to their part in the matter. What ought to be done to them? The writer posing the question was one who ought to have known what to do—the grand-juge of Martinique, Lefessier-Grandpréy. But so great had been the upheavals of the last fifteen years that even judges, prefects, and captains general did not know strictly what was proper. Meanwhile, public opinion in the colony, as expressed by a colonist named Levassor living at Saint Pierre, was sick of revolution and desirous of a return to conditions of the Old Regime.

Perhaps the most significant step in the legal restoration of slavery on Martinique was the order of March 15, 1803, issued jointly by Villaret-Joyeuse and Bertin demanding that all men and women of color who claimed freedom verify within three months their claims to this state. Any and all papers attributing them this freedom must be brought for checking to the record office in Fort de France or to that of Saint Pierre. Failure to comply would put them in the classification of slaves, indeed, of unclaimed slaves to be sold at auction for the benefit of the state. The order was based on the assumption that a large number of those masquerading as free men had no claim whatever to an act of affranchisement. The order of March 15 went farther than this. If alleged papers of affranchisement had been lost, it was made incumbent on the party claiming freedom to prove it by witnesses, court proof, or other means. Those resident in Martinique claiming to have been emancipated in some other colony must produce or obtain the papers of that emancipation within three months, or evacuate the island, or be classed as slaves. Finally, the act

7 Letter to Barthélémy, commissioner to the colonies, *ibid.*, C8A 105.
specified that all foot-loose slaves who pretended to freedom should return at once to their former masters and submit to their service. Otherwise they would be considered runaways, subject to sale for the state's benefit. All affranchised persons were to have a surname but they were forbidden to carry the name of their former master or that of any white person of the colony. Henceforth no marriage might be contracted between free mulattoes and their slaves without governmental permission, and curés in their reports of marriages must be careful to mention such authorization. One readily sees that this order with its many clauses went a long way toward the reinstatement of conditions in force under the Old Regime. 8

Villaret-Joyeuse was so imbued with the prerevolutionary spirit that he recommended that no schools in the colony be permitted for the education of mulatto or Negro children, for in attending them they might get the revolutionary spirit. In fact, he ordered the commissioner to close any and all schools on the island admitting Negro or colored children. 9 To us these measures seem shockingly severe but it should be recalled that Santo Domingo was well on its way to independence and that in Guadeloupe the French were not yet assured of victory. The spirit of revolution among the Negroes and mulattoes had played havoc for the French in the Caribbean.

Meanwhile, colonial officials in Martinique charged that a wave of poisoning was sweeping the colony, the victims being Negroes and beasts. Though the masters were not victims, they considered themselves to be in danger. The poisoning was thought to be the work of a secret confederation among the Negroes. Demand was made that the

8 "Arrêté qui ordonne la vérification des titres dont se trouvent porteurs les gens de couleur se disant libres, du 24 ventôse an XI (15 Mars 1803)," ibid., C8 A 107.
9 Letter of 19 Brumaire an XI to the government commissioner at Fort de France, ibid., C8 A 105.
colonial government wipe it out, and Lefessier-Grandprey, the grand-avage of Martinique and Sainte-Lucie, urged the establishment of a special tribunal for this purpose. He made his plea to the Minister of the Marine. In his letter he remarked that Villaret-Joyeuse by virtue of special powers given him had already set up such a court and that its accomplishments had justified its establishment. The punishments it had meted out had frightened the slaves and stopped the poisonings. The writer hoped that no further poisonings or other acts of violence would occur and that the special tribunal might be dismissed. The time limit for its existence was one year after peace should be made.\(^{10}\)

There were further cases of poisoning, however. Early in June, 1806, an attempt was made on the life of the Empress Josephine's mother, Madame Tascher de la Pagerie, by a slave who brought her some food with crushed glass in it. The slave involved was a thirty-year-old mulattress named Emilie. A remarkable feature of the case was that it occurred in the home of the captain general and that Madame Villaret-Joyeuse had served the food to Madame de la Pagerie herself. The case was tried before the special tribunal, which proceeded to give the accused the death penalty, after her confession of guilt. (At first she had declared herself innocent but later had made a complete confession. She gave as her reason for the act her belief that her mistress never liked her. She said that on the other hand she did not like Madame de la Pagerie.) The court's sentence called for execution by burning alive of the condemned and for the throwing of her ashes to the wind. This was the usual French penalty for poisoning in the eighteenth century and also in the early years of the nineteenth. In short, it was not imposed on Emilie because of her color. When asked about accomplices the guilty woman charged that an elderly Negress named Thérèse, also a slave of

\(^{10}\) Letter of Lefessier-Grandprey, dated 10 Floréal an XII, \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{8A} 110.
Madame de la Pagerie, had suggested the deed and had provided her with the powdered glass. But the court imposed no penalty on Thérèse, evidently doubting her part in the affair. The penalty on Emilie was to be carried out within twenty-four hours.\textsuperscript{11}

In the following year, 1807, sixty-five Negroes and mulattoes were called before this special tribunal on charges of poisoning and arson in Martinique. Eighteen were sentenced to death by burning, their ashes to be thrown to the winds. Others were given the penalty of forced work for life on the roads, yet others were sentenced to deportation, and some fifteen were discharged without penalty, the accusations against them not being proved. None was charged with attempt on the life or person of a white; all the accusations pertained only to crimes toward fellow Negroes. Some were accused of exhuming bodies from the cemetery to obtain parts used in poisoning. Most of the alleged poisonings concerned other Negroes, and especially infants; others, the poisoning of their wives and fellow slaves. Their purpose evidently was to bring loss to their masters.\textsuperscript{12} Not only was slavery the same old institution that existed prior to the Revolution, but the slaves resorted to the same old crimes and the courts to the same old penalties.

In Guadeloupe during these years much the same developments were taking place, save that there does not appear to have been trouble with poisoners. Guadeloupe was encumbered with a great number of those who claimed affranchisement. Writing in 1810 to the Minister of the Marine, Prefect Kerversau discussed the horde of claimants to affranchisement and stated that something must be done

\textsuperscript{11} Several documents in \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{8A} 114, bear on the case, among them "Extrait des minutes du greffe du tribunal spécial de la Martinique." The case was tried June 7, 1806, and the sentence pronounced on June 10.

\textsuperscript{12} Report of the tribunal dated Basse-Terre, Nov. 2, 1807, and letter by Villaret-Joyeuse of Dec. 1, 1807, to the Minister of the Marine, \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{8A} 115.
to reduce the number. Many of the claimed affranchise-
ment had no legal validity and had to be investigated and
weeded out. On the other hand, many held papers that were
legal and valid. Such were the slaves that had been
affranchised by their owners because of long service and
merit. But the affranchiseement given by municipalities and
other organizations he thought should be denied validity.
Most of the claimants were a wandering, shiftless group,
without land to cultivate, workshop for prosecution of a
trade, or means of a living. Yet some should be given an
opportunity to earn the means of redeeming themselves.
To this end he says that on 9 Frimaire an XIV (November
30, 1805) he had set up some workshops where those of
merit might earn by work their right to freedom.\textsuperscript{13}

To prevent emancipated former slaves from loaning or
selling their papers of affranchiseement to persons not hav­
ing such papers, Ernouf and Kerversau, captain general and
colonial prefect, respectively, wrote in 1807 to the Minister
of the Marine stating that those guilty of such practices
would be deprived of their freedom.\textsuperscript{14} The same difficulty
had presented itself in Martinique.

During this period there are references to the continued
sale of slaves. Sixteen slaves, of both sexes and of all ages,
were offered for sale along with the Plantation Deblaine in
the spring of 1808. Ernouf and Kerversau mentioned it in
a letter to the minister and implied that slaves were an
uncertain form of investment because of war and the block­
ade.\textsuperscript{15} It is of interest that slaves were to be sold on the

\textsuperscript{13} “De l’administration civile de la Guadeloupe depuis l’arrivée du
General Richepanse jusqu’à la prise de cette colonie par les Anglais, en
février 1810,” \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{7}A 70. This report though written in 1810 deals
with matters of the last decade.

\textsuperscript{14} Item No. 79 of “Sommaire de la correspondance des Capitaine
Général et Préfet Colonial de la Guadeloupe nouvellement parvenu par des
lettres de marque de cette colonie la Dame Ernouf et la jeune Adèle,” \textit{ibid.},
C\textsuperscript{7}A 68.

\textsuperscript{15} Letter of March 7, 1808, \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{7}A 67.
island in 1808. A year or so previously Amos Witt, an American, had been prevented from selling a load of Negroes, and the Negroes had been seized, on the grounds that the slave trade was illegal. Perhaps there existed a distinction between slaves already on the island and slaves brought in on ships. A sharp drop in the value of slaves did occur in the summer of 1808, because of the severe British blockade, as a subsequent letter from Kerversau on July 25 made clear.\(^{16}\) A year earlier prices had been very different. Then it was the French colonials who had seized several shiploads of slaves and sold them. It depended a lot on who gained and who lost the slaves.\(^ {17}\)

Indeed, the slave trade for the French colonies was already once again in operation, and the colonials were buying slaves brought from Africa not only by French but also by foreign vessels. Bertin, colonial prefect for Martinique and Sainte-Lucie, stated this in a letter to the Minister of the Marine on 9 Ventôse an XII (February 28, 1804). Bertin remarked that because of the renewal of war with Britain it had been necessary for the colony to lay in store a large supply of animals of various types and foodstuffs. Those who sold these things demanded that they also take some shiploads of Negroes, and the colony, according to Bertin, could not refuse them since the revived French slave trade had not reached the point where it could provide the number demanded. Villaret-Joyeuse in a letter shortly later supports the statement, saying that the colony was in need of at least 20,000 additional slaves at the moment.\(^{18}\)

At this time there were apparently no outbreaks of poisoning or arson, but once again there were reports of marronage. The *Gazette de la Martinique* of October 11, 16 *Ibid.* 17 Letter from Kerversau on Feb. 14, 1808, *ibid.*, C\(^ {17}\)A 68. 18 Letter by Bertin of 9 Ventôse an XII, and one by Villaret-Joyeuse dated 28 Floréal an XIII, *ibid.*, C\(^ {18}\)A 110.
1806, carried a notice and description of five runaway slaves—two men and three women. A reward was offered by their owners for information concerning their whereabouts. Likewise, this journal carried a list of slaves, with descriptions of each, who were being held in the prisons of Saint-Pierre and Fort-de-France, four in the former, three in the latter. Four of the seven were women. One imprisoned at Saint-Pierre was a capresse eighteen to twenty years of age named Rosilette. She said that she was the property of Mr. Magensie [sic] of Trinity. The journal carried the comment that she had a rather pretty neck. Another was a mulattress named Marie who was pregnant—at least she said that she was pregnant. Whether prison officials informed the owners by letter is not indicated. Perhaps the information given by the imprisoned slaves was often not to be trusted and the colonists had found newspaper mention and description desirable.19

Letters of officials at this time carry some interesting remarks on the free men of color of Martinique. Villaret-Joyeuse in a letter of 26 Ventôse an XII (mid-March, 1804) to the Minister of the Marine praised the actions of the men of color in several naval engagements that had been fought with the British in nearby waters. He reported that he was not able to speak too highly both of their bravery and their fidelity. And yet they were an isolated lot. Lefessier-Grandprey, grand-juste of Martinique, described them as “a class apart.” They lived in the city and were an integral part of it; they had a right to legal protection, but they could hold no official posts, which were held entirely by the whites.20 Their status was thus little if any different from what it was prior to 1789.

19 Page 386. A copy of the journal for the date specified is found in the register, ibid., C8A 114.
Some of the slaves sold at this time were brought not from Africa but from neighboring islands where they had been taken in raids. Captain General Ernouf and Colonial Prefect Kerversau, of Guadeloupe, wrote in a joint letter of January 25, 1806, to the Minister of the Marine that about a thousand Negroes had been seized in raids on Guadeloupe by ships and sold on other Caribbean islands. This tended to produce a shortage of labor on Guadeloupe and to overstock the labor market on the neutral islands. They did not state that the marauding ships were British but declared that this condition could lead to a state of piracy in the Caribbean. They had decided to strike at it by ordering that all armed vessels plying in the coastal waters of Guadeloupe bring their prizes to officials and pay the "additional tax" before they would be permitted to sell their cargo in the ports. They asked the minister's approval.21

One of the matters of most concern to the colonial officials at this period was the use of Negro and mulatto troops for the defense of the two islands. In March, 1804, the officials on Martinique organized a group of 300 Negroes for service with the engineers and the artillery. They were designated "pioneers." The owners of these slaves were to be paid the sum of 45 francs every two months, and the government was to furnish the men rations and pay of nine francs per month. Those falling sick were to be given medical attention in the hospitals. For any slave killed, crippled, or lost so far as service was concerned, the master was to receive 2,000 francs in reimbursement. A draft of slave labor was thus set up, the owners being required to furnish the government a designated number of slaves, based on the total number they owned.22

In May, 1807, Ernouf and Kerversau wrote the minister that in consequence of the damage to defenses by some

21 Ibid., C\textsuperscript{7A} 65.

22 Arrêté by Villaret-Joyeuse and Bertin, dated St. Pierre, Martinique, 15 Ventôse an XII, ibid., C\textsuperscript{8A} 109.
recent windstorms they had given orders to the army to round up 1,000 able Negroes for making the repairs. The Negroes were issued guns for use in defense in case that they might need them against the enemy. The government assumed responsibility for feeding and clothing them. It appears that 500 were employed at restoring the defenses; the remainder were placed in the troops of the line. In addition, 500 mulatto troops were employed at putting the island defenses in good order in the face of impending British attack.\(^\text{23}\)

The British also used Negro and mulatto troops in their Caribbean fighting at this time.\(^\text{24}\) In November, 1808, Kerversau wrote that the French islands were menaced with attack by the British who were assembling “their Black Regiments” and loading many transports with them. Already on March 2 they had taken the small island of Marie Galante. Later, on January 18, 1809, Kerversau wrote that 5,000 to 6,000 Negroes drawn from the Caribbean islands were serving in the forces besieging Guadeloupe.\(^\text{25}\)

As the threat of British invasion loomed ever greater, additional Negro and mulatto troops were levied for the defense of Guadeloupe. On February 15, 1809, Captain General Ernouf issued an order for a levy of 1,500 Negro troops for bolstering the island defenses. The owners were assured of payment for the service of these slaves. Only four days later announcement was made of the British capture of Martinique. Other levies came to be made. Bertolio in a letter of January 23, 1810, to the minister stated that Ernouf had made two levies of free men of color and two of slave men of color, bringing the latter group to 1,500 in number. However, there had been many desertions

\(^{23}\) Letter of May 10, 1807, \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{7A} 66.

\(^{24}\) \textit{Ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{7A} 69. The British force was 15,000.

\(^{25}\) A letter of Nov. 5 by Kerversau and one of May 6 by Bertolio, \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{7A} 68. In Aug., 1808, the French made a strenuous effort to retake Marie Galante without success. Letter from Col. Cambriel to Ernouf, Aug. 23, 1808, \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{7A} 69. Guadeloupe itself was to capitulate in February, 1810.
and leaves of absence. This kept the number of troops from being high. Colonel Valable, in charge of the crack Sixty-Sixth Regiment, wrote the minister on February 10, 1810, that at the beginning of the siege of Guadeloupe he had a total of 1,191 men—746 whites and 445 Negroes. At the surrender these had been reduced to a total of 586 men. The committee of inquiry appointed to make a study of the fall of Guadeloupe stated that their owners had furnished a total of 2,500 slaves for the defense of the island. 26

In the defense of Guadeloupe, and in fact in the defense of all the French Caribbean islands in the years 1808-1810, Negro and mulatto troops had an important part. A large portion of the colored troops had enrolled as volunteers with the hope of receiving affranchisement after a number of years. Affranchisement had been held up as a prize toward which they might work. Colored women and girls above the age of twelve were likewise able to acquire freedom by working in the hospitals. 27 There were yet other forms of employment by which those without letters of affranchisement might earn their freedom. If the master was known and present, however, it might be difficult for a slave to use them. Of the various routes to freedom, that of military service was by far the most frequently employed.

Martinique fell to the British on February 24, 1809, Guadeloupe on February 5, 1810. Villaret-Joyeuse charged that a Negro division and its white commander, Colonel Sotter, were guilty of rank treason while defending Martinique. 28 He himself was charged with lax defense of the island by some high official. This he hotly but unsuccessfully denied. A council of inquiry appointed in Paris delved

26 Report by Kerversau to the Minister of the Marine, in Feb., 1810; letter of Bertolio, dated Jan. 23, 1810; and letter of Valable to the minister, Feb. 10, 1810; all in ibid., C7A 70.
27 Arrêté by Ernouf and Kerversau on Sept. 11, 1808, ibid., C7A 68. And arrêté of 9 Frimaire an XIV by Kerversau, ibid., C7A 64.
28 Letter of Feb. 26, 1809, to the Minister of the Marine, and his "Journal" for Jan., 1809, p. 9, ibid., C8A 118.
into the situation and turned in a report on November 29, 1809, blaming him for the island's fall. His charges against the National Guards were called half-truths—misrepresentations to defend himself. He was ordered arrested and returned to Paris. 29

In Guadeloupe Captain General Ernouf considered the commandant of the militia, Mercier de Vermont, untrustworthy and asked for his removal and shipment to France. The militia was in part composed of mulattoes, but these appear to have done their duty in defense of the island, save that large numbers were persuaded by the British to desert. 30 There was also some sort of an epidemic, for in December, 1809, Ernouf wrote that more than 600 troops were in the hospital at Basse-Terre. 31

An account of the capitulation of Guadeloupe to the British appeared in the Gazette de la Guadeloupe for March 1, 1810. The officials, except for Kerversau and others in civil matters, and the troops of the French garrison were to be transported to England. Several hundred Negroes and mulattoes thus would be taken to Europe and there have some association with European conditions at close range—conditions that would make an impression on them. All persons wishing to reside in Guadeloupe were told that they must take the oath of allegiance to the British crown. 32 So far as the Negroes and mulattoes were concerned, however, conditions remained essentially the same under British rule.

In 1814 came the downfall of Napoleon in France and the resumption of Bourbon rule. Negotiations for peace

29 "Rapport à Sa Majesté l'Empereur & Roi," dated Nov. 29, 1809, ibid., C8A 118. The high officer who charged Villaret-Joyeuse with incapacity was Lausset, who for several years had been bitter toward Villaret. His letter of May 1 was a bitter attack on Villaret; in a letter of June 17 he renewed the attack. Ibid.
30 Letter of June 8, 1809, ibid., C7A 69.
32 Ibid., C7A 70.
were instituted and Britain returned most of the Caribbean islands to the French. Governors general (not captains general as under Napoleon) were sent out—Vaugiraud to Martinique and Linois to Guadeloupe. In June, 1815, Vaugiraud was elevated in title to the governorship of all the French Caribbean islands. But shortly before news of it arrived an abortive revolution took place in the islands connected with the return of Napoleon to power in France after his escape from Elba. In a bizarre manner Linois received by letter news of the coup and kept it secret for some hours, after swearing his courier to secrecy and dispatching to a distant port the ship that brought it. Linois and his second in command, General Boyer, made ready to declare themselves openly for a switch in loyalty from Bourbon to Napoleon. Linois prepared a proclamation and ordered the tricolor unfurled, but only after Boyer had broken into the packet of letters from France and learned the news. Boyer was more aggressive than Linois and at once ran up the tricolor. Guadeloupe came out for Napoleon but some British vessels proceeded to blockade the harbors. The affair was quickly over. Martinique remained loyal to the king. The British took Guadeloupe. Linois, Boyer, and some of their subalterns were carried as prisoners aboard British vessels to France and turned over to the French government, which instituted against them a long and important trial for treason. Linois and Boyer would have benefited greatly had Napoleon won at Waterloo, but as it happened otherwise they fell into trouble. Attempt was made to enlist the support of the men of color in Guadeloupe for the coup of Linois and Boyer, but they wisely refrained. 33

33 The papers on this affair are extensive. But most of the facts are set forth in the "Extrait d'une lettre du Sr. Chirwas à son Excellence le Ministre Secrétaire de la Marine et des Colonies," dated Point-a-Pitre, June 30, 1815, and letter from Vaucresson to the Minister of the Marine written Aug. 27, 1815, ibid., C7A 73. Also a report by Tinant and Lanes, dated Sept. 2, 1815, ibid., C7A 74.
Prior to the collapse of his little revolt, Linois had ordered a search of Negro cabins on the island for arms. None were found. The reason for his fear is not indicated, but perhaps he considered that their failure to support him was because they were hostile and disposed to offer trouble.\textsuperscript{34}

While neither the men of color nor the Negroes showed interest in a return of Bonapartism to power in the Caribbean, Vaugiraud had written from Port Royal, Martinique, in March, 1815, that the men of color were restless and that many were former slaves who did not have their papers of affranchisement and were tinder for any future revolution. He suggested as a means of avoiding trouble from them the establishment of some companies of sappers, composed only of mulattoes who could not present their certificates of freedom. They could be used not only as auxiliaries to the militia and sent to chase \textit{marrons} and deserters, but for \textit{corvée} work to aid the battalions. After eight years of service they would be freed and passed to the regular companies of militia. He sent the minister copies of two printed ordinances of March 1, 1815, which set up this procedure.\textsuperscript{35} What happened as a result is not indicated.

Linois, governor of Guadeloupe, likewise had comment to offer on emancipation. In a letter of March, 1815, to the minister he complained that the British had been liberal in granting affranchisements during their periods of occupation, and he advocated the policy for the future of granting freedom only for “signal services rendered by the slaves either towards their masters or towards the state.” Later, in June, he wrote that he had “judged it necessary” to issue an order that men of color who did not possess their papers of affranchisement yet who were enjoying freedom must complete four years of service with the sappers to obtain

\textsuperscript{34} “Ordre très secret,” issued at Basse-Terre on Aug. 6, 1815, \textit{ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{7A} 74. The whole of this thick register is devoted to the trial.

\textsuperscript{35} \textit{Ibid.}, C\textsuperscript{8A} 120.
their papers of freedom.\(^{36}\) This illiberal attitude evidently was not confined to the two governors but was widely held among the planters, and it was destined to provoke revolt from those Negroes and men of color who had enjoyed some freedom during the past stormy decade or two.

Aside from the transfer of the two colonies Martinique and Guadeloupe back to French sovereignty, the years 1814-1815 did not mark any enormous change. These changes which did occur were small. Notable were two announcements in the *Gazette officielle de la Guadeloupe* in 1815 pertaining to schools. In February it was announced that the Collège St. Victor was being reestablished at St. Pierre, Martinique, in a new locale, and it was stated that endeavor would be made to provide the youth attending it an education in no way inferior to that given in the best lycées in France. Parents interested in sending their sons were informed as to whom they should communicate with. Later, in June, there appeared an announcement of a boarding school (*maison d'éducation*) at Basse-Terre run by a Madame Leger, and its address. In the same issue with the latter notice was the advertisement of lessons in Spanish offered by a M. d'Alcala, at 4 gourdes a month.\(^{37}\) These announcements were brief and relegated to inside pages but they were to portend great future developments.

Another journal, the *Gazette de la Martinique*, of December 30, 1814, carried the names and descriptions of several slaves who were to be sold, and also those of several slaves *en marronage* and the names and addresses of their owners who offered rewards for information leading to their return.\(^{38}\) They are reminiscent of similar notices which had appeared in colonial journals before and during the early months of the Revolution.

\(^{36}\) Letters of March 5 and June 25, 1815, *ibid.*, C\(^7\)A 72.

\(^{37}\) Issues of Feb. 20 and June 15, *ibid.*, C\(^7\)A 72 and C\(^7\)A 74.

\(^{38}\) *Ibid.*, C\(^8\)A 121.
And yet there lingered some confusion inherited from the revolutionary era in regard to government promises. In 1804-1805 officials in Martinique had drafted a force of Negro "pioneers" or "sappers" to aid the military engineers and artillerymen, promising to owners the reimbursement of all Negroes who did not return to them at the rate of 2,000 francs (colonial), to be paid one month after peace would be made. Some owners with long memories (and probably slim pocketbooks) recalled this promise in 1814 and 1815 and made solicitation to the colonial prefect for payment. He in turn wrote the Minister of the Marine and the Colonies in Paris, asking what was to be done. The minister made no reply, possibly because the promise of payment had been made by the Bonapartist regime, now repudiated. But the colonial masters were not content with silence and renewed their demands; the colonial prefect renewed his inquiry; and the minister at Paris renewed his silence. There is no indication that the money was ever paid, and this despite the fact that the slave masters and the Bourbons had traditionally been warm friends.39

Vaugiraud, governor of Martinique in 1815 for the Bourbons, applauded a decision taken by the Ministry of the Marine not to permit the return to Martinique of men of color from Europe who had played a part in the Revolution. He complained that the widow of "the famous mulatto general Pélage" had been permitted to return to the colony, calling it a mistake, and he predicted that it would have an effect worse in Guadeloupe than in Martinique, fanning the pride of the men of color and embittering their relations with the whites.40 Many of the men of color did return in fact and the restoration of French rule in the two colonies was inevitably marked by some racial bitterness. This

39 "Extrait de la correspondance officielle de l'Intendant de la Martinique parvenue au Bureau, 23 juin 1815," ibid., C8A 121. See letter of April 17, 1815.
40 Letter of Feb. 18, 1815, ibid., C8A 120.
sensitiveness was between the whites and the mulattoes rather than between the whites and the Negroes; the latter showed much more docility.

The widow Pelage was not the only person of color permitted to return from France to the colonies in this era, as an examination of the ship lists of passengers reveals. In the single liasse F\textsuperscript{5B} 111 of the Archives Nationales, carrying a list of passengers going from French ports to the colonies, chiefly to Martinique and Guadeloupe, there are mentioned twenty-four Negroes or persons of color named and briefly described. The majority were servants, but free; only two or three are designated as slaves. It can readily be seen that travelers like these would be critical of conditions prevailing in the colonies, and particularly of slavery.\textsuperscript{41}

Perhaps in consequence there occurred in Martinique and Guadeloupe in the 1820's and the 1830's a number of racial clashes. One was a slave uprising at Carbet, Martinique, in the autumn of 1822. Though suppressed, tension remained, and in December the planters made a raid on the Negro huts throughout the colony to find any contraband anti-slavery literature. In the home of a well-to-do free mulatto named Cyril Charles Auguste Bissette were found two copies of a pamphlet recently published by an author who employed the pseudonym of Avila. The title of the brochure was \textit{De la situation des gens de couleur dans les Antilles françaises}. Bissette and two friends, Louis Fabien \textit{fils} and Jean Baptiste Volny, all free men of color, were arrested on the charge of disseminating seditious literature. Tried before a court in January, 1824, the three were sentenced to exile and their property was ordered confiscated. They appealed and were next tried before the Royal Tribunal of Martinique, which rendered a more severe penalty. They were sentenced to the galleys for life and to be branded with the letters “GAL” (for \textit{galérien}, galley slave). Again they appealed,

\textsuperscript{41} \textit{Ibid.}, F\textsuperscript{5B} 111 (lists of passengers, 1686-1837).
this time to the Cour de Cassation in France, but the court declined to hear it. The governor of Martinique thereupon ordered the sentence carried out. They were branded in consequence and sent to France to be put in the galleys. They were imprisoned at Bordeaux for two or three years, until December, 1827, and apparently would have withered away their lives in prison had not Bissette attracted the attention of a brilliant young lawyer named F. A. Isambert, destined to become famous for his thirty-odd-volume publication of ancient French laws and for his active part in the antislavery movement. Isambert in turn enlisted the aid of several powerful friends, among them the noted Benjamin-Constant, who decided to take the case to the French public, by brochure. The case quickly became a *cause célèbre*. The Cour de Cassation did try the case in September, 1826, after some political changes paved the way for its consideration. It annulled the decision of the Royal Tribunal of Martinique and sent it to the court of Guadeloupe for retrial. This body gave Volny and Fabien suspended sentences, reduced the exile for Bissette to ten years, and ordered him to pay the costs of the trial. Dissatisfied still, the defendants appealed once more to the Cour de Cassation but it rejected the appeal. This closed the case. Volny, an old man, died soon thereafter; Fabien fils stayed on in Paris, as did Bissette. Bissette, embittered by the experience, became an impassioned enemy of slavery and of colonial rule as it then existed. He wrote a series of pamphlets over the years attacking both and in 1834 began the publication of a *Revue des Colonies*, published in Paris, which ran for about five years, establishing for himself a literary reputation and bringing his cause to the attention of the French Parliament. Probably more than anything else the *Revue* paved the way for the act of emancipation in 1848.42

42 An excellent article entitled "The Bissette Affair and the French Colonial Question," by Melvin D. Kennedy, is found in *The Journal of*
Another significant racial disturbance occurred in 1833 at Grand'Anse, Martinique. As recounted in a brochure by Bissette and Fabien fils, it began in a small incident at Grand’Anse on August 4, 1833, between a white man and a man of color, the latter on horseback. They exchanged some words. A second white, named Lasserre, witness to the incident, became angry, put on his sword, and swore that he would take no such insolence. He addressed the colored rider and bade him to cease having his horse prance. Being unarmed, the man of color, named Salomon, left the scene. But two friends of Salomon now went to Lasserre and challenged him to a duel. To extend the challenge, they went to his home. Lasserre was infuriated that he be challenged to a duel by a mulatto! He so stated and proceeded then and there to fall upon Fréjus, the one extending the challenge, seized him by the collar and struck him twice with his fist. Calling his wife to bring him his cane, he struck Fréjus several times with it. Fréjus cried for help. At length Lasserre picked up a rock and struck him with it between the eyes. Another white intervened at this juncture and prevented Lasserre from beating the second mulatto in like fashion. Several witnesses (their names given) saw this merciless beating, which left Fréjus quite bloody.

