

Anglican Missionaries In the British Caribbean, Before Abolition



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Introduction

What led me to endeavour on this work was a result of recurring themes that caught my attention during previous projects that I had undertaken. I saw that the issue of amelioration appeared in debates regarding to the plantations of the British Caribbean. These debates were concerned with how the bettering of conditions on the plantations led to the task of Christianization of enslaved people being made easier. The primary sources, as well as the wider historiography, explained how the lack of an official church structure meant that the organisational capabilities of the Anglican Church's missionary effort was in tatters. In addition to this, there was discussion surrounding the pressure which came from Britain in regards to pressuring Anglican agents to improve the Christianization effort of enslaved people. With all this in mind, I thought it prudent to see that if these factors that were prevalent in certain localities, were relevant to the Anglican Church's missionary work in the British Caribbean as a whole. Furthermore, I want to explore which of these factors – by going off the primary and secondary sources at hand – had the greater influence (if at all) on the Anglican Church's missionary effort in the British Caribbean. That is not to say that these factors were necessarily of vital importance to the Anglican Church's missionary effort but that is the point of this thesis, to explore the extent and see how these factors interacted and influenced one another. This will hopefully create a clearer picture of how the Anglican Church's missionary effort in the British Caribbean transpired throughout the 18th century and early 19th century. This thesis will also primarily focus on the periods before and after 1823, as 1823 was when Anglican efforts to Christianize enslaved people in the British Caribbean truly began in earnest, after many false starts.

Abbreviations and meanings

Abbreviations:

- **SERINS:** Society for the Education and Religious Instructions of Negro Slaves
- **SPCK:** Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge
- **SPG:** Society for Propagating the Gospel
- **LMS:** London Missionary Society
- **HOC:** House of Commons

Meanings:

- **Amelioration:** The act of making something better or improvement. In the context of this thesis this is in relation to improving the conditions on the plantations and generally bettering the lot of enslaved people.
- **Christianization:** This is in relation to the Anglican Church's missionary effort and what this effort hoped to achieve. The aim was to have a Christianized enslaved population in the British Caribbean that abandoned their previous pagan/traditional African beliefs and instead followed and identified with the teachings of the Anglican Church.
- **Sabbath:** Religious Observance on a Sunday in the Christian tradition.
- **Dissenting/Nonconforming Sects:** These were the Christian protestant denominations that did not follow the teachings of the Anglican Church. As such they were separate groups in their own right and were as a result outside the Established Church structure. These included the Baptists, Congregationalists, Quakers, Moravians etc.
- **Established Church:** The Anglican Church
- **Enslaved People:** Primarily referring to the enslaved Africans/individuals of African descent in the British Caribbean

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Literature Review

Works on the Missionary Efforts of the Anglican Church and its relationship with the Plantocracy

In the first half of the 20th century with Herbert Bindley's *Annals of Codrington College*, Barbados, 1710-1910 (1911) and *Bondsmen and Bishops* by Harry J. Bennett (1958). These two secondary works are specifically dedicated to looking at the Anglican Church's missionary effort at the Codrington plantations and did not pay attention to its wider missionary effort in the British Caribbean. This is understandable since the estates were the focal point of the SPG's/Anglican Church's efforts but is so in other aspects. Herbert Bindley for example was the past director at Codrington College, the school built on the plantations to instruct future missionaries and instruct slaves alike, so it is of no surprise that he would be more focused on Codrington. *Bondsmen and Bishops* on the other hand is a more comprehensive piece of work and draws upon wider context and external factors that affected the Church's work on the plantations. Ultimately The early academic focus on Codrington plantations can be understood in the sense that work in this field was in its embryonic stages and the focus on Codrington plantations would act as a sort of foundation to then be expanded upon, and a necessary stepping stone to explore the Anglican Church's wider missionary efforts.

James Latimer's *The Foundations of Religious Instruction in the British West Indies* (1965) is a broadening of the focus on the Anglican Church's missionary efforts. Latimer pointed out that a large part of why missionary activities failed to bear fruit amongst the slaves of the British Caribbean is because the will was not there. He explains that the vast majority of the time, the Church largely closed its doors to slaves because the economic value of the slaves labour took priority in the planter society of the British Caribbean and that missionizing slaves was at best an afterthought.¹ This is where we are introduced to the relationship between the missionaries and the plantocracy, with Latimer also mentioning that missionaries did not have the freedom to instruct slaves

¹ James Latimer, 'The Foundations of Religious Education in the British West Indies', *The Journal for Negro Education*, 34 (1965), P.436

without the express blessing of local planters.² This varied depending on the Anglican missionary group one is referring to, whether it's the SPG who were funded centrally in England or the Anglican Church's auxiliaries like SERINS who relied on local support. However, Latimer largely introduces these tensions between the Church and planter society and how the opposing interests of both made the efforts of the former testing or even impossible.

Because of this relationship Latimer explains that the missionaries affiliated with the Anglican Church had to preach a much more conservative brand of Christianity, that did not preach egalitarianism and rather emphasized subordination, as to not offend the sensibilities of the plantocracy.³ This also introduces to the debate the dissenting sects; as groups like the Baptists, Moravians, Quakers, Congregationalists, Methodists etc, used this vacuum to spread their own form of radical Christianity. In effect, creating this form of triangular rivalry/tension between the two groups, with the plantocracy suspicious and resistant to the Anglican Church but almost universally hateful and mistrusting of the dissenting sects, the Anglican Church frustrated at the obstinance of the plantocracy and incensed at the competition from the dissenting sects and the dissenting sects friends being few and far between.

Emilia Viotti Da Costa in her work *Crowns of Glory, Tears of Blood: The Demerara Slave Rebellion of 1823* discusses many of the themes Latimer discusses. But where Latimer talks predominantly about the Anglican Church, Da Costa focuses on the LMS and its activities in Demerara. Da Costa touches on the fact that missionaries had to have a good working relationship with the local plantocracy, but uses the LMS as an example of how this was turned on its head. Da Costa discusses how the LMS utilised public opinion and parliament from back in Britain to exert pressure on the colonists of Demerara to allow the LMS to carry on its activities, even the LMS was distrusted by the colonists as they thought them a threat to their power.⁴ An ability that many other missionary groups did not have, though Da Costa does mention that even Nonconformist

² Ibid.

³ Ibid. P.437

⁴ Emilia Viotti Da Costa, *Crowns of Glory, Tears of Blood: The Demerara Slave Rebellion of 1823*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), P.90

missionaries did enjoy moderate protection, as the British government was willing to tolerate their activities in the spirit of the Toleration Act.⁵

In *Come Shouting to Zion* (1998) we see demonstrated another evolution on the previous approach to how the literature is explored, in regards to the Anglican Church's missionary efforts and planter relations. Written by Sylvia R. Frey and Betty Wood, this work looked at the missionary efforts in the British Caribbean and expanded the conversation, mainly by explaining that whilst the Anglican Church had a near monopoly on missionary activity they contributed a modest role in the Christianization process.⁶ In doing so, they acknowledged the contributions and existence of other sects of Protestantism (I.e., Methodist and Baptists) but they also acknowledged the agency of enslaved people and how they viewed the missionary efforts in relation to their own experiences. Indeed, the two make the general point that enslaved people had little interest in the Anglican church's efforts, as they were seen as heavily intertwined with the planter class and that the slaves saw the Anglican Church's spiritual authority being used in an attempt to bolster the secular authority of their oppressors.⁷ In this respect, they mirror Latimer's own views; in regards to the Anglican Church preaching a much more conservative interpretation of Christianity, in order to appease the planters.

They further explore this relationship between planters and Anglican missionaries, as the latter relied heavily on the former to have any success in their missionary efforts, even going as far to state that Anglican missionaries would not overstep their mark in fear of upsetting their patrons.⁸ This is in stark contrast to the dissenting sects (again such as the Baptists) who were outside the official power structure of the planter society and preached a much more egalitarian message. This in turn ensured a far greater appeal amongst the slaves who were more inclined to put their own interpretation on the protestant religion (much easier with the dissenting sects) and mix it with their traditional African beliefs which they carried with him into the British Caribbean. Despite attempts colonial authorities to prevent this, which ultimately proved unsuccessful.⁹

⁵ Ibid. P.12

⁶ Sylvia R. Frey and Betty Wood, *Come Shouting to Zion*, (North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), P.63

⁷ Ibid. P.182

⁸ Ibid. P.75

⁹ Ibid. P.182

In the form of Christer Petley's work *Slave Holders in Jamaica* (2009) these themes would be continually explored. His overarching theme centres around discussion of the Anglican Church's missionary effort in Jamaica and how its efforts interacted with the wider society of the Island. He does this whilst also going into even greater detail about the dissenting sects (such as the Methodists, Baptists and Wesleyans) and how whilst the white British Caribbean society had to contend with the Church of England: the reaction to the Nonconforming sects was much more extreme, even spilling over into violence.¹⁰ He examines this and demonstrates that these tensions arose due to the fact that the missionizing efforts of the dissenting sects threatened the power structure of the slaveholding society in Jamaica. Especially since the dissenters were particularly acute agitators in relaying back information back to Britain on the conditions of slavery in the British Caribbean.¹¹

Petley in addition argued what Frey and Wood argued, in that the Anglican Church was seen as being in bed with the interests of the planter class. This feeling was not unfounded since certain Anglican officials such as Belbius Porteus sought to increase missionary efforts in the British Caribbean as a means of upholding the slave holding regime. Petley does however go on to say that Slaves did use Christianity as a mode of political protest, particularly in embracing the dissenting sects (especially the Baptists) as the social hierarchies of these sects focused on the chapel, rather than for the sake of economic production.¹² Carrying on with the theme that enslaved people were much more interested with the more egalitarian missionary efforts of the dissenting sects, than they were with the established Anglican church. Petley does however go on to say that Slaves did use Christianity as a mode of political protest, particularly in embracing the dissenting sects (especially the Baptists) as the social hierarchies of these sects focused on the chapel, rather than for the sake of economic production.¹³ Carrying on with the theme that enslaved people were much more interested with the more egalitarian missionary efforts of the dissenting sects, than they were with the established Anglican Church.

¹⁰ Christer Petley, *Slave Holders in Jamaica*, (Oxford: Routledge, 2009), P.94

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid. PP.80-81

¹³ Ibid.

In *Mastering Christianity* (2011) we see the literature more or less revert back to the earlier roots. Written by Travis Glasson, Much of what *Mastering Christianity* has to say on the subject of missionizing is in regards to the SPG owned and ran Codrington Plantations in Barbados. Much like it was the case with *Bondsmen and Bishops* and *Annals of Codrington*. As the SPG leadership was filled with Anglican officials, including the Archbishop of Canterbury himself, this was the only plantation either directly or indirectly owned and managed by the Anglican Church. Whilst it doesn't represent the whole of the aforementioned literature at large, *Mastering Christianity* does not make many, Whilst it doesn't represent the whole of the aforementioned literature at large, *Mastering Christianity* does not make many, if at all any points that hasn't been discussed previously. It does have a methodical approach as seen with the aforementioned works, although not to the same degree. Even so, it doesn't break any new ground; whether it be on discussion surrounding Codrington, slaves reluctance to accept the Anglican Church's missionary effort and so forth.

Literature on structural and organisational debates and the plantocracy

Slavery and Christianity in the British West Indies (1950) by Robert Worthington Smith sets the scene for the debate surrounding the plantocracy and the structure and organisation of the Colonial Church. Firstly, he highlights how white planter resistance to the Christianization effort in the British West Indies had a massive effect. Missionaries had to rely on the good will of their planter patrons to allow them access to the slaves in the first place and where there was not this good will, efforts were made impossible. This situation, Smith explains, was made all the more difficult due to the competition between the Anglican Church and the dissenting sects; i.e. the Moravians and Baptists, due to the more egalitarian messages of these sects.¹⁴ Along with the Anglican Church's ties to the British plantocracy, the slaves of the British Caribbean were much more reluctant to accept Anglicanism.

¹⁴ Robert Worthington Smith, 'Slavery and Christianity in the British West Indies', Church History, 19 (1950), P.174

Smith Makes the point that the Anglican Church was under resourced in the British Caribbean, having only a few missionaries and places of worship to administer hundreds of thousands of slaves.¹⁵ Meaning that their reach was for the vast majority of the time very limited and would only change in the 1820s when the Anglican church created bishoprics in the British Caribbean, one for Jamaica and the Bahamas and one for Barbados and the Leeward Islands. This latter development meant that the Anglican Church now had the capacity and organisational capabilities to make a genuine attempt at Christianization and facilitated the auxiliary Anglican societies to take more interest in missionizing enslaved people (I.e. SERINS).

Michael Craton in *Christianity and Slavery in the British West Indies, 1750-1865* (1978) has, what can be interpreted, as a more Marxist perspective to the debate. Like with Worthing Smith, he draws the conclusion that the Anglican Church had become interwoven with the plantocracy of the British Caribbean, but goes one step further to state that the slave society of the British West Indies was merely a more extreme version of British society.¹⁶ What Craton infers by this is the rigid class structure of Britain between the lower classes and the aristocracy, (the Church's missionary efforts largely took place before or in the infancy of the industrial revolution, so the Bourgeoisie middle class doesn't really factor in here) which transferred into an even more rigid version with the enslaved people replacing the white lower classes and the planters replacing the aristocracy. With this extreme society also having the sugar economy as an added economic incentive, it meant that the planter societies of the British Caribbean had a much lower propensity for change and less of an interest in the missionizing efforts of the Anglican, Dissenting Sects etc. This latter point indicates that it wasn't merely the structural deficiencies of the Anglican church that led to their underwhelming missionary efforts but the nature of the planter society of the British Caribbean itself.

Nicholas M. Beasley in his book *Christian Ritual and the Creation of British Slave Societies, 1650-1780* (2009) goes on to agree with Michael Craton's analysis when he states that white planter resistance was the reason why such missionaries were at the mercy of the plantocracy and this was the way it was because of how British

¹⁵ Ibid. P.172

¹⁶ Michael Craton, '*Christianity and Slavery in the British West Indies 1750 to 1865*', *Historical Reflections*, 5 (1978), P.142

Caribbean society was structured, which meant that genuine missionizing was nearly impossible from the start. Beasley argues that whilst the influence of the Anglican church would grow over the years, the fundamental cultural structure of white British Caribbean society of race and slavery made these societies hostile to any spiritual concerns.¹⁷ Christianity was only selectively augmented into the West Indies when it suited British white settler/planter society and increased their power. However, since Christianity was often seen as a destabilising force, this did not often happen even when it came to the Anglican church that was far more conservative than the Dissenting Sects.

The Oxford History of Anglicanism (2017) by Peter W. Williams gives a very general history of the Anglican Church and Volume III is the one of interest here. It gives a very basic history, giving mention to the SPG and how the Colonial Church operated. Its key contribution to the debate is how it discusses the structural changes in the Colonial Church and how that assisted in the Christianization effort in the British West Indies. It gives mention to the creation of Bishoprics in Jamaica and Barbados and the Leeward Islands/greater COFE centralisation of control in the West Indies as having a positive effect on the Christianization effort in the British Caribbean.¹⁸ Which fixed the aforementioned problems highlighted earlier in this section but also gave the Anglican Church a sense of direction in its endeavours. It does not go into any great detail however; it is quite a broad source, it's not that ground-breaking, nor does it contribute much to the evolution of how the literature progresses; but it is worth noting none the less. In the very least, it demonstrates some of the more consistent themes that are highlighted throughout the historiography.

The final source by Katharine Gerbner titled *Christian Slavery* (2018) makes one unique contribution to the previous debates that were discussed with Craton and Beasley, concerning British Caribbean society being structured in such a way as to make missionizing very difficult. She states that in these societies where Protestantism was seen as a white endeavour and the idea of having black Christians in a racially stratified society where white planters/settlers were at the top, was not only out of their comprehension but also was seen

¹⁷ Nicholas M. Beasley, *Christian Ritual and the Creation of British Slave Societies, 1650-1780*, (Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2009), P.5

¹⁸ Peter W. Williams, *The Oxford History of Anglicanism Volume III*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), P.247

as potentially subversive.¹⁹ As enslaved people being Christians would infer a level of equality between whites and blacks, meaning that the entire system could be undermined if these ideas became widespread.

Literature on Amelioration

'*Slavery, Amelioration, and Sunday Markets in Antigua, 1823-1831*' by David Barry Gaspar holds unique significance because Gaspar highlights that Christianization and the missionaries view of amelioration did not always coincide with the slaves own interests. It goes at length to discuss how the abolition of Sunday Markets (which allowed slaves to sell their goods for Sunday trading) was done so that slaves could observe the Sabbath, but this in turn enraged the slave population of Antigua and led to revolts in 1831.²⁰ This is highly important because it recognises the agency of enslaved people (much like *Come Shouting to Zion* achieved in the missionary section) and highlighting they were not just docile individuals simply accepting whatever changes their masters or missionaries had in store for them. In the general historiography you see slave resistance to Christianization efforts, particularly with the Established Church and this is well documented. But an example like this where the priorities of the slaves and that of the missionaries are totally mismatched and are a source of tension is seldom discussed.

Mary Turner in her book *Slaves and Missionaries* (1982) points out that when the British government endeavoured on their parliamentary amelioration drive, they put a great emphasis on creating the conditions from which missionary work could be conducted successfully.²¹ She caveats this by saying that the parliamentary amelioration programme did not have specific and/or consistent method for emancipation, but did (broadly speaking) aim to prepare slaves for civil rights and the privileges of being free citizens.²² In addition to this, she points out that whilst there was resistance to this round of parliamentary amelioration (particularly in

¹⁹ Katharine Gerbner, *Christian Slavery*, (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), P.80

²⁰ David Barry Gaspar, '*Slavery, Amelioration, and Sunday Markets in Antigua, 1823-1831*', *Slavery and Abolition*, 9, 1988, P.4

²¹ Mary Turner, *Slaves and Missionaries*, (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1982), P.102

²² *Ibid.* P.104

Jamaica), the tide of public opinion had turned against the plantocracy back in Britain by the 1820s. Effectively eroding planter resistance to amelioration.

