

**BRITISH IMPERIAL POLICY AND COLONIAL ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT: THE COCOA INDUSTRY IN TRINIDAD
1838-1939**

**A Thesis
Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in History**

**of
The University of Manitoba
Winnipeg
Manitoba**

by

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BY

KATHLEEN E. PHILLIPS LEWIS

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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DEDICATION

*To my son, Carlton,
who felt painfully and understood
at close range
what it cost the grape to make wine:
I "played this one" especially for you*

ABSTRACT

The period 1838 to 1939 embraces the rise and decline of the Trinidad cocoa industry. Its development during this time is viewed here as a test case of the impact of British Imperial Policy upon colonial economic development. This thesis examines the factors which conditioned the development of the cocoa industry and fostered both its prosperity and decline. It analyses the significance of British Imperial Policy in this process. It argues that imperial policy input was minimal, for various reasons. In the absence of significant policy aids the cocoa industry was left to find its own way. The result was a history defined by conflict between capital and labour, between large scale and small scale, between planter and peasant. Whenever it did act, imperial policy and colonial legislation favoured planter over peasant, thus exacerbating the conflicts which hampered the continued prosperity of the industry. Having to fall back on their own initiatives and resourcefulness, 'peasants' proved resilient and innovative becoming the back-bone of the cocoa industry, despite attempts by planters to eliminate them. When finally prices became unremunerative and cocoa cultivation no longer profitable, small-holders no less than large-scale planters switched to more lucrative economic pursuits, thus ensuring agricultural diversification and economic development. If British Imperial Policy assisted colonial economic development at all, it is by what it neglected to do rather than by what it did.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis originated from the germ of an idea planted in my mind by Dr. Bridget Brereton, my Head of Department and colleague, while I was yet an undergraduate under her tuition at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus, Trinidad. The idea was immediately attractive to me because my mother is the daughter and descendant of a long line of peon peasant cultivators of cocoa, 'Cocoa Pagnols', who lived originally in the Caura Valley. To her I owe my deep love for the 'Cocoa people' and my desire to understand their milieu. Along with my father, now deceased, she gave me also my love for learning and my drive to explore fully the heights and depths of my mind.

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The Library and Archive staff everywhere have been very helpful to me: The Barbados National Archives especially Archivist Mr. David Williams, The Bodelain Library, Oxford; The British Library and the Colindale Newspaper Department of

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How could this thesis have seen the light of day without my son, Carlton, who insisted that I get on with the task and get it over and done with - sometimes gently with his love, and at other times, not so gently with his need of me, and demands on my time and attention.

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And finally, a very tender thank you to my First Love, El Shaddai, the one who dictates. To God be the Glory.

K. Phillips Lewis

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: FROM EMANCIPATION TO ENTERPRISE

Thesis Statement

The general hypothesis of this dissertation is that British Imperial policy throughout the period 1838 to 1939 was designed in the interest of British economic welfare over that of its colonies. Whenever colonial economic development was promoted, it was strictly because such development was viewed as the means to secure the economic well-being of the mother country, or the continued security of the empire. For the most part, therefore, there was imperial indifference to the true developmental needs of the colonial economies. Britain in the period under investigation was a capitalist economy and therefore policy tended to favour the interest of the capitalist classes over the interest of the working classes, at home as well as in the colonies. The imperial interest blended closely with that of the capitalist classes. In the colonies, it was the capitalist classes who were viewed as the linchpins of colonial economic development. The idea of '*laissez-faire*' however promoted a kind of indifference, a kind of 'hands-off' approach to the making of imperial policy with respect to colonial economic development. Imperial policy, therefore, failed also to seal off the loopholes which might promote status erosion for the colonial capitalist classes. It was this failure which indirectly prompted colonial economic development, though neither in the manner nor direction predicted by policy makers and capitalists. In light of imperial indifference to working class interest, there arose from within the latter class, a small-scale, own-account,

indigenous sector which defined, through its own industry and initiative, the path for colonial development. This indigenous sector focussed first on small-scale agriculture (and has been called a 'peasantry') and in more recent times on small-scale business enterprise. The origins and early development of this process was clearly reflected in the history of the Trinidad cocoa industry during the period 1838 to 1939.

The specific hypothesis advanced here is that during this period, there was intense conflict within the cocoa industry between the capitalist class and the working class over the control of land, labour, and finance capital, the main avenues of social and economic opportunity. The relationships within the cocoa industry were neither relationships of symbiosis nor peaceful co-existence. When not indifferent to the needs of both capitalist as well as working classes, Imperial policy championed the interest of the cocoa capitalists over that of the labouring class; this was the best recipe for securing its own interest. Imperial policy failed to insure against socio-economic encroachments from below by the working class on the preserves of the capitalist class.

The aspiring elements of the working lower class seized this opportunity to transform themselves into an indigenous small-scale cocoa cultivating sector, which posed a threat to the security of status of its rival large scale cocoa planter class. Development of the cocoa industry was promoted by the activities of this indigenous sector (which has been called a 'peasantry') despite the many obstacles in their path. Such a development reflected the path of growth within the island economy in that this sector was merely one component of a larger indigenous sector emerging in the colonial economy. In the wider context, therefore, the point is that the path of

colonial economic development was defined by the rise of a new class emerging out of the working class and later coming to rival the traditional capitalist class. This thesis examines the conflict produced by this emergence.

Literature Review

Thus far, little has been written directly relative to this study. British imperialism has been studied from several different angles and with various theoretical and methodological approaches. The Chamberlainites have portrayed Joseph Chamberlain as a saviour of colonial peoples whose accession to the Colonial Secretariat marked a significant watershed in the history of imperial policy with respect to colonial economic development.¹ A more balanced study of British imperial economic policy during the period is provided by Stephen Constantine who begs to differ from the views of the Chamberlainites.² Constantine argues that while Chamberlain's initiatives were important, he did not accomplish as much as has been previously believed. Constantine claims that the turning point in imperial policy towards colonial economic development came in 1914 rather than in 1895 and that Britain resorted to developing the colonial economies after the First World War because it was expedient and profitable for herself rather than because it was honourable to do so.

With special reference to the impact of imperial policy on British West Indian economic development the work of H.A. Will has been found to be most instructive for the Chamberlain years, which he too defines as the time of shift in the development of colonial policy.³ A balanced and insightful analysis is provided by

Richard Lobdell who examines specifically the reasons for changing attitudes of British imperial policy toward the peasantry which he sees as coming with the 1890s.⁴

This thesis, in agreement with Lobdell, and in part concurrence with Constantine, will argue that British imperial policy with reference to the West India colonies and more specifically, their economic development tended towards indifference prior to the 1890s. With the accession of Chamberlain to the Colonial Office Secretariat, the colonial economies were viewed with new interest, though not for any altruistic reasons but for their potential contribution as solutions to the economic problems of the British Empire, particularly those of Britain. The 1890s saw also the beginning of a new 'enlightened' approach to West Indian peasant development. This thesis argues, however, that even during the Chamberlain and post-Chamberlain eras, such theoretical acknowledgement of the importance of colonial economic development and of the role of peasant agriculture in such development did not bring concrete and constructive policy decisions.

Much in-depth research has been done on the role of sugar in the West Indian economic development and the contribution of sugar, and later of oil, to the Trinidad economy. The general histories of Trinidad broadly but vaguely acknowledge that cocoa was once a significant contributor to the economy. While these studies do not focus singularly on the cocoa industry, they do provide useful insights into the cocoa sector within their larger frame of reference. The best account of the History of Trinidad under the Spanish Crown which also discusses the role of cocoa is Pierre Gustave Borde's History of the Island of Trinidad Under the Spanish Government.⁵

Borde acknowledges that cocoa was indeed the mainstay of the Trinidad economy during much of this period and that the fortunes of local residents were determined by the prosperity or misfortunes of cocoa cultivation. Linda Newson⁶ also documents the importance of cocoa to the early Trinidad economy. James Millette⁷ provides a detailed and enlightening analysis of the period of change over from Spanish to British rule. His work gives useful insight into the policy factors affecting Trinidad's socio-economic and political development at this time. Millette's work underscores the point that British imperial policy making was more concerned with the imperial welfare rather than the interest of the colony itself. This is clearly illustrated in the decision to make Trinidad a Crown Colony rather than to grant it an elected Legislative Assembly under the old Representative System of Government which obtained in the older West India colonies of Britain.

Another recent work which focusses on the implications of British take-over is Carl Campbell's Cedulants and Capitulants.⁸ Campbell's focus is on the plight of the free coloureds in Trinidad's social, economic and political life. He emphasises the fact of British and British Imperial hostility towards coloured persons and their attempts to prevent the wealthy and propertied among them from gaining access to political power. Most of these persons had acquired their fortunes through cocoa planting on land granted to them by the terms of the population decree of 1783 or on lands bequeathed to them by wealthy (and sometimes white) forbears. The fear of non-white economic and political ascendancy was ever present in the minds of British Imperial overlords.

Studies of the history of Trinidad for the 'modern' period (i.e. since the 1783 Cedula and subsequent British take-over in 1797) have also acknowledged the importance of cocoa to the economic life of the island. The most outstanding of these studies include Bridget Brereton's two works History of Modern Trinidad⁹ and Race Relations in Colonial Trinidad.¹⁰ Brereton's work provides a balanced and all-encompassing view of the many different issues and threads which conspired to determine the course and nature of Trinidad's social, economic and political development during the period 1783 to 1962. While she pays fitting tribute to the role of cocoa in the economy, she neither does, and albeit cannot, within the formidable scope of the book, promise an in-depth examination of the internal dynamics and conflicts within the cocoa industry nor the external factors affecting its development. She does not, for example, illustrate an understanding of the facts of agglomeration, large-scale concentration which crept into the cocoa industry during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Neither does she perceive the intricacies behind the conflict between labour and capital within the industry which manifested itself, for example, in the cocoa contract system, the structure of indebtedness and the attempts to dispossess the cocoa peasantry. Brereton does not discuss either the role of the state or imperial policy in this conflict between capital and labour. This thesis addresses all of these issues which have previously been sidelined or ignored.

Another significant work is Donald Wood's Trinidad in Transition¹¹ which examines the developments of the post-Emancipation period 1838 to 1870. Wood hints at the conflict that existed between capital and labour, between planter and

peasant over labour and land during this time and has been of great help on this matter. Wood does not, however, seriously critique the role of Imperial policy making with reference to economic development and in particular to the development of cocoa and the cocoa peasantry. In any case, Wood's analysis stops in 1870 just at the outset of the 'Golden Age' of cocoa.

Eric Williams History of the People of Trinidad and Tobago¹² takes a very critical view of British Imperial policy with reference to the welfare of the colony and of non-white colonial peoples in general. Williams, however, neither provides much insight into how this attitude affected the cocoa industry, nor does he examine in any great detail the conflicts within the Trinidad cocoa industry.

The works of David Harrison¹³ and Howard Johnson¹⁴ speak of the conflict between capital and labour within the industry beginning in the late nineteenth century, stressing the obstacles thrown in the path of the cocoa peasantry. While Johnson refers to the end of the nineteenth century, Harrison sees decline coming for the cocoa peasantry in the village of Demsay in the ward of Toco, by the end of the second decade of the twentieth century. Harrison sees the underlying problem as inability to compete with the large scale cocoa planters while Johnson places the stress on the cycle of indebtedness and 'merchant credit', in any case a matter of the triumph of large over small. It will be shown in this thesis, however, that despite the untold hardships and obstacles thrown in its way, the peasantry continued to survive. The cocoa peasantry was an open-ended phenomenon: while many exited the field, many others continued to enter, and in fact there was, over time, no significant reduction in numbers. On the contrary, their numerical strength increased with time

thus attesting to the failure of attempts to dissuade its productive efforts. While these two pieces move the scholarly analysis in the right direction, these are articles and not full length studies and therefore cannot be expected, in all practicality, to deal extensively or thoroughly with all of the internal and external dynamics of cocoa planting in the history of Trinidad.

Another work which pays some attention to the nature of the relationship between capital and labour in the cocoa industry is Kelvin Singh's "Economy and Polity in Trinidad 1919 to 1931."¹⁵ Singh points at the unequal treatment of the cocoa peasants as opposed to the cocoa planters by the colonial authorities and imperial policy. He states clearly that the tendency was to favour planter over peasant, to favour capital over labour. Strangely enough, however, Singh nevertheless alludes to the existence of a symbiotic relationship between planter and peasant, a kind of understanding for mutual advantage. One must admit that at first glance this seems to be the case. It is a view that was argued previously in the exploratory stages of my research, as is exemplified in a preliminary article entitled "Peasant Cocoa Cultivators in Trinidad 1870-1920: Some Considerations."¹⁶ Closer examination has revealed, however, that nothing can be further from the reality than this view of symbiosis. 'Peasants' and planters in many respects shared the same economic goals and therefore desired to gain control over the same limited factors of production: land, labour, capital. The ensuing power play for control of, and access to, these factor inputs, therefore resulted, of necessity, in unmitigated conflict rather than symbiosis. Measures which appeared on the surface to be movements in the direction of peaceful co-existence were in fact more subtle means of effecting the triumph of

one class over the other in the continuing struggle. It is precisely in this struggle that the state tended to favour the interest of capital over labour, of planter over peasant. This view is supported by Susan Craig in Smiles and Blood in her analysis of the role of the state in the conflict between capital and labour in the labour rebellion of the 1930s in Trinidad and Tobago.¹⁷

To date, the only truly comprehensive monographic work on the Trinidad Cocoa Industry has been the frequently-cited seminal work of C.Y. Shephard The Cocoa Industry: Some Economic Aspects.¹⁸ This work, published in 1937, is almost sixty years old. Shephard, an agronomist, looks at the cocoa industry from the scientific perspective, while documenting its performance as regards the rest of the economy, and on the world market. His aim is to document and analyse the decline of the industry and he devotes only a brief prelude to the 'Golden Age' of prosperity. Shephard's work has proved extremely useful in providing illuminating insight into the agronomic and some economic aspects of the cocoa industry. It provides, too, valuable and detailed statistics on the cocoa industry in Trinidad for the period he examines. Everything that has been written on this industry since Shephard takes its cue from him, using his work as its authority and point of reference. To date no adequate purely historical monographs exist on either the rise of cocoa in Trinidad or on the internal class dynamics within the cocoa sector itself.

It is in light of the above historiographical examination, then, that this thesis becomes relevant in its attempt to concentrate on an investigation of the case of cocoa in Trinidad throughout the period of its rise and decline, and in its examination of the internal class conflict within the industry. The thesis will use the cocoa industry of

Trinidad as a test case in examining the impact of British Imperial policy on colonial economic development.

The thesis will focus largely on the development of the peasant sector of the Trinidad cocoa industry. The century after the abolition of slavery in the British West Indies saw the emergence of an independent peasantry beginning as a logical outgrowth of the plantation workforce of former slaves and augmenting itself numerically and in terms of its economic significance over time. This has been documented by such Caribbean historians as Rawle Farley, W. Arthur Lewis and Woodville Marshall.¹⁹

This peasant class can be viewed more accurately as an indigenous own-account small scale agricultural class because it did not fit neatly into any of the predetermined categories of peasantries as defined by the European model, or even in the Haitian model,²⁰ which, among Caribbean peasantries, comes closest to the European type. For convenience sake, the class shall be referred to as "the peasantry" but it is necessary to define the usage of the term here.

Eric Wolf describes the European peasant as 'a rural cultivator' who is not a farmer or an 'agricultural entrepreneur', that is, "the peasant does not operate an enterprise in the economic sense, he runs a household, not a business concern."²¹ In fact, the European peasantry forms a type of community which is not merely linked by commonality of economic organisation and activity but also by social organisation, ideological orientations and cultural/traditional norms.²² The European peasant does not pursue surplus production with the aim of capitalist accumulation, his primary purpose is to feed himself and his family. While they maintain the strictly essential

links with the outside world, the peasantry exists as a kind of 'underdog' community outside of and apart from the capitalist superstructure and culture.

The Caribbean peasant represents a different phenomenon. W. Arthur Lewis defines the Caribbean peasant as "a man who devotes the major part of his time to cultivating land on his own account with the help of little or no outside labour."²³ The Caribbean peasant does not resemble the European peasant type nor, as Trujillo notes, does he consider himself one. To him, he is a 'small-scale contractor', a 'small proprietor', 'small planter' or even just a 'small man'. As Trujillo points out, the peasant is "more interested in fighting for and gaining recognition than in the terminology through which that recognition is expressed."²⁴

The Caribbean peasant does not restrict himself to subsistence agriculture. In the cocoa industry he produces mainly for export. In addition, he offers his labour for hire to nearby plantations. He does not divorce himself totally from the capitalist market place. Marshall argues that in the early, post 1838 phase, while the peasant continued to work part-time on the plantation for cash "his orientation was in fact antagonistic to the plantation rationale."²⁵ Marshall also identifies the development of the peasantry as parallel to the development of village communities "near if not inside the peasant sector."²⁶ This he sees as more the case in the Windward islands. In fact the term 'peasantry' in the Caribbean defines a continuum in size of holdings, in typology as well as in patterns of tenure.

The cocoa peasant in Trinidad during the period under investigation exemplifies this point. While some held land in freehold tenure, others existed under some form of share-cropping or contractual tenure while others squatted. In any case

there was, for all intents and purposes, effective occupation and cultivation of land for export production. Sizes of holdings varied between two to five acres but larger holdings were not uncommon. The average size was five to ten acres but one was not truly considered to be a large-scale planter if one possessed less than 100 acres. The Blue Books make a clear distinction between those holding under 100 acres and those holding over 100 acres. Other reports and records use 50 acres as the cut-off point. The term 'peasant' therefore includes all small-scale cultivators who did not fit into the large scale proprietary.

For this group of peasants, too, there is no identifiable adherence to a traditional culture nor village community in all cases, distinct and apart from the culture of the larger capitalistic society. The aspiration of the small scale cultivator, too, was not limited by subsistence goals - his aim was clearly upward socio-economic mobility defining a vertical continuum from the labouring class into the large scale landed proprietary/entrepreneurial class. Many of these small scale cultivators started off as wage labourers and later became contractors and then landed proprietors, small first then larger for many, all producing cocoa primarily for export purposes. The peasantry was indeed an 'aspiring' class which never fully let go of wage labour while pursuing small-scale agriculture hoping to improve itself by any means necessary.

It is precisely because of their goals that small scale cultivators came into conflict with the planter class who perceived them clearly as a labouring class, overstepping their natural bounds. In many cases, it was very difficult to distinguish between labourers, contractors and small holders for they wore two or more of these

hats simultaneously, accepting wages for their labour, as well as contracting during the intermediate stages of their upward movement into the landed proprietary class.

In much the same way as the slave-holding class came into conflict with the enslaved work-force, the large scale proprietors, the capitalistic cocoa planters came into conflict with the small-scale cultivators of cocoa and for many of the same reasons. The planter class perceived this aspiring class as a threat to its traditional control over land, labour and capital resource. For the small-scale cocoa cultivators or peasants, therefore, the process of establishment was a long and difficult one. At every turn they found their path of advancement blocked by numerous contingencies and constraints devised expressly by the planter class and its allies to frustrate their goal achievement. The interest of the state blended with that of the proprietary body in this conflict of contending classes and therefore offered no solace to the peasantry.²⁷

Despite the many constraints and obstacles, the peasant class proved itself to be not only resistant but also creative in its struggle to consolidate its position and to extend its arena of control over productive resources. In the cocoa industry, it was small-scale agriculture which steered it to successful establishment during the early years, and continued to facilitate its expansion and prosperity during and beyond the so-called 'Golden Age 1870-1920'. With the achievement of prosperity by 1890 also came serious setbacks, competition and other difficulties for the industry as a whole, which in turn threatened the survival of the peasantry. However, the numerical strength of this class increased rather than diminished, attesting to its resilience and its will to survive. It is this will to survive, which, coupled with their own

resourcefulness, ensured the peasants' continued existence and development into an 'aspiring' or 'transformational class'²⁸ which was to map out the direction of development - a unique Caribbean type of socio-economic development for the colony as for the entire British West Indies.

Methodological and Theoretical Orientations

This thesis will adopt the conflict framework. This dialectical approach has become an accepted basis for Caribbean historical analysis used by many of the 'maestros' of Caribbean history such as George Beckford, Lloyd Best, Elsa Gouveia, C.L.R. James, James Millette, Walter Rodney and Eric Williams.²⁹ The core of the dialectical analysis has focussed on the internal dynamics of relationships deriving from the central pivot of the plantation system. Regardless of the apparent existence of symbiosis, it is difficult to explain the Caribbean historical experience without coming to rest on the position that it was conflict more so than symbiosis as the dominant mode which best defines the Caribbean historical experience.³⁰ For the 'have-nots', this meant the never-ending struggle to gain control of the productive economic forces, the struggle for social recognition and the struggle to overturn the structure of political power, all of which systems and structures were built upon the principle of inequality.

It is the dialectical model that defines the system of slavery and of indentureship as they unfolded in the Caribbean. This very dialectical approach best defines the struggles of the peasantry which emerged out of the emancipation experience. In the ensuing struggle of the 'have-nots' versus the 'haves', one can

locate the origins of what C.L.R. James calls "the West Indian nation."³¹ It is possible to trace the progress of the nascent nation from the birth pangs of slavery and the plantation system, through the emergence of an aspiring class which is really an alliance of the ex-slave wage labourer and the small-scale own-account cultivators, into the full emergence of a truly indigenous Caribbean nation in full possession of the means of its own economic transformation in the twentieth century. It is in the context of this model that this thesis is located.

The model differs from the Marxian type of dialectical model. While the conflicting classes clashed with each other over the control of productive resources and effective power, they also shared some common capitalistic aspirations - a kind of bourgeois consensus of materialism. The aim was not to overturn capitalism and establish a classless society and communal or socialist economic organisation. However even within what can be perceived as the movement towards capitalist consensus there was conflict. The emergent capitalist class differed from and conflicted with the traditional capitalist class even while it adopted some of its goals, attitudes, mechanisms and *modus operandi*. The aim of the former was to compete effectively using techniques grounded in their traditional culture of the wage labour/peasant class from which they came, to use the arts they had acquired during slavery and mastered over the years in order to perfect their stance in their quest for capitalist accumulation and enterprise. The time period of the thesis does not go beyond 1939, while the full blossoming of this transformational class only becomes obvious later in the twentieth century.

The point remains, however, that it is in the period under examination and the period of slavery that this class had its true beginnings and laid the essential foundation for its later coming of age. The thesis, therefore, seeks to establish a broad chronological continuity, a kind of progression linking this period with the one before it as after it. It defines development, therefore, as a process of transformation within the context of history seen as continuity. The emergence of an indigenous transformational economic sector with capitalist leanings therefore cannot be understood without reference to the contiguous development of the cocoa peasantry during the period 1838 to 1939.

In the interest of dialectical analysis the thesis will zero in on the three main areas of conflict: conflict over land, the control of labour and access to capital. Because of the interconnectedness of these areas of conflict, it is impossible to deal with each in isolation without overlap and repetition. Therefore, this study will use chronological periodization as its broad organizing principle. In each period it will deal with the main locus of conflict as it developed and manifested itself at that particular point in time. The thesis will focus on the period 1838-1939; the period of establishment, the Golden Age and the period of decline; the period 1838 to 1870 will be examined only in so far as it sketches the background to the conflicts and lays the foundation for their later exposition.

Unlike many historians³² who argue for a more deliberately oppressive role of Imperial policy and policy makers in their attitude to economic development and economic sectors in the colonies, this thesis argues that Imperial policy was characterised as more indifference to colonial development than downright ideological

opposition to it. Indifference was the dominant attitude influencing policy (or the failure to formulate policy) for most of the nineteenth century. Under Chamberlain, the Colonial Office sheds this indifference to some extent and becomes more actively involved in promoting colonial economic development because it perceived long run economic gains for itself rather than merely for the colony. Whenever or wherever gain was not to be derived, imperial policy lapses back into its customary diffidence over colonial economic welfare.

Another point of departure in this thesis is that does not subscribe to the view of unmitigated and structural underdevelopment as the logical outcome of the imperial/colonial relationship in the British context, even in light of British imperial indifference in the formulation of policy with respect to colonial economic development. Instead of creating a downward spiral of dependency, an attitude of inability to create self-reliance, and are a lack of dynamism to promote economic development and transformation, imperial indifference inadvertently instigated local initiative, resourcefulness and innovation which promoted economic development and transformation. The development of the cocoa industry, no doubt, also had ripple effects on other sectors of the island economy, bearing in mind the impact of linkages and long run multiplier effects of incremental injections from cocoa into the larger economy.

In order to validate conclusions and to highlight developments a comparative analysis will be used wherever necessary. The impact of imperial policy on actual economic development of the Trinidad cocoa industry will be compared with its impact on, and growth of, the cocoa industry of the Gold Coast, which was also

based on small-scale cultivation and which came to prominence within the British Empire after Trinidad cocoa but soon out-distanced it. Under the same imperial policy-making umbrella Trinidad cocoa atrophied while cocoa in the Gold Coast blossomed into prominence. The difference lay, therefore, not in policy but in endogenous variables, in age and scale of operations, in market strategies and in the dynamics of the world cocoa market.

While primary material forms the base for research investigation and analysis, because of the wide chronological range under examination it was necessary to restrict the bulk of primary research to the key period of focus, the 'golden age' of prosperity beginning in 1870 to the period of decline ending in 1939 at the outset for the Second World War. For the earlier period there will be a greater reliance on secondary material, as for the background of imperial policy and for the Gold Coast parallel. Statistical analysis will be used wherever necessary in the interest of testing and validating hypotheses.

In conclusion, the research has revealed that imperial policy effectiveness was constrained by two main considerations: the interest of the mother country which was not always compatible with that of the colonial economies, and the internal class dialectics within the colonial sectors as was the case in the cocoa industry in Trinidad. It is the failure of imperial policy to take a direct and positive stance for the peasant sector which led indirectly to development and expansion of cocoa itself. Even when there was imperial policy it leaned in favour either of the agricultural élite sector or the industry in general, in which case there was some trickle down of

benefits to the small scale sector. Policy, therefore, promoted development more by inadvertence than by intent.

CHAPTER 1

NOTES

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⁴Richard S. Lobdell. "British Officials and the West Indian Peasantry 1842-1938" in Malcolm Cross and Gad Heuman (eds.) Labour in the Caribbean from Emancipation to Independence. (London: Macmillan Publishers Ltd., 1988) pp.195-207.

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¹²Eric Williams. History of the People of Trinidad and Tobago (Port-of-Spain, Trinidad: PNM Publishing Co. Ltd., 1962; London, Andre Deutsch, 1964).

¹³David Harrison. "The Changing Fortunes of a Trinidad Peasantry: A Case Study" in Malcolm Cross and Arneaud Marks (eds.) Peasants, Plantation and Rural Communities in the Caribbean (University of Surrey and Royal Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology, London, 1979) pp.54-85.

¹⁴Howard Johnson. "Merchant Credit and the Dispossession of the Cocoa Peasantry in Trinidad in the late Nineteenth Century". Peasant Studies, Vol. 15, No. 1, 1987, pp.28-38.

¹⁵Kelvin Singh. "Economy and Polity in Trinidad 1919-1938" (Ph.D. Thesis, U.W.I., 1975); Kelvin Singh, Race and Class Struggles in a Colonial State: Trinidad 1917-1945 (Jamaica; Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago: The Press, University of the West Indies and The University of Calgary Press, 1994).

¹⁶Kathleen Phillips Lewis. "Peasant Cocoa Cultivators in Trinidad 1870-1920: Some Considerations in John S. Brierley and Hymie Rubenstein (eds.) Small Farming and Peasant Resources in the Caribbean (Winnipeg, Manitoba: Department of Geography. The University of Manitoba, 1988) pp.29-38.

¹⁷Susan Craig. Smiles and Blood: The Ruling Class Response to the Workers Rebellion in Trinidad and Tobago (London: New Beacon Books Ltd. 1988).

¹⁸C.Y. Shephard. The Cocoa Industry in Trinidad: Some Economic Aspects Parts I-VI (Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, 1937).

¹⁹Woodville Marshall. "Aspects of Rural Development in the West Indies: Notes on Peasant Development in the West Indies since 1838" Social and Economic Studies Vol. 17 No. 3 1968, pp.252-263 also in P.I. Gomes (ed.) Rural Development in the Caribbean (London: C. Hurst & Co. Ltd., 1985) pp.1-14; W.A. Lewis, The Evolution of the Peasantry in the British West Indies (London: Colonial Office Pamphlet 656,936); R. Farley, "The Rise of the Peasantry in British Guiana" S.E.S. Vol. 2 No. 4 1954, pp.17-103.

²⁰Eric R. Wolf. (Peasants, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall Inc., 1966); T. Shanin (ed.) Peasants and Peasant Societies (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974); Peter Fraser, "The Future Peasantry: Caribbean Rural Groups in the 19th Century" in S. Gray (ed.) Contemporary Caribbean: A Sociological Reader Vol. I. (Maracas,

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²¹E. Wolf. Peasants, p.2.

²²D. Harrison. The Changing Fortunes of a Trinidad Peasantry, pp.54-6; M. Lundahl, Peasants and Poverty, pp.13-16.

²³W. Arthur Lewis. The Evolution of the Peasantry in the British West Indies, p.3.

²⁴Michel-Rolph Trouillot. "Discourses of Rule and the Acknowledgement of the Peasantry in Dominica 1838-1928", p.713.

²⁵Woodville Marshall. "Peasant Development in the West Indies since 1838" In P.I. Gomes (ed.) p.2.

²⁶Ibid., p.3.

²⁷S. Craig. Smiles and Blood, pp.15-18, 24; George Lamming Foreword in Walter Rodney. A History of the Guyanese Working People 1881-1905. (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1981) pp.xvii-xxv.

²⁸See notes on Chapter 9 (Conclusion: Equilibrium or Exit?).

²⁹Eric Williams. Capitalism and Slavery (London: Andre Deutsch, 1964); James Millette. Society and Politics in Colonial Trinidad (London: Zed Books Ltd., 1985); C.L.R. James. The Black Jacobins (New York: Vintage Books, 1959); Walter Rodney. A History of the Guyanese Working People 1881-1905 (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1981); George Beckford. Persistent Poverty: Underdevelopment in Plantation Economies of the Third World (Morant Bay, Jamaica: Maroon Publishing House, 1983); Elsa Gouveia. A Study of the Historiography of the British West Indies to the End of the Nineteenth Century (Mexico: Institute Panamericano de Geografia e Historia, 1956); Lloyd Best and Kari Levitt "Character of the Caribbean Economy" in G.L. Beckford (ed.) Reading in the Caribbean Economy (Jamaica, I.S.E.R. 1975).

³⁰W.A. Green. "The Creolization of Caribbean History: The Emancipation Era and A Critique of Dialectical Analysis" Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History 1986: pp. 149-169.

³¹C.L.R. James. "The Birth of a Nation" in S. Craig (ed.) Contemporary Caribbean: A Sociological Reader Vol. 5, pp.3-35.

³²See for example E. Williams. Capitalism and Slavery; G. Beckford. Persistent Poverty; L. Best and K. Levitt. Character of the Caribbean Economy.

CHAPTER 2
'PAX BRITANNICA': THE IMPERIAL BACKGROUND, TRINIDAD
AND THE COCOA INDUSTRY

The Imperial Context

At the beginning of the nineteenth century Britain had begun to take the initiative among European states in industry, commerce, colonization and world ascendancy. Many of the forces which produced such initiative in Britain were not unique to her but were also at work elsewhere in Europe. Population increase and demographic redistribution for instance were evident all over Europe and to a great extent British primacy happened precisely because of her relationship with other states and societies in terms of trade rivalry and intellectual exchange.¹ Britain led the world partly because of her own internal advantages and initiatives but also partly because of the internal problems which constrained her rivals. Britain's most serious later competitors, France and Germany, were still a long way behind in the industrial race. France was still recovering from the ravages of internal political revolution while Germany was hampered by the fact of political fragmentation.

Even within Britain herself, industrialization was not fully a *fait accompli*. British industry was still in the throes of transformation and this 'revolution' was causing grave social disturbance and crisis. As described by Elie Halévy "not only was there open war between Capital and Labour but also in the ranks of Capital and of Labour alike, confusion and anarchy prevailed."² By the late eighteenth century under powerful economic stimuli, British agriculture, industry and trade had registered significant increases. It was this material advance which produced social upheaval as well as the visible tensions between capital and labour which in turn

triggered a wave of social protest and pressure-group activity. Phenomenal economic growth was accompanied by pain, hardship and obsolescence for many. The early nineteenth century therefore dawned with the British people asking new questions of themselves and of their government. Could such prosperity be sustained and if so how - whether through uncontrolled private enterprise and initiative or through state regulation. The early nineteenth century was a chaotic time for British society.

In the commercial field in Britain, however, there was no such confusion. By 1812 Britain emerged victorious after Napoleon's failed attempts to destroy her industrial and commercial supremacy through a system of blockading continental ports from trading with British ships, policing the seas and seizing the cargo of such ships as well as banning British goods totally from the Continent. This system was known as the Continental System.³ Instead Britain continued to pursue her aim to discover new routes, recover new markets which had been closed, and to force her way into the Spanish and Portuguese colonies in the Americas which had previously been closed to foreign trade by the establishment of Iberian monopolies.

Early Victorian self-confidence in Britain's industrial progress, commercial economic and naval ascendancy spilled over in its attitude to its empire and colonies. While Britain's supremacy in the colonial field stood unrivalled by other European nations, she devised no formal policy as regards colonial development. Her possession of colonies exemplified her paramountcy in Europe. Colonies were viewed as mere manifestations of her power and influence rather than the foundation upon which that primacy was built. Britain saw no pressing need to devise restrictive policy for imperial control of colonies nor for concerted colonial expansion and

development. This is not to say that the colonies did not contribute to Britain's wealth and prestige. That Britain was ever cognizant of their importance is illustrated by the mercantilist nature of the relationship between her and her colonies. It is against such restrictions that the thirteen American colonies rebelled in 1776. British colonies elsewhere in the New World empathised and silently identified with America but remained within the empire for various reasons: the commercial benefits to be derived from the imperial colonial relationship, their own lack of military might with which to defy Britain.

In many senses, however, British rule was not always despotic or particularly odious. The British Empire was vast and constituted a loose political entity of peoples of various places and races, varied also in linguistic orientation and religious affiliation. The British Empire was bound together by little more than allegiance to the British Crown and to British Imperial command. Outside of this, wide disparities in culture, government and the progress of civilization were obvious. Britain aimed only at ensuring the indefinite maintenance of her supremacy in Europe and in the world.

As the century advanced British politics and economics were gradually being converted to the idea of liberalism and *laissez-faire* which professed to contain the final solution towards continued economic prosperity and social balance. Greater freedom of enterprise, in the organisation and working of industry and trade would bring in more wealth than the old mercantilist approach. In keeping with these new ideas, protection to colonial interest was also being reduced. The Navigation Acts, upon which rested the old mercantilist trade system, which were promulgated

between 1650 to 1673, were finally repealed in 1849. This coupled with the Equalisation of Sugar Duties Act in 1846 completed the transition to freedom in trade for both mother country and colonies.

On the domestic front, too, these liberal ideas led to the gradual democratization of politics and political participation in Britain beginning with the Reform Act of 1832. *Laissez-faire* also heralded the reduction of state control and interference in the social problem of pauperism. As with the economy, liberals believed, there should be minimal state interference in the social problem. Society they felt had an in-built regulating mechanism which would always ensure a return to equilibrium. At home and further afield within the empire, conversion to the liberal creed was taking effect by the middle of the nineteenth century.

By this time the British Empire was of considerable size. The formal empire, that is, the territory over which Britain had official political control, included Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Natal, Cape Colony and the British West Indies. Britain also boasted a considerable informal empire over which she had either rights of trade, protectorate, suzerainty, or merely indirect influence and where British paramountcy was maintained not by formal control or responsibility. This informal empire included Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, Lagos, Zanzibar, the Malay Peninsula, the West Coast of Africa from the Gambia to the Niger and even Argentina.

Not all mid-Victorians were converted to the idea of free trade. In fact, they were undecided as to what ought to be the best policy to adopt with respect to new colonial acquisition and the development of existing colonies. The Free Traders, in particular the Cobdenites, felt that colonies were wasteful burdens or 'millstones' and

should not be retained. In their view the possession of colonies merely created jealousies amongst European nations and therefore were detrimental to continued European, and world peace.⁴ The apostles of free trade argued for a more 'subtle kind of empire' whereby colonies would remain valuable trading partners without imposing (on the British) the responsibility of governing them.⁵

On the other hand, those in favour of the retention of colonies argued that bringing more territory under the British Crown was in fact the most powerful means of maintaining world peace and also of diffusing the many benefits of Christianity and civilization.⁶ Additionally, colonies were vital as fields for capital investment, market outlets for surplus production, sources of raw material and hedges against insecurity of trade. Colonies could also be valuable and loyal allies which could greatly strengthen a nation's position in the event of war.

For a while the free traders triumphed, particularly with respect to those colonies which had a majority of white settlers. A free trade imperial/colonial relationship seemed to work best with such colonies which were economically and politically more advanced. These colonies, it was generally believed, could be granted *laissez-faire* in trade as well as responsible government without fear of anarchy or disloyalty to Britain. Mid-Victorians therefore pursued a policy of devolution of power to the white colonies. By 1860 the Canadian and Australian settlements and New Zealand had been granted responsible government. Cape Colony was given representative, though not responsible, government. Colonies with a non-white majority, however, were not considered ready for the devolution or transfer of power or even for fully representative political institutions. The pervasive

Victorian attitude to race fostered the belief that political responsibility was only safely applicable to colonists of Anglo-Saxon ethnic origin. Policy governing non-white colonies, therefore, was set apart under the heading "native policy" which, as Bernard Porter points out, "rarely went far beyond the bounds prescribed by pragmatic convenience [and] national self interest."⁷

For such less developed primary-producing colonies, British conversion to the system of free trade had a double barrelled effect. While it increased competition and lowered prices for British exports overseas, it also meant cheaper imports for British consumers, manufacturers and industrialists. For primary-producing colonies, however, which had grown accustomed to the paternalistic protection provided by the mercantilist system of trade, the positive effects of *laissez faire* were not so obvious. They found themselves foundering on the rocks of free trade. The British West Indian sugar islands, for example, having grown to prosperity under the system of protectionism, resented free trade with all its implications. In the face of economic dislocation, estates were abandoned, fortunes lost and free trade was blamed for a decline which in fact had begun much earlier.⁸

While the 'halcyon days' of British industrial growth lasted, however, free trade triumphed over protectionism. This phase, however, did not last to the end of the nineteenth century. By the early 1860s there were definite signs of structural weaknesses, signs that the exhaustion of the frontiers of industrial growth was fast approaching. The British state was forced to reconsider its role in society and economy in order to ensure continued growth and equilibrium or at least, to harness the negative effects of industrialization and of European commercial rivalry.

The Paris Exhibition of 1867 proved adequate grounds for discomfort. It was clear indication that the other countries were pressing ahead with industrial development. Britain could not afford to be complacent. The political unification of Italy and Germany, accomplished by 1870-71, enabled them to enter fully into the industrial race, while the end of the civil war in the United States and the commencement of rapid reconstruction launched her also on to the path of capitalist mania. By the 1880s British industrial growth and commercial supremacy were overcast by a tone of questioning and misgiving.⁹ When the value of capital assets in Britain fell by 1884 the volume of trade showed signs of decline, and socio-economic discontent increased Britain eventually faced the possibility that the *laissez-faire* idea was doomed.

The writings of Karl Marx especially *Das Kapital* which appeared in 1867 but was just published in English in 1887, enlarged upon his earlier work, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (published 1859), which issued loud warnings about the negative effects and unmitigated decadence of capitalistic competition. Protectionist arguments were revived with stronger pleas for Britain to behave like the majority, i.e. France, Germany and the other major powers in Europe.¹⁰ It was the German imperialist thrust above all others, their *Weltpolitik* and Social Darwinistic view of the world as a "fight for feeding grounds" that galvanized Britain into the protectionist response.¹¹ It is in this context that the British Government came to be criticised for its passivity in its imperial policy governing its dealing with the colonies.

The partitioning of Africa in the 1880s indicated the direction of imperial rivalry among European nations and heralded a new age of formal control of colonies rather than informal influence. This does not mean that the *laissez-faire* idea was jettisoned completely but neither were British policy makers converted fully to the system of protectionism. In fact the best principles of free trade were maintained but there was a movement towards stronger integration of trade relations and loyalties within the British Empire - a kind of imperial consolidation in order to ensure survival and supremacy in competition against similarly organised imperial systems. This produced an economy much more inclined domestically towards worker welfare than ever before; it produced a state more concerned about economic regulation and responsibility for the social problem than ever before. It also produced an imperial policy which reflected greater awareness of imperial responsibility for colonial welfare and development than ever before.

By the end of the nineteenth century Britain had moved from a position of virtual complacency in her relationship with her colonies to a position of mild interest, if not concrete action, with respect to the promotion of colonial economic development. The idea of national self-interest would be best served by keeping the primary producing colonies tied firmly to the imperial apron strings. This relationship of dependency, it was argued, would also benefit the colonies for it would make available to them "the experience, knowledge and resources which they could not otherwise command."¹²

The idea that coloured legislative bodies would be, at best, unpredictable in behaviour, and at worst, anarchic, tyrannical and traitorous was an unchanged

Victorian notion throughout the nineteenth century. The Indian Mutiny of 1857 and the Morant Bay Rebellion in Jamaica in 1865 had served to reinforce the Victorians in their belief that self government was inapplicable to coloured or even mixed groups. By the 1860s therefore Britain took steps to bring the West Indian colonies more directly under her authority. The Old Representative System of colonial government which allowed for planter representation on elected colonial legislative assemblies was discarded and replaced by the Crown Colony system of Government that disallowed such elected planter assemblies. Under the old Representative System of Government planters were able to form a powerful oligarchy which ensured its own class interests. With the genesis of the Crown Colony system the political power of this group was severely restricted. This system also proved an effective block to the upward political mobility of non-whites, most of whose foreparents had been slaves prior to the passage of the Abolition Act of 1833 which came into effect on 1st August 1834. The Crown Colony system seemed the most feasible hedge against future trouble from upstart coloured colonists.

With the exception of a few territories which came under the jurisdiction of the Foreign Office, the India Office and the Colonial Office held the responsibility for supervising the empire. The Colonial Office had become formally established as an institution as early as 1812, but it was not until 1854 that it was officially recognised as a distinct and independent State Department led by a Secretary of State for the colonies.¹³ While the Colonial Office devised policy and supervised its implementation, it did very little by way of promoting colonial economic development. In a pre-Keynesian world, the Victorians, preoccupied as they were

with frugality, economy and maintaining a balanced budget, could spare little to make British resources available to impoverished colonies which no longer made significant direct contributions to the imperial coffers.¹⁴ At best, it remained expedient to ensure that the colonial *status quo* was maintained and their budgets balanced without further hardships to British taxpayers. Grants-in-aid from the imperial exchequer were made available to colonial governments, not for purely developmental purposes, but rather to enable them to meet administrative costs and avoid budgetary deficits. Grants or loans to finance large development projects were difficult to obtain, particularly by any colony whose financial position was unsound. It was considered more important to safeguard the financial interests of the imperial exchequer than to rescue hard-pressed colonies like those in the West Indies.¹⁵ Whatever colonial economic development was accomplished in this period, therefore, was largely self-financed and internally generated.

The appointment of Joseph Chamberlain as Secretary of State for the colonies in 1895 ushered in a new phase in imperial policy-making with respect to colonial development. Chamberlain's new radical programme seemed to favour protectionism over *laissez-faire* as the most advisable direction for Britain's trade policy colonial and foreign. During his stay at the Colonial Office, Chamberlain launched a campaign to arrange for imperial government aid for colonial development. "The colonies he saw as a being in the condition of undeveloped estates ... which never can be developed without Imperial assistance."¹⁶ Chamberlain's campaign did not arise principally from disinterested concern for the welfare of colonial peoples, but rather on the grounds of "enlightened self-interest." A policy of colonial economic

development which would expand old markets and create new ones, would serve in the short run to solve the pressing problem of unemployment in Britain, and in the long run to secure her economic salvation.¹⁷

Chamberlain's policy of "constructive imperialism" would serve to increase colonial production and thus strengthen trade links within the empire and with the outside world. To achieve this, Chamberlain proposed a 'marriage' of the private and state enterprises. In order to create a climate for the effective exploitation of colonial resources by private investors, first imperial government financing was needed to construct roads, harbours, railways and other features of infrastructure for economic development as well as to promote research.¹⁸

While Chamberlain could have created a revolution in imperial policy toward colonial economic development, his actual accomplishments fell far short of the original plan. Porter believes that this was chiefly because the "British taxpayers represented by the Chancellor of the Exchequer were not in a revolutionary frame of mind."¹⁹

By 1895, as Richard M. Kesner points out, the Treasury's ideas concerning the role of the imperial government in the development of Crown Colony economies had been well established. Often, Chamberlain at the Colonial Office found his ideas at odds with those of the Treasury. Much of his stay in office, therefore, was spent not attempting to accomplish the almost impossible task of changing the Treasury's views, but rather trying to temper his demands to comply with them while at the same time "providing the colonies with a modicum of assistance."²⁰

Chamberlain's energies seem to have been caught in the crossfire between the Colonial Office and the Treasury, which had a long tradition of mutual suspicion and hostility, and channelled into his growing fixation with tariff reform. The Treasury persisted in arguing the case for 'economy', which one Parliamentary Under-Secretary chose rather to refer to as 'blundering stupidity'. He was convinced that it was "productive of no result whatever except the exciting of a feeling of profound contempt for such miserable pettifogging procedures."²¹ Nevertheless the Colonial Office agreed with the Treasury in principle that imperial budgets had to be carefully balanced and therefore expenditure on colonies had to be adequately justified and kept as low as possible. Chamberlain found out the hard way that it was not always easy to win substantial concessions for his "Cinderella Department."²² His struggle to increase aid to the hard-pressed colonies was an uphill one, especially given the unprecedented nature of this policy.

Although, as R. Dumett observes, "his major policy aim of recasting the machinery of imperial development aid to crown colonies was abortive," Chamberlain was still able to achieve a measure of success in smaller areas. The Colonial Stock Act of 1900,²³ for example, was intended to stimulate colonial development by making it easier to borrow on the London market; but only few colonies whose economies were relatively buoyant could survive the rigorous scrutiny to which applications were subjected, and even if approved, few could cope with such additional indebtedness.

The Colonial Loans Act of 1898 was one major success for Chamberlain. It sanctioned large loans for colonial development totalling £3,351,820 to twelve

colonies to finance public works authorised by Chamberlain and already under construction.²⁴

The Colonial Office shared to some extent the orthodox views and attitudes of the Treasury and Chamberlain's progressive development schemes were hampered by their and his own lack of understanding of the true nature and essence of economic development. His so-called 'ambitious' proposals saw economic development not as structural change in the economy nor as measures to foster self-reliance but rather as arithmetical increases in primary production, for example, in the West Indian sugar industry.²⁵ The real problem was that most Englishmen were not yet ready to give up the empire, which they feared would be the ultimate result of too much colonial economic development.

It therefore can be appreciated that while Chamberlain remained sympathetic and committed to colonial development, he was faced with sometimes insurmountable problems which restricted his freedom to act. At the same time, as H.A. Will postulates, by temperament he tended to lean more heavily toward "great developments" which would bring rapid and positive, rather than slow, incremental results.²⁶

The line of imperial visionaries who succeeded Chamberlain at the Colonial Office continued to adhere to the "Chamberlainite thesis that colonial shifts in colonial policy over the years had not produced any significant progress toward colonial economic development for imperial economic policy still remained confined by bureaucratic problems and its own myopic vision and concerns. As Stephen Constantine points out, although imperial aid for colonial development was greatly

increased during the period 1918 to 1939, this item of expenditure remained an insignificant one in the imperial government's annual accounts, amounting to about one-third the expenditure on stationery and on the maintenance of public buildings. "Only once", he observes, "did expenditure on colonial development creep above 0.1% of (British) G.N.P. and usually it was substantially less."²⁷

It is clear that British imperial policy with respect to colonial economic development was geared more towards British self-interest rather than a genuine concern for colonial peoples. That policy, therefore, despite changes over the period, was kept narrowly confined to assist only in so far as it was absolutely necessary, without damaging in any significant way the imperial coffers. This was indeed the essence of imperialism. Vestiges of the seventeenth century mercantilist idea that colonies existed solely for the benefit of the mother country remained at the root of all imperial economic policy-making. Any economic development within the colonies that did not appear to benefit Britain, either in the long or the short run was not viewed as progressive or worthy of Imperial assistance. While with the march of time means differed, ends remained the same.

As long as Britain stood to benefit from the colonial relationship it therefore was deemed impolitic to sever the umbilical ties. Although bureaucratic difficulties and poor relations between the Colonial Office and the Treasury placed a damper on developmental schemes, it has to be pointed out that the functionaries from both departments were nurtured in the same 'school'. Their differences lay more in method and degree rather than in ultimate intent. Whether perceptible or not, self-aggrandizement lay at the heart of the Imperialist *Weltanschauung*.

Trinidad and its Cocoa Industry in Imperial Context

To a great extent economic directions in Trinidad were determined by the nature of imperial policy with respect to colonial economic development, by what it did and by what it failed to do. At the beginning of the nineteenth century Trinidad was still very much economically underdeveloped but its potential for development was good, given its unexhausted virgin soil. Prior to its annexation by the British in 1797, Trinidad had been a virtual economic backwater under Spanish rule. The economy had started to come to life subsequent to the issuing of the Cedula of Population in 1783 on the suggestion of a French Grenadian planter. The incoming settlers planted sugar and cocoa as well as other agricultural produce - but fourteen years were hardly sufficient to secure a solid foundation for economic transformation. In 1797, Trinidad boasted a total domestic production of 7,800 hogsheads of sugar, 330,000 lbs of coffee, 96,000 lbs of cocoa and 224,000 lbs of cotton but its growth potential was still barely tapped.²⁸

Politically, too, Trinidad presented a problem for the British Imperial government. Trinidad was not granted, like the older British West Indian colonies, the old Representative System of government which was patterned on the Westminster representative model. Instead from as early as 1810, Trinidad was singled out as an experimental colony in which the model of pure Crown Colony Government could be tested and tried. When the island was conquered from the Spanish by the British in 1797, the matter of the most suitable form of government for the colony posed immediate problems.

As early as 1809, the Chief Justice of Trinidad had warned the Secretary of State against granting the representative principle to the island, because of the complexities of the society. He believed that not only was the representative system "incompatible with the vital principle of colonial existence" but that it was particularly incompatible with the stage of "moral, physical and intellectual development of Trinidad, which had yet to be Anglicized."²⁹ Trinidad's problem was not merely a matter of unfamiliarity with the British tradition; she also possessed a sizeable coloured land-owning class.

On its acquisition by the British, Trinidad was a model colony where an interesting experiment had been attempted by the Spanish colonial government with the issuing of the 1783 Cedula of Population. By this Cedula, an invitation was issued to all those persons belonging to nations friendly with Spain and of Catholic orientation to settle in the island with their slaves. Land for settlement was to be granted to such persons.³⁰

The interesting thing was that coloured persons were also invited and granted land, although half the amount allotted to Whites. Trinidad, therefore, became a colony with a significant coloured proprietary, who, should representative government be granted, could not legitimately be excluded from political institutions elected by franchise based on property qualifications.

The population of Trinidad at the point of take-over was 17,643. Of these, 2,086 were whites, 4,466 free coloured persons, 1,082 native Indians, and 10,009 African slaves.³¹ Of the free coloureds, more than fifty percent were of French origin, about thirty percent of Spanish origin and less than 600 were of British

origin.³² Many of these free coloureds were the owners of sizeable estates received under the terms of the Cedula. Carl Campbell points out that two of the largest grants ever made went to coloured men (who looked white), J.B. De La Forest in Aricagua and J.B. Saulger in Arima.³³ By 1813 free coloureds held almost one-third of all the sugar estates in the Naparima district and several cocoa, coffee and provision estates.³⁴ Furthermore, the future potential for increased land-ownership by coloureds was limitless for under Spanish Civil Law illegitimate children, regardless of colour, were allowed to inherit "even at the expense of heirs in the ascending line."³⁵ This meant that a white proprietor could leave his entire estate to a slave or a coloured illegitimate child.