Representatives of the local men of color went to the commissioner-commandant, Desabaye, and denounced this treatment. Some whites also went to this officer and asked protection for Lasserre. They requested that “all the grenadiers of the militia” be sent there. The men of color now sent twelve of their number to see the governor, Dupotetet,


Alfred Martineau and L. Ph. May, in their book, _Trois siècles d’histoire antillaise: Martinique et Guadeloupe de 1635 à nos jours_ (Paris, 1935), 171, say that Bissette, Fabien fils, and Volny were the “true authors” of the publication ascribed to Avila and that the case brought about “an apotheosis of Bissette.”
and tell him of their danger. The authors saw to it that these representatives were shamefully treated, as if they were “bad subjects.” From that time onward Grand’Anse was treated as “conquered territory,” white soldiers patrolling the streets day and night.

Shortly thereafter Lasserre and two mounted soldiers were fired on at night, and one of the soldiers’ horses was hit. Lasserre and the other soldier fled. The whites charged a half-witted Negro youth named Césaire with the shooting, and he was haled into the Court of Assizes, tried, and convicted. The death penalty was imposed. This trial only inflamed the racial feeling. Among the mulattoes it was intense. Rumor spread that on December 25 the homes of Lasserre and a white named Duval-Dugué had been plundered and set afire. White troops numbering 200 and a company of men of color were sent to Grand’Anse to maintain order. There the colored troops were partly cajoled, partly forced, into a small building, a sugar factory, and 107 were left to suffocate. When the enclosed troops attempted to force their way out, eight were shot. This occurred on the night of December 31. Several days elapsed before the procurator general arrived to investigate the incident and the situation, the implication being that he did not care since it concerned the men of color. Meanwhile, on January 1 the colored prisoners at Grand’Anse were removed to the jail at Saint-Pierre, without clothes and shoes, and garroted. The eight wounded soldiers were transferred on mules to the hospital. “Thus terminated the deplorable Affair of Grand’Anse,” wrote Bissette and Fabien fils. The account is a contemporary one, presented by the aggrieved party. It well illustrates the bitterness that was felt. Nor were these two incidents of the 1820’s and 1830’s the only ones during this era in Martinique and Guadeloupe. It is not without interest that the two most significant

clashes occurred, not in Guadeloupe where there had been more disturbance during the revolutionary and Napoleonic periods, but in Martinique where relative quiescence had prevailed.

Bissette's *Revue des Colonies* calls belated attention to what could only have been an incident of some consequence in the French colonies—the introduction of Negro and mulatto Freemasonry in the years 1828-1829, in Guadeloupe. Hitherto, Bissette observes, Freemasonry had been reserved to the whites alone. But recently a Masonic lodge had been formed at Pointe-à-Pitre by some men of color who had been initiated into the order in Paris. There they had been initiated into the lodge of *Trinosophes* by some white citizens of prominence in the government and in the law courts. Not only had they been initiated, he adds, but some of the men of color had been chosen for high position in the lodge of the *Trinosophes*. In Pointe-à-Pitre they were designated as “brothers of Hiram.” No mention of whites’ attending their lodge is made, but the names of several whites in Paris who initiated them there are given, among them Berville, the *avocat général* of France and master of the lodge, and Alexandre de Laborde, deputy in Parliament.44 Freemasonry had long existed in the French colonies in the Caribbean, but the organization was a social one and they had declined to admit either Negroes or men of color. Bissette does not state that the colored Freemasons had been accepted by the white Freemasons in the colonies, for that was not to happen. Even so, black Freemasonry was evidently to establish a fraternal bond between the Negroes and mulattoes.

Meanwhile the “July Monarchy” of Louis Philippe which had come into being in France in 1830 was acting to bring an end to slavery and the slave trade and to remove the line of demarcation between white and colored classes. Under date of January 10, 1831, the government journal *Le

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44 *Revue des Colonies*, issue for June, 1835, 41-42.
Moniteur Universel carried the report that the Minister of the Marine had directed the governors of Martinique and Guadeloupe to disregard henceforth all handicaps and limitations which at one time or another had been placed by law upon the men of color. Henceforth these acts would be considered as having fallen into desuetude, and the colored class was to rate equally with the whites before the law. It proceeded to give a list of local restrictions imposed on them at various times, from 1765 onward. Henceforth the men of color were to enjoy full civil rights in the colonies even as the whites. An act of November 12, 1830, had set forth this new position, evidently as a result of the revolution in France that year. The Jacobin flag and ideas had come back into power.

Very shortly steps were to be inaugurated for abolishing slavery and the slave trade. They came slowly and not without the prodding of certain reformers. The influence of Great Britain, which also was taking steps in the same direction, was a contributing factor. This story of this matter will be topic of consideration in the next chapter.

From the time of the restoration of the Bourbons the tide of antislavery sentiment had moved slowly but steadily forward in France. Napoleon during the Hundred Days had ordered the termination of the slave trade in order perhaps to curry favor with the British, but without much success. Louis XVIII declared null and void this decree of Napoleon, but at the same time he declared the trade abolished thenceforth. Officially, therefore, the slave trade was illegal in French territories after 1815, yet in actuality it continued to exist for two or three decades.1

In 1817-1818 legislation was enacted to terminate it. An ordinance of early 1817 ordered the seizure of any vessel being used to introduce slaves in the French colonies. To support this action the French Parliament passed a decree on April 15, 1818, reiterating the provisions of the ordinance and designating some courts to try cases of violation. And to make a show of enforcement, a cruiser was sent to the French waters off West Africa to see that violations did not occur. France refused, however, to accept a British proposal that each country might have the right of search in enforcement of the ban.2

Meanwhile the French ports of Nantes, Le Havre, Bordeaux, and Marseille reportedly were enjoying a thriving
traffic in slaves. Not only were the importations of slaves large but sanitary measures aboard the vessels were worse than in the past. The traffic was illegal and those engaged in it were out to squeeze all the profit from it they could.

The British in their zeal to see the nefarious trade ended had continued to prod the French and other peoples to terminate it. In 1818, in 1822, and in 1831 they sought agreement on curbs and penalties designed to lessen it. A British sea captain stated in two official reports that he had seen twenty-five to thirty French slave ships off the western coast of Africa during the latter half of 1820, and he estimated that the French had sent to America a total of perhaps 40,000 slaves during the past fourteen months. In 1831 and 1833 the French finally agreed to British overtures for mutual search and seizure of offending vessels on the high seas. Cruisers of the two countries now joined in the search and until 1846 collaborated in their effort. However, friction developed in 1845 and in the year following the French withdrew their cruisers. Priestley suggests that French opposition came from the great profits they were deriving from the trade.

Meanwhile Britain had advanced still further than the French by granting emancipation in 1833 to all the slaves in her colonies. Slaveowners were to be reimbursed in part for their loss, in order that it not be felt too severely. A commission was appointed to study ways of facilitating this colossal undertaking. Some summary figures found in the Archives Nationales indicate that the slaves freed reached a total of 780,933. The total of indemnities paid their owners

was 500,000,000 francs (approximately 25,000,000 pounds sterling). The average evaluation per slave was 1,400 francs. Great care was taken not to throw all the liberated slaves at once on the labor market. They were freed on a gradual or staggered process that ran to 1838, the younger, more able-bodied slaves being liberated first, the older slaves and children later on. From all points of view the measure was an admirable achievement, not only as a display of humanitarian sentiment but also of sage economic planning. While it would benefit the former slave, it would not bring heavy loss to the owner.\(^7\)

Thenceforth the example of Britain was held aloft by zealous French abolitionists as an example to France. There was an evergrowing body of these reformers. The strong, effective group founded in 1788 by Jacques Pierre Brissot, known as Amis des Noirs, so active in leading to the Emancipation Act of 1794, had dissolved following that victory. Apathy had followed. Not until 1820 was a new French abolitionist society formed. Taking the name La Société de la Morale Chrétienne, it focused attention on the slave trade rather than on the institution of slavery itself. Its members were called on for a minimum contribution of 25 francs yearly. The sum was not small and evidently was designed to cover the expense of publishing brochures on its mission. During the next decade it sponsored the publication of a considerable number of abolitionist pamphlets, among them one by M. P. A. Dufau entitled *De l'abolition graduelle de l'esclavage dans les colonies...* (Paris, 1830), a work which set forth the abolitionists' position in comprehensive fashion. Literary personalities like Madame Germaine de Staël and Victor Hugo wrote in behalf of the movement, and the Académie Française offered a prize for

poetry on the subject of “Abolition of the Black Slave Trade.” By these means the public’s attention was called strongly to the traffic in slaves.\(^8\)

But this was not enough. An aggressive movement like this one gains momentum as it goes, and in 1834 a Society for the Abolition of Slavery was organized in Paris, with many prominent persons as members, such as Isambert, Lamartine, La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, Rémusat, Tracy, De Tocqueville, and Montalembert.\(^9\) Its roster of distinguished membership reminds one of the pre-revolutionary Amis des Noirs. Several of its members were destined to play a prominent role in the next fifteen years in terminating slavery in the colonies—Isambert, Lamartine, Tracy, and De Tocqueville. Finally, there was a latecomer to the group in the person of Victor Schoelcher, an Alsatian, who like Paul the Apostle was to make amends for his lateness by his zeal. On a trip to the southern United States about 1838 Schoelcher was impressed by the horrors of slavery and resolved to enlist in the crusade against it.\(^10\) He was not long in being recognized as leader of the movement.

As time passed, certain of the leading Protestants of France, like François Guizot and Agéor de Gasperin, gave their support, and so too did the Freemasons.\(^11\) In 1834 Gasperin published a pamphlet that was much discussed, entitled in brief _Esclavage et traite_ (Slavery and the Slave Trade). In it he argued that abolition was necessary and also that it should be gradual. It would be ruinous, he said, for emancipation of all slaves to be simultaneous.\(^12\) A colonist from Martinique named Fortier made reply, but the replies were few in comparison to the antislavery attacks.

\(^8\) Martin, _Histoire de l'esclavage_, 258-61.
\(^9\) Ibid., p. 281. Martin gives the author and title of several of the more noted of these abolitionist writings, p. 261.
\(^10\) Martin, _L'abolition de l'esclavage_ (Paris, 1848), 51.
\(^12\) Ibid., 25-28.
So numerous were the attacks on slavery that by 1842, according to Gaston Martin, the French public was convinced of the need of emancipation, and the questions left for solution were only when and how it would be done. The abolitionists themselves held diverse opinions—Lamartine, Isambert, Tracy, Dupin and others insisted on immediate freedom. Several decrees were brought forward after 1838 by various abolitionists, with indemnity offered the slaveowners, but they failed to meet acceptance by the government. Realizing the importance of the matter, the government set up a series of commissions in 1838, 1839, and 1840 to investigate the possibility of emancipation and the best way to effect it.\(^\text{13}\) The British government had set the example in doing this. On the commissions the abolitionists had a prominent role.

The government was prodded along by petitions made by the workers of Paris, all inspired by Schoelcher and other abolitionists. Three petitions were presented in 1844 carrying 3,000 signatures; others in April, 1847, carried 11,000 signatures, coming apparently from all France.\(^\text{14}\) The government also was incited to act by reports of occasional uprisings and atrocities coming in from the colonies. Among these was the affair of Mont Carpet, Martinique, during the night of October 13, 1822, when a massacre of the whites and the burning and pillage of their homes were carried out by slaves embittered by their condition. Four slaves were executed as ringleaders in the matter. Earlier incidents had been reported in France and elicited a strong response there.\(^\text{15}\) These and perhaps other cases of racial disturbances were discussed in France by the press and by pamphleteers and contributed to the molding of public opinion on the slave question.

\(^\text{13}\) Ibid., 37-38, 40.  
\(^\text{14}\) Ibid., 41, 49-50.  
\(^\text{15}\) See, for example, Césaire Philemon, *Galeries martiniquaises* . . . (Paris, 1931), 68, and Bissette's *Revue des Colonies*, III (1836), 273-76, and 223.
Besides these outbreaks there were incidents of animosity arising from infraction of the delicate color line in the colonies. Europeans commonly received the stories of them with indignation, little knowing and little caring for the traditions of the colonial whites. In 1831 two incidents occurred in Martinique in which officials recently come from France stirred up the indignation of the colonists by inviting to meals some persons of color. In one case the official bringing wrath upon himself was a magistrate who invited persons of color to a small, private dinner; in the other, the official was a temporary prefect, and the meal a large, public social event. The latter gave the more offense, but in both instances the officials lost their jobs. The judge was forced to resign and the temporary prefect to leave the colony. Two stories appeared in the French press as to what actually happened in the latter event, one in the Constitutionnel of November 24, 1831, the other in the Journal du Havre of November 19, 1831. The first was written by a colonist, the second by the offending prefect. 16

In the public schools of the colonies at this period there existed segregation of races, which aroused some resentment from the free colored class. Where two races were to dwell together, one master, the other slave, such cleavage was inevitable. But it did not accord with the principles of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity which still animated the French, and there were many individuals in France glad to seize upon such incidents to denounce slavery and those who benefited from it. One such was Bissette, an extraordinarily gifted mulatto from Martinique resident in Paris in the 1830's who published a violently antislavery Journal des Colonies. 17

Immediately before the Revolution of 1848 there occurred in Martinique a massacre in which angry slaves attacked

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16 Copies of both journals are found in Archives F.O.M., Martinique 579.
17 See account of Bissette and his journal below, pp. 211-13.
the owners of plantations with cutlasses. Many of the whites fled to the ships, but others were stranded. Some took refuge in the home of one Sannois. The Negroes surrounded it and set it afire, burning all but one of the thirty-seven whites—men, women, and children. The one who escaped had been wounded and left for dead. Later in the night he crawled away to safety. The episode does not appear to have had any great significance other than to illustrate that their servitude was often resented by the slaves, and that emancipation even before it came in 1848 had in part been seen as inevitable by the owners. 18

It would be false to suggest that emancipation of the slaves was the chief issue in the Revolution of 1848, for it was not. Yet it was a prominent issue and one of the first matters handled. Several of the revolutionists—Isambert, De Tocqueville, Lamartine, and Schoelcher—were ardent in the cause of abolition, and as early as March 3, 1848, when the revolution was not a week old, the Provisional Government proclaimed the end of slavery and appointed a commission with Victor Schoelcher as its chairman to draw up the plan for its enactment. 19

The appointment of members of the commission was given to Tracy, who had been made Minister of the Marine by the revolutionists. Tracy, warm friend of Schoelcher and like him a zealous abolitionist, thus allowed the abolitionists to proceed with their heart's desire. Schoelcher was appointed Assistant Minister of the Marine but was left free to devote his entire time to the work of the commission. With him on the commission were Isambert, De Tocqueville, Beaume, Morel, Deslisle, Rodier, and Mestro—a total of eight with Schoelcher included. Their first meeting was called for at 9:00 A.M. on June 19 at the Ministry of the Marine.

18 Charles Wismer, Souvenirs de la Martinique et du Mexique pendant l'intervention française (2nd ed.; Paris, 1890), 6. The whites of Martinique blamed Schoelcher and other negrophiles for this massacre.

19 Priestley, France Overseas, 67.
At that meeting the commission was to elect its president and draw up its plans. Thus did Tracy describe the procedure to Rodier, Director of Accountability in the Department of Finance, in a letter of June 16. Tracy stated in the letter that the government had already agreed to pay an indemnity to slaveowners. It was left to the commission however to draw up more detailed plans and to submit them for ratification by the National Assembly. The commission took its mission seriously and by August 14 (in less than sixty days) held its fourteenth meeting.

The French might have saved themselves an enormous amount of labor and possibly some money had they adopted a more simple method of fixing the reimbursement to slaveowners for each slave liberated, regardless of age, sex, colony, or other factors. But no, that would not have been logical. Why pay as much in remuneration for a liberated child aged four or a slave aged seventy as for a vigorous slave in his twenties or thirties? It seemed appropriate to make such distinctions, and theoretically it should result in a saving of money to do so, but practically observance of such close distinctions involved an enormous compilation of figures—compilation and computation—and this in a day before modern electrical computers. The French are logical people. In the 1790's they had drawn up a new system of weights and measures known as the metric system, based upon logical scientific bases that might be redetermined if lost, but at infinite labor. Their measure of emancipation of slaves in 1848 was likewise to involve a gigantic amount of labor and its results were not to meet the approval of all concerned.

A census or computation of the exact number of slaves in each colony was necessary and had already been made.

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20 The letter by Tracy and the reports on the meeting of the commission are in Archives Nationales, Colonies, K2. There are elaborate papers of the commission's early work.
in the 1840's. It was agreed upon in advance that one-fifth of this number would be reckoned as children under five and old persons over sixty, who would be indemnified at a lower rate than other slaves. Then an evaluation of slaves by colony for four periods of age since 1825 was to be made, with a general average of value per slave as witnessed in judiciary slaves (sales of runaway slaves, etc.). In Martinique, for example, the general average of evaluation by head was 910.90 francs and the average in judiciary sales 654.29 francs. In Guadeloupe, the average evaluation per slave was 1005.54 francs, and the judiciary evaluation 884.30 francs.21 This same memorandum indicated that Martinique had a total of 74,447 slaves, of whom one-fifth or 14,889 were by estimate aged under five or over sixty, leaving 59,558 able-bodied slaves for whom full indemnity should be paid. Guadeloupe had a larger number. Her total was 87,087, of whom 17,417 (or 20 percent) were children under five or aged persons over sixty, leaving 69,670 able-bodied slaves.

A careful study was made of judiciary sales of slaves in the various colonies since 1840 to determine the mean price per slave. Complete figures were available on those in Martinique for two years only, 1844 and 1845, with the mean price in 1844 set at 663.33 francs, and that for 1845, 646.62 francs. For Guadeloupe full figures for each of the years 1840-1845 are given. Their average figure of evaluation was 884.30 francs, as compared to that of 654.98 francs for Martinique. Clearly, slaves though more numerous in Guadeloupe than in Martinique were also more costly. It was a factor in reaching the figure for indemnity.22

Another item of investigation by the commission was the number of affranchisements per colony for each of the last

21 "Nombre probable de la population esclave à l'époque de l'émancipation (dédiction faite des enfans de 5 ans & audessous et de vieillards de 60 ans & audessus, soit 20 0/0," ibid., K2.

22 "Résumé des ventes judiciaires d'esclaves & prix moyens par années à la Guadeloupe," ibid.
few years prior to 1848. We are not told whether the Ministry of the Marine already had these figures for each colony. Presumably it did not. The procurator general of Martinique drew up on March 8, 1848, some summary figures which were sent to Paris and found their way into the hands of the Schoelcher commission. It reported the number of affranchisements in Martinique during 1845 at 616, those in 1846 at 1,010, and those in 1847 at 793, and those for the first three months of 1848 at 300, a grand total of 2,719. The excess of births over deaths also was given for each year since 1845, and the total slave population of the island for March 30, 1848, was set at 74,447.23

A decree of April 30, 1848, had set a sum of six million francs to be divided among slaveowners in reimbursement of their losses through liberation of their slaves. The money was for immediate distribution. It was supplemented by a grant of 120 million francs in securities (government bonds) bearing interest at 5 percent, from the date of September 21, 1848. This was called a complément (supplement) to the reimbursement or indemnity. Negroes bought after 1831 were not to be indemnified, nor children below five or aged persons over sixty.24 Nor was money to be paid for marrons or runaway slaves. The indemnity rested upon some elaborate computations and it differed from colony to colony. Aiding the Schoelcher commission in Paris was a commission in each colony, and they in turn were aided by municipal officers and chambers of commerce.25 It was all very involved and complicated. As already stated, the procedure rested upon a logical basis, but this was not altogether seen or followed by those working on the reports. Thus, in a

23 This note by the procurator general was drawn up on March 8, 1848, in Fort de France.
24 “Projet de decret relatif à l'indemnité due aux colons,” Archives Nationales, Colonies, K2.
25 See for example the “Rapport au Ministère” of Paris, Jan. 3, 1852, by the Bureau des finances et approvisionnement of the direction of colonies.
FREEDOM AT LAST

report of November 29, 1850, to the Minister of the Marine, Morillot explained that he was somewhat slow in the work of his commission in Martinique. Husson and the commission in Guadeloupe, he said, had completed their task but had followed a different approach and had made some decisions without apprising the commission in Martinique. He describes some of the difficulties that his commission had faced.26

There were those who offered the Minister of the Marine or the Schoelcher commission the fruit of their wisdom. Thus a naval lieutenant wrote from Cherbourg on March 22, 1849, to Tracy, Minister of the Marine and the Colonies, advising strongly against a lump sum payment to the former slaveowners, as he considered that it would soon be gone in waste. There were two classes of slaveowners, he observed, one affluent living in France and spending no money on the improvement of their farms, the other living in the colonies and up to their necks in debt. If the money were given in one lump sum to the latter group, it would almost immediately slip through their fingers to their creditors, the money-lenders. He accordingly recommended payment in piece-meal of a certain sum annually, up to three-fourths of what they were to receive. The minister apparently was impressed with this suggestion for he wrote concerning it to Mondaillle, a fellow official.27

Schoelcher and certain other abolitionists had intimated prior to 1848 that the indemnity for liberated slaves would approximate their actual value. The Schoelcher commission did not follow this policy; instead, it set the indemnity at half or one-third of the real value. And the sum set differed for each colony. The owners of slaves in Martinique were paid an indemnity of 425.34 francs per slave, those in Guadeloupe 469.53. This represented a loss of 486.56 francs per head to owners in Martinique, and one of 536.01 francs

26 Archives Nationales, Colonies, K6. 27 Ibid., K2.
in Guadeloupe, on the basis of the mean value of slaves in the two colonies as computed by the commission. Some other colonies, where the indemnities were set at a higher level, fared better. Thus, in Guiana owners were reimbursed 618 francs for a slave, and in Réunion, 705 francs.

According to a report on the spending of the fund which was drawn up in Paris on May 6, 1856, for the Minister of the Marine and the Colonies, some former slaveowners had not yet presented their claim to indemnity. The Director of the Colonies thought that a limited time should be allowed these tardy eligibles, after which the books would be closed. Evidently this was done; there was no opposition from the colonists.

There were also some doubtful cases which had to be settled on their individual merits. One such case was that of Alfred Numa, a young slave in Guadeloupe, who in 1846 signed up for service on the naval goélette, La Decidée. The vessel went to France, Numa put his foot on French soil and thereafter claimed his freedom as law permitted him to do. But this was not all the story. He had sworn before enlistment that he was free, and his sister, who was free, had sworn to the same effect. He had thus practiced fraud in his dealing with the government, and the government had been guilty of insufficient investigation. The owner had reason for a grievance. The paymaster in Guadeloupe after conferring with an attorney hired by the owner thought it best that the government make an indemnity in this case and proposed that the sum of 600 francs plus interest on it at 5 percent from the date of Numa’s enlistment in 1846 to May 28, 1848, be granted. This the minister did.

28 A minute entitled “Indemnité coloniale” in ibid., K4.
29 Priestley, France Overseas, p. 68.
30 Ibid., K4.
Another case concerned the widow Martinis of Saint-Pierre, Martinique. She had two slaves who were liberated, but she was absent from the colony in 1848 and on her return ignored the time limit for making application for indemnity. The director of the interior recommended to "the governor in Privy Council" that she be granted 800 francs from another fund. This was done. Many other claims were made by persons because of extraordinary circumstances.

Hundreds of disappointed former slaveowners in Guadeloupe and Martinique joined in the sending of two petitions in 1852 to the Minister of the Marine asking for an additional indemnity. The governor of Guadeloupe in forwarding one of the petitions explained that his colony had been hit hard not only by emancipation but also by a series of other calamities (evidently referring to a plague of fires). The petition from Martinique consisted of nineteen large pages, with sixty or seventy names on each page. Two later petitions make it clear that no additional indemnity was granted. One detects in these petitions a bitterness on the part of the colonists who thought that they had not been treated justly. The state had formerly permitted them, indeed had encouraged them, in the path of slavery. Should they now be forced to bear a heavy loss just because people's minds had changed? It is easy to be humanitarian at other people's expense.

The new heaven and the new earth did not develop instantly. The slaves were free, and they were given full rights of citizenship including the right to vote (which was only granted to the masses in France that same year), but they were given no land or money, and at least for the time being were little better off than they had been before. This led to some discontent and appears to have been the cause

32 "Rapport" of Oct. 17, 1859, Ibid.
33 Ibid., K6.
of a series of fires that afflicted Guadeloupe during this period and, indeed, the letters of officials to the Ministry of the Marine in Paris have much to say on the trouble. The most extensive of these fires was one that broke out early on Sunday evening, May 12, 1850, at Point-a-Pitre; sixty-two homes were burned, with a loss estimated at 480,000 francs. It had been a dry season, and a strong wind whipped the flames along. The cause was unknown but some attributed it to malice, others to accident. It originated in the former town hall, which should not have been occupied on Sunday, and it got well under way before discovery. The fire consumed all the buildings on several streets before burning itself out.  

Another fire of alleged incendiary origin occurred in the same town on June 3, 1850. The house set afire was that of Adrien Guercy, a friend of Bissette. Three times during the same afternoon and night it caught fire—at first around 1:00 P.M., later around 8:00 P.M., and still later at 1:00 A.M. On the second occasion fire was found in a mattress. Two Negroes and two Negresses found on the premises were arrested. Prompt action on each occasion saved the building. The evidence pointed toward arson but it could not be proven. The same issue of the colonial journal recording this episode carries also the account of several other fires allegedly set by incendiaries.

A fire more plausibly the work of arsonists was one that destroyed the plantation home of Sieur de Beauvallon on April 13, 1850. Beauvallon wrote an open letter to the governor general of the colony charging it to plain arson. He and his wife were away. The fire broke out near midnight. On the previous day the water in a canal which might have been utilized in fighting the fire had strangely been diverted and sent in another direction. Members of

34 St. Pierre Les Antilles, année 8, May 18, 1850, p. 3.  
35 Ibid.
the militia came to aid in fighting the fire but got no cooperation from the Negroes living on the plantation. These last concerned themselves in saving the effects in their cabins. Beauvallon states that he was disliked and that his home was referred to as a nest of aristocrats. He charged that the fire was set purposely to bring about his ruin economically, without killing him.\(^\text{36}\)

These fires in Guadeloupe were too numerous to be scoffed away. Possibly some were not the work of arsonists but it would appear that others were. Let it be recalled that fire and poisoning had always been weapons of subtlety employed by African slaves. But why would former slaves now free want to use fire? Perhaps out of bitterness or resentment. After all, only a few apparently resorted to it.

The journal *Les Antilles*, of Saint Pierre, Martinique, in its issue of July 27, 1850, tells of a proposed decree in France which would carry aid of 1,500,000 francs by way of reimbursement to those in the colonies who had suffered from racial riots in 1848-1849 resulting from the emancipation of slaves. Of this sum 320,000 francs would be allotted to property owners in Martinique and Guadeloupe who had suffered from fire and pillage in connection with riots of May 22, 1848, and June 21, 1849. I find no other reference to such an appropriation, however, and conclude that it was not passed.

On July 11, 1850, according to the same journal, the National Assembly in Paris considered passage of an act to punish those responsible for the series of fires at Pointe-à-Pitre. Schoelcher argued that these fires were accidents, resulting from the fact that the buildings were built of wood and straw; Bissette thought differently.\(^\text{37}\) It seems that nothing was done or, in fact, could be done, inasmuch as the incendiaries were not known in most of the cases. In


at least one case in Guadeloupe, however, the incendiary was caught in the act and sentenced by the court to life imprisonment.\(^{38}\) He had set fire to two cabins on a plantation.

In Martinique there were few if any arson cases at this time. There was apprehension and fear however, and some persons left the island. There were some racial disorders both in Martinique and some of the smaller French islands. Such a clash had occurred on June 24, 1849, on the little island of Marie Galante. The Negroes involved were accused of having laid plans for a long time, designing to attack the whites from all sides with pikes and cutlasses. Some of the whites, however, learned of their plans and fled from their homes to the town of Grand-Bourg. For two days the Negroes destroyed property with fire.\(^{39}\)

The whites of these islands were not the only ones to flee. Some of the former slaves too had fled—whether before or after emancipation it is not clear. Some fled from Martinique to the British island of Dominica. The British registered them but announced that they would collaborate with any French officials who might come to arrest them and take them back.\(^{40}\)

What effect did the emancipation have on economic conditions on these islands? Reports vary. The journal *L’avenir*, published in Guadeloupe, reported in 1853 that a great wave of prosperity had come to the West Indies, more particularly to the British possessions, and that a large number of Chinese coolies and East Indians had been imported as farm laborers. This importation concerned only the British islands however. The French were considering the importation of Negroes from Africa, and the editor of *L’avenir* was strongly in favor of it.\(^{41}\)


\(^{39}\) Described in *Les Antilles*, April 24, 1850.