British West Indian Slavery, 1750-1834 (1988) by J.R. Ward argues that amelioration occurred in the British West Indies after the abolition of the slave trade in 1807, because the planters would no longer be able to get new imports of slaves, and so they were forced to better conditions to keep their plantations economically viable.²³ Whilst he does make this observation, he also goes at length to discuss the amelioration process before and after 1807 in Barbados, St Kitts, Trinidad, Demerara, and Jamaica; showing the differences in the colony and how each approached amelioration in their respects. It does not make any link between the two processes and is one of those sources previously mentioned that treats the two as separate. It still is an important contribution, more so to the discussion around amelioration, as Ward talks about the process itself and how it happened. Which is an important foundation before understanding what extent it affected Christianization.

Ward makes further contributions in the amelioration debate in his article *The Amelioration of British West Indian Slavery, 1750-1834: Change in the Plough* (1989). Ward explicitly challenges the conclusions made by his contemporaries in the debate surrounding amelioration. He specifically challenges Craton and Walvin (1970) where the both of them hint that innovation and amelioration between the period of 1790 to 1820 within the British West Indian slave society had been rather slow. Ward radically disagrees with this approach, going on to say that the British slave economy actually had substantial capacity for innovation and to ameliorate he conditions of enslaved people.²⁴ He uses the example of the Codrington plantations and states the innovations there (sentiment that could also be observed in *Bondsmen and Bishops*) could be seen in the wider British Caribbean. So the contribution of Ward again is important because it demonstrates divergence and tension within the historiography surrounding the amelioration debate.

Earning and Learning in the British West Indies (1991) by Olwyn M. Blouet (as with Craton) makes reference to rise of enlightenment values and again highlights the 1807 break, where abolitionists had hoped the end of the

²³ J.R. Ward, *British West Indian Slavery 1750-1834*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), P.45

²⁴ J.R. Ward, 'The Amelioration of British West Indian Slavery, 1750-1834: Technical Change in the Plough', *New West Indian Guide*, 63 (1989), P.42

slave trade would lead to gradual amelioration and then emancipation.²⁵ However, he also makes note of the different ameliorative proposals that were espoused in an effort by parliament and others to better the conditions of slaves. He also importantly points out that there was high amount of tension between the imperial government and colonial authorities over the former trying to impose its own ameliorative measures, as a means to undermining the abolitionists back in Britain.²⁶ This ties in well with Justin Roberts work *Slavery and the Enlightenment in the British West Indies*, where Roberts also argues that amelioration was shaped by the enlightenment discourses on moral reform. He goes in more detail to state reason and knowledge to relieve human suffering and promote natural rights and liberties were the fundamental core to the amelioration movement.²⁷ Roberts does give credence to other side of enlightenment values however, by acknowledging that enlightenment values of moral purification through hard (even coerced work) was used by planters as a means to justify slavery.²⁸ This analysis of the amelioration process is also unique in its own right because it focuses on the influences of enlightenment, rather than that of Christian moralists which overwhelmingly forms the core of the various themes discussed in this chapter and the thesis as a whole.

Christopher Leslie Brown's *Moral Capital* (2006) takes a different approach. His work takes a significant look at the forces of Christian moralism in how it affected the amelioration drive. He explores influential Church figures like James Ramsey and Beilby Porteus who argued in favour of amelioration as a means to advance Christianity amongst the enslaved people of the British Caribbean. Brown makes similar points to Sylvia R. Frey & Betty Wood and James Latimer, in that the slaves would not accept Anglicanism because it was the religion of their oppressors and again highlights Church figures at the time who stated that because of this, amelioration would have to be adopted in order for the Anglican Church to have any success.²⁹

Amelioration and Empire (2014) by Christa Dierksheide has a more sophisticated discussion surrounding the amelioration debate. Whilst giving a general discussion on the amelioration process in the British West Indies,

²⁵ Olwyn M. Blouet, 'Earning and Learning in the British West Indies', *The Historical Journal*, 34 (June 1991), P.371

²⁶ *Ibid.* P.394

²⁷ Justin Roberts, *Slavery and the Enlightenment in the British West Indies*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), P.44

²⁸ *Ibid.* PP.50-51

²⁹ Christopher Leslie Brown, *Moral Capital*, (North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), PP.354-355

Dierksheide discusses the wider philosophical and moral debate around slavery. This is similar to what Blouet discussed in his work, but Dierksheide discusses the debate about how preserving or abolishing slavery would help or be detrimental to national advancement, and also to Britain's longer term imperial ambitions.³⁰ In terms of the amelioration debate, this took the form of whether or not an ameliorative slave system could preserve slavery. In addition, Dierksheide makes the case that amelioration was spurred on by inter imperial rivalry in the British Caribbean, forcing Britain's colonies to modernize in order to compete, echoing Ward's point that the British Caribbean planter colonies had significant scope to improve.³¹ Finally, Dierksheide argues that anti-slavery and ameliorative drives were primarily driven by Christian moralists, further highlighting that the enlightenment focus of Blouet is more of the outlier in the historiography, rather than the predominant consensus.³²

The final work is *The Amelioration of British West Indian Slavery* (2018) by J.R. Ward and here we see a marked evolution in his line of thinking regarding amelioration. In his 1989 article, he went after Craton and Walvin for saying that amelioration was rather slow during the latter part of the 18th century (and also the early 20th century) and went on to say once more that the British Caribbean showed significant capacity for change. He again reiterates in this latest work that the historical consensus up until 1970 was that slave conditions greatly improved from the late 18th century but now takes the view that subsequent research has disputed this consensus.³³ Going as far to say that the substantive change occurred after 1800. This is a significant shift in Ward's thinking and from the wording of his work, it again appears the weight of historical research since his 1989 publication has forced him to reconsider his position. He does recognise previous works like Kiple's *The Caribbean Slave* (1984) where Kiple states the physical welfare of slaves improved in the late 18th century.³⁴ Ward however points out the incomplete data, which makes making this assertion difficult to substantiate.

³⁰ Christa Dierksheide, *Amelioration and Empire*, (Virginia: University of Virginia Press, 2014). PP.156-157

³¹ Ibid. P.161

³² Ibid. P.158

³³ J.R. Ward, 'The Amelioration of British West Indian Slavery', *The Economic History Review*, 71 (2018), P.1,199

³⁴ J.R. Ward, *The Amelioration of British West Indian Slavery*, P.1,202

Chapter 1: Missionary activity and its influences before 1823

This chapter will explore the state of affairs of amelioration, domestic pressure from Britain, and Structural and organisational concerns before 1823, in relation to how they influenced the Anglican church's missionary effort in the British Caribbean. It will explore the context going into the main focus of the thesis, which is the period from 1823-1833, and delve in to the struggles faced by the Colonial Church trying to Christianize the enslaved inhabitants of the British Caribbean, when the planter based society of the British West Indies was not ready or willing to accept such efforts.

This chapter will examine the state of the British Caribbean and the ways in which individual colonies in the British Caribbean were structured economically, as well as their general history to observe how these different context's influenced the Anglican church's missionary effort on a case by case basis. It will also go a long way to explain to what extent amelioration was able to take place, how domestic pressure had its influence, and structural and organisational changes had the ability to influence events. Furthermore, this chapter will be split up into two main other subsections, exploring missionary efforts pre 1807 and post 1807, as this point of departure is when the slave trade was abolished and is an important departure point to explore as to whether this had an influence of its own.

The State of the British Caribbean, pre 1823

English and then British colonization of the British Caribbean did not happen all at once; indeed, it happened in stages. Previous to the English civil war, Barbados was set up as a colony 1627, with the Leeward colonies of Antigua, Nevis and St Kitts also established before the English civil war.³⁵ All these colonies would adopt slave labour in their economic systems. In 1655, Jamaica was captured via invasion during the Anglo Spanish War and in 1763 – after the conclusion of the Seven Years War – the islands of Grenada, Dominica, St Vincent and

³⁵ Kenneth Morgan, *Slavery and the British Empire*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), PP.7-8

Tobago were ceded.³⁶ Trinidad was taken in 1797 and Demerara (Later referred to as British Guiana, located off North Eastern South America) and Berbice in 1802.

Contrary to popular conception, not all West Indian colonies were sugar plantation societies. Some of the Islands that had little to no sugar production were colonies such as the Bahamas, Anguilla, Barbuda, and the Cayman Islands.³⁷ Other Islands like Dominica with its mountainous terrain making it unsuitable for its cultivation, only produced small amounts of sugar. Jamaica, by far the biggest of Britain's sugar producing colonies, had a surprisingly diverse economy with only 52% of its slaves working on sugar cultivation; as opposed to 75% in Barbados and the British Leeward Islands such as Antigua, St Nevis and St Christopher by the mid-18th century.³⁸ Barbuda, Anguilla and Dominica were also part of the British Leeward Islands but as mentioned before they were not major sugar colonies. Barbuda for example primarily focused on providing livestock, leather goods, meat, Timber, fish, and other provisions to neighbouring Antigua.³⁹ Dominica had noticeable Indigo, Cotton, and Ginger production; as well as Coffee having the most significant presence on the island (46% of the islands slaves worked in coffee production in 1827, as opposed to 34% working on sugar production).⁴⁰ Finally Anguilla had some of the lowest proportion of its slave population working in agriculture in the British Caribbean, with it having a proportionally high number of domestic slaves serving their masters.⁴¹

This discussion surrounding the sugar economy will be important context when discussing the missionary efforts of the Anglican church, not least because in the sugar colonies, the conditions were harsher than in non-sugar colonies. This negatively affected the demography of the sugar colonies in regards to things such as infant mortality, the ratio of creoles (native born slaves), and African slaves and the sex ratio. Which, in later discussion made the Church's task more challenging.

³⁶ Ibid. PP.7-8

³⁷ Trevor Burnard, *Planters, Merchants and Slaves*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), P.18

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Barry Higman, *Slave Populations of the British Caribbean 1807-1834*, (Baltimore & London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1984), P.66

⁴⁰ Ibid. P.55

⁴¹ Ibid. PP.46-49

High mortality rates amongst slaves in the British Caribbean (particularly in the sugar colonies) meant that there was a continued dependence on importing new slaves until the slave trade was abolished in 1807.⁴² This problem was so extreme in the sugar colonies that creole majorities were not seen in Barbados until 1810 and Jamaica in 1840, demonstrating the harshness of the physical conditions experienced by slaves in the sugar colonies. In Trinidad for example, slave deaths were three times higher on their sugar plantations as opposed to cotton plantations.⁴³ In Jamaica it was 50% higher. Sugar colonies in the British Caribbean were also more lopsided towards male slaves in the male to female sex ratio, since the work was more gruelling than all the other cash crops and demanded more physical strength.⁴⁴ This demographic pressure as well was exacerbated by the fact that slaves often had poor fertility rates, meaning slave deaths could not be easily replaced and would mean new African slaves with their own religious and cultural beliefs would have to be brought into the colonies.

From 1808 no further importations from Africa were possible, in every sugar colony except Barbados the continuing excess of deaths over births meant a decline in the slave population.⁴⁵ It is because of this situation that abolitionists made the natural assumption that slavery would gradually be phased out over time through amelioration. Slaves also became more expensive as a result of the slave trade ending, with field slaves in 1808 costing on average £100 instead of the previous average of £40 in the 1750s.⁴⁶ Furthermore, after the closure of the slave trade; improvement on the plantations would have to include a slave population that was better maintained, and in particular better fed.⁴⁷ In addition to this, St Kitts was hit particularly hard by the abolition of the slave trade, as it heavily relied on the importation of new slaves.⁴⁸ It was hoped among abolitionists that after 1807 that slavery would gradually be phased out,⁴⁹ with the decline of the West Indian sugar markets after the abolition of the slave trade being the extra fuel needed to further the amelioration process, during the 1807-1823 period.⁵⁰

⁴² Kenneth Morgan, P.85

⁴³ Ibid. P.90

⁴⁴ Ibid. P.84

⁴⁵ J.R. Ward, *British West Indian Slavery 1750-1834*, P.45

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid. P.77

⁴⁹ Olwyn M. Blouet, P.391

⁵⁰ Christa Dierksheide, PP. 183-184

The sugar economy would affect demographics in other ways. With sugar colonies having to import so many slaves up until the abolition of the slave trade, it would mean that the sugar colonies would have the larger populations and in particular the higher population densities. By 1834 for example (just after the abolition of slavery itself) Barbados had 500 slaves per square mile, 260 in Antigua and 245 in Nevis.⁵¹ The white population would generally stay very small in the British Caribbean. An exception to this was before 1670 where the white population exceeded the black population but after that point, the white population in proportion to the enslaved population would go in steep decline.⁵² The white population in the British Caribbean never exceeded 50,000 before the American Revolution and generally made up 2% of the total population (i.e. in colonies such as Jamaica).⁵³ Barbados was one of the exceptions with it having a bigger white population and being comparatively poor to Jamaica, having only 20% of the wealth Jamaica had.⁵⁴ This larger white population (proportionally speaking) is due to Barbados's previous history with white indentured servitude but because of the aforementioned slave population density that Barbados had compared to other smaller British Caribbean Island colonies, their capacity to grow the slave population was already very limited. Especially since Jamaica is a far larger Island in comparison. The wealth disparity owed to economy of scale disparity between Islands like Jamaica and Barbados, especially considering in 1750 Jamaica had 127,881 slaves and Barbados having 63,410 slaves, (with even smaller sugar plantation colonies like Antigua only having 31,123) meaning that Jamaica simply had the resources to produce more sugar than most of the other British Caribbean colonies.⁵⁵

The smaller less sugar orientated islands (i.e. Anguilla, the Bahamas, Tortola and Barbuda) were even more marginal and comparatively poor compared to Jamaica and other primary sugar producers, which had implications for the resources they had at their disposal, which would in turn have implications in how they reacted to Christianization and amelioration efforts that will be latterly discussed.⁵⁶ These colonies that could not rely on sugar for their wealth had to rely on building/maintaining maritime crafts and rearing livestock to

⁵¹ Kenneth Morgan, P.17

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Trevor Burnard, P.18

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Kenneth Morgan, P.17

prop up their economies, which were comparatively less labour intensive and mortally endangering, so the enslaved population wasn't nearly as large as it wasn't required. It would also mean that the slave population of these islands would not reach or exceed the 90%+ proportion of the islands total population, as found in the sugar colonies.⁵⁷

As such, by the late 18th and early 19th century the predominantly sugar islands in the British Caribbean would develop a sugar monoculture within their economy, with nearly 100% of the export value of Barbados's, 72% of Jamaica's, and 90% of Trinidad's being attributed to sugar.⁵⁸ Even though for example in Jamaica's case its topography was much more suited to coffee production and with it also rearing livestock and working in the towns (both making up the other 48% of Jamaica's slave labour force), the economic incentives were too high not to focus sugar production.⁵⁹ With sugar still making up 72% of Jamaica's total exports during this period.⁶⁰ This trajectory was similar with other colonies, with Dominica the only one by the early 19th century producing staple crops in noticeable amounts by the early 19th century.

What influenced these colonies and their relationship with the central imperial government even more so was the early colonization efforts of the British in the British Caribbean. Early English colonisation in the British Caribbean was notable because in the 17th century (a good example being Barbados) it was done through private means, rather than it being state sanctioned and heavily regulated as was seen with Spanish efforts to colonize the new world.⁶¹ These early colonists were mainly comprised of ex-soldiers and adventurers, which is significant because these early colonists were not enthusiastic to recreate the old order from which they left. This meant that colonies that were not crown colonies had from the onset (at least compared to other colonial possessions by rival European powers) a lot of autonomy. This also meant that when the Anglican church would attempt to Christianize enslaved people and later when the British government exerted pressure on the colonies

⁵⁷ Trevor Burnard, P.19

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Nicholas M. Beasley, P.3

to ameliorate conditions on the plantations, the slave colonies of the British Caribbean would generally resist these intrusions.

To conclude the general state of the British Caribbean leading up to 1823, what we see is a society that varies quite noticeably in its economic structures and society. Whilst the sugar monoculture was firm in many of the colonies, we see diversity in how the different economies were structured. In terms of the societies themselves, we see varying levels of autonomy these Islands enjoyed and the aforementioned diversity in the economic systems meant that different Islands had a planter class that varied in its power and resolve. This would have far reaching consequences for when the Anglican church would attempt its Christianization effort.

Anglican missionary Efforts, 17th century to 1807

The Anglican church was handicapped from the very onset in its Christianization efforts in the British Caribbean. They did not have the benefit their Catholic counterparts in Spain and Portugal had of having strong central control that could enforce its religious edicts. This was compounded by the fact that the Anglican Church did not have appointed bishops or any real structure in the British Caribbean, which itself stemmed from colonial resistance from the white inhabitants of the British West Indies.⁶² This explains in large part why throughout the 17th, 18th and early 19th century the Anglican Church would continually struggle in its efforts to Christianize the slaves of the British West Indies.

Indeed, as well as preserving the autonomous structure of British Caribbean society, the early colonists of the “old colonies” in the late 18th century changed their general law books (not specific to slave codes or religious laws, but their broad legal system) that gradually replaced the term “Christian” with “White”.⁶³ This was done early on because the idea of black Christians challenged the intertwined notions amongst the white colonists in

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Katharine Gerbner, P.74

the British Caribbean that Protestantism was exclusively a white endeavour.⁶⁴ In addition to this, the plantocracy of the British Caribbean felt converting enslaved people to Christianity would confer ideas of spiritual equality amongst them and the white inhabitants of the Caribbean colonies, which could then be a gateway towards potential Temporal equality.⁶⁵

The planters power over the slaves was based on constant terror and a firm hand towards any form of dissent from their slaves. The worry was that if amelioration went too far (that is the gradual material improvement and wellbeing of slaves on the plantations itself), then this would embolden slaves to rise up against their master's, meaning that the plantocracy did not wish to use amelioration as means to allow for the conditions to allow for Christianization, if it meant undermining their own power. What amelioration that did happen in the 18th century and very early 19th century (mostly only happening significantly from the 1770s onwards), was done on almost entirely economic basis, rather than on a philanthropic basis.