Such being the case, the British imperial government's worst fears could very well have become a horrific reality. This coupled with the fact that most of those eligible for the vote were neither of Anglo origin nor English speakers, most probably with loyalties which rested elsewhere, made the Imperial policy makers refrain from establishing the old Representative System. Instead they took the decision to make the island an experimental Crown Colony with restricted local participation in political decision-making.³⁶

Under the Crown Colony system, therefore, colonial legislative power was surrendered to the Colonial Office acting on behalf of the Crown. The island legislature participated in the decision-making process, but final veto power rested with the Colonial Office. Even so, only white residents of the large scale proprietary class and other monied classes were represented on the Legislative Councils. This was to guard against the impending threat of a rising wealthy coloured class with

political aspirations infiltrating the hitherto white colonial assemblies *en masse*. Coloured or mixed parliamentary bodies one would recall, were considered by Victorian Imperialists as highly unpredictable, arbitrary and disloyal. Fears incited by the memory of revolution and the massacre of whites in Haiti were not yet dead.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the non-white labouring class was not given the franchise under this system and their representation was said to be vested in the Crown. It was left largely to gubernatorial initiative either to consider or disregard the interests and welfare of the lower classes in formulating colonial policy. Failing that, the lower classes were left to fall back upon their own resourcefulness, resilience and creativity. Accordingly, the Crown, therefore, retained control through the Governor and the Executive Council consisting of the chief Official Members and a few Unofficial members.³⁷

In 1831, Trinidad was granted a Legislative Council, but it was not an elected body. It was made up of the principal public Officials and a lesser number of Unofficial Representatives nominated by the Governor. Its purpose was strictly to advise and concur with the Governor in the enactment of legislation but no ordinance was allowed to take effect until 'His Majesty's pleasure' was made known.³⁸ While the Crown Colony System was later modified in Jamaica and Grenada to allow elections of Unofficials based on a limited franchise, in Trinidad no significant changes were made prior to 1925 except for an increase in the number of Unofficial Council Members.

In 1862 the Colonial Office agreed to an Unofficial majority in the Legislative Council. This did not mean local control of legislation because of serious division

in the ranks of the Unofficials which made for disagreement over many issues. All laws passed by the Legislative Council remained subject also to disallowance, amendment or repeal. This did not satisfy the planters but the fact remains that their class interests were represented via the Unofficials, while those of the other societal groups were not, for property remained the basis for qualification to appointment as an Unofficial. Barring direct political power, the 'monied' class did have other channels at its disposal for the airing of views and protecting its interests via the exertion of indirect influence.³⁹

As far as the other classes in society were concerned, the Crown Colony System of government embraced the policy of 'trusteeship', that is, it operated on the principle that the Crown now assumed direct protection of the 'unrepresented class'.⁴⁰ While, therefore, the planters were able to apply their influence and pressure, in lieu of legislative power, the peasants remained politically impotent, dependent wholly on the benevolence of Crown representatives.

It was really the sugar planting interest which carried the weight of representation on the Legislative Council rather than the non-sugar planters. In 1870, five of the eight Unofficials were sugar planters, while one owned cocoa properties. In 1880 of the eight nominated Unofficials, four were sugar planters, two owned both sugar and cocoa estates, one was a merchant associated with sugar and one was a barrister. By the end of the century cocoa was more heavily represented but most of these men were also sugar planters.⁴¹ The result was that the Unofficials tended to represent the sugar interest more than that of cocoa. Collectively, when issues did

not divide them, they represented the large-scale planter interest over that of the non-agricultural sector or of the labouring or small-scale agricultural classes.

Planters were gradually able to amass much power and influence through the Unofficials. The Finance Committee of the Legislative Council, established in 1886, which had a vast majority of Unofficials over Officials (8 to 3) came virtually to control the finances of the colony and often coerced Officials by voting salary cuts for them. Other standing committees of the Legislative Council operated in similar fashion. It is not surprising that Officials tended to submit to the whims of Unofficial-dominated committees. It is through such standing committees that the large-scale propertied interest was able to influence policy making.⁴²

Local authorities and even the Colonial Office treated the wishes of the plantocracy with deference. The state, therefore, came to be the undoubted ally of the plantocracy when I stood against the peasantry. Whenever there was an issue that divided ranks within the planter class, it was the sugar interest with its majority Unofficial Representation which held sway.⁴³ If the cocoa interest started off the race for economic primacy with a handicap, far worse was the position of the small scale cultivators or cocoa peasantry.

A movement in the 1880s to 1890s to introduce reform into the Crown Colony System as it worked in Trinidad gained a considerable following. The reformers had hoped to introduce a type of representative government with elected Legislative Council members working alongside nominated Unofficials and Officials.⁴⁴ Such elections were to be based on a limited franchise on the basis of

sex, age, a high property qualification plus a literacy test. This would have given the vote to just over five percent of the entire population.

It was largely the fear of coloured and/or black control of the Council which gave pause to colonial policy makers. The reform movement, headed by [Sir] Henry Alcazar, failed utterly to achieve its goal.⁴⁵ Local interests had no choice but to continue to seek their class welfare through the Unofficial majority. Such was the state of affairs until 1898 when Secretary of State, Joseph Chamberlain, added to the number of Officials to create an Official majority.⁴⁶ Up to this time there had been 21 Legislative Council members. Eleven Unofficials and 10 Officials including the Governor. In 1898 Chamberlain increased the number of Officials to 11, excluding the Governor, whose vote ensured an Official majority.⁴⁷

Like many of his counterparts, Chamberlain while a radical in many senses, maintained a very conservative and uncompromising stance on the matter of representative institutions for non-white colonial peoples. In keeping with this view, he proceeded also in that same year, to abolish the elected Port-of-Spain Borough Council, establishing instead a nominated Board of City Commissioners to manage the affairs of the capital. This illustrates, as Eric Williams points out so graphically in the following extract, the insensitive and sometimes odious nature of the Crown Colony System of Government with which Trinidad was saddled:

With the total contempt for intellectualism which characterised the Crown Colony System of government, the Governor of Trinidad selected, as the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, a British merchant who, of all the names in the world that he could possibly have had, had the name of Adam Smith. The great British economist, who has stood in history for *laissez-faire*, and the minimum possible interference of government in the life of the country, became the

name associated with as arbitrary an exercise of the metropolitan power....⁴⁸

As a result, it is not surprising that local anti-Crown Colony Government feelings ran high. Under the pressure of concerted local protest, the elected Borough Council was restored in 1917. Finally, on the recommendation of the Wood Commission⁴⁹, elected members were introduced on to the Legislative Council in 1925. The basis of this franchise was, however, such that in a total population of 364,828 persons, the number of registered voters was 21,794 - a mere 5.97% of the total population.⁵⁰ The lower classes were not afforded the vote until 1946.

It is in this context that one can begin to understand the position of the Trinidad cocoa industry with special reference to the matter of imperial policy making and the colonial economy. The sugar, and not the cocoa industry, stood the greater chance of having its concerns addressed. In the same way, the Crown Colony System favoured, either intentionally or inadvertently, the large-scale agricultural concerns over the small scale, it lent a more willing and sympathetic ear to the cocoa planter rather than the cocoa peasant. The system, therefore, ultimately exacerbated the tensions which existed in the society between capital and labour, and within the cocoa industry between peasant and planter, owner and contractor.

For most of the nineteenth century, no formal imperial policy existed with respect to the promotion of colonial economic development. Furthermore, it was not until 1914 that the first positive steps were taken towards accelerating this process directly by the provision of substantial financial and other aid.⁵¹ Whatever economic growth and development achieved in nineteenth century Trinidad, therefore, was accomplished largely without Imperial policy aids. Trinidad's sugar industry was

fairly 'young' at the time of British Slave Emancipation. The ex-slave movement away from the estates into the urban areas or on to unoccupied cultivable lands, therefore, aggravated an already serious problem of shortage and irregularity of labour. Planters felt threatened by the exertions of ex-slave labourers to acquire land for agricultural pursuits. This served to widen the gulf that existed between capital and labour - a situation made worse by the rise of a non-sugar peasantry producing cocoa among other crops.

While planters were facing the difficulties contingent upon the freeing up of labour, and increased competition, the sugar industry's failure to rationalise and keep pace with technology brought the industry to its lowest ebb ever in the immediate post-emancipation period. While Britain pursued a free trade policy in an increasingly protectionist world, the sugar bounty system⁵² severely reduced the sugar colonies chances of survival. Sugar planters called for British bounties to the West Indian sugar producers or for financial aid from the Imperial coffers to stave off impending doom.

While sugar struggled for survival, it was the non-sugar agricultural sector which ensured the continued buoyancy of the Trinidad economy during the closing decades of the nineteenth century. It was cocoa which was the most popular non-sugar crop in Trinidad at this time. Many of the traditional French-Creole planters who had won fortunes in sugar, now found themselves hard-pressed to survive. Many of these redeployed their resources and energies into the cultivation of cocoa on a large scale. It was the small-scale cultivators, the 'peasants', however, who

pioneered the Trinidad cocoa industry in the early days of establishment before cocoa became an attractive large-scale agricultural concern.

Despite the increasingly important role of the British West Indian non-sugar export sector, colonial policy-makers continued to disregard its existence and positive potentials. The Victorians had never considered a "peasant" sector to be a progressive economic force. They viewed its existence as incompatible with social advancement; rather it spoke of backwardness, as in the case of pre-revolutionary Russia. The onus of economic progress, it seemed, lay essentially with the agricultural and industrial elite. The peasant agricultural sector was regarded as lying "outside the purview of, and in continuous friction with the old ruling classes who wanted their labour."⁵³ It was thought to have no progressive function.

Accordingly, as late as 1895, provisions for encouraging the development of a diversified economy or a legitimate peasant sector remained outside the narrow vision of colonial policy-makers. In fact, as already pointed out, it would not have served their purposes to upset the existing colonial socio-economic and political structure. Peasant farmers, therefore, who were seeking to achieve and maintain a self-reliant existence while contributing to economic development via diversification, had no choice but to fall back on their own resources and initiatives. There was a struggle to secure, above all, land and finance. Lacking the political supports that cushioned the plantocracy, the peasantry found itself locked in an intense battle for survival in a system where size and power were directly related.

While it was more difficult to secure imperial legislation to restrict the growth of a non-sugar peasant sector, the plantocracy used its influence in local governmental

bodies to achieve its goals. In virtual control of the Unofficial group in the local Legislative Council, the planters did all in their power to secure their own class-interest by obstructing the peasantry in its attempts to expand and become prosperous. The state proved to be the willing ally of the plantocratic élite in this conflict.

The establishment of a vibrant peasant class of cocoa cultivators was already a *fait accompli* in Trinidad by 1897 when the West India Royal Commission headed by Sir Henry Norman was still debating the merits and demerits of peasant agriculture. This Commission recommended agricultural diversification and peasant development after the fact, to counter the effects of the bankruptcy of sugar.⁵⁴

The appointing of the Norman Commission was the work of Joseph Chamberlain. As far as the West Indian sugar colonies were concerned, at this time, the immediate and most pressing problem was the impending collapse of the sugar economy as a result of falling prices, increased competition and the inability of the colonists to secure an adequate source of capital. Recurrent problems and the vagaries of West Indian sugar fortunes had given the West Indies a bad reputation among businessmen and financiers. Chamberlain therefore had to secure direct imperial aid to finance development and to keep island revenues afloat.⁵⁵

The Norman Commission, on investigating the economic conditions in the West Indies and examining their prospects, found that sugar monoculture was at the heart of the problem. Anticipating the future failure of sugar to recover its position of primacy, the Commission recommended: 1) the settlement of the labouring population on the land as small peasant proprietors; and 2) diversification in order to reduce the over-dependence on one industry, which had the tendency to "restrict

development in other ways." The Commission also recommended the imposition of countervailing duties on bounty-supported European beet sugar to even out prices and thus ease the woes of the British West Indian sugar industry.⁵⁶ In addition, Chamberlain was advised to secure the use of imperial funds over a five-to-ten-year period for the establishment of a department of economic botany in the West Indies which would research methods of improving cultivation, and the subsidization of steamship routes in order to widen markets for other export products. Some islands were to receive either grants-in-aid or loans under imperial guarantee.

Chamberlain's schemes and the recommendations of his commission under Sir Henry Norman were indeed ambitious and, no doubt, indicated the right direction for West Indian economic development through diversification and the improvement of peasant agriculture. Accordingly, Chamberlain tried to ease West Indian problems by tariff assistance, encouraging a measure of economic diversification (e.g. gold mining in British Guiana and the fruit industry in Jamaica), the founding of the West Indian Agricultural Department, and the granting of £250,000 to aid the sugar economies, which he managed to obtain from the Treasury in 1902.⁵⁷ Between 1897 and 1905, the sugar islands of the West Indies received £860,000 in grants, in addition to one or two big loans. But very little of this went toward constructive economic development such as agricultural research, new roads and shipping and aiding diversification. The bulk of it was used to save the sugar industry from ruin and to settle public debts.⁵⁸

In keeping with Imperial orthodoxy Chamberlain's financial policy-guide for the West Indian and other tropical colonies made it abundantly clear that borrowed

money should only be used for "directly remunerative works."⁵⁹ This, as H.A. Will points out, posed a special problem for Trinidad, which had recently extended its railways to facilitate access to unoccupied Crown Lands which were mapped out for the expansion of agricultural diversification. Feeder roads were urgently required to service the extended railways but roads were not "directly remunerative expenditure." Chamberlain, however, was sympathetic and agreed to secure a loan of £100,000 to finance in part this project. The remaining £60,000 needed was to be taken from the island's surplus funds. Additional taxation levied on those to benefit from the road would serve to defray interest and sinking fund charges.⁶⁰

As Chamberlain tended to favour great and speedy remunerative projects, the extraction of gold in British Guiana, therefore, perked his interest much more than did "the slow and difficult task of establishing and educating a West Indian peasant proprietary."⁶¹ He continued to maintain, however, that colonial development in the interest of the imperial economy did warrant financial support. Before the First World War, however, only limited amounts of aid were granted to the colonies by the imperial government. The belief, too, that colonial economic development meant improvement in the production and export of primary products remained unchanged. Nothing was done to promote any development of agricultural-based manufacturing or any other form of secondary production.

The post-Chamberlain, post-First World War, period with respect to British imperial policy and colonial economic development witnessed the age of the Imperial Visionaries. The 1920s and 1930s were a time of strain for the British and the imperial economies. War time dislocation was followed by 'great' depression which

forced a change of outlook among imperial policy-makers. During this time Continental governments moved toward agricultural protectionism with renewed vigour. Britain was left to decide whether or not to follow suit and protect domestic as well as colonial primary export production: tea, coffee, cocoa, sugar, rubber and oil. By the thirties Britain also had to deal with an influx of immigrants from colonies impoverished by the collapse of primary product prices.

One group within the British Imperial Government led by Lord Beaverbrook argued for "Empire Free Trade", that is, that Britain "should tax all foreign goods, while in exchange the Empire countries should grant free entry to British and Empire goods,"⁶² which would result in an imperial free trade area. There was growing support for protectionism and preferential tariffs also within the Conservative as well as the Labour parties. Indeed the economies of protectionist countries seemed to be booming while that of free trade Britain was much more sluggish in its post-war recovery. Beaverbrook believed that Empire free trade and external protectionism would encourage imperial capital investment and the development of entrepreneurial talent in the colonies. In this way the Empire's economic potential would be tapped fully.

This group of 'Imperial Visionaries' battled against those new classicists like Lloyd George and Philip Snowden who still favoured *laissez-faire* free trade as the only way to restore the economy to pre-war levels. Many of the Imperial Visionaries were not driven by any altruistic concern for colonial welfare and economic development. It was in fact, the unemployment problem within Britain herself, as well as the rising unemployment in the colonies creating a wave of migrants into

already hard-pressed Britain, which made such development strategies with respect to the Empire seem palatable. Unlike those Imperialists like Beaverbrook and J.H. Thomas, Colonial Secretary 1924 and again in 1929, who were "romantically attached to the idea of Empire,"⁶³, others such as Sir Philip Cunliffe Lister⁶⁴ favoured an imperial preferential tariff system purely for its good business sense. Others like W.A. Hewins, Under-Secretary of State for the colonies 1916-1919, hoped that protectionism would bring riches and greatness to Britishers. Still others like Lord Milner and L.S. Amery⁶⁵ had always criticized *laissez-faire* neo-classical economies but were also "in part captives of their racial theories and their overseas experience."⁶⁶

This group of Imperial Visionaries, for whatever reason, echoed the view of Chamberlain that the establishment of an Imperial Development Fund for the purpose of extending credit to backward colonies would give them a start on the rate of progress by promoting research and health, transportation systems and primary agricultural production.⁶⁷ Included in the Imperial vision were: the export of capital to the Empire, an Imperial Preference to promote intra-imperial trade and subsidized emigration of surplus population to colonial primary-producing areas, which it was hoped, would solve the unemployment problem through demographic redistribution.⁶⁸ Additionally, developmental loans by Britain to the Empire would in the long-run macro-economic sense increase the levels of British exports and employment.

Much of the focus of this Imperial Visionary strategy was geared toward African economic development. Where the West Indian colonies were concerned, it was the general opinion that although they needed help, large investments in these

areas were inadvisable.⁶⁹ Clearly, the rationale was that the natural resources here had already been exhausted and the only likely option, the tired sugar industry, did not show much future promise. Accordingly, the developmental strategy here was to keep the sugar industry alive by the artificial stimulus of imperial preferential duties. Not much thought was given to non-sugar industries. In Trinidad, it was oil not cocoa that was viewed as the next best option.

The full-scale Imperial Preference programme never really got off the ground because the British Treasury continued to oppose it on the grounds that it would grant unfair advantage to producer countries in the British Empire at the expense of consumer countries.⁷⁰ With a free trader, Winston Churchill, installed as Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1923, the task of those in favour of preferential tariffs seemed all the more difficult.

One major concession made in the direction of the Imperial vision, under the Baldwin Government, was the establishment of the Imperial Economic Committee and the Empire Marketing Board, designed to promote research and the marketing of Empire goods, thus creating a "non-tariff preference".⁷¹ The Colonial Development Act of 1929 actually gave very little money away, only £1 million in the first three years, and nearly all of it went to research and communication development and practically nothing to promoting true agricultural, industrial and commercial development. Any such development had to come from the colonies themselves or from private enterprise, which was not very enterprising in a time of such worldwide depression.⁷²

With respect to the Crown's responsibility for the West Indian colonies, it can hardly be said that it lived up to the British idea of 'trusteeship'. It was not until after the general labour conflagration of the 1930s that a genuine effort was made to promote West Indian colonial welfare. With the outbreak of war in 1939, the need for Imperial attention to West Indian welfare became all the more obvious. In 1940 a bill was introduced in parliament giving grants in aid to the colonies for development and welfare on more generous terms than the 1929 Act which had only granted £3 million out of the entire £20 million vote in the first four years of its operation.⁷³ In 1945 a more generous Colonial Welfare and Development Act was passed.

In this new wave of reformism, new labour laws were also enacted, the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture was established in Trinidad for the purpose of agricultural research and development; the colony of Trinidad was given a new constitution which allowed for a universal suffrage base for the election of a House of Representative (1946). By this time, however, all this magnanimity had come too late to resuscitate the Trinidad cocoa industry. Decline and the ravages of disease had already taken their toll. In the absence of genuine Imperial concern and developmental aids, the cocoa industry had become a mere relic of its former majesty.

While British West India economies atrophied, the Imperial Government which could have done much more to assist colonial economic development, in the post-war period, continued to limit the extent of its largesse as it wrestled for years over the issue of Imperial Preference or Free Trade. In any case, even when it

favoured imperial protectionists tariffs, or financial aid for colonial economies, it was not the cocoa industry but sugar which benefitted. In the absence, therefore, of a more vigorous, constructive and all-encompassing colonial economic development policy, especially prior to 1929, the Trinidad cocoa industry, the one serious attempt at economic development via agricultural diversification within the island, watched helplessly as its moment of glory faded away.

CHAPTER 2

NOTES

¹S.G. Checkland. The Rise of Industrial Society in England 1815-1885. (London, New York: Longman Inc. 1st pub. 1964, 1989 ed.), p.4.

²Elie Halévy. History of the English People in the Nineteenth Century. (Vol. 1). England in 1815. (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1st pub. 1913, rev. ed. 1961), p.309.

³J.M. Thompson. Napoleon Bonaparte: His Rise and Fall. (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1952), pp.244-246.

⁴Bernard Porter. The Lion's Share: A Short History of British Imperialism 1850-1970. (London, New York: Longman Group Ltd., 1975).

⁵Ibid., pp.2-3. See also the arguments in Bernard Semmel. The Rise of Free Trade Imperialism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975).

⁶B. Porter. The Lion's Share, p.14.

⁷Ibid., p.17.

⁸Lowell J. Ragatz. The Fall of the Planter Class in the British Caribbean 1763-1833: A Study in Social and Economic History (New York: Octagon Books Inc., 1928) and Eric E. Williams Capitalism and Slavery (London: Andre Deutsch Ltd., 1944) both argue that the application of free trade policies to the British West Indian sugar economies resulted from prior decline.

⁹S.G. Checkland. The Rise of Industrial Society in England, p.54.

¹⁰Ibid., pp.66-67.

¹¹Heinz Gollwitzer. Europe in the Age of Imperialism 1880-1914. (London: Thames and Hudson, Ltd. 1968), p.60.

¹²Sir Charles Jeffries. The Colonial Office. (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. 1956), p.45.

¹³Ibid., pp.20-25.

¹⁴This is a central thesis of the book written by Eric Williams entitled Capitalism and Slavery.

¹⁵Stephen Constantine. The Making of British Colonial Development Policy 1914-1940. (London: Frank Cass Co. Ltd.), pp.14-15.

¹⁶Ibid., p.11.

¹⁷Ibid., Ian Drummond. Economic Policy and the Empire 1919-1929 (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1972) p.38.

¹⁸S. Constantine. The Making of British Colonial Development Policy. p.10.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid., p.12.

²¹Ibid., p.14.

²²Ibid.

²³R.E. Dumett. "Joseph Chamberlain, Imperial Finance and Railway Policy in British West Africa in the late 19th Century" English Historical Review 90(1973), p.321.

²⁴S. Constantine. The Making of British Colonial Development Policy. p.16.

²⁵Ibid., pp.16-17.

²⁶H.A. Will. "Colonial Policy and Economic Development in the British West Indies 1895-1903" Economic History Review (2nd Ser) Vol. (1970) pp 130-137. See also H.A. Will. Constitutional Change in the British West Indies: 1880-1903 With Special Reference to Jamaica, British Guiana and Trinidad (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), Section 4 pp.229-276.

²⁷S. Constantine. The Making of British Colonial Development Policy. p.276.

²⁸E. William. History of the People of Trinidad and Tobago. (London: Andre Deutsch, 1963) p.46, See also J. Millette. Society and Politics in Colonial Trinidad (London: Zed Book Ltd., 1985; Trinidad College Bookshops Ltd., 1985 - originally published as The Genesis of Crown Colony Government in Trinidad 1783-1810 by Moko Enterprises Ltd., Trinidad in 1970) which deals with the period of transition. Also Carl C. Campbell Cedulants and Capitulants: The Politics of the Coloured Opposition in the Slave Society of Trinidad 1783-1838 (Port-of-Spain, Trinidad: Paria Publishing Co. Ltd., 1992) esp. chapter 3: "The Rise of a Coloured Planter Class" pp.84-126.

²⁹J. Millette. Genesis of Crown Colony Government, pp.246-8.

³⁰E. Williams. History of the People of Trinidad and Tobago, pp.40-42.

³¹Ibid, p.47.

³²J. Millette. Society and Politics - Colonial Trinidad, p.105.

³³C. Campbell. Cedulants and Capitalists, pp.100-101.

³⁴Ibid., pp.108-9.

³⁵Ibid., p.110.

³⁶Pierre-Gustave Louis Borde. The History of the Island of Trinidad under the Spanish Government, Vol. II. Trans. from the french by Brigadier Gen. A.S. Mavrogordato O.B.E., 1961. Orig. pub. Paris: Maisonneuve et Cie Librairiers, 1876 (repub. Trinidad: Paria Publishing Co. Ltd., 1982), pp.153-207 details the settlement experiment under the Spanish Government's Cedula de Poblacion; James Millette, Society and Politics in Colonial Trinidad and Carl Campbell Cedulants and Capitulants.

³⁷The official members were the leading officers of the local council; the Unofficial members were private citizens nominated by the Governor from among the leaders of the landowning elite class of the Colony. The Official members, until 1862, were in the majority, with the Governor presiding.

³⁸Hewan Craig. The Legislative Council of Trinidad and Tobago, pp.20-21.

³⁹Ibid, p.286.

⁴⁰J.H. Parry and P.M. Sherlock. A Short History of the West Indies (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1957) pp.215-7.

⁴¹Bridget Brereton. A History of Modern Trinidad 1783-1962 (New Hampshire: Heinemann Educational Books Inc., 1981, 1989 repr) p.139; H.A. Will. Constitutional Change in the British West Indies p.153.

⁴²E. Williams. History of the People of Trinidad and Tobago. p.194.

⁴³B. Brereton. History of Modern Trinidad, pp.139-141.

⁴⁴H.A. Will. Constitutional Change in the British West Indies 1880-1903, pp.153-226 gives an excellent account of the reform movement of the 1880s to 1890s.

⁴⁵Of the 69 burgesses of Port-of-Spain in attendance at the first meeting on the question of reform, 38 were merchants; 17 planters; 13 barristers and solicitors. Many of the principal merchants such as William Howatson and Leon G. Agostini were also heavily involved in sugar. P.N. Bernard represented the Colonial Co., the largest sugar producer of the island while Fritz Zurcher and B. Devenish represented the sugar planting interests. Eugene Lange, a large-scale cocoa planter also owned sugar properties. Others in support of reform included barristers such as Robert Guppy, Henry Alcazar who later led the movement; Vincent Brown, a coloured solicitor, Eugene Cipriani, a wealthy capitalist. H.A. Will Constitutional Change in the British West Indies, p.168.

⁴⁶Ibid., pp.147-148.

⁴⁷E. Williams. History of the People of Trinidad and Tobago. p.194.

⁴⁸Ibid., p.178.

⁴⁹In 1922 a West India Royal Commission was appointed headed by Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Honourable E.F.L. Wood, to visit the West Indies and British Guiana and report on the situation there with special reference to the demands for constitutional reform.

⁵⁰E. Williams. History of the People of Trinidad and Tobago. p.220.

⁵¹S. Constantine. The Making of British Colonial Development Policy 1914-1940. p.9.

⁵²This bounty was a subsidy granted, according to the quantity of sugar exported, to encourage the production of sugar for export purposes. The bounty helped to reduce the selling price of sugar exported and thus made it highly attractive to consumers in foreign markets.

⁵³B. Porter. The Lion's Share. p.16.

⁵⁴Parliamentary Paper Cmmd. 8565-8567. 1897 West Indies Royal Commission Report and Evidence (London: H.M.S.O., 1897).

⁵⁵H.A. Will "Colonial Policy and Economic Development in the British West Indies 1895-1903". Economic History Review (2nd ser) Vol. (1970) pp.30-7.

⁵⁶Parliamentary Paper Cmmd. 8565-8567, 1897.

⁵⁷S. Constantine. The Making of British Colonial Development Policy p.33.

⁵⁸B. Porter, The Lion's Share, p.190.

⁵⁹H.A. Will "Colonial Policy and Economic Development" pp.140-1.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Ian M. Drummond. British Economic Policy and The Empire 1919-1939 (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1972), p.31.

⁶³Ibid., p.37.

⁶⁴Sir Philip Cunliffe Lister was President of the Board of Trade 1922-23, 24-29 and 1931. He was also Colonial Secretary 1931 to 1935. He was originally known as Lord Snowden or Sir Philip Lloyd-Graeme.

⁶⁵Lord Milner was Colonial Secretary from 1919 to 1921. Lord Amery was Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies 1919-21 and Colonial Secretary 1924-1929.

⁶⁶I. Drummond. British Economic Policy and the Empire. p.38.

⁶⁷B. Porter. The Lion's Share, pp.264, 278.

⁶⁸"Memorandum on Empire Settlement in Connection with a Revised Draft of the Emigration Bill" from the Government Emigration Committee to L.S. Amery in I. Drummond. British Economic Policy and the Empire Part II: Document on Imperial Economy and Policy, pp.154-55.

⁶⁹B. Porter. The Lion's Share, p.280.

⁷⁰I. Drummond. British Economic Policy, p.58.

⁷¹Ibid., p.66.

⁷²B. Porter. The Lion's Share, p.280.

⁷³Ibid., pp.309-310.

CHAPTER 3

'THEOBROMA CACAO': A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE TRINIDAD COCOA INDUSTRY TO 1939

When the Spaniards first came to the New World and visited Mexico they found cocoa or chocolate 'nuts' being used as currency money. As a result it was given the name *AMYGDALAE PECUNIARIAE* by Peter Martyr. Here it was also used as a beverage and was held in high religious regard and venerated by the Aztecs of Central Mexico. European physicians came to value cocoa highly believing it was a cure for many diseases. It is said that Cardinal Richelieu was cured of general atrophy by its properties. The earliest published mention of its use in Europe appears in a newspaper called "Needham Mercurius Politicus" dated 16 June 1659.¹ When its medicinal properties became appreciated there was a recognizable enhancement of demand, and ultimately supply. By the 1830s and 1840s cocoa was being served to the troops as a regular daily ration but it was nothing like the palatable beverage known today.² Despite its bitter taste it was a cherished drink. The plant was named *θεός βρωμία*, i.e. "Food of the Gods" by Linnaeus Theobrome, thus the name 'Theobroma Cacao'.³

Cocoa requires a warm steamy climate with deep, moderately rich soil, the preference being for soils which contain a certain proportion of marl (clay and lime). It is the depth of the soil rather than its quality that is most important for the cacao tree sends down vigorous tap roots and therefore cannot thrive where the soil is shallow nor where there is a bed of impervious clay near the surface.⁴ On poor soils half the pickets (tree sites) yield next to nothing and the yield begins to diminish after twenty years whereas a cocoa tree on good soil may live for one hundred years or

more and may give a good yield throughout that period.⁵ A good yield is considered to be about one pound per tree per year. Although this changes somewhat in relation to wage rates, price of cocoa and other variables, one pound per tree is a convenient marker between profitable and unprofitable cultivations⁶, for it is at this point that a cocoa tree begins to pay its way. The average density of planting if pickets are dug twelve to fifteen feet apart, is usually 280 trees per acre and the average yield about seventy fanegas (770 lbs) per 1,000 trees.⁷

Cocoa flourishes best near streams, although this is by no means essential to its cultivation.⁸ While growing the plant should be protected from the direct rays of the sun and from destruction by strong winds. The soil and climate of Trinidad are particularly well suited to the growth of cocoa, the most favourable located in the valleys of the mountain ranges in the Northern and Eastern areas of the island.⁹ (See Appendix B Maps 3 and 5). The area in Trinidad where the crop thrives best is the Santa Cruz Valley which produced the world famous and highly-priced Soconusco and San Antonio types. This district boasts rich alluvial 'vega' lands, well-sheltered by the surrounding hills and open only on the Southern side, therefore well-protected from the trade winds. Streams of fresh water flow through the valley draining the soil and keeping the air cool and moist. The elevation is no more than fifty to sixty feet above sea level. The soil here is a calcareous marl with some clay and siliceous sand - not particularly rich in organic matter but strong, vigorous, deep and cool - ideal for its growth.

The Arima and Montserrat districts are also well suited to cocoa cultivation. Here the cocoa estates are situated in open glades in moderately undulating land

ranging from sea level to 150-200 feet above. The subsoil is of a marly type with gravelly loam, fairly deep and remarkably free from rocks and stones.¹⁰ These soils produce a very rich and uniform quality of bean which attracts excellent prices.¹¹

From its earliest days the history of the cultivation of cocoa in Trinidad has been a chequered one, marked by conflict and struggle as by alternating periods of great prosperity and almost total collapse. Even the dating of the commencement of its cultivation is disputed. Lewis Osborn Inniss, for instance, set it at 1690¹², while Linda Newson maintains that cocoa had been growing wild since 1616 and had risen to rival tobacco as one of the two principal crops of the island as early as 1645. She cites reports by two visitors 'Scott' and Diaz de la Calle.¹³ C.Y. Shephard also states that cocoa trees were present in Trinidad since 1617.¹⁴ Pierre-Gustave-Louis Borde maintains, however, that the main products of the few Spaniards who had settled there by that time were tobacco, cotton, Indian corn, cassava, bananas, Carib cabbage, legumes, coffee and roucou - not cocoa. He explains that this was so because there was a shortage of labour. With a few Indians and a limited number of African slaves, he argues, "it was not probable that they had already begun to cultivate cocoa."¹⁵ He contends instead, in concurrence with Inniss, that cocoa more probably became the principal crop later, by 1690, having been "newly introduced" into the island by the first Governor Don Tiburcio Aspe y Zuñiga, who assumed office in 1680.¹⁶

There is no dispute, however, that by the end of the century cocoa was well established as an export crop in Trinidad. Thus cocoa had either been brought by the Dutch directly from the Coast of Guiana where it is believed this variety of cocoa

originated or via Caracas which had adopted it from the island of Curacao.¹⁷ This variety of cocoa cultivated in Trinidad was called 'Cacao Criollo' or 'Cacao Guianensis', because of its place of origin. It was called 'Creole Cocoa' meaning 'product of the soil' to differentiate it from the Forastero (foreign) variety which originated in Brazil (Cacao Brasilensis).¹⁸ 'Cacao Guianensis' was of a superior quality to 'Cacao Brasilensis' which was sought by manufacturers for its bitterness of flavour and strong aroma which made it attractive for adulteration purposes.¹⁹

After the 'cacao blast' of 1725 the Criollo varieties which were exclusively cultivated were discarded in favour of the more robust Forastero varieties. The two most popular Forastero varieties became the 'Verguso Amarillo' (Rough Yellow) and the 'Verguso Colorado' (Rough Red). The yellow kind is more popular because it is generally believed to yield a larger proportion of seeds than the red and requires less fermentation time. The 'Verguso' types are almond-shaped, long-plump full, of pale crimson colour in the interior and easy to ferment. The 'Liso Amarillo' (smooth yellow) and 'Liso Colorado' (smooth red) possess almost the same characteristics as the Verguso varieties and therefore are also popular. The 'Amalonado Amarillo' and 'Amalonado Colorado' (melon yellow and melon red) are also of fairly good quality but the Calabacillo Amarillo (calabash yellow) and Calabacillo Colorado (calabash red), sometimes called "wild cocoa" are considered of the lowest quality. The pods are very small (three inches long); the seeds are dark, extremely bitter and not improvable by fermentation. This type was avoided by wise planters because its market value is very low.²⁰ The introduction of the Forastero varieties helped to add vigour and viability to the prospects of cocoa growing in Trinidad.

By the end of the seventeenth century cocoa growing had become the chief focus of economic activity in Trinidad. The Capuchin Friars who came to Trinidad to evangelize the Indians in 1687 founded mission towns which also served as agricultural settlements. Much of the daily life in the mission villages was devoted to the cultivation of cocoa and root crops which were interplanted with it. In fact, four days of the week were devoted to this.²¹ In support of this Borde points out that:

The cocoa house was the community home of the mission. On the products of cocoa depended the ornamentation of the church, the furniture and the utensils of the presbytery, the agricultural instruments, the rations for the missionaries and the clothing for the neophytes. What was left over was put into the community chest of the Catalan Capuchin priests.²²

This further development of cocoa growing was facilitated by an increased supply of labour. In response to a plea from the 'vecinos' (Spanish householders) in 1706 the Governor Don Felipe de Artiede was able to secure the reorganisation of the missions, instructing the Capuchin Fathers to release Indian converts to be used as 'peons' or daily labourers for the purpose of privately run cocoa cultivation.²³ Artiede also arranged for the introduction of negro slaves to be applied as labourers to cocoa plantations.²⁴

By the beginning of the eighteenth century cocoa had become the island's only export item. In 1704 Trinidad exported 248,600 lbs of raw cocoa to Spain, the Spanish American Mainland and the other Spanish Antilles, attracting the high price of 460 reales per fanega (110 lbs).²⁵ (See Table of Measurements, Appendix A, Table 1). In 1716 a Spanish brig laden with cocoa bound for Cadiz, Spain, was captured in the harbour of Puerto de los Hispanioles (Puerto España -now Port-of-Spain) by

that famous English pirate Blackbeard, Edward Teach, which underscores the point that the quantity of cocoa exported at this time was considerable.²⁶ In fact, Borde indicates that Trinidad cocoa was so popular and sought after that it was the norm for it to be paid for while still on the tree long before it was ready to be harvested.²⁷

Despite its attractiveness, however, Trinidad cocoa began to experience problems even at this early stage of its production. In 1711 the Governor of Trinidad reported that while local planters were asking 144 reales per fanega they were having difficulty getting their cocoa sold at these prices on the Spanish American Mainland and were forced to accept prices as low as 72 reales in Caracas and 56 reales in Margarita and Cumana - or face wastage.²⁸

The problems were caused by a glut of cocoa on the market with an influx of the product from Mexico. By 1713 Mexican cocoa had found its way to the European market, posing serious competition and causing prices to fluctuate markedly and eventually to fall absolutely to 56 reales per fanega.²⁹ This restricted its profitability and prospects for expansion. War, too, often disrupted its trade opportunities and influenced the state of uncertainty of the European market, especially the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-1713). As a result of these difficulties the quantity of cocoa exported from Trinidad by 1720 was 130,000 lbs, almost half its former level.³⁰

Just when the industry started to reflect the benefits of additional labour these misfortunes struck. In 1725³¹ the entire cocoa cultivation was destroyed by the so-called 'Cacao Blast' or blight - a disease caused by the fungus *ceratocystis*³². While the trees appeared healthy and flowered accordingly, "the fruit which succeeded the

flowers dried up and blackened as soon as they had reached the size of a man's little finger."³³ By 1737 only small quantities of cocoa were still being exported for very few estates remained untouched by the 'blast'. Being a religious lot, the planters were convinced that the wrath of heaven had been visited upon them for failing to pay their tithes. The basis for this conviction was the seemingly inexplicable fact that one planter, Rabello, who had been ever faithful in the payment of his tithes had been spared totally the devastation of the fungus infection.³⁴ His fellow planters, however, were reduced to bankruptcy and had to resort to borrowing clothes from each other in order to attend Holy Mass and other official functions.³⁵ The total disarray resulting from the disease illustrates to what extent the colonists had come to depend on one product - cocoa - that its collapse reduced them to such dire straits that they were barely able to afford the means of domestic sustenance.

The outbreak of the War of Jenkins' Ear between England and Spain in 1739 further reduced the industry's ability to rise above its misfortunes. In 1739, also, a severe small-pox epidemic decimated and further demoralised the island population. Many cocoa plantations were abandoned and lush tropical vegetation invaded cultivations, strangling cocoa trees. Gradually, the forest reclaimed its own. In 1737 the King ordered the Governor to urge the inhabitants to re-establish the cocoa cultivation but by 1750 this attempt had achieved only minimal success.

It was not until 1757 when the hardier Forastero variety from Brazil was introduced under Governor Don Pedro de la Moneda that the tide began to turn in favour of cocoa cultivation. This new variety adapted itself admirably to Trinidad's climatic conditions. By 1775 100,000 lbs of good quality cocoa were being produced

for export annually. While Indian corn was still listed as the island's principal product, it was closely followed by the new cocoa which fetched a price of 120 reales, (fifteen Spanish dollars), per fanega. The export quantities took such a long time to recover because of the nature of the crop. While a tree reaches full flower and begins to produce fruit at three to five years, it does not reach full-bearing maturity until eight to ten years at which time it produces sufficient to cover cultivation costs.³⁸ The introduction of new varieties of cocoa therefore did not bring instant relief but produced long-term recovery and a resuscitation of the future market in cocoa, as recorded by Abbe Raynal in 1776. It was hoped that cocoa would regain and maintain its former level of prosperity.

By this time the Southern valleys of the Northern Range east of Port-of-Spain were planted almost exclusively in cocoa. (See Appendix B, Map 3). It prospered particularly "in the Maracas Valley and in the plain which extends from the St. Joseph to the Aricagua River."³⁹ It was during this time of resuscitation (c1777) that the plantation owners began interplanting the young cocoa cultivation with the Madre de Cacao (Mother of the Cocoa) the Immortelle tree (botanic name - *Erythma micopteryx/Erythma Umbrosa*) to provide shade and protection for the tree. This enabled them to produce ripe fruit for nine out of twelve months every year with the two largest crops coming in December (the Christmas crop) and June (the St. Jean crop).⁴⁰ In Trinidad the practice was (and still is) to use tannias, plantains or banana plants (especially the Gros Michel variety) to provide shade and protection for the young cultivation and to use the Immortelle as permanent shade.⁴¹ The trouble with the Immortelle, however, is that the wood is brittle and breaks with strong wind, its

falling branches causing serious damage to young trees. Another problem is that it is leafless during the dry season (January to May) when the cacao trees require the most shade. The timber from the tree has no commercial value and cannot even be used as firewood. Some cocoa planters preferred, therefore, not to use the Immortelle and to opt instead for either the Jack Tree (*Artocarpus Intergrifolia*), the Sandbox Tree (*Hura Crepitans*), the Guango (*Pithecolobium Inga Saman*), the Hog Plum Tree (*Spondies Graveolens*) or even the Tonca Bean Tree (*Sarrapia*).⁴²

The cocoa cultivation needed to be carefully pruned, weeded and manured and a look-out maintained against disease and damage. The crop was then gathered by picking with curved knives attached to long bamboo rods (cutlasses being used for the lower ones). The pods were spread on plantain leaves on the ground in a heap. They were then cut and the beans scooped out and placed on leaves. The beans were then cleaned of the 'tripe' by squeezing them through the hands. They were then conveyed to the sweating house on panniers (baskets) on donkeys. The sweat house has been vividly described as follows:

Let a planter imagine to himself a wooden house with an iron roof, that house being just the size in every way of one of his own coolie line rooms. There is not a crack by which one particle of air can enter anywhere, except when the doors are open, and then, when shut, must shut hermetically. The flooring is composed of a framework of reapers, very closely placed together so that only the liquid that comes off the bean may fall through (when it is undergoing fermentation) unto a space below. This flooring, after every operation, is taken up, and the space carefully cleaned.⁴³

In order to ferment, the beans were placed on the floor in large heaps, covered with plantain leaves and bits of old sack and left for four to five days. After fermenting the beans were sometimes clayed (covered with a very fine kind of red clay), then

dried in the sun. The drying was done in the drying house. (See Appendix E Plates 1-5).

A flat barbecue is raised on standards and two sliding roofs are placed at each end. When drawn apart a large space exactly their size when shut is afforded for spreading the cocoa to dry, and when the sun or rain requires it, the roofs are run together and so cover it. Below are simple sliding trays, which run in and out when required.⁴⁴

The cocoa was then danced, that is, men and women walked up and down on the cocoa while spread out to dry. This helped to polish the beans.

After drying the cocoa beans were carefully picked and cleaned off the dust. They were then graded into three qualities according to size and readied for conveyance to the market. After fermenting and drying in the sun the beans were sold at a fixed price of "27 French sous per pound"⁴⁵ to the Company of Guipuzcoa (established in 1728) which held the monopoly. The bulk of the cocoa went to Vera Cruz, Puerto Rico, Martinique and some to Cumana, Margarita, Angostura and Santo Domingo.⁴⁶

These efforts, however, did not bring for cocoa the same level of prominence it enjoyed earlier, that is, in terms of its relative importance to the economic survival of the island. In 1783, on the issuing of the Cedula of Population for the purpose of encouraging settlement and agricultural development of the island, each incoming white settler was entitled to four and two-sevenths ($4 \frac{2}{7}$) quarrees of land for each member of their family regardless of sex plus half that amount for each slave brought to the island. (See Appendix A, Table 1). Free coloured and free black settlers were granted half the amount of land per capita granted to whites. The average size of land grants turned out to be fifty quarrees.⁴⁷ While some of the newly granted land

was devoted to cocoa, most of the incoming settlers, who were mainly French, brought with them their 'long experiences' in cotton, coffee, sugar cultivation as well as other crops.⁴⁸ Such crops increased in importance. While cocoa increased its share of total agricultural produce and total export earnings, this share nevertheless paled in significance relative to that of other crops (as illustrated in Tables 3.1 and 3.2) in particular cotton and sugar.

Table 3.1

Total Island Produce - 1786

Crop	% Share of Total Export Produce
Cocoa	2.43%
Coffee	0.87%
Cotton	87.16%
Sugar	9.35%
Vanilla	0.17%

Source: L. Newson Aboriginal and Spanish Colonial Contacts (London: Academic Press, 1970) p.204

Table 3.2**Total Export Earnings - 1795**

Crop	% Share of Total Export Earnings
Cocoa	7.15%
Coffee	19.52%
Cotton	32.87%
Sugar	40.45%
Vanilla	-

Source: L. Newson Aboriginal and Spanish Colonial Contacts (London: Academic Press, 1970) p.204

This indicates that, unlike in earlier times, the economy of the island was not monocultural. While sugar was most important, each crop made a significant contribution. At the time of the British take-over of the island in 1797 there were 159 sugar plantations, 130 coffee, 103 cotton, 70 tobacco, several indigo, 60 cocoa and according to Borde, a good many new cocoa estates which had not yet come into full maturity. In that year 96,000 lbs of cocoa were produced for export on the 60 plantations - an average yield of 1600 lbs per plantation.⁴⁹ In 1797, Captain J. Mallet wrote in Descriptive Account of the Island of Trinidad that of a total of 870,400 acres of cultivable land only 97,280 acres were suitable for cocoa while 420,160 were suitable for sugar, 303,400 for coffee and 50,560 for cotton.⁵⁰ By 1802, sugar had become the dominant crop occupying 33 percent of cultivated acreage while cocoa occupied a mere 9.5 percent. By 1807 sugar's share of cultivated acreage had risen to 68.7 per cent.⁵¹ Sugar seemed to be the crop of the future, but cocoa was holding its own.

After 1797, cocoa remained virtually monopolised by the Spaniards concentrating in the valleys on the slopes of the Northern Range. The two decades following British occupation saw a rapid increase in annual output. Exports of cocoa rose from 96,000 lbs in 1797 to 284,170 lbs in 1800, 726,173 lbs in 1810 and 1,744,465 lbs in 1820.⁵² The growth of cocoa was, during this period, greatly assisted by the influx of Spanish-speaking peon migrants from Venezuela. Some historians suggest that the peons came later in the nineteenth century. David Harrison, for example, suggests the 1860s.⁵³ However, there is ample evidence that their presence can be dated much earlier.

James Millette points out that as early as 1802, George Canning, who initiated the new abolitionist assault in the British House of Commons, made the settlement of Trinidad the central issue of this campaign. He urged, for the cultivation of the island, instead of slaves, new classes of settlers: peons from the South American mainland as well as free blacks and creoles from other islands.⁵⁴ Another parliamentarian, Lord Hobart, too, suggested the encouragement of Indians and Spanish peons from the continent to be employed as wage labourers in the clearing of land and the cultivation of the soil. He believed that regular employment and good treatment was all the incentive they needed.⁵⁵ This advice was taken up by the government as a result of abolitionist pressure inside and outside of Parliament.

Accordingly, free labourers were welcomed from Europe, Africa, China and Venezuela. Indian slavery was an institution that was terminated by this time and cocoa, which had been easily cultivated by the Spaniards could be grown profitably in Trinidad by white small-scale farmers but was seen as too arduous an activity for

people of their colour and ethnic origin. Labour was therefore needed. It was estimated that twenty men were needed to work an estate of 200 acres.⁵⁶ To the newer white settlers, too, cocoa cultivation was not seen as "fashionable because its profits were too slow for the Impatient activity of English and French Colonists."⁵⁷ It seemed that the Spanish-speaking peons from Venezuela were the only ones who concerned themselves with cocoa growing especially in the St. Joseph to Arima districts.⁵⁸

By 1811 there were 818,301 cocoa trees on the island and cocoa sold for prices ranging from £2 5s 0d to £3 12s 0d per cwt. (112 lbs) on the export market.⁵⁹ These peons or 'conqueros' were an ethnically mixed lot of free labourers (Spanish, Amerindian and Negro stock) originally from the mainland region of Venezuela who were traditionally employed in clearing forests for cultivation and in cocoa growing.⁶⁰ These people had migrated either to escape the harshness of Venezuelan law or in flight from a country with an unhappy history - a land ravaged by revolutionary struggle for independence at this time, 1812.⁶¹

Whatever the reason, their coming was a boon to the Trinidad cocoa industry for they brought with them not only their natural love for the land but also their traditional expertise in cocoa planting in which they had been engaged in their homeland. Not only did they fill the need for hired labour on the cocoa estate but they also launched out on their own, mainly as squatters, selecting good cocoa sites, clearing the dense tropical forests and becoming own-account small-scale cultivators. Their small holdings known as 'conucos' yielded on the average 10 to 100 bags of cocoa per annum.⁶² By their endeavours, this group came to form the backbone of

the Trinidad cocoa industry as a peasant class while large-scale planters preoccupied themselves with sugar.⁶³

It was their efforts coupled with the gradual reduction in import duties on cocoa and chocolate in Britain from 1800 and the substitution of a preferential custom rate in favour of British colonies which saw a steady rise in Trinidad exports to Britain during 1800-1820. Accordingly, total exports of cocoa climbed steadily from 1,744,465 lbs in 1820 to 3,696,144 lbs in 1827, after which there occurred a sudden heavy fall in the value of cocoa on the European market causing exports to decline rapidly to 1,646,531 lbs in 1830 and then to 1,330,990 lbs in 1832.⁶⁴ During the period of crisis for Trinidad cocoa growers, prices in Spain (one of their largest markets) dropped considerably. In addition, high import duties were also imposed by the Spanish authorities on foreign cocoa particularly when transported in foreign ships. Trinidad now belonged officially to the British and was therefore subject to the trade restrictions which applied to non-Spanish countries. In order to salvage some respectable profit margins, therefore, Trinidad producers had to pay Spanish ships handsomely to take their cocoa to Puerto Rico or Cuba for transshipment to the Spanish market.⁶⁵

Demand for cocoa in Europe was as yet restricted, the taste being too bitter to suit European fancies. In Britain actual total cocoa consumption in 1820 was 276,321 lbs as compared with its later levels - 4,583,124 lbs in 1860 and over 8,000,000 lbs in 1873.⁶⁶ Significant increases in consumer demand had to await technological advance which would make cocoa more palatable. While cocoa prices in the European market were experiencing decline, cocoa processing therefore began

to advance technologically. The first milestone was reached in 1828 with the introduction by a Dutch firm, Van Houten, of cocoa as a powder instead of a cake, thus enabling it to be prepared as a drink more easily. This process did take some time, however, to have a significant impact on the European market as it was not introduced into Britain, which was to become the major cocoa market, until 1866 by Cadbury Bros. Another invention too, from early in the nineteenth century, the making of milk chocolate by Hans Sloane, was not introduced into Britain until the middle of that century.⁶⁷

By 1838, while cocoa was not yet 'King', its export and demand potentials were growing. It boasted several advantages which made its production attractive. Labour input, for example, compared favourably with that needed for other crops at a time when labour was scarce. By 1838, cocoa plantations employed only twenty percent of all Trinidad ex-slaves while sugar plantations employed fifty percent.⁶⁸ Once thoroughly established and supplied, a cocoa plantation required considerably less labour and expenditure than almost any other cultivation. It was computed that twenty labourers were sufficient to work a full bearing cocoa estate of as many as 300 acres including picking and curing the beans, while sugar required an average of one labourer per acre.