\(^{40}\) *Les Antilles*, March 23, 1850.

\(^{41}\) Issues of July 30 and Aug. 27, 1853, p. 3.
This same journal reported a story of weekend orgies occurring around Sainte Marie, Guadeloupe, which led to police investigation. It was found that there were no orgies, but that some sixty persons among the freed slaves had bought or rented land and had moved in with their families. The journal commented that whereas before 1848 it was common for slaves to steal chickens or rabbits for food, nothing of this sort now occurred. Sometimes on Sundays small groups might go to the cafes for a drink but rarely was there a quarrel.\textsuperscript{42} 

In contrast to the bright economic conditions reported by this journal, another, the \textit{Courrier de la Martinique}, in its issue for March 8, 1851, gave a doleful picture, portraying the smallness of the indemnity to the former slaveowners and the slowness with which it was paid.\textsuperscript{43} Supporting this point of view was a long petition in 1853 “by the women of the French colonies” addressed to “His Imperial Majesty Napoleon III, Emperor of the French,” pleading for an addition to the indemnity of 6 and 120 million francs. The wordy, emotional appeal, drawn up by one Madame A. Riby, opens thus: “Sire, the mothers of family, the widows and orphans of Guadeloupe, united, deprived of the greater portion of their revenues, some [indeed] all, by the Emancipation, most of them not able to provide for the future of their family, a great number lacking from need, living in privation, reduced to some labors [\textit{travaux}], at which they succumb, address themselves to you filled with confidence in crying to you, Pity us!” The letter stated that the indemnity had not been entirely paid in 1853, and that what they have received has been so negligible as not even to pay the interest on the capital invested in their slaves. It said that whereas they should have received 1,250 francs per slave

\textsuperscript{42} Report by the police captain L. Commin, in \textit{L’avenir}, April 2, 1855, p. 3, Archives F.O.M., 582 E.

\textsuperscript{43} A copy is found in Archives Nationales, Colonies, K5, dossier on Martinique.
(a mistake), they had received only one-third that amount. This had not been enough to satisfy their creditors. They appealed to the emperor in the name of his grandmother the Empress Josephine, in that of his mother the Queen Hortense, and in that of his wife the Empress Eugénie, to come to their aid in rendering them a supplement to the indemnity. The letter was accompanied by a long list of signatures of petitioners, all women. Nothing resulted, and in 1860 the petition was renewed, again without success. This petition was not just an empty wail. For many of these women the slaves were all the property they had. They had not seen the storm clouds sufficiently in advance to transmute their property into something else. For these people the liberation had brought hardship, no prosperity.44

Liberation had one result that has been little noticed even by the experts on colonial history. Thenceforth for more than half a century there was a desire—almost a mania—to obliterate all reference to color lines. The Negro and even the man of color considered that he did not enjoy full equality with the whites unless all reference to race or hue was omitted. The Courrier du Havre of August 31, 1851, carried an article pointing out this observation. It was a remarkable forecast. The French government omitted reference to race and religion in its census figures. Until recent decades newspapers in France commonly omitted reference to color. Why? Clearly, it was sensitivity to being regarded as a citizen of lesser rank than the whites. In France even today the term “Negro” is shunned to the point of taboo. The word “noir” (black) must be used. Here in the United States the Negroes prefer to use the term “Negro,” which of course is a Latin derivative meaning “black.” There is really

44 Ibid., K6. Madame Riby confused the sum of 1,250 francs suggested by the commission of the early 1840’s under the Duc de Broglie with the vastly smaller sum of 430 francs for Martinique allowed by the Schoelcher commission. The abolitionists prior to 1848 had disarmed the colonists with liberal promises which were not carried out.
no difference between the two words so far as the dictionary
sets them forth, and there is nothing of opprobrium in either.
Happily, the Negroes in recent decades have become much
less sensitive, as men and women of their race have dis­tin­guished themselves in their contribution to society.45

45 This lack of color distinction creates many problems for the historian.
A great difficulty in the research for this book, as for my earlier The
Negro in France (Lexington, Ky., 1961), was the determination of the
color line of individuals.
THE ACT of Emancipation had come suddenly and without adequate preparation. Large numbers of the slaves interpreted this act to signify that no longer would they have to labor in the fields, that the government in some manner would take care of them and see that they were provided for. A great labor shortage resulted and the colonists were compelled to look elsewhere for laborers. They found their answer in the importation of East Indians and Africans. According to De la Roche, conservateur of the Colonial Archives in Paris and an authority on French colonial history, 13,000 Africans and 65,000 East Indians were imported into the French West Indies in the period 1852-1859. The colonial Negroes resented this importation, particularly that of East Asians, and went back to work as free laborers. Betterment of the sugar market after 1853 also had its part to play in working for improved conditions in the islands. The importation of Orientals appears to have introduced another insoluble problem on the islands, for they still exist there as a distinct element.

The Emancipation of 1848 was significant also in a political way. Not since the Bourbon Restoration of 1814 had the Negroes and mulattoes of the islands had any political voice. There were no legislatures or local political officials, and no representation in the Parliament in Paris. The colo-
nies were administered by French officials sent out from Paris. Among their assistants one might find some men of color. Prior to 1848, however, one observes much similarity to conditions prevalent before 1789. The Revolution of 1848 brought some radical political changes for the colonies: each colony was to keep at Paris three deputies who would sit in the National Assembly, which made laws governing the colonies. These representatives, elected by popular vote, might come from any class. The right to vote belonged to all adult males, as in France, and keen interest was manifested in the elections. Newspapers, of which there were several in each island, served as organs of expression and had much to say on the candidates and their political views. Mayors of the towns and cities, moreover, were elected by popular vote. Thenceforth, as in the Revolution of the 1790's, the Negro and mulatto politician became a man of prominence, a power to be reckoned with. Even though it may be an overstatement to say that the white planters lost political control of the islands in 1848, it seems to have been true. They did not lose economic control—this they yet possess. In the political domain, however, they were overpowered by the democratic vote; the important persons in the islands were the political representatives sent to Paris. They became public figures and received attention in the press.

Happily, several of those first sent to the National Assembly were men of genuine merit, such as Victor Schoelcher, a Frenchman, indeed, but the greatest driving force working for abolition in the 1840's; Cyril Charles Auguste Bissette,

1 Jean Cazenave de la Roche, "Tension in the French West Indies," Foreign Affairs, XXI (April, 1943), 560-61. Greatly different figures, however, are given by Alfred Martineau and L. Ph. May, two other West Indian authorities, who set the number of East Indians in 1860 in the islands at 4,155, that of Africans at 2,995, and that of Chinese at 184. Trois siècles d'histoire antillaise: Martinique et Guadeloupe de 1635 à nos jours (Paris, 1935), 110. Martineau and May state that large numbers of the former slaves left the plantations where they had been at work and that there was much discussion of importing Indian, Chinese, and African labor.
mulatto journalist and pamphleteer who had acquired a national reputation for his abolitionist activities, a verbal duellist of deadly precision; François Auguste Perrinon, a mulatto, native of Martinique educated at the École Polytechnique and elsewhere in France, a man of training and merit; Charles Dain, a white and well informed, who spoke before the assembly on many matters, especially the economic; and Pierre Marie Pory-Papy, a man of color who came of a prominent family, studied law in Paris, and passed his exams there and then returned to Saint-Pierre where he was elected mayor. These names do not exhaust the list. There were men of less merit, as Louisy Mathieu, a mulatto elected from Guadeloupe in replacement of Schoelcher who in turn had been elected by both Martinique and Guadeloupe and had selected the former. Mathieu was only a bench-warmer and was not reelected the next year.

In general, these men spoke on colonial matters, a subject in which they considered themselves authorities. On economic matters, however, even on those pertaining to the colonies, they could speak little; here Charles Dain spoke more fluently and firmly than the others. All were men of modesty save Bissette. Bissette considered himself qualified to speak on any colonial matter and sometimes lost his temper when challenged or contradicted. Even so, he was respected in the assembly in recognition of his long court trial for freedom and his journalistic crusade for it. Most of these men, it seems, voted with the left, but there was no union among them. As a block they might have exercised much more power than they did and might have commanded an occasional ministerial post.

2 Biographical notes on most of these men may be found in the book by Martineau and May. Some are described also in Hoefer's *Nouvelle biographie générale* and in *La grande encyclopédie*.


As things developed, their first ministerial post was not acquired until the Third Republic was established. Its holder, Severiano de Heredia, a mulatto born in Cuba, was naturalized as French in 1870, served on the Municipal Council of Paris from 1873 to 1881, and collaborated on the publication of several reviews. He became sufficiently well known to get elected to the Chamber of Deputies in 1881. There he remained until 1889. From May 30 until December 11 of 1887 he was Minister of Public Works. He took his stand as an opponent of Boulanger and met defeat in the polls during September, 1889. He ran again for deputy in 1893, without success. It is to be remarked that as deputy he represented a French constituency and not a colonial one. Not again until the early twentieth century was France to have another man of African descent sitting in a cabinet.

During the seventy years of the Third Republic (1870-1940) a number of Negroes or men of color came to hold ministerial posts—some from Martinique and Guadeloupe, others, like Diagne, Houphouet-Boigny, and Senghor, from Guiana or the African colonies. Among those that did come from Martinique and Guadeloupe were Gratien Candace (1873-1953) and Joseph Eugène Henry Lémery (1874-). Both received their education in France, Candace studying science at the University of Toulouse, where he received the licentiate, and Lémery studying at the famed Lycée Louis-le-Grand and afterwards law at the University of Paris, where he too received the licentiate. Both remained in France, although both found it useful to retain their colonial status as well. At first a teacher of technology, Candace soon found journalism a more inviting field and he became a journalist and politician. Lémery was licensed to practice law in France in 1898 but shortly thereafter took a political job and thereafter held one political post.

\[A\text{ brief account of Heredia may be found in } La\ Grande\ encyclopédie,\ XIX, 1165.\]
after another. From 1914 to 1919 he was deputy at Paris for Martinique, and from 1920 to 1940 was senator for the same colony. Lémery was twice married to French wives, and both men became more French than colonial. During the war years of 1914-1918 both contributed their efforts to bring a French victory, and both received decorations from the French government for their services. 6

Under the Third Republic, as observed by De la Roche, the colored and black elements in the colonies were loyal to France. Rarely were there racial disturbances save at times of election. The whites, numerically very small, turned over the political posts to the Negroes and mulattoes, who found great pleasure in this activity. They themselves retained the wealth of the island and restricted their activity largely to economic matters. 7 Thus, the period of the Third Republic was marked by the increased political participation of the colored and black elements. Not only did they control the legislative posts of senator and deputy (each colony had one senator and two deputies), but also the local posts of mayor and councilman. Colored and black elements thought of themselves as French, and ideas of separatism or independence simply did not exist. The islands were proud of their war effort during World War I. This loyalty to France and love of it on the part of the West Indian colored population amounted “almost to idolatry,” said M. de la Roche. 8

This article by De la Roche, published in the distinguished journal *Foreign Affairs* in April, 1943, written almost certainly upon request, bespoke American alarm over the future of the islands. Were they loyal to France and would they continue so? The seething discontent of colonial peoples everywhere was well known, and it was realized

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7 De la Roche, “Tension in the French West Indies,” 562.
that after World War II changes must come. The Nazis were in control of France, where they ruled through the Vichy government. And Vichy ruled in Martinique and Guadeloupe through its high commissioner, Admiral Robert. What was the popular reaction to his rule? What was the popular feeling toward France? The attitude toward the Vichy administration was anything but favorable, according to De la Roche. From 90 to 95 percent of the population supported General de Gaulle in his Free French Movement; food and economic conditions were very stringent on the islands; and he predicted a possible uprising against Nazi rule. This prediction was not borne out; there was no attempt at an uprising. On the other hand, neither was any separatist or anti-French movement attempted. Throughout the war the West Indian colored and Negro elements were passive but their sympathy was for France. The Nazi attitude toward dark-skinned people was too well known for them to develop any attachments in that quarter. Throughout the world it was known that Hitler declined to meet the American Negro Olympic star Jesse Owens, who had won four gold medals in the Berlin games. And so France's West Indian possessions were quiescent during World War II.

Under the Fourth Republic (1946-1958) this same loyalty to France was manifest. More representatives of African descent than ever before sat in the two legislative houses, the Assembly and the Council of the Republic. In all there were forty or more, most of them representing leftist groups. In the procession of ministries, it was common to find one or more Negroes holding a cabinet portfolio. Léopold Sédar Senghor and Félix Houphouet-Boigny, both Africans, became national figures. So, too, did Gaston Monnerville, colored, a native of Guiana, a highly educated lawyer who was chosen President of the Council of the Republic (the

9 Ibid., 563-64.
French senate) in 1946 and has continued in that position ever since, the second-ranked official in France. Perhaps the greatest prestige to the people of African descent in the empire under the Fourth Republic, however, came from the burial of the remains of Felix Eboué, the Guiana-born, French-educated colonial governor of Tchad in the Pantheon in 1946, following his great war service in Africa. On the same occasion the remains of Victor Schoelcher, the French emancipator of the Negroes, were likewise placed in the Pantheon. The French now, very clearly, were courting the favor of their black peoples. To be sure, these personages were not Martinican or Guadeloupan but the honors and distinctions these men received revealed the new climate of opinion that had arisen in France toward her citizens of African descent, and it affected Martinique and Guadeloupe vitally.

In fact, these two colonies and all her others in Africa and the New World were accorded by France in 1946, as one of her first actions after World War II, the right of voting on their future destiny. It was the outgrowth of a conference at Brazzaville in 1944, when Charles De Gaulle and some of the African chieftains, including Eboué, agreed that such a plebiscite should be given. The colonies were given a choice of four alternatives: (1) whether to continue under the colonial status of the moment; (2) or to enjoy autonomy and exist with virtual independence in a French Union (similar to the British Commonwealth of Nations); (3) or to have outright independence, cutting all ties with France; (4) or to have political amalgamation with France. Of the twelve or thirteen African colonies that voted, only one at the first, Guinea, voted for independence. The others, as if fearful that they would meet coercion, voted for autonomy and a French Union, but gradually in the 1950’s, when they

10 For details of this episode, see McCloy, The Negro in France, 201-2.
observed that no evil fell to Guinea, they proceeded to declare their independence also. By 1960 the French Union had collapsed.\textsuperscript{11}

The remarkable thing about this plebiscite, however, is that four colonies—Martinique, Guadeloupe, Guiana, and Réunion, all old colonies harking back to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century origins—voted for the fourth alternative: integral union with Metropolitan France. Their vote was ratified by the French in March, 1946, and thus they became departments, such as Hautes-Pyrenées or Seine-et-Marne, having the same privileges and subject to the same laws and restrictions. Not until a year or two later, however, were the changes recognized in official manner. In Martinique the new administration was installed on August 24, 1948, when a prefect relieved the last colonial governor.\textsuperscript{12} In Guadeloupe the official change was made earlier. Jules Moch, Minister of Public Works and Transports, went to Guadeloupe and in a speech at Basse-Terre on September 3, 1947, declared Guadeloupe a department of France, bringing the total number of departments to ninety-four (ninety of them being in Metropolitan France).\textsuperscript{13}

To the untrained observer it would appear that this transformation from colony to department was precipitous and sweeping, a great concession of power made perhaps out of a sense of weakness. Such was not the case. In the most thorough history of the French colonies, written almost two decades before 1946 and edited by Hanotaux and Martineau, is a section by Johannès Tramond, one of the best scholars of the day on French colonial history, who says that ever

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., 266-67.
\textsuperscript{12} Félix Rose-Rosette, \textit{La Martinique} (Paris, n.d.), 23.
since 1870 the two old colonies of Martinique and Guadeloupe had been treated to all practical purposes as departments of France, not only in that they were represented in the French Parliament by a senator and two deputies even as were the departments of France, but in other respects also. Departmental status had long been considered as a possibility or goal. In a seventeen-page brochure published in Paris in 1923, Henry Lémery, senator from Martinique, told of the French senate’s adopting unanimously a proposal to transform the old colonies of Martinique and Guadeloupe into departments. Then for some reason it appears that the senate hesitated in its action and dropped the idea. Lémery was in favor of the idea and argued in its behalf. He stated that the colonists lived in an atmosphere of French culture and that the colonies had been so long a part of the French Empire that the colonists were more French than the French themselves.

At almost the same moment that Martinique and Guadeloupe became departments of France the government passed a measure granting suffrage to women. The women of the former colonies were the beneficiaries even as the women of Metropolitan France. Madame Eboué, widow of the governor general of Tchad, was elected as deputy from Guadeloupe to the Constituent Assembly in early 1946. In March of that year she was sent by the French government to a world conference on the island of St. Thomas, and she took the occasion to visit her native Guadeloupe. Madame Eboué is a woman of broad training and culture and during most of the time since the Fourth Republic came to power has served as a deputy in the government. She is the

16 Revue Guadeloupenne, N.S. I (March-April, 1946), 45. Actually she is a native of the smaller island of Marie Galante, a dependency of Guadeloupe.
leader and symbol of womanhood in the new era in the French West Indies.\textsuperscript{17}

With the formation of the Fourth Republic, Negro and mulatto representation in the French government rose to forty or more deputies. They generally voted with the Socialists or the Communists. Of twenty-three colored deputies from the West Indies and Africa in 1951, sixteen reportedly were aligned with the Communist party.\textsuperscript{18} Apparently their Communist attachments were made in France, not in the West Indies or in Africa, yet before the 1950's small beginnings of a Communist party were made both in Martinique and Guadeloupe. Communism grew rapidly among the Negroes of the former French colonies up until the suppression of the Hungarian revolt in the autumn of 1956. The brutality with which the Russians suppressed the Hungarian revolt for liberty shocked the French Negroes, in fact the French as a whole, and many who had identified themselves with Communism withdrew from it. The development of Communism in Martinique and Guadeloupe encouraged a desire for separatism. To the Communist nothing was more reactionary or taboo than colonialism, and of course the Communists could not bestow their Marxist blessing upon any union like that of 1946 whereby four former colonies became departments of France.

Such was the political development of Martinique and Guadeloupe since the emancipation of the slaves in 1848. The Negroes and mulattoes of those islands have come far. Few in the early days of independence were sufficiently educated to be leaders either in political or professional roles, but in time they have acquired knowledge and experience and an ever-increasing role of activity has come their way.

\textsuperscript{17} She is depicted as a remarkable woman by the English writer, Patrick Leigh Fermor, in his book, \textit{The Traveler's Tree: A Recent Record of a Trip through the West Indies} (New York, 1950), 22.

\textsuperscript{18} The Oklahoma City \textit{Black Dispatch} of Sept. 22, 1951. Made available to me at the Howard University Library.
Today they have a government of their own choice, one in which they have much participation. This extraordinary development has been made, moreover, without revolution and bloodshed.

It is remarkable also that the races have gotten along together so well as they have. It would be false to imply that there has been no racial animosity. The atmosphere of opinion in Paris is not that of the French West Indian islands. It has never been, and it may never be. To the holiday visitor to the islands it may appear that the French indifference to race prevails also there. But this appearance is erroneous. Discrimination and race consciousness are sharp and subtle. It is in the field of private relations—the realm of the social—that they are perhaps felt most and that segregation is the strongest. The distinctions are subtle. White and mulatto may stop one another on the street and chat briefly but the same white may be unwilling to shake hands, or to dance with his colored friends, or to invite them to a wedding party.¹⁹

Though the color feeling exists it is rarely displayed, writes Eugène Revert. The most serious display of it in the twentieth century occurred in connection with the election of 1908, when Siger, mayor of Fort-de-France, was assassinated. Public excitement ran high and rumors flew, but both whites and colored participated in the funeral ceremony. As the procession moved toward the cemetery firing broke out. The casket was placed on the ground and everyone ran for safety. Then firing ceased, the procession reformed, and they completed their march to the grave without mishap.²⁰ Revert comments that "nothing similar

¹⁹ See, for instance, the extended and sane account of racial relationships by the French scholar Michel Leiris in his Contacts de civilisations en Martinique et en Guadeloupe (Paris, 1955), 117-59. Or see the picture given by another French scholar and sojourner of several years in Martinique, Eugène Revert, in his La Martinique: Étude géographique (Paris [1949]), 499-501.

²⁰ Revert, La Martinique, 500.
has taken place since.” Yet he cautions that “it would be vain to believe the prejudice disappeared.” He relates an incident wherein a man of color did not receive a wedding invitation from a white friend when the latter was married. Revert knew them both well. They were close friends and the man of color had rendered the white many favors. Revert expresses his shock that an invitation was not sent. He attempts to explain it, as others before him had done, even during the Old Regime, saying that it is a custom to protect West Indian family life, devised by the white wife to give herself and her children priority over the colored concubines of the planters and their children of mixed blood. There exists at the same time among the Negroes and the mulattoes traditional dislike of the békés (whites) and desire to see their domination ended. From time to time, like a volcano, this racial passion erupts.

Occasionally race prejudice in the islands backfires and whites are the victims. Patrick Leigh Fermor relates the story of a lynching in reverse fashion, in which some Negroes in Guadeloupe took the life of a white. The white proprietor of a bar in Pointe-à-Pitre ejected a Negro who was allegedly drunk. The Negro in fury returned with several friends, dragged the white into a public square, and “cut [him] to bits with cutlasses.” Afterwards they went about their business as if nothing had happened and no police or court action followed.

The West Indian Negroes in their turn are charged by the professor of the Sorbonne, R. Bastide, with maintaining in Paris a snobbish attitude toward the African Negroes who come there. The two groups, he says, in consequence associate little with each other. He attributes this in part to the fact that a large percentage of the West Indian Negroes have some white blood in their veins, while it is rare that

21 Ibid., 501.
22 The Traveler’s Tree, 23. He claims to have been a witness.
the African Negroes do. There are other factors too, such as difference in age: the West Indian Negro students in France are generally older than the African ones, having received more education at home. He also charges that those from the West Indies wish to "whiten themselves." This precludes association with the Africans.

Many of the Negroes from the Antilles who go to France for their education become enamored with French life, linger, marry a French girl, and do not return. Their number has continually grown. Also, according to Fermor, white families have steadily left the islands for the last century and returned to France. This has reduced the number of whites remaining on the islands to "a compact and isolated body." It no doubt also has reduced the racial problem.

Without question, the whites have been able to maintain their prestige in the islands because of their economic domination. They own the chief source of wealth in the islands, the plantations, and they also own some of the business establishments. They train their youth to succeed them. Customarily these boys drop out of school around the age of fifteen and do not complete the lycée or go to France for further study. However, in recent years they have been undergoing a change in this respect, indicating that they do not feel assured of their control in the future.

Martinique and Guadeloupe are yet primarily sugar-producing islands. Sugar, rum, and molasses constitute the chief products and exports. Eric Williams, in his study, states that "two-thirds of the cultivated land in Martinique and one-half [that] in Guadeloupe are devoted to sugar." Statistics show that Guadeloupe produced 159,276 tons of sugar in 1961, having a value of 9,353,000,000 francs. She also produced 40,837 tons of molasses, having a value of

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24 The Traveler's Tree, 10.
401,000,000 francs, and 7,068 tons of rum, valued at 960,000,-
000 francs. Bananas came as a second crop, with a produc-
tion in 1961 of 122,368 tons, having a value of 6,545,000,000
francs. Coffee and cacao came as third and fourth crops
in value. Other crops raised in small quantities were wheat,
wine grapes, and tobacco, while cattle and fish also were
among the exports. In Martinique during the same year
sugar ranked third, after bananas and pineapples, although
more land was given to sugar culture than to both the other
two crops. Martinique raised that year 137,755 tons of
bananas, valued at 16,584,000,000 francs, and 252 tons of
pineapples, valued at 12,000,000,000 francs. In sugar, 74,344
ton were produced, valued at 5,050,000,000 francs. Coffee,
fruits, and vegetables were also produced. Moreover, large
quantities of conserves were produced and shipped, the first
evidence of any industrial activity in the two islands. Only
with the development of more industry will the economic
income of the islands be greatly raised or will wealth become
more evenly distributed. The capital and skills no doubt will
have to be imported.

The limited wealth of Martinique, together with its
shortage of doctors and hospitals, has been responsible for a
number of severe epidemics since 1848, such as the cholera
epidemic of 1865 when 1,200 persons died within a fortnight
at Pointe-à-Pitre, and a yellow fever epidemic of 1895 in
Martinique when two physicians were cited by the governor
for valiant service, one being recommended for the cross
of the Legion of Honor. Epidemics of yellow fever and
typhoid were rather frequent. No epidemic of yellow fever,

\[26\] Annuaire Noria–Martinique–Guadeloupe 63 (Limoges, 1963), 107.
\[27\] Ibid.
\[28\] Ibid., 27, 32.
\[29\] G. Robert, Les travaux publics de la Guadeloupe (Paris, 1935),
184; letter of Jan. 30, 1896, by Noël-Pardon, governor of Martinique,
to the Minister of the Marine and the Colonies, "Service de Santé. Per-
sonnel medical, 1896-1907," Archives F.O.M., Martinique 73. In this
dossier several outbreaks of typhoid and yellow fever are mentioned.
however, is said to have occurred in either of the two islands since 1910.  

Among certain diseases widespread in the islands are syphilis, malaria, tuberculosis, and leprosy. Tetanus and yaws are also common. It is not generally known that leprosy is endemic in the Western world; it is so in the French West Indies. It has been endemic there since the 1700's, and a leper colony with hospital has existed on La Désirade since 1728. In the 1950's this hospital had 110 beds. Another leper hospital exists on the isle of Marie Galante. Altogether there are approximately 2,000 lepers in the two islands. 

There are presently nine general hospitals on the island of Martinique, besides the hospital for lepers and the Pasteur Institute. Today, as in the past, medical facilities are inadequate. In Guadeloupe there were six general hospitals in 1952 and in addition several other institutions for specialized needs, such as maternity cases. There were seventy-five physicians in 1954. In 1950 there were 132 cases of typhoid, 98 in 1953; 102 cases of measles in 1951, 2 in 1953; 79 cases of leprosy in 1950, 146 in 1951, 37 in 1953; 7 cases of tetanus in 1950, 16 in 1953; 253 cases of whooping cough in 1950, 1 in 1951. 

Most of the diseases could be prevented with better hygiene and sanitation. In describing the spread of the hookworm, Eric Williams depicts the horrid sanitary conditions prevalent throughout the West Indian area. The cottages or huts in which the Negroes live are commonly not provided with toilet facilities. The public latrines are filthy and accompanied with an unbearable stench. In con-

sequence many people “use [only] the sugar-cane fields and the bushes.” But the uncovered excrement provides a breeding ground for the hookworm larvae.  

According to Revert, diseases are still treated all too commonly by sorcery in these islands. He does not elaborate but much has been written on sorcery and voodooism in the West Indies, especially in Haiti, and the picture is fairly clear. The voodoo leader takes advantage of the ignorant and charges for his remedies. He derives a fair living by his exactions and enjoys the prestige and fears of his patrons—or suppliants. Even physicians sometimes call in a sorcerer on a case.

Both islands contributed generously to troops for France in World War I. Césaire Philemon gives some statistics for Martinique in this particular. She contributed 14,904 troops, 9,179 becoming combatants, 1,750 being killed or lost, and 2,000 wounded. A total of 269 won citations. Guadeloupe and the African colonies contributed equally well. The colonial war effort in men contributed, for all the French colonies, even to the names of the men, is set forth in a three-volume publication edited by Victor Basquel and Alcide Delmont, entitled *Le livre d’or de l’effort colonial française pendant la Grande Guerre, 1914-1918* (Paris, 1922). The Negro Camille Mortenol (1859-1930), a native of Guadeloupe, after a brilliant career in the marine became a captain in the French navy and during this war was reputedly placed in charge of the anti-aircraft defense of

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34 The Negro in the Caribbean, 35. He also charges that physicians overcrowd the capital cities but desert the rural areas and towns (p. 44).  
35 La France d’Amérique, 179.  
36 Revert reports the confession of one sorcerer, La magie antillaise (Paris, [1951]), 113, 116. He says that the sorcerers would dominate the island (Martinique) were it not for their adversaries the clergy, physicians, and teachers (p. 122).  
37 Galeries martiniquaises, p. 287, n. 1.  
38 Volume I gives the names of those from Martinique, Guadeloupe, and yet other colonies.
No reluctance to contribute to the war effort was seen in either colony.

