

History cxc adjustments to emancipation

[History](#)



INTRODUCTION

This project is based on the topic Adjustments to Emancipation from 1838 – 1876. It focuses on the Coming of the Chinese, Europeans, Indians and Africans into the Caribbean. Information is provided about their reasons for migration, working conditions and their effects on the Caribbean. Slavery was the initial labour system used by Europeans on their plantations in the Caribbean. It was implemented in the 1600s, the Europeans forcefully took people from the African continent to the Caribbean on various trips. The path in which the slaves were carried between Africa and the Caribbean is now known to historians as the triangular trade. These Africans and those from the African lineage became slaves on the plantations where they were not seen as humans and were treated as animals or property. After the freedom of the enslaved population on the plantations in the 1830s, the planters were faced with the irregularity of labour on the estates. This was because many of the slaves had left the plantation to go start a new life. In addition, the remaining population had cultivated land of their own; often when it was harvest time instead of harvesting the crops on the estates, the freed people would harvest their own crops which posed a problem to the planters. As a result of this major problem, planters now had to develop new strategies to regulate the labour force on the estates. A major remedy to the inconsistency of the labour on the estates was the importation of indentured workers.

AFRICANS

Since Britain had abolished the slave trade, her warships had patrolled the seas looking for foreign boats carrying slaves. Most of the captures they were of Brazilian and Cuban ships. When they were released they were usually taken to two British colonies, St Helena or Sierra Leone. Both colonies were in danger of being overcrowded so the British government was willing to encourage the liberated Africans to emigrate to the Caribbean. Most of the imported were free slaves, most notably of the Jamaican Maroons deputed in 1796. After 1841 most liberated Africans were brought to the Caribbean either as soon as they were taken from a slave ship or after a short time on St Helena. These Africans were unused to European ways and had not been seasoned to plantation labour. They usually left the plantations as soon as they could and settled as squatters in the interiors. The scheme lasted from 1841 to about 1862. It was very popular at first but declined after 1850 for two reasons. Firstly the private ships that were chartered at the beginning to carry the emigrants from Africa made the Africans think about slavery all over again. Secondly, the agents in West Africa undoubtedly lured the Africans with false promises of money and land.

EUROPEANS

Jamaica was the main country to import European labour. This was done to raise the white population and at the same time provide plantation labour. This experiment was a failure. From 1834 to 1838, thousands of Scots and Irish and a few hundred Germans came to Jamaica. Most died due to tropical diseases as they lacked immunity to them. Others refused to work because of expected duties and found out that it was the work of blacks. They sought other employment or asked to be repatriated. In 1841 the Jamaican

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government made another attempt and imported more whites from Britain. After more deaths and requests to be sent home, the government finally realized that plantation labour from Northern Europe was a hopeless prospect. A total of 200 immigrants arrived in St. Kitts.

MADEIRANS

In the 1830s Planters in Trinidad and Guyana turned to Madeira, the Portuguese colony in the Atlantic where sugar was the main crop. The first 125 Madeiran cane workers come to Trinidad in 1834, through Mr Seale, an English merchant. 559 landed in Guyana the following year. Private importations of Madeiran began in 1835 but were suspended in 1839 while the British government examined the conduct of the schemes.

Madeiran immigration was re-opened on an official basis in 1841 and large numbers went to British Guiana. The numbers decreased after 1846. In 1848 the scheme was suspended again. It was resumed in 1850 but was not popular. By 1856 Portuguese Madeirans controlled nearly all the retailing businesses in Guyana and St Vincent. The immigration period lasted from 1835 to 1882. The scheme was very irregular, the death rate of the new arrivals were high and most of them went into trading as soon as their contracts ended. In addition, the Madeiran Government objected to the scheme, since so many of its citizens were leaving, and implemented measures making it difficult for their recruitment. In all 36, 000 came.

COUNTRY

In Madeira, workers were paid only one-third of what they could earn in the islands per day, so they were attracted by the higher wages being offered in the Caribbean, especially British Guiana.