This was seen in colonies like Barbados, which experienced an early form of amelioration, where the local authorities tried to increase agricultural output.⁶⁶ As it was an older colony, it was already in economic competition with its newer cousins and followed the general trend from the 1770s onwards. The catalyst for this trend in the 1770s onwards can be partly explained by the coming of the American Revolutionary wars. By this point Enlightenment and more importantly religious revivalism had reached a critical mass where the practice of slavery was becoming more and more questionable.⁶⁷ Particularly with the Americans concern about being made "slaves" by the British imperial government, this increased scepticism of the chattel slave system and caused people to question on what grounds could the enslavement of enslaved people be justified.⁶⁸

Furthermore, the plantocracy in the American colonies were a significant bloc to oppose any talk of abolition or fundamental change in the slave system itself, which would partly explain why in the 1780s there was an upsurge in anti-slavery feeling in Britain.⁶⁹ With the American colonies gone, it meant the influence of the Caribbean plantocracy was significantly weakened but still formidable however.

⁶⁴ Katharine Gerbner, P.80

⁶⁵ James Walvin, *Black Ivory*, (London: Fontana Press, 1992), P.177

⁶⁶ J.R. Ward, *British West Indian Slavery, 1750-1834*, PP.62-63

⁶⁷ David Brion Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), P.144

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* P.145

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* P.154

In addition, some colonies such as St Kitts from the 1770s began to give their slaves better food rations, partly because of the tougher terrain on the island demanded it but also because the planters felt more secure in their position to give the slaves better rations.⁷⁰ This is an important theme to explore because we see resistance by planters to the Anglican Church's missionary efforts as a result of planters once again because they felt insecure in their position; fearing that the Christianization process would incite unrest and rebellion on their plantations, as a result of the more egalitarian aspects of Christianity.

This sense of anxiety towards ameliorative efforts varied between the colonies. For example, ameliorative sentiment was strongest felt in the older colonies such as Barbados and Antigua, where from the 1740s onwards were struggling with newer sugar colonies such as the aforementioned Jamaica and French St Domingue, in term of economic competition.⁷¹ But even Jamaica would face its own issues when new sugar colonies were acquired in 1763, such as Tobago, Grenada, St Vincent and Dominica.⁷² Which rationalises why Jamaica was comparatively ahead of other colonies in ameliorative efforts, but this is also true of colonies such as Barbados. This distinction between older and newer colonies will make itself evident in future discussion surrounding the reports of the missionary societies in the main chapter. In the 1770s for example, Jamaican slaves worked on average 5,000 hours annually, whereas in the early 19th century this was brought down some 20% to 4,000 hours annually.⁷³ Again, part of the general trend from the 1770s onwards and the economic necessity of keeping competitive with the newer colonies and not wishing to waste slave labour. Though these strides had been made in the colony, it is self-evident that by the time 1823 comes, these were viewed as insufficient to truly better the lot of slaves and to create a suitable environment for Christianization.

In the Bahamas, amelioration provisions began somewhat later than other colonies in 1796 with the "First Consolidated Slave Act", passed by the local assembly.⁷⁴ The act was one of the more radical acts implemented before the 1823; with measures that prohibited mutilation, maiming, wearing iron collars, setting up a slave

⁷⁰ J.R. Ward, *British West Indian Slavery, 1750-1834*, P.76

⁷¹ Justin Roberts, P.46

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ J.R. Ward, *The Amelioration of British West Indian Slavery*, P. 1,201

⁷⁴ Gail Saunders, *Slavery in the Bahamas 1648-1838*, (Nassau: Nassau Guardian, 1985), P.171

court, and giving proper cloths to slaves.⁷⁵ This is most likely due to the fact that the Bahamas was not a sugar island, meaning that controls on slaves did not have to be as extreme in the first place, meaning local elites had more room for manoeuvre. Moreover in Jamaica, we can probably the biggest individual progress, with the implementation of the 1788 slave code. The slave code did in practice only give legal force to already customary days off (usually on a Saturday) but the fact it was now legally enforceable is significant.⁷⁶ In general, all West Indian colonies would by the late 18th century at least attempt to increase food rations for their slaves, as to better the operations of the plantations but was not always possible.⁷⁷ This was partly because much of the land was already given towards sugar cultivation, meaning extra space could not be allocated to increase food production.⁷⁸ This demonstrates a practical barrier to amelioration but it runs deeper than this.

This early amelioration effort was modest compared to later efforts, especially during the 1820s. The increase or attempted increase in food rations was step forward, along with the customary days off in Jamaica giving legal force that hadn't existed prior; and the Bahamas individual amelioration was more radical than others, but this on the whole was not enough. Later efforts would include giving even more time off to slaves, ending of flogging, ending family separation and giving slaves greater access to Sunday Markets to sell their own produce and more, more radical policies.

In context, the early amelioration process didn't make significant enough inroads to make any noticeable difference with the Anglican Church's Christianization effort. The SPG (which provided much of the colonial clergy in the 18th century) could not closely supervise and direct their missionaries during this period, because of the influence of the local plantocracy.⁷⁹ This influence from the local plantocracy made things all the more difficult because it made the Anglican Church aligned with the interests of the plantocracy, as any missionaries needed their blessing to conduct their business.⁸⁰ This made enslaved people at best unenthusiastic towards the Anglican Church's efforts in the British Caribbean, especially since efforts to humanise slavery was in its infancy and conditions were still harsh.

⁷⁵ Ibid. P.172

⁷⁶ J.R. Ward, *British West Indian Slavery, 1750-1834*, P.112

⁷⁷ J.R. Ward, *British West Indian Slavery, 1750-1834*, P. 114

⁷⁸ J.R. Ward, *British West Indian Slavery, 1750-1834*, P.115

⁷⁹ Peter W. Williams, P.246

⁸⁰ Christer Petley, P.77

In the late 18th century, the plantocracy drastically hindered the missionary efforts of the Anglican Church. Indeed, this was the case because of the lack of strong centralised Church structure in the British Caribbean. This lack of strong church structure could be largely attributed to the power of the plantocracy who would assert their autonomy and independence but also because the issue was not seen pressing enough, as there wasn't the will back in Britain to implement such a structure until 1823. Examples can be seen through the likes of the SPG, which acted more as an auxiliary rather than the official arm of the Anglican Church. This is once more in contrast to the Catholic powers such as Spain, who commanded much more authority in their colonies. So whilst there was at least some form of amelioration from the 1770s onwards, the insufficient organisation and structure of the Colonial Church meant that this could not be capitalised on. Demonstrating that amelioration without the necessary organisation and structure on the part of the Colonial Church, would mean that the Church's efforts were ineffective. This is not to say amelioration depended on the Church but what it does mean is that any progress in the conditions of slaves on the plantations could not be exploited if the Colonial Church did not have the necessary organisational capacity to make good on this progress.

The Colonial Church during the late 18th century mainly focused its efforts on the white population.⁸¹ In fact, the case has been made that for a century and a half (from the mid-17th century and throughout the 18th century) the Colonial Church shut its doors completely to Enslaved people, with their economic labour on the plantations taking priority.⁸² This can be partly attributed to the aforementioned planter resistance to Christian missionaries preaching to their slaves. However, it does also indicate a level of divergent organisational priorities amongst the Anglican Church, as it was most likely the case that there also the general lack of will amongst the Anglican Church to really focus its efforts on converting enslaved people. Along with not having any real structure in the West Indies to begin with.

There is actual testimony from former slaves that reinforces the notion that slaves economic labour took priority and that the Anglican Church was too impotent to do anything about it. Quobna Ottobah Cuguano was a former slave born in modern day Ghana in 1757, he was enslaved in 1770, and briefly enslaved in the British Caribbean

⁸¹ James Latimer, P.436

⁸² Ibid.

colony of Grenada from 1770 to 1772. In his landmark work “Thoughts and Sentiments” (1787) he recalls an instance in his brief spell in Grenada of a slave receiving 24 lashes for attending church instead of working the fields, with him going on to say that this was the general punishment for such acts at the time.⁸³ Another former slave Olaudah Equiano had much to say on this also. Born in 1745 in what is modern day Nigeria, he was enslaved in 1756 at age 11 and after spending time in Virginia and then England, he would be sold into slavery in Montserrat between 1763 and 1766. Whilst there, he would observe that slaves who were part of jobbing gangs (slaves rented out by their masters) had to wait on the gentleman that they worked for (sometimes for half a day) and if they didn’t give their owners their weekly wages, they would be beaten.⁸⁴ However, since wages were often paid on a Sunday, this meant that slaves would have no time to observe the sabbath as they were far too pre-occupied making sure they were paid. Planters were not only disinterested in Christianizing enslaved people but actively hostile and the Anglican church did not have the means or will to do anything about it.

One aspect that should also be mentioned is the pressure on the West Indian colonies that was imposed by the domestic pressures back in Britain, in the form of internal Anglican criticism. Internal church criticism of slavery and the Christianization process had existed for decades before hand, however figures like the then Bishop of Chester Beilbly Porteus began to take prominence in the 1780s, when criticism really began to pick up. Porteus used the example of the Codrington plantations to say the reason why the Christianization effort was not taking root there was because slaves did not want to adopt the religion of their oppressors.⁸⁵ Because of this Porteus argued that amelioration of slave conditions was absolutely necessary in order for the Anglican Church to have any real chance of converting enslaved people on masse.⁸⁶

It is clear that by the late 18th century figures like Porteus saw the futility in missionizing, whilst the brutal nature of chattel slavery remained unchanged and it is logical that at that point, after several decades of turning a blind eye to the failures of the missionizing efforts, some church officials were beginning to see the reality of the situation. Mounting criticism was not just restricted to internal church criticism however. Once again former

⁸³ Brixton, Black Cultural Archives, Thoughts and Sentiments, (1787), Quobna Ottobah Cuguano, BCA/5/1/49, P.142

⁸⁴ Brixton, Black Cultural Archives, The African the Interesting Narrative of the life of Olaudah Equiano, (1789), Olaudah Equiano, BCA/5/1/57, P.77

⁸⁵ Christopher Leslie Brown, PP.354-355

⁸⁶ Ibid.

slaves such as Cuguano in the 1780s contributed (again with his seminal work *Thoughts and Sentiments*) by saying that Christianity cannot successfully spread amongst slaves until “The traffic of slavery is ended”, as well exclaiming the contradictory nature of the gospel and chattel slavery.⁸⁷ Equiano would go further than both Porteus and Cuguano. Equiano would of course agree with Porteus that so long as the brutal nature of slavery was unchanged, the missionary effort would be futile but he also criticised the plantocracy’s actions as antithetical to Christian ethics. He would remark on one experience in the British Caribbean:

“One Mr D -, told me he had sold 41,000 negroes and he once cut off a negro mans leg for running away. I asked him if the man had died in the operation, how he, as a Christian, could answer, for the horrid act before God. And he told me, answering was thing of another world; what he thought and did were policy.”⁸⁸

What can be deduced from this criticism is that Equiano agreed with Porteus but he also highlights that a Christian missionary effort in the British Caribbean cannot be successful, if the plantocracy cares nothing for Christian ethics and merely cared for temporal enrichment. In regards to Cugauno, in his own work there is a stronger sense that it’s not just the slave trade that is the issue but slavery itself, which is the problem because of its intrinsic nature. Which in itself differs from Porteus’s view that a unreformed slave system was the concern. Though in Equiano’s work he does point out examples of more “benevolent” planters who treat their slaves better (by giving them more breaks and better provisions) and therefor they don’t need as many shipments of slaves, he goes on to say that even in these cases chattel slavery is brutal and inhuman in of itself. He claims (by his own accord) that even though Barbados treats its slaves the best out of the whole British Caribbean, it still required 1,000 slaves annually to keep up an equilibrium (during the 1780s).⁸⁹ This is out of a slave population of 80,000.

Part of this pressure from Britain and why general attitudes were changing in the late 18th century, didn’t just arise from humanitarianism but also was tied heavily to a sense of nationalism amongst the populace, with

⁸⁷ *Thoughts and Sentiments*, Quobna Ottobah Cuguano, P.143

⁸⁸ *The African the Interesting Narrative of the life of Olaudah Equiano*, P.82

⁸⁹ *The African the Interesting Narrative of the life of Olaudah Equiano*, P.83

missionizing being seen as a patriotic duty. As there was a general growing sense of nationalism placed with Britain and her colonial empire: the British Caribbean was no exception to this and the missionary effort as means of civilising enslaved people took on a more cultural focus. Rather than the mostly religious focus as observed through most of the 18th century. So the changing attitudes we see demonstrated in the late 18th century was part of broadly changing attitudes within wider British society.

More significant critique came in the form of James Ramsey's essay "The Treatment and Conversion of African Slaves in the British Sugar Colonies", dated 1783. Here it opened up a massive public and parliamentary debate on amelioration and the spiritual well-being of slaves.⁹⁰ Ramsey believed that genuine reform of slavery could only come about from pressure imposed by the imperial government back in Britain, effectively eroding the autonomy of the sugar colonies.⁹¹ This once more demonstrates the influence of the local plantocracy who on their own accord would be unwilling to undertake radical enough reform, as they would not want to undermine their own position. What can be deduced from this is that there was a clear sense domestically in Britain that the amelioration process had not gone far enough, in so far as assisting the Christianization process. Which essentially ties in to previous points made in this chapter about amelioration not going far enough to support the Christianization effort, as well as a general lack of will on the part of the Anglican Church.

These issues of the lack of progress concerning the Christianization effort was down to the largely conservative and cautious form of missionizing, which had a great emphasis on keeping planters on side and prioritising subordination amongst the slaves. Which is worth taking note because the plantocracy remained largely opposed to the Christianizing efforts of the Anglican Church, demonstrating the perceived threat Christianity held to the positions of power held by the plantocracy. In 1795 an order was given out to Anglican Church missionaries that: "you must never attempt to instruct, or to educate the negro slaves of any plantation without the consent and approbation of the proprietor of that plantation".⁹² The instructions would go further to state that slaves

⁹⁰ Christopher Leslie Brown, P.364

⁹¹ Ibid. P.244

⁹² James Laitimer, 'The Foundations of Religious Education in the British West Indies', The Journal for Negro Education, 34 (1965), P.436

should: “Dwell most strongly and frequently on the great practical duties of piety, and obedience to their masters, contentment, patience, and resignation to the will of heaven”.⁹³

At the turn of the 19th Century, some colonial clergymen tried to use what influence they had to encourage their worshipers in their respective parishes to not overwork their slaves. This can be seen in a sermon delivered by Rev. Charles Peters in 1800 in Dominica, in which the main takeaway was that he encouraged his parishioners not to overwork their slaves.⁹⁴ What is notable here is that Peters after delivering the address, was forced to resign in Dominica and retire to England, due to the domestic backlash to his sermon. This highlights again a very important aspect to the background leading up to 1823, that being domestic white resistance to the conversion of enslaved people in the British West Indies. It has also been noted that the plantocracy in the British Caribbean had their doubts on whether conversion did not imply freedom, and thought it necessary to engrain in the slave codes early on that no slave was to be free by becoming a Christian.⁹⁵ The codes only paid lip service to the masters duty to instruct their slaves but more importantly it clearly demonstrates white settler unease at the notion of converting enslaved people to Christianity, for fear of inciting rebellion or at the very least disobedience.

Once more, there was the recurring theme of the Colonial Church being under sourced and poorly organised. Jamaica for example by 1800 had a white and black population of 400,000 but only 20 Anglican places of worship.⁹⁶ Not only does this show chronic structural deficiencies within the Colonial Church, it also highlights that because there were so few places of worship, it would mean that the spiritual means of enslaved people would be neglected. As white settlers would get priority in spaces in churches.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid. P.172

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

The SPG

One important case study to use to understand the Anglican Church's missionary effort in the British Caribbean are the Codrington Estates in Barbados. The plantations were in the hands of the powerful Codrington family, who held the plantations through most of the 17th century up until 1711 when the estates were handed over to the SPG (an auxiliary missionary arm of the Anglican Church) as per Christopher Codrington's will.

Christopher Codrington's will shows that the estates were bequeathed to the SPG to enable the training of missionaries to then go off to spread the gospel in the new world but to also Christianize enslaved people at his plantation. However – very soon after the acquisition of the plantations by the society – they found out that their missionary effort was floundering. In 1729, the Bishop of London sent out two letters in regards to reports that the Christianization effort was not going well at Codrington.⁹⁷ The first letter notably pleads with the plantocracy to instruct their enslaved people, stating there is no valid excuse not to instruct their slaves and stated that if the planters were to try hard enough they would succeed.⁹⁸ In fact, part of Belbuis Porteus's Criticism of the Church's Christianization effort was in large part due to these early failures and part of why criticism was growing in the late 18th century, as these issues had not been resolved for decades.

This indicates a severe lack of organisational competency on the part of the Anglican Church, as well as a lack of structure. It demonstrates that the Anglican Church did not at the time have the ability to influence events in the British Caribbean and to coerce the plantocracy to instruct their slaves. In regards to what extent did amelioration assist in the Anglican Church's missionary effort in the British West Indies, it can be observed that the issue was not the lack of amelioration but the aforementioned organisational and structural considerations. Planter resistance was an issue and the SPG even had issues commanding their own agents at Codrington to ensure proper instruction of slaves.

⁹⁷ Lambeth, Lambeth Palace Library, Two letters of the Archbishop of London concerning the plantations prefixed with an address, 1729

⁹⁸ Two letters of the Archbishop of London concerning the plantations

The structural and organisational issues would persist throughout the 18th century. The SPG would send 13 missionaries from 1713 to 1768 to educate and convert the enslaved people at the plantations but would continue to have their efforts frustrated by the Codrington managers, who prioritised sugar cultivation over Christianization efforts.⁹⁹ This is a good indication that if the Anglican Church could not competently operate the Christianization effort through their own auxiliaries plantation, then it demonstrates a severe organisational deficiency in the British West Indies. In this context it's easy to make the argument that structural and organisational concerns was more important than amelioration.

There is a case to say however that amelioration (or lack thereof) did play a role on the lack of success of the Anglican Church's missionary effort in the British West Indies, i.e. up until 1761 the makeup of the enslaved population at Codrington Estates was predominately African born.¹⁰⁰ In fact, in 1743 the SPG committee had to order its attorney's in Barbados to order new slaves to bring the slave population at Codrington Estates back up to 300 slaves, in line Christopher Codrington's will.¹⁰¹ This is because conditions on plantations were so severe that the society constantly had to bring in new slaves to replace those who had already perished. On the Estates 1 in every 2 slave child under the age of 5 died throughout the 18th century.¹⁰² Not only did this not create a general environment in which African born slaves would be accepting of the Anglican Church's missionary effort, it also ensured a cultural block to the Anglican Church's efforts in the British Caribbean. This is because these new African slaves would have grown up in their countries of origin, that had their own cultures and spiritual beliefs. Meaning that they would be much more resistive to foreign influences than say the creolized domestic born slave population.