Subsequent to World War I some small degree of separatism has manifested itself in the two colonies. In May, 1938, various African and East Asian French colonials participated in a demonstration in Paris, but none from Martinique or Guadeloupe were mentioned as having had a part. During World War II some American journalists claimed that they saw a great separatist element. The New York journal *PM* claimed that Martinique was "overwhelmingly in favor of independence in a Pan-American federation." This evidently was a gross exaggeration, for in 1946 the two islands, like all other French colonies, were given a choice of future status and overwhelmingly chose amalgamation with France. But since 1946 a faction, evidently still far from large, has come into existence. Cooperating with the group, if not indeed directing it, are some Communists and former Communists. Since the late 1950's the Communist party has been organized on both islands. Brief but printed reports of its first meetings may be found in the Bibliothèque Nationale, that of Martinique on June 30, 1960, and that of Guadeloupe on April 1 and 2, 1961. The tiny ten-page report of the former is little more than an account of how the party in Martinique is organized, from the local cell to the general congress, which meets every two years and is the controlling force of the party. It hears reports of the Central Committee, decides all important matters, and elects the Central Committee and also the Central Commission of Financial Control. What it aims to do for Martinique is not stated.

40 Their bitterness was manifested toward the Popular Front government which had promised much to the colonies. Chicago *Defender*, May 7, 1938.
41 So reports Eric Williams, "The Impact of the International Crisis upon the Negro in the Caribbean," *Journal of Negro Education*, X (1941), 542.
The meeting of the Communist party at Pointe-à-Pitre in April, 1961, was actually the second in Guadeloupe, the first party congress having taken place in 1958. Its report is much longer and more vocal than the Martinican. Its very title is a declaration of war—Pour la libération politique et la décolonisation de la Guadeloupe—save that the terms “political liberation” and “decolonization” seem anachronistic and improper. Clearly, they chose to disregard the status of the two islands as departments of France, voted thus in an uncontrolled election.

The mayor of Pointe-à-Pitre gave the address of welcome to the congress, calling the delegates “mes chers camarades.” He referred to himself as a Communist and stated that the city had elected him knowingly. He had been in office twenty-one months. The second meeting should have taken place in December, 1960, but for some reason had to be postponed. The secretary general of the party made his report in which is mention of the first meeting at Capesterre. This report radiated with reports of Communist success throughout the world, declaring that already Russia exceeded the United States in the production of iron and steel, coal, and atomic energy—as also in butter and milk. Then a report was made on “The Liquidation of Colonialism,” which portrayed the effete imperialist world as surpassed by the Soviet countries. It gloated over Fidel Castro’s success in Cuba and in his alliance with Russia and China.

As for its political objective, the congress declared that Guadeloupe, while remaining a French territory, should have its own parliament elected by the people and this body should make and enforce its own laws. The ultimate objective, of course, should be separation from France. Martinique, Guadeloupe, and Guiana should cooperate in action “against French imperialism, their common exploiter.”

42 Pour la libération politique, p. 8.
43 Ibid., pp. 36-37.
Perhaps few paid much attention to what the Communists said or did in their first meetings. An incident occurred at Fort-de-France, Martinique, in the early morning of December 24, 1962, which brought the issue of separatism sharply to the attention of at least all who read the newspapers. A band of young men had posted on the walls of the city (a practice of long standing borrowed from France) a notice denouncing the status of department for the island. It insisted on liberty and concluded with the slogan of “Martinique for the Martinicans.” It was signed “O.J.A.M.”—Organisation de la Jeunesse Anticolonialiste Martiniquaise (Organization of Anticolonialist Martinican Youth). The ideas were precisely those set forth in the report of the second Communist congress in Guadeloupe. For a month the police were at a loss as to what the letters O.J.A.M. signified or who was involved, but on January 27, 1963, some gendarmes found a brief-case crammed with notes relative to the O.J.A.M. After a bit they learned that the brief-case belonged to one Henri Armougon. He was confronted and acknowledged it was his and gave information on the mysterious organization. He even told of several meetings of the body during the summer of 1962.44 Arrests followed, eighteen in all. The case, a grave civil affair, was brought before the sixteenth correctional chamber in Paris. The eighteen were charged with striking at the integrity of the government. Indeed twelve of them were sent to France during the summer and held at Fresnes “for the cause of public security.” Eight were incarcerated, the others were given liberty of movement. For several weeks the case was tried, in November and December, 1963, much space being devoted to it by the journal Le Monde; other papers had little or nothing to say about it. The defense had several citizens of prominence to testify concerning the character

of the accused, and it was not surprising that one of those called to do this was Aimé Césaire, a deputy and former Communist.\textsuperscript{45}

At length the court rendered its decision on December 10. Five were condemned to prison for a period of time, three for three years, one for two years, and one for eighteen months. All would lose their civil rights for a period of five years. The thirteen others (the names of all are given) were acquitted, the charges not being proved that they had exceeded the proper limits of expression or that they had participated in subversive activities. The court stated that the movement had originated during the summer of 1962 by some students from Martinique who were spending the summer in France. They decided to organize themselves to present a number of problems or issues to the youth back in Martinique. Then unfortunately "other elements, of a maturity more experienced and of a political formation more advanced, undertook to give the project a reality more efficacious." In short, some separatists whether Communist or otherwise had gained control.\textsuperscript{46} The French seem to have handled the matter very well. The affair created no excitement in Paris, and it does not seem to have created much in Martinique.

In March, 1964, President Charles de Gaulle made a speech at Fort-de-France during a short stopover in Martinique. Aimé Césaire as chairman stated that the former French colonies of Africa had played a notable role in world affairs during the last several years, and he wished that Guadeloupe and Martinique might enjoy a similar role. He asked President de Gaulle if he could not say a word of encouragement on this. Apparently he expected to take

\textsuperscript{45} He had publicly denounced the Russians after their brutal suppression of the Hungarian revolt, but his views appear to have continued much the same.

\textsuperscript{46} \textit{Le Monde}, Dec. 11, 1963, p. 1. All the reports in \textit{Le Monde} were written by Jean-Marc Tholleyre, who revealed minute knowledge of the case.
advantage of the general for the advancement of separatist propaganda. But the general was not to be made a goat. He stepped on the idea "with both feet," saying that a vast difference existed between Martinique and Guadeloupe on the one hand and the African colonies. The last have a civilization of their own to be developed apart from the French; Martinique and Guadeloupe have only French culture. The two islands are only some specks of dust in the world: their population and their territory are too small for a modern state. They can never be other than pawns on the chessboard of the world. According to the report in an American journal, the audience sympathized with De Gaulle and many yelled for Césaire to sit down. De Gaulle evidently had anticipated a question by the separatists and he handled the matter well. The episode also indicates that thus far the separatists are only a small faction, though somewhat fanatical. So far it would appear that the two islands are thoroughly loyal and proud of being French.

Although a few educational institutions existed in the French West Indies prior to 1814, largely maintained by religious orders, there is, unfortunately, little information concerning them. A study of those in Martinique has been made by J. Rennard, which may be assumed to mirror conditions in Santo Domingo and Guadeloupe. The Jesuits in the 1600's were licensed by the government to engage in the instruction of the youth, but before the outbreak of the Revolution the Dominicans, the Capuchins, and the Brothers of the Christian Schools likewise were engaged in the instruction of boys; the Ursulines and the Daughters of Providence had some establishments for the girls. Some schools run by laymen also existed. There were, moreover, boarding schools—one founded in 1682 by the Ursulines, and another opened in 1763 by the Daughters of Providence at Fort-Royal, both institutions being well attended over a long period of time. The most celebrated pupil to attend the latter institution was Josephine Tascher de la Pagerie, future wife of Napoleon Bonaparte. A college for boys at Fort-Royal was opened in 1768 by a Capuchin father. It had a checkered history, lasting until the Revolution of 1789, commonly having from 100 to 120 boys in attendance. The Brothers of the Christian Schools, on government request, assumed charge of it in 1777.
Most of the existing schools catered almost exclusively to white youths. The education of slave children was forbidden by the Code Noir. There was nothing to prevent the children of free colored or Negro parents from attending except for social prejudice, but this in itself was an enormous barrier and it may be assumed that few if any free colored children attended. Some free men of color like Julien Raimond and Vincent Ogé received education, but it evidently came by way of a tutor.

During the period of 1789 to 1814 conditions in these colonies were so chaotic that all the schools evidently were closed, even in Martinique where there was much less turbulence and bloodshed than in Santo Domingo and Guadeloupe. And yet it may be questioned whether there existed a complete educational void, inasmuch as some young men of color, like Bissette, demonstrated in the early 1820’s that they could read and write very well indeed.

In 1814 the Bourbons returned to power in France and tranquility was restored to the colonies of Guadeloupe and Martinique. Some educational institutions existent prior to 1789 were revived, but not necessarily under the same religious orders. The Pensionnat Royale at Fort-Royal was restored in 1816 under the name of the Royal School of Education and placed under the administration of Domi-
can nuns. In 1819 it was attended by 150 students, aged six to thirteen. A physical examination and a physician's certificate of good health were required of each student. Moreover, vaccination was necessary. The courses of study offered were reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, geography, history, and mythology. The children also were taught sewing, embroidery, and household management. They were obliged to attend mass daily. They were to arise each morning at 5:00 and from 8:00 A.M. until 1:00 P.M. they were to attend classes. The afternoon and evening were devoted to recreation and reading. Finally the day was to end as it began, with religion and prayer.7

Apparently after 1789 the Jesuits, the Dominicans, the Capuchins, and the Ursulines did not teach in Martinique or Guadeloupe. Upon government request, however, other orders took their place. These included the Brothers of the Christian Schools, the Brothers of Christian Instruction (popularly known as Brothers of Ploërmel), and the Sisters of Saint-Joseph of Cluny. These last two orders were in fact to be dominant in the educational activities of the colonies of Martinique and Guadeloupe till shortly past the middle of the century. The government contracted with both orders to set up schools, and their members were promised free transportation to and from the islands and given a subsidy. Thenceforth all agreements were between the Minister of the Marine (still in charge of the colonies) and the superior general of the Order of Saint-Joseph. As a feature of the contract, members of the two orders were to have a furlough every few years, with free passage on government ships. The superiors general on their part promised that substitutes would always be sent out to take the place of those on leave or sick. Over the next several decades the terms of agreement were faithfully observed.

The brothers and sisters engaged in the enterprise, in fact, took considerable risk in going there, for both islands were quite unhealthy. These friars and sisters were heroes, worthy of the expenditures they entailed.\(^8\)

The Sisters of Saint-Joseph were the first to arrive; they founded a boarding school for girls on Guadeloupe in 1822, called the Boarding School of Versailles, and a similar school on Martinique in 1824.\(^9\) The sisters were paid a salary by the government, which agreed also to underwrite any financial deficit of their schools for the time being. Several primary schools were opened by the sisters in Martinique, and early in 1826 eight additional sisters arrived in the colony. By the summer of 1827 several were reported to be in broken health and in need of replacement. Thenceforth every two or three years there were replacements. But it was not too costly for the government, inasmuch as its vessels were plying the waters anyway, and the sisters were superior personnel devoted to their task. From the outset both colonial officials and government officials were pleased with their work.\(^10\)

The first Brothers of Ploërmel to arrive in Martinique came in early 1840; early in 1841 five additional brothers arrived. One was already in poor health, which had developed on the way out. On the same vessel were some brothers of the order destined to Guadeloupe, and one of them similarly ill. These cases of illness are reported so often in the records that one is inclined to wonder if some were not feigned as an excuse to get back to France.\(^11\)

\(^8\) See, for example, a large dossier of material on these Sisters of Saint-Joseph of Cluny in Martinique from 1824 to 1855, in *ibid.*, Martinique, 73. On the Brothers of Ploërmel, see *ibid.*, Martinique, 478.

\(^9\) Report of E. Demaret on the educational system of Guadeloupe, *ibid.*, 35/310; and report of May 28, 1828, by the governor of Martinique, *ibid.*, Martinique, 73.

\(^10\) See, e.g., the report of May 28, 1828, by the governor of Martinique to the Minister of the Marine, *ibid*.

The first problem facing the brothers was the finding of a building desirable for a school within the city of Fort-Royal which might be had for rent. Customarily during the nineteenth century, school property in the two colonies was rented, never purchased or built especially for the purpose. The school furniture almost always had to be made, and of course it had to be paid for. A local carpenter did the work. This furniture evidently consisted of simple desks and benches. The costs were borne by the government and in all cases were agreed upon prior to construction. The government, for its part, had a budget which had to be respected.

Though the schools conducted by the two orders were popular and drew enough students to fill the schoolrooms available, they were not the only educational establishments. It so happened that they were attended only by the white youth. The schools had not been designed for this, but, as a result of social conditions prevalent on the islands, the whites, mulattoes, and Negroes did not mix. For several decades of the nineteenth century this condition prevailed. There were some schools in the 1820's and 1830's, however, which did provide for the mulattoes. These were called the Mutual Schools, a designation based on a feature of their method of instruction. The teacher hired each month one of the students to aid him. This student aide would instruct some students while the teacher instructed the others. For this the student was paid by the government. For a time these schools were much in favor but they largely disappeared during the 1840's. They were attended wholly by colored students and were conducted by lay teachers from France, some of whom were well trained and devoted to their work, as, for example, was a certain Mademoiselle Garnerin who spent twenty-five years at teaching in Marti-

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12 The governor's letter of Feb. 20, 1840, well illustrates this matter, *ibid.* See also, "Extrait d'une délibération du Conseil Privé" of March 4, 1841, *ibid.*, Guadeloupe, 35/311.
nique before her death in 1857. A tombstone was erected to her memory by grateful pupils and relatives.13

Two Mutual Schools existed at Fort-Royal and at Saint-Pierre, with 115 students attending the former and 150 the latter. Six authorizations for Mutual Schools elsewhere in Martinique were granted in 1834 out of the many requests which had been made, and many other requests to open schools were made to the government in the period 1820 to 1860 by individuals desirous of teaching. The sexes were rigorously separated, as in France, but in February, 1833, the bizarre case is recorded of a man named Cassius de Linval, a landowner at Macouba, being granted permission to open a boarding school for girls on his farm "under the immediate direction of his mother." Why the license was not given to his mother rather than to him is not clear.14

The enthusiasm for education on the part of white and colored students reveals their awareness of its value as a ladder to success and their wish to take advantage of it. The Negroes, even those free, however, had no part in it. No one attempted to discourage them; they simply had no background for culture, as did the two upper classes. It is of course possible that some few did attend and are described in the official school reports under the designation of colored. Yet, the reports stated definitely that they did not attend.15

So rapid had been the development of primary schools in Martinique by 1838 that there existed fifty-two schools, attended by 1,500 pupils of both sexes. This, however, was but a small percentage of the total number of children on the island. At that time children of the whites alone

13 Théodore Baude, Ca et là (Fort-de-France, 1941), 99.
15 The governor of Martinique in a report of Feb. 15, 1837, stated that nowhere did whites and mulattoes attend the same schools. Moreover, the white schools had only white teachers and the colored schools only colored teachers. Ibid.
numbered 2,670, and those of the free colored class 9,847, or a general total of the free children on the island of 12,517. It is thus clear that not more than one free child in eight attended school. Some did not have a school in their neighborhood; others were indifferent.

Colonial and French officials were eager that children of color attend the schools. This is distinctly set forth in various letters and reports on the schools. They were solicitous that some of the _bourses_ to boarding schools go to the colored children and that colored teachers be encouraged to take part in the Mutual Schools. They encouraged the Brothers of Ploërmel and the Sisters of Saint-Joseph to work as much as possible with the colored class. In consequence of this desire, these brothers and sisters developed an extensive extramural program of adult education, chiefly of a religious character.

In its eagerness to encourage education among the colored youth, the government in 1832 permitted the Mutual School for boys in Saint-Pierre to use the school building during the morning, from 7:00 until 12:00, and the Mutual School for girls to use it during the afternoon, from 1:00 until 5:00. We are not told how long this lasted or how well it worked. It was still operated on this basis in 1833 however, which is indicative that it had some success.

In Guadeloupe the Sisters of Saint-Joseph appear to have begun their schools only in the early 1840's. One established at Basse-Terre in 1841 appears to have been the first. With some difficulty they rented a building, engaged a carpenter to make furniture, and soon were teaching. Other towns,

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16 Letter by Governor Moges to his successor, July 30, 1840, _ibid._
17 In a letter of Sept. 9, 1851, to the Minister of the Marine, the governor general to the French Antilles, A. Vaillant, says that henceforth he will alternate in sending white and colored students on _bourses_ to the _lycées_ in France, as directed, _ibid._
18 Letter from the governor to the Minister of the Marine, Nov. 6, 1832, _ibid._
19 Report on schools by Abbé Castelli, Dec. 11, 1833, _ibid._, 65.
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Moule in 1841 and Port Louis in 1842, and the nearby islands of Saint-Martin and Marie Galante solicited the government to set up similar schools for them. All were approved. Basse-Terre soon solicited a second such school. Instruction in these schools, which the government maintained, was free. This feature marked all the schools of the two religious orders on both Martinique and Guadeloupe.20

By the early 1850's approximately one-third of the children of Martinique were attending school. Such was the estimate of the bishop of Fort-de-France made to the Minister of the Marine in a letter of January 1, 1852. The schools were too few, and the bishop intimated that if there were more schools the attendance would be greater. The bishop declared that it was very necessary that more of the Brothers of Ploërmel and of the Sisters of Saint-Joseph be sent out and additional schools provided. He derogated the quality of instruction in the lay schools, which had been growing in numbers during the century, saying that it often was "bad." Such, he added, was the opinion "of all the priests in the colony." He predicted that education for the Negroes, when it should come, would render them lazy. This in turn would be unfortunate for agriculture, inasmuch as they would no longer wish to farm.21

By 1850 the government was obtaining annual statistical reports on the schools. Figures were submitted by each school to the director general of the colony, and this official in turn sent an elaborate report to Paris. In 1850 there were reports on forty-seven schools in Martinique—ten run by the Sisters of Saint-Joseph, thirteen by the Brothers of Ploërmel, and twenty-four lay schools, some run by individuals in a private capacity, others operated by the state. Not only did the government underwrite the expenses of the religious

20 Various papers in ibid., 35/311.
21 Ibid., Martinique, 133. There were fifty Brothers of Ploërmel engaged in teaching in Martinique in 1852, according to a letter from the governor to the minister of Jan. 30, 1852, ibid.
schools, it provided subsidies to those operated by laymen for all indigents that these schools would consent to instruct. At this time there were twenty-seven Sisters of Saint-Joseph and thirty-nine Brothers of Ploërmel in Martinique, with 1,701 girls and 3,216 boys attending their schools. Moreover, 731 adults were receiving religious instruction from the sisters and 663 adults receiving it from the brothers. Six of the lay schools received subsidies (totaling 3,200 francs) for the instruction of indigent pupils. As the century wore on the lay schools came to predominate.

Vaccination was required at this period, at least in certain localities. According to the statistical report for Martinique in 1856, 250 children at Fort Saint-Pierre had been vaccinated, 150 at Mouillage Saint-Pierre, 350 at Vauclin, 218 at Precheur, and 250 at Carpet. The vaccination was made by the Brothers of Ploërmel. The report makes no mention of vaccination of adults, to whom the brothers gave gratuitous religious instruction. At this time 6,843 adults in the colony were receiving religious instruction from the brothers and sisters. Attending the religious schools were 1,529 boys and 1,208 girls. Almost constantly throughout the century the attendance of boys was higher than that of girls. Evidently this indicates that education was considered the more essential for men, the bread-winners of the family.

In 1853 a decree by the government set a fee on school attendance for those receiving instruction at the so-called free schools run by the religious orders. For all children under twelve years of age, the fee was one franc per month; for children aged twelve or thirteen, three francs per month; and for those fourteen or older, ten francs. When it was pointed out in 1866 that this fee operated to decrease the attendance at the schools maintained by the Brothers of Ploërmel, the General Council of the island, which controlled

22 Ibid., Martinique, 478.
23 Ibid.
educational matters, thereupon reduced the fee slightly, placing children of twelve years in the category of those who paid only one franc per month. It was not that the desire for education was lessening, for a large number of applications were made by individuals for the right to open new primary schools. 24

Fees also were required of children attending the "free primary schools" in Guadeloupe, a franc a month for the youngest children, according to a report of 1867. 25 The Brothers of Ploërmel and the Sisters of Saint-Joseph were still very active there, the former having twenty-three schools with 1,655 boys, and the latter twenty-two schools with 1,215 girls. At most of the schools, those for boys as well as those for girls, two teachers were in control. The Falloux Law of 1850 in France had specified that teachers must have a brevet de capacité, except for those in religious orders; these might teach if given a "letter of obedience" by their superior. Most of the brothers and sisters teaching in Guadeloupe took advantage of this privilege. A lay teacher on the Isle of Saint-Martin, where existed a considerable number of Methodists, was reported as having a brevet de capacité. 26

In 1864 there were sixty-one primary schools on Guadeloupe: twenty-three communal schools and eleven free schools, for boys; twenty-two communal schools and eleven free schools for girls; and four mixed schools, where both sexes attended. 27 The total number of pupils attending primary schools in Guadeloupe in the 1860's is not given, but a report of 1867 indicates that those attending the free schools were not many. It revealed that in that year 89 boys, all paying a small fee, attended, and 228 girls, likewise

24 Ibid., 133.
25 Ibid., carton 71, dossier 524.
26 Dossier on communal primary schools for 1864, ibid., 374.
27 Ibid.
paying a small fee. In addition there were 192 boys and 198 girls attending "free superior primary schools," boarding schools run by the two religious orders. Their students paid a higher tuition fee. Besides these there were 150 students attending some "free secondary schools" at Basse-Terre and Pointe-à-Pitre, paying 800 or 900 francs per year for maintenance and tuition. At these secondary schools apparently the sexes were mixed. Secondary schools hardly existed either in Guadeloupe or Martinique. The two religious orders still dominated the scene in Guadeloupe. They controlled not only the free schools but also the communal schools.

The two religious orders still furnished most of the teachers in 1860, when the corps of schoolmasters counted only twelve laymen as against ninety *congreganistes*, and sixteen lay women as against sixty-eight *congreganistes*. There were then a total of eighty-eight primary schools in Guadeloupe, twenty-two being lay communal institutions, fifty-three religious communal schools, and thirteen others designated as "free primary schools." Finally, there were four others in a somewhat different category, called "superior primary schools." In these various schools were enrolled a total of 9,411 pupils, 289, chiefly girls, being in the superior primary schools. Only 1,616 were paying tuition. As for those attending a secondary school, the number was only 234, all boys. The secondary schools existed in only three cities—Basse-Terre, Pointe-à-Pitre, and Moule. It was estimated that there were about 20,000 boys and girls of school age on the island, so that hardly 50 percent were attending school, and these, elementary schools.

Some of the above students were boarders in one of the several boarding schools maintained in the larger centers of

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population—Basse-Terre, Pointe-à-Pitre, Moule, Grand Bourg, and Port Louis—operated by the Sisters of Saint-Joseph. The school at Basse-Terre was popularly known as the "Pensionnat de Versailles" and the others were branches of it. Twenty-three sisters taught in the school at Basse-Terre where there were 110 students. The branch at Pointe-à-Pitre had 120 students and seven sisters; that at Moule, 60 pupils and two sisters; that at Grand Bourg, 30 students and two sisters; and finally that at Port Louis, 12 students and one sister.30

To what degree were mulattoes and Negroes represented in this array of figures? A report for 1884 gave an estimate for the total white (designated "European") population of the island as 1,573, and that of all others (called "indigines") as 153,431.31 Since there were approximately 10,000 in school attendance, and the white population was limited to about 1,600, most of the students had to be mulattoes or Negroes. It is necessary to remind the reader that after slavery was abolished and civil rights were accorded the former slaves in 1848, it became indelicate to mention racial color, for it implied derogation. The problem of learning the racial identity of the students is thereby made difficult for the historian. Happily, in recent decades there has developed a different attitude on the part of most Negroes. But from the incidental remarks that are made from time to time in the latter 1800's it is clearly seen that the schools were much more attended by the mulattoes than by the Negroes. In part, this was the result of the fact that the schools were established in the towns, where the mulattoes lived, whereas the Negroes continued to stay on the farms. Education was also more appreciated by the mulatto, who had a better cultural background than did the Negro.

30 Statistics submitted in Jan., 1881, by the governor of Guadeloupe to the Minister of the Marine, *ibid.*
The government officials were alert and eager to promote educational advantages for the colored and Negro classes—but more for the former than for the latter.

Throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth the numbers of students and teachers continued to mount in both colonies. Statistics for Guadeloupe in the year 1908 show that there were 6,378 boys and 4,876 girls attending primary schools in the colony and 323 boys and 65 girls attending secondary schools. There were forty-eight primary schools for boys, forty-two for girls, and eleven attended by both sexes. There were two secondary schools for boys and one for girls. There were 131 laymen and 8 conglomeranistes engaged in primary school teaching; in secondary school training, 17 laymen and no conglomeranistes. There were 97 lay women teachers engaged in primary teaching, and 23 conglomeranistes; in secondary schools, 2 lay teachers and no conglomeranistes.32

A law of March 28, 1882, had made elementary education compulsory in France and her colonies, and one of June 16, 1881, had made it gratuitous. Despite this, half the children of school age in Guadeloupe were not attending school in 1901. Of those that did attend, the heaviest enrollment was in the elementary classes.33

Steadily since 1814 the number of schools, teachers, and students had increased. It was destined to increase even more so in the twentieth century. Statistics for Guadeloupe during the early 1950’s were to reveal still greater development. During the academic year 1953-1954 a total of 752 were teaching in public primary schools and 84 in private primary schools. In this same year there were 126 public and private primary schools in operation, with an attendance of 38,580 pupils—19,643 boys and 18,937 girls. Of these,

32 Ibid., 193/1173, “Statistiques de l’instruction publique, année 1908.”
33 Ibid., 35/310.
1,691 girls and 1,403 boys were attending private primary schools.\textsuperscript{34}

In Martinique for the academic year 1956-1957 there were 173 primary schools in operation—37 for boys, 37 for girls, and 99 for both sexes. One will observe that a remarkable development in coeducation had taken place in that colony. In addition to these, there were eight private primary schools—two for boys, two for girls, and four for both sexes. During this same year Martinique had 1,499 public primary school teachers and 42 private ones. Attending the public primary schools in the colony in 1956-1957 were 57,107 pupils—28,156 boys and 28,951 girls. Enrolled in the private primary schools in the same year were 666 boys and 738 girls.\textsuperscript{35} In neither colony were all the children yet enrolled in school, despite the legal requirement, but the increase in numbers and percentage had been enormous. Also of striking significance had been the transfer of the role of teaching from those in religious orders to the laity. Of great significance, moreover, had been the proliferation of schools—both in number and in type. The school system in both colonies had become elaborate, not only with a marked increase in secondary teaching but also with various forms of technical instruction.

Secondary schools developed at a much slower rate than the elementary ones. The explanation of this lay in the

\textsuperscript{34} Annuaire statistique de la Guadeloupe, 1949-1953 (Paris, 1954), 46. In 1961, 59,000 pupils were attending elementary schools in Guadeloupe, somewhat more than 90 percent of the child population of the colony. The number of schools had doubled in the decade 1950-1960. So reports a brochure entitled Guadeloupe, the Emerald Isle, published by the French Embassy of New York, Service de Press et d'Information (November, 1961), 10.

\textsuperscript{35} Annuaire de la Martinique, 1952-1956 (Paris, 1957), 42. In Martinique in 1960, 70,500 children were enrolled in elementary schools, a total of 95 percent of its children of school age. Information obtained from a brochure published by the French Embassy of New York, entitled Martinique, Pearl of the Antilles (October, 1961), 10. Martinique's population at this time was estimated at 275,000; \textit{ibid.}, 6.
fact that the economy of the islands was agricultural and that an elaborate education was not considered necessary in such a society. Schools on the islands could not meet the standards set by the lycées and universities in France. Throughout the century planters, colored as well as white, made it a practice to send their sons to France. Some of the boys won scholarships, others paid their own way. Free passage by boat was granted to many by the government as a means of developing skilled professional classes in the colonies. Some of the youths so trained remained in France, but others returned. To a considerable degree the practice of going to France for advanced education still continues.

Very few institutions in the two colonies offered secondary instruction. Many of the boarding schools did not. It was confined largely to the two or three larger cities in each colony. One of the most prominent, the Seminary-College situated at Fort-de-France in Martinique, which dated from the early nineteenth century, was staffed by certain priests and trained boys for the priesthood and for teaching. It accommodated several score of students and was still existent late in the century.

There was a Diocesan College at Basse-Terre, created by the bishop of that city and staffed by the Brothers of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit. In early January, 1881, there were fifteen professors and 170 pupils. The colonial government paid its professors and gave the school an

36 Prior to the Revolution of 1789 a School Saint-Victor had existed at Fort-Royal in Martinique, in which some secondary courses were taught as well as elementary ones. It had an enrollment of 100 to 120 students. During the Revolution it collapsed but after 1814 was revived for a short time. Rennard, "Les écoles à la Martinique," no. 5, pp. 25-26.