While growing, the young cocoa cultivation can be interplanted with 'catch crops': provision and vegetables for example cassava, chillies, gungo peas, tannias, bananas and plantains, which produce cash returns helping to defray the expenses of the first two to three years. They also keep the ground cool and moist, save much expenditure in weeding, shade the young seedlings and help to retain and return

valuable nutrients of and to the soil. Horses and cattle can also be fed upon the husk of the cocoa beans thus increasing the value of the product.⁷⁰

Another advantage is the longevity of a cocoa plantation. Once planted a good cocoa tree in good soil may live for as long as one hundred years and give a good yield throughout that period. The casualty rate, however, is high; fewer than half the trees survive to the age of forty years and before that time many have to be renovated by suckers or replaced by supplies (new plants) more than once.⁷¹

It was possible, too, and often preferable to grow cocoa on small plots rather than on large extensive plantations. Cocoa was more of a garden culture than a field culture. It is not surprising, then, that while sugar was regarded as the jewel in the crown, bringing wealth to the already wealthy, cocoa occupied a higher position in the heart of the 'small man' seeking to make a living and to explore the opportunities for success. This does not mean that cocoa growing would be inadvisable on large plantations. Cocoa can be produced as profitably on large as well as small holdings, given the right conditions, labour efficiency, good cultural practices and effective management. The advantage of the small holding is that the cost of establishment, capital and recurrent costs are lower than on large organized estates but the yield per acre tends to be lower also.⁷² By 1838 in Trinidad many cocoa estates were owned by ex-slaves such as the Mandingo groups who themselves hired ex-slave and other free labourers.⁷³

After the low of 1832, cocoa exports began to creep back up to a respectable level reaching 2,571,915 lbs in 1838. The average annual growth rate of cocoa exports over the period 1797 to 1837 was 65.30 percent. Tables 3.3 and 3.4 show

the raw growth in cocoa exports, the Ten-Year Percentile Growths and the average Ten Year Growth Rate over the period 1797 to 1836. Table 3.5 shows that the overall five-year average of cocoa exported between 1801 and 1840 was 1,708,061 lbs with a five-year growth rate of 677.22% over the entire period. Quantities supplied for export are influenced by price but not in the short run. A rise from very low prices to high prices would naturally stimulate planting but because cocoa trees take at least three to five years (and in poorly cultivated fields ten to fifteen years) to come into full bearing, there is a time lag that has to be allowed for supply to adjust to meet higher demand and higher prices. This process can be assisted by effective pest and disease control as well as favourable weather conditions. An abnormally dry or rainy season will affect quantities produced and available for supply negatively.⁷⁴

Outside of the brief period of fluctuation, there was significant growth in cocoa production in Trinidad over the period 1797 to 1838. Cocoa proved to be one of the cheapest crops to establish and it also held the advantages of being easily stored in a tropical country for some time without deteriorating and also of being easily transported.

At the end of this period of exploration, therefore, its prospects were good and the coming of emancipation in 1838 would see the awakening of the ex-slave class to the joys of cocoa cultivation, thus facilitating the rise of a vibrant cocoa small-holding class which steered it safely through the difficult years of endeavour 1838-1866, a time when class conflict and internal strife began to etch itself deeply upon the landscape of cocoa cultivation in Trinidad.

Table 3.3**Cocoa Exports from Trinidad in lbs 1797-1837**

Year	Quantity of Cocoa Exported (lbs)
1797	96,000 lbs
1807	355,000 lbs
1817	1,341,461 lbs
1827	3,696,144 lbs
1837	2,507,483 lbs
1797-1837	Average Annual Percentile Growth Rate - 65.30%

Source: Computation From C.Y. Shephard. The Cocoa Industry: Some Economic Aspects. Part IV p.30. See Appendix A. Table 2 - Cocoa Production 1797-1939 (For Growth Rate Formula - See Appendix A Table 4)

Table 3.4**Ten Year Percentile Growth Rates
1797-1836**

10-Year Period	Ten-Year Percentile Growth Rate
1797-1806	513.34
1807-1816	197.65
1817-1826	92.50
1827-1836	-15.68
1797-1836	Av. Ten Year Percentile Growth Rate: 196.95%

Source: Computation From C.Y. Shephard. The Cocoa Industry: Some Economic Aspects. Part IV, p.30. See Appendix A, Table 2. Cocoa Production 1797-1939.

Table 3.5**Five Year Averages for Cocoa Exported Between 1801-1840**

5-Year Period	Quantity Exported (QX) 5-Year Averages	
	QX lbs	QX metric tons
1801-05	371,072	168.32
1806-10	616,640	279.71
1811-15	1,053,822	478.01
1816-20	1,376,343	624.31
1821-25	2,152,281	976.27
1826-40	2,726,554	1236.76
1831-35	2,483,728	1126.61
1836-40	2,884,047	1308.20

Source: Computation based on Appendix A, Table 2. Cocoa Production 1797-1939.

The earliest large-scale cocoa estates were formed by the old Spanish families with the aid of slave labour. After emancipation, however, these ex-slaves became squatters or own-account cultivators under some other form of land occupancy. Most of the large estates planted in the fifty years after emancipation were established under the contract system which provided a solution to the problem of labour shortage.⁷⁵ So long as the industrious peon 'conqueros' and ex-slaves could get land to work for themselves, they opted to do so. It was only when squatting was absolutely prohibited during the 1860s that impecunious ex-slave labourers, displaced cultivators, 'conqueros' and, later, time-expired Indians took recourse to 'hiring' themselves out as contractors for the purpose of forming cocoa estates for others,

rather than for themselves.⁷⁶ The contract system therefore became more popular during the 1870's and 1880's with the mass influx of large-scale planters into cocoa.

A man of some capital could have chosen to become a cocoa proprietor in one of three ways:

1. By purchasing Crown Lands and hiring labour to clear and plant;
2. By purchasing either one or several small estates and gradually amalgamating via purchase of adjoining Crown Lands or peasant cultivations or acquiring the latter by running an estate shop based on the credit system;
3. By purchasing Crown Lands and employing contractors to clear the land, and plant it up with cocoa, receiving as payment all the wood cut down, and the free use of the land to plant provisions for a term of five years at the end of which time they give up the land, receiving one shilling for each bearing cocoa tree.⁷⁷

The first method was the most tedious. The proprietor was required to have some knowledge of planting cocoa in order to provide effective supervision to hired labourers. This method was rather costly, involving significant initial outlays of capital for erecting a cocoa house, dwelling house/s and the payment of woodcutters and labourers. Furthermore, the capital remained dormant for a while until the tree began to bear.⁷⁸ The cost of erecting a cocoa house varied depending on the size of

the estate: for a small holding of ten acres this would cost not more than £20 while for a large estate of about 300 acres the cost would be about £150 sterling.⁷⁹

Labour was paid at the rate of 30-50 cents (1^s 3^d to 2^s) per day dependent on the task, with a breakdown as follows:

Picking the cocoa	- 30-50 cts (1 ^s .5½-2 ^s .0) per day
Heaping into small heaps (done mostly by women)	- 30-35 cts (1 ^s 3-1 ^s 5½ ^d) per day
Heaping, breaking, draining and delivering cacao from the fields	- 35 cts (1 ^s 5½ ^d) per barrel
Weeding (cutlassing)	- \$4.00 (16 ^s) per 1,000 trees or (5 ^s) a carré per acre
Cutting down forest (exclusive of lopping and burning costs)-	\$20 per carré or 25 ^s per acre ⁸⁰

It was estimated by Urquhart that during the first year of operations, such tasks required eighty-five man days per acre and during the following three years an average of forty-five man days per acre; making a total of 221 man days per acre over the first four years of operation (Table 3.6). At the average rate of forty cents per man day, this would mean a total labour cost of \$88.40 per acre for the first four years or \$22.10 per annum per acre. In addition to such heavy outlays, the proprietor had to guard against unproductive hired labourers and unskilled ones. One had to find, for instance, a skilled cutlasser because poor cutlassing was liable to do extensive damage to the tree sometimes killing it.⁸¹

Table 3.6Labour Needs of a New Cocoa Estate

Operation	Man-days Per Acre
1st Year:	
Clearing and filling	15
Lining and holing	12
Planting temporary shade and immortelles	14
Planting cocoa	7
Draining	17
Weeding	16
Manuring	<u>3</u>
	85
2nd Year:	
Weeding	24
Care of plants, pruning and supplying	17
Regulating shade	<u>3</u>
	44
3rd and 4th Years:	
Weeding	24
Care of plants	8
Mulching and regulating shade	7
Draining	4
Manuring	3
	46 x 2 = 92/221

Source: D.H. Urquhart. Cocoa (London: Longmans, 1955), p.197.

The second method, which involved the dispossession of small holders, to be discussed more fully later, was the one preferred by many planters. Henry James Clark, in his advice to prospective settlers in 1886, pointed out that this method: "the one now most in favour is no doubt the best where suitable properties can be obtained."⁸²

Of the three methods identified, the least expensive way of bringing cacao cultivation to a full-bearing condition was through the contract system.⁸³ The system worked as follows. The prospective planter purchased the desired acreage of virgin forest land from the Crown, cleared it, selected pasture and 'homestead sites', erected the necessary buildings for his use and reserved land for estate road development. The rest of the land was 'farmed out' in three to five acre plots to contractors procured mainly from the labouring population and many of whom looked to the contract system as a means of eventually becoming peasant proprietors themselves.⁸⁴ The contractors prepared the land for planting seeds provided by the planters (the contractees); set out an irrigation system of main and intermediate drains; and did the lining and picketing.⁸⁵ They then planted the seeds, the windbreaks and the shade trees.

While the cocoa was growing, the contractor was allowed to plant ground provision for his own subsistence while he weeded, manured, nurtured the young plants and supplied vacancies.⁸⁶ By the end of the first five years, the thriving young cultivation was just beginning to yield and was ready to be handed over to the proprietor. The planter paid the contractor a predetermined amount per healthy tree, usually one shilling. The planter usually supplied all necessary agricultural implements. Contracts were seldom written but were verbal agreements. At the end of the contractual period contractors either recontracted, moved on to new contracts or used their money to purchase small-holdings and pay outstanding debts. The farming guides advised planters of the wisdom of entering into a second contract with

these contractors for the purpose of extending cultivation for this would ensure a fund of labour nearby for working his cultivation.⁸⁷

Under this system the proprietor had to spend from twenty-five to thirty shillings per acre on cutting down the forest, to give up the use of the land to be cultivated in provisions for five years and to pay for the cocoa trees at the end of that time. At the value of one shilling per tree on a plantation of about 230 trees per acre this would amount of £11.10^s per acre. Establishing a plantation in this way cost something like £13-£14 (\$62-\$68) per acre.⁸⁸ The net annual revenue to be derived from a well-managed estate brought into cultivation in this way was considerable. If a proprietor spent £3,250 sterling (\$15,000) to purchase an estate of about 12,000 trees, which produced an annual crop of 216 fanegas (@ 18 fanegas per 1,000 trees), he would derive a revenue of \$9 per fanega i.e. \$15.00 less \$6.00, being the cost of production and delivery to town (on an estate located about fifteen to twenty miles from the road). This would give him a net annual revenue of \$1,962 or £408.15^s sterling, which is equal to over 12½% on invested capital.⁸⁹ This made the contract system attractive to large-scale planters. It was this system which helped the cocoa industry to weather the stormy period of establishment.

The period 1838-1865, therefore, defines a transitory phase in the history of the cocoa industry. Exports climbed steadily as indicated in Tables 3.7 and 3.8. In 1838, 2,571,915 lbs of cocoa (1166.61 metric tons) were exported from the island as compared with 6,611,160 lbs (2998.80 metric tons) in 1865. See Table 3.8. This indicates a rate of growth of 157.05% for cocoa exports over that period. Table 3.8

shows that cocoa was expanding at a faster rate than sugar since the beginning of the century. Average annual exports of sugar grew at the rate of 185.71% between 1800/9 and 1860/9 while cocoa exports grew at the rate of 1323.71% during the same period. Yet, by 1865 cocoa contributed only 17.96% of Total Export Value while sugar and its by-products contributed 61.08%. In raw figures this meant that out of a total export value of £820,107 sugar contributed £500,924 while cocoa contributed £147,329 (Tables 3.12 and 3.13). As late as 1870, too, when cocoa was rising in importance it still occupied only 18.53% of cultivated acreage while sugar accounted for 63.19% (Table 3.15).⁹⁰ Sugar still held the starring role in the drama of Trinidad's economic life.

One of the reasons for this was that sugar consumption in the United Kingdom had tripled between 1840 and 1870. Per capita consumption of sugar in the United Kingdom which stood at 15.20 lbs in 1840 increased to 47.23 lbs by 1870. Despite the post-emancipation uncertainty, the problem of labour shortage and the equalisation of sugar duties, therefore, the prospects of sugar cane cultivation were good.⁹¹ Where cocoa was concerned, on the other hand, it was not until the late 1860s that improvements in the manufacture of eating chocolate and the beverage were introduced into Britain serving to enhance demand.⁹²

Table 3.7**Cocoa Exports (lbs & Metric Tons) Five-Year Average
1836-1865**

Years	lbs	Metric Tons
1836-40	2,884,047	1308.20
1841-45	2,979,852	1351.65
1846-50	3,852,238	1747.36
1851-55	4,657,411	2112.59
1856-60	4,906,470	2225.56
1861-65	6,291,125	2853.64

Compiled from Appendix A. Table 2.

Source: C.Y. Shephard. The Cocoa Industry, Part IV, p.30.

Table 3.8**Average Annual Exports (X) from Trinidad Sugar and Cocoa
from 1800-9 to 1860-69 (to nearest 000 lbs)**

Years	Sugar X (hhgds)	Cocoa X (lbs)
1800-09	14,000	447,000
1810-19	15,000	1,113,000
1820-29	24,000	2,457,000
1830-39	23,000	2,525,000
1840-49	26,000	3,358,000
1850-59	31,000	4,675,000
1860-69	40,000	6,364,000

Source: C.Y. Shephard. The Cocoa Industry: Some Economic Aspects. Part III, p.7.

The year 1866 saw the introduction of cocoa powder and of cream-centred eating chocolates (vanilla, lemon, orange and almond). In 1868 Cadbury's introduced fancy wrapping and decorated dainty chocolate boxes with bright pictures rather than dreary labels. The picture box readily captured the public fancy and did much to enhance the popularity of eating chocolate and hence the demand for raw cocoa.⁹³ In Great Britain alone the actual consumption of cocoa which was only 276,321 lbs in 1820 rose significantly to 8,000,000 lbs in 1873.⁹⁴

Not only the demand for cocoa but also the facility with which it could be imported had improved tremendously in the nineteenth century. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the duty on cocoa entering Great Britain from British possessions was £10 5^s 4^d per cwt, which though less than one-third of that paid on foreign cocoa, was nevertheless burdensome to fledgling producers in Trinidad. An alternative £1 3^s 4^d was levied on the finished product for home consumption. As the century progressed these duties were gradually reduced until 1853 when both British and foreign cocoa paid only 9^s 4^d per cwt. The duty was stabilised at this rate for the next six decades. In continental Europe, too, consumer demand for cocoa increased from the beginning of the century. European consumption of cocoa increased steadily from 10,000 tons in 1806 to 76,000 tons in 1895.⁹⁵

The period 1870 to 1920 is generally considered the 'Golden Age' of the Trinidad cocoa industry, although one can just as easily date the beginning of the halcyon days at 1866.⁹⁶ A mere glance at the statistics relating to production, export values and crop acreages, however, would immediately plant doubt in the mind as to the time of actual commencement of this age of prosperity and prominence. While

there had been growth in cocoa production since 1866, significant growth did not occur until 1885 and in terms of export values not until 1895. In fact as late as 1890, sugar was still the prime contributor to total export earnings. By 1900, however, the position had changed; cocoa had become the chief export earner, at first edging sugar out by a neck in terms of percentage share of export value. Again, while absolute collapse did not begin before 1920, problems had begun to appear for the Trinidad cocoa industry by 1914, the onset of the World War I. It becomes legitimate therefore to view the truly 'golden' age of cocoa, the time when cocoa was really 'King', as the period 1895-1914.

With changing conditions on the international cocoa market local conditions and factors came in to facilitate the taking advantage of the favourable market climate. 1870, therefore, marked a year of significant change, the year from which rising expectations in and popularity of cocoa growing began to take-off. While it was indeed a watershed year, the total establishment of the cocoa industry, the full exploration and exploitation of its production capacity and export potential did not come until twenty odd years later.

By 1890 the cocoa sector was well-established as one of the major contributors to the export economy of the colony and enjoyed prominence in the international market. Market demand had increased significantly. Between 1888 to 1892 there had been a considerable increase in exports of the bean from the island. During this time exports to the U.K. registered an increase of 964,761 lbs while for France there was an increase of 2,431,732 lbs, U.S.A. - 2,333,237 lbs and to other countries 245,500 lbs.⁹⁷ Cocoa consumption in the U.K. had risen from 126 tons in

1822 to 9029 tons in 1890, as illustrated in Table 3.9. Total European consumption was steadily expanding.⁹⁸

The more refined eating chocolate had become extremely popular, particularly through the exertions of the firms Cadbury Bros. and Fry & Sons.

Table 3.9

100 Years of Cocoa Consumption in Great Britain
Quantity (Q) in British tons

Year	Q. consumed (tons)
1822	126
1830	176
1840	910
1850	1,375
1860	1,442
1870	3,099
1890	9,029
1900	16,888
1910	24,596
1920	50,651
1922	50,530

Source: A.W. Knapp. The Cocoa and Chocolate Industry (London 1923), p.26.

The method of cocoa production by pressing out part of the butter fat was not adopted in England until 1866 but once introduced, it rose quickly in popularity. The competition between Cadbury's and Fry's served to accelerate the progress of cocoa/chocolate manufacturing in the U.K. When Cadbury Bros., for instance, introduced their 'Cacao Essence', Fry & Sons adopted the process for their 'Cacao Extract' (1868); Fry & Sons sold "Chocolate Delicieux à Manger" in 1847 and Cadbury Bros. displayed chocolate at an exhibition in Bingley Hall, Birmingham in

1849. But commerce in cocoa remained unsettled until Gladstone fixed the uniform rate of duty at 1d per lb in 1853, which remained constant until the time of the Great War. Such conditions triggered a phenomenal increase in demand.⁹⁹ In the late 1880s, confectionery firms developed chocolate as an important sideline. For example, one of the oldest Messrs. Joseph Terry & Sons of York, confectioners since 1767, built a chocolate factory in 1886. There they copied the process of manufacturing milk chocolate which was invented by M.B. Peter of Switzerland in 1876.¹⁰⁰

The three principal chocolate/cocoa manufacturing firms in Great Britain were Cadbury's, Fry's and Rowntree's. As early as 1842 Cadbury's had developed sixteen lines of drinking chocolate in cakes and powder, eleven lines of cocoa in powder, flakes, paste and in the form of cocoa nibs.¹⁰¹ Even at this time they paid much more for pure Trinidad cocoa than for any other type. During the last half of the nineteenth century Cadbury's expanded its offering to include: vanilla chocolates (1850), plain chocolate bourbons (1850s), fruit flavoured bourbons (1866), 'Chocolate du Mexique' for both eating and drinking (1864-70), chocolate 'croquettes' (1871); Dragee's (chocolate drops - oval shaped) (1872); Travellers chocolates (long wafer sticks) (late 1860s); Cocoa Essence; 'Homeopathic', 'Iceland Moss', 'Pearl' and 'Gem' cocoas; famous brands of chocolates: Crème Duchesse, Pâte d'Abricot and Bourbon Delices, also chocolate-covered nougats and caramels. By 1890 the firm held the first position in the trade and was responsible for one third of all cocoa imported into England.¹⁰²

Increased demand for cocoa was created also by the expanding variety of uses to which the bean could now be put. By the end of the century cocoa was being used in myriad ways: cocoa drink, eating chocolate, cocoa butter, ointments of various consistencies, hair pomades, soaps, candle fat, dipped candles, cocoa ash fertilizer, cocoa ash medicine, cocoa bread, cocoa biscuits, stomach medicine, health salts as a saline purge.¹⁰³ In 1866, a Trinidad Newspaper even extolled the virtues of Quinine Chocolate - produced by Massey's - as an excellent method of administering quinine to sick children and even adults. It was said to cure all fever, and indigestion with 'no bitter taste whatsoever'.¹⁰⁴

European demand therefore enhanced the attractiveness as well as the price of Trinidad cocoa. Consistently high prices helped to stimulate supply at the local level. Prices were maintained consistently high at an overall annual average of \$14.19 per fanega as indicated in Table 3.10. At the worst of times cocoa fetched approximately \$8.50 per fanega as was the case at the end of September 1896 which was the lowest point for over twenty years. However the prices improved to \$9.75 per fanega by the end of the year "in sympathy with consuming markets".¹⁰⁵ At the beginning of October 1907 cocoa prices hit an all-time high of \$26.75 per fanega although they fell off again to the more normal level of \$18.00 per fanega by December of that year.¹⁰⁶ Trinidad cocoa was very remunerative even under the most primitive modes of cultivation and preparation and was thus able to rival the former chief export staple, sugar, which fetched unremunerative prices from c.1884.¹⁰⁷

Table 3.10**Average Annual Cocoa Prices (\$ per fanega) 1885-1914**

Year	Av. price per fanega (\$)	Year	Av. price per fanega (\$)
1885	15.75	1900	14.75
1886	15.25	1901	14.13
1887	14.50	1902	26.75
1888	14.19	1903	13.28
1889	12.49	1904	12.58
1890	12.38	1905	11.63
1891	13.13	1906	14.93
1892	13.25	1907	22.48
1893	15.25	1908	15.13
1894	12.63	1909	12.20
1895	10.38	1910	11.40
1896	9.13	1911	12.25
1897	13.64	1912	13.35
1898	15.88	1913	15.95
1899	14.38	1914	12.75

Average price: 1885-1914: \$14.19 per fanega

Source: Compilation from: CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books; Colonial Report Annuals; C.Y. Shephard The Cocoa Industry "Notes on the Trinidad Cocoa Market", The Canada-West Indies Magazine. Vol. XX No. 7, June 1931. pp.236-7.

Local cocoa production figures show that supply of cocoa from Trinidad did adjust to meet increased demands on the U.K., U.S.A. and European markets. Between 1885 and 1895 local production had grown from 13,729,565 lbs (6227.69 metric tons) to 29,458,819 lbs (13,362.43 metric tons), that is, it had more than doubled its former level.¹⁰⁸ By 1914, that figure had grown further to 63,447,876 lbs (28,779.77 metric tons), again more than double its 1895 level (see Appendix A. Table 2). Table 3.11 indicates that five-year total production increased at a rate of 224.99% between 1885/89 to 1910/14.

Table 3.11
5-Year Averages and Totals of Exports 1885/9-1910/4

Years	5 Yr Total QP & X (lbs)	5 Year Average (lbs)
1885-89	80,257,209	16,051,442
1890-94	103,497,657	20,699,531
1895-99	117,711,172	23,542,234
1900-04	175,031,576	35,006,315
1905-09	226,429,947	45,285,989
1910-1914	260,829,360	52,165,872

Growth Rate: 1885/9 to 1910/14 = 224.99%

Source: CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books; Colonial Reports Annuals.

The graph in Appendix C Figure 1 illustrates that exports rose slowly between 1860 and 1885 then more sharply until 1895/1900 from which time growth was more significant until the peak period 1905-1920. The period of most dramatic progress therefore can be identified from 1895.

By 1900 cocoa had become the colony's chief export earner, just edging sugar out in terms of percentage share of total export value. In 1870 cocoa earned less than four times the export value earned by sugar but by 1895 cocoa outdistanced sugar and by 1905 brought in more than twice the export earning of sugar, as indicated in Table 3.12. From 1890 to 1915 cocoa export value increased from £531,025 to £1,865,216 indicating a growth rate of 251.25%. In 1870, cocoa accounted for a mere 18.10% of total export value

Table 3.12Cocoa, Sugar and Total Export (X) Values 1865-1935

Year	Cocoa X Value £	Sugar X Value £	Total X Value £
1865	147,329	500,924	820,109
1870	168,826	718,555	932,884
1875	125,449	811,676	1,119,626
1880	302,335	858,081	1,340,538
1885	385,901	684,675	1,306,863
1890	531,025	628,834	1,413,128
1895	620,618	596,415	2,065,664
1900	852,568	559,158	1,691,283
1905	1,041,109	451,986	2,118,747
1910	1,230,047	743,969	2,328,377
1915	1,865,216	1,070,423	3,422,270
1920	3,536,830	2,756,625	7,435,361
1925	1,462,723	1,092,594	4,677,148
1930	1,136,056	776,326	5,841,246
1935	527,212	948,251	5,021,535

Source: See Appendix A, Table 3 compiled from CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books; Colonial Reports Annuals.

while sugar commanded 77.03%. By 1895 sugar had been outclassed by cocoa. Cocoa contributed 30.04% while sugar contributed 28.87% of total export earnings. By 1915 the distance had been lengthened, cocoa was now responsible for 54.50% of total export earnings compared to sugar's 31.28% share (Tables 3.12 and 3.13). The graph in Appendix C Figure 2 compares the export values of cocoa and sugar during the period 1865 to 1935 illustrating that cocoa export values lagged behind sugar for thirty-odd years but edged sugar out by 1895.

Table 3.13Cocoa, Sugar as % of Total Export Value 1865-1935

Year	Cocoa XV as % of TXV	Sugar XV as % of TXV
1865	17.96	61.08
1870	18.10	77.03
1875	11.21	72.50
1880	22.55	64.01
1885	29.53	52.39
1890	37.58	44.50
1895	30.04	28.86
1900	50.41	33.06
1905	49.14	21.33
1910	52.83	31.95
1915	54.50	31.28
1920	47.57	35.73
1925	31.27	23.36
1930	19.45	13.29
1935	10.50	18.88

Source: Calculated from Table 3.12.

Appendix C Figure 3 uses the bar graph to illustrate the same for the period 1870-1930. It shows that the period during which cocoa's share of total export earnings outdistanced sugar came between 1890-1900 after which the gap continued to widen until 1920.

The growth rate in cocoa export values over the period 1865 to 1920 was 2300.63% as compared to the 430.34% growth rate for sugar. The growth rate for total export values during the same period was 806.63%. Cocoa's ascendancy to the throne was nothing short of phenomenal.

Not only did cocoa feature significantly in the export trade of the island but the revenue it brought in was also responsible for the marked growth in the total value of the island's import trade during the period 1875-1915 of 301.21% (Table 3.14). In the Colonial Annual Report for 1907/8, for instance, Ag. Governor S.W. Knaggs reported that there was an increase in the value of imports of £254,107 over the previous year. He attributed much of this to the fact that there was a high importation and transshipment of Venezuelan cocoa (in that year 2,762,825 lbs) attracted by the high prices which prevailed; and the increased importation of consumer products particularly malt liquor and textiles. This, he explained, was the result of "the prosperity resulting from large crops and high prices".¹⁰⁹ Livestock, particularly mules and asses, were imported as beasts of burden for the estates and this helped to increase total import values.

Another indicator of the remarkable rise to prosperity of cocoa was the extension in acreages under its cultivation as well as its increased percentage share of total cultivated and alienated acreage. Table 3.15 shows total alienated acres between 1860 and 1915, the total acreages actually under cultivation as well as the total acreages under cocoa as compared with sugar during that period.

Table 3.14**Total Import Values 1870-1915**

Year	Total Value of M (£)
1870	1,042,678
1875	1,507,794
1880	2,382,632
1885	2,241,478
1890	2,096,797
1895	2,276,864
1900	2,629,051
1905	2,584,547
1910	3,343,011
1915	4,183,297

Source: CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books; Colonial Reports Annuals.

Table 3.15**Total Land Acreages 1860-1915**

Year	Total Alienated Acreage (acres)	Total Cultivated Acreage (acres)	Cocoa Acreage	Sugar Acreage
1860	213,292	60,000	7,000	30,000
1870	226,455	71,577	13,262	45,228
1880	318,685	104,413	25,188	52,163
1890	400,207	194,000	94,500	58,500
1900	479,000	300,000	190,000	52,000
1910	584,797	423,600	290,000	62,600
1915	593,277	470,887	336,154	50,742

Alienated acreage: formerly Crown Land either sold or granted, in either case "alienated" from the possession of the Crown.

Source: A compilation from data found in C.O. 300 Trinidad Blue Books 1870-1915 and Colonial Reports Annuals 1860-1915.

Between 1860 and 1890 cocoa expanded its cultivated acreage from 7,000 to 94,500 acres and increased dramatically to 336,154 acres in 1915. Sugar in the mean

time increased from 30,000 acres under cultivation in 1860 to 58,500 acres in 1890 and fell to 50,742 acres by 1915. (Table 3.15).

As is revealed more clearly in Tables 3.16 and 3.17 which illustrate cocoa and sugar acreages as percentages of total alienated and total cultivated acreages for each of the stated years, cocoa came gradually to occupy a greater percentage of both cultivated and alienated acreages over time than its rival crop, sugar cane. While in 1860 cocoa accounted for a mere 3.28% of total alienated acreage, by 1915 it represented 56.66% of the total. Sugar, on the other hand, did not register such marked increase in acreage neither in aggregate terms nor as a percentage of the total. In 1860 sugar occupied 14.07% of total alienated acreage while in 1910, its share had declined to 10.70% of the total. This meant that cocoa which occupied less than one-fourth the land space held by sugar in 1860 had come to control almost seven times the acreage under sugar by 1915.

The same direction of movement also is obvious if one compares the acreages under each of these crops as percentages of total land under cultivation. In 1860, cocoa occupied 11.67% of all cultivated land while sugar occupied 50%. By 1915, the tables had turned with cocoa occupying 71.39% of all cultivated land while sugar now represented a mere 10.78%. (See graphical representation of these comparisons in Appendix C Figures 9, 10 and 11). The point is that the greatest portion of Crown Land alienated during the period 1860 and 1915 went into cocoa cultivation. Using the data given in Table 3.15, it will be seen that of a total of 379,985 acres, representing all Crown Land alienated 1860-1915, 329,154 went into cocoa and only 20,742 into sugar. In other words, over the entire period 1860-1915, 86.62% of all

land alienated was utilised for cocoa production while only 5.46% was used for sugar cane cultivation. Over this period, therefore, it is safe to conclude that:

(1) Cocoa growing was expanding much more rapidly than cane growing and was a much more popular economic concern for those entering the field of own-account agriculture either on a large or small scale; and (2) there was a more direct correlation between the overall change in land alienation and the overall changes in cocoa acreage, than between change in land alienation and changes in sugar acreages.

Similarly, of all additional land brought under cultivation between 1860 and 1915, 80.19% went into cocoa while a mere 5.05% went into sugar cane, indicating that as in the case of alienated acreage, while there was an almost perfectly inverse relationship between additional cultivated acreage and additional sugar acreage, the relationship between additional cultivated acreage and additional cocoa acreage was a direct one as shown in Table 3.18.

Table 3.16**Cocoa, Sugar Acreages as % of Total Alienated Acreage 1860-1915**

Year	Cocoa Acreage as a % of Total	Sugar Acreage as a % of Total
1860	3.28	14.07
1870	5.86	19.97
1880	7.90	16.37
1890	23.61	14.62
1900	39.67	10.85
1910	49.59	10.70
1915	56.66	8.55
1860-1915	86.62	5.46

Source: Computation based on Table 3.15.

Table 3.17**Cocoa, Sugar Acreages as % of Total Cultivated Acreage 1860-1915**

Year	Cocoa Acreage as a % of Total	Sugar Acreage as a % of Total
1860	11.67	50.00
1870	18.53	63.19
1880	24.12	49.96
1890	48.71	30.15
1900	63.33	17.33
1910	68.46	14.78
1915	71.39	10.78
1860-1915	80.19	5.05

Source: Computation based on Table 3.15.

For the entire period 1860-1915 the growth rate of total alienated acreage was 178.15% and of total cultivated acreage 684.81%. Whereas the growth rate for

sugar acreage during that time registered 69.14%, the growth rate for cocoa acreage was 4702.20%.¹¹⁰ During that time, too, cocoa land came to attract much higher prices than sugar land on the real estate market. By 1920 cocoa lands were sold for £40-50 per acre while sugar lands could attract no more than £20-25 per acre.¹¹¹

In much the same vein, the number of cocoa estates grew from 75 in 1890 to 807 in 1915. During the period 1900-1915, the number of cocoa estates was virtually doubled from 450 in 1900 to 897 in 1915, while the number of sugar estates was almost halved from 93 in 1900 to 52 in 1915. (See Appendix A. Table 8). While one might argue that the drop in the number of sugar estates was due to the rationalisation and amalgamation of estates in process at the time, it is important to note that acreage cultivated in sugar land also fell from 52,000 acres in 1900 to 50,742 acres in 1915 while cocoa acreage increased from 190,000 acres in 1900 to 336,154 acres in 1915.¹¹² By this time cocoa was being grown in almost every district of the colony.

In the Report of the Blue Book for 1890, Governor W. Robinson observed with respect to the new vitality of the cocoa industry:

Cacao cultivation continues to extend and the exports to rise accordingly. The prizes offered by the Government for the best cacao Drying Apparatus has led to earnest thought on the subject and to a considerable amount of success in the designing of simple and yet effective machines. Several of these are now at work in different districts and three have been patented.

During this year the Blue Book recorded also the existence of two chocolate factories on the island.¹¹³

Governor Sir F. Napier Broome remarked in his Annual Report for the colony for the year 1892 that there was "probably no agricultural industry so

remunerative."¹¹⁴ He pointed out, further, that on account of this prosperity the revenue per head of population in Trinidad that year was £2 8s 10d as compared with £0 2s 6d per head for the Gold Coast, another cocoa producing British colony.¹¹⁵

By the end of that decade, the position of cocoa had been enhanced further. The lucrative nature of its cultivation was clear. The Annual Report for 1899 noted:

Seeing ... that the cost of production is not more than 27s a cwt, the cocoa planter may be regarded at the present time as a very fortunate man. Though the world's production of cocoa is being vastly extended, its consumption is also increasing rapidly and there is no probability of a fall in prices in the immediate future.¹¹⁶

By the first decade of the twentieth century, cocoa had truly become 'the financial barometer' of the country. In fact, the fortunes of the cocoa industry and the fortunes of the island's economy were so intertwined and interconnected that crop failure in 1906/7 almost crippled the entire economy. A fall in cocoa exports from 48,416,256 lbs in 1905/6 to 27,570,928 in 1906/7 created a very serious decrease of £43,807 in revenue. The lessening of the amount of money in circulation was reflected in the diminished receipts under several heads of revenue for example: Land Sales, Customs, Licences and Immigration Tax.¹¹⁷

Cocoa maintained its position of primacy in the Trinidad economy until after World War I. The 'Golden Age' is said to have ended in 1920. The period of decline, which will be analyzed fully in a later chapter, has been dated from 1921 to 1939. During this time the cocoa industry was defeated by larger, more efficient competitors on the international market. The Gold Coast alone produced nearly fifty percent of world requirements. They were followed closely by Brazil, Nigeria and French West Africa.¹¹⁸ This expansion of international supply led to falling prices

which in turn meant decreased profits for Trinidad growers who were also faced with increasing cost of cultivation because of the need to spend large sums on disease control. Gradually cocoa lost its position as chief export earner in the island economy, and was supplanted by the petroleum industry and the resuscitated sugar industry. By 1939 cocoa was contributing a mere seven percent of Total Domestic Export, plagued as it was by disease, competition and unremunerative prices.

The exports of countries like Trinidad which produced 'fine cocoa' showed marked decreases while those of countries growing 'ordinary' tended to rise rapidly. This led manufacturers to seek ways and means of using ordinary and cheaper grades of cocoa to replace increasingly large proportions of the superior kinds among which Trinidad cocoa was second to none.¹¹⁹ The result was that the demand and command of high prices to which 'fine' brands once laid claim tended to decrease over time. By late 1937, the prices had dropped to \$6.85 per fanega for local exports.¹²⁰

At the close of the 'Golden Age', cocoa still provided the most attractive opening for investment of capital. Returns were profitable on investments on the formation of an estate, on the purchase of an established estate, as well as on the investment of capital based on the security of an established estate.¹²¹ When difficulties arose, therefore, the entire economy and financial climate of the colony was jeopardized. The general level of demand fell as the income earning capacity of a large portion of the population decreased, that is, those whose incomes were directly or indirectly dependent on cocoa.

In the belief that it was the poor quality through the abuse of "claying" which was affecting the reputation of Trinidad cocoa in foreign markets and thus lowering

price, an Ordinance was passed in 1922 making the claying of cocoa a punishable offence.¹²² Several measures were also tried to improve quality by controlling pests and diseases. While the Cocoa Research Staff at the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, established at St. Augustine, investigated the Witchbroom disease, the Department of Agriculture sponsored fact-finding expeditions and introduced a parasite for the Gold Coast in an attempt to control thrips through biological means. In addition, co-operative societies were founded: co-operative fermentaries, producers associations and credit societies in order to keep costs down while improving quality. The co-operative fermentaries prepared grade cocoa at reduced cost to small growers and this was disposed of at better prices through the Cocoa Planters Association.¹²³ Co-operative Credit Societies supervised by the Department of Agriculture led to financial gains for such growers through the formation of thrift, the better management of holdings and through co-operative marketing.¹²⁴

Despite their every effort, however, cocoa continued to decline. Even while the quantity produced increased, consistently low prices made the industry's contribution to total exports of reduced significance. By 1938-9 cocoa, which for many years had been the most important agricultural industry of the colony, had dropped to a distant second place after sugar. In that year cocoa exports earned £493,601 (\$2,369,286) while sugar exports brought in more than double that amount, £1,074,316 (\$5,156,718). The continued depression of the cocoa industry and the resultant widespread distress among the populace led finally to the substitution of other crops where conditions were unfavourable to cocoa and to attempts to rehabilitate the crop on suitable soil. In 1938 alone £90,365 (\$433,751) were

disbursed in aid of the industry through the Government Subsidy Scheme.¹²⁵ The

Trinidad cocoa industry had become a mere effigy of its former self.

CHAPTER 3

NOTES

¹D. Morris. "Cacao - How to Grow and How to Cure It". Public Opinion. Fri. 30 July 1886 Vol. 11 No. 165. Ch. 2. p.11.

²"Cocoa as Grown in Trinidad and How to Plant it in Ceylon - Il fait essayer pour réussir" (London: Halchard, Piccadilly, 1879) p.6.

³Historicus (Richard Cadbury). Cocoa: All About It. (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co. 1892) p.17.

⁴D. Morris. "Cacao". Ch.4. Public Opinion. Tue. 10 August 1886. Vol.11 No. 167.

⁵D.H. Urquhart. Cocoa. (London: Longmans, Green Co. Ltd., 1955) pp.108-9.

⁶Ibid., p.109.

⁷Henry James Clark. "Trinidad A Field For Emigrants: A Sketch". Public Opinion. Tue. 20 July 1886 Vol. 11, No. 162.

⁸"Cocoa as Grown in Trinidad", p.11.

⁹"Cocoa Production in the British Empire". Bulletin of the Imperial Institute Vol XVII (London: H.M.S.O., 1919) p.6.

¹⁰D. Morris. "Cacao". Ch.4. Public Opinion. Tue. 10 August 1886, Vol. 11 No. 167.

¹¹Cocoa Production in the British Empire. Bulletin of the Imperial Institute, Vol. XVII, p.60.

¹²Lewis Osborn Inniss. Trinidad and Trinidadians: A Collection of Papers - Historical, Social and Descriptive About Trinidad and Its People. (Port-of-Spain: The Mirror Printing Works, 1910), p.26.

¹³Linda Newson. Aboriginal and Spanish Colonial Trinidad: A Study in Culture Contact. (London: Academic Press, 1970), p.133.

¹⁴C. Y. Shephard. Report on the Economics of Peasant Agriculture in the Gold Coast. (Accra: Government Printing Department, 1936), p.5.

¹⁵Pierre-Gustave-Louis Borde. The History of the Island of Trinidad Under the Spanish Government. First Part (1498-1622) Discovery, Conquest and Colonisation. (Repub. Port-of-Spain: Paria Publishing Co. Ltd., 1982. Trans. James Alva Bain, 1932. First pub. Paris: Maisonneuve et C^{ie}, Libraries, (eds.) 1876) p.236.

¹⁶Ibid., Part II, pp.36-39, 54.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid., p.73.

¹⁹Ibid., pp.73-74.

²⁰D. Morris. "Cacao". Ch.3 Public Opinion. Thur. 5 Aug. 1886 Vol. 11 No. 166.

²¹Fr. John T. Harricharan. The Catholic Church in Trinidad 1498-1851. Vol. I (Trinidad, 1975) p.21.

²²P. Borde. History of the Island of Trinidad (Part II) p.54.

²³Ibid., pp 75,78; L.A.A. de Verteuil. Trinidad: Its Geography, Natural Resources, Administration, Present Conditions and Prospects. (London, 1981) p.143; L. Newson. Aboriginal and Spanish Colonial Trinidad. p.130.

²⁴L. Osborn Innis. Trinidad and Trinidadians. p.26.

²⁵L. Newson. Aboriginal and Spanish Colonial Trinidad. p.133, See Appendix A, Table 1, 1 reale = 10 Spanish cents; 8 reales = 1 piece of eight = 1\$ Sp.

²⁶P. Borde. The History of Trinidad. (Part I) p.83; Henry James Clark. IERE, Land of the Humming Bird: Being a Sketch of the Island of Trinidad. (Port-of-Spain: General Post Office, 1893) p.76; Edward Lonzer Joseph. History of Trinidad. (Trinidad: Henry James Mills, 1838) p.143; L. Osborn Inniss. Trinidad and Trinidadians, p.26.

²⁷P. Borde. The History of Trinidad (Part II) p.74.

²⁸L. Newson. Aboriginal and Spanish Colonial Trinidad. p.135.

²⁹Ibid., p.133.

³⁰Ibid., p.135.

³¹Some writers set this date at 1727, for example, Borde p.90, who used the visiting priest, Father Gumilla as his authority. In records elsewhere the date has

been given as 1725. e.g. E.L. Joseph. History of Trinidad written from family documents passed on to him.

³²H.J. Clark. Iere. p.76; L. Newson. Aboriginal and Spanish Colonial Trinidad. p.135.

³³P. Borde. History of Trinidad. Part II, p.91.

³⁴Ibid., pp 91-93.

³⁵Ibid., pp 101-103; H.J. Clark. Iere, pp.76-77.

³⁶P. Borde. History of Trinidad. Part II, p.131; E.L. Joseph. History of Trinidad. Part II, p.154; L.O. Innis, Iere, p.27; L. Newson, Aboriginal and Spanish Colonial Trinidad, p.135.

³⁷The term fanega was used as a unit of resource - one fanega of cocoa = 110 lbs. This was calculated to be the expected yield of 1 fanega of land. One fanega of land was equivalent to 7.5 acres. A fanega was also a measure of capacity 1 fanega = 20 gallons (almides) or 32 quarts (millares). See P. Borde. History of Trinidad, Pt. II, p.328.

One reale was equivalent to about 8 cents; 8 reales = \$1 or 1 piece of eight or 1 peso or 3^s 6^d Sterling (See J. Millette Society and Politics in Colonial Trinidad. p.10 of 60. See also Borde, History of Trinidad, pp.327-8.

³⁸P. Borde. History of Trinidad, Pt. II, p.131-2.

³⁹The Aricagua River is now called the San Juan River. In 1786 Don Jose Marie Chacon, the last Spanish Governor, founded a town there which he named San Juan in honour of St. John the Baptist.

⁴⁰P. Borde. History of Trinidad. p.321.

⁴¹J. Collens (ed.). Handbook of Trinidad for the Use of Settlers. (Port-of-Spain: G.P.O., 1912) p.100.

⁴²D. Morris. "Cacao". Ch. V. Public Opinion. Friday 13 Aug. 1886 Vol. 11, No. 168.

⁴³'Cocoa as Grown in Trinidad'. p.18.

⁴⁴Ibid., pp.20-21.

⁴⁵Ibid., p.322 2 sous was equivalent to 1 cent (English). See Appendix A, Table 1. The fixed price, therefore, would have been 13 cts per lb: 20 reales per fanega or \$15.00 per fanega.

- ⁴⁶L. Newson. Aboriginal and Spanish Colonial Trinidad. p.214.
- ⁴⁷P. Borde. History of Trinidad. pp.186-7; B. Brereton. History of Modern Trinidad 1783-1962. (Oxford: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1981), p.13. 1 Quarree = 3 1/5 acres.
- ⁴⁸B. Brereton. History of Modern, p.16.
- ⁴⁹P. Borde. History of Trinidad, p.36; B. Brereton; History of Modern Trinidad, pg. 317-18; L.M. Fraser. History of Trinidad, 1781-1838. (Trinidad: Government Printery Office 1891-6) Pt. II, p.149; J. Millette Society and Politics in Colonial Trinidad. London: Zed Books Ltd., 1985) p.19, Eric Williams. History of the People of Trinidad and Tobago. (London: Andre Deutsch Ltd., 1962) p.47.
- ⁵⁰J. Millette. Society and Politics. Appendix Part II, Table II.
- ⁵¹B. Brereton. History of Modern Trinidad. p.47.
- ⁵²C.Y. Shephard. Cocoa Industry. Part IV, p.29.
- ⁵³David Harrison. The Changing Fortunes of a Trinidad Peasantry, p.59.
- ⁵⁴J. Millette. Society and Politics. pp.78,84; B. Brereton, p.45.
- ⁵⁵Ibid., Millette, pp.133-4.
- ⁵⁶Cocoa as Grown in Trinidad, p.7.
- ⁵⁷J. Millette. Society and Politics, pp.175-180.
- ⁵⁸B. Brereton. History, p.55.
- ⁵⁹J. Millette. Society and Politics. Part II Appendix. Tables VII, X.
- ⁶⁰Fr. Vincent Leahy O.P. The Catholic Church in Trinidad 1797-1820. (Trinidad, 1980) p.124.
- ⁶¹D. Harrison. "Changing Fortunes", p.59; Brereton. History, p.51.
- ⁶²J.H. Collens. A Guide to Trinidad: A Handbook for the Use of Tourists and Visitors. (2nd ed. London, 1888) p.168. 1 bag cocoa = 165 lbs or 1½ fanegas.
- ⁶³C.Y. Shephard. The Cocoa Industry. Part IV, p.5.
- ⁶⁴J.H. Clark. Iere, p.78.

⁶⁵B. Brereton. History. p.91.

⁶⁶D. Morris (Director - Public Gardens and Plantations, Jamaica) "Cacao - How to Grow and How to Cure It". Public Opinion. Fri. 30 July 1886 Vol. 11 No. 165, Ch. 2, p.11.

⁶⁷"Cocoa Production in the British Empire". Bulletin of the Imperial Institute Vol. XVII p.42; Shephard. Cocoa Industry, Part II, p.2.

⁶⁸B. Brereton. History. p.55.

⁶⁹D. Morris. "Cocoa - How to Grow and How to Cure It". Public Opinion. Ch. VI, Cont'd. Tuesday 17 August 1886, Vol. 11 No. 169.

⁷⁰Ibid., Ch V, Friday 13 August 1886.

⁷¹D.H. Urquhart. Cocoa (London: Longmans, 1955). p.108.

⁷²Ibid., p.191.

⁷³B. Brereton. History, p.67.

⁷⁴D. Urquhart. Cocoa, p.179.

⁷⁵Henry James Clark, "Trinidad. A Field for Emigration: A Sketch"; Public Opinion. Vol. II, No. 169. Tuesday 17 August, 1886, p.1.

⁷⁶"Agricultural Contracts Ordinance". Public Opinion. Vol. 5, No. 397. Friday 7 December, 1888, p.4.

⁷⁷W.C. Jardine. "How to Start a Cacao Estate" in J.H. Collens (ed.) Handbook of Trinidad and Tobago for the Use of Settlers. (Port-of-Spain: Government Printing Office, 1912), pp.84-107; H.J. Clark, "A Field for Emigration" Public Opinion. Vol. II, No. 162. Tuesday 20 July, 1886, p.1.

⁷⁸H.J. Clark. "Trinidad: A Field for Emigration". Public Opinion. Vol. II No. 162. Tuesday 20 July, 1886, p.1.

⁷⁹D. Morris. "Cacao - How to Grow and How to Cure It". Ch. VII. Public Opinion. Vol. 11, No. 170. Friday 20 August, 1886.

⁸⁰Ibid. Ch. VI. Public Opinion. Vol. 11, No. 169. Tuesday 17 August, 1886.

⁸¹Trade and Taxes Commission. 19 August 1886. Evidence of Mr. Charles Augustus Fabien (Cocoa Planter). Public Opinion. Vol. 11, No. 175, Tuesday 7 September 1886.

⁸²H.J. Clark. "Trinidad: A Field for Emigration". Public Opinion. Vol. 11, No. 162. Tuesday 20 July 1886, p.1.

⁸³W.C. Jardine. "How to Start a Cacao Estate". pp.84-107.

⁸⁴J.H. Collen. Handbook of Trinidad and Tobago for the Use of Settlers. pp.84-88,91. H.J. Clark. "Trinidad: A Field for Emigration: A Sketch". Public Opinion, Vol. 11, No. 162. Tuesday 20 July 1886, p.5.

⁸⁶Lining i.e. spacing, measuring for placement of tree sites at equal distances apart. This was done for better results. In Trinidad lining was done carefully in squares and in perfect continuity. The average distance between trees was generally 12 ft x 12 ft and sometimes 14 ft x 14 ft as described in J.H. Collens Handbook p.95; F. Stockdale "Agriculture in the West Indies" (London: HMSO: Report of the Stockdale Commission, 1940), p.60.

Picketing i.e. Holing for new plants. A picket = an individual tree site. Lining as described here was expected to yield about 256 pickets per acre when the 14 ft x 14 ft system was used and 348 pickets when the 12 ft x 12 ft system was used. The average for Trinidad cocoa cultivation was 280 pickets per acre. This is described in H.J. Clark "A Sketch" Public Opinion Vol. 11, No. 162. Tuesday 20 July 1886, p.1; J.H. Collens Handbook, p.95; D.H. Urquhart. Cocoa (London: Longmans, 1955) pp.108-9.

⁸⁷Supplied vacancies. i.e. supplied new plants to vacant sites. Dead or poor-yielding trees were also replaced either by suckers or by fresh nursery supplies of seedlings. This was done by the more enterprising and efficient cultivators. Described in H.J. Clark "A Sketch" p.1; D.H. Urquhart. Cocoa, p. 108.

⁸⁸W.C. Jardine. "How to Start a Cacao Estate" in J.H. Collens (ed.) Handbook, pp.84-107.

⁸⁹D. Morris. "Cacao" Ch. IV. Public Opinion. Vol. 11, No. 169. Tuesday 17 August, 1886.

⁹⁰C.O. 300. Trinidad and Tobago Blue Books: Colonial Report Annual; C.Y. Shephard. The Cocoa Industry: Some Economic Aspects. Part IV.

⁹¹R.W. Beachey. The British West Indies Sugar Industry in the Late 19th Century (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1957) p.47.

⁹²The term "eating chocolate" was used for chocolate bars, the confectionery, to distinguish it from chocolate "the drink".

⁹³T.B. Rogers. Cadbury Bournville: A Century of Progress 1831-1931 (Bournville, Birmingham, 1931) pp. 14-16; C.Y. Shephard. The Cocoa Industry, Part II, p.2.

⁹⁴D. Morris. Cacao - How to Grow and How to Cure It: Ch. 2. Public Opinion, Vol. II, No. 165, Friday 30 July 1886.

⁹⁵C.Y. Shephard. Cocoa Industry, Part II, p.2.

⁹⁶Ibid., Part IV p.6; B. Brereton. A History of Modern Trinidad, p.91.

⁹⁷Colonial Reports - Annual. Trinidad and Tobago Report of 1892, 1893-4 (78) LX. 389. Cd. 6857-28. Sir F. Napier Broome to the Marquis of Ripon.

⁹⁸C.Y. Shephard. Cocoa Industry. Part II, p.2.

⁹⁹A.W. Knapp. The Cocoa and Chocolate Industry. (London, 1923), pp.25-26.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., pp.27-28.

¹⁰¹T.B. Rogers. Cadbury Bournville: A Century of Progress 1831-1931. (Bournville, 1931, p.15).

¹⁰²Ibid., pp.20-51.

¹⁰³G.W. Greenidge. The Story of Cocoa: Ways of Using Cocoa. (London: The Sheldon Press, n.d.) pp. 6-16.

¹⁰⁴Public Opinion. Thursday 30 December 1886, p.11.

¹⁰⁵"Notes on the Trinidad Cocoa Market: Showing Prices Over a Period of Fifty-Six Years 1874-1930". The Canada-West Indies Magazine, Vol. XX, No. 7 (June 1931), p.236.

¹⁰⁶Ibid.

¹⁰⁷An 1842 Cadbury's price list shows that a premium was placed on Pure Trinidad Cocoa which was more highly priced than other cocoa. T.B. Rogers. Cadbury Bournville, p.14.

¹⁰⁸Colonial Reports Annuals 1885-1895; CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books for 1885 to 1895.

¹⁰⁹Colonial Reports Annuals, No. 587. Trinidad and Tobago Report for 1907-8. 1908 (587) LXIX, 953, Cd. 3729-51.

¹¹⁰For Growth Rate Formula See Appendix A Table 4.