MALTESE

Before 1840 a small number of Maltese came to the British West Indies, mainly British Guiana and Grenada. The Maltese were not satisfied with the conditions and asked to return home. Malta was incapable of providing enough immigrants to solve the labour problem on West Indian sugar estates.

CHINESE

In 1802 the first governor of Trinidad received permission to import Chinese labourers from Malay. Many Chinese were already moving to places like Malaya in South-east Asia where European plantations and trading posts were growing fast. They were easily persuaded to move and acquire indentures in Trinidad with the promise of small plots of land after five years. In 1806, 162 Chinese immigrants landed in Trinidad. At their own request 61 returned in 1807. After seven years only 30 of the original immigrants lived in Trinidad and none of them worked on a plantation. In 1844 British Guiana tried to persuade Chinese who had previously emigrated to Malacca, Singapore and Penang. However, they were unwilling and were happy where they were. In 1852 large-scale Chinese immigration began from Macao. The immigrants were convicts or prisoners of war and included no women, which had unhappy consequences for the scheme in British Guiana. In 1859 a family immigration scheme was started. An agent was sent from British

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Guiana in 1860 to Canton to accumulated Chinese families from rural areas of Fukien and Kwangtung. Trinidad joined the scheme in 1864 and shared the cost of an agency. The scheme was more successful but the agents practised some deception, they did not inform the Chinese of the work they were going to do and made false promises about repatriation. The Chinese recruits were small farmers and market gardener, not plantation labourers. Reason for migration: Most hoped for better living as shopkeepers or petty traders. They were promised small plots of land after 5 years.

EAST INDIANS

In 1836 John Gladstone, a Guyanese plantation owner, applied to the Secretary of State for the Colonies for permission to import Indian labourers. In 1838, 396 arrived and the great flood of Indian immigration begun. The Caribbean seemed attractive with high wages, shelter, medical care and a chance to find new occupations besides agriculture. It was immediately proclaimed a success. However, their fate was terrible. Investigations by the Anti-Slavery Society found evidence of flogging and other forms of punishment. 9 of the Indians on the Gladstone estates died before their time of indenture was over. In July 1838 the Indian government suspended emigration to the West Indies while an investigation of the conditions in British Guiana was carried out by the Commission of Enquiry. In 1844 immigration officially resumed and lasted until 1917. The planters' demand from East Immigrant labour was very strong in the 1840s. In British Guiana government spending? 50, 000 a year on immigration. Trinidad and Jamaica were also importing Indians on a large scale. Indians were easily recruited as India was a British colony. British ships and trading costs were already there <https://assignbuster.com/history-cxc-adjustments-to-emancipation/>

and the British government could easily provide British officials to supervise the scheme. Planters were satisfied with the Indians because they were hard-working, accustomed to tropical agriculture and re-indentured themselves.

Up to 1848 the Indian immigrants, known as ‘ cookies’, were drawn from the poor on the streets of the cities of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. These cities always remained the ports of embarkation. After 1848 they were drawn from the provinces of Agra-Oudh and Buhar which always suffered terribly. Many of these emigrants were peasant farmers. In 1848, after giving loans to the governments of British Guiana, Trinidad and Jamaica, she wanted especially in British Guiana where the government much stricter supervision over immigration. Britain was spending? 50 000 per year n immigration, was also allowing Indian immigrants to go to non- British colonies, the French, Dutch and Danish. In these territories it was not possible to oversee the treatment of put towards immigration, it was decided in 1876 to Trinidad and Jamaica were also importing Indians stop the transportation of Indians into all non- on a large scale, but the Jamaican government was British colonies except Surinam, Guadeloupe and Martinique. In 1886 Guadeloupe and Martinique British Guiana and Trinidad were also banned, and only Surinam continued importing Indians until 1917. The scheme may seem successful but in many ways, it did not live up to expectations. It deprived human beings of freedom for long periods of time, there was great mortality and suffering for the immigrants and grave social problems were caused in West Indian territories. By 1917, 416, 000 East Indian immigrants had entered the British West Indies.

