

**COMPULSORY MANUMISSION,
OR AN EXAMINATION OF
THE ACTUAL STATE OF
THE WEST INDIA QUESTION**

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Compulsory Manumission, Or an Examination of the Actual State of the West India Question
by Alexander MacDonnell

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ALEXANDER MACDONNELL

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BY
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ADVERTISEMENT.

It is fearful odds against a writer, when, at each stage of his task, he is liable to encounter prejudice as an upholder of a condition of society so repugnant to the feelings of Englishmen as that of slavery.

Greatly must those odds be increased, if a disposition be shown by Government, hitherto believed impartial, to array the weight of its authority against him.

But it is hoped that prejudice will not preclude inquiry. In the following pages it will be found, that in setting forth the actual state of the West India Question, the real and permanent welfare of the slaves occupies a conspicuous place.

In regard to the display of power, let us conclude, that when a measure can be demonstrated as positively bad, such disapprobation will be

manifested by the independent and disinterested members of the legislature, as must exercise a salutary control over the counsels of ministers.

Under this impression, the following pages are respectfully submitted to the consideration of the members of both Houses of Parliament.

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COMPULSORY MANUMISSION.

CHAPTER I.

WEST INDIA PARTY DISINGENUOUSLY TREATED.

THE West India Question is gradually narrowing to a point. There seems now to be little difference of opinion in regard to all safe and practicable measures tending to ameliorate the condition of the slaves, though the time and manner of their adoption may be dependent upon local considerations.

The question of emancipation, or that measure commonly designated Compulsory Manumission, alone remains at issue. The paramount importance of this clause, and the alarm felt in every West India colony at the threat of government to enforce its adoption, has caused the proceedings of the colonial department to be closely scrutinized, and it has in a variety of publications been charged with precipitation.

A pamphlet has lately appeared in vindication, under the title of "Remarks on an Address to the Members of the New Parliament, on the Pro-