¹¹¹Colonial Reports - Annual. Annual General Report for Trinidad and Tobago for the year 1920. Cmd. 1103.

¹¹²Colonial Reports Annuals for the year 1900-1915; CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books for the years 1900-1915.

¹¹³CO 300/101. Trinidad Blue Book for 1890. Report of Governor Sir W.M. Robinson.

¹¹⁴Ibid.

¹¹⁵Colonial Reports - Annual. Trinidad and Tobago Report of 1892. 1893-4 (78) LX.389, Col. 6857-28. Fr. Napier Broome to Marquis of Ripon.

¹¹⁶Ibid.

¹¹⁷Colonial Report Annual No. 303. Trinidad and Tobago Report for 1889 1900(303) LIV. 1047, Cd. 354-9.

¹¹⁸'Trinidad's Cocoa Industry'. Canada - West Indies Magazine. Vol. xx. No. 10 (Sept. 1931) p.346.

¹¹⁹Ibid.

¹²⁰Colonial Report Annual. No. 1891. Report for Trinidad and Tobago for 1937-8.

¹²¹Colonial Reports Annual cmd. No. 1069. General Report for Trinidad and Tobago for the year 1917.

¹²²Col. Rep. Annual cmd. No. 1166. Report from Trinidad and Tobago for 1922.

¹²³Col. Rep. Annual. No. 1767. Report for Trinidad and Tobago for 1935.

¹²⁴Col. Rep. Annual. No. 1634. Annual Report on the Social and Economic Progress of the People of Trinidad and Tobago for the year 1932.

¹²⁵Col. Rep. Annual. No. 1915. Report for Trinidad and Tobago for 1938.

CHAPTER 4

'SQUATTERS VERSUS THE CROWN': THE STRUGGLE FOR CROWN LAND IN THE PIONEERING YEARS 1838-1866

The conflict which developed between the working classes and the employers of labour in the aftermath of British Slave Emancipation did not only focus on the control of labour but also on the control of land resources. In the build-up to emancipation planters had expressed fears that there would be an immediate mass exodus from the estates contingent upon the granting of freedom to the slaves, thus creating serious labour problems for themselves. It is in this context that easy access to land was perceived as a major determinant of planter control of labour. In the debate in Parliament as to the direction and form emancipation was to take, this concern became central to the issues surrounding abolition. Lord Howick proposed a solution: the imposition of a prohibitive tax on land which would enable "the planter to continue his business when emancipation shall have taken place" ¹ A Colonial Office Despatch of 1836 clearly laid down the policy as regard the alienation of lands still in the possession of the Crown: Crown Lands were to be kept out of the hands of the labouring classes in order to ensure a continued and adequate supply of labour for large sugar estates after the end of the apprenticeship period in 1838. ²

While planters in most British West Indian sugar islands anticipated instant flight of labour from the estates upon full freedom, the situation was most grave in the larger 'newer' colonies of British Guiana and Trinidad where the adoption of a plantation-type economic system was still not a fully completed process and where the land-use still bordered on an open resource situation. The sugar planters of Trinidad, led by William Burnley, owner of the Orange Grove Estate and leader of

the Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council, favoured a restrictive Crown Land alienation policy as the solution to their problems.³ It was their aim that ex-slaves should continue to constitute the labouring class while land ownership should be retained in the hands of the white plantocracy.⁴

The Crown Land alienation policy had always been one of the main factors influencing the development of the cocoa industry in Trinidad. In 1838, the general consensus of official and popular opinion was that the future prosperity of the island, as of the other British West Indies, rested solely on the cultivation of sugar cane on a large scale. Small wonder, then, that planters opposed any attempt to make Crown Land available to the non-sugar sector, particularly when that sector consisted mainly of an aspiring class of ex-slave and other small scale cultivators. An independent peasantry or own-account small-holding agricultural class was seen as a serious contradiction to the goals and designs of plantation society. When, in 1841, the Secretary of State for the Colonies advocated the alienation of Crown Lands in minimum parcels of forty acres each, the sugar planters objected, stating that it would be disastrous to make grants of less than 320-acre units, considered to be half the optimum size of a sugar estate, which was 640 acres (one square mile). The Colonial Office eventually agreed on a minimum grant of 640 acre units.

The implications for cocoa cultivation were grave indeed. Cocoa was more conducive than sugar to small-scale cultivation. Cocoa required relatively smaller expanses of land than sugar, smaller outlays of capital and comparatively smaller investments on labour and machinery. Cocoa growing therefore became the most popular agricultural activity of the ex-slave class in Trinidad. When land was not

legally available, they squatted. Squatting seemed to be a fairly simple operation for in August 1838, the Crown still retained over one million acres of undeveloped land, while of the 208,379 acres already alienated, only 43,265 acres, i.e. approximately one-fifth, were actually under cultivation.⁶

Many cocoa farmers with sizeable acreages under cultivation were squatters. However, squatting was looked upon with disfavour by the white planters for it posed a potential threat to them as the only landed class entitled to political rights and privileges. Nevertheless, labourers found it much easier, given the restrictions against legal acquisition, to squat rather than to secure lands in freehold tenure. In fact, prior to 1847, it was virtually impossible for small purchasers to acquire land legally from the Crown.

Accordingly, while policy restrictions continued to hamper the rate of Crown Land alienation, the concomitant problem of squatting assumed alarming proportions. By 1847, new legislation seemed essential to curb the acceleration of the problem. Henceforth the major concern of planters and officials was to stem the tide of squatting without posing any threat to the landholding class or violating their rights of property and priority. A Gubernatorial Proclamation of 22 June 1847 invited squatters to 'regularise' their position by allowing them a grace period of six months within which to petition for grants of confirmation with respect to lands occupied by them.⁷ This privilege was extended, however, only to those who had been in occupation prior to 31 December 1845 and they were also restricted to "so much of land as they shall have respectfully actually cleared, enclosed or cultivated."⁸

Those who had been in occupancy of such lands prior to 12 December 1838 were required to make a payment of 6s per acre in lieu of redemption of quit rent plus survey costs and government expenses. Those who had settled later than December 1838 had to pay £1 per acre plus all survey costs and government expenses. Those who failed to petition by 31 December 1847 were to be "rigorously proceeded against" as squatters and ejected from such lands. Of the 1090 squatters who filed petitions before the expiration of the grace period, only 295 had had their holdings regularised by 1865 when the issue of squatting came up once more.⁹

The main reason was that few squatters could provide concrete and acceptable proof of length of tenure; fewer still could afford the astronomical surveying and legal fees which varied according to the quantity of the grant ranging from £2 7s to £8 8s. Even so, the tedium, lengthy delays and intricacies of the legal and surveying procedures involved militated against speediness in tenure regularisation under the 1847 proclamation. In addition to these restrictions, the fixing of the price of lands at £2 per acre by the Governor, Lord Harris, in 1847 to help defray the cost of immigration had served to frustrate the intent of all anti-squatting legislation during this period.¹⁰ These rules governing the alienation of Crown Land obtained for the next twenty years during which the legal acquisition of land by the small man remained an exercise in frustration.

Between 1847 and 1865 a total of 779 grants of land had been made of which 472 were agricultural grants and 307 were village lots. An annual average of forty-one grants including village lots, therefore had been maintained. (Tables 4.1 and 4.2). The total acreage granted was 3423 acres of which 453 acres were purchased

by sugar planters for the extension of their cultivations; the remaining 2970 acres were purchased for the purpose of cocoa growing and ground provisions. For the period 1847 to 1865, under the old Crown Land Disposal System, an annual average of 180 acres were alienated out of the hands of the Crown. Appendix A Table 5 shows a breakdown of Crown Land sales from 1847 to 1915. This slow rate of Crown Land alienation was definitely not conducive to the effective settlement of land and the development of agriculture.¹¹

In the mean time, it is not surprising that squatting had accelerated to such alarming proportions that it again became a matter of official concern. In 1866, it was estimated that there were 721 squatters who, with their families occupied 3817 acres of Crown Land illegally as shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.1Sale of Crown Lands 1847-1865

Year	Number of Sales	Total Acreages Sold		
		A.	r.	p.***
1847	16	2	1	0
1848	78	134	3	25
1849	5	106	3	32
1850	1	4	2	36
1851	50	29	2	3
1852	65	126	2	39
1853	20	16	0	12
1854	15	37	2	2
1855	10	67	2	38
1856	83	91	2	21
1857	89	643	0	6
1858	20	146	3	9
1859	125	222	0	31
1860	40	380	0	33
1861	11	75	0	25
1862	64	698	2	10
1863	18	17	2	2
1864	14	84	3	9
1865	55	379	2	32
1847-1865	779*	3423**	0	25

* These include 307 village lots.

** This total includes 453 acres purchased by sugar planters for extending cultivation. All else was to be planted in cocoa and provisions, i.e. 2970 acres 0.roods.25 perches.

*** 40 perches = 1 rood, 4 roods = 1 acre.

Source: C.O. 295/235. Trinidad Despatch No. 72 of June 16, 1866.
Rushworth to Cardwell. Enclosure 6.

Table 4.2Grants of Crown Lands 1856-1865**

Year	Number of Grants	Acreage Granted
1856	12	202 3/5 acres
1857	36	246
1858	13	135
1859	33	307
1860	17	260
1861	3	84
1862	5	90
1863	6	265
1864	8	70
1865	7	186
1856-1865	150 grants	1895 3/5 acres*

* An overall average of 15 grants per annum and 12 2/3 acres per grant.

** In C.O. 295/267 Trinidad Despatch No. 72 of April 14, 1873. Report on the Blue Book for 1872, Rennie to Kimberley, Acting Governor Rennie explains that the Land Grant figures hardly represent the number of actual transactions for, because of pressures of work on the staff of the Intendants Office, grants were frequently not issued even though the transactions had been completed, until some time after the land was sold. This explains, therefore, the discrepancy between Table 4.1 and the above table; the former records land sales while the latter represents land grants.

Source: C.O. 295/234 Trinidad Despatch No. 41 of April 6, 1866. Manners Sutton to Cardwell. Enclosure A.

Table 4.3**Squatting Occupations on Crown Land 1865**

Wards/Ward Union	Number of Squatters	Acreage
Arima Ward Union		
Arima	12	
Guanapo	9	
Turrence	11	
Upper Caroni	<u>34</u>	
	66	
Cedros Ward Union		
Couva Ward Union		
Pointe-a-Pierre	131	403
Savonetta	115	1868
Carapichaima	22	109
Couva	93	422
Chaguanas	<u>13</u>	<u>173</u>
	374	2975
Diego Martin Ward Union		
Diego Martin	7	89 ^{3/5}
Mucurapo	3	15
Carenage	<u>1</u>	<u>6 ^{2/5}</u>
	11	111
Moruga Ward	5	35
Mayaro Ward Union		
Manzanilla	13	142
North Naparima Ward Union		
Savana Grande North	2	11
South Naparima Ward Union		
S. Naparima East	12	142
Oropouche	<u>34</u>	<u>148</u>
	46	290
St. Anns Ward Union		

Tacarigua Ward Union		
Tacarigua	67	
Maracas	31	260
Caura	40	
Lower Caroni	<u>66</u>	—
	204	260
TOTAL	721	3817

Source: C.O. 295/234 Trinidad Despatch No. 41 of April 6, 1866. Manners Sutton to Cardwell. Enclosure B.

N.B. This return is not entirely complete and therefore may reasonably be supposed to understate the facts of the case.¹²

It was obvious that prohibitive legislation, including the Ordinance of 1848 which gave powers of summary eviction to magistrates and which provided for the passing of sentences of six months hard labour on conviction, had had no effect.¹³ Further solutions had, therefore, to be found to contain what was regarded disparagingly as the landgrabbing tendencies of the lower classes.

By this time, the problem of squatting had become a rather complex one. The term 'squatter' applied to a non-homogeneous group of persons in illegal tenure. Broadly speaking, there were two classes of squatters. The first class included "the industrious well-conducted, but poor people who cannot be induced to work for wages, but who clear the land on which they settle" and raise cash crops on their own account.¹⁴ These were generally Spanish peons and the descendants of ex-slaves who had obtained their freedom prior to 1834. The less 'well-conducted' fell into the second class, described as "an idle and dissolute and half-savage population impatient of the restraints of civilisation who cultivate small patches of Indian corn and rice barely sufficient for their own sustenance."¹⁵ Given this distinction, clearly

a uniform policy could not be applied. However, the bias against the ex-slave population in their bid to acquire land was immediately obvious: they had all been officially and indiscriminately included in the latter class of undesirables.

As regards this latter group, the difficulty of devising policy seemed insuperable. Considering their alleged nomadic habits, it was felt that such a group could not be induced to pay anything for the usage of land. Having been ejected from one plot, they removed themselves farther and farther away from the reaches of officialdom. The vast extent of forested unalienated Crown Land in the colony made the task of containing them an almost impossible and ruinously expensive one, but one which they felt had to be pursued ultimately to stave off ruin for planters and for the colony as a whole. However, the only ready solution to the problem of 'nomadic squatting' seemed to be a better organised Land Department and stricter policing and police regulations. Such a solution was strictly a long run one which could not be implemented without adequate discussion, legislation and radical reorganisation of the Crown Land administrative machinery.¹⁶

The first group was a class considered to be a more respectable group of squatters. Many of them had been in possession of their holdings for several years; some had even inherited these lands from their foreparents and had worked assiduously at their cultivation and general improvement. It seemed inhumane and unjust to eject them summarily. The idea, then, was to induce them to purchase their lands and make valid their tenure. Inducements were seen as necessary because, regardless of how respectable these squatters were, they would, if allowed, continue to occupy lands and enjoy the privileges of landowners provided conditions of

occupancy remained easy and unburdensome. Again, given the existing obstacles to tenure regularisation, these squatters could not reasonably be expected to trouble themselves unduly if there was no need. The Governor at this time, Sir H. Manners Sutton felt that a nudge in the right direction would be helpful and should be provided by policy.¹⁷

For quite some time, the land occupied by squatters had been included in the triennial assessment rolls for the levy of ward rates and the Wardens had been in the habit of collecting ward rates from squatters in respect of the lands they occupied. Thus, operating on the premise that the collection of such rates gave silent acquiescence and unwitting recognition to an illegal and untenable situation, Manners Sutton issued orders in 1865 to Wardens to refrain from receiving ward rates from squatters on Crown Land. It was his belief that this open declaration of the illegality of squatting in whatever form would serve as a disincentive to merchants who advanced supplies to these people. The refusal of merchants to continue extending credit to squatters, he hoped, would force them to petition for the purchase of their holdings.

While the plan seemed feasible enough, it was the opinion of the Attorney General, Charles Warner, that such a solution was questionable. First of all, he pointed out, in the absence of the authority of an Ordinance, such an order would not hold up in a court of law should any ratepayer see fit to proceed against a Warden for the non-collection of rates. Furthermore, he indicated, the ward rate was a local rate aimed at defraying the cost of local annual expenditure on the construction and maintenance of roads, schools and other provisions generally attended to with

disbursements from local funds. His contention was that even in the discontinuance of the payment of such rates, the squatter was still allowed to enjoy the benefits provided through such funds free of charge, as well as to retain possession. This he viewed as a moral injustice against those who held legal tenure and who continued to pay ward rates.¹⁸

Although the concern was a very real one, the Manners Sutton plan did produce the desired effect, to some extent. The measure caused great alarm among the class of 'respectable squatters' and a petition signed by fifty-five persons was submitted requesting permission to purchase their holdings at the established 'upset price'¹⁹ of £2 per acre and to pay for them in four annual instalments.²⁰ For this class of squatters, then, agreeing to such a settlement seemed to be the answer. It would also put to rest the contentious issue of whether or not they should be allowed to pay ward rates.

The problem of 'nomadic' squatting remained however. Toward this latter goal, the wardens were further directed to prevent non-grantees from taking possession of Crown Lands in future. Needless to say, the machinery for giving effect to such directives did not exist. There were also other problems still to be considered which entailed a broader view of all Crown Land alienation policy as well as the organisation and administration of the Crown Land Department. It also entailed due consideration of the impact of any enabling legislation on other sectors of the society, for example, on persons from the upper classes legitimately seeking to acquire land in legal tenure, and on the employers of labour. In fact, it was of utmost importance to secure the interest of these two classes - the 'haves' of the society.

These issues came to the fore as part and parcel of the discussion on policy with respect to squatters. Any decision to allow squatters to regularise their position as legal land-owners would be a matter of concern for the planters who had been accustomed to regard the poorer elements in the society as a natural caché of labour, ready answer to their estates' needs. In their attempt, therefore, to 'crush out' the development of a small-scale proprietary body, the landed élite, ably assisted by official policy, sought to throw every imaginable obstacle in the way of those attempting to settle small acreages of Crown Land.²¹ They argued that the resultant

withdrawal of large numbers of Inhabitants of the Island from established settlements and from the vicinity of churches, schools and other civilizing influences [was] a very serious evil not in any degree compensated for by an apparently increased independence on the part of the Persons thus withdrawn.²²

The maintenance of a high upset price per acre for Crown Land, designed as a safeguard to the employers of labour against the dispersal of the labouring population had been effective in restricting and retarding the rate of alienation of Crown Land. The facility of squatting however, had led to open violation of the Crown Land disposal regulations and therefore had not served to stem the increase in small agricultural holdings.

Manners Sutton now queried whether it was prudent to maintain the present high upset price of Crown Land in light of the facts of the case. A lower upset price of £1 per acre had been the norm in the other British West Indian islands such as Antigua, Dominica and St. Lucia with satisfactory results.²³ While it was desirable for the more respectable squatters to legalise their tenure, Manners Sutton envisioned problems in the future if they were required to pay a price of £2 per acre in four

instalments. It seemed highly likely that after the payment of the first instalment and the subsequent granting of a licence of occupation, non-payment of further instalments would follow, necessitating the revocation of licences and eviction. The increased trauma and expenditure involved in such procedures for the government could easily be avoided by lowering the upset price of these lands from the outset.²⁴ A lower price on 'Wild Land' could mean, however, its acquisition by 'mere land jobbers' and men of little or no capital who would be better off serving in their 'rightful place' as labourers for wages.

There was another variable to be considered in weighing the pros and cons of lowering the price of Crown Land. In 1864, a memorial had been presented to the Governor signed by twelve persons of "respectability and position in the community", including a member of the Legislative Council and a barrister, asking to be allowed to purchase tracts of land from the Crown varying from 640 to 900 acres at ten shillings per acre for the purpose of establishing cocoa, coffee, cotton and nutmeg plantations, on the condition that such lots would not be subdivided.²⁵ Another suggestion was for the purchase of lots from eighty acres in size.

Dr. L.A.A. De Verteuil, the spokesman of the group and main signatory, claimed that in addition to the memorialists, there were several other young men of European descent, belonging to respectable families, who had not succeeded as managers, and clerks but who were prepared to buy land for the purpose of cultivation, provided it could be bought at a reasonable price, bearing in mind that they would then have to expend considerable sums of capital in establishing the plantation and bringing it into full-bearing maturation. Donald Wood observes in his

book Trinidad in Transition that nine of the twelve memorialists were from the French Creole class the "descendants of the original settlers who had been ousted out of sugar growing by the superior resources of the British expatriate firms."²⁶ Under the existing restrictive Crown Land disposal policy, such enterprise was discouraged.

Evidently, it was desirable to bring more land under cultivation, for every addition acre cultivated increased the overall wealth of the colony. The implication for agriculture in the colony was ultimate diversification from sugar to cocoa and other crops. Cocoa cultivation had been on the increase, having expanded its exporting capacity from 1,346,464 lbs in 1832 to 7,384,944 lbs in 1863, that is, more than five-fold.²⁷ Further expansion would not only enhance the island's export-earning capacity but would also serve to open up the interior regions, thus acting as an aide in the operations against squatting.

Another advantage was the ultimate rescue of the displaced French and other Creole planters by providing another economic niche for them within the boundaries of landed wealth. This would, no doubt, ensure the maintenance of the socio-economic *status quo* provided of course, some policy could be arrived at which would accomplish this goal while at the same time preventing the wholesale influx of the labouring classes into the ranks of the proprietary. In the opinion of the Governor "it was desirable to enable persons with small capital to acquire land" but the distinction had to be made between them and "mere labourers", who may have obtained "the command of a few pounds" and were suddenly seized by grandiose dreams of landed property.²⁸ One possible solution to the problem was that the Government should set two prices - the lower price for the large and wealthy

purchasers, and the higher price for the small and poorer ones, thus serving as a disincentive to land acquisition by the latter group. This suggestion was discarded as being "too invidious to be entertained."²⁹ The Governor believed that while the large scale planters and employers of labour had a good case, their concern should not totally be allowed to stand in the way of the acquisition of land by those small capitalists who were in a position to make good use of the land.

Furthermore, a small-holding agricultural class producing provisions was not entirely undesirable for it would help reduce the food import bill and the island's general dependence on supplies from Venezuela and the Windward Islands.³⁰ If, therefore, hitherto landless labourers sought land strictly for ground provision cultivation, all would have been well, for in this they safeguarded rather than threatened the interest of the higher classes, but their ambitions were not to be contained within the confines of the consumption needs of the planter class. In the final analysis, another solution seemed more feasible, that is, the setting of an upset price of 20s per acre for the purchase of lots not less than forty acres in size. The purchase money was to be paid as follows: ten percent at the time of purchase and the balance within one month. This scheme it was felt, would facilitate small capitalists as well as exclude mere labourers and land jobbers.³¹

The attempt between 1847 and 1866 had illustrated, too, that the systematic enforcement of any measures for Crown Land sale regulation would be impossible without an alteration of the structure of management of Crown Lands. So far, the duties of a Land Department had been performed by a Legal Tribunal called The Court of Intendant, a court of Spanish origin with the Governor as Judge and one of

the Puisne Judges as his Assessor. Clerical functions were performed by the Escribano. The Office of Surveyor General had been previously abolished and The Court of Intendant was not empowered to perform executive functions. This duty was vested in the Governor.³² Much depended, therefore, on whether or not there was a vigorous and vigilant Governor in office. Effective management policy with respect to Crown Land and to alienation relied heavily on the strengths, weaknesses, attitudes, beliefs and inclinations of one man. Clearly what was needed was a system so constructed as to rise above the vagaries of personality, individual propensities and biases.

In the absence of such a system, Crown Land alienation would continue to be slow, inconsistent, erratic and subject to political pressures brought to bear on gubernatorial policy both from the imperial front and from local interest groups. The crux of the problem rested, perhaps not so much with finding a foolproof Crown Land policy as with the entire structure of colonial government which itself relied too heavily on personality, particularly that of the Governor, for the effectiveness of government. This obtained in both the case of the Crown Colony System which operated in Trinidad during this time and the case of the old Representative System which existed in the other colonies as exemplified during the tenure of Governor William Eyre in Jamaica.³³

Here, no doubt, lay the crux of the matter with respect to the issue of Crown Land alienation policy and the problem of squatting in Trinidad. Manners Sutton had, at least, taken the initiative with regard to formulating a more liberal policy. However, while the white plantocracy was in favour of this in principle, working out

the details of the system still proved a niggling problem, for one had to be careful in the process of attending to the needs of the lower classes, not to alienate the more influential groups within the society.

While Manners Sutton was grappling with these problems, squatting was proceeding apace. Returns filed under his administration showed that the number of squatting holdings in Couva alone were about 400 and the number of squatters in residence had grown to 1500 by 1867.³⁴ Not only did this imply further dispersal of estate labour, but also that the rate of ruination of forested lands was on the increase. Nomadic squatters were in the habit of cutting down a vast quantity of valuable timber every year, or burning the best trees and then moving on to fresh land, not to mention removing themselves farther from official reach. The Wardens were concerned that not only did these people "come into the world and go out of it again without the Warden knowing anything about it" but did so, "ignorant even of the very name of Christianity."³⁵ The situation was compounded by an influx of immigrants from the other West Indian islands allegedly as labourers for estates but who tended to 'vanish' on arrival in the ports and become 'lost to society' as part of the increasing squatting population.

In certain areas of squatter occupation, almost the entire population were immigrants. Another major problem was that in many cases squatters had not settled in close proximity to each other but thinly scattered over a wide district, "sufficiently distant from each other to permit the intervention of considerable belts of forest and other Crown Land." The problem was that while these occupations were distant from each other, they were still close enough to make it almost impossible to discover "any

block of land of considerable size which had not had several morsels of its best soil, containing 2 or 3 acres a piece eaten out of it by squatting occupations", thus making future alienation of sizeable chunks into the hands of prospective large scale planters extremely difficult.³⁶

Even the question of correct classification of squatters or those in legal tenure itself had given rise to many irregularities under the system which had obtained since 1847. Incomplete records and inadequate record-keeping, the absence of proper maps and plans of districts, and inaccurate surveys were largely responsible for the problems and mistakes, for without such aids it was impossible for Wardens to ensure total efficiency in the classification of squatters and the enforcement of regulations. Documents of the Archives of the Court of Intendant containing petitions and counter-petitions and orders of the Court had been kept in huge piles, musty and moth-eaten, unbound, disordered and uncatalogued, leading in many instances to decisions of the Court not being acted upon at all or being subject to indefinite delays. As a result, errors and irregularities went unnoticed for many years, thus leading to further complications.

In his report for 1869, the Sub-Intendant for Crown Lands, Robert Mitchell, highlights some of these irregularities. Frequently, occupants of Crown Land who were also defaulters in the matter of ward rate payment, had themselves purchased their lands for a few shillings after it had been put up for sale for default in payment, "thus in an improper manner obtaining a grant for a mere trifle." In some instances, too, ward rates had been collected from squatters in respect of lands occupied by

them. However in seeking to regularise their position these persons found that these lands were already owned by the War Department.

In other instances, grants were issued for acreages far in excess of the amount petitioned and paid for. Sometimes portions of these grants were later sold and occupied by other parties before these irregularities were discovered, by which time correction of such errors became a difficult task. Another irregularity was the granting of a parcel of land previously alienated to another party without either party discovering the mistake for years.³⁷

Two other categories describing persons in insecure tenure but not expressly squatters further complicated the problem. Many large properties, some over 1000 acres in size, were prone to encroach especially if bounded on either side by Crown Land. In such instances encroachments may or may not have been deliberate but in any case, the lengthy duration of occupation had led the holders to look upon these lands as their own. Some small holders were also guilty of encroachment, sometimes extending the size of their holdings considerably in this way. Awareness of trespass could not be ascertained conclusively and therefore these cases required careful treatment.³⁸

The final case is that of those who had been granted land earlier in the century in respect of services performed but who had not received official titles to such grants and whose descendants, now in occupation, remained in insecure tenure. In 1816 and 1818, a number of soldiers discharged from the West India Regiment had been sent to Trinidad and settled in various designated areas of the island: Cuare, Turure, La Ceyba and Manzanilla. The first three of these settlements had

been abandoned, but the Manzanilla settlement remained in existence. Allotments, five quarres or sixteen acres per soldier, had been handed down to natural or adoptive children or god-children, close relatives or friends in the case of those who had no natural heirs. Many of those in current occupancy possessed no official titles and no written records of the original transactions. In such cases it seemed natural and logical to regularise or confirm tenure of the present occupants.

However, the problem was not so simple. Some of the allotments had been abandoned by their original owners or their descendants and/or inheritors. These allotments were then occupied by outright squatters with not even the slightest claims of relationship. It was therefore necessary to distinguish between lawful and unlawful occupiers, as well as to decide whether lawful occupiers who had allowed their holdings to lapse into deplorable conditions or who had "virtually reverted to a savage existence" should be confirmed in their holdings or removed to some other area from where it would be easier to keep them under surveillance.³⁹

Much depended on the vigour with which the Wardens tackled their jobs. Wardens were charged with the duty of ascertaining the nature of tenure of all property under their jurisdiction and keeping proper records of any changes in tenure. To facilitate this, purchasers or those otherwise coming into possession of property were required to make a return to the Warden within one month of acquisition or pay a penalty of £10. Failure to enforce these obligations and penalties had given rise to many of the abovementioned discrepancies.⁴⁰

Immediate policy for effecting regularisation of land holding, therefore, seemed imperative. It was clear, too, that to deal with the issue of population and

labour force dispersal, as well as 'the danger of increasing barbarism', concentration of the population was necessary. The answer seemed to lie in the setting out of specific blocks of Crown Land for alienation as well as in the foundation of villages to serve as 'centres of civilising influences'. This would certainly help to solve the planters' perceived problem of inability to control the widely dispersed potential labour force. Another problem still remained, however, that is, how to deal with those squatters whose occupations lay either outside of designated blocks or in the middle of land which could be targeted for sale to the upper classes for the formation of large-scale estates.

The matter of gravest concern was that the squatter population was not a homogeneous bunch and this fact required that each class within this larger body had to be dealt with differently. In the wake of the 1847 Proclamation of Lord Harris and the 1865 Order of Sir H. Manners Sutton, the ranks of squatters had become more intricately stratified. Seven classes of squatters could now be identified, thus complicating the solution-finding process.

Each class of occupier needed to be offered a different opinion. The first class was composed of those who had already received Crown Grants for the land they occupied were considered in good tenure. As such, they could not be removed against their will, regardless of where their holdings were situated. The second class was comprised of those who had already paid the fees and/or received formal grants. These, too, could not be interfered with. The third class included those who had petitioned for lands they occupied and had had these lands surveyed plus had paid part of the purchase money. While it was felt that these had the right to remain,

wherever it was desirable they were to be offered an equivalent amount of land at the future reduced price of agricultural land and compensation for cultivation and any structures which they had built on that land.

In the fourth group were those whose lands had been surveyed with or without petition and had habitually paid ward rates but had not paid any portion of the purchase money. Numerically, this was the chief class of squatters and therefore 'the utmost discretion' had to be used in dealing with them. Cases within this group demanded varying degrees of consideration from the Government based on individual merit. The fifth class of squatters were those who had their lands surveyed, after petition, but had not paid ward rates, in the misguided belief that the completion of survey automatically conferred licence of occupation from the Crown. This class was to be dealt with leniently for what was considered a "by no means unnatural error" given the nature of past transactions.

Comprising the sixth class were those who had petitioned for the lands they occupied but had neither had it surveyed nor had paid ward rates. This class of settlers, however desirable, was to be offered an equivalent portion of land elsewhere with compensation for improvements effected. On rejection of this offer, the squatter was to be regarded as belonging to the seventh class which included all those who had neither paid nor petitioned for their lands. Of this class, those squatters who had holdings which were conveniently located were invited to submit petitions. Others with holdings not conveniently located were to be offered an equivalent amount of land more suitably situated at a location to be determined by the

Government. Those who refused to accept this offer were to be summarily proceeded against.⁴¹

Like his predecessor, Governor Rushworth, Manners Sutton believed that a Surveyor General was needed to give teeth to anti-squatting legislation and that the prior abolition of that office had been rather inexpedient.⁴² In April 1866, he suggested several solutions to the problem of squatting. Firstly, that squatters on Crown Land be allowed four years to finalise the purchase of their holdings at the upset price of £2 per acre, payable in four equal instalments; that unoccupied land also be sold to prospective occupiers by the Crown Land under the same terms; that on the payment of the first instalment a licence of occupation be issued. This licence was to be subject to revocation and the occupier ejected on failure to meet any subsequent instalment; that certain districts be set apart expressly for the purpose of such settlement. Only lands falling within these designated areas were to be made. In addition, he suggested that the Court of Intendant be abolished and that the management of Crown Lands be vested in the Governor as Commissioner of Crown Lands, assisted by a Crown Lands Department with a Surveyor General at its helm.⁴³

Such was the state of affairs when Manners Sutton vacated office and a new governor, Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon took over the reins in November 1866. Both Manners Sutton and Rushworth had recognised the need for a new Crown Land alienation policy but had been either unable or reluctant to initiate, execute and implement such reforms fully. Once more, effectiveness at the policy-making and execution level had to await vigorous leadership which came in the person of Arthur Hamilton Gordon.

Clearly the chief casualty of the restrictive Crown Land disposal policy thus far was the cocoa industry. As it lent itself well to small-scale cultivation, cocoa was an attractive economic avenue for the ex-slave and labouring classes desirous of enhancing their status. Finding since 1838, the means of legally acquiring land virtually closed to them, they resorted to squatting. As a result, during the immediate post-emancipation period of establishment cocoa production was primarily located on squatter land. Lack of security of tenure, however, proved to be a debilitating factor, seriously limiting the expansion of cocoa cultivation during this time.

During the period 1838 to 1866 cocoa enjoyed a time of relative growth but not outright prosperity. By 1866 almost half of all cocoa produced was grown on squatter holdings. In 1859 cocoa occupied 7000 acres, that is 11.67% of cultivated acreage while sugar occupied 30,000 acres (50.%).⁴⁴ Visiting the island in 1859, American journalist William Sewell expressed the opinion that cocoa was not only far less profitable than sugar, it was also not capable of prospering except on virgin soil and that it would go out of cultivation eventually.⁴⁵ He observed, too, a certain disposition on the part of the governing and proprietary bodies to "throw obstacles in the way of the settlement of Crown Lands and to crush out the small proprietors."⁴⁶ It is not surprising, then, that the prospects of expanding cocoa cultivation remained restricted.

The squatting population kept cocoa cultivation alive. There was also a portion of the Creole labouring population which had departed the estates after emancipation and were growing cocoa on small free-hold plots. Sewell estimates that of the 7000 persons who left the estates, five-sixths of them became proprietors of

from one to ten acre-plots, much of which were planted in cocoa, intercropped with ground provisions.⁴⁷ Those living in close proximity to large sugar estates continued to offer their services, however irregularly and on a part-time basis especially during crop time. This provided them with ready cash when needed.

At a time when market conditions were changing in Europe, the Trinidad cocoa industry needed to promote expansion. In order for quantity exported from Trinidad to respond to rising consumer demand, internal conditions affecting supply had to be adjusted. The greatest struggle was for prospective growers to gain access to suitable land for cocoa cultivation. The anti-squatting legislation, especially unaccompanied by any enlightened Crown Land alienation policy did much to keep supply severely contained. What was needed was a policy with the goal of colonial economic development at heart - a policy which would gain the confidence of prospective cocoa producers, large and small, and encourage those who squatted to legalise their tenure or purchase available land with the aim of improving the economic performance of the island. A more liberal Crown Land management and disposal policy would have been more effective not only in controlling squatting but also in giving to the cocoa industry the internal stimulus it needed. However few government officials saw in the ugly duckling, cocoa, the goose that would lay the golden egg.

CHAPTER 4NOTES

¹Eric E. Williams. History of the People of Trinidad and Tobago. (London: Andre Deutsch, 1963), p.87.

²B. Brereton. A History of Modern Trinidad. p.88.

³Donald Wood. Trinidad in Transition: The Years After Slavery. (London: Oxford University Press, 1964). pp.49-50.

⁴E. Williams. History of the People of Trinidad and Tobago. p.87.

⁵Ibid.

⁶D. Wood. Trinidad in Transition. p.49.

⁷'Tenure Regularisation' was the term given to the procedures to be followed for the legislation of tenure of land from squatting tenure to freehold tenure. It involved a formal declaration of squatter status, a purchase petition and downpayment, the survey of the land in question, the final purchase and the conferment of grants and deeds with respect to freehold ownership.

⁸C.O. 295/234, No. 41. Manners Sutton to Cardwell. 6 April 1866. Enclosure C.

⁹D. Wood. Trinidad in Transition. p.96.

¹⁰Ibid.; Bridget Brereton. A History of Modern Trinidad. p.89.

¹¹C.O. 295/235, No. 71. Rushworth to Cardwell. 19 June 1866. Enclosure.

¹²C.O. 195/234, No. 41. Manners Sutton to Cardwell. 6 April 1866. Enclosure B.

¹³D. Wood. Trinidad in Transition. p.95.

¹⁴C.O. 295/235. Murdock to Rogers Bart. 2 August 1866.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷C.O. 295/234, No. 41. Manners Sutton to Cardwell. 6 April 1866.

¹⁸C.O. 295/235, No. 71. Rushworth to Cardwell. 19 June 1866. Enclosure.

¹⁹The 'upset price' is the lowest acceptable selling price of property in auction; the reserve price.

²⁰C.O. 295/237. Murdock to Rogers Bart. 2 August 1866.

²¹William Sewell. The Ordeal of Free Labour. (New York: 1861). p.103.

²²C.O. 295/234, No. 41. Manners Sutton to Cardwell. 6 April 1866.

²³C.O. 295/237. Murdock to Rogers Bart. 2 August 1866.

²⁴C.O. 295/234, No. 41. Manners Sutton to Cardwell. 6 April 1866.

²⁵C.O. 295/237. Murdock to Rogers Bart. 2 August 1866; C.O. 295/235, No. 71. Rushworth to Cardwell, 19 June 1866. Enclosure.

²⁶D. Wood. Trinidad in Transition. p.271.

²⁷C.O. 295/237. Murdock to Rogers Bart. 2 August 1866.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰C.O. 295/256. No. 61. Longden to Kimberley. 15 April 1871. Enclosure: C.P. No. 13 of 1871.

³¹C.O. 295/237. Murdock to Rogers Bart. 2 August 1866.

³²C.O. 295/234, No. 41. Manners Sutton to Cardwell. 6 April 1866.

³³Eg. D.G. Hall. Free Jamaica 1838-1865: An Economic History. (Aylesbury, Bucks, U.K.: Ginn and Co. Ltd., 1959). p.256-9.

³⁴C.O. 295/239, No. 80. Gordon to Buckingham and Chandos. 8 June 1867. Enclosure 5.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶C.O. 295/239, No. 80. Gordon to Buckingham and Chandos. 8 June 1867. Enclosure 6.

³⁷C.O. 295/250. Gordon to Granville. Enclosure: C.P. No. 14 of 1870, 23 March 1870.

³⁸C.O. 295/256, No. 61. Longden to Kimberley. 15 April 1871. Enclosure: C.P. No. 31 of 1871.

³⁹C.O. 295/252, No. 193. Longden to Kimberley. 16 November 1870.

⁴⁰C.O. 295/250. Gordon to Granville. Enclosure: C.P. No. 14 of 1870, 23 March 1870.

⁴¹C.O. 295/239, No. 80. Gordon to Buckingham and Chandos. 8 June 1867. Enclosure 6.

⁴²C.O. 295/234, No. 41. Manners Sutton to Cardwell. 6 April 1866: C.O. 295/235, No. 71. Rushworth to Cardwell, 19 June 1866.

⁴³C.O. 295/234, No. 41. Manners Sutton to Cardwell. 6 April 1866.

⁴⁴W. Sewell. Ordeal of Free Labour in the British West Indies. (New York: Sampson Low & Co., 1860) pp.113.

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 101-2.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 103.

⁴⁷Ibid., p.111.

CHAPTER 5

'LANDOWNERS OR LABOURERS?' THE CONTINUING STRUGGLE FOR LAND AND LABOUR IN THE PERIOD OF EXPANSION 1866-1885

The coming of Arthur Hamilton Gordon ushered in a new and memorable phase in the annals of gubernatorial leadership in Trinidad, to be eternally remembered for its liberalism and humanitarianism. Gordon himself has been described always in glowing terms for his industry, broadmindedness and sympathy with colonial peoples, his "fairness and impartiality, irrespective of creed and race," and "his recognition of native claims to public enjoyment". Gordon gained distinction in the British Empire as one of the few administrators who recognised that there were other paths to civilisation and even to salvation, than 'the narrowly Anglo-Saxon one.'¹ Small wonder, then, that it was under his able guidance that positive measures were finally adopted with regard to the effective settlement of Crown Lands in Trinidad and to the orderly establishment of a thriving and industrious peasantry.²

This does not imply that there had been a change in the official mind of British imperial policy-making concerning the growth of a West Indian non-sugar sector, in particular, a peasant sector. The approach that obtained since Emancipation carried through until the closing years of the nineteenth century. It was strengthened in 1842 by the Report and Recommendation of the Select Committee set up to enquire into West Indian economic conditions. This Select Committee agreed with the planters that the greatest threat to West Indian economic prosperity and to the success of plantation agriculture was labour shortage, caused by the development of a peasantry. The Committee therefore recommended the enactment of measures

designed to hinder and restrict peasant agricultural activity.³ The Gubernatorial initiative taken by Gordon, therefore, although not indicative of any new direction in British Imperial policy toward colonial economic development, merely indicates that it was possible for an enterprising official to manoeuvre policy on behalf of the small-holding class. Not many, however, were like Gordon who chose to explore this option based on personal convictions.

In June 1867 Gordon laid a list of proposals for reform of the system of Crown Land management before the Legislative Council for their consideration. He proposed that the Court of Intendant be abolished and the management of Crown Lands be vested in a Department with a Surveyor General at its helm. He also advocated the reduction in the price of agricultural land to £1 per acre and village lots £2. He further suggested that the sale of lands as a rule be limited to specially designated districts in each Ward Union. In exceptional cases, land might be sold outside of these designated areas but at a higher price: £2 per acre, at least. Gordon felt that it would be wise to hold out inducements to squatters to encourage them to purchase their lands and to stay within the designated areas of population concentration, not only for the ultimate suppression of squatting, the development of villages and the encouragement of larger scale cultivations, but also to promote their own social and moral progress. The lower upset price was intended to provide the necessary inducement. Those in long-standing occupation of lands outside of the designated areas were to be induced to exchange these holdings for others in immediate contiguity with each other or be made to pay the higher price. Newer squatters, especially those who existed in a 'semi-barbarous' state were to be forcibly

removed into areas more conducive to the promotion of their own social welfare and improvement.

Gordon proposed to implement the scheme of squatter regularisation and Crown Land alienation on an experimental basis in one ward only, extension into other wards would then be contingent upon successful implementation in the first district. The experimental district was to be called the Ward Union of Montserrat, comprised of the Wards of Upper Caroni, and the new Wards of Montserrat, Turre and Tamana. The Montserrat Ward Union was to come into being immediately while Turre and Tamana, comprising portions of Lower Caroni, St. Andrew, Nariva and Victoria, would come into existence as circumstances required. Gordon also proposed the appointment of the Warden of the newly founded Ward Union as Commissioner charged with the implementation of the new programme and empowered to receive monies with respect to land purchases.

Each block of land was to have its village reserve on a central allotment and its own fresh running water supply, its own police station, public square, school house, public hall, warden's office, church reserves, as well as residences for the Warden, School Master, Clergyman and Magistrate. Gordon also envisioned the establishment of benefit clubs, friendly societies and savings banks to facilitate the social advancement of the Ward inhabitants.⁴ His was an holistic policy designed to promote all-round socio-economic improvement.

The district of Montserrat had been chosen for the experimental settlement because it was one of the most popular haunts of squatters. Montserrat was well-wooded and its soil was very rich and fertile, especially well-suited to the growing

of cocoa.⁵ C.Y. Shephard shows that the annual average yield per acre for cacao soils in the district was 349.3 lbs. Yield on the best Montserrat soils went as high as 494 lbs per acre while elsewhere the highest yields for the best soils did not rise beyond 374 lbs per acre. Calculations based on figures for the 'Golden Age', 1870-1920, show that the overall average yield per acre for all cocoa growing districts taking into account all contingencies, was 238 lbs per acre.⁶ It is not surprising, therefore, that Montserrat was a highly attractive district for prospective cultivators of cocoa, large and small, legal and illegal.

Immediately prior to Gordon's accession, a survey by Manners Sutton had shown that within the Ward Union of Montserrat, in the district of Couva alone there were almost 800 squatters and that their number was being augmented daily. These squatters occupied holdings ranging in size from 3 to 120 acres. Many of the larger holdings had been established as long as twenty-five years earlier and were now valuable cocoa plantations of more than one hundred trees, some of them with values upward of £1000. The squatters of the Montserrat region constituted a scattered population of various races. The most industrious group was the Venezuelan peons who owned the largest plantations, sometimes containing as many as 8000 to 10,000 trees. Another significant group was the Africans, who controlled the South Western corner of the ward, occupying areas such as St. Mary's Junction, Carapichaima, Couva, Caratal, Bonne Aventure, Freeport, Mayo and Tortuga (present names). Among these could be found representatives of various tribes - Mandingoes, Foulahs, Honna, "Yorubas", Ashantees and Congos existing in various socio-economic conditions ranging from abject poverty to considerable prosperity.⁷ These latter

spoke their various African dialects and their only mode of communication with the outside world was a mixture of Negro English and French Patois, which it is reported was almost unintelligible to any except those who had daily intercourse with them.⁸ The peons spoke a dialect of Spanish, which came to be known as 'Cocoa Pagnol.'⁹

The implication for the new policies devised by Gordon was that the Warden/Crown Lands Commissioner for the Ward Union, who was expected to pay personal visits to these squatters in an effort to induce them to comply with the regulations, must be someone fairly conversant with all of these dialects. The person finally chosen for the job, Robert W.S. Mitchell, was best fitted for the task, as he was able to communicate with these peoples (in their own dialects), as well as write up notices in English, French and Spanish to be posted in strategic locations for their information.⁹

Gordon was ready to concede that in many instances, squatter contribution to the development of cocoa was significant but the fact remained, however, that by and large it was for most an unmitigated evil, which retarded rather than promoted the overall development of any economy and society. While one might successfully contest the view that squatting could only give rise to 'widespread demoralisation,' idleness, barbarism and desultoriness, it was an undeniable fact that the shifting cultivation and arbitrary deforestation practised by some squatters worked counter to the goal of economic progress. An estimated \$20,000 to \$30,000 (£4167 to £6250) were lost to the colony annually as a result of squatting, including loss of valuable timber. Squatting, too, tended to encourage more squatting, thus multiplying its evil effects.¹¹

At the same time it could not be denied that there were many well-intentioned and industrious squatters who had added positively to the economic improvement of the colony by their contribution to Gross Domestic Production, by their attempts at agricultural diversification, particularly cocoa cultivation, and by their pioneering work in opening up the interior. Nevertheless, such positive contributions needed to be harnessed, co-ordinated and rationalised in order to achieve optimum effect. This could only be effected through a programme of squatter regularisation and management of future land settlement. Quite apart from the need to prevent further population and labour force dispersal, Governor Gordon felt keenly the need for government control over limited national resources, in this case, the rationalisation of land resources through their more effective and planned use. Such reform, he hoped, would also address the welfare of the labouring and unpropertied classes as well as that of the plantocracy.

In spite of planter opposition, the proposals submitted in mid-1867 by Gordon were finally passed in a series of Ordinances over the next two years. Planters feared that Gordon was more concerned with the welfare of the 'naturally servile' classes rather than with that of those who truly had a vested interest in the economic development of the island. They therefore tried, without success, to sabotage his planned reforms by making amendments more in favour of the interest of their own class, despite the fact that the Land and Emigration Boards as well as the Colonial Office applauded the original plan as an admirable one which seemed "judicious and likely to be successful."¹²

Ordinance No. 24 of 2 September 1867, made provision for the appointment of a Surveyor General who was to have charge and management of all Crown Lands within the island. Ordinance No. 3 of 2 April, 1868, amended and consolidated the Laws with regard to the removal of illegal occupiers of Crown Land, providing for the six-month incarceration with hard labour of squatters in defiance of the regulations. Ordinance No. 25 of 1 October 1868, facilitated the appointment of District Commissioners charged with organising the survey and disposal of Crown Lands in their respective districts. The original proposals for the disposal and management of Crown Lands submitted by Gordon to the Legislative Council on June 1, 1867, were embodied in Ordinance No. 24 of 1 October 1868 with a few changes made by the planter-dominated Legislative Council during Gordon's absence from the colony. These changes were no doubt designed to frustrate Gordon's attempts to make land available to the lower classes in freehold tenure for the purpose of own-account agriculture.¹³

According to Ordinance No. 24 of 1 October 1868 sales were to be conducted by public auction and only in Port-of-Spain rather than in the districts as outlined by Gordon. Notice of such sales had to be published in the Royal Gazette at least three months before the day of sale. It was extremely difficult for the poorer classes to journey into Port-of-Spain for such sales, given the expense and tedious nature of travel from their remote locations in the absence of adequate roads and rail service. The odds, therefore, were skewed in favour of the well-to-do and urban-based prospective purchasers. While agricultural land was to be sold at the upset price of £1 as planned by Gordon, all monies from such sales had to be deposited with the

Surveyor General within six days from the day of the next auction sale or the land could immediately be re-sold. It was clause 15, however, that was expressly designed to exclude persons of limited means from landownership. It stipulated that agricultural land was not to be sold in parcels of less than sixteen acres.¹⁴ Most persons from the labouring classes desirous of becoming own-account small-scale cultivators in free-hold tenure were not likely to be able to afford more than five to ten acres at any one time.

On his return to Trinidad in September 1868, Gordon discovered the changes in the Draft Ordinance and refused his assent. His original plan was eventually adopted with the approval of the Colonial Office. Under the new system, based on the new rules for the regulation and disposal of Crown Lands issued on May 1, 1869, any person desirous of purchasing Crown Land no longer needed to make the journey into Port-of-Spain; he simply had to go to the Warden of his district and indicate his wish to acquire land and the quantity desired. The Warden then supplied him with the form of petition and if necessary, assisted him in filling it out. Half of the purchase price had to be paid at the time of application and the remainder eight days after the sale was finalised. The survey fees were also to be paid at the time of application. The petition was then forwarded to the Court of Intendant for approval. Its decision was promptly handed down to the Warden and the survey was commenced within one month from the date of the order.

After this was done, it was mandatory to give twenty days public notice before the sale. All such sales were to be conducted within the district itself. Sales were to be held monthly from June to February. At other times sales could be held

but only at the discretion of the Intendant. Grants were issued by the Crown Lands Office sometimes within twenty-four hours of the sale. In effect, all things being equal, the entire procedure took not longer than two months unlike under the old system when it could have drawn out for years, many petitioners dying before the sale was finalised. Under the old system, the cost of acquiring land was much higher than under the new dispensation. Previously, the total cost of petitioning for ten acres of land would have been not less than £27 10s. Under the new system this cost did not rise above £13 18s 10d all inclusive. The same rules applied whether a purchaser wanted to avail himself of 500 acres or of 5.¹⁵

By the end of 1869, the records showed that during the last nine months of that year, i.e. the time during which the new regulations were in force, the sale of land amounted to 3283 acres exclusive of village lots with allotments ranging in size from 1½ acres upward to 492 acres. A total of 131 grants had been issued during this period. In 1870 alone, 688 grants of Crown Land were issued, representing 9316 acres of agricultural land plus 241 village lots. This meant that almost 20 percent more land was alienated between 1869 and 1870 than between 1847 and 1868. In the latter period, a total of 4312 acres were alienated in 838 grants while during the two years 1869-1870, 11791 acres were alienated in a total of 817 grants. Over the next few years, the rush for Crown Land continued apace. Between 1871 and 1875, prior to the introduction of revisions in the system, a total of 39,686 acres were alienated in 4386 grants. In the seven years following the implementation of the new regulations in 1869, therefore, an annual average of 7354 acres in 743 grants was maintained as compared with an annual average of 296 acres in thirty grants for

the previous seven years. There could be little doubt that considerable progress had been made (See Table 5.1).

Table 5.1

Grants of Crown Land 1866-1914

Year	Number of Grants	Acreage Granted	Comments	
1866	3	226	Old System	
1867	16	359		
1868	20	304		
1869	129	2475	New System begins	
1870	688	9316		
1871	697	6250		
1872	663	6887		
1873	954	5927		
1874	1025	10491		
1875	1047	10131		
1876	724	7997		New rules 8/3/76
1877	404	4317		
1878	297	2793		New regulations
1879	564	9701		
1880	529	7912		
1881	374	7479	New regulations	
1882	249	3127		
1883	370	6191	New regulations	
1884	438	6010		
1885	599	8171	Block System	
1886	661	11124		
1887	739	10800		
1888	585	9115		
1889	434	5391		
1890	487	6165		
1891	517	6925		
1892	528	5622		
1893	684	7222		
1894	699	7072		
1895	630	6894		
1896	407	4390		
1897	432	4690		
1898	706	8002		
1899	1299	14630		

1900	1422	13856	
1901	1303	11509	
1902	1141	9882	
1903	1233	12407	
1904	1531	13598	
1905	1232	12780	
1906	991	8004	
1907	1157	9494	
1908	1369	13402	
1909	992	8123	
1910	543	3466	Lands reserved for oil
1911	342	1424	Temp. halt to sales
1912	274	1638	
1913	411	3319	
1914	405	2508	

Source: A compilation from the following sources: C.O. 300 Trinidad Blue Books; Parliamentary Papers Colonial Reports Annual; C.O. 295 Trinidad Governor's Despatches; Reports on Trinidad Blue Books; C.O. 300/84 Trinidad Blue Book for 1873 Appendix 2. Report of the Sub-Intendant for Crown Lands for 1873.