This is important, as even though Codrington was an example of how the lack of amelioration played an important factor as to why the Anglican Church's missionary effort during this time was failing, one can still see why the main reason for this is the organisational and structural issues surrounding the Anglican Church's missionary effort. For example, by the 1760s Codrington College – the main instrument to be used for the teaching of missionaries and enslaved people at Codrington – fell into disrepair. A letter was sent by Robert Ray

⁹⁹ Christopher Leslie Brown, P.72

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. P.152

¹⁰¹ Lambeth, Lambeth Palace Library, SPG papers, Minutes 1740-1744

¹⁰² Kenneth Morgan, P.94

Drummond (Bishop of St Astaph) concerning the income the Estates was taking in.¹⁰³ He was concerned that the society could not afford to run the plantations, let alone the college.¹⁰⁴ The society would in the end keep the estates and fix the repairs in 1764 but this is still a microcosm of the deep structural and in this case organisational issues faced by the Anglican Church's missionary effort in the British West Indies.

These systemic issues at Codrington would only get worse and would reappear during the late 1770s and early 1780s, where the Christianization process ground to a halt altogether. Codrington College would have to be closed in 1775 because of an economic depression, along with wars and natural disasters between 1775-1984 which further damaged the missionary effort at Codrington.¹⁰⁵ The killer blow would come in 1783 when the plantations incurred £3,600 worth of debt and had to lease the plantations to John Braithwaite for ten years, on the understanding he would use the estates profits to pay off the debt and repair the buildings.¹⁰⁶ Further showing the structural and organisational difficulties the Anglican Church faced.

1807 was when the slave trade was abolished and it was hoped by abolitionists that this would lead to a gradual phasing out of chattel slavery in the British Caribbean. It was thought amelioration would have to take place to improve slave conditions (as planters would find it much harder to replace slaves who perished) and the natural conclusion of this process would lead to slavery in its entirety ending. Slavers argued against this by stating slave populations could not be maintained because of slave infertility, profligacy and lack of maternal instincts on the part of slave mothers.¹⁰⁷ Metropolitan abolitionists on the other hand refuted this by saying that the harshness of slavery was the route cause and that abolishing the slave trade would apply the necessary pressure to greatly better the conditions on the plantation.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰³ Papers of Thomas Secker (1693-1768), Bishop of Oxford and Archbishop of Canterbury 1758-1768

¹⁰⁴ Papers of Thomas Secker (1693-1768)

¹⁰⁵ J. Harry Bennett, jr, *Bondsmen and Bishops: Slavery and Apprenticeship on the Codrington Plantations of Barbados, 1710-1838*, (California: University of California Press, 1958), P.93

¹⁰⁶ T. Herbert Bindley, *Annals of Codrington College Barbados, 1710-1910*, (London: The West Indian Committee, 1910), P.25

¹⁰⁷ Robert Worthington Smith, P.176

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

Anglican Missionary Efforts, 1807-1823

The Anglican Church began to rethink its efforts at the turn of the 19th century because of the growing influence of its evangelical wing. This wing of the Anglican Church was calling for much more aggressive amelioration efforts to allow the Anglican Church any real hope of converting enslaved people to Anglicanism.¹⁰⁹ This also coincided with a rise in domestic pressure back in Britain, with the same aim of pushing for genuine amelioration in the British West Indies.

With the above in mind, to what extent did amelioration did take place during this period? To what extent was domestic pressure in Britain and from sections of the Anglican Church successful in bringing about amelioration and Christianization in the British Caribbean? In regards to the first query, amelioration to a degree had already begun to take place in its infancy and I have also discussed how abolitionists had hoped that after 1807, slavery would gradually be phased out. A significant reason for the latter was that because slaves could no longer be replaced, amelioration would have to coincide in order to maintain slave populations in the British West Indies, this process eventually leading to emancipation. Therefore, in order to discuss to what extent amelioration helped in the Anglican Church's Christianization effort, it is important to discuss the amelioration process itself. In regards to how accurate abolitionist were in their predictions that amelioration would inevitably happen more rapidly after 1807 and if it did, to what extent did it assist in the Anglican Church's Christianization effort.

It is noted that the slave sugar economy had significant capacity for innovation from the 1790s up through to the 1820s.¹¹⁰ A good example were the Codrington plantations, where the amelioration efforts undertaken there (i.e. increased maintenance standards and less workloads) could be observed broadly across the rest of the British Caribbean, even if they were not as radical.¹¹¹ This allowed plantations in the British Caribbean, who up until the 18th century had relied very heavily on importation of slaves, to have far greater demographic self-

¹⁰⁹ James Latimer, P.436

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ J.R. Ward, *The Amelioration of British West Indian Slavery, 1750-1834: Technical Change in the Plough*, P.42

sufficiency. Though only one slave colony ever reached full self-sufficiency (Barbados).¹¹² So it can be seen already that the assumptions of the abolitionists were at least in part proven correct and it can be said that amelioration accelerated during this period.

During the period of 1807 to 1823, there was the emergence of parliamentary amelioration. These were measures that were coerced upon the colonial governments in the British Caribbean by the imperial government back in London. This happened as domestic opinion towards the treatment of slaves in the British Caribbean (along with the lack of Christianization of the slaves) started to turn against the planter's. This pressure would amplify much more during and after 1823, as will be discussed in the next chapter but it was certainly present during this period as well. The first law of parliamentary amelioration took place in 1815 with the "Registration Act".¹¹³ This required all plantation managers, overseers, or attorney's to submit an annual register of slaves to the colonial office and this would include the name, sex, age, and class of the slave. This was done to in theory make the planters more accountable for their slaves and to discourage abuse, although this piece of legislation did not work to discourage abuses and faced immense hostility from colonial planter's. This can be explained by the fact that whilst the legislation required a register of slaves, it had no tangible mechanism to stop the abuse itself. So because pressure from Britain was not as robust as it was during and after 1823, amelioration could not take hold as well.

When discussing public opinion in Britain turning against slavery: it is important to mention the growing discontent within the Anglican Church itself over the lack of progress of the Christianization programme. One was a key member of the Anglican Church's leadership, being the Bishop Porteus, the Bishop of London.¹¹⁴ Porteus in 1808 even went so far as to make a pamphlet aimed at proprietors, legislators, and governors in the British West Indies; making the case for Christianization as a means of making the slaves more obedient and docile. Whilst not an explicit call for the abolition of slavery, it is still highly significant that a member of the Established Church would make such open calls for reform of the slave system. Therefore, it's still very indicative of public opinion at the time and which way public opinion was turning. What makes this even more

¹¹² J.R. Ward, *The Amelioration of British West Indian Slavery, 1750-1834: Technical Change in the Plough*, P.43

¹¹³ Christa Dierksheide, P187

¹¹⁴ Robert Worthington Smith, P.176

significant is that the Bishop of London was nominally in charge of religious affairs in the British Caribbean,¹¹⁵ so this demonstrates further the shift in public opinion and is a clear example of why the British state was engaging in parliamentary amelioration.

Planters – whilst being resistant to amelioration measures imposed by the British state – would rather Christianization be conducted under the auspices of the Anglican Church if forced to, rather than by Nonconforming sects like the Baptists or Moravians.¹¹⁶ There were some exceptions. In Jamaica for example (though they were hated by most planter's), Moravians in the island were given permission by some slave owners to preach on their plantations, with the first Baptists and Wesleyans coming over after the American Revolution.¹¹⁷ These were on a case by case basis and were down to the individual “enlightened” plantation owners who were personally more receptive to Christianization. These were more exceptions, rather than the rule in the British Caribbean, as the brand of Christianity espoused by the dissenting sects was far more egalitarian than that of the Anglican Church. With even the latter struggling much of the time with its Christianization efforts.

So what did all of the previously mentioned implicate for the Anglican Church's Christianization effort in the British Caribbean? Did the planters show a degree of cooperation with the Established Church? Going off the primary sources directly from the missionaries in the British Caribbean, it makes for bleak reading. Interestingly, it indicates the greater importance of structural and organisational considerations to the Christianization effort of the Anglican Church over that of amelioration.

In particular, correspondences give us this unique look into the operations of the Colonial Church. These would centre around those missionaries in the West Indies and the Bishop of London. These correspondences are particularly interesting to observe in the “old” colonies such as Jamaica and Antigua (not least because they were under the greater pressure to reform). In the former colony there was condemnation of enslaved people, with them being perceived as: “being anything like civilised beings, they have no sense of religious or moral

¹¹⁵ Peter W. Williams, P.246

¹¹⁶ Robert Worthington Smith, PP.176-177

¹¹⁷ Christer Petley, P.77

prosperity”.¹¹⁸ In the latter you see discussion surrounding the obstruction of the Church’s efforts amongst the slaves, in regards to slave marriages and the direct intervention of the Bishop of London was even sought.¹¹⁹ This ties in to planter resistance to amelioration efforts and previous mentions before that to planters general resistance to Christianization efforts. Shortly before the 1823 reforms, a memorandum to the Bishop of Durham dated the 28th of November 1821 had stated that: “religious instruction amongst the negroes has not been successfully communicated”. With reasons ranging from Rectors not having the spare time to instruct enslaved people, to the local clergy not being encouraged enough due to lack of organisation.¹²⁰

The lack of organisation and centralised control meant that the Anglican Church had little to no tools to influence events in the British Caribbean. This meant that the Church could not overcome local planter resistance to the Christianization effort and was severely hindered in conducting their affairs. This situation is again juxtaposed to the situation of the Catholic church in the Spanish, Portuguese, and French colonies where the Catholic Church either controlled directly or indirectly controlled their own plantations or were allowed significantly more freedom to operate in the West Indies than the Anglican Church did.¹²¹ To give some perspective, the Anglican Church (indirectly through the SPG owning the Codrington estates) owned anywhere between 200-400 slaves from its acquisition to abolition, whilst the Jesuit order (just one branch of the Catholic church) by comparison owned 17,000 slaves at its height.¹²² An extreme example of this lack of organisation of the Colonial Church was Tobago, which in 1817 only had one curate.¹²³

Jamaica was more “forward” thinking in terms of its receptiveness to Christianizing its slave population. A letter to the Bishop of London dated the 3rd of September 1817 from the rector of Manchester, stated that the Jamaican assembly recently passed an act that promoted the religious instruction of slaves, with the backing of the Anglican Church (1818 curate act), which showed Jamaica was comparatively ahead of the curve to other British Caribbean colonies.¹²⁴ He goes on to state that this had some success and is a clear example of where the

¹¹⁸ Lambeth, Lambeth Palace Library, FP Howley 2

¹¹⁹ FP Howley 2

¹²⁰ FP Howley 2

¹²¹ Travis Glasson, *Mastering Christianity*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), P.145

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ FP Howley 2

¹²⁴ FP Howley 2

organisation and the cooperation with plantocracy and local elites were there, the Christianization process was workable. A theme that will be seen to a far greater degree in the second chapter.

There was a similar development taking place in Bermuda. An act was passed by the Assembly on March 11th 1820 and then by the legislative council on the 16th of March, which stipulated that each of the four livings in Bermuda (containing the 8 parishes) shall have rector, sponsored and educated by the Anglican Church.¹²⁵ This would increase the number of clergyman within the island and the Islands treasury would be used to fund the rectors (£200 each for living). Further demonstrating the greater importance of organisational and structural considerations, rather than amelioration, as well as having the plantocracy on side. The fact Bermuda was not a sugar plantation based society was most likely a significant influencer in this success, as the anxieties surrounding planter supremacy would be as potent.

The latter consideration is again important, as we can observe in further correspondence. James Curtin was a long standing missionary on the island of Antigua from 1798 up until at least the early 1820s.¹²⁶ Meaning that he was able to observe first-hand the developments in the Anglican Church's missionary effort during this time period, which is extremely valuable. He would go on in further correspondences between him and the Bishop of London to state there is: "still, a great backwardness amongst some in authority here at present" and generally he needs more assistance in his efforts.¹²⁷

It's worth mentioning however that it was not just a case of planter resistance hindering the Anglican Church's missionary effort, there is evidence to suggest there was a lack of enthusiasm on the part of the slaves as well. A letter from a James Dawn based in Jamaica (most likely in the year 1818) is quoted in saying: "I was called upon to preach to the negroes and all who could attend...every Sunday afternoon. But instead of negroes I had a congregation of whites and of the people of colour".¹²⁸ Dawn doesn't seem particularly concerned by this. This

¹²⁵ FP Howley 2

¹²⁶ Lambeth, Lambeth Palace Library, FP Howley 3

¹²⁷ FP Howley 3

¹²⁸ FP Howley 2

can be interpreted as the lack of amelioration making the slaves less receptive to the Anglican Church's teachings.

This is in contrast to other Christian sects however; such as the Baptists, Methodists, and Moravians who were seen by the slaves as outside of the official structures of the plantation system and were more able to blend Christian beliefs with the traditional African beliefs of newly arrived slaves. It is noted that these Nonconforming sects had a greater emphasis on group participation and singing hymns, which made the experience more amicable to the slaves. Furthermore, slaves felt a level of independence and freedom that they would not feel inside a Anglican Church, adding further to the idea the Anglican Church was seen as merely another instrument of oppression. In addition to this, these Nonconforming sects were more inclined to allow their black subordinates to do their work on the plantations, circumventing the planters and their authority.¹²⁹ Nonconformists did also undermine the authority of planters in another significant way. This is best epitomised by the Baptists who saw that slave communities were centred around the plantation, so they sought to set up entirely new alternative communities centred around the chapel.¹³⁰ This is an important point because unlike the Anglican Church which sought an alliance/working relationship with the plantocracy in order to missionize, the Baptists actively sought to remove the planters out of the equation entirely.

This warranted a backlash in parts of the British Caribbean, notably in Jamaica. In 1802 the Jamaican legislature passed a law that required all missionaries to have a license to preach and teach in an attempt to drive away the Nonconformist sects. This was further added on to in 1807, when the Jamaican legislature passed a law permitting only missionaries from the Anglican Church to preach to the slaves.¹³¹ This exemplifies the need for all the missionaries at the time to be able to have a good working relationship with not only the plantocracy but the other elites of the British Caribbean, in this case the political elites (though there was overlap). The fear that Christian egalitarianism would undermine the position of the plantocracy was a very real threat and the Anglican Church was not immune from this distrust. This Christian egalitarianism was born out of the aforementioned religious/evangelical revival from the 1770s onwards, which propagated the idea that people

¹²⁹ Robert Worthington Smith, P.174

¹³⁰ Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002), P.97

¹³¹ Robert Worthington Smith, P.175

could be born again under a new Christian identity.¹³² For planters, having slaves form their own individual identities was unacceptable, as it gave the slaves of self-worth whilst being under the dehumanising bondage of chattel slavery.

It was this acknowledgment of the unease felt by planters over the Christianization project and Christian egalitarianism that compelled the Anglican Church to play along. This can be seen in a Bible made for enslaved people in the British Caribbean, which was published on behalf of the Anglican Church. All of the parts of the Bible that had any egalitarian, radical or anti-slavery messaging (i.e. Exodus) were left out and censored. The parts that were left in are as follows: Genesis, Deuteronomy, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, The book of Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Isaiah, Daniel, Joel, The Gospel according to St Matthew, The Gospel according to St Luke, The Gospel according to St John, The Acts, Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, Hebrews, James, Peter, and John.¹³³

What all this shows that as well organisational and structural concerns, the colonial clergy of the Anglican Church also had to take into consideration their working relationship with the local plantocracy and other local elites. Curtin mentions when there was resistance amongst the plantocracy and other elites, his efforts were severally impeded upon. Yet when he found allies and made efforts to reach out to the local elites, his prospects were far more prosperous. It is another factor in the Anglican Church's missionary effort that appeared to take greater priority in the minds of Anglican Church officials, rather than the temporal wellbeing of slaves. Not to say it was never a consideration as that would be inaccurate to state. But my interpretation of the primary source material does seem to indicate it was no more than a secondary consideration.

This is supported by the fact of how understaffed and under resourced the Colonial Church was at this point. A rector in some colonies would have had as many as 18,000 whites and blacks in their parish.¹³⁴ This is why earlier plans to have a system of education for the slaves after the abolition of the slave trade on the Lancaster

¹³² Catherine Hall, P.86

¹³³ Lambeth, Lambeth Palace Library, Bible for Negro Slaves, 1808

¹³⁴ Robert Worthington Smith, P.177

model (which was the model used for the poor in England) failed.¹³⁵ Indeed, the only colony during this period to take the Christianization effort substantially seriously was Jamaica. The colony would raise taxes to pay for curates to assist rectors in Christianizing enslaved people.¹³⁶ This was done in part to dismiss criticism back in Britain but to also keep the slaves out of the hands of the Nonconforming sects. Whilst it was mentioned previously with parliamentary amelioration that domestic pressure in Britain during this period was generally not enough to spur on radical amelioration and Christianization: this appears to be the major exception to this. Furthermore, Sundays were given to slaves for worship, along with two other days during the week with the express permission of the planter's.¹³⁷

These measures had their desired effects. One clergyman remarked that in the 15 years previous to 1817, he would baptize on average 100 slaves per year but in the first 6 months of 1817 he had baptized 5,000 out of 24,000 slaves in his parish.¹³⁸ However, it should be noted that whilst these slaves had nominally become part of the Church, their tangible understanding of Christianity was very much to be desired, meaning the Anglican Church still had much work to do.¹³⁹ In addition to this, the slaves who tended to be baptized were the so called "elite" slaves. These comprised of the craftsmen, domestics, drivers, and mulattoes and it would take until the 1820s for slaves further down the chain to be baptized and converted in significant numbers.¹⁴⁰

As previously discussed, towards the end of the 18th century the SPG had lost interest in spreading the gospel to enslaved people, even though that was one of its express purposes. Causing rifts within the Church over the issue. By this period it is evidenced that the SPG made greater strides towards amelioration, in order to further assist in its missionary effort at Codrington. By 1805 the first hospital in the upper estate was completed and from the years of 1813 to 1823 the SPG spent twice as much on medical care for enslaved people then they had done in the first half of the 18th century.¹⁴¹ The workload of slaves had been significantly reduced by the introduction of the plow. This is important to mention because whilst I have put great emphasis on the

¹³⁵ James Latimer, P.441

¹³⁶ Robert Worthington Smith, P.177

¹³⁷ Ibid

¹³⁸ Ibid, PP.177-178

¹³⁹ Ibid, P.178

¹⁴⁰ Michael Craton, P.154

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

importance of organisational and structural considerations, as well as the importance of having a working relationship with the local plantocracy of the British Caribbean, it is worth mentioning that amelioration did happen and did likely have a positive effect on the Anglican Church's missionary effort in the British West Indies. Even if it was secondary to other factors.

