

C. G. and S. money, being the amount of dividend upon consolidated public account up to first October one thousand eight hundred and thirty-three. £98. 5. 3.

H. J. Woodcock,
by his Attorney, G. W. Lewis."

That, after deducting the said sum of £98. 5. 3. from the said debt of £2526. 16. 4 $\frac{3}{4}$.. there remains due to the petitioner on the said order the sum of £2428. 11. 1 $\frac{3}{4}$. current money.

That the taxes raised for payment of the public debt in the said colony or possession of the Virgin Islands, have hitherto been levied on the slave holders, by making them pay so much for each slave they possess.

That, in consequence of the aforesaid Act of Parliament, the negro and other slaves, being emancipated, will cease to be the subject of taxation.

That, as the taxes of the said colony have hitherto been raised on the slave population, and the debt of the colony thereby charged on that species of property, the petitioner submits that which is substituted for, or put in the place of, the slave, should be considered liable to the payment of the sums heretofore charged or chargeable on the slaves, as far as such sums remain on the first August one thousand eight hundred and thirty-four unsatisfied, from taxes then already raised on the slave, out of which the public debt was to be paid; and the petitioner therefore submits, that the public debt to the petitioner in arrear should now be paid from the compensation to be given for the slave under the aforesaid Act of Parliament.

That the Commissioners are, under the said Act of Parliament, authorised and required to apportion and assign, amongst others, to the said colony or possession of the Virgin Islands, a certain share of the sum of twenty millions of pounds granted by way of compensation, the petitioner humbly submits, that so soon as the share of the said sum payable to the said colony or possession of the Virgin Islands is assigned to that colony or possession, it becomes the property of that colony, and as such should be in the first place applied to the payment of its debts, so far as the slaves emancipated under the said Act, or the slave holders in respect of such slaves, would have been liable thereto.

That the principle humbly contended for, on the part of the petitioner, is, that the private property of each individual in the state is, in proportion to its extent, liable for the public debt, it being the only fund from whence the public creditor can be paid; and that when any part of such property is destroyed, and compensation granted for it, the owner thereof cannot engross the whole and avoid his obligation to bear a part of the public burthen, created in maintaining establishments by which he has been secured in the enjoyment, and protected in the possession, of that very property; and that when any species of private property is annihilated, the security of the public creditor and his chance of payment ceases to exist to the extent of the property destroyed; therefore, in the distribution of the compensation given for such property, the interest of the public creditor therein should be considered, and satisfaction awarded to him upon the same principle as payment would be made to the mortgagee or other claimant.

That, in obedience to the directions contained in the said Act of Parliament, under the forty-seventh clause of the said Act of Parliament, and also under the fifty-fifth clause of the said Act of Parliament, the said Commissioners appointed by your Majesty under the authority of the same Act, have drawn up and framed, under date of the thirty-first day of March one thousand eight hundred and thirty-four, certain general rules to be observed in carrying into effect the provisions of the said Act, and which general rules have since been published in the London Gazette.

That, notwithstanding the provisions of the said Act of Parliament, the petitioner is advised that the rules so made as aforesaid by the said Commissioners, are inapplicable to the petitioner's case, and that should the same, as they now stand, be confirmed and allowed by your Majesty in Council, the petitioner will be deprived of all benefit and advantage under the said Act of Parliament, or in the compensation thereby provided, inasmuch as there is no rule under which the said Commissioners could entertain the petitioner's said claim.

That the petitioner, therefore, conceives he is aggrieved by the aforesaid rules of the said Commissioners, and he is apprehensive he will be left without remedy, unless your Majesty in Council shall afford him relief:

And the petitioner, therefore, humbly prays, that your Majesty in Council will be pleased to alter, amend, or vary the aforesaid rules of the said Commissioners, by framing a new rule sufficiently ample to comprehend the petitioner's claim, and give him relief and protection in the premises, or by remitting the said rules to the said Commissioners for further consideration and revision for that purpose, or that such other order and direction may be made and given in the premises as to your Majesty may seem meet:"

The Lords of the Committee, in obedience to your Majesty's said order of reference, have taken the said petitions and appeals into consideration, and caused notice thereof to be served upon the said Commissioners; and having also heard counsel, as well on behalf of the several appellants as on behalf of the said Commissioners in defence of the said appeals, their Lordships do agree humbly to report, as their opinion, to your Majesty, that it may be advisable for your Majesty to confirm and allow, subject to certain alterations and amendments therein, such of the general rules, made as aforesaid, as are the subject of or affected by the said appeals; and their Lordships do agree further humbly to report to your Majesty, that the last-mentioned rules, with such alterations and amendments as aforesaid, are as follows, viz.

GENERAL RULES under the 47th and 55th Clauses of the Act, 3d and 4th Will. 4th, c. 73.

1. That the party or parties who shall be in possession as owner or owners of any slave or slaves, and shall appear as such by the latest returns made in the office of the Registrar of Slaves under the Registry Acts in the respective colonies, shall be deemed *prima facie* the rightful owner or owners thereof respectively, and *prima facie* entitled to the