Another feature of the new Crown Land alienation policy was the Indian grants, i.e. grants of land to time-expired Indian Indentured Immigrants in lieu of return passages. Based on a request made by a group of them, Gordon took the decision in 1869 to incorporate the Indian land grants into the scheme. The settlement of Indian immigrants upon the land was considered of utmost importance to the island's future and therefore every effort was to be made to encourage the extension of the scheme. The first fifty immigrants were granted allotments of ten acres each in the Ward of Montserrat. Toward the extension of the scheme, land was to be alienated in batches of about 400 acres, each of which was to be surveyed and divided among forty adult male Indians "thus forming a colony of coolie plantations" suitable to the growing of cocoa and other cash crops and at the same time in the

immediate neighbourhood of the major sugar estates of the district for obvious reasons.¹⁶

The problem was, however, that the allotments were so dispersed over the 400 acres that it hindered the "gathering of the children in schools" and made it difficult to ensure the provision of amenities to the settlers as well as it necessitated the construction of a path or roadway to every cottage, the same problem which had occurred with respect to squatters earlier. As a result, Governor J.R. Longden, who succeeded Gordon in 1870, thought it wise to establish Indian villages within these blocks. Each immigrant who was the recipient of an agricultural grant was to receive a village lot of 100 ft x 50 ft in addition to his ten acres. The village was to be established in the flattest, most accessible part of the block and would follow a village plan as follows: houses were to be constructed around a central plaza or square with streets branching out from the centre at right angles. Each village was to be connected to the nearest highway by a straight road. Within each village, land was also to be reserved for a school-house, a cemetery and other public purposes. Villages were to carry names reminiscent of the mother-country, India, as requested by the immigrants themselves, e.g. Chandernagore Village in the Chaguanas district. In each village a Headman or Sirdar was to be appointed by the settlers themselves and who was also to be named Rural Constable charged with securing the preservation of peace and seeing to the maintenance of public buildings and streets, drains and public areas generally for a 'consideration' of £5 or £10 annually. No agricultural grant was to be situated farther away from the village than 800 to 900 yards.¹⁷

It was expected that most of these grants would be devoted to the growing of cocoa, favourably circumstanced as they were to its cultivation, which yielded profitable returns and needed no large outlay of capital. An additional attraction of cocoa growing for the immigrant grantees was the fact that during the time which it took for the cultivation to come into full bearing maturation, the settler could feed himself and his family by rearing oxen, cows, pigs, goats and poultry and/or by planting corn, rice, yams, sweet potatoes, cassava and other vegetables and ground provisions, for all of which demand was great. It was also hoped that not only would the Indian settlers be able to feed themselves and supply local markets but that eventually such cultivation would serve to reduce Trinidad's import bill considerably. The following table shows the value of such stock and provisions imported into the island in 1869 alone, all of which could have been successfully grown/reared locally with the exception of oats, which could have been substituted by maize produced locally in sufficient quantities.¹⁸ (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2**Value of Stock and Provision Capable of Being Raised
in the Island, Imported into Trinidad in 1869**

Item	Value
Arrowroot	£184 18s 11d
Cassava	£82 6s 9d
Indian Corn	£4,374 2s 0d
Indian Cornmeal	£7,877 0s 5d
Garlic	£623 2s 8d
Goats	£767 10s 0d
Hogs and Pigs	£2,441 15s 0d
Oxen and Cows	£28,128 0s 0d
Oats	£12,224 8s 6d
Peas and Beans	£2,188 4s 0d
Rice	£66,641 6s 2d
Yams	£754 7s 8d
Total	£126,284 2s 1d

Source: Report of the Sub-Intendant for Crown Lands for the year 1870. CO 295/256. Desp. No. 61 of 15 April 1871. Longden to Kimberley.

The benefits destined to accrue to the colony from the expansion of this scheme in terms of import substitution and agricultural diversification as well as the extension of established crops such as cocoa was considered well worth the effort and

the loss to be incurred from the possible reduction of the labour force for the plantations in the long run. The Agent General made the point in March 1870 that:

... there can be little doubt that they swell in some way or other the tide of labour, and contribute their quota to the general progress most probably in the minor cocoa estates or the still smaller holdings and provision grounds from which the former gradually arise.¹⁹

Also, a system of permanent voluntary settlement was seen as more beneficial to the colony than the tried system of more temporary immigration of contractual labourers who had no real interest in the welfare and economic development of the colony itself.

The fear of shortage and irregularity of labour for the estates remained. As a solution, consideration was given to reducing the Indian land grants from ten acres to five acres. The immigrant was then also to be given £5 in cash. It was argued that the ten acres of land was more than one man with his family could cultivate on his own and therefore, instead of giving labour during his free time to the neighbouring estates, the Indian settler invariably found himself in competition with the large scale planters for hired labour. Thus the age-old conflict over land and labour had resurfaced. Fear of status erosion caused planters to panic, misrepresent or misread the facts and to overstate their case, fearing as usual that the perceived polarisation of interest between capital and labour, as between large scale and small scale, could ultimately work against their favour.

The fact remained, however, that ten acres in cocoa cultivation were just sufficient to support a man and his family. Mr. St. Luce D'Abadie, the Warden for the Montserrat Ward Union, estimated that approximately 2400 trees were grown on ten acres of land. After deducting expenses, the annual profit per tree was ten to

fifteen cents, which meant that the net profit which a cultivator could obtain from ten acres of cocoa excluding all other produce was \$300 or £62 10s which would be barely adequate to feed a family of six. In the final analysis, there seemed to be no real case for the reduction of the Indian grants from ten to five acres unless, of course, specifically requested by the immigrant himself.²⁰ In fact, many of those who took money in lieu of Crown Land grants later purchased land from private persons, settled and planted crops.²¹

In 1870 alone, there were 12,000 Indian immigrants entitled to free passages back to India, who, had they accepted land grants in lieu of return passages, would have constituted a significant addition of more than 25,000 persons to the island's permanent population, including wives and children. As Table 5.3 shows over the period 1869 to 1888, 5,652 adult Indian immigrants opted to accept land and/or money in lieu of return passages. Of those who opted to take up permanent residence, women were not allowed land grants; 1168 men received ten acres of land each, 1460 men received five acre grants plus £5, fifteen men received five acre grants only and 1229 men received £5 grants only. The commutation of return passages to land grants and/or money therefore represented a significant addition to the resident labour force as well as to the peasant agricultural sector.²²

Governor Longden observed that despite their labours on their own holdings, the Indians still offered themselves for hire on neighbouring estates. This labour was more valuable to the plantations than unseasoned labour. According to the findings of Robert Mitchell, the Agent General of Immigrants, the Indians in the Ward of Montserrat offered on the average four days per week of hired labour to the estates

in their locality.²³ This meant, therefore, that the Indian commutation land grant scheme, if properly administered was destined to prove a boon to the cocoa industry and to the entire island economy.

Gradually, a few individuals in official circles were beginning to recognise the significance of a flourishing peasantry and were beginning to concede their obligation to lend whatever assistance necessary and possible toward the nurturing of this sector. It must be pointed out, however, that a major constraint remained the lack of consistency in the determination of policy as well as the lack of continuity in the implementation of policy from one gubernatorial term to another. The development of a small-scale agricultural proprietary sector relied upon the vagaries of the political climate, as did the fortunes of the cocoa industry. In the period which was ushered in by the Gordon era, the prosperity of cocoa-growing as a viable export-earning industry came to depend largely on the Crown Land policy, i.e. the whole approach to squatter regularisation, management and

Table 5.3

Grants of Land and Money in Lieu of Return Passages
1869-1888 Inclusive

Year	Men 10 acres	Men 5 acres £5	Men 5 acres	Men £5	Women £5	Total Adults
1869	12					12
1870	22					22
1871	140					140
1872	162					162
1873	335	18			96	449
1874	85	394			133	612
1875	84	413			223	720
1876	68	247			110	425
1877	74	119			68	261
1878	96	183			77	356
1879	87	86	14	108	74	369
1880	3		1	172	146	322
1881				220	182	402
1882				209	191	400
1883				216	184	400
1884				104	96	200
1885						
1886						
1887				100	100	200
1888				100	100	200
Totals	1168	1460	15	1229	1780	5652

Source: CO 295/324. Trinidad Despatch No. 332 of 19 September 1889. Fowler to Knutsford. Sub-enclosure No. 9.

disposal of Crown Land as well as to Indian land grants. A liberal approach to all of these issues led in turn to a cocoa boom as the statistical data would illustrate. One other component of policy which must also be considered in this equation was policy with regard to the development of roads, bridges and railways.

Gordon saw such development as a major avenue by which to secure the attainment of the desired goals of squatting regularisation and the more effective exploitation of land resources while at the same time bringing the entire island population within the reaches of civilisation. The country stood in dire need of roads, bridges and railways. Until such means of access were laid down, the extension of properly controlled population settlement and of agricultural cultivation could not be effected. Gordon therefore proposed that the monies collected by Wardens with respect to Crown Land purchases should be utilised in the construction of roads, bridges, among other Ward expenses. If the rate of Crown Land alienation were to be accelerated, it followed that access roads would be needed for the additional produce to be transported cheaply to market. The Road Scheme proposed by Gordon met with the approval of the vast majority of the members of the Council "with one exception", who felt that the improvement of the road system would only compound the problem of dispersal of the labour force. The point was that large-scale planters through or near whose estates the proposed roads were to pass had long since perceived the need for such provisions, but would not trouble themselves unduly to provide the monies for its construction and maintenance. The task therefore fell to the government of the day. Accordingly, the Colonial Office was kept updated as to the deplorable condition of the Colony's road system.²⁴

Ordinance 11 of 20 April 1869 addressed itself to the roads problem. The first road to be constructed was to extend the Eastern High Road (now called the Eastern Main Road) running from Port-of-Spain in the West through the Wards of Arima and Guanapo into the seashore in the Ward of Manzanilla, a total of forty

miles. The first sixteen miles of this road, i.e. from Port-of-Spain to Arima was already constructed and in 'tolerably fair condition' and therefore provisions had only to be made for its maintenance and for the construction of a bridge over the Arouca River in order to make connections easier.²⁵ Ordinance 8 of 23 May 1870 made provisions for this bridge. The six-mile stretch from Arima to Valencia, prime cocoa-growing district, was also already constructed but sorely in need of improvement. The last eighteen miles i.e. from Valencia to the seashore at Manzanilla passing through extensive cocoa cultivations was still a bridle path and therefore a carriage road had to be constructed. The Ordinance provided for the construction of another road connecting Valencia in the Ward of Turure to the seashore in Toco.²⁶

A third road was to connect the Eastern High Road which ran from Port-of-Spain to Arima, to the town of San-Fernando, passing through prime sugar and cocoa districts. Fourteen miles of this thirty-seven-mile road, i.e. the portion which connected Chaguanas to San-Fernando, had already been made and was in fair condition. The sixteen-mile section which connected the Eastern High Road to Caroni Savanna was also already built but in need of repairs and improvement while the seven-mile section from Caroni River to the Chaguanas High Road had yet to be made into a cart road. A fourth road was to extend for 45 miles connecting San-Fernando to Mayaro Bay, again running through cocoa district. The twelve and a half miles between San-Fernando and Monkey Town was in need of improvement and proper upkeep, while the other thirty-two and a half miles from Monkey Town to Mayaro Bay was bridle path to be turned into carriage road. A fifth road was to

extend the road leading from the town of San-Fernando through the Ward of Oropouche into the seashore in the Ward of Erin on the South Coast.²⁷

Costs for the provision and upkeep of such roads were to be partly defrayed by monies raised from duties of Wharfage on imported goods as well as from rates and taxes levied on houses, mines, quarries and Ward Lands. The Governor was also empowered to establish toll gates as he saw fit and to collect tolls to be used in financing road repairs. The estimated cost of making and upkeeping the first three roads to be tackled, i.e. the Port-of-Spain to Manzanilla Road (forty miles), the thirty-seven-mile stretch connecting Eastern High Road to San-Fernando and the forty-five-mile stretch connecting San-Fernando to Mayaro, amounted to a total of £24,467 4s 11d (\$117,442.60), the breakdown being as follows in Table 5.4.

A large part of these monies was to be expended on labour. Gordon proposed the use of convict labour to supplement wage labour in the construction of new roads. For road maintenance he suggested the use of the 'Cantonnier System' by which the road would be divided into portions of a mile or less and one labourer would be assigned to each portion, the daily upkeep of which would be his exclusive duty.²⁸

Table 5.4

Cost of Road Construction and Maintenance

Road	Making and Improving	Annual Upkeep
to Manzanilla	£4,051 16s 8d	£4,961 19s 0d
to San Fernando	£1,364 1s 9d	£2,598 19s 2d
to Mayaro	£8,719 15s 10d	£2,770 12s 6d
Total	£14,135 14s 3d	£10,331 10s 8d

Source: CO 295/247. Desp. No. 57 of 7 May 1869. Gordon to Granville. Enclosure.

The problem with labour was that most of it was already employed in agriculture: sugar, cocoa, rice and provisions. In order to attract them into this venture, wages needed to be competitive. The prospective workers themselves had come to expect high wages when employed in what they considered 'Queen Work', i.e. when employed by the Government. They therefore expected to be paid as much as 80 cents to \$1.00 per day, as compared to the ruling wages for agricultural work - 40 cents (1s 8d) per day, and for the trades - 54 cents to 80 cents (2s 6d to 3s 4d).²⁹ It is to minimise labour costs that convict labour was suggested.

In 1871, Governor J.R. Longden, Gordon's successor, piloted through the Legislative Council the proposal for the construction of a railway extending from Port-of-Spain to Arima supplementing the service provided by the Eastern High Road and passing through prime sugar cane lands and miles of cocoa. By this time Arima with a population of 2,000 had become the virtual centre of the Northern/Eastern cocoa growing district, which boasted a rapidly extending acreage. As the proposed line was to traverse one of the most fertile areas of the island, and as the land in the neighbourhood of the proposed line was being quickly purchased and planted in cocoa, such a service had to be provided without delay.³⁰ An article published in the Port-of-Spain Gazette on Saturday 1 July 1871, underwrote the wisdom of the scheme stressing the positive economic and social impact of the laying down of railways in the United States of America, Canada and Australia. The point was made that in these countries the extension of railways into "comparatively unimportant regions"

had had the "almost magical effect" of creating thriving centres of population and economic activity in areas which otherwise would have remained "barren wastes and scenes of unpeopled desolation."³¹

In response to the purists, cynics and disbelievers, the 'prejudiced and uninformed minority' who entertained doubts, therefore, the case was made that even stronger reason existed for the laying down of a railway through and to a district already alive with encouraging prospects. It was felt that within ten years, the rapid transformation of Arima and the systematic and remunerative expansion of the neighbouring cocoa-growing areas would serve to remove all doubt as to the feasibility of the proposed line.³² The point was well taken and the railway construction scheme was given the official nod.

Reform was made in the areas of development of infrastructure; commutation land grant scheme for Indians; and more effective Crown Land management and disposal served to facilitate the development of the cocoa industry, particularly its small-scale cultivation.

Satisfactory progress and success of the entire land alienation scheme was reported by the end of 1869. In the first experimental district, the Ward of Montserrat, reports indicated that up to February 1870, a total of £5,400 (\$26,077) had been received from squatters for the purchase of the land occupied by them. The progress of the settlement of this Ward was so encouraging that Mr. D'Abadie, Commissioner of the district was of the belief that by the end of 1870, the entire district would have been effectively and legally settled, leaving little for him to do as Commissioner charged with the settlement of Crown Lands in the region.³³

Finally, measures for the suppression of squatting seemed to be having the desired effect. Only twenty-eight charges had been laid against squatters, and as many convictions had been made: four were sentenced to imprisonment; six had been ejected - one with subsequent incarceration for defiance of the order of ejectment; and the remaining eighteen had come forward with the required payments. The village system, too, was progressing according to the best expectations. Two new villages had been formed: Montserrat Village and Tortuga Village, and abandoned estates of 100 to 500 acres in size near the sea coast were also being formed into villages.³⁴

The Indian Land Grant Commutation Scheme was also producing positive results, by 1870. Two blocks of land had been laid out in forty-seven 10-acre allotments, the first of twenty-eight lots and the other of nineteen lots, to be granted to Indian immigrants in lieu of return passages. All grants had been taken up and buildings erected on most of them. A further forty immigrants had applied for land in lieu of return passages, stating their intent to form a joint stock company amongst themselves for the purpose of developing the block allotted to them. These Indian grants not only produced cocoa and ground provisions and vegetables, but also provided for nearby estates "a supply of labour unknown before," thus far attesting to the overwhelming success and good future prospects of the scheme. D'Abadie felt that the experimental land settlement scheme in the Ward of Montserrat was to "prove a perfect success and one of the greatest boons ever conferred upon our island, laying open and extending its resources to a considerable degree and most beneficial to the inhabitants of this district."³⁵

It was to the credit of Governor Arthur Hamilton Gordon, therefore, that the district of Montserrat, once an area of serious concern with respect to the perennial problem of squatting had now been transformed into a thriving agricultural district with organised villages within a short space of time.³⁶ With such resounding success in Montserrat, there was no reason to prevent the implementation of the scheme to other parts of the island. With the provision made for the laying of adequate transportation systems, he was ready to proceed with the extension of the scheme.

In the Toco Ward Union efforts were made by the Warden, Mr. James O'Connor, to implement the new rules and regulations for the sale of Crown land and to effect the suppression of squatting. This area, although very underpopulated, was settled mainly by the Venezuelans peon cultivators of cocoa. By the end of 1871, O'Connor was able to report that "the squatters have been induced to acquire by purchase a legal right to their lands." He was optimistic that within another three months squatting would have been eliminated. Of the 250 squatter holdings in existence previous to the passing of the Ordinance No. 3 of 2 April 1868, only a very few had neither been transformed into legalised holdings nor petitioned for by the end of 1871. Under the new ordinance, 151 holdings, amounting to 1696 acres of land had been surveyed and sold by public auction. Most of this land was under cocoa cultivation.³⁷

In the Ward Union of Arima, while surveying was under way, nothing had as yet been done to compel squatters to legalise their holdings, although this Ward Union registered the greatest number of squatters. In Matura, for example, out of seventy-five persons paying taxes for their holdings, only nine had any legal rights

of ownership. By the end of 1872, however, 588 acres had been applied for in Arima most of it under cocoa and properties had appreciated considerably here in anticipation of the establishment of the railway.

In Upper and Lower Caroni where the problem of squatting was also rife, 2000 acres had been surveyed and occupied but purchases had not yet been legalised. Here, too, measures were being adopted by the Commissioner, Mr. Jas. Devenish, for regularising the tenure of illegal occupants. In the Tacarigua district - especially in the Maracas, Caura and Arouca valleys - persons in long standing occupation of Crown Land had already petitioned for their holdings but the actual purchase payments had not yet been made to complete the transaction. These valleys, too, were natural ground for the cultivation of cocoa.³⁸ In the Maracas Ward, seven time-expired Indian immigrants had settled adjacent fifteen-acres allotments and were about to start on their own account what would eventually be a most extensive cocoa plantation worked along the co-operative system.³⁹

The Warden of the North Naparima/South Naparima/Oropouche districts had not been very successful in suppressing the incidence of squatting. The case here was that those who had made deposits for tenure regularisation, had eventually gone to the Warden and taken back their money in light of the large numbers of outright squatters who were being allowed undisturbed enjoyment of the privileges of legal holders. In the mean time, too, the ranks of squatters had increased so significantly that these latter

as a rule laugh at those who try to become purchasers and in many cases cabal against them, and this so effectually that it has become almost a misfortune to be known and recognised as 'gens la Reine' the term given to those who purchase land.⁴⁰

In the two or three Ward Unions where squatting still presented a major problem, the failure to extinguish it was not a fault of the regulations but the lack of exertion, energy and zeal in the efforts of the Wardens themselves.⁴¹

Again, as seemed to be the norm in colonial administration, too much depended on the individual capabilities of personnel. In this, as in many other cases, much depended on one man, thus conformity and standardisation of practice was difficult to compel or to achieve. As in the case of the squatter regularisation and Crown Land settlement systems, therefore, fluctuations and variations were notable from district to district. In Wards with zealous and energetic wardens, the success rate of the scheme was significant, while in Wards with less motivated Wardens, the obverse was true. Ward Constables, too, who had been employed by Wardens experienced great difficulty in commanding the services of efficient men. Some of the Ward Constables were themselves squatters. For instance, in 1871, it was found that the Ward Constable for Erin had been squatting on Crown Land for twenty-nine years. In other cases, Ward Constables took advantage of ignorant squatters, forcing them to hand over part of the purchase price for their holdings without even giving them receipts. Only the Warden was authorised to collect such monies. One suggestion to solve the problem was to make part of the remuneration of Ward Constables and forest rangers dependent on convictions of those guilty of squatting and the unlawful appropriation of timber, plus a fixed salary of \$10 to \$20 per month.⁴²

Another problem encountered was opposition by the squatters themselves. D'Abadie, the Surveyor, reported that reluctant squatters resorted to "the most

extraordinary means" to deter him and his assistants from their work, for example, invoking the powers of 'obeah' such as planting 'obeah' symbols⁴³ - blue bottles and 12 to 15 inches long coffins - along the lines of survey.⁴⁴

Despite the yet existing wrinkles in the fabric of the system, however, by the end of 1872 the Crown Land Alienation and Land Settlement Scheme was proceeding apace and producing rapid results in terms of the elimination of squatting. The success of the scheme is indicated by the increase in land sales revenue between 1866 to 1872, as Table 5.5 illustrates.

Table 5.5

Crown Land Sales Revenue 1866-1872

Year	Land Sales Revenue (£)
1866	464
1867	842
1868	748
1869	2,279
1870	4,186
1871	2,105
1872	4,674

Source: CO 295/252. Fo. 13487. Desp. No. 206 of 6 December 1870. Longden to Earl of Kimberley; CO 295/256. Fo. 4728 Desp. No. 70 of 22 April 1871, Longden to Kimberley; CO 295/267, Fo. 4774 Desp. No. 72 of 14 April 1873, Rennie to Kimberley.

While in 1868, a mere twenty grants were made totalling 304 acres and in 1869 129 grants (2475 acres), in the following three years 1870, 1871 and 1872 respectively, 688, 697 and 667 grants were made totalling 9316, 6250 and 6887 acres. For the next three years sales increased even further from 954 grants (5927 acres) in 1873 to 1025 grants (10491 acres) in 1874 and then to 1047 grants (10131

acres) in 1875. (See Appendix A. Tables 5 and 6). This means, therefore, that by 1875 the annual land grant acreage had increased over that of 1868 thirty-three fold. Average size of grants for this period was 11.7 acres and very few of these grants exceeded 100 acres in size. In 1871 for instance, of 697 grants total, only four were over 100 acres in size. Indications are that the bulk of land granted had gone to relatively small scale cultivators.⁴⁵

By the time of Gordon's departure in 1870, the policy had been laid down. By early 1875, the full groundwork was in place for the development of the agricultural potential of the colony. The cocoa industry, hand in hand with the small scale proprietary class, was the main beneficiary of the policies to ensure effective and legalised settlement of Crown Lands for agricultural purposes. It must be emphasised, however, that whilst the policies of the period 1860s to 1870s did much to benefit the peasantry, this was not the primary thrust of these policies. The problems which demanded immediate solution were: the acceleration of squatting; the need to make fuller use of under-utilised land resources; and the problem of dispersal of the labour force. It is only in seeking to address these problems that legislators had come to terms with the interrelated land hunger of the aspiring sector of the labouring class and its need to translate itself into a small scale own-account landed agricultural class.

Quite apart from the persistent fears and opposition of the traditional proprietary classes, the inconsistencies in legislation over time reveal the failure of imperial and colonial policy-makers to decide on one firm policy with respect to peasant development and to stick to it. The trend of events from the early 1870s

after the initial steps were taken indicate either a lack of commitment to this goal or a tendency to prop up and favour the plantocracy over the peasantry in the struggle for control over productive resources. After the initial push, therefore, continued survival and meaningful expansion for the cocoa peasantry was a continuous struggle. As cocoa growing continued to attract many small scale cultivators, it follows that conflict remained the abiding theme of the cocoa industry. It is above all in the unceasing battle to hold on to land resources that this conflict became evident.

The gradual introduction of subtle changes in the legal base of land ownership via Crown Land alienation management and disposal from 1875, in the wake of the positive advance made by Gordon, while it could not prevent the continued progress of those already admitted, made life increasingly difficult for prospective small scale cocoa cultivators to enter the industry based on freehold land tenure. The first significant change in the Crown Land alienation policy came in 1875 under Governor Henry Irving. The amended rules for the sale of Crown Lands stated that lands could only be advertised for sale in Port-of-Spain rather than in the offices of the Wardens throughout the country as was previously the case. It was hoped that the change in the system would facilitate prospective purchasers and promote competition. According to Irving it appeared that over time the Wardens had been allowed under his predecessors, a 7½% commission on land sales, which occasioned a loss of £300 to £400 per annum to the Crown. The centralisation of all land sale transactions at the Port-of-Spain Office of the Sub-Intendant of Crown lands therefore was said to be geared to realise savings for the Crown. The upset price of land remained at £1 per acre but the sale of lots measuring less than ten acres was not to be entertained

except in exceptional circumstances which had to be expressly stated by the petitioner.⁴⁶

While the motive of effecting savings for the Crown seemed feasible enough, one needs to look at the underlying implications of such a change in regulations, which undoubtedly would have surfaced as part of the overall consideration in the decision making process. The small man who did not possess the wherewithal to purchase as many as ten acres but who nevertheless wished to satisfy his land hunger and his need to be self-reliant by purchasing say five acres for agricultural purposes, was hereby debarred from approaching the Crown. Apart from the ever-present difficulty of having to make petitions for purchase in Port-of-Spain only, this centralisation tended to make it easier for the well-to-do and/or those more conveniently located than the average rural prospective small holder to acquire land. The promotion of competition meant also that the interest of the large-scale proprietors were being served above those of the peasant cultivators.

In a report to the Trade and Taxes Commission in 1889, the Sub-Intendant of Crown Lands, D. Wilson, argued against the earlier practice of selling Crown Land without competition, making the point that any advantages of the system were by far outweighed by the disadvantages. He argued that selling land with competition would provide a hedge for large-scale planters against 'small men', probably prone to 'picking their neighbour's cocoa', who would then be able to buy small plots of land 'here and there' around large estates and become the source of much worry to the planters. To minimise the acceleration of this 'serious nuisance' he advocated the sale of land with competition, thus allowing the owners of large scale cocoa estates,

who were better placed to cultivate 'the larger part of some valley' and ultimately make a significant contribution to the economic development of the colony, to secure their boundaries by outbidding their smaller, less enterprising neighbours.⁴⁸

It was quite legitimate for large scale cocoa growers to desire to set up hedges against any income erosion, but the built in assumption here was that every small scale cultivator or labourer was a prospective perpetrator of crimes such as praedial larceny which posed an ever-present threat to his large scale neighbours. It is with these considerations at the fore, however, that the new regulations were passed in January 1876 skewing the balance once more in favour of large over small, of planter over peasant, of capital over labour.⁴⁹ These regulations were approved by the Colonial Office and promptly put into effect.

Immediately following the introduction of the new restrictive legislation in 1875, the number of grants per annum dropped, while the average size per grant increased. Table 5.6 shows that there was no significant change in the average number of acres granted per annum between 1871-75 and 1881-85. On the other hand the average size of individual grants almost doubled in that same period. Even so, many hopefuls from the labouring class continued to apply for land for cultivation purposes. Governor Young reported to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Earl of Kimberley in 1880 that "the applications for small parcels of land [were] almost too numerous for Government to keep pace...".⁵⁰

Table 5.6
Grants of Crown Land in 5 Year Periods
1866-70 to 1881-85

5 Year Period	Average No. of Grants Per Annum	Average Acreage Granted Per Annum	Average Size of Grants
1866-70	175	2536	14.49
1871-75	887	7397	8.34
1876-80	504	6544	12.98
1881-85	406	6195	15.26

Source: Compilation from CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books, Colonial Reports Annuals for the years 1866 to 1885.

Not surprisingly, therefore, further changes in the Crown Land alienation systems were effected. From 1881 the Block System was gradually introduced making it increasingly difficult for prospective small holders to acquire land from the Crown. It sought to overturn the former policy whose object according to Governor I. Freeling seems to have been

to get rid of as much land as possible without due consideration as to whether the alienation would be productive or permanent good to the country ...⁵¹

He argued that land had been indiscriminately surveyed and sold, not in blocks but in single plots here, there and everywhere "irrespective of proper consideration of a means of egress or ingress."⁵² The proposals for the new system, the Block System of Crown Land alienation were approved by the Colonial Office with no murmuring in 1881. Blocks of Crown land were to be surveyed and laid out in different parts of the island and provided with 'good roads.' Petitions for such lands were then to be entertained, but not for pieces of less than ten acres. All applications had to be

made directly to the Sub-Intendant for Crown Lands at his Port-of-Spain office at which time the full price of the land together with the Survey and Grant fees were payable as a deposit.⁵³

It was clear that the small holder was to be effectively eliminated. Consideration was to be given for sale of land in other places, i.e. outside of the blocks in the following order of priority:

1. Blocks laid out by government.
2. Petitions from proprietors where land bounds with Crown Lands for adjoining lands to add to their Estate, provided that the whole available land of these Estates was under cultivation or can give such reasons as may satisfy His Excellency the Intendant to approve his petition.
3. Petition for block of not less than 100 acres.⁵⁴

The result of the implementation of the Block System was that Crown land grants were now fewer in number but larger in average size as indicated in Table 5.6. In 1881, there were only 374 grants of Crown land as compared to 529 in 1880 but the total acreage granted remained virtually unchanged. In 1881, 7479 acres were granted as compared to 7912 acres in 1880. In 1882 fewer grants still were made, 249 accounting for 3127 acres. (Table 5.1). The desired effect was being realised.

In 1884 a memorial respecting the Sale of Crown Lands was submitted to the Governor (Ag. Governor Bushe). The memorialists requested that lands be granted to persons at the rate of £1 per acre, payable ten years after the date of allotment.

The reason given for this request was concern for the welfare of the labouring classes:

that by reason of the serious crisis through which this Colony, together with the other West Indian colonies is now passing, thousands of labourers, entirely dependent for their subsistence on the employment afforded to them on sugar plantations are thrown out of employment.⁵⁵

The petition aimed at providing small-scale own-account cultivation in non-sugar agriculture as a means of staving off the destitution, "unparalleled distress and disorder among the masses" given the economic crisis brought on by commercial depression affecting the sugar industry as a result of the fall in price of sugar.⁵⁶ By the end of 1884, according to R.W. Beachey, the economic distress in the British West Indies was genuine. The price of raw muscovado sugar had fallen from 20s per cwt at the beginning of the year to 13s per cwt. By the end of the year the average price of 13s per cwt was less than the average cost of production on many West Indian estates.⁵⁷ The petition argued, therefore, for the release of unalienated fertile and 'wholly unoccupied' Crown Land in tracts of ten to two hundred acres for the purpose of the productive cultivation of "cocoa and the permanent tropical cultivation."⁵⁸

The Chief Memorialist was Dr. J.J. Chittenden, retired editor of the Port-of-Spain Gazette. In a letter to the Public Opinion dated 26 December, 1884, Dr. Chittenden pointed out that there was visible distress amongst labourers and:

amongst the large class of small cocoa and sugar proprietors who have been dispossessed of their estates with insufficient means to buy Crown Land but who would be able to start on the terms of the petition.⁵⁹

Interestingly, the petition was signed by several prominent merchants and planters, but by none of the labouring class nor the class of small holders to which the memorial referred. The petition bore the signatures of Messrs. C. Tennant, S. Devenish, A. Coryat, A. Rapsey, J. Siegert, G. Agostini, A. Wupperman, G. Grant, C. Fabien, G. Wilson, J. Spiers and Ambard & Sons - all prominent large scale cocoa and sugar planters, businessmen and merchants.⁶⁰

Both the Sub-Intendant of Crown Lands, Mr. D. Wilson and the Governor advised the Colonial Office against agreeing to the petitioners' request. The Sub-Intendant pointed out that such a system would be ruinous to the colony. He argued that during the period 1866-69 such a pay-later scheme was agreed to with disastrous results. He pointed out further that it was his belief that there was no such 'state of want and distress nor any immediate anticipation of it' experienced by the labouring class of the colony. Instead he felt that there was still a shortage rather than a surplus of labour. Newly formed cocoa estates, he argued, were suffering an inability to find a sufficient supply of labour for clearing and cultivation and these planters were forced to pay exorbitant wages to attract labour away from the sugar estates. He believed that any such system would throw the sugar planters into even greater distress.⁶¹

Furthermore, he argued that the colony lacked the funds to carry out such a scheme, let alone for persons of "slender means and small capital who have contributed nothing to the state."⁶² He concluded his report on the Memorial by indicating that while the signatories were individuals of high standing in the community, they had not carefully thought out the full consequence of such a scheme

and that in fact, it was brought to his attention that many of them had signed the petition "without even looking at it ... to get rid of the man who brought it to them."⁶³ They were of the belief that the suggestion was so preposterous it would not be given a hearing by the government.

Acting Governor Bushe concurred with Wilson's views and refused to sanction what he considered a 'utopian scheme'. His main objection, however, was that Chittenden should not be taken too seriously for he "now desires to pose as a philanthropist but I regret to be unable to say much in his favour."⁶⁴ Predictably, the Colonial Office sided with the Governor and Wilson in the interest of large scale planters against the aspirants of the labouring class: "Lord Derby is unable to accede to the request of the memorialist."⁶⁵

The Colonial Office called, however, for a further report on the economic crisis in the colony in order to verify the claims of the memorialists. Governor Havelock's report pointed out that the statement made by the petitioners that "thousand of labourers entirely dependent for their subsistence on the employment afforded to them on sugar plantations are thrown out of employment ..." had been greatly exaggerated⁶⁶ indicated that while there had been a considerable fall in the level of wages, there was still a sufficient demand for agricultural and skilled labour. There was fair distress among the urban working class in the environs of Port-of-Spain, but this was caused not by the sugar crisis but by "an injudicious system of emigration from Barbados and other neighbouring colonies to the island."⁶⁷ Apart from that, there were no other indicators of general distress such as increases in prison committals or admissions to hospitals and poor asylums.

On Havelock's recommendation, therefore, the Colonial Office concluded that it was "not desirable to alter the rules for selling Crown Lands."⁶⁸ Instead the Earl of Derby, Secretary of State for the Colonies, approved Havelock's alternative request to reduce from ten acres to five acres the minimum quantity of Crown lands that could be petitioned for. Havelock was also empowered to order the sale of land direct to the petitioner without the auction as required by the current regulations.⁶⁹

By the time Havelock vacated office and was succeeded by Governor William Robinson in 1885 the Block System with its limiting consequences for the rise of the cocoa peasantry was well-established. Once more, despite the well-intentioned attempts of Gordon, large triumphed over the small, capital over labour. There is little doubt as to where the sentiments of colonial and imperial authority lay, with the exception of enterprising individuals such as Gordon. A survey done in 1884 revealed, too, that many public officials were also owners of large cocoa estates.⁷⁰ While they insisted that this did not interfere with their execution of public duties one has to question to what extent were interests clear-cut and unalloyed. Small wonder, then, that the state invariably made concessions in favour of capital rather than of labour, of planter rather than of peasant.

The cocoa peasantry, however, by 1885, was well entrenched and its resilient nature frustrated all attempts to annihilate it completely. What was clear, in this conflict over land, however, was how closely bound was the Crown land alienation policy with the fortunes the cocoa industry. An easy land disposal policy facilitated the expansion of cocoa cultivation while a tight and restrictive policy limited its

growth. This was particularly relevant for prospective small holders who found it difficult to obtain land on the private real-estate market.

It is possible to establish direct statistical correlation between the total and marginal changes in the alienation of Crown Land and the total and marginal increases in cocoa acreages. It is also possible to establish an overall correlation between Crown Land alienation and increases in the quantity of cocoa produced for export, time lags considered. No doubt, there are other variables to be considered in the supply equation for cocoa production, such as the prices ruling for cocoa; the prices ruling for substitute crops into which resources utilised in cocoa production could easily be switched e.g. sugar, weather conditions and the control of pests and diseases. The point remains, however, that one of the prime factors influencing rapid expansion, contraction, or stagnation in cocoa production was, undoubtedly, the availability of land as well as the rate of its actual alienation.

The rate of alienation was governed primarily by current rules and regulations concerning its management and disposal, as determined by official policy. Changes in legislation and therefore in policy with respect to Crown Land alienation had direct impact upon alienated acreage as well as cultivated acreage, which, in turn, was reflected in the aggregates of cultivated cocoa acreage and consequently aggregate cocoa production. It is possible statistically, therefore, to prove that the fluctuating fortunes of the cocoa industry and of cocoa producers, large and small were inextricably bound up with the fluctuating nature of policy with regard to Crown land alienation in particular and agricultural, or peasant development, more specifically.

One method of testing the hypothesis of direct relationship between a more liberal Crown land alienation policy and a boom in the cocoa industry from the supply side is to examine the relationship between changes in alienated acreage over time vis-à-vis changes in cocoa production quantities, catering for the time which elapsed between actual alienation of the land from the hands of the Crown and the full-bearing maturation of the cocoa cultivation, i.e. allowances had to be made for a time lag of five to seven years. In the first instance, using data for the period 1847-1900 (Appendix A. Table 6), regression analysis with a five-year time lag revealed that there was a definite correlation between the two, despite the fact that there were other factors and variables at work. Computation showed that the adjusted correlation coefficient or coefficient of determination R^2 was 0.69, indicating that 47.61% of the changes in cocoa production, the dependent variable, could be explained by changes in total alienated acreage, the independent variable. In this case, the Durbin Watson statistic was 2.88, indicating that the coefficient of determination was not very significantly affected by autocorrelation, thus the R^2 can be taken as a fairly reliable guide in this case. (See Appendix A. Table 7). What this signifies is that a positive and progressive Crown Land alienation policy had a positive effect on cocoa production, while a regressive and backward-looking Crown Land alienation policy impacted negatively. It is not surprising, therefore, that whenever this policy was liberalised in any way, the almost immediate effect felt within the cocoa industry was expansion. Similarly, in 1911, when there was an almost total cessation in the sale/granting of Crown lands for agricultural purposes,

the rate of expansion of cocoa acreage and of quantity produced immediately suffered immediate reversals. (See Appendix A. Table 6).

During the interim period of 1875 to 1911, whenever there were changes of a negative direction in the land policy, not only did the cocoa industry in its entirety suffer, but more precisely the small scale cultivating group within the industry who were more dependent on the liberal policy of the Crown to enable them to gain control of land. The monied groups could afford to purchase land at higher prices and in larger blocks than the less wealthy and, therefore, were less affected by inter-variations and fluctuations in land alienation policy which focussed mainly on determining the size of blocks to be sold and their price per acre. In its fight against the small man for control of land and labour, as well control of the entire cocoa industry, therefore, the large-scale plantocracy continued to put pressure on the government to devise policy and pass legislation which redounded in their favour and safeguarded their interests against possible competition from the small man in his quest to become landholder, own-account cultivator and hirer of labour instead. As the following chapter will illustrate, the period defines, therefore, another episode in the continuing saga of struggle and conflict between the 'haves' and 'have-nots', between capital and labour, a serial theme of the economic history of the Caribbean region, in general, and, of the Trinidad cocoa industry in particular.

CHAPTER 5

NOTES

¹B. Porter. The Lion's Share. p.187; C.O. 295/251, No. 79, Vol. II, Gordon to Longden, Enclosure: C.P. No. 12 of 1870, 12 June 1870.

²C.O. 295/251 Vol. II, No. 79, Gordon to Granville Enclosure: C.P. No. 12 of 1870, 12 June 1870.

³Richard Lobdell. "British Officials and the West Indian Peasantry: 1842-1938" in Malcolm Cross and Gad Heuman (eds) Labour in the Caribbean: From Emancipation to Independence. (London: Macmillan Publishers Ltd., 1988) p.196.

⁴C.O. 295/239, No. 80. Gordon to Buckingham and Chandos. 8 June 1867, Enclosure; C.O. 295/242, Murdock to Rogers Bart, 27 July 1867.

⁵J.H. Collens. A Guide to Trinidad: A Handbook for the Use of Tourists and Visitors. (2nd ed., London: Elliott Stock Co. Ltd., 1888), p.165.

⁶C.Y. Shephard. The Cocoa Industry of Trinidad: Some Economic Aspects. Part IV. Appendix B. Fig. XVII (Port-of-Spain, 1937). Calculations based on statistics collected as in Appendix A Table 9.

⁷C.O. 295/239. No. 80. Gordon to Buckingham and Chandos. 8 June 1867.

⁸C.O. 295/243, No. 46. Gordon to Buckingham and Chandos, 8 April 1868, Enclosure; C.O. 295/260, No. 4, Longden to Kimberley, 6 Jan 1872; Maureen Warner Lewis, Guinea's Other Suns, (Dover, Mass: The Majority Press, 1991), Chapter 2. 'Africans in Nineteenth Century Trinidad,' esp. pp.36-41, 44-5.

⁹"Cocoa Pagnol" was the term used to refer to the Spanish-speaking peons, originally from Venezuela who pioneered cocoa cultivation on small-holdings in Trinidad. "Pagnol" is the local "patois" form of the word "Español".

¹⁰C.O. 295/250. Gordon to Granville, Enclosure: C.P. No. 4 of 1870, 23 March 1870; C.O. 295/243, No. 46, Gordon to Buckingham and Chandos, 8 April 1868, Enclosure.

¹¹C.O. 295/239, No. 80. Gordon to Buckingham and Chandos, 8 June 1867, Enclosure.

¹²Wood. Trinidad in Transition, p.273. C.O. 295/240, No. 127. Gordon to Buckingham and Chandos, 23 September 1867: C.O. 295/242, Murdock to Rogers

Bart, 27 July 1867; C.O. 295/242, Emigration Board to Gordon, No. 56, 7 Aug. 1867.

¹³C.O. 297/8, Trinidad Acts, 1867-71.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵C.O. 295/250, Gordon to Granville, Enclosure: C.P. No. 14 of 1870, 23 March 1870; C.O. 297/8, Trinidad Acts, 1867-71, Ord. 8 of 2 March 1869.

¹⁶C.O. 295/250. Gordon to Granville, Enclosure: C.P. No. 14 of 1870, 23 March 1870: The Review No. 3. Saturday 6 June 1869.

¹⁷C.O. 295/256. No. 61, Longden to Kimberley, 15 April 1871.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹C.O. 295/251 Vol II, No. 16, Gordon to Granville, 25 March 1870.

²⁰C.O. 295/261, No. 109, Longden to Kimberley, 23 May 1872.

²¹C.O. 295/256, No. 91, Longden to Kimberley, 19 May 1871.

²²C.O. 295/324, No. 232, Fowler to Knutsford, 19 Sept. 1889, Sub-Enclosure 9.

²³Ibid.

²⁴C.O. 295/239, No. 76, Gordon to Buckingham and Chandos, 5 June 1867; C.O. 295/239, No. 57, Gordon to Buckingham and Chandos, 24 April 1867.

²⁵C.O. 295/247, No. 57, Gordon to Granville, 7 May 1869.

²⁶C.O. 297/8. Trinidad Acts 1867-71; C.O. 295/247, No. 57, Gordon to Granville, 7 May 1869.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸C.O. 295/247, No. 57, Gordon to Granville, 7 May 1869, Enclosure.

²⁹C.O. 295/251 Vol. II, Gordon to Granville, C.P. No. 6 of 1870, 1 Feb. 1870; C.O. 300/81,82, Trinidad Original Blue Books for 1870, 1871.

³⁰C.O. 295/255 Vol. I, No. 46, Longden to Kimberley, 28 March 1871.

³¹Port-of-Spain Gazette, Saturday 1 July 1871; also cited in C.O. 295/257 Vol. III, No. 116, Longden to Kimberley, 4 July 1871, Enclosure.

³²C.O. 295/253, Walcott to Rogers Bart, 5 April 1870; C.O. 295/250, No. 18, Gordon to Granville, 24 Feb. 1870.

³³C.O. 295/253 Fo. 3621, Desp. of 5 April 1870. Walcott to Rogers Bart. Encl. The Report for 1869 of Mr. D'Abadie, the Commissioner of the Squatters Settlement in the District of Montserrat.

³⁴C.O. 295/250, No. 18, Gordon to Granville, 24 Feb. 1870. Enclosure: C.P. No. 70 of 1870.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶C.O. 295/251 Vol. II, No. 79, Gordon to Granville, Enclosure: C.P. No. 12 of 1870, 21 June 1870.

³⁷C.O. 295/256 No. 16, Longden to Kimberley, 15 April 1871, Enclosure: C.P. No. 13 of 1871.

³⁸C.O. 295/267, No. 76, Rennie to Kimberley, 23 April 1873.

³⁹C.O. 295/272, No. 53, Longden to Kimberley, 14 Feb. 1874.

⁴⁰C.O. 295/256, No. 61, Longden to Kimberley, 15 April 1871, Enclosure C.

⁴¹C.O. 295/267, No. 72, Rennie to Kimberley, 14 April 1873.

⁴²C.O. 295/267, No. 76, Rennie to Kimberley, 23 April 1873.

⁴³'Obeah' is the African practice of witchcraft or necromancy, sometimes referred to as "dealing". According to Maureen Warner Lewis "The belief that spiritually powerful individuals can subdue or strengthen another person's spiritual energy is the basis for the practice of *obeah*". (p.175). The word '*Obeah*' originated from the Cormanti Twi word 'obeye' meaning witchcraft. The Africans believed in the constant interaction of the spirit world and the material world for good or for evil. They therefore frequently solicited the help of spirit forces for the promotion of their physical, mental or material welfare or that of others. Conversely, it was also possible to activate these forces either malevolently against others or to counteract the impact of evil or negative forces on one's own life. See Maureen Warner Lewis Guinea's Other Sons pp.175-177.

⁴⁴C.O. 295/272, No. 53, Longden to Kimberley, 14 Feb. 1874, Enclosure; C.O. 300/84, Trinidad Original Blue Book for 1873.

⁴⁵C.O. 295/261, No. 91, Longden to Kimberley, 26 April 1872; C.O. 300/82, Trinidad Original Blue Book for 1871.

⁴⁶CO 295/276 Fo. 3872. Trinidad Desp. No. 47 of 8 March 1876. Irving to Carnarvon.

⁴⁷CO 295/324 Fo. 20234. Trinidad Desp. No. 332 of 19 September 1889. Fowler to Knutsford.

⁴⁸CO 295/276 Fo. 3872. Trinidad Desp. No. 47, of 8 March, 1876. Irving to Carnarvon.

⁴⁹CO 295/288 Fo. 17399. Desp. No. 263 of 14 October 1881. Young to Kimberley re: Blue Book for 1879.

⁵⁰CO 295/291 Fo. 17951 Desp. No. 260 of 16 September 1881. Freeling to Kimberley.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴CO 295/303 Fo. 22431 Desp. No. 289 of 6 December 1884. Bushe to Derby. Enclosure: Crown Lands Petition signed Inhabitants of the Island.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶R.W. Beachey. The British West Indies Sugar Industry in the Late 19th Century. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1957) pp 59-60.

⁵⁷CO 295/303. Fo. 22431 Desp. No. 289 of 6 December 1881. Bushe to Derby. Enclosure 1.

⁵⁸Public Opinion. Vol. 1 No. 10. Friday January 8, 1885. p.2.

⁵⁹CO 295/303. Fo. 22431. Desp. No. 289. (Enclosure 1) Bushe to Derby.

⁶⁰Ibid. Enclosure 2. Report of the Sub-Intendant of Crown Lands, Mr. D. Wilson to the Col. Sec. dated 3 September 1882.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴CO 295/303 Fo. 22431 Desp. No. 289 of 6 December 1884. Bushe to Derby.

⁶⁵Ibid, Col. Office Minutes.

⁶⁶CO 295/306 Fo. 9550. Desp. No. 121 of 6 May 1885. Havelock to Derby re Grant of Crown Lands.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Ibid, Col. Office Minutes.

⁶⁹CO 295/307 Fo. 13044 Desp. No. 193 of 9 July 1885. Havelock to Frederick A. Stanley re Rules for the sale of Crown Lands.

⁷⁰CO 295/303 Fo. 15634. Desp. No. 203 of 23 August 1884. Bushe to Derby re: Estates owned and managed by Public Officers.

CHAPTER 6
'WOLVES AND LAMBS': THE CONFLICT OVER
CONTRACTS 1885-1890

The vagaries of the economic performance of the Trinidad cocoa industry have been no more spectacular than the intricacies of its internal dynamics. Throughout its history conflict and deadlocks describe the mosaic of labour and production relations within the industry. During the period 1885-1895 such a pattern was clearly exemplified in the operation of the contract system which was instrumental to the expansion of the cocoa industry in its Golden Age period 1870 to 1920. During the period beginning 1884 to 1885 the internal problem caused the system to grind almost to a halt, temporarily immobilising the industry and threatening the entire island economy with serious paralysis.

An investigation into the working of the contract system during this period undermines the common assumption of relative easiness in employer/employee, and peasant proprietor/planter relations within the cocoa industry, when compared with the case of sugar. In fact, inherent within the very nature of the contract system were numerous loopholes for exploitation by both employers and employees, in the absence of any satisfactorily explicit legal regulations. The problems of the contract system reveal the nature of the dialectics at work within the cocoa industry leaving little or no room for the existence of symbiosis between contractors and contractees.¹

In the early days of establishment and expansion of the cocoa industry a certain goodwill, however fleeting, had developed between contractors and contractees. However, such feelings of mutual trust were short-lived. As cocoa soared to new heights of prosperity, these neighbourly sentiments were 'supplanted

by greed and oppression' on the one hand and "dishonest conduct" on the other.² The conflicts which ensued reveal not only the weaknesses inherent within the contract system itself but also the deep flaws in the legislative and judicial foundations of the island. Conflict indicated failure at the level of policy to stop existing loopholes. In the absence of firm directives and protective legislation, therefore, complete authority was left in the hands of individuals in power to use or misuse as they chose.

The contract system as it stood by the 1880s had become an ill-advised and exploitative arrangement which seemed poised to self-destruct in the absence of timely intervention. The ensuing struggle defines the tension between the polarized interest of grasping, unscrupulous employers on the one hand and unschooled self-interested contractors on the other. Officialdom played a disinterested or non-committal role which favoured the interest of the contractees (owners). After five years of hardship and ceaseless toil, the contractors looked forward to getting a considerable sum in hand. There was nothing to prevent proprietors, however, from depriving the contractors of their just earnings based on some frivolous pretext.

D. Morris, Director of Public Gardens and Plantations in Jamaica, had issued warnings to prospective growers that the system did also have its drawbacks for planters (contractees). He argued:

I believe from what I have seen and heard of it, both in Trinidad and Grenada that with a fair amount of labour the land could be planted more regularly in a better manner and with actually less cost by the planter himself. It can answer, if any, where labour is scarce and where Spanish settlers who thoroughly understand cacao cultivation can be obtained to take contracts. It appears to be quite unsuited to the ordinary negro and the cooley and indeed, to anyone who has not,

like the Spanish settlers of Trinidad and the Mainland, long association and a natural aptitude for cacao growing.³

In spite of Morris, however, contractors were sought from among the ordinary labouring classes - both free negroes and free Indians served just as well although an equal mixture of both was said to be the best workable arrangement, second only to the Spanish peons or 'Cocoa Pagnols' as they were called.⁴ Generally, however, the latter preferred to work small holdings on their own account than sell out to capitalists and proceed farther inland to work new plots.⁵

Most contractors, regardless of stock, viewed the contract system as a necessary evil - a temporary expedient resorted to by the more ambitious though impecunious among them who, lacking in initial capital outlay, looked to the time when they would save enough to improve their station from mere labourers to small-scale proprietors. While they worked toward that goal, however, many existed on the margins of civilized life, dwelling in scantily covered 'ajoupas', 'sans' doors and windows, with the most basic amenities being supplied strictly by nature. These contracts were usually located in remote areas sometimes sixteen to twenty miles away from the nearest village and serviced by deplorable soil roads.⁶

Life as a contractor also meant dealing with several seemingly unsurmountable obstacles in the path to social improvement. In the first instance, the exact legal nature of these contracts remained vague. While they bore many similarities to Contract of Leases, Contracts of Labour and Contracts of Partnership, the dissimilarities were too pronounced to enable them to fit snugly into any single legal category. For such 'sui generis' contracts, no doubt, possible legal

interpretation was rather too liberal thus giving rise to abuse of the system on both sides.⁷

Some of the abuses arising out of insecurity of payment were enumerated by Sir John Gorrie, Chief Justice at that time, in a memorandum to Governor William Robinson as follows: After five years contractors were to be paid according to the number of bearing trees but most cocoa trees took longer to bear. If 'bearing' was to be interpreted to mean 'full bearing' trees as done by some proprietors, the contractor, whose interpretation amounted to 'all healthy trees', was deprived of a considerable portion of his dues. Another difficulty arose in interpreting the meaning of the vague term 'free from weeds' which left much room for speculation and exploitation. Sometimes, too, cash advances were made to the contractor or he was allowed to amass unchecked credit accounts at the estate shop belonging to the owner. At the end of five years the contractor was simply informed that he had already exhausted all wages due to him.