Conclusion For this Chapter

What can be deduced from this background chapter is that despite the nominally growing influence of the Church and the betterment of slaves conditions more generally, the missionizing effort was largely still a failure during this period. Planter society was still largely entrenched in its opposition to the missionizing of slaves and the lack of structure and organisation of the Colonial Church meant that this could not really be influenced by the Church itself. Whilst we do see demonstrated some pressure from the imperial government back in London, this does not come close to bringing about the radical change needed to bring about the results the Anglican Church desired.

Chapter2: SERINS, SPG, SPCK and the Plantocracy's endgame, 1823-

1833

The Association of West Indian Planters and Merchants

Popular pressure to end or reform slavery had existed in Britain from at least the late 18th century. However, this popular pressure had not been nearly enough to bring about enough reform to the slave system to drastically help the Anglican Church's missionary effort in the British Caribbean. During this period, we can see this is now the case; as the plantocracy and those dependant on the economic system of chattel slavery are genuinely concerned over the prospect that their position is for the first time, under genuine threat. These anxieties are well observed in the primary sources concerning the minutes of the Association of West India Planters and Merchants and is the best source to epitomize the 1823 split. Particularly on the theme of Colonial Church restructuring and the establishment of Bishopricks and centralised structure in the British Caribbean. This was the most definitive event that marks the split, but this is vitally important context in which to understand the Anglican Church's increased efforts on its missionary campaign during this period. The Association of West Indian Planters and Merchants was an organisation that acted as the lobbying body for the British Caribbean plantocracy. Formed in 1780, the body represented three primary groups: British sugar merchants, absentee planters (with there being a noticeable amount in parliament), and colonial agents.¹⁴²

There was growing concern amongst the British public that slave conditions needed to be improved. A subcommittee set up by the standing committee of the West Indian Planters and Merchants dated the 5th of April 1823 is quoted in stating this: "There is a very prevailing notion throughout the public, that a system ought to be adopted for improving the condition of negroes, by affording them more time and opportunities for receiving religious instruction".¹⁴³ It goes further to mention how enslaved people need to be given more civil rights (inferred to mean more protections against planter excesses) and receive less harsh treatment, whilst at the

¹⁴² Kathleen Mary Butler, *The Economics of Emancipation: Jamaica & Barbados, 1823-1843*, (University of North Carolina Press, 1995), P.8

¹⁴³ FP Howley 2

same time ensuring that slaves respect the authority of their masters, not that of parliament and British public opinion. This is not to say discussion in parliament had necessarily fermented insubordination at this point but rather the language of the document insinuates that if the amelioration process is inevitable, the plantocracy must be in control in order for order to be maintained in the British Caribbean slave societies.

On the latter, the subcommittee is quoted in saying that they must: “Do all in our power to remove such prejudice against the West India local governments”.¹⁴⁴ In addition to this they stated that any plans for amelioration would have the West India local governments involved. The biggest item mentioned is the fact that the subcommittee recognised that they could not push against public opinion and that the only way to get parliament onside to possibly preserve the slave system as a whole was to adopt amelioration. This was the only way to remove the aforementioned “prejudice” faced by the planter’s. This was vital

In a meeting of the standing committee dated April 25th 1823, where they went off the findings of the subcommittee meeting on the 5th of April and there was concern from Parliament that amelioration was going too slowly. They had this to say: “Resolved, that this committee cannot but view with the greatest alarm, the motion, of which notice has been given in the House of Commons, for a committee to enquire into the condition of the negroes in the West India colonies.”¹⁴⁵ Because of this alarm, they state that it’s pertinent to show that slave conditions aren’t as harsh as the public perceive it to be and are capable of improvement. Otherwise the plantocracy’s power would again be threatened. To this end they seek to implement a plan to carry this objective out.

This plan was fleshed out in a subcommittee meeting the next day on the 26th at the colonial club house, attended almost exclusively by members of Parliament.¹⁴⁶ In this committee meeting they advocated the abolition of Sunday markets, (when slaves sold their surplus produce on a Sunday) in order to allow slaves more time to devote to religious worship. Banning the use of the whip on the field and generally not used as a punishment unless in the presence of an overseer or two white persons or a free person of colour. Flogging was

¹⁴⁴ FP Howley 2

¹⁴⁵ FP Howley 2

¹⁴⁶ FP Howley 2

also no longer be used as a punishment for women and slaves should be allowed to own property so long as they were married. The sub committee also recommended the establishment of Anglican Church and Presbyterian churches for every plantation.¹⁴⁷

A further meeting of the standing committee on the 8th of May 1823 highlighted the dismay of those present at the ongoing talks in the House of Commons about the possibility of emancipation.¹⁴⁸ In fact, in 1823 Colonial Secretary Henry Bathurst would go on to send circulars to all the slave colonies detailing the new amelioration measures.¹⁴⁹ These measures included registering slave punishments, banning flogging for female slaves, slaves being allowed to give evidence in colonial courts, and proper religious instruction given to slaves (with the exception of the last one, most islands didn't fully implement these measures until after 1827).¹⁵⁰ Also in May 1823, the then foreign secretary George Canning created three general resolutions for improving slave conditions and preparing slaves for freedom.¹⁵¹ These were that slaves should receive religious instruction, laws preventing slaves from becoming "civilised" would be abolished, and slaves should be able to work for wages.

From the Earl of Bathurst's circular dispatches on the 9th of July 1823 would set into stone the British governments parliamentary amelioration agenda for the next several years.¹⁵² They were as follows:

- 1) Protectors of slaves should be established.
- 2) Slave evidence to be admitted in court.
- 3) Manumission of slaves encouraged.
- 4) Acquisition of property by slaves and the establishment of savings banks.
- 5) Marriage of slaves to be encouraged.

¹⁴⁷ FP Howley 2

¹⁴⁸ FP Howley 2

¹⁴⁹ Christa Dierksheide, P.189

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Olwyn M. Blouet, P.393

¹⁵² Ibid.

- 6) Family separation to be discouraged.
- 7) Punishment/whipping of slaves (especially female slaves) to be discouraged and recorded.
- 8) Observance of the sabbath and abolition of Sunday Markets and better moral and religious instruction of slaves

The Foreign and Colonial Secretary's declarations combined most likely prompted a meeting of the standing committee dated June 5th 1823 to get the subcommittee to warn the slave colonies of the situation they are in and the general mood of the British public at large.¹⁵³ Further to this, the subcommittee sent over the amelioration resolutions of the subcommittee to the slave colonies, to give them ideas of how to go forward with the situation at hand. This all culminated in a meeting on the 23rd of June 1823 of the standing committee, where as a result of a public appeal by the Society for the Conversion and Religious instructions of Negro slaves (SERINS), the standing committee adopted the following resolutions.¹⁵⁴

The first on the list was: "That this committee are of the opinion that the extension of the means of religious instruction is the best and surest foundation for the improvement of civil as well as moral condition of negroes in the West India colonies". This concession is evidence that the plantocracy and those who had a stake in the British Caribbean slave society finally submitted to external pressure from Britain and recognised that reform had to be made, or the slave system was entirely doomed. Without such reform, pressure from back Britain would soon reach crescendo and calls for slavery's abolition would of become irresistible. This is also significant because this comes off the back of only a couple months of continues debate and pressure from Britain, something that could not be achieved like this in the previous few decades. This was in addition, happening to a slave society that usually enjoyed relative autonomy to other European slave societies in the Americas (see discussion in the background surrounding Spain, France etc.).

¹⁵³ FP Howley 2

¹⁵⁴ FP Howley 2

In resolution 2, SERINS (the pre-eminent missionary group in the British Caribbean at the time) sent its thanks to the Association of West Indian Planters and Merchants subcommittee for its cooperation in helping the colonial clergy. This historically is not unheard of for the plantocracy or wider planter society to cooperate with missionaries and their efforts, but it was more of the exception rather than the rule up until this point. Now however – with the planters hands being tied – they had to engage properly with the colonial clergy to preserve their own positions and privileges in colonial society. This extended beyond just mere cooperation but actively funding the operations of SERINS to the tune of £1,000 (£119,000 in Today's money).¹⁵⁵

It can be observed and strongly argued through the minutes that external pressure from parliament forced this development of greater financial support being given to missionary societies and for greater planter cooperation to transpire. Amelioration in of itself was seen as vital to ensure that slaves would be far more receptive to the moves towards Christianization but this likely would not have happened to the degree it did without the panic strewn amongst the plantocracy because of external influences. Whilst at this specific point in 1823 the demands of the Colonial and Foreign Secretary's demands were not all met, it a significant step in the direction of amelioration and even eventual abolition.

Preamble to the Missionary reports

Anti-slavery activists found out that the abolition of the slave trade did not lead to slavery dying out and that planter cruelty still persisted.¹⁵⁶ Conditions for slaves in the British Caribbean improved somewhat leading up to this period but not nearly enough to the aforementioned activists. With the caveat that this in fact varied between the colonies, but this outlook was more of a general one amongst these activists. This ties in well with the minutes of the West India Merchants and Planter's, as it mirrors the merchants and planters concerns about British public opinion turning against them.

¹⁵⁵ <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator> Bank of England Inflation Calculator

¹⁵⁶ Travis Glasson, P.226

As well as the renewed attack by abolitionists in 1823, there also coincided a greater centralisation efforts of the Anglican Church in the British West Indies.¹⁵⁷ The Anglican Church would finally set up bishoprics, assigning one bishop for Jamaica (also including the Bahamas) and one for Barbados and the British Leeward Islands (Essentially for the rest of Britain's Caribbean holdings) in 1823.¹⁵⁸ This went a long way to solving the long standing structural issues the Church faced in the British West Indies. The UK government further implemented a new round of parliamentary amelioration (to take the wind out of the sail of the abolitionist movement) and had a particular emphasis on the missionary efforts on enslaved people.¹⁵⁹ Indeed, historians such as Mary Turner believe that the missionaries were transformed from reformers allied with their planter patrons who saw their work as a potential sacrifice to anti-slavery agitation, to reformers who actively benefited from the anti-slavery movement and opposed the slave owners.¹⁶⁰

But to what extent was this true? To what extent did missionaries in the British Caribbean benefit from the renewed anti-slavery agitation back in Britain? How much did missionaries in the British Caribbean really come to oppose the plantocracy? In addition to this, how does this statement fit into the wider debate surrounding the extent to which amelioration assisted in the Anglican Church's missionary effort in the British West Indies? To answer this, I will discuss and analyse the primary sources from the three main missionary/auxiliary arms of the Anglican Church, which includes the SPG, SERINS, and the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (SPCK).

¹⁵⁷ Mary Turner, P.102

¹⁵⁸ Peter W. Williams, P.247

¹⁵⁹ Mary Turner, P.102

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

SERINS

Starting with the biggest and most relevant of the three: I shall begin by discussing SERINS. SERINS was given its royal charter on the 13th of October 1794, on the: “34th year of the kings [George III] reign”.¹⁶¹ As stipulated in: “A short account of the charitable fund”, a wealthy patron by the name of Robert Boyle asked for the proceeds of his estate in his will to be used: “for the advancement or propagation of the Christian religion amongst infidels”.¹⁶² The original purpose of the proceeds was for native Americans in the British American colonies, mainly children in the college of William and Mary in Virginia.¹⁶³ However, during the American revolution these efforts were disrupted and the Bishop of London decided to later on stop it altogether, as he believed Robert Boyles will was meant for conversion in Britain’s foreign dominions, which no longer applied to America.¹⁶⁴ As a result, the Bishop decided to create SERINS from these funds.

SERINS was different to the SPG and SPCK, in that it was an official institutional arm of the Anglican Church and not just an independent/semi-independent auxiliary arm, as was the case with the SPCK and SPG respectively. One thing of note is how high profile the upper echelons of SERINS was, with the president being the Bishop of London, vice presidents including Robert Peel MP, the Lord Mayor of London, and the Dean of Westminster.¹⁶⁵ It also had William Wilberforce – the famous abolitionist – within its ranks when he was alive.¹⁶⁶ Demonstrating how intertwined British society was with the institution slavery or at the very least with the missionary aspect of it. Furthermore, out of the 31 governors of the society, 16 were Anglican Church officials and included the likes of William Huskisson MP who was the president of the board of trade at the time.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶¹ Lambeth, Lambeth Palace Library, Charter given to the society on the 13th of October 1794

¹⁶² Lambeth, Lambeth Palace Library, A short account of the charitable fund

¹⁶³ A short account of the charitable fund

¹⁶⁴ A short account of the charitable fund

¹⁶⁵ Lambeth, Lambeth Palace Library, Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, July to December 1823

¹⁶⁶ Lambeth, Lambeth Palace Library, CFS F/4

¹⁶⁷ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, July to December 1823

In its 1823 report, it directly mentions the previously discussed resolutions and meetings of the committee of the West India Planters and Merchants of the City of London, particularly those resolutions that involved expanding religious instruction to the British Caribbean and the payment of £1,000 to the society.¹⁶⁸ In the report, SERINS mentions a meeting of the clergy in Barbados dated the 5th of August 1823, in which it they state the following:

“They Look with confidence to the cordial Co-operation of every enlightened master; and the soil which they have to work upon is so improved by the fostering care and indulgent treatment of the owner to his slaves, that they are sanguine in the hope of reaping the fruits of their labours at no very distant day”.

This quote is important as it insinuates that the Anglican clergy of Barbados sensed a sea change in the mood of the local plantocracy. In that they became much more open to genuinely cooperating with the colonial clergy, so much so that the clergy of Barbados feel confident that their efforts will not be in vain for much longer. Cases included those of “progressive planter’s” such as John Gladstone who told his plantation managers to improve the conditions of the slaves and to allow for religious instruction.¹⁶⁹ However, this would in a way unravel as several of his slaves were central to the 1823 slave rebellion in Demerara. This did no favours in abetting the nerves of the plantocracy, who as mentioned before still had concerns that any loosening of their authority would lead to insurrection, which was somewhat vindicated by this rebellion.

The Demerara Slave Revolt happened as a culmination of various issues. In the immediate run up to the revolt: the very same parliamentary debates that had influenced the West Indian Merchants and Planters to embrace amelioration and Christianization, were felt acutely in Demerara itself. Thomas Buxtons motion in the HOC for example calling slavery: “Repugnant to the British Constitution and Christian religion” helped to rally anti-slavery support in the HOC and amongst the wider public.¹⁷⁰ As mentioned previously, after the governments consultation with the West Indian Merchants and Planter’s, several “recommendations” were forwarded to the colonies but it was clear that if these recommendations were not followed, the British government would

¹⁶⁸ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, July to December 1823

¹⁶⁹ Christa Dierksheide, P.180

¹⁷⁰ Emilia Viotti Da Costa, P.177

enforce these measures by force.¹⁷¹ As such the Demeraran authorities very reluctantly accepted these measures and even though they did not make this public (because of stiff planter opposition), word did get out to the general slave population and some thought this conferred emancipation.¹⁷² This was a similar situation to the Barbados Slave Revolt of 1816 where rumours of emancipation helped spur on the revolt.¹⁷³

In addition to this, the colonies slave population was under the heavy influence of the evangelical missionary group The London Missionary Society (LMS). Before the LMS came to the colony in 1808 there was no substantial missionary effort on Demerara, with there just being one Anglican minister and one Dutch minister present. This was due to the fact that the colony made an active effort beforehand to stop any Nonconformist or independent evangelical groups from entering the colony.¹⁷⁴ This only changed when a pious Dutch planter invited the LMS's John Wray to the colony, being followed by another missionary being invited in 1809 to look after planter's children.¹⁷⁵ From the onset, there was severe hostility on the part of the Demerara colonists towards the LMS, as they believed that their evangelical teachings would turn Demerara into another Haiti, who's own rebellion was a very recent memory. This does demonstrate once more the importance of the missionaries, whether they be of the Established Church or Nonconformists, to gain the support of the local plantocracy but in reality the colony was fighting against the tide even before 1823. Ironically, the colony officially joined the British Empire just as abolitionism and free trade (the latter eroding protective tariffs, meaning the slave economy suffered from further competition) was gaining prominence, with the colony being permanently annexed by Britain in 1803.¹⁷⁶ Even though the 1803 Capitulation act guaranteed the colonists right to maintain as much of their autonomy as possible, (i.e. in areas taxes, traditional laws kept in place, public officers kept in place etc.) there was this growing sense in Britain that the souls of enslaved people needed to be saved and that imperial government intervention would become inevitable.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷¹ Emilia Viotti Da Costa, P.178

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid. P.179

¹⁷⁴ Ibid. PP.87-88

¹⁷⁵ Ibid. P.89

¹⁷⁶ Ibid. P.21

¹⁷⁷ Ibid. P.20

By the time 1823 came to pass, the Demerara authorities did try to resist the influence of the LMS had on their slaves by reissuing an old proclamation that slaves could not attend chapels without passes (which enraged slaves on the East Coast of Demerara where the LMS had a strong following).¹⁷⁸ By this point, the slaves had gotten used to the customary rights (including their right to religious observation) and these new developments by the Demerara authorities transpired when the 1823 parliamentary debates were taking place and notions of rights and freedoms, as well as the rhetoric coming from the LMS missionaries, reached their apex. All these factors would lead to the rebellion which lasted from the 18th of August 1823 – 20th of August 1823.