Reasons for Migration: Many craftsmen had lost their jobs due to competition from mechanized factories and mills of England. India was becoming overpopulated and there was not enough land to divide among the younger generation. Wages in India had fallen to 1/2d per day and there was a series of famine during the period 1857-1877 that led to an increase in food prices. Those escaping the police and the caste system were also willing to migrate.

CONTRACTS

At first black West Indian labourers moved from one island to another without contracts. When planters started paying the cost of the passage they insisted on contracts. However, as these contracts were signed on arrival, there was little a planter could do if the terms were refused. The British government insisted that all indentured contracts had to state clearly the length of service, the number of hours to be worked each day, rates of pay and the conditions for return passage. For most of the 1840s, the British government ship, single men, single women, and married would only permit contracts signed on arrival in couples were all berthed separately.

It was very rare government gave way to planters and permitted for a voyage to be completed without loss of life. Contracts to be signed at the port of embarkation. The average mortality rate on board was about This was better from the planters' point of view, but 4 per cent until the 1850s, when it went as high as 17 per cent. On one ship in 1856 no fewer worse for the immigrants who had no protection than 120 of the 385 immigrants on board died against false promises before it reached British Guiana. The conditions of the contracts varied according to rate declined again in the

1860s and were under to the scheme and the colony involved. The indignities suffered immigrants, the British government would allow on passage did not end once the surviving contracts of only one year. In 1848 this was extended immigrants had landed and been set to work. to three years and in 1863 the planters got what they warm clothing was of little further use, had been pressing for from the beginning - five- and nothing more suitable for wear in the year contracts signed at the port of embarkation. The government offered contracts. A field labourer on a plantation had to 5-acre (2 ha) lots of Crown Land to immigrants work seven hours per day, and a factory labourer, on the expiry of their contract. The wages were 1s per day (later 1s 6d) for Guiana government modified the clause about a man over sixteen, provided that he was healthy, return passages to require the immigrant to pay a and 8d per day for a woman or boy under sixteen, a quarter of the cost himself.

In 1898 this was raised For the first three months after arrival, food would be supplied to the immigrant and 4d per day could The British Guiana Labour Laws of 1864 be deducted from his wages for this. The labourers greatly favoured the planter at the expense of the were to be housed in ' barracks' rent-free, and would immigrant. A breach of the labour laws was regarded to receive free medicine and hospitalisation. The clause about free return passages was the For minor offences such as the failure to answer most controversial. The planters and colonial one's name at the muster roll in the morning, harsh governments did not want repatriation terms, which fines of up to ? 5 could be imposed. Other minor were insisted on by the governments of the countries offences were punishable by up to three

months in of origin and by the British government. At first, prison. If a planter broke his side of the contract, immigrants were promised free return passages on such as the failure to pay full wages, the immigrant completion of their contract. In 1854 they could have no recourse to the court, but could only go to claim repatriation only after living for ten years in the Petty Debts Department.

EFFECTS of SUGAR INDUSTRY

Their introduction resulted in an increased supply of labour. This of course created competition for estate work. It is fair to argue that after 1845 many plantations that used immigrant labour found that they had a sure, steady supply of labour. Remember that the immigrants were contracted to work for a specified period. The decrease in the price of labour. More land was bought and more mechanization was introduced in British Guiana. By the 1850s and '60s when there would have been a considerable importation of immigrants, the wages offered for work on estates were considerably lower than that which was offered immediately after Emancipation. The introduction of immigrants, the cost of production decreased giving some estates a fighting chance to realise a decent profit. As a result of the above factors, sugar production increased, particularly in Trinidad and British Guiana. In these two territories also new estates were opened during this period, bringing these two colonies to a place of relative prosperity by 1870. In other instances, the closure of some estates was avoided.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL

New races were introduced, this resulted in a 'permanent' change in the racial composition of the colonies. The sexual relations of the Chinese and Indians with the Negroes resulted in a further mixing of the races. Worsening of relations between the two groups Indians and Negroes. The introduction of culture, new language and religions.