Another loophole for abuse arose from the lack of standardisation in the system. Prices paid to contractors for bearing trees differed markedly from place to place, ranging from 12 cents to 48 cents per tree, thus allowing for a wide range of abuses by unscrupulous proprietors. Additionally, the benefits of such long-term postponement of fixed earnings accrued to proprietor rather than to the contractor, "whose wages reposed for 5 years at high risk and without interest in the pockets of his employer rather than in a savings account under his name."⁸

Abuses of the system reached a high point in the period 1885 to 1889. A sarcastic letter under the pseudonym, "PAX", appeared in the Public Opinion on

August 2, 1887. The writer, addressing himself to the injustices of cocoa contracts, remonstrated against what he termed "a league offensive and defensive" - a trade union reversed mounted by those "much oppressed and long-suffering individuals, the cocoa planters, against their terrible, grasping oppressors, the cocoa contractors."⁹ Equating it to the case of the "poor wolf being wickedly defouled by the vicious lamb", he highlighted the case of a contractor who had fallen ill after three years of "diligent husbandry." The contractor was promptly deemed to have forfeited his contract by neglecting to keep the holding 'free from weeds', although the trees had remained 'exceptionally luxuriant'. Originally entitled to \$120 (one shilling per tree for 500 trees), the poor man was paid \$15.00 'out of compassion' and summarily turned out. The owner having paid a further \$2.50 to have the contract weeded, benefitted to the tune of \$102.50 at the contractor's expense. Once again the 'wolf' had triumphed over the 'lamb'.¹⁰

Exploitation of the system was not the preserve of contractees only. There is evident of abuse on the part of contractors as well. Reporting on the Blue Book for Trinidad for the year 1888, Governor Sir W. Robinson observed that "contracts did not secure the labourers against oppression." Neither was there any means of redress. On the other hand, the Governor hastened to add, "the owner had practically no redress against the contractor, whom he could not eject even if he neglected to do what he had stipulated, surrendering instead, at the end of the stated number of years, a contract "in a state of depression."¹¹ Cocoa proprietors supported this claim. One contractee pointed out that granting the contractors "free ingress and egress" to and from his garden plot virtually allowed him *carte blanche* to roam at

liberty over the entire plantation outside the plot allotted to him. Exemption of employees from prosecution under the law of trespass left the proprietors unprotected from exploitation by dishonest contractors.¹²

Given the numerous avenues for abuse on either side, it was clear the system had become more impractical and intolerable over time. Unless measures were devised to protect contractors from the oppressive and unjust machinations of the wealthy and powerful proprietors on the one hand, and to compel indolent and dishonest contractors to fulfil their contractual obligations on the other, the entire system would have sooner or later have had to be abandoned.¹³ Despite the learned assessment of the acting Attorney General, George Garcia, the system had not been "working satisfactorily" prior to the advent of Chief Justice, Sir John Gorrie.¹⁴ The destruction of confidence in the system, therefore, was imminent.

At the base of the matter lay the fact that the contract system was an open-ended one which did not exist in a vacuum but in a larger structure of power-relationships between the 'haves' and 'have nots' within the society. The contract system had arisen out of the labourer/employer relationship and in turn fed the peasant/planter interface, often co-existing with either of these. A proprietor could also be at the same time mortgagee, creditor, employer and contractee to a single contractor. It was often the case that the cocoa contractor filled more than one role at a time, as did the contractee. In this deadlock of complex relationships, it is hardly surprising that the contractor found his powerlessness pitted with impunity against the powerful and wealthy cocoa planters.

At the core of the problem affecting all types of relationships between the 'poor' and the 'powerful' was the perceived competition for labour and the polarization of conflicting interests between the two groups. In anticipation of a dearth of labour, there had been talk as early as 1866, in official circles, about instituting measures such as block sales of Crown Lands at high upset prices in order to prevent the acquisition of land by "men without capital who OUGHT TO BE labourers for wages."¹⁵ With the gradual elimination of squatting and the increase in the number of small-scale proprietors, particularly after the liberalisation of Crown Land alienation policy under Governor, Sir Arthur Gordon, there was indeed good reason for the hitherto secure plantocracy to be alarmed.¹⁶ Prior to the passing of the new regulations, over the twenty-year period 1847 to 1866, an annual average of 23.6 agricultural plots had been sold by the Crown.¹⁷ In the wake of the new ordinance, land sales soared. In 1870 alone, 688 agricultural land grants were made. In the preceding five-year period (1865-9), a total of 243 grants were made accounting for 3744 acres. In the succeeding five-year span (1870-74), 4027 grants were made totalling 38,871 acres. This means that during 1865-69 an annual average of 48.6 grants were made (648.8 acres) as compared with an annual average of 9805.4 grants (7774.2 acres) in the five years which followed.¹⁸ In the period 1876-1885, 4548 land grants were made, amounting to a total of 63,698 acres making an annual average of 454.8 grants.¹⁹ (See Appendix A Tables 5 and 6). Ordinary labourers and cocoa contractors were upgrading their status, thus creating not merely a perceived crisis in labour supply but also moving towards a capitalist consensus with their social betters.

Under the guise of legality, therefore, obstacles were thrown in the way of prospective purchasers of small holdings and attempts were made systematically to deprive those already in possession of their holdings.²⁰ Peasants who failed to pay their Ward Rates for whatever reason found themselves suddenly deprived of their lands with no legal redress. Lands in default of such taxes in the Ward of Toco for example, were advertised for sale in Port-of-Spain and sold for a mere nominal sum.²¹ Roads to small holdings were also kept in a deplorable and sometimes impassable condition while roads to large scale estates were kept in a better state of repair. This limited the expansion of the small-holding class and in any case sought to keep them within easy reach of the employers of labour. The same effect was achieved by attempts to revert to the Block system of Crown Lands alienation.²² Planters also objected to the sale of Crown Lands without competition. This was aimed at enabling wealthier, more powerful owners to outbid their smaller less-blessed neighbours.²³ Again, Ordinances to regulate the sale of cocoa and other agricultural produce and to minimise the incidence of praedial larceny of crops, were based on the suspicion of guilt on the part of all "small men". The cocoa contractor had to prove his innocence by bearing on his person at all times the written authority of the contractee permitting the sale of a stated amount of licensable produce from his land. Punishments were severe - a fine of £5 or imprisonment and twenty-four strokes of the cat on the second offence.²⁴ Such laws purporting to protect the interests of all classes left room for unlimited oppression of small scale cultivators including contractors.

Such invidious systems of 'legal spoilation' had begun to produce the desired effects by 1885-1890. Good faith and confidence between contractors and proprietors was seriously compromised.²⁵ With the increasing tensions between them, all small scale cultivators found it more difficult than in previous years to obtain cash advances on their unreaped crops.²⁶ Less lenience was employed if debtors defaulted on their payments. Investors did not exercise the utmost caution, seeking only good and safe openings where ample returns for outlay could be guaranteed, thus operating against the interest of a small scale proprietary class.²⁷ The reduced borrowing power of the 'poorer classes' plus the ruin of 'friendly' relations between contractors and contractees did much to decrease transactions in Crown Lands by both classes, further depleting the numbers of contractors.²⁸ The amount advanced on mortgages to the 'poorer classes' fell in 1888 by £26,852 16s from its 1887 level.²⁹ One debtor/proprietor observed:

I used to go downtown and borrow \$100 ... simply giving a note of hand ... now if you go downtown and want \$100 you will get it from the merchant but you must give him a mortgage ... If on the 31st December I do not pay the interest I am ruined. For a matter of \$132 I nearly lost my estate some time this year.³⁰

Accordingly the number of land grants also fell from 585 (9115 acres) in 1888 to 434 grants (539 acres) in 1889.³¹ (Tables 6.1 and 6.2).

During this period, too, there was a retardation in the annual rate of increase in savings banks' depositors and deposits. In 1888 there were 947 new savings bank depositors and an addition of £11,474 in total deposits. In 1889, however, there were only 256 new depositors accounting for an additional £6,306 in total deposits.³² (Table 6.3). Such decline spoke eloquently of impending difficulties; the level of

savings deposits has traditionally been viewed as a true indicator of national economic performance. In this time after rising from 13,729,565 lbs with an export value of £385,901 in 1885 to 21,352,312 lbs, having an export value of £611,876 in 1888, cocoa output fell to 15,335,228 lbs with export value of £411,243 in 1889.³³ (See Tables 6.4 and 6.5). At this time cocoa was the principal crop accounting for 94,500 acres of total cultivated acreage while its closest rival, sugar, could only lay claim to a mere 58,500 acres.³⁴ The signs were clear. The economy of the island was headed for disaster, if these trends were not reversed.

The contract system, which for over forty years had oiled the productive machinery of the island's chief export crop, had fallen into disrepute, thus severely affecting the level of confidence between the capitalists and the labouring classes, and the economy stood threatened. The paralysis of the system had arisen out of the issue of validity and legality of contracts. Disputes arising between contractors and owners failed to find fair and expeditious settlements. This caused the system to be suspended almost entirely, incurring considerable loss to both contractees and contractors, thus jeopardizing the future of the cocoa industry and the entire island economy.³⁵

It was the mishandling of justice in such matters which had given rise to class antagonisms.³⁶ While the system allowed ample leeway for roguery and abuse on both sides, industrious contractors had gradually become convinced that justice was being denied them and many turned to violent means of resolving the impasse between themselves and the proprietors/contractees. When their contracts were suddenly and inexplicably revoked without adequate compensation contractors

resorted to wilful destruction of plants and trees within the contract. At Las Cuevas in December 1887, for example, one incensed contractor who had been denied his just rewards sent his livestock on a thunderous rampage destroying 880 two-year old cocoa trees.³⁷

At the heart of the matter lay the struggles of a poor and powerless class against the flagrant abuse of the powers of jurisdiction invested in the local magistracy. In this system the contractor was less likely to get judgements in his favour than was the proprietor. It seemed that the powerful within the society had collaborated in a system which degraded further an already degraded class and which, if left unremedied, would keep them forever in 'servile subjection'. The local magistracy was not totally independent of the local plantocracy and therefore was not above falling prey to the insidious influence of members of that class. Oftentimes there were 'ties of consanguinity' or connection by marriage between individuals of the two groups. It was frequently the case that the more-deprived social and pecuniary situation of many magistrates made them enter into too-neighbourly relations with wealthy and influential proprietors. Drinking of the planters' best wines and dining sumptuously at their tables, these magistrates found themselves unable to resist the 'warm overtures' of their social betters, whose friendship could make life highly agreeable. Small wonder, then, that the less strong-willed magistrates were easily manipulated by those of the planter class. Cruel penalties and reprisals were therefore brought to bear upon the guilty poor while the guilty rich were let off in style.³⁸

It was a vicious system indeed but not one that was strange particularly to any society ruled by 'unrepresentative' and 'irresponsible' government and controlled by an all-powerful oligarchy. In Trinidad, therefore, in the absence of codified law, the justice depended heavily upon the impartiality of the interpreters of the law. Not surprisingly, it was "the man whose purse was longest" and who "could fee the best lawyers" who carried the day.³⁹ This is not to say that there were no instances of rulings made in favour of contractors, but these were few and far between. Litigation was a very costly business and as such lay beyond the reach of most contractors, the vast majority of whom could neither read, write nor speak much English, let alone comprehend fully all the legal implications and intricacies of the contracts into which they had entered.⁴⁰ The absence of litigation, then, did not necessarily mean the absence of just cause for complaint.

The contract system, therefore, had long since ceased to function smoothly. It was merely that, having little hope to be given justice under the existing system, 'the lambs' had acquiesced in defeat at the hands of the 'wolves'.

Then in 1885 came Sir John Gorrie, the Chief Justice, whose attempts to bring fairness and justice in legal matters to the 'humbler classes' offended the sensibilities of 'respectable men', bringing to the fore the serious class conflict already eating away at the very heart of the society.⁴¹ Truly enough, Trinidad had always had its fair share of good judges, "men of ability, good lawyers and conscientious administrators of the law who, no doubt, employed all their learning and astuteness of intellect to give sound judgements."⁴² But in a society where all power resided in the hands of a wealthy and influential minority, such qualities

simply did not suffice to ensure true and efficient administration of justice between the powerful and the weak: As one editor so ably expressed it:

It required in the Judge that sacred fire which flames out into a blaze at the bare idea of injustice and oppression. That was what burned bright in the heart of [Sir John] Gorrie.⁴³

What was needed was a truly impartial judge who would exert all of his energies to ensure that the scales of justice were not thrown out of balance on either side. Sir John Gorrie was that type of man.

He was a man not unfamiliar with deprived circumstances. His father Reverend Daniel Gorrie having died when he was still young and "like all Scottish ministers leaving no fortune", Sir John Gorrie was obliged to earn his living even while putting himself through university.⁴⁴ Gorrie stood firm on the belief that justice had to be made accessible to all, rich and poor alike.⁴⁵ He therefore, made it his chief concern to advise all possible litigants as to their rights and also to provide 'legal assistance gratis' to those of impecunious circumstances.⁴⁶ Those of the poorer classes who formerly had no access to justice were "now flocking into the towns" coming to the Judge's Chambers petitioning *in forma pauperis* for legal aid with respect to wrongs incurred. After interviewing these petitioners himself, the Chief Justice decided either to commence action immediately in the Supreme Court himself or to send such poor petitioners to various solicitors who were directed to inquire promptly into these cases.⁴⁷

Many of these petitioners were contractors seeking redress against the flagrant abuses of the contract system on the part of their employers. Sir John Gorrie believed that the actual nature of these contracts was too vague to allow for the

establishment of a defined and definable relation between the parties involved, thus giving rise to widely divergent interpretations of terms and conditions. As a result litigation became necessary in order to iron out problems which frequently arose out of the defects of the system.⁴⁸ When charges were brought against a contractor, whether they be true or false, invariably he had no money with which to defend himself, particularly after being unceremoniously ejected from contracts without wages. While cases were pending, contractors found that their wages were suspended and proprietors did all in their power to protract legal proceedings.⁴⁹

Such cases Sir John Gorrie preferred to hear himself for he firmly believed that unlike before county magistrates, both contractors and owners would be afforded the same measure of justice before the Supreme Court.⁵⁰ He pointed out that, for all practical purposes, given the nature of the society, it was necessary to bear in mind "who and what magistrates practically are rather than what they ought to be." Acting Governor Henry Fowler himself, for example, owned a cocoa estate in Honduras, while most magistrates were the neighbours, friends and daily associates of these proprietors and therefore it was hard to get unbiased opinions from them.⁵¹ As a permanent solution, he advocated legislation to effect contracts of shorter duration with more explicit terms and conditions and frequent regular payment of wages (e.g. monthly) which would not be based on numbers of bearing trees. Such legislation he believed would prevent retrograde practices which could effect a reversal of the conditions and status of the labouring classes to 'semi-slavery'. Sir John Gorrie reminded local legislators that the too 'laissez faire' interpretation of 'freedom of

contract' was working injury to the very races with whose protection they had been entrusted.⁵²

The case of James Henry, a labourer/contractor of Upper Caroni against Alfred Bourne, planter/contractee, heard before Sir John Gorrie - February 1886 became celebrated island-wide and was typical of the new Chief Justice's brand of summary jurisdiction.⁵³

In 1877 Henry had entered into a contract with Bourne to plant cocoa and coffee on an unspecified acreage of land belonging to Bourne. In April 1885 when the contract was discontinued there were 459 cocoa trees, half of which were full bearing, and 510 mature coffee trees on the contract. Some time just prior to the termination of the contract Henry had purchased ten acres of land which he cleared for planting. That was when his troubles started. Bourne, who had never complained before, now charged that Henry was neglecting his property and that the place had become overrun with bush since 1880. He claimed also that ants nests had not been destroyed as agreed, that a sufficient number of Immortelle shade trees had not been planted, and that the cocoa trees had not been planted at regular intervals. The contract, he argued, was so overrun with bush that on several occasions he was unable to count the number of trees. Bourne, on these pretexts, refused to pay to Henry monies due to him in respect of trees handed over at the end of the contract. Furthermore, he was countersuing for a refund of monies paid to Henry for the destruction of two ants nests on the property. The job, he claimed, had not been completed.

After publicly investigating the complaint and hearing the case in Court, Sir John Gorrie delivered judgement in which he found that the plaintiff had good *prima facie* grounds for complaint. He based his decision on several counts. Gorrie pointed out that he had observed, on the part of the counsel of the defendant, "a strong desire to postpone and delay" and to promote "inefficiency in the administration of justice."⁵⁴ According to the Rules of the Court, cases could only be heard on the first and third Friday of the month. Repeated postponements created severe difficulties and high costs to the plaintiff, "a negro peasant who lives upward of twenty miles from town" and who had to bring himself and his witnesses into town each time to no avail. As a result, Gorrie waived the Rules of the Court and agreed to "dispense justice in a summary cause".

He concluded that as the plaintiff, Henry, had already laboured for years cleaning the ground, planting the trees and nurturing the young cultivation without wages until the termination of the contract, by which time most of the trees were full-bearing, he was entitled to be paid the previously agreed price per tree. Gorrie found the excuses of the defendant to be inadmissible. Bourne had argued that Henry had come to him on a day other than the appointed one; that the contract was so covered with 'rastrau', or jungle, that the trees could not be counted and that the plaintiff had forfeited his claims by allowing the cultivation to become overgrown. Gorrie countered with the point that full care had been given by the contractor to the trees when they were young at a time when care was most needed; the presence of bush did not injure the trees nor impair their productivity. In any case, he argued,

the only witness ... said that in June 1885 when they went to count the trees the land was then covered with 'rastrau' or jungle. But the

plaintiff had had notice to quit in April and it would have been a little too much to expect of human nature, that after receiving such a notice, he should be spending his days on weeding up the land for the defendant ... [in fact] the defendant's son [who allegedly had gone with him to count the trees] did not recollect anything about the land being in bush until it had been specially brought to his attention by his counsel.⁵⁵

Accordingly Sir John Gorrie ordered that the plaintiff be paid the full agreed price per tree. Since the owner had refused to count the trees and therefore could neither verify nor deny the numbers submitted by the contractor, the Chief Justice took the plaintiff's word and granted him the sum petitioned for, £27 18s 6d. To be fair, however, he upheld the defendant's counterclaim on the basis that the task of destroying the ants nests had only been carried out in part. Henry was therefore ordered to refund to Bourne the sum of £56, half of what had been paid to him for the task.⁵⁶

While the Chief Justice's *modus operandi* was indeed unorthodox, his attempts to restore impartiality in the administration of justice received the unreserved approbation of a wide-cross-section of the population - rich and poor proprietor and contractor alike.⁵⁷ The Editor/owner of the Public Opinion, Mr. Phillip Rostant, himself a prominent cocoa planter and employer of contractors, praised Sir John Gorrie's efforts to restore confidence in the contract system which "from its anomalous nature is creaking on all sides and require tinkering otherwise it will fall to pieces."⁵⁸ The stance taken by such leading cocoa planters was clear. The continued success of the cocoa industry depended upon the continued functioning of the contract system. It was in their interest, therefore, to come together in support of whatever action was necessary, legislative or otherwise, to restore equilibrium

within the industry and thus to ensure the survival of cocoa as an important contributor to the island's economic prosperity. This pro-Gorrie faction managed to get 5,061 signatures, including those of cocoa planters and contractors, to a petition to the Governor in 1887.⁵⁹

The editorial of The New Era entitled "Vos Quoque, Judices!" which appeared in print on Monday 8th March 1886, while agreeing that reform in the business of the court was indeed urgently required and while heralding "the dawn of better days for the administration of justice", also pointed out that the new Chief Justice needed to be aware that:

the abuses which (he) has set himself to correcting would not have existed without in most cases the concurrence of the Bench.⁶⁰

He was reminded therefore that "if the work of cleaning the Augean stables was to be seriously undertaken ... the success of such an Herculean task would depend on tackling it from the right end," that is, not with the legal practitioners, including barristers and solicitors whom he blamed, but with the Bench itself where the corrupt system had originated.⁶¹

While many lauded the dawn of a new era in the administration of justice, there were, no doubt, the detractors who came exclusively from the propertied classes. Such persons banded together in secret conclaves to pass resolutions and secure signatures to petitions condemning the actions of the Chief Justice who they felt had shaken the faith of the people in the administration of justice in the colony.⁶² They argued that the lower classes were "naturally litigious" and needed no further artificial stimulus in this direction. They believed that Sir John Gorrie tended to lean too heavily on the side of the labouring classes and was only too willing to listen to

their tales of injustice and pauperism, the veracity of which he never thought to question.⁶³ What Gorrie was in effect doing, they pointed out, was encouraging labourers in "the direction of disregard of authority and other duties" while posing as the poor man's friend. As a result, the value of landed property started to depreciate, many proprietors were contemplating abandoning their estates rather than risking the litigation to which they had of late been exposed, and men of capital were less willing to invest or to lend money to the lower classes.⁶⁴

In highlighting the case against Sir John Gorrie, the Attorney General, Sir G.H. Gatty, pointed out that:

... people with money will not lend it to a class in the community whom they believe to receive undue favours from the Courts and people who can employ labour will not employ it under contracts likely to come before the courts where they believe that the unemployed will be listened to and they will not.⁶⁵

He believed that it was the small scale proprietors who would suffer the most when sources of credit dried up and they found themselves unable to access capital with which to pay their labourers and contractors. The anti-Gorrie brigade also took objection to the fact that Sir John Gorrie's appearance at the Court House gave occasion for the presence of "an excited and disorderly crowd" filling windows and doors to such an extent that "it was impossible for any respectable person to obtain standing room."⁶⁶ As a matter of fact they had come finally to the view that the upper classes need not "feel hurt" by the Chief Justice's ungentlemanly conduct towards them for those at the receiving end of 'abuse' from Sir John Gorrie could rest assured that this was a clear sign that they were "above the riff-raff."⁶⁷

What was most significant about this was that those who protested most vociferously were those who had felt the weight of this new justice in rulings against them. Of the seven men who headed the secret conclave against Sir John Gorrie in 1887, five of them had all had judgements against them by the Chief Justice earlier that very year.⁶⁸ Small wonder, then, that they led a strong anti-Gorrie offensive to secure the "clipping of Sir John Gorrie's wings" which, as they put it, "have lately been wafting him beyond the bounds of prudence."⁶⁹ Even the Governor, Sir W. Robinson, tended to sympathise with the stance of the latter group, agreeing that all was well until a spate of litigation by contractors was incited by the mischievous instigation of others. This gave rise to 'violent' antagonism between himself and Sir John Gorrie.⁷⁰

To solve the deadlock within the contract system and to ease the tensions paralysing the entire industry, corrective legislation seemed the only answer. The first attempt to formulate such legislation on the matter of agricultural contracts gave occasion for much heated discussion. Eventually it had to be abandoned, so serious was the division of opinion in the Legislative Council as to the necessity or advisability of legislating on the subject.

Planter suggestions for improvement of the system via legislation included the restriction of the 'free roaming' of the contractor on his employer's land. This, it was argued, could be done by marking out and defining in the contract a specific 'right of way' for the contractors which would be determined and changed if necessary on the mutual consent of contractor and contractee. The planters felt that this would keep contractors 'honest' and prevent them from confusing '*meum and*

teum'. This would have the effect of protecting the employers from the evils of praedial larceny allegedly perpetrated by the contractor.⁷¹

Another suggestion was that the proposed ordinance be sketched more liberally to provide a contractor who had forfeited his contract with a certain period 'not exceeding one month' in which he might be allowed to reap the provisions which he had planted. This would minimize the loss incurred by the contractor whose crops may only be a short time away from maturation. Compensation could also be granted in lieu of crops forfeited.⁷²

These proposed amendments were lost. The Bill was reintroduced with slight modifications the following year as all concerned gradually accepted the fact that, were it not resolved expeditiously, the state of affairs would deteriorate resulting in much inconvenience to the owners, disaster to the contractors and material injury to the colony.⁷³

The Agricultural Contracts Ordinance which finally came into operation on 18 July 1889 solved the problem as to the nature and legality of the contracts by deeming them to be contracts of service, legally binding on both parties. (See Appendix D, Exhibit 1). Clear terms and conditions were laid down governing all aspects of the relationship between contractors and contractees. The Ordinance also provided a simple, expeditious and inexpensive avenue for the settlement of disputes arising between them. According to the New Ordinance, the Registrar General was to keep a Register of Contracts which was to be made available to the public on the payment of a fee of one shilling. Owners were to pay all rates and taxes and were to grant contractors permission to erect buildings on the contracted land. The owner

was given the authority to impound all animals allowed to stray negligently unto the land by the contractor. Owners also had to keep written annual accounts of all transactions between himself and the contractor. Such accounts were to be used by the Justice in case of disputes or dissatisfaction by either party.

After the expiration of the contract or in the event of its discontinuance, the owner was not allowed to repossess the land until he had paid to the contractor all monies due to him. Should the contractor default on the agreement, the owner could sue either for possession of the land or for appropriate compensation. A contractor was deemed to have defaulted on the contract in the following cases: where he transferred, mortgaged or sublet his contract without the prior written consent of the owner; upon the expiration of the stated time in any termination of contract notice; where the contractor either neglected the cultivation of the land under contract or was guilty of 'grossly defective' cultivation; where he violated or evaded any of the terms and conditions of the contract; and when the contractor after receiving money from the owner as for the cultivation of the land, failed to use this money for the stated purpose.

In cases where claims were brought against the contractor, the Justice could grant him reasonable time to put his contract in good order. On the granting to the owner of a Warrant of Possession it was left up to the Justice to allow the contractor 'reasonable time' to reap any provision crops planted by him which, under the terms of the contract, belonged to him. The Justice had the right to appoint persons to inspect the land. Should a contractor try to prevent any such authorized persons from performing this take, he incurred a maximum penalty of £5. The ordinance also

provided that any 'pecuniary compensation' awarded to the owner should be deducted directly from any monies owed by him to the contractor. If the contractor were to die in estate or without next of kin, the owner was to have the contract valued and deposit any monies due to the contractor with the Savings Bank before resuming possession of the land. The Debtor Ordinance was to be applied in cases of monies owed by either party under the terms of the Contract. Any person found giving false evidence in cases concerning contracts was to be considered guilty of perjury and dealt with accordingly.⁷⁴ Fees payable under the new arrangement were clearly laid down and standardised (See Appendix D Exhibit 2).

The attempts made by planters and employers of contractors to save the system indicated that there was still much benefit to be derived by its continuance, despite the abuses which had been allowed to creep in over time. During the fifty-year period since it was first employed in 1838 when Emancipation became a fact, the contract system had been the foundation and means by which most of the large estates were brought under cultivation. By 1888 large estates employed as many as ninety (90) contractors at a time, all of whom were resident in barracks or huts on the estate. There was little doubt that the contract system had contributed significantly to the increasing prosperity and stability of the island economy. In giving evidence to the 1888 Royal Franchise Commission, Mr. Charles Fabien, a merchant, proprietor of cocoa estates and employer of contractors stated of contracts, that there was

no doubt they are valuable, in fact they are so valuable that anyone must admit that any increase of the export of the colony during the last fifteen years has been due largely to the System of Contracts.⁷⁵

Reporting on the first year of operation of the Ordinance, Justice Walter Llewellyn Lewis, Chairman of the Committee on Agricultural Contracts who had been responsible for drafting the legislation, indicated that the new system was working satisfactorily and that while total confidence would take some time to recover fully, there had been a slow but steady movement in this direction.⁷⁶ During the period 1st August 1888 and 31st July 1889, 323 new contracts had been entered into, all duly registered under its provision. The districts which had made most use of the new Ordinance had been the foremost cocoa growing quarters; (See Appendix B Map 5) the Western District of St. George - 82, the Caura-Chaguanas, Montserrat District -188, the Arima district - 47. During that first year, too, no litigations had taken place under the Ordinance.⁷⁷ He pointed out, however, that most of the contractors being illiterate, the success of the new system would depend to a very a large extent on the responsibility and 'cordial performance of duty' by magistrates, wardens or other officers before whom these parties came to enter into contracts. Such officers would have to ensure that all conditions were clearly understood by both parties and dissatisfaction dealt with before signatures were accepted.⁷⁸

The Agricultural Contracts Ordinance of 1889 made the nature of the relationship more definable and indisputable and therefore limited the causes for grouse. However, as Sir John Gorrie pointed out, in case of dispute chances for fair settlement still favoured the proprietors. Cases were still to be heard by magistrates and therefore were still subject to individual whims and prejudices and the workings of conscience.⁷⁹ The point is that while a measure of confidence and equilibrium had been restored to the industry and to the colony, the loopholes for the undermining of

such confidence remained. The proprietary body was still too strong and too determined not to relinquish its hold on power for the humbler classes to secure absolutely fair treatment.

Commenting on the Ordinance, Sir John Gorrie noted, as if in agony:

It is a painful and thankless task for me of course to say a word against the Colonial Executive Government opposed to the Contractors, a Legislature of Proprietors opposed to the Contractors and against anything sanctioned by the Secretary of State. But justice to the contractors is worth something and if that cannot be obtained, I would rather leave the custom to rest on custom, than to sanction what is unjust by a law. However I will say no more.⁸⁰

Such objections were ignored in the passing of the Ordinance. One comment from the Colonial Office merely observed that there was nothing new about Sir John Gorrie's remarks.⁸¹ That problem having been dealt with, the Colonial Legislature of proprietors and the Colonial Office turned their attention to more pressing matters.

The actions of Sir John Gorrie had brought to the surface the canker that was eating away at the core of the society. The Agricultural Contracts of Ordinance of 1889 only provided a temporary solution which merely glossed over the cracks instead of attacking the root causes of the problem. Power still rested in the hands of the minority, the large scale proprietary class, while the majority - the poor and labouring class - was still denied representation and political participation. Since 'trusteeship' was obviously being mismanaged, political reform was sorely needed.

The legal system, too, stood in need of reform in order to ensure justice for all, as Sir John Gorrie had maintained all along. The 'beautiful machinery of English laws' had been operating in the Colony which, while it might have been a British Colony, was certainly not an English country. As such, therefore, English laws and

legal principles which had been built upon the hard lines of English custom would certainly not have addressed adequately the needs of such a heterogenous colonial society - at least not without adaptation. The Chief Justice's departure from English legal orthodoxy, then, while scandalous to some, was a necessary one - one that the Colonial Government would have done well to emulate, in principle. As a letter to the editor of the Public Opinion pointed out, "In French and Spanish countries ... the preliminary stage of conciliation" (as practised by Sir John Gorrie was "a *sine qua non* to all legal proceedings."⁸² Such preliminary interviews of both parties by the Judge *in camara* led "nine times out of ten" to peaceful out-of-court settlements agreeable to both. In these countries, the letter pointed out, "the system worked beautifully and not a cent of expense was incurred in the process of conciliation."⁸³ What the colony needed therefore, was a legal system adapted to suit its particular society and its distinct needs.

In the absence of total and radical reform, however, problems and conflicts persisted. Deadlocks continued to define the pattern of labour and power relations within the society. These had to be resolved from time to time by summary legislation to gloss over the flaws in the underlying structure. While in 1887 affairs centering around the contract system were brought to a head at the instigation of Sir John Gorrie, and impending disaster was staved off for the time being, the large gap between the poor and the powerful remained causing major eruptions in the decades to follow.

Table 6.1Crown Land Grants (No. and Acreages) 1885-1895

Year	Crown Land Acreage Granted (acres)	No. of Grants
1885	8171	599
1886	11124	661
1887	10800	739
1888	9115	585
1889	5391	434
1890	6165	487
1891	6925	517
1892	5622	528
1893	7222	684
1894	7072	699
1895	6894	630
Totals: 1885-95	84501	6563
	Average 7682 per year	Average 597 per year

Source: CO 300, Trinidad and Tobago Blue Books, Colonial Report Annual.

Table 6.2**Crown Land Granted (Nos. and Acreages 1855/64 - 1885/94)**

Ten Year Period	Acreage of Crown Land Granted (Acres)		No. of Grants	
	Total	Average per year	Total	Average per year
1855-64	2,429	230	474	47
1865-74	42,615	426	4,270	427
1875-84	62,865	6,287	4,996	500
1885-94	77,607	7,761	5,933	593
1855-1894	Growth rate in acres granted: 3095.02%		Growth rate in number of grants: 1151.69%	

Source: CO 300. Trinidad and Tobago Blue Books; Colonial Reports Annuals.

Table 6.3**Savings Bank Depositors/Deposits 1885-1895**

Year	No. of Depositors	Total Deposits Value (£)
1885	3490	87,511
1886	3757	97,458
1887	4420	110,279
1888	5350	122,753
1889	5606	129,059
1890	6769	145,283
1891	6967	n.a.
1892	7784	160,767
1893	7784	n.a.
1894	2337	n.a.
1895	9649	229,623

Source: CO 300. Trinidad and Tobago Blue Books; Colonial Reports Annuals. Where figures differed, the Blue Book figure was taken as the most reliable official source.

- Note: 1) In 1885 there were only 2 Savings Bank: Port-of-Spain and San-Fernando while in 1895 there were 10 Savings Banks; Port-of-Spain, San-Fernando, Arima, Cedros, Couva, Montserrat, Mayaro, Princes Town, St. Joseph and Moruga plus 53 Friendly Societies.
- 2) In 1885 the Interest Rate was 4%. There was no limit on the deposit amount but no interest was paid on amounts in excess of £200. In 1889 the interest rate was dropped to 3%. In 1891 a further stipulation was added. No interest was granted on amounts in excess of £300.

Table 6.4Cocoa Exported (Q) Annually (lbs) and Export (X) Values and Average Prices 1885-1895

Year	Total Q Exported (lbs)	X value (£)	Average price of cocoa per fanega (\$)
1885	13,729,565	385,901	15.75
1886	17,913,037	521,278	15.25
1887	11,927,067	354,420	14.25
1888	21,352,312	611,876	13.75
1889	15,335,228	411,243	12.25
1890	21,552,593	531,025	12.63
1891	16,188,493	439,786	13.13
1892	25,041,635	648,104	13.25
1893	19,106,552	535,055	15.25
1894	21,608,384	587,564	12.63
1895	29,458,812	620,634	10.00
Annual Average: 1885-1895	19,383,062	513,353	13.47 average

1885 - 1895 Growth Rate of Quantities Exported (QX) (lbs) - 114.56%

1885 - 1895 Growth Rate of Export Value (XV) (£) - 60.83%

See Appendix A. Tables 2 and 3.

Source: CO 300. Trinidad and Tobago Blue Books, Colonial Reports Annuals. C.Y Shephard. The Cocoa Industry: Some Economic Aspects Part IV.

Table 6.5Cocoa Exported (OX) 5 Year Totals + Annual Average
1871-1895

5 Year Period	Totals OX (lbs)	Annual Averages OX (lbs)
1871-75	39,559,304	7,911,861
1876-80	51,756,285	10,351,257
1881-85	60,070,603	12,014,121
1886-90	88,080,237	17,616,047
1891-95	111,403,877	22,280,775

Growth Rate in QX over period 1881/5 to 1891/5 = 181.61%

See Appendix A. Table 2 and 3.

Source: CO 300. Trinidad and Tobago Blue Books; Colonial Reports
Annals.

CHAPTER 6

NOTES

¹Contractors were those labourers employed to bring the land under cultivation under the specific arrangements of the contract system. These contractors were either of African (negro), Indian or 'peon' origin. By 1888 most of the younger generation were fairly literate and conversant in English, although the older generation was not.

Contractees were the employers, owners of the estates which were contracted out for a specified period of time to contractors.

²Editorial: "The Agricultural Contract Ordinance". The Public Opinion. Vol. V. No. 397. Friday 7 December, 1888, p.4.

³D. Morris. "Cacao". Public Opinion. Vol. 11, No. 169. Tuesday 17 August, 1886.

⁴"The Agricultural Contracts Ordinance". Public Opinion. Vol. 5 No. 397. Friday December 7, 1888, pp. 4-5; W.C. Jardine, "How To Start a Cacao Estate" in Collens. Handbook, p.90.

⁵"Trade and Taxes Commission: Evidence of Mr. M.J. Romero". Public Opinion. Vol. III, No. 228. Tuesday March 22, 1887, p.1.

⁶"Trade and Taxes Commission: Evidence of Paul Auguste Alexis (Cocoa Planter). Public Opinion. Vol. III, No. 235. Friday April 22, 1887, p.11.

⁷Confidential Memorandum of Sir John Gorrie re: Cocoa Contracts. Enclosure 2 in Trinidad Despatch No. 20 of 14 January, 1889. CO 295/321 Fo. 2441. Robinson to Knutsford.

⁸Ibid., Trinidad Blue Book for 1888. CO 300/99.

⁹Correspondence "Cocoa Contracts" Public Opinion. Vol. III, No. 260. Tuesday August 2, 1887, p.4.

¹⁰Ibid., p.2.

¹¹Colonial Reports Annual 1889. LIV (801) No. 51. Report on the Blue Book of Trinidad for 1888. CO 300/99. Governor Sir William Robinson to Lord Knutsford. c5620-9.

¹²"Cocoa Contracts" Public Opinion. Vol. IV, No. 305. Friday January 20, 1888, p.4.

¹³"Agricultural Contracts Ordinance" Public Opinion. Vol. V, No. 397. Friday December 7, 1888, p.4.

¹⁴Confidential Memorandum of George Garcia re: Agricultural Contracts Ordinance. Enclosure 1 in Trinidad Despatch No. 20 of 14 January, 1889. CO 295/321 Fo. 2441. Robinson to Knutsford.

¹⁵Emigration Board Despatch of August 2, 1866 to the Land Board. CO 295/237 Fo: 7465. F.W. Murchison to Sir Frederick Rogers Bart.

¹⁶Ordinance 24 of October 1, 1868 re: for Regulating the Sale of Crown Lands. Trinidad Acts 1867-71. CO 297/8.

¹⁷Emigration Board Despatch of August 2, 1866. CO 295/237 Fo: 7465. F.W. Murchison to Sir Frederick Rogers Bart.

¹⁸Trinidad Blue Book for 1871. Trinidad Despatch No. 91 of 26 April, 1872 CO 295/261 Fo: 4984. Longden to Kimberley.

¹⁹Report of the Sub-Intendant of Crown Lands: Enclosure in Trinidad Despatch No. 87 of 15 April, 1886 CO 295/310 Fo: 7595. Robinson to Granville. Table 6.2 indicates that a total of 4,996 grants had been made in the period 1875-1884 with an annual average of 500 grants. This can be compared with a total of 474 grants for the period 1855-64 with an annual average of 47 grants; and for the period 1865-74 a total of 4,270 grants with an annual average of 427 grants.

²⁰Editorial: "Proposed Ordinance to Amend the Law as to Recovery of Public Land Charges". Trinidad Palladium Vol. III No. 150. Saturday September 6, 1879, p.3.

²¹Ibid., Report on the Blue Book for 1879. Trinidad Despatch No. 263 of 14 October 1880. CO 295/288 Fo. 17399. Governor William Young to Earl of Kimberley.

²²"Roads of the Colony". Trinidad Palladium. Vol. II No.99, Saturday 14 September, 1878, p.4.

²³Trade and Taxes Commission Submission of D. Wilson, Sub-Intendant of Crown Lands. Trinidad Despatch No. 332 of 19 September 1889 CO 295/324 Fo. 20234. Fowler to Knutsford: Reports of the Wardens and Assistant Warden. Annual Report: Toco Ward Union for 1887. Public Opinion, Vol. IV, No. 337, Tuesday May 15, 1888, p.5.

²⁴Ordinance No. 1 of 1885: Sale of Cocoa Ordinance. Trinidad Despatch No. 92 of 15 April, 1885. CO 295/306 Fo. 8537. Havelock to Derby. Ordinance 8 of 1889. Sale of Produce Ordinance. Trinidad Despatch No. 127 of 7 April, 1899. CO 295/391 Fo. 10473 Jerningham to Chamberlain.

²⁵Report of Sub-Intendant of Crown Lands 1888. Trinidad Despatch No. 59 of February 28, 1888. CO 295/321 Fo. 3420. Robinson to Knutsford.

²⁶Royal Commission on the Proposed Franchise: Evidence of Mr. Harris Harragin, Warden of Arima Ward Union. The New Era. Vol. XVI No. 45 (new series) whole no. 867. April 5, 1889. p.2.

²⁷Colonial Reports Annual 1899. (LXII) No. 272. Report for Trinidad and Tobago for 1898 p.633 Cd. 9498. Ag. Governor Knowles to Mr. Chamberlain.

²⁸Report of the S.I. of Crown Lands 1888 - Trinidad Despatch No. 59, 28 February 1888. CO 295/321 Fo. 5420. Robinson to Knutsford.

²⁹"The State of the Colony". The New Era. Vol. XVI No. 43. (New Series) Whole No. 865. Friday March 22, 1899, p.2.

³⁰Trade and Taxes Commission: Evidence of Mr. Gregoire Bonair. Public Opinion Vol. III No. 236. Tuesday April 26, 1887, p.1.

³¹Trinidad Original Blue Book for 1888. Trinidad Acts CO 300/99. Trinidad and Tobago Original Blue Book for 1889. CO 300/100.

³²Trinidad Original Blue Book for 1888. Trinidad Acts CO 300/99. Trinidad and Tobago Original Blue Book for 1889. CO 300/100.

³³Ibid., C.Y. Shephard. The Cocoa Industry: Some Economic Aspects. Part IV, pp.29-30.

³⁴Trinidad and Tobago Blue Book for 1890. CO 300/101.

³⁵Colonial Reports Annual 1890. XLVIII (911) No. 108. Report on the Trinidad and Tobago Blue Book for 1889, c.5897-38.

³⁶Reasons for the Agricultural Contracts Ordinance 1888. Confidential Despatch No. 20 of 14 January 1889. CO 295/321 Fo. 2441. Robinson to Knutsford.

³⁷"Cocoa Planters and Contracts". Public Opinion. Vol. IV, No. 298. Friday December 16, 1887, p.6.

³⁸"Magistrates Jurisdiction in the Colony". Trinidad Palladium. Vol. VI. No. 289. Saturday July 15, 1882, p.2.

³⁹"Sir John Gorrie, Knt". Public Opinion. Vol. III, No. 275, Tuesday November 29, 1887, p.4.

⁴⁰Report on the Working of the Agricultural Contracts Ordinance of 1889 in its first year. Trinidad Despatch No. 307. 30 September 1890. CO 295/329 Fo. 20716. Robinson to Knutsford.

⁴¹Memorandum of Rev. J. Beresford Robinson (Vicar of Arima) vs Chief Justice Sir John Gorrie. Enclosure in Trinidad Despatch No. 30 of January 26, 1891 CO 295/332 Fo. 3304 Robinson to Knutsford.

⁴²"Sir John Gorrie, Knt". Public Opinion. Vol. III, No. 275. Tuesday November 29, 1887, p.4.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Trinidad Despatch No. 234 of 27 August 1887 re Sir John Gorrie. CO 295/314 Fo. 18765 Robinson to Holland.

⁴⁶Ibid., "The Chief Justice in Chambers". The New Era. Vol. XV, No. 7 (New Series) whole no. 777, Friday July 15, 1887, p.3.

⁴⁷Minute by the Attorney General, Sir H. Gatty, to the Col. Sec. re. want of confidence in the administration of law esp. relating to property and the validity of contracts. Enclosure in Trinidad Despatch No. 230 of July 31, 1890. CO 295/329 Fo. 15991, Robinson to Knutsford.

⁴⁸Memo. of Sir John Gorrie to the Governor. Enclosure No. 9 in Confidential Despatch No. 20 of 14 January, 1889. CO 295/321 Fo. 2441. Robinson to Knutsford.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Memo. of Sir John Gorrie to the Governor. Enclosure No. 4 in Confidential Despatch of 17 January, 1889. CO 295/321 Fo. 2452. Robinson to Knutsford.

⁵¹Trinidad Despatch No. 262 of 20 July 1889 re. Ordinance 9 of 1889 - Agricultural Contracts Ordinance. CO 295/323 Fo. 15386. H. Fowler to Knutsford.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Evidence given before Sir John Gorrie, CJ, in the case of Henry vs Bourne, The New Era Vol. xii, No. 39 (new ser.), whole no. 705. Tuesday 23rd February 1886, p.3.

⁵⁴Judgement of Sir John Gorrie, CJ, in the case of Henry vs Bourne, The New Era Vol. xii, No. 39 (new ser.) whole no. 705. Friday 26th February 1886, p.3.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷"Sir John Gorrie, Knt". Public Opinion. Vol. III, No. 293. Tuesday November 29, 1887, p.8; "The Chief Justice" Public Opinion Vol. III, No. 275, Tuesday September 27, 1887, p.4.

⁵⁸"The Agricultural Contracts Ordinance". Public Opinion. Vol. V, No. 397. Friday December 7, 1888, p.4.

⁵⁹"Sir John Gorrie, Knt". Public Opinion, Vol. III, No. 293. Tuesday November 29, 1887, p.4.

⁶⁰"Vos Quoque, Judges!" Editorial. The New Era. Vol. xiii No. 40 (new ser) whole no. 708. Monday 8 March 1886, p.3.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Minute of the Attorney General to the Colonial Secretary re. Want of Confidence in the Administration of the law in relation to property and the validity of contracts. Enclosure 2 in Trinidad Despatch No. 230, 31 July 1890. CO 295/329. Fo. 15991, Robinson to Knutsford.

⁶³"The Chief Justice in Chambers". The New Era Vol. XV No.7 (New Series) Whole No. 777. Friday July 15, 1887, p.3.

⁶⁴Memo. of Sir G.H. Gatty, Attorney General. Enclosure in Trinidad Despatch No. 230 of 31 July 1890. re: The Administrative of Law relating to Real Property. CO 295/321 Fo. 2452. Robinson to Knutsford.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Trinidad Despatch No. 22 of 15 January, 1891 re. Tobago Petition vs Sir John Gorrie. CO 295/332 Fo. 2168. Robinson to Knutsford.

⁶⁷Memo. of Rev. J. Beresford Robinson vs Sir John Gorrie. Enclosure in Trinidad Despatch No. 30 of 26 January 1891. CO 295/332 Fo. 3304. Robinson to Knutsford.

⁶⁸"Sir John Gorrie, Knt." Public Opinion. Vol. III, No. 2. Tuesday November 29, 1887. (The five were: Edgar Tripp, G.R. Alston, Charles A. Fabien, Gordon Gordon and George Grant).

⁶⁹"The Chief Justice in Chambers". The New Era. Vol. XV, No. 7, Friday July 15, 1887, p.3.

⁷⁰Colonial Office Minutes on Trinidad Despatch No. 332 of 19 September, 1887. CO 295/324 Fo. 20234. H. Fowler to Knutsford.

⁷¹"Cocoa Contracts" Letter to the Editor by an Employer of Contractors. Public Opinion. Vol. 4 No. 305. Friday 20th January 1888, p.4.

⁷²"Cocoa Planters and Contractors". Public Opinion. Vol. 4 No. 307. Thursday 24th January 1888, p.5.

⁷³Report on the Blue Book for 1888 No. 51 Trinidad c.5620-9. Trinidad Blue Book for 1888. CO 300/99.

⁷⁴CO 297/12. Trinidad Acts 1888-1890. Trinidad and Tobago Ordinance 9 of 1st July 1889 (Gov. Henry Fowler). An Ordinance Respecting Agricultural Contracts.

⁷⁵Evidence of Mr. Charles A. Fabien, Cocoa Merchant and Proprietor of Cocoa Estates to the Royal Commission on the Proposed Franchise. The New Era Vol. xv, No. 44 (new ser.) whole no 814, Friday 30th March 1888, pp 6-7.

⁷⁶Colonial Reports Annual 1890 (XLVIII) 911 No. 108. Report on Trinidad and Tobago Blue Book for 1889. C. 5897-38. For details of the Act see Trinidad and Tobago Ordinance 9 of 1889. July 1. Henry Fowler. An Ordinance respecting Agricultural Contracts. CO 297/12. Trinidad Acts 1888-1890.

⁷⁷Report on the First Year working on the Agricultural Contracts Ordinance No. 9 of 1889. Mr. Justice Lewis to the Colonial Secretary. Enclosure in Trinidad Despatch No. 307 of 30 September 1890. CO 295/329. Fo. 20716. Robinson to Knutsford.

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹Memorandum of the Ordinance by Sir John Gorrie. Enclosure in Trinidad Despatch No. 262 of 20 July, 1889. CO 295/323 Fo. 15386. Fowler to Knutsford.

⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹Ibid.

⁸²Letter to the Editor. Public Opinion. Tuesday August 2, 1887.

⁸³Ibid.

CHAPTER 7

'THE ROSES AND THE THORNS': PLANTERS AGAINST PEASANTS 1890-1914

During the last decade of the nineteenth century, cocoa reached its peak of prosperity in Trinidad. These were the truly golden days of 'King Cocoa'. Large-scale planters flocked into cocoa to be part of this bonanza attempting to recuperate from previous losses in sugar. Peasant proprietors, too, sought to improve their economic position and continued to be attracted to the cocoa industry. For them, however, the issues went beyond the victory song. This group had pioneered and steered the industry to fortune and fame but for them the struggle was not over. They were now forced to redouble their efforts to ensure their own continued existence within the cocoa industry. The odds against them were great. The coming of prosperity signified for them, therefore, the commencement of a more intense phase of their struggle for survival; to consolidate and maintain their position within the industry, as well as to be recognised and accepted as an integral and indispensable part of the colony's economic base.

During the period of prosperity, most of the prominent French Creoles who previously planted sugar had transferred their operations into cocoa. Crisis, amalgamation, the influx of British corporate capital into sugar and the depression years of the 1880s had caused these previous owners, fallen into hard times, to exit the industry.

By 1896, practically all the sugar estates in Trinidad were concentrated in the hands of a few individuals and firms, most of which were British-based. Of the fifty-six sugar estates in existence, the Colonial Company and Burnley & Co. owned

thirteen estates. Grieg & Co., Messrs. Turnbull & Co, Sir Charles Tennant and the Lamont family were the other principal owners.¹ These estates were large and could only be maintained by those with access to large outlays of capital. The Usine St. Madeline estate, for instance, also owned by the Colonial Company, comprised an area of 4,000 acres.² Many French Creoles, who lacked the capital, therefore, found it easier either to sell out to amalgamating British companies or to switch their operations into cocoa. As Brereton puts it "Cocoa became the backbone of French Creole prosperity."³ (Note - and not vice-versa). Many fortunes were regained and many long-starved dreams fulfilled by cocoa.

Another indicator of the prosperity of cocoa was the high rate of export duties levied upon the crop for the purpose of funding Immigration. It also reflected the official tendency to prop up the sugar industry despite the realities of the case. All agricultural produce was subject to this tax, which was finally removed in 1926, allegedly in view of the low prices 'now-ruling' for the two principal products,⁴ cocoa and sugar, but only after much opposition by cocoa planters. This tax was to assist in funding the importation of Indian immigrant labourers into the colony. Most of these labourers were employed on sugar estates. For this reason cocoa planters felt justified in their view that the tax on cocoa should be considerably less than the tax on sugar.

At no time, however, was the tax levied on sugar equal to that levied on cocoa, despite the fact that sugar planters reaped the lion's share of the benefits of immigrant labour. Over the period 1871 to 1925 taxes on cocoa varied between 2s

9d to 12s 6d per 1000 lbs while that on sugar varied between 0s 9d to 6s 0d per 1000 lbs, i.e. about 50% the amount levied on cocoa.⁵

Prosperity therefore had produced not symbiosis but conflict once more, first, this time within the class of the large scale proprietary, the agricultural elite: sugar planters versus cocoa planters. Such intra-class conflict reveals that there was neither true class consciousness nor cohesion in the Marxian sense of economic class. The 'haves' fought against the 'haves' in what can only be described as inter-sectoral conflict. Both groups were struggling but with capitalist intent 1) for a greater share of the economic benefits and 2) against economic status erosion. The class loyalty and solidarity which they displayed in dealing with the peasant/labourer threat from below was quickly whittled away when the *status quo* of their own sectoral interest seemed in jeopardy.