Even so, this revolt was not enough to unravel the whole missionary and ameliorative project (unlike the 1830-1831 Baptist war in Jamaica, which will be discussed later) and even if there was the desire too, popular revulsion surrounding slavery as an institution only deepened amongst the British public in the 1820s.¹⁷⁹ This gives credence to the themes discussed in the minutes of the West India Merchants and Planter's, where there is a genuine mood of fear amongst those deeply involved within the slave system that British public opinion is turning against them to a unbearable degree. In fact – whilst the rebellion did spur on anti-abolitionist feeling as the rebellion vindicated previous fears that the Christianization effort would lead to insurrection – it animated the abolitionists even more. Especially after the death penalty was given to LMS preacher John Smith (who would die in prison) as abolitionists saw the rebellion and death of Smith as evidence of the plantocracy's cruelty and excesses.¹⁸⁰ So much so, that regardless of the slave revolt, the following year in 1824 the Demerara authorities instituted the Office of Protector of the Slaves; where slaves could launch complaints against abuses and this office was also set up in Berbice, Trinidad and St Lucia.¹⁸¹

One aspect of the Demerara episode that must be highlighted is how the LMS missionaries acted in relation to the plantocracy. The missionaries of the LMS received widescale hostility the moment they entered the colony and the colonists wished to expel these missionaries, much the same as they had done before. However, the LMS managed to survive because of their ability to utilise pressure from back in Britain to keep them in the colony. Wray, who was aware of the opposition he faced in Demerara, asked people he knew within the colony

¹⁷⁸ Emilia Viotti Da Costa, P.174

¹⁷⁹ Christa Dierksheide, P.182

¹⁸⁰ Emilia Viotti Da Costa, PP.280-281

¹⁸¹ Christa Dierksheide, P.198

to sign a petition on his behalf which was then sent to the LMS as evidence of his good results at preaching and the LMS in turn sent these results to allies within parliament (Wilberforce being chief among them) and the government, who would then support the missionaries work in Demerara on this basis.¹⁸² This would create a recurring pattern where whenever the LMS would face continued opposition within the colony, they would lobby the imperial government to defend them on their behalf. This example is particularly important as the primary material is reliant on missionary reports and correspondence and this example does cast doubt on the reliability of such reports.

Whilst this is a legitimate concern, we must also recognise the unique context the LMS found themselves in. Unlike SERINS, which was an official arm of the Anglican Church and had the Anglican church's blessing and the (very reluctant) cooperation of the plantocracy, the LMS was an independent evangelical missionary group. It had to work particularly hard to lobby on their own behalf to ensure their work could continue in Demerara (in a way that was not necessary for SERINS), meaning it created perverse incentives to overstate their successes in the colony. Considering the previous discussion was in relation the LMS's work in the lead up the rebellion (before the setting up of the bishoprics and the 1823 parliamentary debates which forced the cooperation of the plantocracy), this was especially the case.

Giving credence to the notion that external pressures had more of an effect, we can explore this follow up quote which states:

“In the second place, where the right of the master over the services of the slave is absolute, it is next to impossible to attempt the work of conversion on the latter without the aid of the former. The silent operation of time has at length brought us to that period when almost every master looks on his slaves with such feelings of kind and intimate relationship as dispose him to meet any rational plan for their religious and moral instruction”.¹⁸³

¹⁸² Emilia Viotti Da Costa, P.90

¹⁸³ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, July to December 1823

The “silent operation of time” phraseology is interesting because it underscores the pressure felt by the plantocracy in regards to British public opinion, as the constant onslaught from back in Britain will have had to have taken its toll at this point. However, the more important part of this quote is most likely referring to the amelioration process. In both quotes you see a feeling amongst the clergy of Barbados that masters are beginning to take the amelioration process much more seriously than they have done previously and feel that with this road block overcome, they can now have serious chance of being successful in their missionary efforts. But the “silent operation of time” phraseology also likely in part refers to past ameliorative efforts, where some progress was made and helped to undermine that absolutist power between that of the master and the slave. Therefor setting the groundwork for the much more serious endeavours during this time period. This can be seen also that in Barbados but also Jamaica (both comparatively older colonies) during this period put in large resources to build hospitals for the slaves.¹⁸⁴ At the same time, this does seem to have again been spurred on by external pressures indicating this was the more vital factor.

This is partly in contrast to statements made in the previous chapter that put the emphasis on organisational and structural deficiencies. However, what must be remembered is that these statements put a great deal of emphasis on the cooperation (or lack thereof) of the local plantocracy and this is where the criticisms of these deficiencies came about, where the Colonial church did not have structures in place to assist its missionaries in the British West Indies. By the time of this report in contrast, bishoprics and a central church structure had been established in the British Caribbean. This strengthened the Colonial Church and along with pressure from back in Britain, could go a long way in explaining renewed planter openness to the missionary efforts of the Anglican Church and amelioration. It still appears structural and organisational concerns and external pressure still take some degree of primacy, as this can be seen in the quotes above to be a necessary pre-requisite to the amelioration mentioned previously.

The language of the quotes appears to indicate that planters are for the first time generally opening up to amelioration as means to further religious instruction (to tame public opinion back in Britain), rather than

¹⁸⁴ Justin Roberts, P.48

primarily down to economic considerations. Though there are other considerations at play here. Whilst planters were partly opening up to further religious instruction due to external pressure from Britain from Evangelicals and humanitarians, the economic reality in the British Caribbean also played a significant role. Namely, the price of slaves increasing made slaves far less expendable, and it could be argued that such measures would have had to have followed a similar (though not as pronounced) trajectory, regardless of external influences.¹⁸⁵ Whilst this may be partly true, the renewed vigour of criticism of the slave system in the British Caribbean cannot be understated.

The fact that the clergy in Barbados had also been working to produce a plan for instruction on the island for the slave population, gives further evidence to this idea.¹⁸⁶ As will be further discussed, during the period of 1823 to 1833; you see previously unprecedented cooperation between the colonial clergy, the local plantocracy, and local West Indian legislators to produce together plans collectively to produce plans for conversion efforts of enslaved people.

Mr James Curtin of Antigua again offers valuable insight, with a letter he sent to SERINS. He is quoted in stating that: “I beg to observe, that on some of the estates mentioned in the schedule, almost all the slaves are baptized by ministers of the Established Church” and goes further to say: “It being maxim with me never to interfere with slaves as to ministerial duties without a written or personal application from the owners”.¹⁸⁷ This shows a clear success in the Christianization effort of the Anglican Church that in some estates in Antigua the slaves are almost all the slaves are baptized as Anglicans. It also does demonstrate that a marked difference in attitude amongst the plantocracy in Antigua. This in part can be again attributed to the fact that Antigua is one of the aforementioned “old” colonies in the British Caribbean, meaning its pressures to reform were greater than other newer colonies. This was exacerbated by the fact Antigua was a prominent sugar colony and sugar planting limited the physical welfare of slaves, whereas colonies that did not produce sugar or were less reliant on the industry did not face such pressures.¹⁸⁸ Such colonies include Barbice, St Lucia, and Trinidad.

¹⁸⁵ J.R. Ward, *The Amelioration of the British West Indian Slavery*, P.1,999

¹⁸⁶ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, July to December 1823

¹⁸⁷ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, July to December 1823

¹⁸⁸ J.R. Ward, *The Amelioration of the British West Indian Slavery*, P.1,201

As discussed in the previous chapter, the lack of a central structure for the Anglican Church in the West Indies, along with poor organisation on the ground, meant that the Anglican Church could not penetrate the plantations for the sake of missionary work. We can see here fortunes did change and it can be at least partly attributed to better organisation and structure of the Colonial Church. This is demonstrated in Curtin's 1816 correspondence, as you see him describing a degree of "backwardness" amongst the plantocracy of Antigua, whereas you now see in this time period a much greater openness. Curtin mentions he still needs the blessing and patronage of local planter's, but the fact that he has had so much recent success after 1823 is an indicator that the local planters have largely done away with this aforementioned "backwardness" as Curtin put it. It can also be perceived as an indication of improved organisational abilities of the Colonial Church.

Curtin does also mention: "It may also be worthy of notice, that a number of slaves which I had baptized in the town of St Johns...more than one fourth, or perhaps a third part, are now free people".¹⁸⁹ This gives an important emphasis to the role of amelioration to the recent successes of the Anglican Church in their missionary effort in the British Caribbean. The offer of freedom being a massive incentive for slaves to convert to Anglicanism. This ties in with the assertion that the Anglican Church transformed itself from being intertwined with the interests of the local plantocracy, to being seen more as a liberating and reformed force for good, on the side of the enslaved peoples interests. Though not as far as being directly opposed to the planters themselves. As Curtin concluded:

"From all this I infer, that slavery would gradually die away by a steady uniform perseverance in the performance of all sacred duties of Christianity, which, by its own action, would imperceptibly produce more theories which can be devised for emancipation".¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁹ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, July to December 1823

¹⁹⁰ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, July to December 1823

This touches upon an idea that the amelioration programme did not have a specific method for emancipation but prepared slaves for the privileges of free citizens.¹⁹¹ Gradual emancipation, which abolitionists had hoped to achieve by the abolition of the slave trade and the lack thereof, caused renewed vigour in the abolitionist movement from 1823 onwards.

We can see so far that the claim that the missionaries began to oppose the plantocracy doesn't hold any real weight. As we can see with quotes of Mr Curtin and others, the Anglican missionaries don't really come to oppose the plantocracy. In fact, working relationships with the missionaries and the plantocracy were at an unprecedented high. This is in large part due to the renewed pressure from abolitionists back in the Britain, so in this instance it is correct to state that missionaries in the British Caribbean certainly benefited from renewed anti-slavery agitation, but not to the extent that the Anglican Church missionaries came to oppose the plantocracy or the institution of slavery itself. Whilst this renewed anti-slavery agitation did make its way to the rank and file of the Anglican Church, the institution itself and the missionaries abroad did not come to.

Most importantly of all, how do these primary sources and the discussion surrounding them, fit into the wider discussion of to what extent did amelioration assist in the Anglican Church's missionary effort in the British Caribbean? As said previously, anti-slavery pressure from back in Britain intensified much more so than in previous times, urging the plantocracy and local elites of the West Indies to act. This came in the form of unprecedented cooperation with the Colonial Church. What is also critical is that this coincided with the centralisation of Church authority in the British Caribbean, which facilitated the organisational ability of the Colonial Church to be able to coordinate these actions. These developments in my view do take primacy over amelioration in terms of what better aided the Anglican Church's missionary efforts in the British West Indies.

This can be seen further in the 1824 report for SERINS. We see in the report present the dissemination of Mr Harte's lectures on the gospel of St Matthew to the general clergyman and bishops of the West Indies. The elites of the colonies approved of this development, particularly in Demerara where the reports states: "[The] governors have felt the advantage which must arise from a more ample supply of works...as also the great want

¹⁹¹ Mary Turner, P.104

of books of elementary instruction for the negroes".¹⁹² We see here once more a marked change in the attitudes of the elites of the British Caribbean. Not only in religious instruction but in this case education as well, as they no longer viewed a more educated and instructed slave population as a threat to their position. So much so the colony would spend £59, 9s, 3d on 2,378 religious texts that year.¹⁹³

What is interesting here is that Demerara was at this time a very newly acquired colony compared to other British Caribbean colonies, only being acquired in 1808. Meaning that it would not have faced the same aforementioned economic pressures that older colonies such as Jamaica, Barbados, and Antigua faced, and yet the elites of the colonies embraced the Christianization effort none the less. With newer colonies such as Demerara (particularly ones like it that were acquired in the early 19th century as a result of the Napoleonic wars) they had their own exceptional circumstances as to why many embraced Christianization efforts. The main factor being that because colonies like Demerara were only acquired very recently, they lacked representative assemblies like the older colonies did, meaning that their ability to resist Christianization was much weaker than the older colonies.¹⁹⁴ In addition to having a far less established plantocracy, it is very possible that colonies like Demerara didn't see much point in putting up a fight, even if it was desired.

There was a contrast with missionaries in their previous experiences and their experiences after the 1823 break. This appeared to be because of the now strong position the Colonial Church found itself in after the bishoprics were established in the British Caribbean. A notable example is In Antigua where Rev. James Curtin explains that his school in St Johns increased in popularity, as it was giving out religious texts to slaves and free coloured's, with the number of estates that gave permission to his ministry increasing to 51 and he further stated that no estate would: "reject him at this point".¹⁹⁵ This is very important in the wider debate of this thesis because as was seen in the background chapter, even after amelioration was beginning to intensify after the abolition of the slave trade, the Colonial Church was in such a weak position that it could not really exploit any advances in amelioration, bar perhaps Codrington Estates.

¹⁹² Lambeth, Lambeth Palace Library, Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1824

¹⁹³ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1824

¹⁹⁴ J.R. Ward, *The Amelioration of the British West Indian Slavery*, P.1,201

¹⁹⁵ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1824

We see this growing positive attitude on the part of the plantocracy in other colonies in the British Caribbean, namely colonies such as Montserrat. An example being that of missionary Mr Luckock who was appointed rector of St Anthony district. He reported to SERINS that many proprietors were willing to have his ministry amongst their slaves and had secured the right to read prayers and instruct slaves on nine plantations.¹⁹⁶ This actually brought a significant number of slaves under Mr Luckock's instruction, with the total number of slaves of the nine plantations being 1,104, 260 of whom regularly went to church.¹⁹⁷

However, it would be wrong to assume that the change of heart amongst the West Indian plantocracy was a universal one. For example, Jamaica is noted to being particularly resistant to the British governments amelioration programme and was determined to protect their power.¹⁹⁸ This is in contrast to how in previous decades (1770s to 1810s) Jamaica was the only colony in the British Caribbean taking both the amelioration and Christianization effort seriously. It can however be deduced that it's highly possible the Jamaican authorities felt this renewed parliamentary amelioration was too much of an encroachment and would undermine the institution of slavery too much, even though they were trying to save face. This is opposed to previously when the Jamaican authorities had full control over the amelioration process and could use it to suite their own needs. In short, whilst the reports give off the impression that the Jamaican authorities were turning against amelioration, it's more likely they were turning against amelioration that was not on their own terms.

In the case of Jamaica, the character of the white settlers were that of a fearful minority alongside the enslaved labour force.¹⁹⁹ Meaning that the interference from London could upset the social order so much in colonies such as Jamaica, that long standing resentment from enslaved people could potentially boil over into a slave rebellion. Other colonial legislatures would take this similar line thinking that parliamentary amelioration would

¹⁹⁶ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1824

¹⁹⁷ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1824

¹⁹⁸ Mary Turner, PP.102-104

¹⁹⁹ J.R. Ward, *The Amelioration of the British West Indian Slavery*, P.1,119

undermine the institution of slavery too much.²⁰⁰ One example being the Bahamas, which did initially object to the interference from parliament.²⁰¹

Whilst they would to varying extents expand upon the amelioration and Christianization process, they would ultimately resist London's intrusions. This is noteworthy with colonies such as Antigua who showed a marked increased interest in working with the Anglican Church and its proxies to roll out the Christianization process, which can be largely seen as a means to placate public opinion back in Britain. Especially in the context of the minutes of the West India Planters and Merchants where there was the fear of growing pressure from parliament and British public opinion but a desire to ensure their status remained intact, which goes a long way to explaining the renewed cooperation between the plantocracy and Colonial Church from 1823 to abolition.

In addition to this it would be wrong to assume that the slaves themselves universally accepted and embraced this renewed Christianization effort by the Anglican Church and whilst this period is generally seen as a success for the Church's missionary efforts, there were certainly cases of resistance. This was particularly true in Antigua, when in March 1831 the Island's legislature banned Sunday Markets.²⁰² Sunday Markets in short were an opportunity for slaves in the British Caribbean to be able to sell their excess produce to market and was one of the few freedoms slaves enjoyed.

There was a previous act in 1828 that restricted them up to 11:00am in the morning but this act banned them in their entirety.²⁰³ Whilst this shows once more a general greater willingness amongst the plantocracy and elites of Antigua to take religious instruction more seriously, this was a move that was poorly received by the slaves themselves. The slaves of Antigua saw this move as an affront to their interests because it would mean they would not have any other day to go to market. This is important because slaves used Sunday markets to sell off whatever left over produce they had to sell and had grown quite attached to the markets as a result, as it was one

²⁰⁰ David Barry Gaspar, P.2

²⁰¹ Gail Saunders, P.171

²⁰² David Barry Gaspar, P.1

²⁰³ Ibid. P.13

of their few tangible liberties.²⁰⁴ Slaves for example would collect wood and grass and raised livestock to then sell on to the Sunday markets.²⁰⁵

One other fundamental aspect of this issue was that the slaves of Antigua saw Sundays as a day for themselves and were not at all interested in giving it up just to receive holy orders.²⁰⁶ This differs from the previous example of Demerara where the slaves were incensed at their loss of customary rights in regards to religious administration but the result with both was that there was an extreme mismatch in interests between the Colonial Church, legislatures, and slaves themselves. The former believed that the abolition of the Sunday markets would be for the betterment of the moral and spiritual character of the slaves and for their general well-being. The latter on the other hand believing this just another encroachment on the few freedoms they possessed. Because of such feelings, through March up until July 1831 there would be large scale violence, with 22 plantations being burnt down.²⁰⁷ Not only does this demonstrate the mismatch in interests but highlights that what the local elites, the Church, and British public opinion considered amelioration, did not always help the Christianization effort and in this case set it back. This is an important caveat to keep in mind when discussing the general successes of the Colonial Church during this period.

It must be stated however that slave resistance did not just take place within the framework of Anglicanism: traditional African beliefs also played a significant role. These beliefs were seen as a threat to the established order in the British Caribbean just as Christianity was, because it was seen as alien to them and as such something that they could not fully control.²⁰⁸ As such, it could be used as a rallying call against the plantocracy and could upset the social order, in the same way it was feared amongst the spread of the Nonconforming sects would and even with the spread of Christianity in general. It can be argued as such that the planter societies of the British Caribbean were not fond of religion in its entirety, but whereas traditional African beliefs could be resisted because of its pagan nature, events transpired that meant that these planter societies had no such recourse with the established Anglican church.

²⁰⁴ Ibid, P.1

²⁰⁵ Ibid, P.6

²⁰⁶ Ibid P.4

²⁰⁷ Ibid, PP.16-20

²⁰⁸ James Walvin, P.176

With these caveats established, we continue to see this success through to the SERINS 1826 report (for whatever reason a 1825 report was not published, so the information covers the preceding year also).