37 It had been founded by the bishop of Fort-de-France. Soon it had forty students, and the locale and the building were too small, hence a new location was found for it in 1851 at Saint-Pierre, where it was to move in Jan., 1852. It accommodated both boarding students and day students. Besides courses in the classics, it gave training also in industrial and commercial work. Article in Les Antilles, Nov. 5, 1851, Archives F.O.M., 560 E.
annual subsidy of 36,000 francs. Another secondary institution at Pointe-à-Pitre in early 1881 had 279 students. Teaching there was in the hands of eight professors of the Brothers of Ploërmel. It took day students only. Likewise, there was a secondary school, with thirty-odd students, taught by two ecclesiastics at Saint-Pierre in 1844. Emphasis was placed on instruction in French and Latin. In a report on the schools in Martinique for 1850 there is mention of a school both elementary and secondary at Saint-Esprit, Martinique, taught by a Mademoiselle Evélina. It had only thirty-one pupils, twenty-five of whom were aged twelve or below, hence few there were taking secondary work. The information on these and other secondary schools existent on Martinique and Guadeloupe in the archives is scattered and meager. They did not compare in quality of instruction with those in France, but few could go to France for study, whether by bourse or private means. The number of secondary school students in either colony for any given year of the 1800's was amazingly small, not rising over three or four hundred. While it would be erroneous to say that the inhabitants of the two colonies did not properly evaluate the advantage of an education, few seem to have evaluated properly the secondary and higher studies. Moreover, finances were very limited.

About the middle of the nineteenth century demand arose for a lycée. It originated with the Schoelcher commission in the spring of 1848, immediately after the decree abolishing slavery. But there was some indecision as to who

38 Ibid., Guadeloupe, carton 71, dossier 524. It was still operating, with the same subsidy, in 1901. Report by Demaret, ibid., 35/310.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid., Martinique, 28. “Extrait d’un mémoire rémis à son successeur . . . par M. le Contre-Amiral Duval d’Ailly (ler Decembre 1844).”
41 Report on the schools of Martinique for the second semester of 1851, ibid., Martinique, 478.
42 In 1909 Guadeloupe had 543 students in secondary schools, ibid., Guadeloupe, carton 193, dossier 1173.
should be placed in charge of the institution and apparently there were other problems, and it ended in no action being taken.\footnote{3} Three more decades were to pass before action was actually taken. Much attention was given to educational matters in the early 1880's in France, when the Ferry Laws were passed. Alexandre Isaac, man of color and deputy for Guadeloupe, was successful in obtaining a decree of May 17, 1883, providing for the establishment of a \textit{lycée} at Pointe-à-Pitre. It came into being on September 1 of that year, and in 1895 was given the name of Lycée Carnot, the first \textit{lycée} inaugurated in Guadeloupe or Martinique.\footnote{4}

As time passed, two additional \textit{lycées} were set up in Guadeloupe, one at Pointe-à-Pitre for girls, named the Lycée Michelet, and one at Basse-Terre for both boys and girls. Above all they were to train students for the baccalaureate, or bachelor's degree. Their establishment gave impetus to secondary education, and the attendance at almost any of the \textit{lycées} today would probably surpass that for either of the two colonies in 1900. The Lycée Gerville-Réache in 1951-1952 had an enrollment of 555 boys and girls, the Lycée Carnot (for boys) 689, and the Lycée Michelet (for girls) 463.\footnote{5} In the same year the Lycée Schoelcher had 934 students and the \textit{lycée} for girls at Fort-de-France 846.

The \textit{lycées} have absorbed certain of the earlier secondary schools of the two colonies, but not all. These last in the

\footnote{3} Some wanted a M. Vallée placed as director, others an Abbé Angelin; some wanted the school at Basse-Terre, others at Pointe-à-Pitre. \textit{Ibid.}, carton 48, dossier 367, various letters between the Minister of the Marine and the governor of Guadeloupe; also letter from V. Schoelcher to the Minister of the Marine, May 30, 1848.

\footnote{4} T. Oriol, \textit{Les hommes célèbres de la Guadeloupe, avec préface de M. Charles Moynac} (n. p., 1935), 313.

\footnote{5} Michel Leiris, \textit{Contacts de civilisations en Martinique et en Guadeloupe}, (Paris, 1935), 72-73. The total enrollment at both \textit{lycées} in 1960 was 3,160. \textit{Martinique, Pearl of the Antilles}, 10. For Guadeloupe, the enrollment in her \textit{lycées} in the autumn of 1961 totaled 2,185. She had but two \textit{lycées} at this time, one at Basse-Terre, the other at Pointe-à-Pitre. \textit{Guadeloupe, the Emerald Isle}, 10.
early 1950's embraced the "Pensionnat" (Boarding School) of Versailles, with 148 girls in its secondary courses, the Seminar-College Sainte-Marie, with 130 boys in secondary courses, the little Seminary of Saint-Philip and Saint-James, with 60 secondary students (boys), and two or three other institutions.\(^46\) The lycées, though a definite improvement over the former secondary schools, are recognized as falling below the high standard of the lycées in France itself.

The chief function of the lycées was to train students for the baccalaureate and to give them the basic training for later professional study. The baccalaureate examinations were drawn up in France by a committee of examiners and sent in sealed envelopes to a committee or jury of examiners in the colonies. Though the questions were not the same as those asked in France, they were similar. They came in two parts, the first set to be taken while the student had yet a year to go at the lycée, the second when he had completed his lycée studies. Prior to the inauguration of the lycée in the colonies, and even afterwards, the students worked toward a brevet de capacité, which qualified one to teach in an elementary school. It could be exchanged for a baccalaureate. Theoretically it had no greater value in the colonies but in France it did carry more value.

The brevets de capacité had been initiated by a decree in France of December 23, 1857. They were diplomas awarded those who passed the examinations drawn up in Paris for testing the lycée students in France. This brought some inquiries and complaints from colonial officials, who stated that few colonial students could afford the expense of going to France for them. Thereupon another decree, of November 18, 1863, provided that examinations for the brevets would be given also in various colonies, including Martinique and Guadeloupe. A later decree, of October 26, 1871, made it possible for a colonial student to exchange, upon request,

\(^{46}\) Leiris, *Contacts de civilisations*, 72-73.
his *brevet de capacité* for a diploma of bachelor of letters or bachelor of sciences. Later decrees of April 2, 1875, June 19, 1880, and July 15, 1884, set up more detailed regulations.47

Despite meticulous regulations, a scandal developed in connection with the baccalaureate examination given in Guadeloupe. In some manner never completely determined, the students to be examined learned in advance of the questions to be asked. But they talked too much. A conscientious citizen reported the scandal to officials, an investigation was made, and the examination nullified. Regulations yet stiffer were set up. Apparently they were better observed thenceforth since one reads of no later scandals of this nature.48

In a letter of August 27, 1903, the chief of the Service of Public Instruction in Guadeloupe wrote the governor of the colony expressing his disappointment with the showing of the students from the colony who had taken the exams for the baccalaureate in July. Out of thirty-one candidates who had taken the exams in classical teaching only thirteen passed. Twelve of these were students at the Lycée Carnot, one a student at the Seminary-College at Basse-Terre. The students of the Seminary-College had shown up the worse, with only one of its ten candidates passing the examination. In another phase of the examinations of that year, one of the fourteen candidates was caught at flagrant cheating and his paper was taken. A decree of October 6, 1902, provided that a student found cheating on these examinations would be condemned to imprisonment for one month to three years or a fine of 100 to 10,000 francs, or both.49 It is not stipulated

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48 Letter from the governor of Guadeloupe to the Undersecretary of State for the Colonies in Paris, Aug. 29, 1889, *ibid*.
49 *Ibid*. Moynac, the writer, does not indicate how many of the fourteen candidates passed.
what penalty, other than the confiscation of his paper, was inflicted.

The late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries witnessed the emergence of some technical schools, one or two normal schools, a two-year law school, and one or more schools in the fine arts and the domestic arts. Perhaps the first was an agricultural college in Martinique, which was set up by decree of March 7, 1853. It was particularly designed to serve the Negroes, the great agricultural class. Located at Fort-de-France, it would receive students between the ages of ten and fourteen, and tuition was free provided they would remain in the school until they were eighteen. If they left earlier, they would be obligated to reimburse the institution at the rate of 300 francs a year for the deficiency.\(^5\)

In Martinique was founded in 1883 an elementary Institute of Juridical, Political, and Economic Studies, where two years of legal study might be had and a diploma and license received. In 1951-1952 it had an enrollment of 137 students.\(^5\) The school serves both colonies. On completing the courses it offers, the student is expected to go to France for further study.

In 1944 there existed at Fort-de-France in Martinique a practical school in the arts called École des Arts Appliqués, attended by approximately fifty young men and young women, some with and others without their baccalaureate diplomas. They were serious students and worked faithfully, studying the fine arts, plastic art, fancy sewing, and architecture.\(^5\) Exhibitions of the work of these students were displayed in the salon of the mairie of Fort-de-France and

\(^5\) Supplément au Journal officiel de la Martinique, du 10 mars 1853, 3-4; Archives F.O.M., Martinique, 133.

\(^5\)1 Leiris, Contacts de civilisations, 81. This school was named for Henri Vizioz and was situated at Fort-de-France. For further details, see the Revue Guadeloupéenne for July, 1958, pp. 125-27. In 1960 the institution's enrollment was 427; Martinique, Pearl of the Antilles, 10.

\(^5\)2 René Hibran, "Pour un art vraiment antillais," Martinique, année 1944, issue no. 1, p. 25.
were honored by visits from the governor and the head of public instruction in the colony.\textsuperscript{53}

In Martinique two institutions existed in the 1950's for technical studies: first, the Technical, Industrial, and Commercial College, where a young man might learn to be, for example, a carpenter, tinsmith, or electrician, and a young woman to be a typist, a social worker, or a seamstress; and second, the Technical College of Applied Arts already described, where watch repair, cabinet work, ceramics, and fancy needlework might be learned.\textsuperscript{54} One will observe that in Martinique the educational institutions were concentrated at Fort-de-France. On Guadeloupe it was otherwise; they were divided somewhat equally between Basse-Terre and Pointe-à-Pitre.

Technical training on Guadeloupe in the early 1950's was largely done at the three lycées—the Lycée Carnot for boys, the Lycée Michelet for girls, and the Lycée Gerville-Réache where the sexes were mixed. There was also a technical section, for boys, at Moule. At Pointe-à-Pitre there was a Practical School of Agriculture, and in both colonies there were certain small private technical schools, as the Institution Saint-John Bosco, at Gourbeyre, Guadeloupe, for training boys in wood work and iron work.\textsuperscript{55}

Normal school studies appear to have been offered at certain of the lycées. The lycées represent the pinnacle of academic training at present in the two colonies. From time to time there had been some demand for a university which would serve the French Antilles as a group, and particularly


\textsuperscript{54} Institut Nationale de la Statistique et des Études Économiques pour la Métropole et la France d'Outre-Mer, \textit{Annuaire de la Martinique, 1952-1956} (Paris, 1957), 40. This \textit{Annuaire} gives elaborate statistics on all aspects of educational institutions in Martinique for the early 1950's.

for a medical school. But the French have wisely refrained from setting up two luxury institutions that the colonies could not maintain financially or without trained personnel. And if they did, the islanders would become insular intellectually. It is much better that the youths capable and desirous of professional training go to Paris, one of the world’s intellectual centers, and be trained there.

To attain this end, it has aided the colonial governments in the establishment of a prodigious number of *bourses*. In Martinique alone in 1956 there were 1,742 studying to be primary school teachers who held *bourses*, evaluated at 40,400,000 francs; 864 preparing for secondary school teaching, whose *bourses* were worth 39,300,000 francs; and 204 students in technical courses, with *bourses* worth 5,500,000 francs.56 This was when the French franc was greatly inflated and prior to its strengthening under the administration of De Gaulle (when it was reevaluated on the basis of one per hundred). The number of students holding these *bourses* is impressive. The *bourses* in Guadeloupe were comparable. In technical studies alone 173 *bourses* were given in Guadeloupe in the academic year 1951-1952, valued at 23,369,500 francs. In Martinique 279 *bourses* were received in the same year, worth about 34,000,000 francs.57

*Bourses* provided by the colonial government (chiefly at the expense of France) date back to the days following the Restoration of the Bourbons in 1814. In 1817 three girls, apparently all whites, from Martinique were given free admission to the Maison Royale at St. Denis.58 In 1829 there were twelve *bourses* for girls at the Pensionnat Royale at Saint-Pierre, Martinique. Intellectual capacity was not a

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57 Leiris, *Contacts de civilisations*, 78. Leiris gives here some detailed information on technical studies on Guadeloupe.
58 A royal ordinance of Sept. 2, 1816, had set up these *bourses*. Much correspondence on them is found in Archives F.O.M., Martinique, carton 65.
factor in their selection; they were chosen for family rating and other reasons. Apparently all were white.\(^{59}\) By the mid-century some recipients of grants were girls of color. Mademoiselle Thou, granddaughter of Bissette, key politician in Martinique, was awarded a \textit{bourse} to one of the boarding schools in France.\(^{60}\) Even as yet the intellectual capacity of the applicants does not seem to have been a criterion for the awards. As the years passed the number of scholarships increased and in the 1870’s sixty-two were available to youths from Martinique. Of this number the whites in one year got forty-five, the colored class seventeen. So wrote Victor Schoelcher, who remarked that the apparent favoritism caused bad feeling.\(^{61}\)

While most of the \textit{bourses} were for study in colonial institutions, a goodly number were for study in France, which they designated the Métropole. In 1955-1956, 356 youths from Martinique studied in France, thanks to \textit{bourses}.\(^{62}\) In 1935, 104 students from Guadeloupe had \textit{bourses} there.\(^{63}\) In 1901 there existed twenty-two ample \textit{bourses} for students from Guadeloupe to pursue professional training in France—eight in medicine, two in law, one in science, two in literature, and nine others undesignated. They carried a total stipend of 30,135 francs, or well over a thousand francs each. Criticism was voiced in the colony by one of the

\(^{59}\) A sketch of the history of this interesting school is presented in an “Extrait du registre des procès-verbaux des délibérations du Conseil privé de la Martinique,” session of March 24, 1834, \textit{ibid.}, Martinique, 134. It had been founded in 1740 by a Père Masse to provide education for the daughters of planters who could not go to France. During the Revolution it collapsed, but in March, 1816, it was revived and continued until 1880 or later.

\(^{60}\) Letter of the Grand Chancellor of the Legion of Honor to the Minister of the Marine and the Colonies, May 3, 1861, \textit{ibid.}, 61.

\(^{61}\) \textit{Le grand conspiration du pillage, de l’incendie et du meurtre à la Martinique} (Paris, 1875), 95.

\(^{62}\) \textit{Annuaire de la Martinique}, 1952-1956, 45.

\(^{63}\) Lenis Blanche, \textit{Histoire de la Guadeloupe} (Paris, 1938), 100; Guadeloupe, the Emerald Isle, 11.
officials, not that the bourses were not needed, but that many boursiers never got their diplomas (implying either lack of effort or lack of ability) and that others did not return to the colony but went elsewhere to work.\textsuperscript{64} This situation has always prevailed. Colonial students in general have not shown up as satisfactorily as the students reared in France, whether from laziness or the presence of other attractions, or both. Moreover, there has been strong incentive for them to marry a French girl and remain in France, rather than return to the colony that awarded them the scholarship. This happens in other countries than France and with boursiers other than West Indian.

Before concluding this chapter it may be of interest to observe whether Martinique and Guadeloupe as colonies have fared as well in educational development as has the independent nation of Haiti. Several rather detailed studies have been published on the educational system of Haiti—one by Rayford W. Logan in the \textit{Journal of Negro History}, another by Mercer Cook, perhaps the best-informed American on Haiti, a third by a United Nations commission in 1949, and a fourth by George A. Dale in 1959.\textsuperscript{65} Their detailed treatment is commensurate with the greater attention there has been to the history of Haiti as a whole than to that of Martinique and Guadeloupe.

One might think that an independent republic like Haiti would be anxious that elementary education be widely disseminated among its citizenry. Haiti indeed has tried to see to it for a long while that elementary schooling be gratuitous and compulsory, but she has not been careful to enforce it, with the consequence that, in the late 1950's, out of its

\textsuperscript{64} Report of E. Demaret, assistant to the Inspector of the Colonies, of April 8, 1901, Archives F.O.M., carton 35, dossier 310.

\textsuperscript{65} These are, respectively, “Education in Haiti,” \textit{XV} (1930), 401-60; \textit{Education in Haiti} (Washington, D.C., 1948); \textit{Mission to Haiti} (Lake Success, N.Y., 1948); and \textit{Education in The Republic of Haiti}, Bulletin No. 20 (Washington, D.C., 1959).
population of approximately three million, approximately 600,000 children were not attending school. The United Nations, in the late 1940's, estimated that 85 percent of the population of Haiti was illiterate and stated that only one-sixth of the children were in school.

In Martinique and Guadeloupe in the same period nearly three-fourths of the children were attending school. Out of 91,703 children of school age in Martinique in 1954, 50,027 were attending public or private schools—roughly 60 percent. In Guadeloupe, in 1953-1954, 41,714 were in attendance out of a slightly smaller general population. A Guadeloupean journal in 1957 estimated the attendance at approximately three-fourths.

The pathetic situation in Haiti was accentuated by the fact that a large portion of the students had no textbooks; the students were too poor to buy them and the state neglected to do so.

The position of Haiti in secondary and university education is much more impressive than in the area of elementary schools, according to Dale. It will be recalled that only five lycées exist for both Guadeloupe and Martinique. Total enrollment for the fifteen Haitian lycées in 1956-1957 was 5,857. Total enrollment for the lycées in Martinique that


67 Mission to Haiti, 46.

68 Annuaire de la Martinique, 1952-1956, 19, 43.

69 Le progrès social, Basse-Terre, Nov. 9. The total school population of the island is estimated at 65,000 and the pupils attending elementary schools at 38,500. See also Annuaire statistique de la Guadeloupe, 1949-1953, 47, Table 5.

70 Mission to Haiti, 48.

71 Education in the Republic of Haiti, 69. They are listed, with attendance figures, for 1956-1957, p. 70. Rayford W. Logan, writing in 1930, spoke of their standards as very low, saying that they had “rarely done work of a real American high school level.” “Education in Haiti,” Journal of Negro History, XV, 413.
same year was only 2,542, but Martinique’s total population was less than one-tenth that of Haiti. Clearly, the picture of secondary education in Martinique is better than that in Haiti. In Guadeloupe 2,803 students were enrolled in 1953-1954, her position being similar to that of Martinique. These two smaller islands, with one-sixth the population of Haiti, had a total of 5,345 students attending lycées, almost as many as had Haiti.\textsuperscript{72}

Haiti has an elaborate university, formed in 1944 and composed of many professional schools. It is certainly an advantage to Haitian youth to attend a university close at hand. The youth of Martinique and Guadeloupe are not so fortunate. There has been some agitation for a university of the French Antilles but the French government thus far has not seen fit to establish one. Instead, it has set up an elaborate system of bourses whereby students of high merit may come to France for study in French universities, lycées, and schools of professional training. In the academic year 1955-1956 there were 356 students from Martinique in France.\textsuperscript{73} Haiti also has many scholarships for study abroad by her youth. In the years 1950-1956 a total of 182 went to France for study, seven less than the number of Haitians who went to all other foreign countries. There is a great advantage for those who have the opportunity to go abroad, especially to France. Students not only benefit from attending institutions of very high standing but escape the insularity of their own institutions. For the more gifted of the students from Martinique and Guadeloupe the present system is to be preferred.

Happily, change and advancement are very much manifest in the educational system of all three islands, and even a decade hence some important changes for the better will

\textsuperscript{72} Annuaire statistique de la Guadeloupe, 1949-1953, 46; Annuaire de la Martinique, 1952-1956, 42; Dale, Education in the Republic of Haiti, 70.
\textsuperscript{73} Annuaire de la Martinique, 1952-1956, p. 45.
almost certainly have been accomplished. The development of education in all these three islands since the early years of the nineteenth century has been remarkable. For Martinique and Guadeloupe, the greatest credit must go to the French government, which has directed and subsidized the larger part of it. Great credit also must go to the religious orders—the Sisters of Saint-Joseph of Cluny and the Brothers of Ploërmel—who bore the brunt of the teaching burden in the first half of the nineteenth century and even longer. Many humanitarian lay men and women who have served as teachers in private schools also have played a noble role. In fact, many private and church schools still operate in all three islands. The quality of the instruction in all these insular institutions has been criticized by writers as much below that of European institutions, but it is vastly better than the vacuum of intellectual atmosphere that formerly existed.
To what degree has the Negro of the French West Indies advanced in a cultural way since he was a slave? More than a century has passed since emancipation went into effect for the last of the enslaved in 1848. In this period the most sincere efforts of the French and the colonial governments have been devoted to extending colonial education. The Negroes and mulattoes on their part have shown laudable response, both in Martinique and Guadeloupe. An ever-increasing number have pursued secondary studies in lycées in their larger cities, while the more gifted and ambitious youth have received scholarships for further study in the lycées and universities of France. These last have received training at institutions considered among the world's best. Sufficient time has elapsed for the more gifted and determined to have made some achievements.

Literary capability, of course, is not necessarily dependent upon university training. Some of our most remarkable writers, as Shakespeare, Robert Burns, Dumas père, Winston Churchill, and Richard Wright have not attended universities. Not all in the French West Indies who have aspired to a literary career have been university graduates, yet some of the most successful have been of this group. On the other hand, much the greater number of literary aspirants have received training in France. It also will be observed
that many more have reached success in literature than in the demanding realm of scholarship. 

Prior to the French Revolution of 1789 there was no literary expression on the part of Negroes or mulattoes, either in the colonies or in France. It began with the Revolution and its originator was an octoroon from Santo Domingo named Julien Raimond. Raimond was a wealthy planter and slaveowner who was little concerned with the abolition of slavery and the rise of the Negro. Rather, he was solicitous for the status of the free men of color, demanding that they be accorded the same rights and privileges, economic and political, which the whites enjoyed. In short, he wished for his class full equality in civil rights with the whites. In 1784 he had gone to France at his own expense as agent for the men of his class. He stated that he had been chosen for this post by a brother and others residing in the vicinity of Aquin. At first he resided in southwest France, where a married sister was living, and only later, in 1789 or 1790 moved to Paris. The government of the Old Regime manifested some interest in his proposals for reforms in the colony but took no actual steps. The outbreak of the Revolution provided a magnificent opportunity for all groups wishing reforms, and this Raimond quickly realized. He and a number of other well-to-do free men of color living in Paris quickly organized their activities and affiliated themselves with the humanitarian group of French citizens formed by Brissot in 1788 called Amis des Noirs. This French organization realized the value of publicity and made much use of it. Possibly it was they who pointed out to Raimond its advantages, and from 1789 to 1796 he proceeded to publish, in Paris, a series of eight or ten brochures, all dealing with colonial matters and setting forth the demands of the free men of color. All were polemics, directed at the colons or whites of the planter class. Some were attacks upon political steps that the planters had taken, others were
attacks upon pamphlets they had published. The *colons* resident in France in still larger numbers than the mulattoes were also organized for political ends; they formed the group known as the Club Massiac, which was the foe that drew the most of his assaults. Whatever his foe desired he opposed and did so with remarkable sarcasm, clarity, and logic.

Of Raimond’s schooling we know nothing; evidently he had received training from a tutor in Santo Domingo. His brochures cannot be considered classics, but they were much the best of a large quantity of polemics that suddenly flowered into being, treating of conditions in the colonies in the 1790's. His writings are yet the more remarkable in that he limited his attention to a single colony, Santo Domingo; his sources were his own acquaintance with the colony, letters from a brother living at Aquin, and a bristling two-volume criticism of conditions in Santo Domingo published in the 1770's by a French writer named Hilliard d’Auberteuil, entitled *Considerations sur Saint-Domingue*. This work he had read with enormous profit. By no means was Raimond the only man of color or Negro from the French colonies to publish a brochure during the Revolution, but none approached him in skill. In a very real way he may be considered as the first author of African blood who came from the French colonies.¹ None of his works went into a second edition or second printing. They were not referred to in the writings of the time. Their readers, it would seem, were few. But they were read sufficiently to bring him a reputation, and evidently they had some part in gaining the legislation he desired.

A second prominent literary man from the French colonies of the West Indies was likewise a free man of color, a

mulatto, Cyril Charles Auguste Bissette (1795-1858), of Martinique. As in the case of Raimond, we do not know how he got his education, but he was well trained—a broad reader, a careful logician, and a scorpion in the use of sarcasm and irony to which he subjected his opponents unmercifully. For like Raimond too, he was a polemicist, a crusader in holy armor, not to do battle for religious creed but for the civil rights of his race. Like Raimond, he was proud of being a man of color and it was primarily for the rights of this group that he hurled his lances, yet he was also and to a much greater extent than Raimond a champion of the Negroes.

He did not plan to become a literary man or a politician, but circumstances destined that he should become both. What started him on the road was a racial incident of 1822 in which he had a rather harmless but irritating part—the collaboration with two friends in writing a pamphlet reporting what had happened, getting it published, and distributing it in the island. Theirs became a cause célèbre. 2

While their case was under consideration by the courts, Bissette and his collaborators Volny and Fabien fils published a second pamphlet for the purpose of gaining public support for their cause, entitled A la Chambre des Pairs. Pétition additionnelle pour Bissette, Fabien fils et Volny, déposée le—avril 1826. It was a procedure for which there was precedent; Voltaire did it in the 1760's to gain support for the Calas family, Dupaty in defending Bradier, Simare, and Lardoise, and it was to be repeated in 1803 by Magloire Pélage and some collaborators charged with treason in overthrowing the government of Captain-General Lacrosse in Guadeloupe in 1801. 3 In all instances the method brought

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2 See above, pp. 135-36, on the Bissette affair.

3 For details on the earlier cases, see Shelby T. McCloy, The Humanitarian Movement in Eighteenth-Century France (Lexington, Ky., 1957); for the last, the Mémoire pour le chef de brigade Magloire Pélage, et pour les habitants de la Guadeloupe . . . (Paris, 1803), written by Pélage, Hyp. Frasens, C. Corneille, P. Piaud, and their lawyer, J. T. Langloys.
ultimate success, as happened also for Bissette and his co-accused.

In Paris Bissette, as the central figure in a cause célèbre, came to meet a number of the humanitarians like Isambert, De Tocqueville, the Aragos, and Schoelcher, and to cultivate their friendship. With their encouragement and support, he began the publication in 1834 of a remarkable journal, published monthly, entitled *Revue des Colonies*, for the purpose of informing the reading public in France of the sufferings and oppressions experienced by his race in the colonies. It was not the first French journal dealing with the colonies, for at Port-au-Prince in 1817 Jules Solime Milscent had founded a literary revue entitled *L'Abeille Haïtienne*, which lasted until 1820. The latter, however, was negligible in significance and not to be compared to the former. The *Revue des Colonies* was designed to be propagandist in nature, and it served its purpose admirably. It was concerned with whatever interested the colonies and all classes in the colonies, as Bissette stated in a prospectus, although it would give particular attention to the abolition of slavery and the slave trade. The *Revue* had many learned correspondents who assured it of competently written articles covering a wide range of interests. The forty-eight pages of each issue are filled with a mélange of reading matter that even today one finds interesting. It was a sort of *Gentleman's Magazine* treating of the French colonies. It was published for about five years, with new features added from time to time, such as a fictional serial, poems by colonials, reports on colonial boursiers who had done well academically, a portrait of Phyllis Wheatley, the death and funeral service of a colonial boursier. Bissette saw the value of education and held it up as the ladder to success for the colonial peoples. Unfortunately the journal's cost must have

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limited its circulation almost exclusively to the more well-to-do colonials, even as its bias would have limited it to the free colored and Negro readers.

The reputation of Bissette as a literary man rests also in part upon some fifteen or twenty pamphlets, most of them polemics. Bissette became increasingly irate as he grew older, and for any writer on colonial matters to express the slightest deviations in thought from him was to invite bitter reprisals. Even those of his own school of thought, like Victor Schoelcher, were not immune to his attacks; at least two of Bissette's brochures were caustic in treatment of Schoelcher. Schoelcher, like most of those whom Bissette attacked, refrained from reply. Bissette alternately wooed and attacked churchmen, legislators, jurists, political figures, literary men, as they conformed or failed to conform to his razor-edged line of thinking. He wrote with greater dexterity and had a broader outlook than Raimond. He took much more notice of the Negro in his writings, being concerned as much in the welfare of the black man as in that of the man of color. His pamphlets are of interest today only to the historian delving into the currents of thought in the past; they are, so to speak, without any permanent literary value. Even this, however, qualifies him for a niche in the roster of colonial literary men.5

He had acquired for himself such a reputation as a literary champion of his people that when in 1848 the Second French Republic was established he was overwhelmingly elected deputy from Martinique despite the fact that he had been absent from the colony about twelve years. Shortly thereafter too (around 1850) a vessel plying the waters between Martinique and Le Havre was named the Bissette-et-Pécout in honor of him and Martinique's other

5 The complete list of his writings may be found in the Catalogue imprimé des livres de la Bibliothèque Nationale. Whereas Raimond did not reprint his pamphlets, Bissette frequently republished his, in whole or in part, under a slightly altered title.
deputy, and in 1852 he was decorated as chevalier of the Legion of Honor in recognition of his services to the French Empire.\(^6\)

Subsequent French colonial mulatto and Negro writers have almost all been trained in a lycée or university, frequently in medicine or in law. One such was the man of color, Privat d'Anglemont, born in Guadeloupe in 1815 of well-to-do parents. His parents died young, and his brother sent him to Paris for his education, first at the Lycée Henri IV and afterward at the Faculty of Medicine. But finding himself uninterested in a medical career, he gave up its study and decided on the more leisurely role of writer and frequenter of sidewalk cafes. His was a life of indolence. He was an occasional contributor to several journals, among them Le Figaro, writing on antiquarian Paris—its shops, streets, salons, cafes, and their frequenters. He also wrote verse for the periodicals L'Artiste and La Revue de Paris. His financial returns were small and he lived on the borderline of poverty. He attempted also to write other forms of literature—novels, dramas, vaudeville parts, social analyses, and essays—without much success. Report had it that when summoned home by his brother to settle some business matters he spent only one day in the island, embarking for France again on the morrow.\(^7\)

It is of interest that all three men of color thus far discussed made Paris their home, once they had placed foot on French soil. Privat differed from the others, however, in being an antiquarian, not a polemicist. His essays on old Paris were in part collected and published in 1854, some years before his death, under the title of Paris anecdote; the others were collected after his death in 1859 by a friend and published under the designation of Paris inconnu

\(^6\) Les Antilles, March 15, 1850, p. 3, April 12, 1852, p. 1, Archives F.O.M., 560E.