In 1894, when depression struck and distress faced the agricultural industries of the colony, and in particular the sugar industry, the conflict intensified. The Legislative Council, after investigating the case, proposed to assist the planters by reducing the land tax and transforming to General Revenue the major part of the cost of East Indian Immigration, that is, reducing the planter's liability from two-thirds to one-third of the total cost.⁶ This would have meant a relief of £23,239, which was to be distributed as follows:

Sugar	-	about £15,725
Cocoa	-	about £6,834
Coffee	-	about £31
Coconuts	-	about £410

being a bonus of about

6s 6½d per ton on sugar

1s 4½d per bag (165 lbs) on cocoa

1s 4½d per bag (165 lbs) on coffee

0s 9¾d per 100 on coconuts⁷

In his covering letter to the Colonial Office, the Governor, Sir Napier Broome opined that the sugar industry was:

in a very depressed and critical condition and it deserves, and urgently needs, any assistance which can be properly given to it.⁸

While he stood ready to assist sugar planters in their distress, he expressed the view that:

Cocoa growing is at present, perhaps the most prosperous agriculture industry in the world. There is no case whatsoever for assisting it at the public expense.⁹

The Colonial Office refused to approve relief for any other industry but sugar arguing that all evidence suggested that cocoa was in a flourishing position. The Minutes went on to point out that there was no indication in the newspaper clippings accompanying the despatch for them to see that the cocoa industry was in need of relief "... nor if I did would I admit that any relief should be given."¹⁰ Furthermore, E. Wingfield, of the Colonial Office, expressed the opinion that:

This proceeding seems to furnish an argument for a more representative Legislative Council in Trinidad .. the planters - sugar and cocoa have it all their own way.¹¹

The most interesting revelation was the response of the cocoa planters to the decision of the Colonial Office. An embittered battle ensued between them and the sugar planters, fought largely in the local newspapers. The cocoa plantocracy

objected vociferously on the grounds that it was unfair to squeeze the money to help the sugar industry out of the poverty of the planters, small proprietors and in effect the labourers and artisans within the cocoa industry. "To suck the lifeblood out of the goose that lays the golden eggs", they pointed out, was tantamount to "killing it outright." In their view, the Colonial Government, and by extension, the Colonial Office, was allowing itself to be "bamboozled by every cry of wolf" coming from the sugar sector while cocoa tottered unaided on the brink of collapse.¹²

In spite of their complaints, in 1901/2, Imperial aid was granted to the sugar industry to the tune of £41,000 to be apportioned between the planters and the cane farmers. The planter was to get 13s 6d per ton of sugar on the average of his exports over the last three years while the cane-farmer received 1s per ton on his crop of the coming season.¹³ Undoubtedly, this decision had arisen out of the change in policy and attitude towards the colonies at the Colonial Office, with the accession of Joseph Chamberlain as Secretary of State in 1895 and the 1897 report of the West Indian Royal Commission headed by Sir Henry Norman which was appointed to investigate the tenuous situation of the West Indian economy and make recommendations for its betterment.

One of the principal conclusions of this Royal Commission was that if the existing conditions were to persist the West Indian sugar industry would face possible extinction before long, which would have, in turn, a most disastrous effect on the colonies since it was apparent that there was no one industry completely and satisfactorily well-placed to supplant sugar in the economy. It suggested, therefore, that the British Government should take every step to secure the abolition of Sugar

Bounties which crippled the export trade. This was eventually secured by the British Convention of 1903. A Parliamentary grant of £250,000 was to be made to the sugar industry to enable sugar planters to tide over the difficult times.¹⁴

In the conflict of interest which arose between cocoa and sugar planters during this period, colonial authority and imperial decision-making favoured sugar over cocoa despite the admirable performance and prospects of the Trinidad cocoa industry. Cocoa planters felt cheated - the ill-treated step-children of the Mother Country while sugar basked as the only begotten son. They did not hesitate, however, to mete out the same unequal treatment, which they so bitterly resented to the peasants and small farmers within the cocoa sector itself. While the cocoa planters smelt the fragrance of the roses of prosperity, the peasants felt the sharp piercing of its thorns. By the beginning of the twentieth century members of the agricultural élite were beginning to invest in both sugar and cocoa, thus bridging the perceived gulf which existed between the two sectors. The struggle therefore was more intense between large-scale and small-scale cultivators than between sugar and cocoa.

In flourishing times when one would have thought that there was room for all at the top, sharing the spotlight, the capitalist classes were of the opinion that cocoa would do even better if it were controlled by large-scale operations rather than small. The struggle of the cocoa peasants, then, was not merely for recognition but also against total expulsion. In this struggle they stood virtually alone while the imperial government dragged its feet on the matter of support for a peasant proprietary in the

West Indies and colonial governments inclined in favour of planter over peasant, even as it favoured sugar over cocoa.

Not unusually, the threat of extinction facing the cocoa peasantry was fine-tuned and intensified during the depression years of the 1880s and 1890s. Planters blamed the peasant sector for their increasing inability to stand their ground on the international market. In fact, any woes which could not legitimately be laid at the doorstep of the imperial government were attributed to the peasantry. Planters therefore moved in the direction of large-scale concentration, amalgamation or what Sir Norman Lamont called 'agglomeration'¹⁵ as the way to salvation. The peasant sector therefore had to fall back on its own resourcefulness and initiative in its struggle for acceptance.

The endeavours of peons, ex-slaves, squatters, and other pioneers, as well as the Crown Land alienation policy of Gordon had helped to cast a solid foundation for the development of a small-scale sector within the cocoa industry by 1875. Upon that base, the so-called cocoa peasantry continued to build and to become the virtual backbone of cocoa in Trinidad. Although the local plantocracy, the imperial government and many of Gordon's successors did not favour the existence of a peasantry, this aspiring sector nevertheless pressed on with their quest for upward mobility.

Sir William Robinson, Governor 1885-1891, initiated a policy "for the support and development of all agricultural interests including minor industries and small-scale proprietary."¹⁶ In keeping with the trend set by Gordon, Robinson acted in the belief that any formula for riches and progress must direct its attention to

excess productive capacity within the economy, thus bringing together surplus labour and idle land. This prescription leans in the direction of Hla Myint's contention that the utilisation of hitherto unemployed or underemployed resources, by defining a new production possibility curve, rather than a downward movement along the same curve as achieved by a reallocation of resources already in use, would enhance export production and productivity without placing strain on any part of the colony's productive apparatus.¹⁷

Robinson proposed to enhance exports and at the same time ease unemployment by increasing the number of *bona fide* agricultural occupiers through selling more Crown Land on easier terms and in a more systematic way than before. "If the small holder thrived and prospered", he argued, "he would become the backbone of the community." The sale of Crown Lands at the rate of about 7,000 acres annually, he pointed out, would result ultimately in an "increase in exports and more general diffusion and circulation of the principal means of existence."¹⁸ This formula held special significance for the cocoa industry, the expansion of which continued to be facilitated by the easier availability of Crown land whereby squatters, landless labourers and tenant farmers had been transformed into a peasant proprietary.

Accordingly the peasant agricultural sector grew to sizeable proportions. Almost all of the Crown land alienated between 1870-1914/5 went into the establishment of small holdings. As indicated previously most of the alienated Crown land went into cocoa. It is safe to conclude, therefore, that most of the land alienated

from the hands of the Crown between 1870 and 1914/5 went into the establishment of cocoa small-holdings.

Of the total acreage of Crown land granted for agricultural purposes during this time (310,946 acres) only 7.79% (24,228 acres) went into large-scale estates of 100 acres and up, while the remaining 92.21% (286,718 acres) went into holdings of less than 100 acres (Tables 7.1 and 7.2). Table 7.1 also indicates that 99.41% (25,385) of all those who came into possession of agricultural granted land were cultivators of acreages of less than 100 acres while a mere 0.53% (136) of them were planters with large-scale concerns of at least 100 acres in size. While 'under 100 acres' seems to be a rather broad category, Table 7.2 indicates that the average acreage per grant for the entire period was only 11.29 acres. Further, Table 7.3 illustrates that by 1889 of the 17,846 proprietors of holdings of under fifty acres in size, 87.9% (15,682) owned holdings of fifteen acres and under and 94.5% (16,873) owned holdings of less than twenty-five acres. In terms of actual acreage, 51.78% of total acreage in this fifty and under category (i.e. 60,489 acres) were accounted for by holdings of under fifteen acres while 72.17% (84,309 acres) formed holdings of under twenty-five acres. The average acreage per proprietor, therefore, was 6.55 acres (Table 7.3).

During this time only two grants were made of acreages in excess of 1,000 acres: one of 2005 a. or. 35 p. (acres, roods, perches) in the Caroni Ward Union to George Turnbull in 1879 and one of 1134 a. or. 31 p. in the Chaguanas Ward Union to Messrs. Smith & Bros. Co. in 1913. Only one other significantly large

grant (i.e. in excess of 500 acres) was granted - 610 acres in the Caroni Ward Union to J. Cummings in 1879.¹⁹

It seemed clear that the labouring class preferred to cultivate its own-account small holdings than to remain as mere wage labourers. Acting Colonial Secretary, H. Clarence Bourne, observed in 1899 that although wages paid to agricultural labourers were good (10d - 1s 8d per day) and were more than sufficient to supply the employee's wants, "they seldom gave more than three or four days labour per week" to the estates, opting instead to save and become at the first opportunity, peasant proprietors.²⁰ Cocoa, Bourne observed, maintained a much larger number of peasant proprietors than any other crop, including its rival, sugar.

Table 7.1

Crown Land Grants Per Ward Union 1870-1914/5
(includes only Grants of 100+ acres)

Ward Unions	No. of Grants	Total Acreage Granted	Average Size of Grants (acres)
Arima	24	3457	144.04
St. Anns	-	-	-
Tacarigua	1	197	197
Diego Martin	-	-	-
Naparima (N & S)	22	3585	162.95
Cedros	5	607	121.4
Mayaro	6	937	156.17
Couva	4	709	177.25
Montserrat	8	1003	125.38
Toco	3	437	145.67
Moruga	1	103	103
Caroni*	13	4386	337.38
Blanchisseuse	2	302	151
Chaguanas**	16	4216	263.5
Manzanilla	5	576	115.2
Oropouche	11	1488	135.27
Savana Grande	15	2225	148.33
La Brea	-	-	-
Totals 1870-1914/5	136	24,228	178.15

* This includes a single grant of 2005 acres made to George Turnbull

** This includes a single grant of 1134 acres made to Messrs. Smith & Bros. Co.

Source: Compilation from CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books 1870-1914/5.

Table 7.2

Crown Land Grants per Ward Union 1870-1914/5
(includes only Grants of Below 100 acres in size)

Ward Unions	No. of Grants	Total Acreage of Grants	Average Size of grants (acres)
Arima	4671	53,060	11.36
St. Anns	297	1,523	5.13
Tacarigua	2075	17,480	8.42
Diego Martin	377	2,837	7.53
Naparima (N & S)	2697	27,485	10.19
Cedros	1154	13,468	11.67
Mayaro	860	10,113	11.76
Couva	502	2,786	5.55
Montserrat	3466	36,962	10.66
Toco	1995	18,365	9.21
Moruga	110	1,017	9.25
Caroni	700	7,274	10.39
Blanchisseuse	318	2,606	-
Chaguanas	1763	18,093	10.26
Manzanilla	1830	19,587	10.70
Oropouche	2185	19,885	9.10
Savana Grande	3831	34,155	8.92
La Brea	4	22	5.5
Totals 1870-1914/5	25,385	286,718	11.29

Source: Compilation from CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books, 1870-1914/5.

Note: Port-of-Spain has been excluded from the table as there were 94 grants over the period but all were village building lots.

Table 7.3**No. of Small Proprietors and Acreages - 1889**

Size of Holdings	No. of Proprietors	Acreages (%)
1 acre + under	6,779 (37.97%)	3,387 (2.90%)
5 acres + under	10,989 (61.58)	16,529 (14.15)
10 acres + under	14,410 (80.75)	44,589 (38.17)
15 acres + under	15,682 (87.87)	60,489 (51.78)
25 acres + under	16,873 (94.55)	84,309 (72.17)
30 acres + under	17,314 (97.02)	96,436 (82.55)
40 acres + under	17,670 (99.01)	108,896 (93.22)
50 acres + under	17,846 (100%)	116,816 (100%)

Source: CO 295/324 Fo. 20234 Trinidad Desp. No. 332 of 19 Sept. 1889. Ag. Gov. Fowler to Knutsford, Enclosure No. 2. Memorandum on Immigration.

Note: The average acreage per proprietor was 6.55 acres.

To be counted in this class of small cocoa proprietors were those of the ex-slave class, Venezuelan migrants and ex-indentured immigrants who had either been granted or had purchased land. In the Indian settlement blocks which had been established, Calcutta, Piparo, Coolie Town, Caratal, Guaracara Settlements, most of the grantees had established cocoa cultivations in addition to a quantity of corn and rice.²¹ Free Africans also cultivated cocoa on their small holdings, thus contributing to the growth of the peasantry.²²

The increase in the class of small proprietors was reflected in the increase in the popularity of Government Savings Banks, Friendly Societies and informal saving institutions such as the 'Su-Su' or 'Esusu' which Maureen Warner-Lewis describes as "a typical West African means of pooled monetary contribution which was at the disposal of each donor in turn over a specific period of time."²³ The su-su was believed to be of Yoruba origin used by ex-slaves and free Africans and later by others at large within the Trinidad society.²⁴

Friendly Societies were mutual self-help benefit and financial organisations, which, according to A.F. and D. Wells in their survey:

consist of a certain number of persons who pay, weekly or monthly, a certain sum for the maintenance and support of the sick and for the burial of the dead. They appoint as their head one of themselves, whose orders by their regulations, they are bound to obey on matters connected with the societies.²⁵

Like the su-su, it was a means of enforcing the virtue of thriftiness and the practice of compulsory savings. In 1890 there were only twenty-three Friendly Societies in Trinidad. By 1915 there were at least 212. (Table 7.4).²⁶ During that time (1890-1915) membership had grown from 4,624 persons in 1890 to 23,945 persons in 1915 and total funds had increased from \$6,602 to \$134,654. These Friendly Societies were patronised mainly by the Negroes; the East Indians seemed reluctant to join and utilised instead the Government Savings Bank.²⁷ By 1912, out of a total number of 23,695 depositors in Savings Banks with £395,504 to their credit, there were 10,071 East Indian depositors with £132,857 to their credit.²⁸

The Government Savings Banks were the most convenient means of savings for people of small incomes. With its Head Office in Port-of-Spain and branch

offices in outlying towns and rural villages, contribution to this institution became a fairly reliable guide as to the well-being of the economy. Branches were located in Post Offices or District Revenue Offices. Deposits were accepted at any branch and sums accepted were as low as one shilling. Similarly, there was no stringent limit on the levels of withdrawal. The annual rate of interest on deposits was dropped from 4% (established in 1883) to 3% in 1889. No interest was paid on amounts in excess of £200 in 1881. This limit was raised to £300 in 1891 and £500 in 1901.²⁹ This stipulation was to serve as an additional incentive to the small man.

As cocoa cultivation by small holders grew in popularity, so too did the Savings Banks. The number of depositors increased from 899 in 1875 to 9,649 in 1895 and again to 26,527 in 1915, while total amount of deposits almost tripled during the latter twenty-year period (Table 7.5). The majority of these depositors derived their incomes from the cocoa industry. With the failure of the cocoa crop in 1906 there was an instant fall in the number of depositors and total amount of deposits to their credit. Between 1905 and 1906 cocoa production dropped markedly from 48,416,251 lbs to 27,570,928 lbs. Export values registered a corresponding collapse from £1,041,109 to £802,073. By 1906 savings bank depositors had fallen from 15,212 in 1906 with £286,320 to their credit to 8,864 with £179,537 to their credit in 1907.³⁰ During the year 1906, withdrawals exceeded deposits by £22,320. Receipts from the cocoa industry were short, owing to crop failure and instead of adding to their savings, in many cases depositors were forced to draw upon them in order to maintain themselves and their families.³¹

Table 7.4Numbers, Memberships and Funding Friendly Societies, 1890-1920

Year	No. of Societies	Members	Total Funds (\$)
1890	23	4,624	6,601.96
1895	63	6,384	20,537.36
1900	57	6,730	28,407.52
1905	90	9,028	49,393.92
1910	135	11,918	88,337.51
1915	212*	23,945	134,653.72
1920	82**	6,510	64,870.55

Source: Colonial Office. Col. Research Publication No. 15. Friendly Societies in the West Indies. Report on a Survey by A.F. and D. Wells (London: H.M.S.O. 1953) held in Barbados, National Archives. p.102.

Note: * The Colonial Reports Annual. Report for Trinidad and Tobago for this year lists the no. of Friendly Societies as 263.

** The marked fall in the no. of societies, membership and funds can be attributed to wartime hardships.

Table 7.5Depositors in Savings Banks & Total Deposits (£) 1875-1930

Year	Total No. of Depositors	Total Amount of Deposits (£)
1875	899	n.g.
1880	2,573	n.g.
1885	3,490	87,511
1890	6,769	144,554
1895	9,649	129,623
1900	13,464	226,689
1905	15,944	300,908
1910	19,654	333,840
1915	26,527	n.g.
1920	n.g.	n.g.
1925	26,670	358,094
1930	37,900	470,273

Source: Compilation from CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books; Colonial Reports Annuals.

There can be little doubt that the cocoa peasants were vital to the expansion and prosperity of the industry during this time. Despite the mass influx of large-scale proprietors into the industry since the 1870s the indications were clear. Cocoa was and continued to be ideally a small man's crop. As was the case in the Gold Coast, the cost of production tended to be higher on large estates worked by wage labourers than on 'family-worked' peasant farms and the buffer capacity against low prices much weaker.³²

Cocoa planters recognised the value of the peasantry and their priceless contribution to the expansion of the industry. One planter remarked:

Like the coral insects which, small in themselves, nevertheless build up whole islands in time, the squatters and small proprietors have

formed some of the largest cocoa estates in the colony and they may be considered as the pioneers of that cultivation in whole districts.³³

While recognising that their fortunes and that of the cocoa peasantry were inextricably and intricately interwoven, however, the Trinidad cocoa planters feared and stoutly resisted any attempts to promote small proprietorship as the avenue to progress. In fact, they tried every means possible to dispossess these small holders and effect structural transformation from small scale to large scale within the cocoa industry. This is ironic, in light of the fact, that, as Christer Gunnarson points out, the rapid expansion of the West African industry during this time was made possible precisely because the obverse was true; there was structural transformation from estate production to small-holder based production.³⁴

The trend towards amalgamation and structural transformation of the cocoa sector from a small-holder dominated concern to a large-scale operation originated with the contract system discussed earlier. However, there were other means of effecting large-scale concentration.

Prospective planters were advised of another method in frequent use for the establishment of a cocoa estate. In fact it was a method resorted to not only by them but also those seeking to increase acreage. A planter could secure by purchase a 'block of cultivation' surrounded by those of a number of small peasant proprietors and gradually proceed to 'gobble up' his neighbours either by purchase or forfeiture. To facilitate this move, he was directed to invest in an estate shop and run it on the credit or 'truck' system for contractors and neighbouring small proprietors, based on the belief that "the character of the native peasantry" was such as to "lend itself to the scheme."³⁵ The shop served to reduce considerably the contractor's demand on

the planters for cash advances, while it involved small scale proprietors in an ever-deepening mire of indebtedness, resulting in the loss of his holding.

One planter, Mr. W.S. Tucker, the proprietor of two estates in the valley of Cuesa, Macqueripe, in a paper read to the Trinidad Agricultural Association in 1885, described how he himself had expanded his operation using the contract system as well as the purchase method.

On these lands I allowed many persons to make gardens and plant cacao ... Later on ... I was induced from the promising appearance of the district to take over the planted portion. This, in conjunction with other smaller pieces started in the valley (of which I am now the sole proprietor) became an object worthy of special attention, and in consequence, I left town and became a cacao planter.³⁶

In fact, in some areas as a rule, the large estates had not been obtained by grants of Crown Land but by the amalgamation of a number of small ones. The cocoa growing district of Montserrat, for instance, had been opened up originally by the Spanish 'conqueros' or peons who squatted and cultivated small holdings 'conucos' which yielded 10 to 100 bags of cocoa a year. Most of these had been taken over and amalgamated into large estates by 1888. By this time the only large estate in the area that had not been formed in this way was Philippine.³⁷ It appears that when these original squatters after 1869 had purchased their small holdings from the Crown, these in turn had been gradually acquired by "men of capital" and made into extensive and valuable cocoa estates. This amalgamation process was lauded as a boon to the cocoa industry and to the progress of the island as a whole. Governor Freeling, commenting on the trend in 1883, observed that in this way "the supposed evil of establishing too large a peasant proprietary body seems therefore to practically remedy itself with advantage to all classes."³⁸

Many planters felt that the total elimination of the small holder and the movement in the direction of agglomeration as was indeed the way to salvation as it had been in the case of the sugar industry. Sir Norman Lamont for instance argued that:

When there are only ten or twelve cacao estates in the island, the cacao industry may once again become prosperous. When we have an amalgamation of cacao properties we shall see cacao cultivation carried on as in Ceylon ... It is in that direction of amalgamation of estates, more science and more capital in our industry that I look for improvement, rather than in embarkation upon a policy of manufacturing chocolate, or splitting up estates, already mostly too small, into minute fragments owned by peasant proprietors.³⁹

It was felt that the primitive cultural system, preparation methods and simple technology of the peasant sector tended to detract from the attractiveness of Trinidad cocoa on the international market. It was much less tedious, too, for a prospective planter to 'gobble up his neighbours' than to 'start from scratch'. Everybody, even the most upright of planters got involved in the game of squeezing out the small-scale cultivators.⁴⁰ This was done in many ways - the establishment of an estate shop being only one.

Small-scale proprietors lacked the initial capital to launch cultivation or for living expenses while the crop matured. They therefore resorted to taking credit from the estate shops or cash advanced on the basis of future crop earnings. There were many who supplemented their ground provision earnings by giving of their labour for wages to nearby plantations. Those who wanted, however, to devote themselves entirely to the business of cocoa growing, found that the seasonality of cocoa harvesting seriously restricted their cash flow throughout the year. Their only

means of recourse, in order to sustain life, was further cash advances and 'goods' on credit from estate shops. Many creditors became large-scale planters in this way.

Small holders who pledged their crops for cash advances or credit found that their properties could be put up for sale at short notice by usurious money lenders (who were oftentimes themselves large scale planters and shop owners) if the small holder reneged on his payments or failed to deliver up crops pledged.⁴¹ On many plantations the planters issued their own token coins or currency notes (Purchase Orders) to the contractors, labourers and small proprietors to be used at the estate shops and sometimes a wide range of local shops connected with the estate.⁴² As a means of security not only were entire crops pledged but often entire properties. In this way many peasants were ruthlessly dispossessed.

This trend became obvious as early as the 1880s, when it was observed that:

Working men of a useful class and persons formerly small proprietors, descendants of the old Spanish and French settlers, were emigrating from Trinidad to the neighbouring republic of Venezuela.⁴³

Possibly they were attracted by facilities for land acquisition offered by the Venezuelan Government.⁴⁴ Another, more real possibility existed, however. In 1885, Governor Havelock, in a confidential despatch to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Earl of Derby, ascribed this migratory trend to property dispossession as a result of the operation of the laws concerning debtors and creditors.⁴⁵ Havelock pointed out that the Attorney General, Mr. H. Ludlow believed that the legal practices in the colony with respect to the laws of mortgages and contracts gave "too much scope to capitalist lenders to act usuriously and oppressively against the borrower."⁴⁶

The system worked as follows: a small proprietor obtained a mortgage on his property, usually for an amount considerably less than the value of the holding. Mortgagees generally obliged the mortgagor to purchase from them all agricultural implements which he required for working the estate and to deliver up the crop to the mortgagees, who undertook to sell it on commission or purchase it themselves. After sale, so long as anything remained due on the mortgage, the mortgagee was able to sell out at any time he pleased, even in opposition to the wishes of the mortgagor. This was invariably the case as compound interest was charged on mortgages. In the event of sale, under the power in the Mortgage Deed, it was the usual practice for the mortgagee to purchase.⁴⁷ The mortgagor normally had no legal recourse. He was allowed one month after the foreclosure Judgement in which to settle the account due to the mortgagee. After this time the property was advertised for sale.⁴⁸

The advertising of sale in the Royal Gazette for a period of one to three months did not mean a reprieve for the mortgagor. Once advertised it was inevitably the case that the property if not purchased by the mortgagee (at the amount outstanding on the mortgage) would be purchased by some other large-scale planter. Such newspapers were not read by more than: "half-a-dozen small proprietors or small agriculturists of any class, throughout the length and breadth of the island."⁴⁹ It followed that such properties were instantly removed from the hands of the small-holding class thus contributing to the advancement of agglomeration.

Planters defended their position by arguing that small holders loved to move on, anyway, their nature lent itself better to opening up new lands and to labour. Furthermore, no one forced them into debt. Instead they entered voluntarily, simply

because they lacked business acumen and could not manage their own financial affairs.⁵⁰ A memorandum from the judges of the colony indicated that they, too, were of the opinion that the rules in force were adequate and that there was no need to change them.⁵¹

The Colonial Office was of the same opinion:

these are no doubt onerous conditions but they are entered into voluntarily by the mortgagor and it would be a strong interference with freedom of contracts to make them unlawful - moreover if they were prohibited the mortgagee might not improbably demand a higher rate of interest.⁵²

Stanley merely drew attention to the dangers of the law being worded in such a way as to enable mortgagees to oppress mortgagors. He did not recommend, however, any alteration of the law.⁵³

In his tenure, Sir John Gorrie sought to initiate changes bringing greater justice to mortgagors. Under his instigation the practice came to be accepted by the court of granting injunctions against sale by mortgagee and appointing receivers of the estate. Mortgagees rebelled feeling that their rights were being trampled underfoot. The result was a reluctance to lend on the part of men with capital - once Sir John Gorrie continued his system of justice via personal interviews in Chambers.⁵⁴ But in spite of such noble efforts, greedy capitalist planters continued to pursue their goal of dispossession of small holders with a fair measure of success.

During the crisis of 1890s when economic depression seriously threatened agriculture in Trinidad, the cocoa agricultural elite opened its arms, in theory, though not in practice to embrace the peasant proprietary. The Central Agricultural Board had already announced its endorsement of Robinson's plan to support minor

industries and the peasantry.⁵⁵ Allegedly in the interest of progress and improvement, cocoa planters objected to the plan to tax the cocoa acreages large and small at the rate of 1s per acre (i.e. 10% the cost of the land at £1 per acre), pointing out that the result would be to "effectively prevent the spread of ... new enterprises by any but rich men ... and ... swamp out peasant proprietary."⁵⁶ It would also mean that the small producer would realise less for his produce.

The peasant proprietary was now being defended as a positive factor on the West Indian economic landscape.

a peasant proprietary - every man having an interest in the land, with his small house and his cow, and, in many cases, has horse -means a well-behaved body of citizens, bound to devote their whole time to the cultivation of their plots, and having not time to listen to demagogues and silly West Indian newspaper scribblers.⁵⁷

This, spoken in favour of a petition to advance sums of money to cultivators out of public funds, seemed to be a genuine plea for the support of a peasantry as a vibrant and economically dynamic body. Planters' concern, however, seemed to be limited to the realm of rhetoric. Even as they made impassioned pleas on behalf of the peasant proprietary, dispossession and amalgamation continued apace.

The imperial authority, too, had come alive to the benefits of settling a peasant proprietary upon the land. Joseph Chamberlain had appointed in 1895 a special commission headed by Sir Henry Norman to enquire into the problems of colonial economic development and make recommendations accordingly. Based upon its findings, this Commission reported favourably with respect to the development of the peasantry. In view of the nebulous prospects for sugar monoculture, the Norman Commission favoured agricultural diversification, as well as assistance from the

Imperial government towards peasant land acquisition schemes and the development of agricultural small holdings. The Commission felt that Trinidad, Grenada and Jamaica had been spared the worst effects of the depression owing to the extension of cocoa cultivation in the two former, and banana in the latter colony as well as to the existence of small holder agriculture.⁵⁸

The change in the 'colonial office' mind, as R. Lobdell describes it, can be ascribed to several factors: the depressed economic state of the colonies; a more liberal socio-political and ideological climate in the mother country; and the radical and reforming spirit of Joseph Chamberlain and other influential individuals such as Fabian Socialist Colonial Administrator, Sydney Olivier and Sir Henry Norman, both of the Norman Commission.⁵⁹

Once more, however, for whatever reason, nothing significant was done to follow through on the recommendations of the Norman Commission for the direct benefit of the peasantry. While imperial policy-makers accepted in theory that a West Indian peasantry was a positive and functional economic feature, they however never really acted upon this belief. Once more the cocoa peasants were left to find their own way and work out their own redemption.

Their struggle against expulsion continued. It seemed that everyone had conveniently lost sight of the fact that:

Had there been in St. Domingo in those days a large body of free peasant proprietors each with his own small holding with much to lose by revolt and anarchy and everything to gain by steady abidance by the laws, the fate of St. Domingo might have been very different.⁶⁰

It was only when the colony almost went up in flames in the riots of the 1930s that the Colonial Office and its Agricultural Department started to pay serious

attention to the fuller possibilities of peasant proprietorship, as the key to solving the problems of the West Indies as identified by the Moyne Commission and created largely by the plantation system. This view was supported by other official and unofficial observations of conditions in the British West Indies. William MacMillan for instance writing in 1936 warned of problems which were potentially dangerous but which could be solved by land settlement and peasant agriculture.⁶¹

In the meantime, however, the cocoa peasantry struggled on its own initiatives in the absence of the protecting aegis of supportive imperial policy and its colonial execution. Rather than abating, the system of agglomeration and large scale concentration became more entrenched.

A survey done in 1905 reveals several interesting facts of the case. There was a recognisable trend towards the concentration of multiple cocoa holdings by one individual or family. Most of the prominent families in Trinidad owned at least two cocoa estates each.⁶³ The classic case, was that of W. Gordon who owned twenty-one estates in Toco, one cocoa/coconut estate in Mayaro and the Moka Estate in the Diego Martin Ward Union.⁶⁴ The statistics for the alienation of Crown land would indicate that most of these estates were certainly not purchased directly from the Crown but were amalgamated from small holdings over time either by purchase or some other means.⁶⁵

Another interesting revelation of the survey was that many estates were owned not by individuals but by companies, either partnerships, family concerns, or limited and unlimited liability companies as Table 7.6 indicates. Public officials were not above the land-grabbing tendencies that had become part of cocoa large-scale

proprietorship: Hon. C. Leotaud, Hon. R. de Verteuil, Jas. de Verteuil, Hon. W.G. Gordon; Hon. W. Robertson, Sir J. Needham and Hon. A.P. Marryat were among them. One member of the British landed aristocracy, Lord Pendlesham, owned the Las Cuevas estate in the Blanchisseuse Ward Union. Even His Grace the Archbishop owned a cocoa estate - the Sta. Isabella estate in Arima.⁶⁶

In many cases one person owned cocoa estates in more than one Ward Union and therefore they were not contiguous to each other. This meant that managers and agents/overseers had to be hired for those estates on which owners did not reside, thus introducing the element of absenteeism and all its attendant evils.⁶⁷ In some instances the planter lived in the town rather than on any of his estates. Some estates were not even owned by locals, e.g. the two Maracas Valley estates which were owned by the British chocolate manufacturing firm, Cadbury Bros. based in Birmingham. This firm later acquired a third estate in the same area in 1930.⁶⁸

Table 7.6

Ownership of Cocoa Estates by Companies 1905

Company	Cocoa Estates Owned	Ward Union
Borde Bros	La Horquetta Caroni Farm; Armonica La Pastora; Tranquilidad St. Madeline	Arima Caroni St. Ann's Toco
Malze Bros.	Villanueva	Cedros
Cadbury Bros.	Maracas Valley	Maracas
De Gannes Bros.	La Compensacion	Arima
J.H. Archer & Co.	El Peru; El Manacal; El Florida	Caura
Poole Syndicate	Poole	Savana Grande
Wilson Son & Co.	Soconusco La Josephina	St. Ann's Manzanilla
F.J. Scott & Sons	La Soledad	St. Ann's
Colonial Bank	Ariperio	Savana Grande/Moruga
Colonial Co. Ltd.	Hibernia	Montserrat
C. Croney & Co.	St. Lucien	Diego Martin
Trinidad Land & Finance Co.	Tucker Valley; Haleland Park	Diego Martin
G.R. Alston & Co.	Providence La Soledad	Upper Caroni Toco
Trinidad Estate Co. Ltd.	Caroni; St. Helena	Caroni
Trinidad Cocoa & Coffee Ltd.	Verdant Vale; Willow Vale; S. Patrick; La Razon; San Mateo; Cedar Hill	Arima
C. Tennant & Co.	Pluck Ortinola Concord Pluck	Naparima Naparima LaBrea/Oropouche Maracas
Carr Bros.	Itaccidonium	Chagaunas
Ellis Grell & Co.	Morvant	St. Ann's
Juan Camps & Co.	Santa Paula	Savana Grande/Moruga

Source: J.H. Collens. The Trinidad and Tobago Yearbook 1905. (Port-of-Spain; Gov't. Printing Office, 1905).

While at the surface it was easy and convenient to draw a firm line of demarcation between cocoa planters and sugar planters, perceiving only the rivalry which existed between the two sectors, ownership data reveal that the two categories were not always so clearly distinguishable. In many cases, there were planters/owners who held both cocoa and sugar plantations. L. Bert de la Marre, for example, owned nine cocoa estates (six in Cedros, two in Guanapo and one in Tacarigua) and three sizeable sugar plantations: Orange Grove, Macoya and El Dorado, which together produced 2775 tons of sugar annually. Another example was Charles Tennant & Co. which owned four cocoa estates (two in Naparima, one in Maracas and one in La Brea/Oropouche) as well as eleven sugar estates: Ben Lomond, Friendship, Bien Venue, La Fortune, Hermitage, Concord, Buen Intento, Malgretout, Inverness, Glenroy and Cavan, which together produced 7225 tons per annum.⁶⁹

Yet another notable feature of cocoa estate ownership was that not only was there inter-sectoral involvement in cocoa and sugar, but that the cocoa industry was becoming vertically integrated. Cocoa planters were also becoming the owners of produce and cocoa dealing firms in Port-of-Spain as illustrated by the survey. C. Tennant & Co., in addition to owning four cocoa estates and eleven sugar estates, also owned the Tennant Agency, a cocoa-dealing firm at King Street, San-Fernando; Leon Agostini who owned nine cocoa estates also owned a produce merchant business, Leon Agostini & Co. at South Quay, Port-of-Spain; Borde Bros. owned six cocoa estates and a produce dealing firm at Marine Square, Port-of-Spain. Hon. C.

Leotaud owned twelve cocoa estates and the produce dealing business - Chas. Leotaud & Sons, also at Marine Square.⁷⁰

Ex-indentured East Indian immigrants, too, had begun to move from small-scale proprietorship to large-scale: Boodhni owned the Belle Vue estate in Couva; Cowlessar - the Erasdas Estate, Mary Bagwandeen - the El Campa, Seecharan - the Young Grant Estate, Boodhoosingh - the Putnam and Mon Plaisir Estates - all in La Brea/Oropouche; Dhanooolal - the Belle Vue estate in Maracas; and Madoo Lala - the Prospect Estate in Upper Caroni. Given the Anglicisation of names, it is difficult to distinguish those of African descent from the list. One estate - the Dahomey estate in Guanapo owned by B. Douglas bears possibility - most likely named after that Kingdom in West Africa.⁷¹ Some prominent families of the coloured middle-class, however, owned cocoa properties, e.g. the Maresse-Smiths and the Bruntons.⁷²

By 1905, therefore, the structure of ownership within the cocoa industry had become rather complex, moving as Norman Lamont wished, in the direction of large-scale concentration, multiple holdings, amalgamated operations and inter-sectoral integration. The process of large-scale concentration in the industry was beginning to involve horizontal as well as vertical integration. No doubt many of these owners of amalgamated concerns had become such through the structure of indebtedness. After 1905 the process of agglomeration continued and became more and more complex. Having to compete with operations of such magnitude, cocoa small holders found life increasingly difficult.

By 1917 dispossession was not the only penalty for delinquent debtors, those borrowers found to be in contravention of a debtor/creditor agreement. Ordinance

No. 14 of 30 May 1917, was enacted to make provision for greater security for persons making advances on agricultural produce in the event of contravention by the debtor. For such a misdemeanour, the debtor was made liable to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a term of up to three years.⁷³ Over time, apparently, the pledging of crops had evolved into the pledging of entire properties and for larger cash advances or amounts of credit. The list of creditors was no longer confined to individual owners of estates and estate shops or usurers. The 'creditor' business had also expanded into large-scale operations; creditors were now the owners of cocoa dealing/exporting firms in the city.

At the time of the onset of the First World War, 1914, these new creditors were not strictly local but many were of European origin, in particular Germans and Austro-Hungarians, many of whom were not naturalised. Naturalised Germans had been for decades involved in supplying merchandise to estates. Many of them had become integral parts of French Creole society: for example, the Boos, Stollmeyer and Wupperman families.⁷⁴ By 1905 there had been a new wave of Germans seeking to establish themselves not only in the merchant business but also in the ownership of cocoa estates. It was highly probable that these goals were facilitated through the cycle of indebtedness. L & W Schoener owned 3 cocoa estates and 1 coconut/cocoa estate. M. Holler owned 2 cocoa estates at Caura. Other German names which appear are: Bernstein, Scheult, Epps and Metz.⁷⁵

The intensification of unnaturalised German involvement as dealers/creditors in the cocoa industry was brought to light clearly with the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. Colonies were prohibited from carrying on any business 'with

or on behalf of any alien enemy'. In Trinidad a Liquidating Committee led by D. Slyne was set up to supervise and control the winding up of alien/enemy businesses.⁷⁶ The reports of the Liquidating Committee reveal that many of these unnaturalised Germans had become possessors of cocoa estates through the system of indebtedness. Max Reimer who owned an estate at Caura was also a cocoa dealer and creditor. Alien-owned Companies such as Paul H. Scheerer and Co; Neubauer & Co. and Trinidad Properties Ltd. amassed vast acreages of several estates all over the island and the list of their mortgagors/debtors was indeed lengthy.⁷⁷ Many of these cocoa estates and produce dealing businesses of the following were all placed in the hands of receivers by 1915.⁷⁸

The system of indebtedness had become more complex as the report of Mr. D. Slyne revealed. Many of the debtors were small scale proprietors and sometimes large scale planters who had already obtained advances against their crops and who, in order to continue cultivating, had once more pledged their produce to obtain fresh financial aid and pay off other creditors. Cocoa growers were not the only ones indebted to these European firms, a large number of the debtors were "shopkeepers carrying on their business on current accounts."⁷⁹

The structure of indebtedness seems to have become, over time, internally stratified, as in the case of the Gold Coast cocoa industry. As the cocoa industry developed, land became increasingly democratised into small holdings. Small-scale proprietors who lacked the initial capital and finance for recurrent expenditure found that their only means of recourse was to usurious money lenders who charged as much as 25% interest. The lowest rates amounted to \$1.00 per month on every

\$5.00 borrowed, resulting in the payment of about 240% interest per annum.⁸⁰ Another option was to take cash advances or credit from local shopkeepers/intermediary cocoa dealers who bought cocoa from small holders and sold it in turn to the European cocoa dealing firms in the city. While the small scale growers became indebted to local intermediaries, these intermediaries became indebted in turn to the European cocoa dealing firms in order to continue making cash advances and extending credit to peasant proprietors.

When the local middlemen were unable to discharge their liabilities to their European creditors, it led to an eventual assumption of ownership by the European firms of both the intermediary businesses as well as their debtors, the small scale holdings.⁸¹ Regretfully this system, therefore, further advanced the cause of amalgamation and integration within the Trinidad cocoa industry. It is not surprising then, that large scale integrated companies came to feature prominently in cocoa land tenure. Even the British chocolate manufacturing firm of Cadbury's engaged in acquisition of cocoa estates in Trinidad with the view of securing raw materials at source.⁸²

Purchase and the 'cycle of indebtedness' had served to concentrate large acreages and sometimes several estates into the hands of single individuals, partnerships and companies, making 'non-residence' on estates inevitable. Again, 'alien' proprietorship provided vivid illustrations of this situation. The Liquidating Committee reported in 1917, that the German firm of Neubauer & Huttenheim, a firm also engaged in granting credit jointly with the Dresdner Bank (London) owned nine cocoa estates, totalling 2,604 acres in Turure, Caroni, Guanapo, Poole, Moruga,

Montserrat, Caura and St. Joseph. Another 'alien' firm registered in the United Kingdom, Trinidad Properties Ltd., owned a total of 5,625 acres of cocoa in Siparia, Manzanilla, Santa Cruz, Savanna Grande and Cunupia, in addition to two cocoa dealing stores in Port-of-Spain. Max Reimer owned 495 acres in Caura plus a produce dealing business in Port-of-Spain.⁸³ The difficulty experienced by the peasant cocoa farmer to secure loans especially in large amounts ensured that many of them were ousted from their small holdings by creditors as soon as they became valuable.⁸⁴

The trend towards amalgamation and dispossession did not, however, achieve its intended goal, i.e. the disappearance of the small-scale proprietary as a significant factor in the Trinidad cocoa industry. Despite the array of forces against them, and their continuing poverty, the ranks of the small holders continued to increase numerically. Their houses, mud-walled one or two-roomed huts thatched with timit, were evidence of the poverty of their existence. "On retiring to rest" as Collens put it, "night shirts being unheard of ... these honest folk ... insert their bodies into empty cacao bags as a refuge from bats."⁸⁵ And yet the class of peasant proprietors grew, indicating their energy, ambition, determination and resilience individually and as a class.

In 1924, the small owner, the peasant proprietor was still 'the backbone of the colony.' By 31 December 1924, the number of owners of land of 100 acres or less stood at 47,042 of which 39,574 owned holdings not exceeding ten acres, while 809 persons owned properties exceeding 100 acres in size.⁸⁶ In the 1930s, the cocoa industry was still dominated by small holders. Statistics for the year 1930 reveal that

there were 16,000 cocoa holdings, large and small, with a total acreage of 209,000. This meant that the average size of a cocoa holding was thirteen acres. The majority of holdings fell within the two to twenty acre range.⁸⁷ The peasant proprietary class seemed to have been an open-ended one fed from below by a steady inflow of previously landless labourers, usufruct contractors and tenant farmers as well as time-expired Indian immigrants and liberated Africans. Despite the exit of several small holders from this class, however, attempts to make large scale amalgamated estates the sole or dominant mode of organisation of cocoa cultivation were repeatedly frustrated. Amalgamated concerns, nevertheless, became a key feature of the Trinidad cocoa industry - an alternative way of organisation of production.

The evidence indicates that while small-holders, the so-called cocoa peasantry, struggled against and stoutly resisted the efforts of the planters to eliminate them from cocoa production they were not against the idea of diversifying their economic pursuits themselves. When prices finally fell in the 1930s beyond the point of profitability and showed no indication of any future improvement, many of these small holders voluntarily exited the industry in search of a more fertile soil on which to devote their creative economic energies. For the moment, however, they remained and endured the storms, helping each other along the way with co-operative systems such as the su-su, friendly society, 'gayap' and 'day-work' labour exchange systems.⁸⁸ In his annual report for 1913/14, the Colonial Secretary, S.W. Knaggs had observed that the chief factors in the prosperity of Trinidad were "her agriculture and her peasant proprietary."⁸⁹ Indeed, the peasantry lived on long after the names of many large-scale planters had become merely distant memories.

Throughout the entire period, in spite of good intentions and clear perceptions, colonial and imperial legislators/policy makers continued to move cautiously and non-committally on the key issues affecting the peasantry. The colonial and imperial authorities displayed a tendency to resist far-reaching radical reform for various reasons. The frugal attitude of the Exchequer and the tendency to view colonial economic development as not very high on the list of expenditure priorities lay beneath this cautious approach. They resorted instead to temporary expedients, short-term remedies which papered over the cracks but did not tackle the problems at the root. As one newspaper columnist put it, the approach seems to have been and continued to be one of:

"Après moi le déluge"⁹⁰

CHAPTER 7

NOTES

¹R.W. Beachey. The British West Indies Sugar Industry in the Late 19th Century, pp.122-3.

²Ibid.

³B. Brereton. Race Relations in Colonial Trinidad 1870-1900. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p.50.

⁴Colonial Reports Annual Series 1926. No. 1311. Trinidad and Tobago Report for 1925.

⁵CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books for the Years 1871 to 1925.

⁶Col. Rep. Annual. Trinidad and Tobago Report for 1894. 1895 (145) LX.X. 607. c.7847-6.

⁷CO 295/361 no. 1414. Trinidad Desp. No. 15. Napier Broome to Ripon. Enclosure No. 3. Memo by the Government Statist, H. Clark, dated 8 Jan. 1895.

⁸Ibid., Governor's letter.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid., Col. Office Minutes. Minutes of Oliver to Wingfield Draft Despatch No. 60 Ripon to Napier Broome.

¹¹Ibid., Col. Office Minutes. Minutes of E. Wingfield.

¹²"The Crisis" Public Opinion 12 November 1894; Daily News, 6 November 1894.

¹³Col. Rep. Annual, No. 382. Report for Trinidad and Tobago for 1901-2. 1903(382) XLIII-521, Cd. 1388-6.

¹⁴F. Stockdale. Comptroller of Development and Welfare. Agriculture in the West Indies. Report of the Stockdale Committee. September 1940.

¹⁵R.W Beachey. The British West Indian Sugar Industry in the Late 19th Century, p.42.

¹⁶CO 295/329 Fo. 15986. T'dad Desp. No. 225 of 29 July 1890. Robinson to Knutsford. Enclosure. Minutes of a Meeting of the Central Agricultural Board held on 27 June 1890.

¹⁷The argument is in keeping with the Third World Version of Adam Smith's 'Vent-for-Surplus' model of International Trade as adapted by Hla Myint in "The Classical Theory of International Trade and the Underdeveloped Countries". Economic Journal Vol. 68. 1958. pp.317-337.

¹⁸CO 295/237. T'dad Desp. No. 106 of 5 April, 1892. Enclosure; 'The Remedy' Public Opinion, 12 December 1894.

¹⁹CO 300. Trinidad Blue Books, Colonial Reports Annuals 1877-1913. 1 acre = 4 roods; 1 rood = 40 perches.

²⁰Col. Report Annual. No. 303. Trinidad and Tobago Report for 1899. 1900(303) Liv. 1047 Cd. 354-9. General observations.

²¹Annual Report of Warden Thornton Warner for Montserrat Ward Union for 1887 in Public Opinion. Vol. 4, No. 33. Tuesday 15 May, 1888. pp. 5-6.

²²M. Warner-Lewis. Guinea's Other Suns, pp.46, 63.

²³Ibid., p.31; Barbados Archives; Colonial Office; Friendly Societies in the West Indies. Report on a Survey by A.F. Wells and D. Wells. Colonial Research Publication No. 15. (London: H.M.S.O., 1953) p.12.

²⁴M. Warner-Lewis. Guinea's Other Suns, p.54.

²⁵A.F. Wells & D. Wells. Friendly Societies in the West Indies. pp.17-18.

²⁶The Colonial Report Annual for Trinidad and Tobago for this year lists the number of Friendly Societies as 263. This probably includes the figures for Tobago as well. Col. Reports Annual No. 877. T'dad & T'go Report on the Blue Book for 1914/15. 1916 (877) xix. 7789. Cd. 8172-3.

²⁷A.F. Wells & D. Wells. Friendly Societies in the West Indies. pp. 26-28.

²⁸Colonial Report Annual. No. 790. T'dad & T'go Report for 1912/13. M14 (790) LV III 651, Cd. 7050-3.

²⁹A.F. Wells & D. Wells. Friendly Societies in the West Indies, pp. 125-128; Colonial Reports Annuals for 1889 to 1901.

³⁰Colonial Reports Annuals, CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books, 1895-1915.

³¹Col. Rep. Annual. No. 545. T'dad & T'go Report for 1906/7. 1908(545), lxi. 929, Cd. 3729-9.

³²"Cocoa Production in the British Empire", Bulletin of the Imperial Institute Vol. xvii. 1919, p.49; Christer Gunnarson, The Gold Coast Cocoa Industry 1900-1937 (London: 1978), pp. 6-9.

³³CO 295/361. Fo. 1414. T'dad Desp. No. 15 of 9 January 1895. Napier Broome to Ripon. Enclosure.

³⁴"Cocoa Production in the British Empire". Bulletin of the Imperial Institute, p.45; C. Gunnarson. The Gold Coast Cocoa Industry. pp. 6-9.

³⁵Mr. W.C. Jardine. "How to Start a Cacao Estate" in J.H. Collens (ed.). Handbook of Trinidad and Tobago for the Use of Settlers. (Port-of-Spain, 1912), p.87.

³⁶"The Curing of Cocoa Discussed". Trinidad Agricultural Association (Port-of-Spain, 1885).

³⁷J.H. Collens. A Guide to Trinidad: A Handbook for the Use of Tourists and Visitors (2nd ed. London: 1888) p.168.

³⁸CO 300/94. Trinidad Original Blue Book for 1883. "Remarks on Squatting".

³⁹Sir Norman Lamont. Problems of Trinidad. (Trinidad, 1933) pp. 275-6.

⁴⁰Ibid., p.170; S. Craig. Smiles and Blood, p.16.

⁴¹CO 295/306. Fo. 9554. Confid. Desp. of 7 May 1885. Havelock to Derby.

⁴²R. Lyall. "They Made Their Own Money: A Look at Local Merchants who Issued Coins" Sunday Guardian 22 April 1984; also cited S. Craig. Smiles and Blood pp. 16-17.

⁴³CO 295/306 Fo. 9554. Confid. Desp. of 7 May 1885. Havelock to Derby.

⁴⁴Ibid., Howard Johnson. "Merchant Credit and the Dispossession of the Cocoa Peasantry in Trinidad in the Late Nineteenth Century". Peasant Studies. Vol. 15, No. 1 (Fall 1987), p.30.

⁴⁵Ibid.; CO 295/306 Fo. 2955. Havelock to Derby.

⁴⁶Ibid., Enclosure. Memo by Ludlow re: 4 petitions received.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸English law required a six-month grace period before the final judgement of foreclosure was made irrevocable.

⁴⁹Editorial. Public Opinion. Tuesday 16 August, 1878, p.4.

⁵⁰David Harrison. "The Changing Fortunes of a Trinidad Peasantry", p.64.

⁵¹CO 295/307 Fo. 15952. T'dad Confidential Despatch of 19 August 1885. Havelock to Stanley. Enclosure 22.

⁵²CO 295/306 Fo. 9554. T'dad Confid. Desp. of 7 May 1885. Havelock to Derby. Colonial Office Minutes.

⁵³CO 295/308 Fo. 22292. T'dad Confid. Desp. of 8 Dec. 1885. Robinson to Stanley. Comments of the Colonial Office: Draft. Co. Desp. No. 23 of 27 Jan. 1886. Stanley to Robinson.

⁵⁴CO 295/329 Fo. 15991. T'dad Desp. No. 230 of 31 July 1890. Robinson to Knutsford; CO 295/318 Fo. 19611. T'dad Desp. No. 250 of 14 Sept. 1888. Robinson to Knutsford. Enclosure. Draft Ord. to Regulate the Sale of Mortgaged Properties.

⁵⁵CO 295/329. Fo. 15986. T'dad Desp. No. 225 of 29 July 1890. Robinson to Knutsford. Enclosure. Minutes of a Meeting of the Central Agricultural Board held on 27 June 1890.

⁵⁶CO 295/314 Fo. 12396. T'dad Desp. No. 150 of 4 June 1887. Robinson to Holland. Enclosure 1; CO 295/329 Fo. 17890. T'dad Desp. No. 258 of 28 August 1890. Robinson to Knutsford.

⁵⁷CO 295/345. Fo. 9956. T'dad Desp. No. 161 of 25 May 1893. Fowler to Ripon.