Interestingly, we see in the report that the bishop of the diocese of Jamaica is pleased with the progress that has been made in the Island, in regards to the instruction of enslaved people in the parishes of St Thomas in the East and St James.²⁰⁹ He puts this recent success to the implementation of the clergy bill (which expanded religious instruction by hiring more catechists) and made plans to set up a branch association for the society on the Island (in much the same way the SPCK had done, as will be discussed later on).²¹⁰ Most importantly the report is quoted in stating: “He [the lord bishop] trusts the greater proportion of the community have a sincere desire to ameliorate the condition of slaves, by implementing to them the blessing of religious instruction”.²¹¹ This quote demonstrates a number of things.

Firstly, it demonstrates again a previous point I had made that whilst the Jamaican authorities and society at large were very resistant to parliament imposing amelioration and Christianization programmes upon them, they still continued their comparatively long standing commitment to implement amelioration efforts and take Christianization seriously, trying to do so on their own terms. The former being particularly observed at the start of the renewed effort of parliamentary amelioration in 1823, where it was met with public protest and the Jamaican Assembly refused to adopt a new slave code.²¹² Again, carrying on the desire to implement these programmes on their own terms to best secure the plantocracy’s position and stave off potential insurrection. It also shows that whilst external pressure was instrumental in forcing the Christianization programme along, it did attract its blowback.

Secondly, It highlights an overlap between Christianization and amelioration because in many cases the former was a vital part of the latter. That the improvement of the moral character of the slave, by bringing them into the

²⁰⁹ Lambeth, Lambeth Palace Library, Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1826

²¹⁰ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1826

²¹¹ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1826

²¹² Mary Turner, P.104

Anglican fold, would be a way of improving their temporal conditions. This is important to highlight as it makes clear that the two are not mutually exclusive processes and in places seen as more or less the same.

Finally, it confirms a long running theme with this thesis that the actual ameliorative efforts were a second consideration to other factors in the Anglican Church's Christianization effort. Organisational and structural considerations and external pressures have been previously mentioned but again we see that the success or failure of the Anglican Church's Christianization effort is largely dependent on the willingness of the white settlers on these Islands, including Jamaica. Indeed, the aforementioned success in this report can largely be put down to white Jamaican societies comparative willingness and openness the missionary efforts on the islands plantations. It has been seen previously how if the reverse was true, the Anglican Church's efforts would be frustrated to the point of futility.

The reported success of the Christianization effort in Jamaica during this time can again be also attributed to better organisational qualities of the Colonial Church, along with increased resources, as can be evidenced by the building of a large Sunday school in Kingston.²¹³ Missionaries and SERINS officials report high amounts of success in their personal endeavours as well. Rev. H. Beams reports that in the parish of St James 300 people frequent his congregation alone and in another area in St James called Montpelier, all of the enslaved people were in attendance.²¹⁴ In the year leading up to September 1826, he had baptized 448 slaves and it is mentioned that the slave children are just as well versed as the adults.²¹⁵

A parallel process happened during this time in the Diocese of Barbados and the Leeward Islands. The Bishop of the Diocese (with funds given to him by a vote of the general court in March 1826, by the New England Company and by subscriptions from the new associations in Barbados, St Christopher, and St Nevis) set about a proper system for instructing enslaved people.²¹⁶ In addition to this, the governor of the Demerara colony

²¹³ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1826

²¹⁴ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1826

²¹⁵ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1826

²¹⁶ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1826

allowed the Bishop to draw upon £100 to expand upon the schools in the Bridgetown area and he done exactly that, by establishing four new charity schools for free blacks and the general slave population.

What can be first observed is that the branch associations that were conceptualized in the Jamaican diocese, were being replicated and were having a positive effect on the Anglican Church's Christianization effort in the Barbados and Leeward Islands Diocese. These branch associations allowed for greater organisational capabilities for the Colonial Church on a micro level in each individual colony in a way that was not previously possible. But it also demonstrates an even wider commitment towards the Christianization effort than was demonstrated in the Jamaican Diocese during this time period. The general society of the white population of this diocese got on board with the effort (as can be seen with the subscriptions to the branch associations). So much so that in appendix 3 of the 1826 report it is quoted in stating: "In presenting the first annual report of the branch association of Barbados, the committee rejoice in being able to congratulate the public on the progressive desire of the slaves to receive, and of the higher classes to impart, the blessings of religion".²¹⁷ It does go on further to state however that: "but the unsettled state of mind which then pervaded the colony, and the difficulty of raising adequate means, unhappily presented great obstacles to these benevolent views".²¹⁸ So unease in regards to Christianization leading to the undermining of the white settlers position in society certainly did not entirely dissipate. What's important however is how this issue was resolved. This hurdle was overcome by having a meeting with the society, local clergy, and other important local figures to ensure that any fears were alleviated.²¹⁹ Again showing the importance of acquiring local support, so that the organisational and structural capabilities of the Colonial Church could be properly established.

But you also saw the judicial branch (the general court) and even commercial interests get involved in the form of the New England Company. The latter not surprising considering the aforementioned fear and unease expressed by the West India Merchants at the beginning of this chapter. Demerara again serves as a useful example of how some of the newer colonies implemented their own forms of Christianization. As previously stated, because colonies like Demerara were colonies that were very recently acquired, the plantocracy had little

²¹⁷ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1826

²¹⁸ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1826

²¹⁹ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1826

recourse to object to London's amelioration or Christianization measures. With this in mind, the governor of Demerara had much more of a free hand to implement what needed to be implemented, to appease the dictates of London.

From 1827 there was an increased effort by the British government to push through parliamentary amelioration, due to continued pressure. This culminated in setting up a policy of investigating all complaints of cruelty, in a desperate attempt to improve slave conditions.²²⁰ Whilst slave conditions were improving during this period, particularly compared to previous decades, there was still the strong impression from those in London that it was not going nearly far enough. This raises doubts on the influence of amelioration on the Anglican Church's Christianization effort in the British Caribbean.

Indeed, it is observed that many West Indian colonies were not following through with many of the aforementioned May 1823 resolutions proposed by George Canning, with a few exceptions such as slaves receiving moral and religious instruction. Showing broad adherence to the Christianization programme but lacking in amelioration in many aspects. In Barbados for example, no protectors of slaves were established and slaves were unable to purchase their freedom without the Masters permission.²²¹ Indicating that the white settler elites desire to ensure that amelioration happens within their framework. Slaves could own property, but there was no protection against seizure and slaves could only give evidence in court when given a certificate of competence by an Anglican clergyman or by the slave owner himself.²²² Furthermore, no limits on the power of slave owners were established and aggregate acts like whipping of females and family separations were not banned.²²³ The perceived lack of influence of amelioration, is most likely due at this point in time to lack of it, not because amelioration in of itself was ineffective. But it is once again illustrated which force was more influential in aiding the Anglican Church's missionary effort in the British West Indies.

²²⁰ Mary Turner, P.132

²²¹ Olwyn M. Blouet, P.394

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ibid.

Compulsory manumissions was a particular sticking point in most colonies, only in the Bahamas where sugar planting was not vital to the colonies local economy was it put into practice (In contrast to the Bahamas initial reservations, they would by the later stages have their resistance to the amelioration process greatly diminished).²²⁴ Which was a massive hurdle for the British government, as the policy was essential for parliamentary amelioration and the gradual abolition of slavery itself.²²⁵ In fact, this was already established policy in the Spanish colonies where slaves could work additional hours to buy their freedom.²²⁶ Whilst parliamentary amelioration was an effective tool to apply pressure to the British colonies, it had at this point no tangible way of enforcing its will in most cases.

The British government could not for the most part impose amelioration on the British Caribbean. Only in Trinidad, a Crown Colony, was the full programme put into force by orders from the imperial government. Elsewhere in the British Caribbean, they were left to initiate their own amelioration programme. Compliance with the imperial government varied from colony to colony. But most planter legislatures dragged their heels, fully realizing that amelioration would undermine slavery.²²⁷

This variance between colonies has been explored with the predominately sugar based colonies vs colonies that were not primarily based on producing sugar, and between the older and newer colonies, but this again highlights the fears of colonies such as Jamaica, who were willing to implement amelioration and Christianization, but on their own terms. Without the mechanisms to properly enforce parliamentary wishes, it is easy to see why amelioration did not play as influential role as was hoped in the Anglican Church's Christianization efforts.

Whilst it is true to say colonies such as Jamaica were becoming more vigorous in implementing Christianization measures on their own terms, this do not by any means mean that there was no resistance to the process. In the 1828 report of SERINS, it is noted that there had been no tangible progress in religious instruction in the

²²⁴ Gail Saunders, P.171

²²⁵ Olwyn M. Blouet, P.394

²²⁶ Ibid

²²⁷ Ibid

Jamaican Diocese between in the two years from 1826-1828.²²⁸ Furthermore, the bishop of the Jamaican Diocese informed SERINS that the progress of “Negro reading” hasn’t advanced in that time, except in the principle towns and that the planters are not disposed to allow more than oral instruction and even this was not standardized.²²⁹ Once more highlighting the fact that in Jamaica that the planter society there would only accept amelioration on their own terms, as to not undermine the slave system. In addition to this, planters were even unwilling to allow services from catechists whom the Bishop recommends, so he had to limit their services to Sunday schools under the guise of the local clergy.²³⁰ There was success in St Thomas in the East (a consistent stronghold for the Anglican Church in the Island of Jamaica), but was not largely replicated in the rest of the Island, as there was still resistance to allowing catechists on plantations.²³¹

This illustrates that whilst the Established Church, the plantocracy, and local elites of the British Caribbean had made significant strides to create unity and push through the Christianization process, there was still unease and reservations on the part of the latter. There were still fears that the process could undermine the position of the white planter society in the colonies and it brings to attention that whilst the Anglican Church had at this point a proper structure and better organisational capabilities, it had not fully consolidated itself. Even after 5 years to do so. In fact, towards the latter part of the 1820s (date not specifically specified) Jamaican Planters told a Baptist missionary by the name of James Phillippo this:

“We will not tolerate your plans till you prove to us they are safe and necessary; we will not suffer you to enlighten our slaves, who are by law our property, till you demonstrate that, when they are more religious and knowing they will continue to be our slaves...slavery must exist as it now is, or it will not exist at all. If we expect to create a community of reading, moral, church going slaves we are woefully mistaken”.²³²

²²⁸ Lambeth, Lambeth Palace Library, Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1828

²²⁹ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1828

²³⁰ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1828

²³¹ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1828

²³² Michael Craton, P.143

This is in contrast to the 1826 report where significant progress was being perceived to be made. It is still likely that the progress that was mentioned in the 1826 report was still happening but with resistance still arising in the form described in the 1828 report.

However, we see more positive developments in other parts of the British Caribbean, namely in the Diocese of Barbados and the Leeward Islands. The report stipulates that the services of the society, with few exceptions, are being received, with the only obstacle being money.²³³ Another big obstacle to instructing enslaved people came in the form of the lack of chapels being in close distance to one another, making it extremely difficult in some instances for slaves to go to church or Sunday school.²³⁴ Despite these limitations, it is noted that the St Vincent Branch had success in rolling out a national system of instruction for enslaved people and in Grenada the boys and girls school in St George parish was doing rather well.²³⁵

Though the society and the Colonial Church at large did well to make do with what they had, it still highlights there were tight restrictions on them financially and this is evident to having the profounder impact on the Anglican Church's Christianization efforts. In St Vincent, whilst they had managed to roll out a system of national instruction for the slaves, the branch association there did not receive funding proportionate to the colonies wealth.²³⁶ In Grenada, whilst the school in St George's Parish was doing well, the Grenada legislature voted against giving it £200 to improve the school, demonstrating still limited support on the part of the local elites towards Christianization and that the tendencies that were observed in Jamaica about wanting to control the Christianization process was not unique to them.²³⁷

These financial constraints were felt on a regional level and this meant the society could not pursue its efforts to the fullest of its ability. In fact, the society only had £5,200 a year for its efforts in the West Indies, which amounts to £555,400 in today's money.²³⁸ A pitiful amount, especially considering SERINS at this time was

²³³ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1828

²³⁴ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1828

²³⁵ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1828

²³⁶ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1828

²³⁷ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1828

²³⁸ <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator> Bank of England inflation tracker

expected to shoulder the brunt of the Anglican Church's Christianization efforts in the British Caribbean. This all culminated in the report of 1828 admitting that whilst the last report noted progress in religious instruction amongst slaves, 700,000 slaves were still without instruction or education.²³⁹ This being out of a population of 800,000 as of 1826 and once more highlighting that the biggest influence (or rather constraint) to the Anglican church's Christianization effort was still its comparative lack of resources at its disposal.

We can see reoccurring problems carrying on into 1829. Despite appeals made that were mentioned in the previous report, the society did not receive the sufficient funds/donations from its supporters, whilst at the same time, there was an even greater demand for the societies services.²⁴⁰ This illustrates the continuing theme that the society still, even at this late stage, did not have the resources at hand to properly execute its missionary effort in the British Caribbean and was expected to do more with less. This shows that whilst the establishment of branch associations in the colonies had proved extremely useful to the society, it was limited in its willingness and/or ability to properly shoulder the burden of the societies missionary efforts. It in addition demonstrates further that what was holding the societies efforts back and stopping it from reaching its full potential was again its lack of resources. Even though the proper structures for the Colonial Church had at this point been put in place and was a vital component to aiding the societies and wider Anglican Church's efforts in the British Caribbean, without the resources necessary it could not be nearly as effective as it could have been. When comparing this to other factors at play such as amelioration, we can see once more what factors played the greater role of advancing, or even holding back the Anglican Church's efforts in the area.

However, on the other hand, we see in some respects an improvement in affairs for the society. The report is noted in stating that the desire for religious improvement amongst the slaves is increasing and that most interestingly that slaves are increasingly preferring the ministry of the Church of England.²⁴¹ This is significant, as the Anglican Church and its auxiliaries had a tough time fending off Nonconforming sects like the Baptists and Moravians. With the Baptists in Jamaica for example, in 1827 there were 8 chapels with 5,000 members,

²³⁹ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1828

²⁴⁰ Lambeth, Lambeth Palace Library, Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1829

²⁴¹ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1829

whereas by the time 1831 came around there were 24 chapels with 10,000 members.²⁴² Despite this competition, the Established Church continued to grow during this period.

Indeed, on estates where the missionary was seen to be under the thumb of the plantocracy, enslaved people would often flock to missionaries who were seen as “free agents”.²⁴³ This sentiment stemmed from the historically firm alliance between the Established Church and the institution of slavery.²⁴⁴ An alliance, as is explained throughout this thesis, is misguided, as there was only genuine signs of cooperation between the Colonial Church and the plantocracy and colonial legislatures after 1823. But it is clear that throughout the vast majority of the history of chattel slavery in the British Caribbean, the Colonial Church was wholly subservient to the plantocracy and the local elites of the British West Indies and that the slaves had the agency to realise this fact.

So what could of brought about such change? Whilst it is mentioned in the reports that SERINS and the Anglican Church at large struggled with resources continuously throughout this period, they had comparatively much more resources than they had in previous periods. For example, between 1824 and 1834, the number of Anglican ministers had tripled in the British Caribbean.²⁴⁵ Towards the latter part of slavery, the slaves became more enticed by the Church because Christianity was seen to have more social, political, philosophical, and phycological attractions.²⁴⁶ Meaning that slaves began to view that being under the Anglican Church’s auspices was a more attractive means of serving their own self-interests, as the power and strength of the Colonial Church grew and its reach broadened. This was not universally the case however as a report from Tortola states that the number of slaves not aligned with the Anglican Church is greater in the Virgin Islands than in any other colony in the diocese.²⁴⁷

²⁴² Catherine Hall, P.87

²⁴³ James Latimer, P.438

²⁴⁴ Michael Craton, P.141

²⁴⁵ Ibid. P.150

²⁴⁶ Ibid. P.153

²⁴⁷ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1829

This optimism about the slaves coming round to the Anglican Church did have its limitations though, in this particular case surrounding the observation of the sabbath amongst slaves. The report is quoted in saying (regarding the diocese of Jamaica): “It is to be regretted, however, but it must be confessed, that the profanation of the sabbath generally still continues to be the opprobrium of our community, and is a great obstacle to the increase of religion”.²⁴⁸ Giving the impression that observance on Sunday still leaves much to be desired. Regardless, there still appears to have been a continued desire to increase religious instruction amongst the slaves in the diocese. With their being an increase in Sunday schools, chapels, and other schools within the various parishes.²⁴⁹

Even at this late stage it is clear that the blessing of the plantocracy was still vital to be able to Christianize the enslaved inhabitants of the British Caribbean. This is not all too surprising since 1823, the basis of the Anglican church’s success has been centred around church/planter cooperation, but it is noticeable that the planter societies of the British Caribbean still wished to keep the Anglican missionaries within arms distance. This is demonstrated in the diocese of Barbados and the Leeward Islands report where it states: “I need not remind you, that in every attempt of ours to meliorate [ameliorate] the spiritual condition of the slave population, we must, as much as possible, carry the favour of the planter with us”.²⁵⁰ It is suggested that members of the society must continue to meet with the managers, attorney’s, and resident proprietors to ensure the objectives of Christianization are made perfectly clear, but also hints that the cooperation between the Colonial Church and the West Indian elites is not as firm as it would be ideally. If it was, there would be no need for the reminder. It also highlights that many amongst the plantocracy – whilst progress has been made – were still worried that the Christianization process will ultimately undermine their position. An example of this tension and of the local plantocracy getting in the way of Christianization can be seen in St Lucy’s parish in Barbados, where the rector is complaining of none observance of the sabbath on Sunday’s as the slaves are still expected to work.²⁵¹ Nevertheless, Despite some difficulties, it is clear that in every other parish in Barbados there appears to have been some degree of progress made.

²⁴⁸ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1829

²⁴⁹ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1829

²⁵⁰ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1829

²⁵¹ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1829

The final batch of reports from 1830 and 1831 are brief but still show key information, in particular surrounding the presence of SERINS across the British Caribbean. The report of 1830 states that there is not a colony in the British Caribbean where SERINS is not active.²⁵² This does indicate that SERINS was by far the most dominant arm of the Anglican Church's missionary effort in the British Caribbean. Especially compared to the SPG, as will be elaborated later on in this thesis. This also demonstrates the large degree in which SERINS was able to penetrate West Indian society and how far the missionary effort in the British West Indies has come. Events such as setting up branch associations obviously helped to spread the societies reach.