\(^7\) T. Oriol, Les hommes célèbres de la Guadeloupe (n.p., 1935), pp. 113-19.
(1861). They have some value even to the present to researchers in antiquarian subjects.\(^8\) He was thus more strictly a literary man than Raimond or Bissette.

Toward the middle of the nineteenth century historical writings came to attract the French West Indians. It was the great age of historical writing in Germany, Britain, France, and other European countries. Especially during and since the French Revolution of 1789-1795 they had undergone stormy crises and made much history—events very imperfectly known to Europe and even to the islanders themselves. In the 1840’s, 1850’s, and 1860’s accordingly there came numerous publications in history. The former French colony of Haiti led the way with three notable writers—Thomas Madiou, Beaubrun Ardouin, and Joseph Saint-Rémy. The first, born at Port-au-Prince in 1814 of a family in comfortable circumstances, appears to have been a white. At the age of ten he was sent to France for his education and attended schools in Angers, Nantes, Rennes, and Paris, studying first letters and later law. Returning home, he became first a newspaper editor, then a private secretary, then a government minister. His services were much in demand and he did not spend the time in research that he should have. His *Histoire d’Haïti* (Port-au-Prince, 1848-1904), in four volumes, resting partly on documentary study, partly on interviews and verbal tradition, are very detailed, animated, and praise the French Revolution and its influence on Haiti. Some recent Haitian critics have likened him in this respect to Michelet.\(^9\) His greatest shortcoming is his lack of philosophical grasp and failure to designate the significance of various developments. He is little more than a raconteur. His weakness in this respect is supplemented, ironically enough, by a contemporary man

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of color with extremely little formal education, Beaubrun Ardouin, whose eleven-volume *Études sur l'histoire d'Haïti* (Paris, 1853-1860) are reported to be largely directed toward pointing out the errors and inadequacies of Madiou; but it is tedious to read.

Ardouin, like Madiou, came of a prominent family. His father had been a follower of Vincent Ogé and later was secretary to the mulatto general, Alexandre Pétion. By wide reading in a good home library the son came to acquire a fair education. Becoming a newspaper man and a politician, attached to the faction of General Borgella and President Boyer, he set out to write a biography of Borgella, his idol, but found that his project demanded considerable collateral reading. His eleven-volume history of Haiti resulted. It rests much more upon archival sources than does the history by Madiou. Ardouin made much use of the manuscripts in the Archives Nationales. One critic says that he is too combative and that his work is more a work of criticism than a history. As in the case of Madiou, his last volumes, treating of the author's own times, are decidedly his best. "As a collection of materials," says this critic, "the work of Ardouin is precious, [but] as a work of art it barely counts." More recent critics commend his scholarship but criticize his style.

The third Haitian, Joseph Saint-Rémy, was more of a scholar than either of the two just described. Actually he was born in Guadeloupe, but while he was young his parents moved to Haiti, settling at Cayes. His parents though colored were sufficiently well off to send him to Paris for his education. There he studied the humanities and later law. Returning to Haiti in the 1840's, he became involved

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in the stormy politics there and was banished from the island in 1850. Perhaps this was a blessing in disguise, for he devoted himself more to historical studies. In 1850 he edited, or rather re-edited, the memoirs of the Negro revolutionary leader Boisrond-Tonnère, and in 1851 published those of Toussaint Louverture. Subsequently he published his chief work, *Pétion et Haïti*, a six-volume work. His publisher, however, seized Volume V because Saint-Rémy had not paid him for publishing the first four volumes; later Volume VI was seized by a Paris notary because of debt. Saint-Rémy died in Paris in 1856 at the age of forty. He is reported to have been a hard worker, thoughtful, and objective. Pressoir and the two Trouillots say of him that he "was the most methodical Haitian historian of his generation."¹¹

At the same time that this historical activity was under way in Haiti, similar studies were being made in Martinique and Guadeloupe. In Guadeloupe, A. Lacour, a councilor at the imperial court, published at Basse-Terre during the years 1852-1855 a three-volume *Histoire de la Guadeloupe*. The fact that Lacour was on the imperial council, however, would almost certainly indicate that he was a white. Likewise, it would appear that Sidney Daney, a member of the Colonial Council of Martinique, who wrote under the pen-name of J. Lutèce and published a six-volume *Histoire de la Martinique depuis la colonisation jusqu'en 1815* (Fort-Royal, 1846), was white. It is not surprising that literary activity by Negroes in the Caribbean was virtually nil to the end of the century, in view of the almost total absence of opportunity for receiving higher education; even for whites and those of mixed blood it was very rare.

After the burst of activity in historical writing around the middle of the last century there was little if any respectable history published by Negro or colored authors of these

¹¹ *Historiographie d'Haïti*, 194-211.
islands until about 1920. Since 1920 there has been a second
and much greater burst of historical writing, influenced
greatly by the high scholarly standards of western Europe
and the United States. These newer histories have been
shorter in length but have met higher standards than those
of the earlier period. Once again, Haiti has led Martinique
and Guadeloupe in the number of writings, if not also in
other respects.

Of the Haitian historians a man of color named Horace
Paulius Sannon (1870—) stands high. He was trained in
Paris as a boursier. For three years he pursued medical
studies and then changed to social and political science,
taking courses at the Sorbonne, the Collège de France, and
frequently visiting and observing the French Parliament in
action. He remained in Paris from 1891 to 1898, then
returned to Haiti as a journalist and chief customs officer at
Cayes. Later he was given certain cabinet posts, was sent
as minister plenipotentiary to Washington, and then was
made director of the Lycée Pétion. One of his early writings
was Haïti et le régime parlementaire. Afterward he pub-
lished a number of brochures—on the Darfour Case (a
famous political assassination in the early nineteenth cen-
tury), on Boisrond-Tonnère, and on the Revolution of 1848.
In 1924 there was founded in Haiti the Société d'Histoire
et de Géographie and Sannon was made its first president.
In that same year he published a history entitled La Guerre
de l'Indépendence, on which subject Madiou and Ardouin
had written at length. Sannon had made use of some hitherto
unused letters of Mary Hassal, an American woman living
at the time in Haiti, addressed to Colonel Burr and discussing
events in the island. Later he published these letters under
the title Le Cap Français vu par une Américaine. His
most famous work, however, was his three-volume Histoire
de Toussaint Louverture, published from 1919 to 1933. It
is carefully documented, but the sources for this subject lie
in several countries, above all France, and he made no trip to utilize them. This is severe criticism, but his three volumes are called the most elaborate and scholarly study of Toussaint until that time. The matter to which Sannon gave most attention was the quarrel between Toussaint and Sonthonax. Toussaint is his hero and Sannon deftly glorifies him by quoting at length the opinions of Toussaint's contemporaries. Sannon is primarily a biographer rather than a historian and, though trained in the modern method, he falls somewhat short of its highest standards.

A second recent Haitian historian has been the Negro Antoine Michel, author of the Mission d'Hédouville à Saint-Domingue, which was planned as a five-volume work, though only the first volume ever appeared (1929). It was to exploit a rich collection of unused source material owned by the distinguished scholar and writer Dr. Price-Mars. Why the halt, nobody knows. By his handling of materials he impresses the reader as brusque and lacking in grace; Catts Pressoir and the Trouillots, Haitian literary critics, depict him as a disappointed man and a radical. Perhaps the courtesy of Dr. Price-Mars wore thin.

The most outstanding historian of African descent coming from Martinique during the twentieth century has been Henry Lémery, long a senator in Paris from that island. And yet the African strain in his heritage is so slight, as seen from his photograph, that he might easily be taken for white. His outstanding work has been La Révolution française à la Martinique (Paris, 1936). It rests heavily upon manuscript sources of the Archives Nationales and the Archives du Ministère de la France d'Outre-mer, though his documentation is not so copious as one might expect. He makes much, perhaps too much, use of quotation. In his Conclusion he says that the Revolution was not severe in

13 Historiographie d'Haiti, 228, 254-57.
Martinique, in contrast to France and Santo Domingo—and he might have added, to Guadeloupe. The reason for this mildness, he says, rested on the contentment of the people. Prosperous societies, in his opinion, do not fall the victims of rivalry, hatred, and bloodshed. Revolution is never foisted on a country from the outside. His work is not racial or partisan and received favorable comment from its reviewer, A. Martineau, in the Revue de l'histoire des colonies françaises. Gabriel Debien, however, possibly the leading scholar of our day on the French Caribbean area, says that there is nothing new in the volume.

Lémery also wrote certain brochures, the leading one being a 145-page Martinique terre française: le conflit des races et l'opinion métropolitaine. Victor Schoelcher (Paris, 1962). It is a historical treatise on the conflict of races in Martinique since the 1660's, admirably written by a ripe scholar who, though he gives few footnotes, reveals broad acquaintance with the sources in the field.

Several other able works of history have been written on Martinique during this period but their authors—P. L. May, Eugène Revert, Michel Leiris, and Armand Nicolas—appear to have been whites and should not occupy our attention.

Certain of the historians of Guadeloupe for the twentieth century have been of African lineage. One of the ablest, Maurice Satineau, was both a Negro and a colonial deputy to the French Parliament. His Histoire de la Guadeloupe sous l'Ancien Régime, 1635-1789 (Paris, 1928) is highly praised by the able critic Maurice Besson. Later Satineau was a senator. Another writer of African descent was the man of color, Oruna Lara, who in 1923 published an interesting little textbook entitled Histoire de la Guadeloupe.

14 See p. 307 of his work.
15 XXIV (1931), 75-77.
with a decided pro-Negro bias. Another history of the colony was published in 1938 at Paris by the Negro, Lenis Blanche. The preface to the work, by the island's senator Henry Berenger, states that Blanche was "the first Negro admitted to the École Normale Supérieure of France on his merits." Blanche's father had been mayor of Lamentin, a man of distinction. Young Blanche attended the Lycée Carnot at Pointe-à-Pitre and later went to Paris for study. His Histoire de la Guadeloupe is a work of 192 pages and traces the story of the island from prehistoric times down to the twentieth century. In short, it is a history written for popular consumption. There are no footnotes, nor does Blanche anywhere indicate his sources. The most significant feature of the work is its inclusion of the history of newspapers on the island. Blanche afterward was professor of philosophy at the Lycée Gerville-Réache in Guadeloupe but, so far as I know, has never published a history based on scholarly research.

There has been much interest at various times by the islanders in their history, and through their close contact with France and French culture they have had adequate knowledge of what constitutes good history. A few have done creditably and have received the commendation of able critics like Albert Martineau, J. Tramond, Maurice Besson, and Gabriel Debien. The majority so praised have been whites or mixed bloods. The Negroes, in general, have lacked the necessary training, whereas those endowed with the training have lacked the ambition or the will power to achieve.

Of some encouragement has been the formation of scholarly societies interested in history and the establishment of some historical reviews. The Haitian Society of History and Geography in 1924 founded the Revue already cited, and it has a very commendable record. The other islands have not done so well. From 1944 to 1959 La Revue Guadeloupéenne,
at first a weekly and later a monthly, was published at Basse-Terre; it was designed for popular reading and met with much success. In 1944 a quarterly review entitled _Martinique_ came into being and ran through 1946. Articles of diversified interest appeared in it, written more by French scholars than Martinicans. In 1955 was born a dignified review entitled _Annales des Antilles_, sponsored by Société d'histoire de la Martinique. Only seven issues were published, four in 1955, one each in 1957, 1958, and 1959. A journal of scholarly nature, it carried articles by French writers as well as by Martinicans. In 1950 Haiti had a second historical society, entitled La Librairie d'Histoire d'Haïti, which published a review of the same name. Its editor, Mentor Laurent, thought that it should advance historical knowledge and frequently published documents in its pages. Nor were these all. Several other journals, some founded very early in the twentieth century, are referred to by Michel Leiris in his _Contacts de civilisations_, some literary, some historical. No doubt the vicissitudes of these scholarly reviews have inevitably developed from the small population and from the strong individuality of the three islands. This however does not exonerate the islanders for failure to meet high standards of scholarship.

In the realm of literature also there has been much activity in the French West Indies, most of it in the twentieth century. Especially in the domain of fiction has this been true. Two or three of the novels have been recognized by critics as outstanding. One was by the Guadeloupean man of color, Sully Lara, published in Paris in 1935, entitled _Moeurs créoles; sous l'esclavage_. It is a tragedy, depicting

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17 Trouillot, _Historiadores de America_, 52-53.
18 Leiris names, for example, the _Revue des Antilles_, founded at Fort-de-France in 1900, by Théodore Baude; the _Bulletin pour servir à l'histoire de la Martinique_, also at Fort-de-France, 1915-1917; the _Revue Martinique_, at Fort-de-France, 1928-1939, founded by Jules Monnerat, who was one of the early surrealists there; _Contacts de civilisations en Martinique et en Guadeloupe_ (Paris, 1935), 106-16.
embittered relations between a Guadeloupean planter and his slave in the last days of slavery, just before and during 1848. The hero of the story is the slave Sidoine, a hard worker and faithful to his master, a M. Savalon, the weakling in the story. Savalon's younger son rapes the attractive daughter of Sidoine and gets her with child. This leads to Sidoine's joining a secret group of free mulattoes interested in subversion. Savalon's daughter, Odette also attractive, just back from a finishing school in Paris where she had been taught by some Catholic sisters and had become interested in the sad condition of the slaves, likewise is brought into the story. She too became pregnant, outside of marriage, by a young Negro leader, although little is said of her pregnancy, and not until much later did the parents or others learn who was the father. Meanwhile, there was a slave outbreak affecting the Savalon plantation; the slaves were led by Sidoine, who for some weeks or months had turned marron, living in the woods. The outbreak was unsuccessful but Sidoine escaped capture and continued his depredations, which became ever more serious. Meanwhile, tragedy after tragedy came to the Savalons and their friends. Both babies were born out of wedlock and secretly were entrusted to the care of an old slave woman. The slaves, it seems, learned all things but this, and it had its part in the developing tragedy. Finally came 1848 and emancipation. Some slaves, embittered toward their old masters, now took their revenge. Savalon decided to take his family secretly to Paris, to avoid impending troubles. But on the night of their planned departure, Sidoine and a large band of collaborating former slaves set fire to the Savalon home, and all were destroyed by it, even Odette, Sidoine, and the two babies. Sidoine, always the author's hero, plays an impossible role for an unlettered slave. When he learned of the presence of the two babies, he would save them and the Savalon family, but it was too late. The flames
engulfed them all. The vivid story is filled with episodes of brutality and tragedy, involving both races. Lara says at the outset that he is interested in improving racial relations. Whether or not books of this type promote that end is very doubtful. *Moeurs Créoles* is a good book, and reveals minute knowledge of social conditions that existed in the regime of slavery.

Another novel of high quality is *La rue Cases-Nègres*, by the Negro, Joseph Zobel, published in Paris in 1950. It is an autobiographical account of the author’s own childhood and youth, depicting Negro life and conditions on a plantation in Martinique, in the town of Petit-Morne, and at the lycée in Fort-de-France. Never is the tone bitter, nor does Zobel treat of class hatred. In this it differs radically from the book by Lara. Instead of being ashamed of his African blood, Zobel is proud of it and says so. He dedicates the book to his mother and his grandmother, saying (translation mine): “To my mother, a domestic with the whites. [And] To my grandmother, a plantation worker who does not know how to read.” His mother had been very solicitous that he get an education. He did, winning a scholarship to the lycée of Fort-de-France.

Zobel’s novel is well written and at all times natural. Its simplicity, its frankness, its picture of social conditions give it charm. Above all, it shows us a young Negro intellectual in quest of an education. An earlier novel, which he entitled *Diab’-La, roman antillais* (1942), which enjoyed a sale of more than 6,000 copies, is much the weaker of the two novels.19

Alexandre Dumas *père* and *fils*, Frenchmen of the nineteenth century, wrote magnificent fiction of permanent value,

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19 An account of Zobel is found in an article by John Harrison, “To introduce Three French West-Indian Novelists (Guy Mareste, Joseph Zobel, Daniel de Grandmaison),” in the June, 1952, issue of *De West-Indische Sich*. 
despite limited educations; one can only speculate why other men of color in the West Indies did not produce novels of equal merit. For some reason they failed to do so.

Of poets, too, the French West Indies have produced many, but few of high quality. In his book, *Poètes d'expression française, 1900-1945*, Léon G. Damas, himself a poet, lists and describes the work of four poets from Guadeloupe and thirteen from Martinique. Outstanding among the group is a mixed blood from Martinique named Daniel Thaly (1879-1950), who was born on the island of Dominique of a Martinican father and an English mother. He was sent early to Toulouse and later to Paris for the study of medicine. But it was the vogue for young intellectuals to turn to literature, and Thaly did so too. On completing his medical training, he returned to Dominique and went into practice until 1938, when he retired and went to Martinique as Conservator of the Schoelcher Library and there remained until 1945 or later.²⁰

After 1910 his poems began to appear in some of the leading French reviews and during the next several decades he published seven or eight collections of his poetry. His first collection appears to have been published even earlier, at Toulouse in 1905. The collection consists of several dozen poems treating a wide variety of topics. Many references are found in them to Toulouse and the south of France, which he loved. Many, perhaps most, of his poems deal with aspects of nature, with major emphasis on the beauty of the natural world. He was a lover of France and of Martinique; someone has remarked that when in France he was nostalgic for Martinique, when in Martinique nostalgic for France. He also was very fond of Britain, where he had also traveled.

Thaly was a romantic, sensitive soul, without bitterness.

To him the world was beautiful and lovely, and his poems gave expression to this feeling. He chose his words with great care and deftness; the flow of his language is sonorous. One thinks of Shelley, Keats, or Poe. He had many friends, and a large number of his poems are dedicated to individuals. In his day he was the great poet of the Caribbean area, and justly so. One writer has referred to Thaly as “the poet of grace and of light.”  

In contrast, the great vogue of recent years in French Caribbean poetry has been that of the surrealists, of which one of the leading exponents has been the Negro, Aimé Césaire, long a deputy from Martinique to the French Chamber of Deputies. He is also a newspaper owner and mayor of the city of Fort-de-France. He writes fiction and biography as well as poetry; his recent biography of Toussaint Louverture is remarkably well done as a critical appraisal, but it does not show independent research. The book of poems that won for him his great reputation was his Cahier d’un retour au pays natal (Paris, 1947). It was first published in 1939 in a Parisian review without attracting attention. But sometime afterward it came to the notice of the surrealist André Breton. To its publication in book form in 1947 he contributed the preface, which he entitled “Un grand poète Noir.” This poetry was “grande poésie.” Breton was dazzled by the young Negro’s use of the French language, by the charm of his wife (also a writer of note), and by the fact that Césaire shared his surrealist views. The poem had been written in Paris at the time that Césaire was leaving the École Normale Supérieure to return to Martinique. The appeal of the island came to him like the song of a siren. But he was aware also of a shadow of misgovernment and misery, caused by white men, parasites who had exploited the island to their own advantage. He hopes for the day when white and black (or man of color)
can lay aside racial differences and work in unison. His hope to win full freedom for the black people in modern society found its fullest expression in surrealism; he became a follower of Isadore Ducasse, even as Breton had come to be. Breton calls Ducasse "the great prophet of the times to come" and says of Césaire's poetry that it is as "beautiful as rising oxygen."

The poem mixes the techniques of both prose and verse. It depicts the squalor, misery, mistreatment, and injustice that the Negro has received from the white man. It is Marxist verse concerning the warfare between the races and the mistreatment of the Negro for generations. Césaire's mood is intense, even paranoiac. His vocabulary is extensive and he is careful to use the most graphic words for his pictures. In 1946 he published another book of poetry, entitled *Les armes miraculeuses*, in which modernistic devices are carried even further than in the *Cahier d'un retour*.

Césaire was a member of the Communist party until the autumn of 1956. On October 24 he wrote an open letter to Maurice Thorez, secretary general of the French Communist party, announcing his resignation as a party member. Was it because of the Russian suppression of Hungarian endeavor for freedom? No, it was because of Khrushchev's overtures to the Western world and watering down of the ideas of pure Communism. The French West Indies, he says, can expect nothing from the Western world, not even from Russia; it must rely upon Africa alone.22

Another poet of some merit has been Gilbert Gratient, born in Grand'Anse, an agrégé and professor of English. He refers to himself as a mixed blood and has no dislike for the word "Negro." In his *Credo des sang-mêlés ou je veux chanter de France* (Fort-de-France [1948?]) he rhapsodizes over France—her culture, manners, arms, government. He

expresses the joy of the people of the Antilles for France. He appears jubilant over her emergence from Nazi captivity. He praises her inventions, her manufactures, her long daylight, her museums, her gardens, her snowflakes. He praises also Africa. He sings of the blacks, calling them "Negroes," of the mulattoes, of the békés (a term for the white planters, given them by the Negroes and mulattoes). He refers to slavery, but with no bitterness. He sings of Montesquieu, Grégoire, Lamartine, Schoelcher. He is proud of French civilization and tradition. It is worthy of remark that only the first twenty-six pages of this volume are in French, the rest being in Creole, the language of the masses in the French West Indies. Increasingly in the twentieth century, poetry and fiction have been published in Creole, to reach the masses.

Gratient is one of the intellectuals of Martinique. He was the translator and perhaps editor of a book by J. B. S. Haldane, *La science en marche* (Paris, 1952), which had appeared first as a series of essays in the *Daily Worker*, the English Communist journal. He has also contributed an essay toward a volume entitled *Les quatre samedis antillais* (Paris, 1946), in which he discusses without prejudice the social relations and religion of the whites, mulattoes, and Negroes of the French Caribbean.

Studies of poets and other literary men of Haiti have been made by the Negro Duraciné Vaval (*Histoire de la littérature haïtienne ou l'âme noire* [Port-au-Prince, 1953]), Louis Morpeau (*Anthologie d'un siècle de poésie haïtienne, 1817-1925* [Paris, 1925]), Dr. Jean Price-Mars (*De Saint-Domingue à Haïti: Essai sur la culture, les arts et la littérature* [Paris, 1959]), as well as a list of seven or eight studies published in the 1800's or early 1900's cited by Morpeau, pp. 31-32. Martinique and Guadeloupe likewise have their anthologies and critiques of literary men. Among them may

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23 *Credo des sang-mêlés*, pp. 7-26.
be mentioned the study of poets for all the French colonies in 1947 by Léon G. Damas, entitled *Poètes d'expression française, 1900-1945* (Paris [1947]), the book by Auguste Viatte, *Histoire littéraire de l'Amérique des origines à 1950* (Paris and Quebec, 1954), the Negro H. Adolphe Lara’s study entitled *Contribution de la Guadeloupe à la pensée française, 1635-1935* (Paris, 1936), T. Oriol, *Les hommes célèbres de la Guadeloupe* (n.p., 1935), and Michel Leiris, *Contacts de civilisation en Martinique et en Guadeloupe* (Paris and Nimegue, 1955). In general these critical studies have improved in quality with the passage of time, but even now there is too much following of precedent in selection of the writers considered and in estimation of their merit. It is to be regretted that all of these critical studies have been made by the islanders themselves, for that prevents the books from being as critical as they should be. Yet few of these West Indian historians, novelists, poets, and essayists can be regarded as of the first quality, judged from the standards of western Europe and the United States. Even so, the quality of workmanship, in general, has improved with the passage of time, and the islands have come a long way in culture since the days of slavery.

The newspaper is also a form of literature to which the French West Indian Negro and mulatto have contributed. While the newspaper in the French West Indies antedates the Revolution of 1789, the first to be edited by a Negro or mulatto in Guadeloupe was *Le Progrès*, published by some mulattoes in Pointe-à-Pitre. Its first issue was on June 17, 1849, and it ran until May 19, 1850. This was a period of racial ferment, and the paper gave attention to all aspects of life—political, literary, commercial, industrial, and agricultural. Those editing it reported that politically they stood for government that represented the will of the people and

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24 I have purposely omitted René Maran and Léon Damas, two of the more eminent writers, though both were born in Martinique. Both were reared elsewhere and do not consider themselves Martinicans.
economically for the rights of private property. It lasted less than a year, however, and was not revived until 1892.\textsuperscript{26}

Not until 1892 did the Negroes of Guadeloupe publish a journal. Entitled \textit{Le Peuple}, its editor was Hégésippe Legitimus, who was destined to become a great political figure in the island. Legitimus was a Socialist, later a friend and disciple of Jules Guesde. His journal was published at Pointe-à-Pitre. The Negroes formed a political party on the island at this time. Later other Socialist journals came into being in Guadeloupe. Legitimus was elected deputy to Parliament from Guadeloupe in 1898 and was reelected in 1906 and 1910. While in Paris he contributed to certain journals, among them Clemenceau's \textit{Aurore}, and founded there a newspaper entitled \textit{Les Antilles socialistes}. He also published several political brochures of a polemical nature. Though a successful journalist and politician, he cannot be called an important literary man.\textsuperscript{26} Even in politics he lost his post in 1914, but he continued to live in France until his death in 1944. While Guadeloupe was making plans in 1947 for celebration of its centenary of freedom from slavery, someone suggested that his body be brought home for burial. He was likened to Schoelcher; he had liberated his race economically. Before his day the workers were not organized; now they were, and Legitimus was accredited with it. His body was brought home with great pomp, on a French war vessel, and he was reinterred with military honors before a vast crowd. Several distinguished speakers lauded him.\textsuperscript{27}

Other Guadeloupean Negro or mulatto journalists have been Gratien Candace, Alexandre Isaac, Gaston Gerville-Réache, and H. Adolphe Lara; most of them were also politicians. Candace was first a teacher, later a politician,\textsuperscript{25} Louis Blanche, \textit{Histoire de la Guadeloupe} (Paris, 1938), 179, 181.\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., 180-83; H. Adolphe Lara, \textit{Contribution de la Guadeloupe à la pensée française}, 1635-1935 (Paris, 1936), 271-72.\textsuperscript{27} \textit{Revue Guadeloupéenne}, N.S. I (March-May, 1947), 4-7.
going to Paris as a deputy in 1912, a position he held for many years. In May, 1932, he became Undersecretary of State for the Colonies. While in Paris he contributed articles to several journals; also, he wrote a number of books on diversified subjects.\textsuperscript{28}

Alexandre Isaac began his career as a lawyer, then became a politician and later a journalist. As a politician he became Director of the Interior, having control of the educational system of the island, and founded, in 1883, the \textit{lycée} at Pointe-à-Pitre named after Sadi Carnot. In 1885 he became senator and was reelected in 1894. While in Paris he contributed to several journals and reviews, such as \textit{Le Temps}, \textit{Le Matin}, \textit{Le Figaro}, \textit{La Revue Politique}, and \textit{Les Questions Diplomatiques et Coloniales}. In 1898 he founded a journal there, the \textit{Liberté Coloniale}, and became its political editor. Also, he wrote several brochures on political matters. But he cannot be called a literary man of importance.\textsuperscript{29}

Gaston Gerville-Reache was at first a professor of philosophy in Haiti, later a lawyer to the Court of Appeals in Paris, and afterwards, from 1881 to 1906, a deputy for Guadeloupe to the French Parliament. While in Paris he collaborated with Clemenceau and Schoelcher on certain journals. He also contributed to some reviews and wrote brochures. He was primarily a political man, however, rather than a writer. In 1933 a \textit{lycée} at Basse-Terre was named for him.\textsuperscript{30}

H. Adolphe Lara was a contemporary of Legitimus and his opponent in thought. As editor of a Negro journal, \textit{Démocratie}, in Guadeloupe, he was a nineteenth-century liberal and urged (in opposition to Legitimus) the Negroes not to form a separate political party and not to break ties with France. He would have had them remain aloof from all movements leading to bloodshed. In a brochure of 1901 entitled \textit{A mes frères noirs}, he urged contentment, education,

\textsuperscript{28} Lara, \textit{Contribution de la Guadeloupe}, 275-82.

\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 206-8.

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., 256-57.
labor, and achievement. Cooperation, not hatred, was what
the races in Guadeloupe needed. His most important work,
Contribution de la Guadeloupe à la pensée française, 1635-
1935 (Paris, 1936), already cited, is a very useful reference
work. Lara writes well and to the point. His views are
conservative and sound.

This has necessarily been a brief treatment of an important
aspect of West Indian culture. From it, however, can be
discerned the outlines of what the future may bring—a blend
of the rich heritage from France with the Indies’ own
concerns and problems.
TWELVE SANTO DOMINGO
SINCE INDEPENDENCE

The colony of Santo Domingo ceased to exist in 1804 when it declared independence from France, but culturally it has remained equally as French as Martinique or Guadeloupe. The position is anomalous. French political control has been repudiated but the use of French language and ideas and dependence on Paris as the cultural center has been continued voluntarily, even eagerly. Therefore, to add a chapter on developments in that former colony since it detached itself politically will be illuminating, partly to show the aspirations and tendencies of these freed Africans, but even more to reveal advantages that have accrued to Martinique and Guadeloupe in their continued role as French colonies. The sketch will be in part political, in part social and cultural. It will afford some opportunities to compare and contrast.

On January 1, 1804, a group of Negro and mulatto military leaders of Santo Domingo who had been in arms against Leclerc and Rochambeau met at Gonaïves, declared their independence from France, and changed the name of their country to Haiti, the Indian name of the island prior to the coming of the European and the African. At the same time they chose Dessalines, the most embittered enemy of the French, as governor general for life, authorized him to make war or peace, and gave him the right to choose his successor.
For some years the country continued under arms, expecting the French to make a further attempt to restore the island to submission. The country was divided, for efficiency, into four departments, with the four most prominent leaders after Dessalines in charge—Christophe, Pétion, Geffrard, and Gabart. Forts were constructed here and there, and all adult males were subjected to army service. The French did not strike, in fact, could not strike, being heavily engaged in war in Europe. Dessalines was able to move rapidly toward dictatorship. On October 8, 1804, he dropped the title of governor general and assumed that of emperor. This new grandiose rank he enjoyed for slightly more than a year, during which he came to be hated and feared for his cruelty and treachery. In October, 1806, he was assassinated as a result of an army plot. His body was left for some hours where it fell.

Among his victims were several hundred whites still living in the island whom he lured from their hiding and brutally murdered. The mulattoes hated him because of his prejudice against them and because he had defrauded many of them of their lands in building up a large public domain. All men not in the army were classified as laborers, the greater number as agricultural laborers, and were forced to till the soil. They were back in the condition of slavery save that now they had Negro masters instead of white ones. They were no longer beaten with whips, but rather with vines (lianes).1 As for the whites, few remained in the country and these few Dessalines set out to exterminate. He called on Negroes to massacre them, and when they did not, he set about to do so himself. In a constitution promulgated by him in 1805, Dessalines inserted a prohibition that no white man should ever possess a square foot of Haitian soil.2 For

2 Davis, Black Democracy, 211.
decades this provision remained the law of the land, as new constitutions reasserted it. Dessalines even removed the white from the tricolor, which otherwise became the Haitian flag.

Dessalines' successor was Henry Christophe, the strongest surviving Negro general on the island. Christophe had been born on the British island of St. Christopher whence he had received his name; later he himself added the name Henry, which he spelled in the English manner. He learned to read at an early age and was fond of reading, in this respect differing from Dessalines, who was illiterate and uninterested in education. Christophe had grown up as a free Negro. During the American Revolution he was one of 800 volunteers from the French West Indies who served under Comte d'Estaing in the naval expedition against the British in Savannah. Afterward he returned to Cap Français in Santo Domingo as a hotel waiter. He served under Toussaint in the 1790's and the early 1800's. During the period of the Leclerc invasion of 1802 he pursued a vacillating role, at first opposing the French at Cap Français where he was in charge, later collaborating with them, and when things began going badly for the French he deserted them and turned revolutionist again. He was the logical choice by the Constituent Assembly to be Dessalines' successor. But his election ruffled the second strongest general on the island, Pétion, commander in the South. The South thereupon refused to accept Christophe as ruler, and when Christophe led an army against it to force acceptance he was defeated in battle by Pétion. The Constituent Assembly met again, deposed Christophe, and elected Pétion as president. But it lacked the means to defeat and depose Christophe. The

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3 Leyburn and Davis tell different stories of his early years, though both are well informed. Davis, *Black Democracy*, p. 98, relates that he was born in Africa, was later a slave, became a hotel waiter, and later a steward on a French war vessel.
result was that throughout the lifetime of both men there were two rulers in the island, Christophe in the North, Pétion in South and West. 4

Pétion, a free man of color, had been reared and educated in France, had attended a French military school, and had served as an officer in the French army. Of the various Negro and mulatto generals in the West Indies he is said to have been the best educated. He believed in allowing his subjects as much freedom as possible and in breaking up the land tracts into small farms. He repaid many of the soldiers who had served under him with grants of land and thus was responsible for originating the small-farm movement in Haiti which still survives and is blamed by some as one of the chief curses of the country today. 5 He was very popular, however, with his subjects and was reelected president in 1811 and 1815. In 1816 the constitution was revised and he was made president for life—president of the South and West. For several months in 1810, however, he faced a crisis when André Rigaud, another ambitious Haitian mulatto general, returned to the island after his flight to France from Toussaint in 1800 and began an insurrection in Pétion’s domain. 6 He did in fact gain control of a large portion of the territory and for a time Haiti had three governments. But Rigaud died after a year and conditions in the island reverted to what they had been previously.

Christophe, in contrast to Pétion, held a firm hand over his subjects. They were forced to labor like serfs. The land was left in large estates, and Christophe himself became a great landowner. He acquired wealth in a land where little existed. In 1811 he crowned himself King Henry I in European fashion and set up a royal court. Its members

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4 Leyburn, The Haitian People, 42-43.
5 Davis, Black Democracy, 100-1; Eric Williams, The Negro in the Caribbean (Washington, [1942]), 46.
were his loyal henchmen, whom he paid off with aristocratic titles, binding them in loyalty to his rule. He governed as a strong man until 1820 when he was afflicted with paralysis and committed suicide.

He continued the social and economic system which Dessalines had inaugurated. Those in the class of workers must marry within that class. The farming group was placed on a rigid routine, the hours for reveille, breakfast, luncheon, the noon siesta, and cease-work being prescribed. The crippled and the aged were to work as waterboys and babysitters. Christophe insisted on hard work and on the use of the liana. He tried to introduce the plow but the Negroes preferred the hoe, largely for the reason that they could thereby work in groups. And lest insurrection develop among discontents, Christophe imported 4,000 Africans from Dahomey to constitute a royal bodyguard. His “royal Dahomets” he called them. He had sought 20,000, but only 4,000 came. Even these were sufficient to dispel any idea of revolt.\(^7\)

On February 24, 1812, he promulgated a code of laws called the Code Henry. Based on French and English laws, it comprised a general collection of Haitian laws. It was the first Haitian code. In it Christophe came out strongly in support of the institution of marriage, providing that the right of children to inherit property depended upon the legality of the marriage on which they based their claims. He also proclaimed Catholicism as the state religion and had state officials attend church services. Thus he brought the church to support the state.

Perhaps most significant of his achievements was his encouragement of education. Through correspondence with certain Englishmen he learned of the Lancastrian system. He thereupon made request that the British send a mission and install such a system on Haitian soil, for elementary

schools. Later a Professor Harvey from Cambridge went to Haiti and inspected the schools, which he describes in his *Sketches of Haiti*. Christophe also installed a high school to train further those who had completed their training in the elementary schools. This was called the Collège Royal. It offered training in Greek and Latin, mathematics, the natural sciences, history, and geography. A report on this school has been left us by Sir Home Popham, an English admiral who visited Haiti and this institution. He reported favorably on it. Christophe founded a medical school, entitled Académie de Chirurgie, for the training of pupils in medicine, pharmacy, and hygiene. It was staffed with teachers trained in Europe. And he founded an Academy of Painting, Drawing, and Music, and set up an observatory at Cap Français for study of the weather. Christophe is depicted as having been an enthusiast for the spread of education among his subjects.

The world remembers Christophe, however, not for his social, economic, or educational institutions but for a giant fortress which he built on the top of a mountain, much after the manner of a Rhineland castle. On the summit of the mountain Bonnet d'Èvèque he placed this massive structure with walls ten feet thick and a hundred feet high, capable of garrisoning 10,000 troops, with storerooms for food, cisterns for water, and powder magazines sufficient to withstand a siege of several years. Well might he have been tempted to exclaim, “Cheops, I have beaten you!” It remains today, stupendous, frightening, awe-compelling.

He built other palaces; he repaired the roads; he amassed and left a fortune, like a second Henry VII. He was a remarkable man. He might well have been embittered.

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9 Patrick Leigh Fermor, *The Traveler’s Tree: A Recent Record of a Trip through the West Indies* (New York, 1950), 320-22.
toward the French for the shabby, indeed cruel, treatment shown his son whom he had sent to France in 1802 for his education. It is doubtful, however, that Christophe knew much about it. It is worthy of observation that both Dessalines and Christophe died violent deaths, Dessalines by assassination, Christophe by suicide after he had suffered an attack of apoplexy. The political history of Haiti from its beginning has been marked by violence.

With the death of Christophe the two Negro governments in Haiti were merged into one. Pétion had died in 1818 and his government, the Republic of Haiti, had chosen as his successor the man of color, Jean Pierce Boyer, who like Pétion had been educated at a military school in France, had joined the French army and served during several campaigns, and had returned to Santo Domingo and fought with the mulattoes under André Rigaud. In 1800 Toussaint crushed Rigaud’s forces and the mulatto leaders were forced to take flight to Paris. With Leclerc’s army they returned in 1802 and fought with the French until things went badly for them, whereupon Boyer like most of the others turned on the French. On the election of Pétion as president in 1806 Boyer was made commander-in-chief of the army and thence until 1818 was chief aide to Pétion. It had been due chiefly to him that Christophe had failed to annex the Republic to his “empire.” Boyer is referred to as “a refined mulatto” and a mild ruler who pursued the relaxed, lackadaisical policies of Pétion. In 1822 he became successor to Christophe because of his military strength and in 1823 he acquired the Spanish portion of the island. This latter part

10 The boy and his aunt, a Negress about forty, were sent to Paris in the custody of a Frenchman named Lambert, with 100 louis (a louis having the value of 24 francs). Lambert reportedly appropriated the money; the aunt was placed in the unsavory Salpêtrière (asylum for magdalen women) and died there in 1804; and the boy was put to work sawing wood, despite his protests, and died in 1805, reportedly from abuse. Georges Servant, “Fernand Christophe, fils du roi d’Haiti, en France,” Revue de l’Histoire des colonies français, I (1913), 217-32.
was to remain under Haitian rule until Boyer’s death in 1843. The whole island was thus consolidated in the Republic of Haiti, but Boyer’s lax policies had unfortunate economic consequences and eventually he was forced to flee from the island. Seeing what was happening after his first few years, he attempted to adopt the stricter policies of Dessalines and Christophe but this brought opposition and bitterness. He tried to set up a police force patterned after the Dahomets of Christophe. A severe earthquake in 1842 wrought great damage to Cap Haitian (the old city of Cap Français) and several other large towns. His measures of relief were considered inadequate and a rebellion developed in January, 1843. He was compelled in March to seek safety by flight to Jamaica on a British war vessel.

A major cause of discontent and the rebellion appears to have been Boyer’s settlement of the dispute with France. This had been negotiated in 1825, on terms that the Haitians considered humiliating and exorbitant. For two decades the Haitians had feared that the French might send another expedition after the manner of Leclerc’s to restore the island to subjection and slavery. Because of this fear a large military force was maintained and a number of supposedly strong forts. Beginning in 1821 Boyer sent commissions to France to seek a settlement of the matter, with apparently little success. At length, in July, 1825, a French fleet of fourteen vessels dropped anchor at Port-au-Prince and presented a proposal from Charles X that the island pay as indemnity to the colonists who had lost their property in the upheavals of the Revolution the total of 125,000,000 francs, in five equal installments, and that Haiti should grant the French an advantage in Haitian foreign trade over all other countries. It was the first condition that gave rise to more complaint. It was for Haiti a stupendous sum. Intimidated, Boyer signed his approval and the Haitian Senate proceeded to ratify it. His subjects, more particularly
the Negroes, were furious, and the settlement had much to do with terminating mulatto rule in Haiti.\textsuperscript{11} As for Boyer, he realized that the French terms were very high but considered it almost essential to get French recognition at any price, for at that time not a single country had recognized Haiti, not even the United States or Colombia, her closest neighbors. Haiti had stood alone in the world after two decades of existence, but could she continue to exist in that plight?\textsuperscript{12}

Boyer made the mistake of relying too heavily on his own judgments and on those of a small number of trained men who had served in office under Pétion. Most of his helpers were men of color. This offended the Negroes. Moreover, younger men of the mixed-blood class were opposed to him because the doors to government service were closed to them, even though many had studied in France and were competent. Prior to 1830 they supported him, but afterward they became critical and published their criticisms in certain newspapers of the island. Discontent became more rife when after the elections of 1838 and 1842 Boyer refused to let certain deputies to the legislature take their seats because of their critical attitude toward him. In 1843 revolt broke out and Boyer was forced to flee from the island.\textsuperscript{13}

Stormy though the history of the country had been since liberation, it was destined to be increasingly more so in the years ahead. Several men succeeded Boyer as president in the next few years. The first was a mulatto named Rivière Hérard, who remained in power only a few months; in 1844

\textsuperscript{11} Davis, \textit{Black Democracy}, 114-18; Leyburn, \textit{The Haitian People}, 64-78; United Nations, \textit{Mission to Haiti. Report of the United Nations Mission of Technical Assistance to the Republic of Haiti} (Lake Success, N. Y., 1949), 26. This last source gives the figure as 150 million francs instead of 125 million, states that the money was to be raised by French loans and that this sum was reduced in 1838 when the tariff terms were dropped. The French then gave unconditional recognition to Haitian independence.

\textsuperscript{12} Davis, \textit{Black Democracy}, 115.

\textsuperscript{13} Leyburn, \textit{The Haitian People}, 217-19.
he was followed by the Negro Guerrier, who died in 1845; and he in turn was succeeded by the Negro general Pierrot, but a mulatto conspiracy drove him from office in late February, 1846. Jean Baptiste Riché, a mulatto, now came to office but died in February, 1847. During most of this period hostility between the mixed bloods and the Negroes had been latent. Finally, in 1847 a Negro military officer named Faustin Soulouque was made president, with the mulattoes supporting him. Reportedly the mulattoes preferred to have in office a Negro who was ignorant, and Soulouque qualified in this respect. The mulatto newspapers strongly supported him, but he had been in office only six or seven weeks when he was forced out. He now surprised everyone by resorting to force. He thus got back into power and remained in it by dictatorial force for eleven years. His chief supporters, it appears, were Negroes. Many mulatto families in fear emigrated to nearby islands. Their fear was well founded, for in 1848 he massacred a large number of mulatto leaders and exiled others. The highest posts in the army were filled by ignorant Negroes. He seized all power, replaced cabinet members with toadies, and ruled capriciously.

This supposedly unpretentious ruler now startled the world by setting up an empire—the Second Empire of Haiti. Soulouque took for himself the title of Emperor Faustin I. This was done in a simple ceremony in the cathedral at Port-au-Prince on August 26, 1849. The final coronation did not occur until April, 1852. It was very elaborate and no expense was spared. The crown cost the equivalent of $100,000, and other expenses were $150,000. The ceremony was held in a large tabernacle erected on the Champ de Mars capable of seating 7,000 people.

In line with this pomposity he created a Haitian nobility,

15 Davis, Black Democracy, 120.
consisting of four princes, fifty-nine dukes, and many counts, barons, and knights. He created also a Legion of Honor and an Imperial Order of St. Faustin. He introduced an elaborate court ritual, altered the constitution to suit his interests, and in 1855 invaded the Dominican Republic occupying the eastern part of the island. His army was beaten, however, and that apparently ended his Napoleonic mimicry.  

The Empire of Soulouque was brought to an end in 1859 by a rebellion led by General Geffrard, who in turn was elected president of the restored republic and who attempted to win the favor of both elements—Negro and mulatto. This met with sufficient success for him to be elected for life in 1862. For advice he leaned on the British envoy, Sir Spencer Saint-John. Geffrard was a griffe, the son of a mulatto and a Negro. He succeeded in holding power until 1867. He was an enterprising president, his greatest contribution being the introduction of a system of schools (both elementary and high schools) in the republic. He also drew up a treaty with the United States and tried, without success, to induce some prominent Negroes of the United States to migrate to Haiti.  

Geffrard remained in power until 1867, when a revolution by General Sylvain Salnave forced him to flee for refuge to Jamaica. The fruit of winning a rebellion was election to the presidency, and Salnave was now accorded that honor. A new constitution was drawn up, in which the term of presidency was limited to five years. But an abortive rebellion against him later in 1867 furnished Salnave the excuse
for revoking the constitution and for naming himself president for life. For two years the revolt ran, with great destruction of property, especially in the South where most of the cities were bombarded, plundered, and burned. Port-au-Prince itself underwent a series of fires that destroyed one part of the city after another. Homes, libraries, paintings went up in flames or were otherwise lost. The loss was great and much of it irreparable. Eventually in 1869 Salnave fled to neighboring Spanish Santo Domingo but was extradited, tried, tied to a pillar in the ruins of his former palace, and shot. This ended the desire of those who wanted to be president of Haiti for life.\textsuperscript{18}

What indeed had been the spoils desired by those making the revolutions? According to the Yale sociologist Leyburn, it was the salary of $30,000 to $40,000—an immense sum for Haiti—plus the prestige and perquisites and, indeed, the opportunity for graft. The sum paid as salary was not constant, for since 1801 until 1937, says Leyburn, there had been seventeen different constitutions for the little country, often marked by small changes.\textsuperscript{19}

The president was usually chosen by the senators and deputies sitting together in joint session, called the National Assembly. The senators had little to do save to keep an eye directed on the activities of the president and be convinced that all was proper. For this, they got the equivalent of $1,600 a year throughout their term of nine years. The deputies, elected for five years, had to be at least twenty-five years of age and were elected by "electoral colleges" composed of prominent citizens. It was an indirect electoral system in which the populace had little expression. The revolutions, too, were fomented by aspirants for office and were not explosions of irritated masses.\textsuperscript{20} Generally, accord-


\textsuperscript{19} The \textit{Haitian People}, 237-38, 242-43. This book lists the constitutions, pp. 238-41.

\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Ibid.}, 242-43.
ing to Eugène Aubin, writing about 1910, the president found his way to office not by election of the National Assembly but by having a victorious mercenary army at his heels. The mercenary soldiers were professionals from the mountains, called cacos in the North, piquets in the South, and success depended on their number and effort.  

The revolutions were numerous. The Haitian historian Magloire counted sixty-nine that occurred in Haiti from 1806 to 1879. And they did not cease then; if anything, they possibly increased. It would be a wearisome task to record the story of presidents and revolutions in Haiti from 1870 to 1915, when conditions became so chaotic that military intervention by the United States was necessary to maintain law and order and to prevent financial collapse. H. P. Davis in his excellent study entitled Black Democracy tersely summarizes the situation as follows: “Within the following period of six and a half years, seven presidents were elected and deposed. Of these seven, one was blown up in the national palace; one died, it is said, by poison; and of the other five, all of them were deposed by revolutions, one was butchered in a massacre of political prisoners, and another was torn to pieces by a mob.” (p. 141)

The last president before the intervention was named Sam. He had been in office but two months when a revolution to oust him, led by a certain Dr. Bobo, got under way. Both had caco troops, but Sam’s deserted him. As he climbed over the wall of the adjacent French legation he was shot in the leg, but he escaped his captors temporarily. The next morning rebel forces invaded the legation grounds and pulled Sam out from under a bed and shot him. His body was then cut to pieces and paraded through the streets of Port-au-Prince.  

Sam’s execution was disgraceful enough for the little

21 En Haïti, xvi, n. 1; Leyburn, The Haitian People, 226, 242-43.
22 Davis, Black Democracy, 161-63.
country but it was not all. It came just after a massacre of 167 political prisoners whom Sam had incarcerated because of their opposition. A firing squad of fifteen men went through the prison and in cold blood shot all the prisoners, some of whom were among the island's leading citizens. Whether Sam ordered the massacre is not clear, but the director of it, General Oscar Etienne, was his chief military leader, and so Sam must be saddled with the responsibility. 23

With no one at the head of the Haitian government the British and French envoys asked the Americans to land troops (from some naval vessels stationed in the harbor for the protection of American subjects) and establish order. Almost simultaneously Admiral Caperton of the American naval unit received a wireless message from the Secretary of the Navy directing him to occupy the island. Thus began American occupation, with American naval forces taking complete control of the little country and disarming the Haitians. The Haitians bitterly opposed the occupation, and many were vocal in their protests, but it mattered little. Ever since the French Revolution of 1789-1795 the Haitians, at least the mixed bloods and the Negroes, have wanted to exercise complete control in their land, no matter how chaotic the conditions.

The Americans remained in the country until 1934, with a puppet native government in immediate charge. They reorganized the financial resources of the land, gave great attention to hospitals and public health service, and increased enormously the educational institutions. Among these last were some trade schools capable of accommodating 6,000 pupils, some industrial schools for both sexes, and a normal school. Yet even in the 1930's 95 percent of the population in Haiti were illiterate. 24 The Americans gave particular attention to the establishment of agricultural and
technical schools, and within six years the number of pupils attending them increased from 50 to 11,500. The Americans also gave attention to road building and the installation of telephones and the telegraph. But the most impressive creation of the Americans was the establishment of a National Public Health Service, which after eleven years had 2,300 members, all Haitians except for a few Americans and French. 25

During the American occupation nine grants-in-aid for study in the United States or in France were given to Haitians, with the design of improving the medical teaching in Haiti. Six of the recipients went to the United States, three to France. The Haitians criticized the Americans, accusing them of wanting to scuttle their medical school, founded in 1823, of which they were proud. Later they saw that they had judged wrongly. 26

Not all Americans supported their government in its intervention. One of these was Ernest Gruening, who voiced his criticism in an article in which he called the government's vindication of its action false. 27 The government did not intervene to aid "the helpless and hapless Haitian people" or to protect the investments of foreign creditors but because of American financial interests. Americans had taken advantage since 1915 to exploit Haiti even more. The Bank of Haiti had become an adjunct of the National City Bank of New York, at a cost to Haiti of $2 million to be paid in four years; moreover, the American bank was to have charge of paying off $11 million in bonds held by foreigners, all bringing 6 percent.

The occupation ended in 1934, during the administration

26 So says the American Rayford W. Logan in an article entitled "Education in Haiti," in the Journal of Negro History, XV (Oct., 1930), 451. Logan accuses the Haitians of dragging their feet in opposition to all aspects of the American educational program in Haiti.
of Franklin D. Roosevelt. President Hoover in 1930 had sent a commission (the Forbes Commission) to Haiti to investigate the causes of a bloody riot which had taken place earlier that year. This commission reported that there was widespread resentment of American occupation and recommended our early withdrawal. But the Hoover administration was reluctant to pull out our troops and agents before the funding of debts was completed. And so the problem was left for the Democrats to handle. Roosevelt at first was too engrossed with problems arising from the Great Depression to give attention to Haiti, but in August, 1933, he made an agreement to withdraw United States military control, retaining only fiscal oversight of the country. Early in 1934 he went even further and agreed that the United States would make a "complete evacuation" of the island not later than November 1, 1934, in matters fiscal as well as others. Nevertheless, the Bank of Haiti was tied to the National City Bank of New York in such a way as to be a dependency, and New York bankers were given control over the financial policies of Haiti. The Haitians would be the last to admit it, but the U. S. intervention accompanied by measures toward betterment of health and education was the most salutary development in the little country since it had cut its cable of connection with France in the 1790's.

Since 1934 the Haitian government has avoided descending to the disgraceful condition of the years before American intervention. The terms of office served have been longer, fewer revolutions have occurred, and there has been little bloodshed. Even so, the presidents have not been without their faults. At this moment Haiti is governed by a capricious dictator, François Duvalier, a cultivated Negro physician who received his medical training at the University

28 Ibid., 677-78.
29 Ibid., 677-79.
of Michigan. He came into the presidency in 1957, on a six-year term of office, but by clever referendum in 1961 got it extended for six additional years. Reportedly he is accompanied wherever he goes by armed guards with cocked pistols. That he has bitter enemies is revealed by the assassination in April, 1963, of the driver and two guards accompanying his two children to school. His son and daughter escaped by flight, but apparently they were not the intended victims. Duvalier caught the significance of the attack and proceeded, according to report, to fire sixty of his higher ranking army officers.\textsuperscript{30} It is indeed surprising that he did not resort to massacre, for he is described as a vindictive man.

The author of an article on Duvalier in the \textit{Reader's Digest} of November, 1963, designates him as “Haiti’s Voodoo Tyrant.” Normally the cultured class in Haiti scorns voodooism, and this includes the presidents. In fact not since Soulouque—the “ignorant Soulouque”—of the mid-nineteenth century, has a president come out strongly for the voodoo rites. Duvalier’s link with voodooism developed in connection with his expulsion from Haiti in 1962 of the French-born Roman Catholic bishop Paul Robert and three priests who supported him. In fact, these brought to twelve the number of Catholic priests whom Duvalier had deported since coming into power in Haiti.\textsuperscript{31}

Catholicism has never had strong support in Haiti. Desalines made a complete break with Catholicism in 1805 and not for fifty-five years was there a real return of cordial relations. During this period the church declined not only to recognize the Haitian constitution but forbade any priests to enter Haiti. Even as late as 1941 the Yale professor of


\textsuperscript{31} The Lexington (Ky.) \textit{Leader}, Nov. 17, 1962.
sociology, James G. Leyburn, reported that there were but 205 priests in the country, and only eight of these were Haitians. There were, however, many members of religious orders—105 brothers (all members of the Brothers of the Christian Schools) and 366 sisters. Of the brothers eighty-three were French and ten were French Canadians.32

Voodooism and the Catholic church are sworn enemies, although the great masses in Haiti are reported to be members of both religions. The Haitians see nothing inconsistent in having a foot in each camp and they hope for double benefit from belonging to each. Voodooism, of course, is the animistic religion brought from Dahomey, the Congo, and other parts of West Africa by the slaves who were sold into the West Indies two or three centuries ago. On the plantations the slaves found opportunity to continue to practice its cult, and did. It is reportedly very widespread in Haiti today—far more so than in Martinique and Guadeloupe and other West Indian islands. It has attracted the attention and study of a number of writers, from Moreau de Saint-Méry of the late eighteenth century to Alfred Métraux, Melville J. Herskovits, and Patrick Leigh Fermor of today.

The most complete study of voodooism is that made by the French anthropologist Alfred Métraux, who made visits to the island over a number of years and to study it the better became a member of the cult, attending dozens of meetings. He also discussed features of the meetings and of the beliefs with priests and priestesses. He has graphically set forth his findings in a book entitled Voodoo in Haiti.33 It is scholarly and objective. Voodooism as he depicts it is a polytheism, with hundreds or even thousands of loa (gods or goddesses), each having his or her particular province of

32 The Haitian People, 119, 125-26, 128.
33 Translated into English by Hugo Charteris and published by the Oxford University Press of New York in 1959.
activity. All have to be worshiped or placated, for men are continually committing an act that offends some *loa*. And when all does not go well for a man, he must consult a priest (*hungan*), learn what *loa* is displeased and why, and be instructed on what can be done by way of recompense. For these services the *hungan* has his fee, and he reaps a nice revenue from his clients.

Among the forms of appeasement is the offering of sacrifices. Chickens, goats, calves, and other creatures may be sacrificed and a feast made of their flesh. The animals are killed in the tabernacle after a ceremony in which some of their blood is drunk, some put on the faces and bodies of the worshipers; parts of the animal are kissed or sucked, such as the nose, anus, or testicles; and the body is then cooked and eaten.

There are unscrupulous priests or priestesses who reportedly cast "black magic" to harm individuals. Some even claim to be werewolves, who suck the blood of children and bring about their death; but most priests do not resort to this. Rather they employ "white magic" and serve in the role of intermediaries between the *loa* and men. Their end is to help. They also conduct the religious services which are held at night and last for several hours, in which dances, trances, and prostrations have their part, these being interpreted as signs of union of the worshiper with the *loa*. Voodooism seems to be devoid of a system of morals. Neither has it dogma or theology. There is no orthodoxy or heresy. Rather, it is a nature worship in which some god is constantly piqued because of some courtesy due him. The gods are petty like men, and the men can draw no inspiration or strength from the gods.