When observing what factors played the greater influence on the Anglican Church's missionary effort in the British Caribbean, we again see the recurring theme of structural and organisational considerations. The report goes further to state the Bishop of the Jamaican and Barbados and the Leeward Island Diocese had begun to set up a system for the entire British West Indies, where every estate would get a catechist or teacher and would be under the direction of the Anglican Church.²⁵³ Furthermore, bookkeepers on many estates in Jamaica have been employed in instructing slaves, with the Bishop of Jamaica stating that it has been a force for good.²⁵⁴ At this point the Colonial Church has the proper structures and organisational capacity in place to implement such an ambitious plan, in spite of its financial constraints. Once more, it does demonstrate that the Church is in a comparatively strong position when compared to previous years. As mentioned previously, the success of the Church's missionary effort depended largely on its relationship with the plantocracy and other local elites in the British West Indies. Whilst the previous issues of planter resistance to the Anglican Church's missionary effort were likely still ongoing to some degree, it is worth noting the apparent strong position of the Church to be pursuing such a policy agenda.

There was however, a massive setback for the Anglican Church's missionary effort, and that came in the form of the 1831-1832 Jamaican slave revolt. The Revolt began on the 27th of December 1831, when the Kensington Estate in the West of the Island was burnt to the ground and all Western parishes would be involved in the

²⁵² Lambeth, Lambeth Palace Library, Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1830

²⁵³ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1830

²⁵⁴ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1830

revolt, leading to £1 million in damage done.²⁵⁵ It was caused by several factors. One was the economic distress in the months leading up prior to the rebellion, where a severe drought caused damage to the sugar cane harvests, which was then followed by severe rains which served to help cause an epidemic of smallpox and dysentery.²⁵⁶ This caused a severe pressure on the slave workforce who had to do more work with less bodies and meant that slaves from the second gangs (who were used to lighter work) had to be pressed into the first gangs to cultivate the sugar cane. In addition to this, there were increasing rumours being circulated amongst the slave population that emancipation was coming soon, raising hopes for eventual freedom. The slaves (who were under the influence of native Baptist teaching) used Christianity as their political ideology that would glue together and give the rebellion its impetus.²⁵⁷ The rebellion would however be swiftly crushed, with 600+ slaves court-martialled and half were executed.

Even though the revolt was put down swiftly, on the 14th of March 1832, the Bishop of the Jamaican Diocese explains that as well as massive damage caused to life and property, he fears that the Church will never be able to rebuild the trust between them and the plantocracy.²⁵⁸ This shows once more why the trust and relationship between the plantocracy and the Church was so vital in shaping the Anglican Church's missionary effort. It also highlights the recurring theme that has been explored within this chapter that the one thing planters and local white elites feared was their position being usurped by insurrection. This fear was realised and the Bishops worry that trust has been broken was well founded. In the aftermath of the insurrection, many Baptist churches were destroyed as is explained in the report, which is significant as Jamaica was one of the more "progressive" in terms of ameliorative and Christianization reforms. The Baptist and other Nonconforming preachers, whilst advocating a much more egalitarian brand of Christianity, actually called for calm and supported law and order when the revolt took place, but this won them no favours amongst the local elites, who stopped Nonconforming missionaries from continuing their work.²⁵⁹ This was due again to the fact the slaves drew upon their teachings during the revolt and many of the leaders (i.e. Sam Sharpe) were practising Baptists and would force these Nonconforming missionaries to become explicit and vocal advocates for abolition.

²⁵⁵ Mary Turner, P.148

²⁵⁶ Mary Turner, P.149

²⁵⁷ Mary Turner, P.149

²⁵⁸ Lambeth, Lambeth Palace Library, Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1831

²⁵⁹ Mary Turner, P.149

Interestingly, the 1832 report when discussing the abolition of slave markets in Antigua, notes that the abolition of Sunday markets had proven successful and had led to: “fuller and more regular attendance of the slaves at Church, beyond that of any former period”.²⁶⁰ This is in total contrast to Barry Gaspar’s version of events, in regards to the abolition on Antigua’s Sunday markets, which as previously explained, transpired far from harmoniously and the authorities even had to go back on the policy. This highlights that whilst the reports are generally a good source of information, they are not immune from covering up events that proved inconvenient or even embarrassing for them. Indeed, the Antigua Sunday markets fiasco and especially the Jamaican slave rebellion appeared to have had ramifications for the Anglican Church’s missionary effort and this is supported by the historiography.

Before the Jamaican slave rebellion, parliament had lost its patience with the colony in giving it leeway to push for its own ameliorative programme to better facilitate Christianization. In 1831, parliament threatened financial penalties against Jamaica in the form of tariff discrimination unless further ameliorative measures set out by the Colonial Secretary were met.²⁶¹ These new measures were introduced by the new Whig government that came into power in 1830 and they included provisions such as regulating working hours to 9 a day for adults and 6 for children, and was intended that slaves could work longer hours to buy their freedom and earn wages.²⁶² This was to facilitate a move towards a waged economy in Britain’s biggest and most prosperous slave colony and was an obvious attempt to salvage the situation. However, this backfired when the revolt took place in December 1831 to January 1832, further engraining in the minds of Jamaican slavers that amelioration and Christianization only served to undermine their position.

This was beyond frustrating to Anglican Church missionaries who had shown strict adherence to preach subordination to the slaves, unlike their Nonconforming Baptist counterparts who preached much more radical theology.²⁶³ As a result of the backlash from the Jamaican slave revolt and the subsequent attacks on (mostly

²⁶⁰ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1831

²⁶¹ Robert Worthington Smith, P.180

²⁶² Olwyn M. Blouet, P.395

²⁶³ J.R. Ward, *British West Indian Slavery 1750-1834*, P.220

Baptist) missionaries and chapels, it convinced public opinion back in Britain that slavery could not continue and that Christianization and slavery were not compatible, meaning slavery would have to end.²⁶⁴ Meaning the British governments parliamentary amelioration efforts at least on this front was a failure.

SPCK

Looking at the reports from the SPCK, there are similar themes we saw with SERINS. When looking at the reports from the SPCK in regards to their missionary efforts in the British Caribbean, you'll find that you cannot find anything predating 1823. This is because the reports of the societies activities are organised by diocese.²⁶⁵ Whilst I have found evidence in Lambeth Palace library that the SPCK had some minor activities in the West Indies before 1823, their major activities appear to begin with the creation of the diocese in Jamaica and Barbados and the Leeward Islands in 1823. Giving further credence to the primacy of structural and organisational concerns, rather than amelioration, in understanding which played the greater influence in the Anglican Church's missionary effort in the British Caribbean.

As the SPCK specialised in spreading Christian texts to as wide audience as possible, they were not specifically a missionary group in the traditional sense, but was still Anglican in nature and still aided the Anglican Church in its efforts to spread Christianity amongst enslaved people. If we look at the 1823-1825 reports from the SPCK, we can see that the Jamaican diocesan committee is very active and in the reports and wished to spread its resources to the community at large.²⁶⁶ Interestingly, this was done despite some of its supporters wanting to only focus or at least prioritise the "lower orders" of the free population, meaning the poor whites and the free coloured population.²⁶⁷ This alludes to a desire to spread Christian texts amongst enslaved people and certainly

²⁶⁴ Ibid. P.221

²⁶⁵ Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, Observations of the SPCK reports in the archives catalogue

²⁶⁶ Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, SPCK reports 1823-1825

²⁶⁷ SPCK reports 1823-1825

demonstrates a degree of organisational strength that the SPCK feel strong enough to push aggressively for enslaved people to receive Christian texts. The Barbados diocesan committee was also very active.

The success of the SPCK continued throughout the period of 1826-1828. In the reports for 1826-1828, We can see that the Jamaican diocesan committee is continuing to do well, particularly in St Thomas in the East and £500 was put into this chapter of the SPCK for the purposes of education.²⁶⁸ More resources, meaning better organisational abilities. This proved so effective that a member of SERINS by the name of Mr Threw said (as a result of the dissemination of books given to children and the positive response they got from religious instruction) that: “Could some of our proprietors in England have witnessed these delightful scenes, I think it would have forced upon them a conviction of the indisputable truth, that Christianity is the basis of our own security, and that without it neither master or slave will ultimately prosper even with their temporal concerns”.²⁶⁹

This is a direct refutation of the notion that Christianization would lead to an undermining of the position of the plantocracy and white settlers of the British West Indies and goes on to imply that order is being kept on the estates because of the Christianization efforts. Though the reality of the situation and the feelings of the plantocracy towards Christianization could be seen to be at odds here. It also heavily intertwines the process of Christianization and amelioration together because Mr Trew states that even with the temporal concerns of the slaves or the master, neither can prosper without the Christian religion. By doing so, it also puts greater emphasis on the former rather than the latter, that the spiritual well-being of the slave is of greater importance than his or her material well-being.

During this period, the SPCK also demonstrated an increase in its structural capacity and therefor improving its ability to organise on the ground. In the Barbados diocesan committee, it was noted that sub committees have been set up in Montserrat, Nevis, and Trinidad.²⁷⁰ Further to this, with the suggestion of the Bishop of Barbados and the Leeward Islands, the society printed tracts and books in Spanish and French as that’s the language the

²⁶⁸ Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, SPCK reports 1826-1828

²⁶⁹ Report for the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, 1826

²⁷⁰ SPCK reports 1826-1828

inhabitants spoke in many of the Leeward islands (as they had been in Spanish and French control on previous occasions).²⁷¹ In addition to this, the Bishop set up 4 new charity schools around Bridgetown Barbados for free and enslaved blacks.²⁷² The assistance from the Bishop of Barbados and the Leeward Islands demonstrates that many of the activities of the SPCK in the West Indies was greatly aided by the relatively new centralised structure of the Anglican Church and it could be argued that these activities would not of been possible without it.

This can be seen best in the 1829-1831 reports (quoted from the Jamaican Diocesan committee) where it states: “The presence of the Bishops of Jamaica and Barbados in this country has enabled the society to obtain authentic, and in many instances most satisfactory accounts, of the progress of Christian knowledge in their respective diocese”.²⁷³ The report goes further to say that some difficulties are still experienced amongst planters outside the principle town of Kingston and St Thomas in the East, but the ground already gained had not been lost in these areas. Barbados is reported to be fairing much better than in the previous report, saying that the last island in the diocese to not have a school (whether Anglican or secular I’m unsure, presumably Anglican) was Montserrat, which built there’s towards the end of 1828.²⁷⁴ This school served white, free coloured, and enslaved people.

The SPCK, much like SERINS, did not escape the repercussions from the Jamaican slave revolt of 1830-1831 and the 1832-1834 reports paint a somewhat bleaker picture. Much like with SERINS in their reports, the 1831 slave rebellion in Jamaica had effectively halted and stalled the efforts of the SPCK.²⁷⁵ Other disasters In Barbados during the same time came in the form of a massive hurricane that hit the Island, damaging operations there, particularly on the Codrington Estates. The Bishop of Barbados and the Leeward Islands describes scenes where all churches are damaged or destroyed, the clergy is trying to make due but have given out pleas for help, to which the society pledged to spend £2,000 to help rebuild.²⁷⁶ In general, the reports of the SPCK paint a much more extreme and one sided view towards what had the greater influence on the Anglican Church’s missionary

²⁷¹ SPCK reports 1826-1828

²⁷² SPCK reports 1826-1828

²⁷³ Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, SPCK reports 1829-1831

²⁷⁴ SPCK reports 1829-1831

²⁷⁵ Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, SPCK reports 1832-1834

²⁷⁶ SPCK reports 1832-1834

effort in the British Caribbean. They do not mention anything in regards to amelioration and instead paints a picture where structural and organisational concerns take absolute primacy. Whilst I have argued throughout this thesis that structural and organisational considerations should be considered generally more important than amelioration, I do feel that amelioration did have a bigger role to play in the SPCK's success than the reports let on. However, the fact the reports place such total emphasis on structural and organisational concerns is still significant in itself.

SPG

In regards to the SPG, it was mentioned previously that the Codrington Estates could be said to have got their house in order by 1818, by allowing increased funds to the plantations for religious instruction. However – as seems to be the consistent theme with the SPG'S effort at Codrington – amelioration appeared to have played a larger role in assisting the Anglican Church's missionary effort than in other places in the British Caribbean. In the reports dating 1821-1824, we can see a much more serious and thorough set of amelioration measures introduced into Codrington Estates. One measure included slaves been given tea before they start work, two regular breaks for breakfast and dinner, and regular amounts of water given.²⁷⁷ The workload was reduced drastically by the introduction of the plough at Codrington and severe punishments were rarely inflicted on the slaves, with measures like confinement being used instead of corporal punishment.²⁷⁸ Furthermore, mothers who have 8 children alive get Thursday and Saturday afternoon off, a new hospital was built, and a substantial increase in the food portion was provided.

Whilst this amelioration was taking place, the SPG was finding very satisfactory success in its missionizing efforts on the plantations. Religious instruction on the Sabbath became more regular and was reported to be well attended by the adult slaves of Codrington.²⁷⁹ Child slaves between 4 to 10 were taught how to read and it is stated that slaves were generally received the Christianizing process well, with the exception of the continuation of polygamy as a practice amongst slaves, as there had only been one Christian marriage amongst the slaves.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁷ Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, SPG reports 1821-1824

²⁷⁸ SPG reports 1821-1824

²⁷⁹ SPG reports 1821-1824

²⁸⁰ SPG reports 1821-1824

Progress was being made in Codrington plantations, with the 1825-1828 reports mentioning that the Bishop of Barbados and the Leeward islands is pleased with the classes of John Pinder and the progress his students was making.²⁸¹ In the 1829-1833 reports, it is stated that the college was enlarged and converted purely as an institution for theological instruction, in line with Codrington's original will. News from the new chaplain by the name of Packer states the religious and moral progress of the slaves is going well and to this end the society is considering accelerating the process of gradual emancipation.²⁸²

The increased funds and the enlargement of the college certainly helped the missionizing effort at Codrington but through reading the reports, it is clear that the amelioration process had more influence in assisting the Anglican Church's missionary effort at Codrington. A clear and strongly pursued amelioration effort was undertaken on the plantations, which coincided with progress in the Christianizing of Codrington's slaves. It must be noted that the reports are rather vague on what progress was made at the plantations (with the exception of marriage) but there is a clear sense of progress, greater it appears than in previous years. One glaring contrast to make here is the difference in emphasis when comparing the SPCK and SPG reports. The former exclusively giving credence to structural and organisational concerns and the SPG mainly mentioning the amelioration process. This can be explained, as the SPG was not a major missionizing force in the British West Indies by the turn of the 19th century and their only major stronghold was Codrington Estates in Barbados, and at Codrington they already had a structure in place. The SPCK however are looking at a much more macro picture as their activities are all over the British Caribbean. So what might be the case at Codrington, may not be the general picture for the Anglican Churches missionary effort in the West Indies.

It is commonly believed that because of greatly improved slave conditions, a more creolized slave population took hold at Codrington, meaning cultural barriers that had previously got in the way of the Anglican Church's Christianization effort were gradual erased.²⁸³ This coinciding with greater efforts in religious instruction meant

²⁸¹ Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, SPG reports 1825-1828

²⁸² Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, SPG reports 1829-1833

²⁸³ Travis Glasson, P.142

that slaves were much more readily willing to accept Anglicanism.²⁸⁴ As Pascoe largely relies on the same SPG reports I have, he doesn't have much else to say on the matter, however he does mention that as well as the aforementioned amelioration measures, the SPG did also allow slaves to raise livestock and sell part of it at market.²⁸⁵ In addition to this, the SPG gave special privileges to married slaves and by 1831 half of all heads of family at Codrington were married. Giving a direct link between greater amelioration and the Christianization of the SPG's enslaved population at Codrington.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ Pascoe, Digest of SPG Records 1701-1892, (Published at the (SPG) society office, 1893), PP.200-201

²⁸⁶ Ibid. P.201

Conclusion

When concluding the entire thesis, it may at first be difficult to ascertain which factors truly had the greatest influences on the Anglican Church's endeavours in the British Caribbean. However, I believe looking at some consistent themes throughout this thesis, one can come to a conclusion in a confident manner. As has been discussed, the brutalizing nature of chattel slavery meant that the Anglican Church found its tasks extremely difficult on the plantations of the British Caribbean, which was particularly evident in the period covered in the background chapter. The enslaved people of the British Caribbean had their own agency and were fully aware of the conditions they found themselves in and as such, had no interest in the faith of the people that brutalized them on a daily basis through much of the Christianization project. Though this would change somewhat by the events of the main chapter.

The amelioration of the lot of slaves was vital but the slaves living a less harsh existence wouldn't mean they would leap into the arms of the Anglican Church, nor was the ameliorative measures enough in many cases, even by the 1820s/early 1830s. The power of the plantocracy, who's obstinance made it doubly challenging for the Anglican Church to Christianize enslaved people, must also be considered. As such, out of all the factors discussed, I believe that the centralisation of the Anglican Colonial Church and the pressure from Britain proved decisive. Decisive in the sense of being the crucial turning point in the Anglican Church's efforts in the British Caribbean and to that end, the Christianization of a significant portion of the British Caribbean's slave population.

The latter more than the former, as pressure from Britain in the 1820s (as discussed in chapter 2) led to an existential crisis amongst the plantocracy of the British Caribbean, forcing them to change/see change as necessary in some form. This in turn meant that the British Government saw the necessity of working with a colonial Anglican Church now having a proper centralised structure, which increased dramatically its ability to organise on the ground. These conditions being in stark contrast to the conditions mentioned in the background chapter. This in turn allowed them to capitalise on the increased pressure from the British government in the 1820s and that's where we saw substantial change take place. Changes such as increased cooperation amongst

the plantocracy being the primary one, not out of desire but out of necessity, with this necessity extending to the need to ameliorate and allow for the Christianization of the enslaved people to some degree. All these factors had their part to play certainly, but as stated in my introduction my aim in this thesis was to gauge which of these factors had the greater influence and it is clear that external influences, rather than more internal ones, had the greater part to play on the Anglican Church's missionary effort in the British Caribbean.

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