Perhaps its hold on the masses is exaggerated. Miss Blanche Maurel, a scholar well informed on Haiti, thinks so. Nevertheless, voodooism has a grip on Haiti that it does not have on Martinique and Guadeloupe. I have
found it little referred to by writers on these last two islands. In them the church has been a friendly agency and not banned, as in Haiti. These two islands have kept more in touch with Europe and the civilized world.34

Not only does the Haiti of President Duvalier suffer from the blight of African voodooism, her population is one of the densest per square mile in the world, and her public health system is extremely backward. To begin with, Haiti's housing is very inadequate. A report published in 1949 by a United Nations Commission, entitled *Mission to Haiti*, states that nine-tenths of the population live in small hamlets or in rural communities, where the huts are devoid of lighting facilities, sewage, flush toilets, and often even beds. "Rarely," it says, "has a peasant family more than one bed, if any, and several people share it simultaneously; the less fortunate sleep on mats on the bare ground." "The water supply is very scarce and limited in general to that from untapped wells, cisterns, and polluted surface water." "Latrines and other toilet facilities are mostly lacking."35 Physicians are few. In 1946 the island had a total of 292, of whom 150 lived and practiced in the capital city, Port-au-Prince, and its suburb, Pétionville. Only ninety-nine physicians practiced in other parts of the country, and of these forty-four were attached to local hospitals. This left only twenty-six physicians to serve more than two and a half million persons.36

The most common diseases are malaria, tuberculosis, and the yaws, this last being a nauseous, pustulent blood disease similar to syphilis. It had previously been treated through arsenic injections, but the United Nations Commission re-

36 Ibid., 62-63.
ported that it was also being treated effectively with penicillin. Malaria, of course, came from the anopheles mosquito, of which the island had four types. Tuberculosis, like these other diseases, preventable, is the disease most prevalent in the hospitals. It is a severe killer, 20 percent of the deaths in the hospitals of the three largest cities being attributed to it. The hookworm is also very prevalent on the island. In a single community where the Rockefeller Foundation in 1925 conducted tests, it found 47 percent of the population infected with it. Intestinal worms also are found in not a few patients.\textsuperscript{37}

It is of interest that in the early 1960's a large modern hospital was erected not far from Port-au-Prince, in Haiti, by a wealthy young physician who became fascinated with what Dr. Albert Schweitzer had done at Lambaréné in the Belgian Congo. The physician, Dr. William Larimer Mellon, had visited the Schweitzer hospital in 1954 and been enamored of the great service there rendered. He and his wife at once decided to erect a comparable plant in the back country out from Port-au-Prince. It was opened in 1956, in voodoo territory, and it has operated at near capacity ever since. The Mellons have expended $3,500,000 on it. Its costs are ten times its receipts, but it is maintained by small gifts from friends in the United States and by small charges which the patients are asked to pay.\textsuperscript{38} Two million dollars were put into the hospital building, and the remaining $1,500,000 into the housing of the staff and other features. The staff of doctors and nurses is made up of men and women of various nationalities and various religious creeds. Even the voodoo medicine men come there for treatment, and they have not opposed the establishment of a hospital. The creation of such an institution is in itself

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., 62-73; see also Leyburn, The Haitian People, 272-75.

\textsuperscript{38} The Saturday Evening Post in its issue of Sept. 16, 1961, carries an article by Joe Alex Morris, entitled "Doctors vs. Witchcraft," telling the story of the Mellon hospital.
evidence of the dire medical needs of the populace. The public health conditions in Martinique and Guadeloupe though poor are somewhat less acute than those of Haiti, partly because the population is less dense, partly because of their closer ties with France.

Haiti's appalling lack of sanitation and health measures has been based in part on her enormous illiteracy—89.5 percent in 1950—and in part upon the excessive division of the land into small holdings, too minute to sustain a family settled on them.39 Densely populated, Haiti simply has not the arable land needed to sustain herself. Fully 87 percent of her population is rural—agricultural—and much of the farming is still done with the hoe. Moreover, her people are little trained for other forms of livelihood. It is estimated that 600,000 children in Haiti do not attend school, largely because there are not sufficient schools. And of those who attend schools few reach the lycées. Training in the lycées is largely classical and of little value for the rural youth. Furthermore, education in Haiti has always been hampered by a lack of textbooks.40

The government does aid financially certain private and parochial schools without taking over their management. Most of the Haitian elementary teachers are young and have had no more than eight years of elementary school training. Their average length of service is eight years. Salaries for these elementary teachers run from $40 to $100 per month, with most of them getting $40 to $60. Secondary school teachers fare better, getting from $55 to $77 per month. Many teachers are not able to live on their salaries and are obliged to find supplementary jobs. Secondary school teachers may retire after twenty-five years of service and receive

40 Dale, Education in Haiti, 10.
pensions equal to the pay they received during their last year's work.41

To supply teachers for the elementary schools and the lycées there are four normal schools, the fourth (chronologically), a Rural Normal School set up only in 1954, with monetary aid from the United States. Students attending the normal schools are subsidized by the Haitian government to the extent of $28 a month for food and lodging. Their training runs over a three-year period. As for the teachers of normal schools, a large proportion have studied abroad, either in the United States or in Europe.42

Throughout the nineteenth century and during the twentieth the chief source of Haitian culture has been France, and there Haitian youth have gone to drink from the fountains of learning. There is left no bitterness for slavery or the Leclerc expedition; these have been forgotten, and France is regarded with deep affection. Apropos of this, Professor Leyburn quotes a distinguished Haitian as saying, "It is from France that we draw our culture, our language, our literature, our attitudes of mind: why should we not love her?" Yes, the Haitians love France; they pride themselves on their French culture; and they go there for visits whenever they can.43 Yet, the more the Haitians stay in France, says Leyburn, the less they have in common with the masses back home. For in Haiti the masses do not speak or read French but Creole, a patois based largely on African speech brought by their slave ancestors to the West Indies. The elite use French, the masses Creole. And in general the elite are mixed bloods, the masses Negro; but this does not hold in all cases, for some of the Negroes use French and are educated.

The Haitians are rightly very proud of their culture. In

41 Ibid., 13, 26-29.
42 Ibid., 30-36, 40-46.
43 Ibid., 5; Leyburn, The Haitian People, 109-10.
literature, in painting, in the production of history and other fields of learning they have made some very respectable contributions which have received the approbation of French savants, painters, and writers. It is remarkable indeed that a country so small, so destitute of wealth, and so stormy in politics could have had the time and inclination for the creation of works of art and beauty. Yet they have; and there is a dichotomy between the Haiti of the elite and Haiti of the masses.

In this chapter it has been necessary to see the country as a whole and to compare it to Martinique and Guadeloupe. These latter two islands have benefited in certain respects by retaining their political connection with France. Haiti gained independence but has little known how to use it. From a comparable study of colonialism in these three old French dependencies, it appears that Martinique and Guadeloupe have been the more fortunate. They have enjoyed more peace, serenity, better living conditions, better education, and a more promising future.
THIRTEEN  RACIAL RELATIONS

By the 1600's there had developed among the French colonials of the Caribbean a feeling of white superiority in the matter of race and of opposition to marriage with the Negro. A case to illustrate the point happened in Guadeloupe in the 1680's. A white girl of a prominent family formed a liaison with a Negro household servant named Jean Roland (also written Rolland), and by him bore a child out of wedlock. According to report, she had the mulatto child strangled. When later she became pregnant by this Roland a second time, Père Fleury persuaded her to get married. This she did but she did not observe the formalities sufficiently for either the church or the law courts to recognize the marriage. It happened that Roland was of the Protestant faith, and to clear difficulties arising therefrom he abjured it on July 14, 1681. The same witnesses to the abjuration were also witnesses to the marriage. Unfortunately there were only three of them and they were persons of no prominence. The marriage was a hidden affair; it did not take place in a church, nor were the bans published. Moreover, the girl's mother, in Europe at the time, did not give her consent as required. Four witnesses were necessary both of the abjuration and of the marriage; but only three were present and all three were apostates. This marriage took place on January 24, 1684. The
girl's mother on returning from Europe, until her death, tried to break this "pretended marriage." But the judge of the locality, on January 5, 1686, closed his eyes to the objections and pronounced the marriage good and valid. Later, on May 22, 1686, the same Félicité Lespine appealed the matter to the sovereign Council of Guadeloupe, which in turned asked the opinion of the Councils of Martinique and St. Christophe. Their opinion in both instances was unfavorable and the marriage was pronounced null and void. Observing their hostility, Roland fled from the colony on August 3, 1688.

The girl, who had been eighteen or twenty in the early 1680's, lived with several men until she became engaged to a sailor named Diot who was also a tailor. She decided on a church marriage, and this time was careful to observe the ecclesiastical demands. She called on Père Astruc to publish the bans for three successive Sundays and asked him to see that she adhered to the other demands. The marriage ceremony was held at the sortie of the church on August 2, 1688. The requisite number of witnesses were present. The priest, Dumoin, who recorded these things, was of the opinion that this second marriage would be approved as legal. The report by Dumoin to the Minister of the Marine was made in 1693. Dumoin said that most of the records of the matter had been destroyed by fire in 1693 when the British captured Guadeloupe, but there were still some papers on it.¹

Here was a white girl with apparently no color prejudice whatever, who was willing and did enter into sexual relations and marriage with a free Negro. Her mother, however, had strong objections—at least to the marriage—and from the lack of interest manifest it would seem that the general public was not favorably inclined toward it. Roland's flight to another colony would support this view. It is interesting nevertheless that public animus was not aroused, as might

¹ Archives Nationales, Colonies, F3 18, ff. 269-74.
have occurred at a later period. Moreover, it may be ob-
served that Père Dumoin was careless in his use of dates.
The case was very exceptional; it is indeed the only case
that I have observed wherein a white girl in the colonies
entered freely into sexual relations or marriage with a Negro.
The only person who displayed strong objections, according
to the priest’s account, was the girl’s mother. Generalizing
upon this one case, it seems valid to observe that in the
closing years of the seventeenth century racial animus was
not greatly developed in the French Caribbean colonies.

This viewpoint is supported by certain other observations.
It was not unusual for a white man in the colonies to marry
or to form a liaison with a Negress or a mulatto and have
children by her. Moreau de Saint-Méry in his Description
of the colony of Santo Domingo reported this and took the
view that the white opposition to the Negroes and mulattoes
arose from the white wives of the colony who employed it
in self-defense. Julien Raimond took the same view. Rai-
mond was no scholar but probably adopted the idea from
tradition in the colonies. The idea, moreover, seems to fit
in with the wording of the Code Noir of 1686 where racial
interrace is discussed and in some cases forbidden.
There the economic factor of slavery rather than race prej-
dice seems to be the matter stressed. If a white man
married a slave Negress with church rites, she and any
child or children resulting from the union became free and
legitimate. If, however, a white did not marry a slave of
his own possession by whom he had a child, she and the
child were to be given in ownership to the nearest hospital
and a heavy fine imposed on the owner. In each of the
colonies there thus grew up a large colored class, some of
whose members were legitimate and free, some illegitimate

2 Description . . . de la partie française de l'île Saint-Domingue, ed.
X (1925), 323.
but recognized by their parents and allowed to share in their father's estate.

With the eighteenth century the consciousness of race was to become greatly increased, not only among the whites but also among the colored. Among the latter some pride came to develop over the status of being a quadroon or an octoroon. Raimond was an octoroon and was proud of it, Vincent Ogé a quadroon.

Moreau de Saint-Méry comments in describing the theater at Cap Français that only in 1775 were free Negresses given the right to attend the theater, and even then they were not allowed to sit beside mulattoes. A Negro mother thus was not permitted legally to sit beside her mulatto daughter. Prior to that date mulatto women had been allowed to attend, and Moreau comments that young white men might converse with them, but that this conversation was often of a coarse nature. Moreau however does not mention whether or not Negroes or mulattoes were allowed to take parts in the performances.⁴

Under the Old Regime it was only in very rare cases that a Negro or a man of color was permitted to sit at table with a white. Yet a few cases did occur. One was in the case of a remarkable Negro soldier named Vincent Ollivier, commonly known as Captain Vincent, who had the unusual distinction of being invited to the table of the governor general of Santo Domingo, the Comte d'Argout.⁵ Another interesting case has been related by the late eighteenth-century German traveler, Baron Ludwig von Closen, who in 1783 was for several weeks at Cap Français, Santo Domingo, the guest of the very wealthy official Du Comin, reportedly the owner of ten sugar and coffee plantations. Du Comin, a bachelor, had a mulatto mistress who served as his hostess. She sat

⁴ *Description*, I, 361-62.
at the table with Du Comin and Von Closen, helping at entertaining the latter, which she did in splendid fashion. Von Closen was captivated by her gracious manners. She was regarded as mistress of the house by the other servants and they obeyed her orders.6

Sometimes there were special cemeteries for Negroes. Moreau tells of one near the village of Ester in Santo Domingo where, in the 1780's, Negro slaves were buried. He does not tell us, however, where the free Negroes and mulattoes were buried, whether with the whites or not.7 Also at Cap Français, commonly called Le Cap, there was a special cemetery for Negroes—or rather for Negroes and sailors. It was created in 1736 at the time of an epidemic, when the mortality was great, and it continued to be used only until 1759, when at an assembly of the parish it was decided to close it and resume burials in the adjacent cemetery for whites. So slaves were buried in the same cemetery with whites at Le Cap both prior to 1736 and after 1759.8

The whites of the colonies, however, did hold themselves aloof in the 1700's. The Baron von Closen recorded in his journal a triviality which illustrates this. Returning to France in 1783, after his visit to Santo Domingo, he reported that a parakeet that was being taken to Europe in his mistress's cabin escaped one day and fell into the sea. A Negro belonging to the same mistress saw what happened and jumped into the sea, rescued the little bird, and climbed back aboard the vessel with it. The lady was overjoyed to have the little bird restored and permitted the Negro to kiss her hand. She promised him, moreover, an annual pension of 100 livres a year. Von Closen remarked that "many sailors would have liked to have been able to do as much at this price."9

One of the rankest forms of class distinction in the colonies in the late seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth, at least until the Revolution and indeed even later, was the closure of the professions and political and military offices to mulattoes and Negroes, even though they might be free or wealthy. This prohibition was set forth in the Code Noir, as already observed. The English historian Bryan Edwards, in his *Historical Survey of the Island of Saint Domingo*, calls attention to it. He comments that none of the learned professions—the priesthood, the bar, medicine, surgery, pharmacy, or teaching—was open to the mulatto. These professions were the exclusive domain of the whites. Neither might the mulatto take the surname of the white from whom he was descended. The passage of time and the increase of white blood in the veins offered no hope of improvement of condition. As long as there was the slightest trace of African blood in his veins, one was subject to the color ban. “The taint in the blood was incurable,” said Edwards, “and spread to the latest posterity.”

There were a few rare cases of Europeans’ being banished from the colonies because of a “mésalliance de couleur.” One in particular has come to my attention. It concerned a colonist in Martinique by the name of Rabier. The Ministry of the Marine had written asking the intendant of Santo Domingo if there lived in the colony a colonist named Rabier who had a son about grown. It seems that the young fellow had either fought a duel or had issued a challenge to one in France and that the government was searching to find if he had any property which might be confiscated. The intendant wrote back that there were two men of that name in the colony, brothers from Caen, and that back in 1780 there was a third who, because of a “mésalliance de couleur,” had left the colony that year and gone to Marseille. But he could hardly have a son old enough by this time.

10(London, 1801), 33-34.
(1789) to engage in a duel. The intendant therefore wrote back saying that he could find no information of interest.\textsuperscript{11} Conditions had come to an intolerable state when a "mésalliance de couleur" could lead to forced migration.

In the early part of the century another interesting case of the same type had occurred, in Santo Domingo, wherein the husband had married and freed a Negro slave belonging to another man. The husband was a Sicilian named Baptiste Amat and was naturalized only after coming to the colony. He married a Negress belonging to a Sieur Bureau, a colonist in the quarter of Limonade. Bureau gave his consent to the marriage, and because of the marriage the Negress became free. Later, in 1732, Amat died without leaving any children by the Negress or any other heirs than the Negress. He had not taken the pains to register his naturalization papers at the record office and yet he had left an estate reckoned in 1742 to be worth more than a million livres. It consisted of three farms, one a sugar plantation near Limonade worth more than 700,000 livres, a second in indigo near Jacquery worth more than 200,000, and a third in the White Lands\textquoteleft valued at more than 100,000 livres. They had increased enormously since his purchase of them, mostly since his death. His widow the Negress was apparently his sole heir, yet his marriage contract with her had not been found and it would be necessary to read its terms. Had he not been naturalized, Amat would have died a foreigner and his property would have fallen by the droit d'aubaine into the hands of the king. As it was, the widow had married again—to another white—Gascard du Mesny. She had borne several children, all bastards, their father or fathers being unknown. They had been born, in fact, before her first marriage. The author of the letter, the paymaster (ordonnateur) Le Normant, asked the minister for directions, saying

\textsuperscript{11} Foullon d'Ecotier to Le Comte de la Luzerne, Nov. 1, 1789, Archives Nationales, Colonies, C\textsuperscript{8A} 89.
that the problem was very tangled and the property very valuable. One of the interesting features of this story is the apparent ease this Negress, though at the first a slave, had in finding white husbands. The observation may be made on this case that even among slaves God smiles on some.

The Guadeloupean historian, Maurice Satineau, attributes to government policy the hostility toward interracial marriage that developed in the eighteenth century. It was recommended by the colonial officials, who took the view that it led to affranchisements and affranchisements created trouble in the colonies. Throughout the eighteenth century, he says, the administrators of the French West Indies, and those of Guadeloupe in particular, opposed the affranchisement of slaves lest it lead to the abolition of slavery. From the mid-eighteenth century until 1848, in fact, he observes that interracial marriage was so opposed that the suggestion of mixed blood was about the grossest insult that could be brought against a person of the white race. That there was much affranchisement in the 1600's and early 1700's seems to have been a fact. Moreover, that the government in France after about 1740 took an attitude of increasing opposition to affranchisement—to an unreasonable extent—is also a fact. But did government policy on marriage create racial prejudice? Not very likely. We must search for other factors which played a part.

The French Revolution brought a great accentuation of color prejudice, hatred, and resentment, shown then as never before by the men of color and the Negroes. The matter of color tended to become the chief issue at stake in the colonies. Each of the three classes—whites, coloreds, and Negroes—was out in selfish fashion to get and keep for

12 Le Normant to the minister, May 24, 1742, ibid., C9A 60.
itself all the benefits that it could and was hostile toward the other two classes. The whites might have retained their power and prestige had they been willing to ally themselves with the men of color, but they would have been compelled to compromise and yield some of their social and economic privileges, granting equality. This they refused to do. The men of color were equally adamant. Only in 1791 did the men of color despair of success and join in alliance with the Negroes. This alliance was always shaky and in danger of falling apart, for the men of color at heart despised the Negroes and wanted to have as little to do with them as possible. Eventually under Toussaint and André Rigaud, in 1799, the alliance did collapse and the two factions engaged in open hostilities. After a few months Rigaud and the mulattoes were decisively defeated, and the leaders of their party fled for refuge to France. The Negroes had won. The larger number of whites had died or fled from the island, and a large portion of the mulattoes had disappeared also. Those that remained had lost all power and influence.

This contest between the races had been accompanied by burnings, pillage, and incredible cruelty. It is difficult to know how many of these reports of barbarism really took place. Each faction groaned with narration of indignities that had been perpetrated on it. Bryan Edwards, the English historian from Jamaica, reported some that were perpetrated on the whites, with whom he sympathized. He reported, for instance, that a police officer (white) was nailed to a gate on his plantation and his limbs chopped off with an axe, one by one. A carpenter was sawn asunder. A colonist named Cardineau was stabbed to death by his two natural sons, both mulattoes, although he had been very kind toward them. White children were murdered, young women were violated and then generally killed, and some were blinded. He reported that a white named Séjourné was killed in his wife's presence; then she was ripped open and her unborn
child thrown to the hogs. The husband’s head was then sewn up in his wife’s body.¹⁴ Stories like some of these are so fiendish and fantastic in character as to be questioned. Other atrocities told of a white child impaled on a stick and carried as a standard by the Negroes,¹⁵ and of the mulatto leader, Colonel Candi, who gouged out the eyes of his white prisoners.¹⁶ These stories appertained to atrocities allegedly perpetrated on the whites.

There were also reports of extraordinary kindness shown the whites by former slaves who were motivated by goodness. Thus, a young white just returned from France to Santo Domingo during the Revolution reported in his journal that his family was saved from the burning and slaughter of 1793 by a faithful former slave. Another ex-slave nursed him and helped him to escape from the town of Fort Dauphin to the United States in 1794.¹⁷ Edwards told of yet another faithful slave who saved the lives of his owners.¹⁸ They spent nineteen nights in the woods.

The whites were by no means without fault. To the last they held to their class superiority and aloofness. Satineau reports that throughout the eighteenth century they had stubbornly opposed allowing mulattoes and Negroes to take the names of whites. Not even mulattoes were entitled to take the name of their father if he was white. The matter was not only debated in the colonies, it was referred to Paris for decision. The Superior Council of Guadeloupe by an arrêt of November 15, 1763, forbade the appropriation of the names of natural fathers or of present or former slave-owners. This was to protect the whites against the charge

¹⁴ Historical Survey, pp. 99-100, 118.
¹⁵ Blanche Maurel, Le vent du large; ou, le destin tourmenté de Jean-Baptiste Gérard, colon de Saint-Domingue (Bruxelles, 1952), 228.
¹⁷ A Creole of Saint Domingue, My Odyssey, trans. Althéa de Puech Parham (Baton Rouge, La., 1959), 96-97, 137.
¹⁸ Historical Survey, 100-1.
of having mixed blood in their veins. However, it granted the right to those of mixed blood by legitimate marriage if their fathers were white. Here in the United States the slaves on becoming free were allowed to assume the surname of their master and this was commonly done. No unfortunate consequences followed.

It will be recalled that the decree of May 15, 1791, by the National Assembly of France was accepted, under pressure, in the colonies. Theoretically that represented a great concession to the men of color from the whites, but it lacked sincerity and brought no real rapprochement between the two parties. The same may be said concerning the Emancipation Act of February 4, 1794. The whites and mulattoes were forced to recognize it but it did not have their sincere approval. Of this the turmoil that followed, political and military, was indicative.

For a generation after the Revolution there was relative quietude in Martinique and Guadeloupe. Napoleon by a decree of May 20, 1802, restored slavery in the colonies and it was enforced without great difficulty. In the years after 1802 both colonies were conquered by the British, Martinique in late February, 1803, Guadeloupe February 6, 1810, and they remained under British control until the end of the war in 1814. By the Treaty of Vienna both colonies were returned to France, and France permitted the continuance of slavery until 1848. Until 1820 no disturbances occurred in regard to slavery.

Because a number of mulattoes, chiefly from Martinique, wrote polemical brochures attacking the institution of slavery, there developed in the two colonies a steadily mounting opposition to slavery during the twenties, thirties, and forties.

19 Satineau, Histoire de la Guadeloupe, 351-53.
20 Henri Bangou, La Guadeloupe 1492-1848, ou histoire de la colonisation de l’île liée à l’esclavage noir de ses débuts à sa disparition (Aurillac, 1962), 289.
21 Ibid., 294.
The colonies were on the verge of revolution when the Revolution of 1848 broke out in France and instant action was taken to deal with it—by a second and final emancipation. During the twenty-five or thirty years prior to 1848, racial relations in the colonies had been anything but good. In 1848 they were in a position analogous to that of 1790. One may see the discontent in the pages of Bissette's *Revue des Colonies*. One may detect it also in the history of education for that period in the two colonies. The schools were almost entirely for the whites, the others for the mulattoes. The Negroes were passed over entirely. To the credit of the colonial officials, and especially to the Ministers of the Marine in Paris, it can be said that they led the way in making education available to the mixed bloods and the Negroes. It was a policy that they pursued throughout the century after about 1830.

At the time of emancipation in April, 1848, the suffrage was granted to all male citizens not only in France but also in the colonies, and it has continued unto the present. In 1946 suffrage was given to all women as well. This carried with it the assumption of equality before the law. Theoretically since 1848 color has had no significance. In actuality, however, it has been otherwise. From time to time there have been outbursts of indignation on the part of the colored and Negro classes. In 1870, for example, there was an outburst in Martinique, and a number of plantation homes and crops were burned as a result of an altercation between a white and a mulatto—Augier de Maintenon and Lubin. Large numbers of persons became involved, were imprisoned, tried, and convicted, some to life servitude, others to the chain gang for a period, and yet others to fines. And for a long time thereafter the colony made payments to the owners of the pillaged and burned plantations.\footnote{Césaire Philemon, *Galeries Martiniquaises: population, moeurs, activités, diverses et paysages de la Martinique* (Fort-de-France, [1931]), 119-21.}
Racial clashes continued throughout the century in Martinique. One occurred in Saint-Pierre in the Affair Loto; another, shortly later, in the Affair Lainé. This latter episode was followed by a number of pistol duels that ended, sometimes in wounds, sometimes in death, all developing from racial provocation.

The twentieth century has not witnessed major clashes like these. Racial relations have been marked by more sobriety and quietness. Occasionally the remark is made that racial animus no longer exists in the Caribbean. Expression to this effect may be found in a book by Eric Williams, an authority on the British Caribbean, and yet a page or two farther on he recognizes that color distinctions do still prevail and that sharp racial differences still persist. Restaurants, theaters, churches, schools, and cabs serve both white and black, and one never hears the word "Negro," which is considered a term of contempt, he remarks. He recognizes, however, that a white skin is something dearly to be sought, and that to "whiten" the family is an important factor in marriage. He recognizes that color distinctions do prevail on the islands and attributes them bitterly to the heritage and to the "high market value of a white skin." He comments that clubs have been known to accept mothers and daughters with fair skin and to reject the father with a dark skin.

Eugène Revert, a professor of the Faculty of Letters of the University of Bordeaux, cited earlier, observes on the subject of color prejudice that some small variation may be found from island to island. It is his observation that prejudice is strong on Martinique but faint in Guadeloupe. In Haiti, as in Martinique, he finds it strong. That the Negroes have all the political power, he thinks perhaps explains this.

23 Ibid., 122-24.
Michel Leiris, another French authority on the Caribbean, has some very sane observations on the racial relations in the French islands. He states that sharp distinctions are not always seen by those who visit the islands for the first time. None may appear to exist but they do. It is more in private relationships that segregation is the strongest. Even in this atmosphere some interracial marriages take place, but usually the young couples are compelled to go elsewhere to live, as the white relatives and friends rarely forgive one of their class who breaks over. It is true that white and mulatto may stop one another on the street and chat but it is erroneous to conclude that no bars exist between them.\textsuperscript{26}

In business, politics, and cultural matters there is often cooperation. Aimé Césaire, he observes, was elected deputy mayor of Fort-de-France by whites as well as by colored and Negro elements.

The men of color consider themselves superior to the Negroes and because of greater wealth and education have established a higher level of culture, says Leiris. The Negroes in turn consider themselves superior to the "coolies" or East Indians who have come to the islands more recently, although these last have demonstrated themselves to be good gardeners and brilliant students. The Negroes pass on to the Asiatics the derogations previously made of them by the whites: that they are lazy, addicted to drink, quick tempered, given to poisoning, are sensual (especially the women), lacking in virility (charged of the men), and afflicted with venereal disease.

As for the feeling of superiority among the whites, he charges that in Guadeloupe some of them abstain from going on the ballroom floor when colored couples are dancing.

Early in the century a prominent white citizen of Martinique created a tempest in a teapot by shaking hands in

\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Contacts de civilisations en Martinique et en Guadeloupe} (Paris, 1955), 117-59.
public with the mulatto politician, Lémery. For this action he was severely criticized by the other whites.\footnote{Elections législatives des 6 et 20 mai 1906. L’éviction des blancs à la Martinique M. Knight et M. Sévère sous la République (Paris, 1906), 15.} Even to the present day there are some whites who consider it humiliating to shake hands with a Negro or a mulatto.

The English traveler, Patrick Leigh Fermor, relates an episode which occurred in Guadeloupe in the 1940’s which revealed color prejudice among the Negroes. A Negro was ejected from a bar by the white owner on the grounds that he was drunk. The Negro charged that he had been evicted because he was black and returned to the shop with some friends. They took their revenge by cutting the white to pieces with cutlasses. Fermor calls it a Southern lynching in reverse.\footnote{The Traveler’s Tree: A Recent Record of a Trip through the West Indies (New York, 1950), 23.}

Many instances can be cited to show the continued existence of colored prejudice in the Caribbean. Conditions are much the same in this particular for all the Caribbean islands—Haiti, the British islands, and the former French colonies. The whites, still enjoying an advantage from the past, constitute the aristocracy; the men of color, who fill most of the professional roles and may be termed the educated class, fill the intermediate caste; the Negroes, still the farmers and city workers, constitute the laboring class. Neither the mulattoes nor the Negroes are satisfied with their rating: each wishes to improve it. The best way to do this, they think, is to “whiten themselves” by marriage to persons lighter in color than they themselves are. They also consider that education is a ladder to improvement and are seeking higher levels of education for themselves. And in late years a few have been sniffing at the Communist bottle with the idea that it can bring the “Open Sesame” to them, whereby all things will come easily.
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