⁵⁸F.A. Stockdale. "Agriculture in the West Indies" (London: 1940) pp. 4-5; R. Lobdell, "British Officials and the West Indian Peasantry: 1842-1938" in M. Cross & G. Heineman (eds) Labour in the Caribbean (London: Macmillan 1988) pp.204-205; Report of the West Indian Royal Commission headed by Sir Henry Norman. London: H.M.S.O. Parliamentary Papers Cmd. 8565-8567, 1897.

⁵⁹R. Lobdell. "British Officials and the West Indian Peasantry" pp.204-205; Paul Rich. "Sydney Olivier - Jamaica and the debate on the British colonial policy in the West Indies" in M. Cross and G. Heuman (eds) Labour in the Caribbean pp.208-233.

⁶⁰"Small Proprietors" Port-of-Spain Gazette, 15 Dec. 1894.

⁶¹W.M. MacMillan. "Warning from the West Indies". Extract from Tropical Agriculture. Vol. xiii No. 7 of July 1930. (Review B). CO 318/427/1 Fo. 71120/37. Brockett to Ormsby Gore. W.M. Macmillan. Warning from the West Indies (London: Faber & Faber, 1936).

⁶²Leon Agostini, for example, owned six estates in Caura as well as three on Chaguanas. The Hon. Charles Leotaud owned six estates in Maracas, three in Arima, two in Guanapo and one in La Brea/Moruga Ward Union. C.F. Stollmeyer owned seven estates in St. Anns, one in Guanapo and one in Montserrat. J.E. Coryat owned six estates in St. Anns and two in Upper Caroni.

⁶³V. Wehekind, A. De Matas, J. Rapsey, J.M. Blanc, H. de Lapeyrouse, L. Centeno, L. Lota, A. Tinoco, C. Dade, M. Lucas, Hon. R. de Verteuil, C. Lange, G.H. Rooks, E. Castillo, J. Villaruel, Geo. Huggins, M. Alonzo, A. Ambard, J. Anduzo, E. Clapham, A. Kernahan, H. De Lisle, C. Boos, J. Aché, J. Bermudez, M. Gransauil and J. Redhead all owned at least two cocoa estates each - and the list goes on.

⁶⁴J.H. Collens. The Trinidad and Tobago Year Book for 1905 (Port-of-Spain: Gov't Printing Office, 1905). pp.197 ff. D. Harrison "Changing Fortunes of a Trinidad Peasantry", pp. 54-85.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Daily News. 9 November 1894; CO 295/361 Fo. 1414. T'dad Desp. No. 15 of 9 January 1895. Napier Broome to Ripon.

⁶⁸J.H. Collens. T'dad and T'go Year Book for 1905. pp. 197 ff.

⁶⁹F.J. Le Blanc, owner of the cocoa estate Mon Plaisir in Arima was also the owner of the La Florissante sugar estate; Hon. R. de Verteuil owned two cocoa estates Good Hope and Perseverance in Caroni as well as one sugar estate Endeavour; Hon. W.S. Robertson was the owner of one sugar estate, Hindustan, San Francique in Naparima and La Retraite in Savana Grande/Moruga.

⁷⁰Other prominent cocoa-planting families whose names also appear on the list of cocoa dealers were: Ambard, Anduze, Tucker, Permuy, Gransauil, Kernahan, Grant, Gordon, Prada, Lee Lum, Smith, Archer, Pierre, Masson, De Frietas, Rust and Maingot.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Ibid., B. Brereton. Race Relations in Colonial Trinidad 1870-1900, pp.88-90.

⁷³CO 297/22. Trinidad Acts 1917-18; Colonial Reports Annual. No. 984. Trinidad and Tobago Blue Book Report for 1917. 1919 (984), xxxv, 701 Cmd. 1-7.

⁷⁴B. Brereton. Race Relations. p.53.

⁷⁵J.H. Collens. T'dad and T'go Year Book for 1905, pp. 197 ff.

⁷⁶Proclamation by Governor George Le Hunte published in the Gazette Extraordinary. Vol. 83, No. 63, 31 October 1914 (Port-of-Spain).

⁷⁷CO 295/498 Fo. Trinidad Confid. Despatch of 15 June 1915. Le Hunte to Harcourt. Enclosure No. 2. Report of D. Slyne. Chairman of the Liquidating Committee.

⁷⁸Cocoa estates and produce dealing firms belonging to the following: Messrs. P.H. Scheerer and Co.; Messrs. Schjolseth & Holler, Messrs. Wessels Bros. & Van Gontard; Mr. J.E. Jacobson, Mr. Max Reimer, A.S. Laing & Co.; Hugo Hoffman; J.A.A. Scheerer; F.W. Meyer; Max Reimer & P.F. Colingman were all placed in the hands of receivers in 1915.

⁷⁹Ibid.

⁸⁰"Usury - the Bane of Our Poor", Public Opinion. Vol. 1 No. 50. Fri. 22 May, 1855, p.2, "Investment on Landed Property" Public Opinion, Vol. 1, No. 56, Fri. 19 June, 1855, p.2.

⁸¹C. Gunnarson. The Gold Coast Cocoa Industry. pp. 51-56.

⁸²T. Rogers. Cadbury Bournville. p.85.

⁸³CO 295/511. Fo. 25825 Trinidad Confid. Desp. No. 145 of 25 April, 1917. J.R. Chancellor to W. Hume Long. Enclosure: Report of D. Slyne. Chairman of the Liquidating Committee; CO 295/511 Fo. 16434. T'dad Confid. Desp. of 1 March 1917. Chancellor to Hume Long.

⁸⁴"The State of the Colony". The New Era. Fri. 22 March, 1889. Vol. XVI, No. 43 (New Ser.) Whole No. 865.

⁸⁵J.H. Collens. A Guide to Trinidad. pp. 212-222.

⁸⁶Trinidad Chamber of Commerce (Inc.) and the Agricultural Society of Trinidad and Tobago. Economic Review of Trinidad: Agricultural and Mineral Resources. (Port-of-Spain, 1926) p.18.

⁸⁷CO 295 571/86423. Trinidad Desp. No. 45 of 13 May, 1931 Hollis to Passfield. Report of Proceeding of a meeting held at the Colonial Office, London on 2 April 1930 to discuss the scheme of the Government of Trinidad for the relief of the Cocoa Industry.

⁸⁸The 'Gayap' was a system of co-operation used by neighbours, friends, relations to pool labour and other resources in order to get tasks done. In Tobago it was known as "len-han". See S. Craig. Smiles and Blood, p.2.

⁸⁹Colonial Reports Annual. No. 819. Report on the Blue Book for Trinidad and Tobago for 1913/14. 1914-16 (819) XLVI, 673 Cmd. 7622-10.

⁹⁰"The Remedy". Public Opinion. 12 Dec. 1894; cited in CO 295/361 Fo. 1414. T'dad Desp. No. 15 of 9 Jan. 1895. Napier Broome to Ripon.

CHAPTER 8

'CACAO AGONISTES': THE STRUGGLE AGAINST EXTINCTION 1915-1939

The 'Golden Age' of King Cocoa in Trinidad was all too short-lived. The fall from ascendancy of the cocoa industry was even more spectacular than its rise to prominence. While it is customary to date decline from the time of the appearance of Witch Broom disease in 1928 and the end of the boom period in 1920/21, on closer examination it becomes clear that the industry was in decline long before this time. In fact, even while cocoa enjoyed prosperity, structural problems had started to become obvious. The fall, when it did come therefore, had less to do with the visitation of disease than was believed. This chapter argues that, given the underlying flaws in the foundation of the industry, eventual collapse was inevitable.

The cracks in the foundation of the Trinidad cocoa industry began to become obvious with the first appearance of serious competition in the last decade of the nineteenth century. In 1890 the attention of cocoa growers in Trinidad was called to the fact that Ceylon cocoa was commanding a higher price on the London market than was cocoa from this island. In view of rapidly extending cultivation in Ceylon, such news gave occasion for concern among Trinidad cocoa planters, peasant cultivators and those many other persons whose livelihood depended on cocoa. Every effort was made to unearth the roots of failure. It was discovered that not only was the Ceylon 'Criollo' variety of cocoa superior to the Trinidad 'Forastero' variety but that the process of preparing the beans for market was more efficient and utilised superior techniques.¹ The next few years were critical ones for Trinidad cocoa on the London market. In September 1889 the price reached an all-time low of \$12.00

per fanega after fourteen years of consistently high prices. After a few years of fluctuation, prices fell steadily from \$17.25 in April 1893 to \$8.50 by September 1896.² Fluctuating prices plus the very real threat of more efficient competition forced the Trinidad growers to reassess their position. The indications were that long-run survival strategies had to be sought not simply to ensure the future of cocoa but also, consequently the future of the entire island economy, precariously perched on the equally evanescent twin pillars of 'saccharine and chocolate'. But the joys of prosperity were too exhilarating, the delectable taste of success too lingering to induce cocoa planters to establish hedges against possible future collapse. They failed to heed the warning of the popular local maxim "when you have cocoa in the sun, look out for rain."³ Accordingly, the 'rain' when it did come, fell in torrents, finally sweeping 'King Cocoa' off its throne of ascendancy.

The financial crises and economic depression of the 1890s had its impact not only on sugar but also on the cocoa industry of Trinidad. By 1894, declining prices on the London market for both sugar and cocoa had created general agricultural distress within the island. It was generally held that sugar planters had more cause for alarm than cocoa planters. However, while their vocal protests magnified their distress, there was indeed cause for concern among cocoa growers. In addition to falling market prices and increased taxation, the cocoa industry was also faced with a relatively declining share of the world market, which by 1900 had turned into an absolutely declining share. Ceylon was not its only nor most threatening rival. Competition also came from other places inside and outside the British Empire.

In 1890 Trinidad had contributed 15% of total world cocoa exports but this share fell to 9% in 1913 and 5% by 1926⁴, and this despite increased raw export production. For reasons of both internal and external origin, Trinidad cocoa was losing ground on the world market against her competitors. Before investigating the factors making for decline, it is necessary to view the nature and extent of this determination. In 1895, Trinidad was ranked second among world cocoa producers (14%) after Ecuador (23%), but the other competitors were gaining ground. In 1894 Venezuela exported 6,815 tons of cocoa, which amount had risen to 17,986 tons by 1915. In 1898 Ecuador was exporting 20,517 tons; this rose to 41,980 tons in 1916. Saõ Tomé's share of world exports rose from 13,713 tons in 1899 to 32,640 tons in 1916; Brazil's from 20,273 tons in 1902 to 32,640 tons in 1916; and even San Domingo (now the Dominican Republic) had increased its export production from 1,378 tons in 1890 to 20,715 tons in 1916.⁵ By 1915 Trinidad had fallen to sixth position among world producers after Ecuador, Gold Coast, Brazil, Saõ Tomé and San Domingo.

Table 8.1**World Production of Raw Cocoa 1915**

Country	Q produced for X (cwt)	% Share of World Production
Gold Coast	1,545,560	26.39
Brazil	885,142	15.11
Ecuador	728,461	12.44
San Domingo	588,271	10.53
Trinidad & Tobago	482,870	8.24
Total World Production	5,857,000	

Source: Cocoa Production in the British Empire. Bulletin of the Imperial Institute, Vol. xvii, 1919, p.47.

Within the British Empire Trinidad also faced increasing competition and had now lost her customary position as first in cocoa production and exporting. Her most serious competitor within the British Empire was the Gold Coast colony. The date of introduction of cocoa into West Africa is unsure. There are records of individual attempts to grow it as introduced from Central America in 1868. Other reports state that the tree was introduced from Saõ Tomé or Fernando Po in 1878 but the more reliable records date its introduction from Saõ Tomé at 1866.⁶ By 1916 cocoa commanded 66.15% of total Gold Coast export earnings.

The initial shipment from the Gold Coast in 1891 was a mere eighty lbs.⁷ The average annual export between 1892 and 1896 was 236 cwt (26,432 lbs) per annum. By 1900 it had risen to 10,529 cwt (1,179,248 lbs); 1914 - 1,057,964 cwt (118,491,968 lbs) and 1920 - 2,450,898 cwt (274,500,576 lbs) [Table 8.2]. By 1912

the Gold Coast was contributing 52.19% of British Empire export production as compared to Trinidad's 25.03% and 17.05% of world production as compared to Trinidad's 8.18%. By 1917 the Gold Coast had increased its share of British Empire export production to 63.69% while Trinidad's had decreased to 21.92%; and its share of world export production to 27.45% as compared to Trinidad's 9.45% (Tables 8.3, 8.4 and 8.5).

Table 8.2

Gold Coast Raw Cocoa Production

Year	QP & X (cwt)
1898	3,698
1900	10,529
1902	47,923
1906	179,545
1910	452,616
1912	772,933
1914	1,057,964
1916	1,443,236
1920	2,450,898
1923	3,815,311

Source: Bulletin of the Imperial Institute Vol. xvii, 1919, p.47; D. Urquhart. Cocoa p.98; Trinidad Chamber of Commerce (Inc.). Agricultural Society of Trinidad and Tobago Economic Review of Trinidad's Agricultural and Mineral Resources (Port-of-Spain, 1926) p.20; C.Y. Shephard, The Cocoa Industry part IV, p.29.

By 1926/7 the Gold Coast was producing 45% of world export production while Trinidad was producing 5%.⁸ Tables 8.4 and 8.5 illustrate Trinidad's inability to regain its former prominence among British Empire producing countries and importance among world producers. Within the short space of nine years from its

initial shipment of cocoa, the Gold Coast had become by 1900 the largest single supplier of cocoa in the world. By 1917 the Gold Coast cocoa production was three times that of Trinidad. (Table 8.3).

Table 8.3

Raw Cocoa Production (cwt) 1912-1917

Year	Trinidad (cwt)	Gold Coast (cwt)	British Empire (cwt)	World (cwt)
1912	370,764	772,933	1,481,000	4,543,000
1913	429,610	1,011,071	1,760,427	4,844,000
1914	566,499	1,057,964	1,978,291	5,394,000
1915	482,870	1,545,560	2,515,161	5,857,000
1916	472,393	1,443,236	2,371,720	5,829,000
1917	626,294	1,819,284	2,857,500	6,628,000

Source: Bulletin of the Imperial Institute Vol. XVII, 1919; p.47.

Table 8.4

% Share of British Empire Production of Raw Cocoa

Year	Trinidad (%)	Gold Coast (%)
1912	25.03	52.19
1913	24.40	57.43
1914	28.64	53.48
1915	19.20	61.45
1916	19.92	60.85
1917	21.92	63.67

Source: Computation from Table 8.3 above.

Table 8.5**% Share of World Raw Cocoa Production**

Year	Trinidad (%)	Gold Coast (%)
1912	8.18	17.05
1913	8.87	20.87
1914	10.50	19.60
1915	8.24	26.39
1916	8.10	24.76
1917	9.45	27.45

Source: Computation from Table 8.3.

From 1913 the Trinidad cocoa industry found itself in deep waters for at this time world production stood at 253,144 tons while total world consumption only accounted for 251,500 tons, thus indicating a surplus in supply on the world market of 1,644 tons. Gradually the surplus increased to 21,533 tons in 1923.⁹ This meant necessarily, therefore, in keeping with the laws of supply and demand, that prices automatically fell. The average price for Trinidad cocoa fell from \$21.69 per bag of 165 lbs (i.e. \$12.76 per fanega of 110 lbs) in 1913 to \$13.60 per bag of 165 lbs (\$9.50 per fanega) in 1923.¹⁰ Average annual prices per fanega of cocoa fell from \$17.25 in 1915 to \$6.71 in 1938 (see Table 8.6). In 1933-35 the price fell beneath this level to \$5.03 - \$6.05 per fanega, which made cocoa cultivation unremunerative. Appendix C Figure 12 indicates the movement of export f.o.b. prices per ton for cocoa from 1912/13 to 1937/38 peaking in 1919/20 and then going into rapid and continuous decline.

Table 8.6

Cocoa Production for Export & Average Prices
1915-1939 in metric tons (2204.6 lbs or 20.04 fanegas)

Year	Quantity Produced and Exported (metric tons)	Average Price Per Fanega (\$)
1915	24,531	17.25
1916	24,355	15.50
1917	31,818	12.50
1918	26,598	15.00
1919	27,553	22.00
1920	28,459	20.00
1921	34,128	8.88
1922	22,973	11.00
1923	30,705	9.13
1924	25,584	11.38
1925	22,442	13.88
1926	22,711	12.88
1927	23,557	16.13
1928	26,312	13.25
1929	28,073	11.38
1930	24,414	9.50
1931	25,940	7.13
1932	18,970	6.94
1933	23,275	5.78
1934	12,158	5.03
1935	20,134	6.05
1936	12,854	7.00
1937	11,911	10.93
1938	19,249	6.71
1939	7,463	

Source: Compilation/Computation from CO 300/Trinidad Blue Books; Col. Reports Annual 1914/15-1938; CO 950/954 Appendix A. These prices represent the mean for the years. See Also Appendix C, Figure 13.

Table 8.7Trinidad Cocoa Export Production (OX) 1895-1939

Year	Q: Cocoa Produced for Export (X) (lbs)
1895	29,458,813
1900	30,383,800
1905	48,416,251
1910	57,858,640
1915	54,081,452
1920	62,741,170
1925	49,476,609
1930	53,825,120
1935	44,387,836
1939	16,453,800*

Source: CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books; Colonial Reports Annuals.

* 1939 Q.P. for X = 26.22% of its 1920 level and 30.42% of its 1915 level

While cocoa was expanding its cultivation in Trinidad and increasing its export quantity, surplus of world supply triggered falling prices which created a dilemma for planters. Quantities produced for export increased from 29,458,813 lbs in 1895 to 48,416,251 lbs in 1905 and to 62,741,170 lbs in 1920 (Table 8.7). In 1921 Trinidad produced its largest crop ever - 75,238,566 lbs (Appendix A Table 2). In 1922 there was a sudden decline to 50,457,635 lbs and exports fluctuated between 50-60 million lbs for the next decade never regaining its previous level.¹¹ (See also Appendix C Figure 1 and Figure 4). By 1946 exports had fallen to 6,626,862 lbs.¹² The cocoa industry had become a mere shadow of its former self.

In fact, the annual average for the ten-year period 1920-29 was 58,409,663 lbs, considerably higher than the average for 1910-1919 when it stood at 55,812,961

lbs. Significant change in quantities produced on a prolonged basis, rather than one-year temporary fluctuation only came in the period 1930-39 when the annual average was 38,882,208 lbs or 66.576% of the annual average for the previous ten-year period (See Appendix C Figure 5). This indicates that prior to the final collapse the main problem lay in prices rather than in production and productivity. Given the competition, cocoa from Trinidad was finding it increasingly difficult to weather the storm.

The implications for the position of the cocoa industry within the island economy were grave indeed. In 1900 cocoa had peaked on its performance as an export earner, accounting for £852,568 in domestic export value, that is 50.41% of total export value while its nearest rival, sugar, accounted for 30.8% as indicated in Table 8.6 and Appendix A Table 3. The gap widened with time, so that in 1919, cocoa brought in 51.19% while sugar brought in 20.56% of export earnings. By 1939, however, falling prices helped to erode the export value of cocoa as well as its percentage share of total export value. Cocoa's percentage share of export value fell from 47.57% in 1920 to 6.70% in 1938. Its place of primacy had been surrendered but not to sugar. Sugar's percentage share of total export earnings had also declined from 35.73% in 1920 to 14.58% in 1938. It was petroleum and its by-products which now became the largest export earner. In 1922 petroleum and petroleum products contributed 12.75% of export value, while in 1938 they accounted for 70.11%, as indicated in Tables 8.9 and 8.10. Both sugar and cocoa had lost their places of significance in the export hierarchy, possibly forever. By 1939 the export value of cocoa had fallen to half its 1938 level, i.e. from £493,601 to £252,642.

Table 8.9 (also Appendix A Table 3 and Appendix C Figure 13) show the movement in export production and export values for agricultural produce, including by-products, indicating steady rise in significance for other agricultural products and decline by 1938 for sugar and cocoa.

Table 8.8

Local Cocoa Export Production as % Share of Total Value (£) of Domestic Exports 1895-1939

Year	Value (£) of Locally Produced Cocoa for Export	% Share of Total Value (£) of Domestic Export
1895	620,634	30.04
1900	852,568	50.41
1905	1,041,109	49.14
1910	1,230,097	52.83
1915	1,865,216	54.50
1920	3,536,830	47.57
1925	1,257,255	26.88
1930	1,136,056	19.45
1935	527,212	10.50
1939	252,642	2.81

Source: Compilation and Computation from Colonial Reports Annuals; CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books.

Another indication of problems in the cocoa industry is its declining share of cultivated acreage. In 1914 cocoa accounted for over 75% of cultivated acreage. Out of a total cultivated acreage of 470,887 acres, cocoa occupied 336,154 while its rival, sugar, occupied a mere 50,742 acres.¹³ By 1930, cocoa acreage had been reduced to 209,000 acres and further to 180,000 acres by 1938.¹⁴ (See Table 8.11).

Table 8.9**Cocoa, Sugar, Asphalt, Petroleum, Total Export Production
Value (XV) £ 1920-1939**

Year	Cocoa XV £	Sugar XV £	Asphalt XV £	PetroleumX V* £	Total Export Value £
1920	3,536,830	2,656,625			7,435,361
1921	1,361,434	1,519,412			4,093,395
1922	1,196,166	1,158,840	339,824	472,767	3,706,618
1923	1,286,494	1,121,364	337,814	832,256	4,298,378
1924	1,165,816	1,277,235	385,949	981,348	4,521,225
1925	1,257,255	1,092,594	360,062	1,155,496	4,677,148
1926	1,270,335	1,003,250	451,967	1,225,006	5,006,955
1927	1,671,883	762,366	464,475	2,319,838	5,588,091
1928	1,651,179	1,230,547	402,564	2,493,290	6,184,464
1929	1,446,127	1,081,729	432,085	3,051,400	7,122,857
1930	1,136,056	776,326	313,397	2,790,695	5,841,246
1931	826,333	902,993	236,597	1,949,455	4,643,859
1932	579,170	845,874	132,442	2,382,846	4,577,211
1933	555,907	1,115,567	151,347	2,254,055	4,598,421
1934	349,694	951,835	166,052	2,928,360	5,271,115
1935	527,212	942,171	227,705	2,775,356	5,021,115
1936	487,578	1,276,580	199,950	3,314,716	6,238,445
1937	643,123	1,338,673	248,940	3,936,755	7,021,311
1938	493,601	1,074,316	235,641	4,928,450	7,368,284
1939	252,642	1,117,580*	n/a	n/a	8,992,174

* Includes by-products

Source: Compilation CO 300 Trinidad & Tobago Blue Books; Colonial Reports Annuals.

Table 8.10Cocoa, Sugar, Asphalt, Petroleum, % Shares of Total Export Value 1920-1938

Year	Cocoa %	Sugar %	Asphalt %	Petroleum %
1920	47.57	35.73	-	-
1921	33.27	31.26	-	-
1922	32.27	31.26	9.17	12.75
1923	29.93	26.09	8.79	19.36
1924	25.79	28.25	8.54	21.71
1925	26.88	24.11	7.70	24.71
1926	25.37	20.54	9.03	24.47
1927	29.92	14.65	8.31	41.51
1928	26.70	19.90	6.51	35.00
1929	20.30	15.19	6.07	42.84
1930	19.45	13.29	5.37	47.78
1931	17.79	19.44	5.09	46.7
1932	12.65	18.48	2.90	56.8
1933	12.09	24.26	3.29	52.1
1934	6.63	18.00	3.15	63.2
1935	10.50	18.76	4.53	58.5
1936	7.82	20.46	3.21	59.0
1937	9.16	19.07	3.55	59.43
1938	6.70	14.58	3.20	70.11

Source: Computation from Table 8.9.

Table 8.11Cocoa Cultivated Acreage

Year	No. of acres under cocoa cultivation
1904	190,000
1910	290,200
1914	336,154
1917	232,533*
1930 **	209,000
1935	210,000
1938	180,000

Source: Compilation from Colonial Reports Annuals; CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books

* The vast reduction in acreage indicated a more accurate survey in that year

** Statistics for the years between 1917 and 1931 are very patchy. In many years no returns were made.

The drastic reduction in cocoa acreage by 1938 is indicative of attempts to diversify into other crops, through a redeployment of cocoa land. The fall in international market prices and the debilitating effect of plant disease had induced many planters whose cultivations were situated on the edge of the sugar belt to replace their cocoa by sugar cane. Other planters ventured into the growing of coconuts 'on lands totally unsuitable' and still others switched their affection to grapefruits, oranges and limes. Yet others sought to alleviate their grief by interplanting their cocoa cultivation with coffee, bananas, or tonka beans.¹⁵

The implications were serious. Any disaster, in or collapse of, the cocoa industry would have meant general distress among a large percentage of the island

population. In addition to proprietors, large and small, it was estimated that, in 1938, the cocoa industry employed no less than 34,000 labourers. A memorandum from the Association of Cocoa Growers of Trinidad and Tobago to the West Indian Royal Commission headed by Lord Moyne in 1938 indicated that:

Including small proprietors, labourers and owners of large estates there are roughly about 100,000 people directly dependent on the industry. This does not take into account the effect upon shopkeepers, transport workers and other bodies whose livelihood indirectly depends on the industry. The industry thus supports a quarter of the colony's inhabitants, and is of major importance in the economic welfare of the whole community.¹⁶

Consistently falling prices had led to a reduction in wages from about 60 cents per day for men in 1920 to 40-45 cents per day in 1938 and for women from 40 cents to 30 cents per day.¹⁷ Children over the age of twelve were employed at the rate of 20 cents to 25 cents per day. Gangs of children were engaged in sifting cocoa in the cocoa houses, catching cocoa beetles and cutting out witches' broom.¹⁸ There was no denying that wages were at an uneconomic level for cocoa proprietors. This inability to pay higher wages applied to the best estates as to the worst¹⁹ and there was, therefore, a tendency for labour to be competed away from cocoa by other industries. General observations in the Colonial Report Annual for 1933 note that:

The low prices obtaining for some time past have been the cause of considerable financial embarrassment to proprietors and have resulted in the curtailment of the demand for labour. The industry is estimated to give employment to some 49,000 persons in normal times.²⁰

Accordingly, by 1937 the Forster Commission had listed the number employed - cocoa as 34,500 persons including 17,525 labourers and 10,416 small planters. Even so, cacao employed more than any other industry. Sugar employed

34,000 persons, coconuts 4,000 and petroleum and asphalt - 9,000.²¹ Even with a reduced labour force, cocoa proprietors experienced difficulty in footing the basic wage bill let alone paying higher wages in order to afford the labourers a better standard of living or to prevent them from taking their services elsewhere. In a memorandum to the WIRC, the Cocoa Planters Association of Trinidad Limited pointed out that the: "lot of a cocoa labourer is not a very happy one and it is becoming increasingly more difficult to retain him on the land".²²

The problem of the cocoa industry arose from several immediate causes: serious competition on the world market, which started from as early as 1890; falling prices, the appearance of disease; and natural disasters, in this case, hurricane.

While grappling with competition and lower prices the Trinidad cocoa industry also had to contend with an increasing incidence of pests and disease from about 1910. In his report for 1910/11, the Colonial Secretary noted the existence of disease in the cocoa industry which he hastened to assure "was not serious."²³ But even earlier the Trinidad and Tobago Department of Agriculture in its Cacao Circular No. 1 of 12 January 1909 had concerned itself with a remedy for fungoid disease known as 'Bordeaux Mixture' and the second Circular for that year dealt with the damage to cocoa 'fruit and seeds' done by the 'carpenter bird.'²⁴ By 1916, cocoa crops were being 'appreciably reduced' by the attacks of thrips (*Selenothrips Rubrocinctus Giard*)²⁵ and by black pod disease (*Phytophthora Palmivora*).²⁶ Spraying, however, was proving effective in combating its spread.²⁷ In spite of these, export production maintained respectable levels and even reached new heights in 1921.

It was the appearance of witches' broom disease (*Marismius Perniciosus*)²⁸ in 1928 and its subsequent spread to all parts of the island which finally eroded export quantities and destroyed the confidence of the vast majority of planters. During 1927/28 cocoa production had been much improved, showing good recovery from the effects of drought in 1926 which had caused great damage. The drought had created conditions favourable to the spread of cocoa beetles (*Steirastoma depressum*).²⁹ However a cocoa beetle campaign mounted by the government coupled with the exertions of many proprietors had produced encouraging results and prospects for the future seemed positive.³⁰ The appearance of the witches' broom fungus was therefore particularly unfortunate. This disease had done much damage in previous years in Surinam (Dutch Guiana), Ecuador and British Guiana. In 1928 it put in its appearance in the wettest districts of Trinidad - the worst affected being the estate in the areas of L'Ebranche, Guaico, Tamana and Mundo Nuevo affecting 44,000 acres by the end of the year.³¹

By the end of 1931, the disease, in varying degrees of intensity, was found on 2,454 estates involving 102,120 acres of cocoa as compared with 1,830 estates of 86,718 acres at the end of 1930. So far, however, only in the worst areas were there indications of direct loss of crop due to the disease.³² By 1935, 5,184 estates covering acreage of 162,151 acres (out of a total cocoa acreage of 209,000 acres) were affected.³³ Heavy rains and generally unfavourable weather conditions favoured mushroom and spore production and therefore contributed to the spread of the disease. By 1936, the cocoa cultivation was also attacked by thrips. These coupled with low prices tended to dampen the enthusiasm of cocoa growers. On 27 June

1933, too, Trinidad had been visited by a hurricane of considerable force. Serious damage had been done to cocoa and coconut plantations especially on the Southern Coast from Icacos to the Guayaguayare districts.³⁴ Approximately 5,000 acres under cocoa had been destroyed and a total of 21,000 acres of cocoa damaged.³⁵

It was hoped that a rigorous control campaign would help to arrest the spread of witches' broom and prevent outright disaster. In 1931 and 1937, using funds provided jointly by the Government and the Advisory Committee of the Caribbean Development Fund, the Cocoa Agronomist, Dr. F.J. Pound, and Dr. F. Stell, Plant Pathologist, under the aegis of the Department of Agriculture, departed on a fact-finding mission to Ecuador, Brazil and Peru, countries also heavily infected with the disease. The search was for strains possibly resistant to witches' broom. However the disease continued to spread rapidly as the search for resistant strains proved largely fruitless. Breeding and plant propagation experiments were also conducted at the Government Experimental Station at River Estate, Diego Martin on strains of cocoa brought into the island from Latin America after quarantine in Barbados as a precautionary measure.³⁶

The effective control of the disease, however, required money, which was precisely what the industry lacked as prices continued to tumble. In his submission to the 1938-39 WIRC, Lt. Col. G. Hinds Howell of Arden, Tobago, highlighted this underlying problem which served to magnify the effect and impact of the disease:

The problem of Witchbroom is only serious because of the lack of money available for its control and there is no reason to suppose that it would continue to be a serious menace if Trinidad converted its cocoa to one commanding a high price, so providing sufficient margin over cost of production to admit of adequate control of Witchbroom plus good cultivation.

The search for an immune variety however laudable in itself can be of little or no value unless it also is of such quality as to command high market prices - while if of sufficient high value the question of immunity, or high resistance to witchbroom infection, becomes of very slight importance.³⁷

He concluded, therefore, that only a switch to a higher priced cocoa would put the cocoa industry of the colony on a sound financial basis once more.³⁸ The big problem therefore was how to make cocoa pay while controlling the spread of disease, which cost anywhere between \$1.07 and \$3.26 per acre, depending on how heavy was the incidence of its occurrence.³⁹ Such monies would have to come either from higher profit margins achieved through lowering cost of production or Government assistance to the industry. Both methods were attempted.

In their reaction to sustained decline, cocoa planters looked not/merely at the immediate and short term factors contributing to their distress but also at the underlying long-term structural problems which made the cocoa industry collapse so easily under the strain of falling prices, natural disaster, rising competition and witches' broom disease. Attention came to focus on the inefficiencies of the industry itself as a major factor contributing to decline. Instead of searching for solutions however, they sought instead to allocate blame. The peasant proprietors and their 'backward cultivation practices' were blamed by large scale planters for much of their distress. Most of the cocoa was grown by peasants, who, the mainstream argument went, were "wholly unacquainted with the best methods of producing a marketable product," and who, furthermore, were not inclined to over-exert themselves in the cultivation or preparation of the product unless they saw the possibility of "the receipt of a marked pecuniary advantage."⁴⁰

Instead of looking seriously towards rationalisation even within the plantation sector, all attention was focussed on the fact that there was much room for improvement in the methods adopted by some of the peasant proprietors and unscrupulous contractors.⁴¹ Peasants, more so than estate owners, tended to use only small quantities of manure. They were also unskilled in the arts of lining and picketing. W.C. Jardine pointed out that pickets had to be carefully measured but that it was generally not taken as a serious matter. Estate owners, therefore, tended to leave it up to the discretion of contractors who, needless to say, were not sufficiently enlightened to be entrusted with such technical operations. Such neglect, he argued, had negative effects on the most important aspects of estate operations. Contractors were also not capable of lining correctly except under supervision. While they held a "lively appreciation of the fact that the closer trees are, the greater the number he will be able to get into his contract" and some contractors were paid per tree, it followed that their main concern would be in securing their greatest gain. Jardine, therefore pointed to the abuse of the planter's land by "worthless contractors under slack supervision."⁴² Claying of the beans to give them a uniform colour, a common practice in Trinidad and Venezuela, was suddenly frowned on and seen as 'deliberate adulteration.' This practice was used not only by cultivators but also by cocoa dealers, among whom 'the Chinos' were said to be adept at such 'dodges.'⁴³ At the request of planters, therefore, in 1923, the use of clay or other 'kindred substances' was made illegal.⁴⁴

The methods used by the peasant farmer were said to produce an inferior product which sold at a lower price than that of the planter and in effect worked

towards depressing the price that cocoa from Trinidad was able to attract.⁴⁵ To add insult to injury, even the Department of Agriculture geared the main thrust of its improvement crusade towards the cocoa peasant proprietors. The Board employed agricultural instructors to visit the country districts and instruct the peasant proprietors in the best methods of 'husbandry', teaching them how to plant, manure, diagnose and cure plant diseases. It also launched competitions and distributed prizes and rewards to successful participants in their agricultural shows.⁴⁶

While it was true that the cultivation practices of the peasants were rather 'outdated', such was also the case of many large scale planters. While cases of wilful neglect and inefficiency featured more prominently in the latter group, peasant cultivation suffered mainly because they lacked the financial wherewithal to take advantage of modern technology to combat effectively the advance of plant disease and to present an improved product which would attract higher prices on the international market.

On closer examination it is found, however, that large scale planters, too, were partly responsible for the problem of inefficiency in the cocoa industry, if blame is to be allocated. C.Y. Shephard argues that early prosperity had led Trinidad planters to live extravagantly extending their indebtedness beyond the call of reason. High prices had also induced them to extend cultivation, indiscriminately to unsuitable soils. Low prices and high duties during and after the First World War, therefore, had serious consequences.⁴⁷ D.H. Urquhart points to the defects in the 'cultural' system which retarded the efficiency of the Trinidad cocoa industry.

- 1) Planters practised the system of supplying seedlings in too 'crowded' a fashion thus making the environment of each

supply unsuitable for its vigorous growth. Some died while others were retarded in growth and had to be removed.

- 2) The failure to remove damaged trees led to the accumulation of low yielding, low resistant and unprofitable trees. The casualty rate of trees then, was high, few reaching 40 years, while good cocoa trees on good soil could survive for 100 years or more.⁴⁸

But it was the Assistant Director of Agriculture, S.M. Gilbert, who hit upon the crux of the problem. He agreed with Shephard that cocoa was being grown on poor soils quite unsuited to it and that planters had been 'improvident' and 'thrifless' in good times. But he went further in the observation that there were many cases of inefficient management due to 'non-residence' on the part of the large-scale proprietors.⁴⁹ Inefficiency, then, and hence reduced productivity, was a direct consequence of the growing absenteeism which came with large scale concentration, agglomeration and amalgamation within the Trinidad cocoa industry.

The Trinidad cocoa industry has always been applauded by contemporaries and historians alike because its ownership was said to be almost exclusively of local origin.⁵⁰ It was believed, too, that the largest and best estates were in the hands of the French Creoles.⁵¹ It was customary for the cocoa planters, therefore to look askance at the sugar industry where the 'Sugar Lords' were absentees. This they saw as the crux of the problems of the sugar industry.⁵² An editorial in the Public Opinion in 1887 commented on the issue:

How do we explain the difference of conduct? Simply that the cocoa planters are natives of the country, resident proprietors, whereas the Sugar Lords are absentees. Had the policy of these absentees prevailed Trinidad would ... be exclusively a sugar producing country, in the hands of absentee proprietors, and our finances, our position as a civilised community would be trembling in the balance, exposed to a sudden crash should a further fall occur in the price of

the one staple which would have formed our only means of existence. Would the money made and hoarded during the last twenty odd years be available to save us from destruction? Not in the least. The absentee landlords would shake the dust of their feet at us and turn their backs on it....⁵³

Over time, however this very abhorred phenomenon had crept into the cocoa industry. The outbreak of war in 1914 revealed the extent to which cocoa estates and cocoa dealing firms fallen into the hands of 'alien' or expatriate parties, as illustrated in the previous chapter. Time had revealed, too, that the movement towards concentration of several estates under the same ownership had created an absenteeism of sorts, i.e. non-residence on estates, which, although not recognised as such carried within itself the seeds of most, if not all, of the evils of full-blown absenteeism.

Giving evidence before the 1938-39 West India Royal Commission, Mr. Jean de Verteuil of the Cocoa Planters' Association of Trinidad pointed out that a very large number of owners were not occupiers of estates. In fact, very few of the owners of large estates lived on them. He observed that this was also the case of many small estates, collectively owned. These estates had managers or overseers. In some cases one manager was in charge of several different owners' properties amounting to as many as 1000 acres. These managers in turn had resident overseers on each property.⁵⁴ While owners may have inspected their properties periodically, they did not manage them personally, but merely gave advice to managers or overseers. Invariably owners were otherwise engaged in urban business.⁵⁵ Non-residence and poor supervision invariably led to inefficiency which in turn led to reduced productivity. This evil was magnified when prices declined and the ability to pay high salaries to the best managers was diminished.⁵⁶

Reporting on the Cocoa Industry to the Legislative Council in 1931, S.M.

Gilbert pointed out:

Only some 5,000 odd proprietors out of some 17,000 live on their estates. Lack of close personal supervision may account for a lower degree of efficiency than might otherwise be expected.

Of the cultivators who live on their holdings, only 235 control estates of over 50 acres each. As only 85 owners live abroad, it means that some 11,000 properties depend on visits for controls and, incidentally often rely on underpaid and ill-trained resident men in charge. Therein lies an important cause of inefficiency which can be remedied. It may be further added that quite a number of estates are owned by non-agriculturists who have obtained possession of holdings owing to the foreclosure of mortgages.⁵⁷

Table 8.12 showing absenteeism and non-resident statistics indicates that of a total of 16,637 owners of holdings, only 5630 (33.84%) lived on their properties; 11,007 (66.16%) were non-resident. Of all owners, 85 (0.51%) lived abroad while 10,922 (65.65%) lived in Trinidad but not on their holdings.⁵⁸ Contrary to popular and historiographical opinion, therefore, absenteeism and its attendant evils were very real facts of life in the Trinidad cocoa industry.

To a very large extent, however, neither planter nor peasant could legitimately be blamed for the 'parlous' condition of the Trinidad cocoa industry. The core of their distress clearly arose from their inability to control prices on the international market more so than their inability to keep costs down. Large producers were in a better position to influence market prices - not so small producers like Trinidad. According to the written evidence submitted to the WIRC led by Lord Moyne in 1939 by the Association of Cocoa Growers of Trinidad and Tobago, the total cost of cultivation per acre ranged from \$25.50 to \$32.07 per acre

during the years 1937-38. The average yield under normal conditions was 284 lbs per acre.⁵⁹

Table 8.12

Management of Cocoa-Producing Holdings

Acres	Owner Abroad			Owner in Trinidad but not resident on Estate			Owner lives on Estate		
	Good Estates	Medium Estates	Bad Estates	Good Estates	Medium Estates	Bad Estates	Good Estates	Medium Estates	Bad Estates
0 - 10	5	6	10	2870	1416	2231	1903	820	777
11 - 50	7	2	9	1465	618	1013	1113	442	340
51 - 100	7	-	4	206	52	67	69	31	20
101 - 200	3	1	3	140	42	583	42	14	9
201 - 500	13	1	2	108	33	24	30	5	5
501 - 1000	6	3	1	35	5	5	10	-	-
Over 1000	2	-	-	6	2	1	-	-	-
Grand Total	43	13	29	4830	2168	3924	3167	1312	1151

Source: CO 295/573/846459 1931. T'dad Desp. No. 118 of 27 March 1931. C. Hollis to Passfield. Enclosure. T&T Council Paper No. 4 of 1931. Cocoa Industry of Trinidad (Report of Mr. S.M. Gilbert laid before Leg. Co. on 20 Feb. 1931).

With the market prices ruling in 1937-38 at \$6.70 per fanega (or 6 cts per lb), this meant that the returns per acre amounted to \$17.92, thus planters stood to lose anywhere between \$7.58 and \$14.15 on the acre or an average of \$10.87 per acre. In brighter days when cocoa fetched an average price of \$14.50 per fanega (13 cts per lb) one acre yielded a return of \$36.92 and brought in average annual profits ranging from \$5.76 to \$12.23 per acre, i.e. an average profit of \$8.83⁶⁰ at 1937/8 production costs levels this would have meant a profit range of \$4.85 - \$11.42 per acre or an average of \$8.14 per acre. It was an average price rather than average cost that was the crucial variable, the former being more elastic than the latter.

Not so elastic was Trinidad's ability to adjust supply to meet changes in price. Planters sought instead for ways and means of keeping costs down. The effectiveness of any cost cutting or restraining measures would naturally depend on its competitive impact on the international market. Despite its best exertions, the plain truth remained that Trinidad cocoa was unable to beat or even closely approximate the performance and efficiency of its competitors. A Report on the Development of Agriculture in Trinidad submitted to the Empire Marketing Board in 1930 offered the observation that:

Cocoa is the chief industry of Trinidad. She has felt very severely the competition of the Gold Coast where it is a native industry and the cost of production are very much less. There are no overhead charges, and the cocoa is produced by the aid of domestic and not hired labour. If Trinidad cocoa is to survive, the country must be able to produce more cheaply. This means that larger acre yields must be obtained without a corresponding increase in the cost of production....⁶¹

In the Gold Coast trees were planted much closer than in Trinidad - 700 trees per acre while in Trinidad there were approximately 300 trees per acre, thus yields per acre was naturally lower in Trinidad.⁶² The cost of establishing a cocoa farm in the Gold Coast was much lower than in Trinidad because there the planting of shade trees was not a common practice, neither was it necessary to establish an intricate drainage system as in Trinidad.⁶³ Because of the comparative age structure, too, of existing cultivations in Trinidad, increasing vulnerability to diseases and reduced productivity levels were to be expected. Despite the trend towards larger-scale units, the absence of modern technology meant that few economies of scale could be realised. While the technology on the peasant farm in the Gold Coast was not more advanced than that of Trinidad, the smaller scale of individual operations and less-

expensive cultivation practices ensured that diseconomies of scale were few and production costs low.

The market advantage which Trinidad cocoa had enjoyed previously was based on quality and flavour. However, even on those counts, the advantage had virtually disappeared. According to the Hon. James Forbes, First Vice President of the Trinidad Chamber of Commerce (1939), giving evidence to the West India Royal Commission, the West African producers had so improved their curing that there was no longer that wide difference between quality

except on the question of flavour and even there the manufacturer tells us that his chemist can give him all the flavour he wants so really our strong point is more or less dying ... he can buy West African cocoa and add his flavour....⁶⁴

Even where freight rates and shipping costs were concerned the Gold Coast had the advantage. The schedule on freight rates in Appendix D Exhibit 3 shows that rates, direct or with transshipment at continental ports from Trinidad to London (a distance of 4005 nautical miles), stood at 70s per 2240 lbs (1 British ton) with a 10% rebate while rates from the Gold Coast to London (3893 nautical miles) were 37s 6d per ton (2200 lbs) and from Bahia, Brazil 58s 6d per 1000 kilos (approx. 1 metric ton) in a distance of 4230 nautical miles. The cost of shipping from Trinidad to London was by far the highest of the three. According to the Hon. J. Forbes, this was due not to difference in distance but mainly:

to cheaper freights and larger cargoes from the West Coast. When the West Coast sells 20,000 and 30,000 bags of cocoa on one bottom, we sell 2,000 and you cannot expect to get freight at the same rate.⁶⁵

The same applied to Brazil but was more so the case for the Gold Coast. The Gold Coast was the top exporter within the British Empire, while Brazil was the main one

outside the British Empire. Forbes believed that it was almost entirely a question of price, that Trinidad could not compete with Brazil on account of the exchange rates and with the Gold Coast on account of their cheap labour. The price differential between the top Trinidad grades and West African cocoa sometimes ran as high as 16s per fanega, and was usually 10s per fanega.⁶⁶

The true root of the disorder, however, was not price. Price was merely the symptom, the manifestation. The problem lay with scale of operations or the limiting factor of size, as indicated by James Forbes. While large scale had its diseconomies, it also had its advantages. Only bulk producers and exporters were in a position to influence price. Small producers like Trinidad were price-takers rather than price setters. According to Forbes, "it is a disadvantage which must always be felt by small producers -you cannot get away from that."⁶⁷ The problem of the Trinidad cocoa industry lay therefore in quantity rather than in quality. In the final analysis it mattered less what was the scale of individual production units within the territory than what was the overall size of the island industry. It made no difference - peasant and planter were both locked into a larger struggle against formidable external competitors. Small wonder, then, that the Trinidad cocoa industry found it virtually impossible to extricate itself from the quagmire into which it had fallen.

The Trinidad cocoa industry undoubtedly suffered the insurmountable disadvantage of limited land space and therefore severe constraints in capacity for expansion. By 1919 Trinidad was ranked third among the world cocoa-producing countries in the relative importance of the crop to total acreage. Table 8.13 indicates to some extent the relative importance of cocoa growing in some of the chief

countries of production in 1915. The degree to which cocoa cultivation has been extended depended on several factors including geomorphological and climatological considerations, as well as the extent to which other crops receive attention and their share of cultivable acreage. Because of the high prices previously attracted by cocoa, its cultivation had been extended into lands unsuitable to its growth, given the limit on land space. The island comprised 1,864 square miles or 1,192,960 acres, a mere fraction (0.15%) of the size of the Gold Coast, where much of the land showed suitability to the growing of cocoa. In some parts of the Gold Coast the rainfall is somewhat low for the successful cultivation of cocoa but this is compensated for in most localities by the humidity of the vast forest region where the plant is grown with great success as evidenced by the amazing rapidity with which output increased from the early years of production.⁶⁸

Table 8.13

Relative Importance of Cocoa Growing

Country	QX** of cocoa in cwt per sq. mile
Sao Tomé	1487.9
Grenada	785.7
Trinidad	230.5
San Domingo	21.2
Gold Coast*	12.6
Ecuador	6.6
Venezuela	0.8
Brazil	0.2

* Include colony and dependencies

** QX = Quantity Exported

Source: "Cocoa Production in the British Empire". Bulletin of the Imperial Institute, Vol. XVII, p.53.

Any further attempt to extend cocoa cultivation in Trinidad to enhance competitiveness would have meant further extension onto unsuitable soils. It is probably this indiscriminate land use which increased the susceptibility of the cultivation to crop disease.⁶⁹ It would also have meant encroachment onto lands better suited to the cultivation of sugar cane, the other significant export earner.

It seemed necessary for Trinidad to find new markets and/or to enter into collective agreements with other producers for the purpose of working out advertising and marketing strategies.⁷⁰ Imperial Preference helped little or not at all considering the fact that 70% of the world's cocoa was produced in British territories and that Britain herself was a relatively small market and most of the buyers there were interested in West African not Trinidadian cocoa. The need therefore was for a market outside the preferential zone. Most European markets pursued self-sufficiency policies. In any event, even if an adequate market could be found, most markets were more interested in quantity rather than in quality.⁷¹

In 1924, attempts were made by interested persons in Trinidad, therefore, to organise a conference in London for the purpose of fixing a price advantageous to all. (See Circular to World Cocoa Producers in Appendix D Exhibit 4). The quest was also for collective promotion of the product within the British Empire. A 'Buy British' campaign was mounted to enhance imperial demand for British colonial cocoa.⁷² It was hoped that it would have been possible to increase U.K. consumption by 30,000 tons a year.⁷³ Imperial Preference could not be of much help to resuscitate the Trinidad cocoa industry because of the existence of more and larger competitors within the Empire itself.

The Canadian market offered a preference for British West Indian cocoa which served to enhance demand by Canadian manufacturers. The general tariff to Canada was 1 cent per ton and intermediate class 1½ cents whereas the British West Indian goods were allowed to go in free. But even there, the preference tended to disappear because Canada also bought Brazilian cocoa which sold at cheaper prices because of cheaper freight rates and larger quantities.⁷⁴ Gold Coast cocoa was also bought by the Canadians though at a higher rate of duty. The attitude of Trinidad producers to their Gold Coast 'allies' in the Canadian market caused the West Africans to doubt their sincerity in their quest to achieve collective marketing and trade agreements. It appeared that, in order to hamper the Gold Coast trade, the Trinidad producers had negotiated a clause in the Canada/West India Trade Agreement whereby they lured the unsuspecting Canadians into imposing heavy duties on Gold Coast cocoa.⁷⁵ Gold Coast producers understandably grew wary and decided against entering into any collective marketing agreement with Trinidad.⁷⁶

Most of the initiatives to upgrade Trinidad cocoa's chances of survival in the British and international markets as well as to ensure continued viability of the industry, came from within the local industry itself. Measures were also adopted, at the imperial policy-making level and solution-finding conferences held, but only on the instigation of cocoa producers, large and small. From Trinidad producers numerous memoranda and appeals were sent directly to the Colonial Office, to the Empire Marketing Board and to their West Africa competitors, entreating imperial intervention and/or collaborative strategies. Mr. E. Radcliffe Clarke of the Trinidad and Tobago Agricultural Society, for example, made an impassioned plea in all

relevant quarters for imperial co-operation to save the Trinidad cocoa industry from the disastrous effects of 'calamitous vicissitudes' fallen upon it since the Gold Coast agents had forced the price down to 'starvation point' by 1922. The result, he pointed out was that in other countries outside of West Africa:

labourers were thrown out of work and the wives and children and their employees suffered the greatest misery. Their purchasing power for goods ... was crippled as ruin stared us all in the face.⁷⁷

Producers and other concerned individuals stressed, too, the need for giving immediate financial assistance by way of relief to:

the industry that has been the pith and marrow of the island's economic structure ... an industry income from which has been ... the lifeblood of the majority of the peasant and large proprietors, the traders generally, and, to a material extent, the support of the public sector ... the mainstay of Trinidad.⁷⁸

It is in this context, then, that the colonial government was given the mandate to investigate ways of assisting the Trinidad cocoa industry and saving those dependent on it from ruin. The schemes implemented were as follows⁷⁹:

The first scheme was embodied in the Mortgage Extension Ordinance of 9 Dec 1921. It was intended to prevent mortgagees from foreclosing and demanding the repayment of their principals unless both parties were in agreement and the interest payments subsequently became at least six months in arrears. This ordinance was originally carded to expire on 30 June 1923 but did not come actually to a close until 31 March 1935.

Another ordinance, the Agricultural Relief Ordinance of 1925 empowered the Relief Committee to make advances from government funds to the owners of cocoa properties for the purpose of carrying out their cultivating, reaping, and marketing

the produce, paying interests on mortgages and other encumbrances, and meeting necessary personal expenses. In order to determine eligibility the Committee relied upon a sworn affidavit of the owner for such information as was required. The scheme was not as successful as expected and was therefore abandoned. A great percentage of the applications received were either rejected outright, withdrawn or refused. Even so, of those which were successful, many could not be maintained and were closed prematurely. In March 1925, an assessment of the performance of the scheme indicated that of the 398 applications received, 47 were withdrawn, 119 refused and 46 not even given consideration, leaving 186 successful applications, i.e. 46.7% of the total. Of this number only 112 remained open by 31 March 1925; the other accounts were closed.⁸⁰ No doubt there was something remiss with the scheme and it never, therefore, fully realised its stated goals.

Since 1920 the need had been felt for the provision of long term credit to agriculturists by means of a Land Mortgage Bank. Continuing low prices made this need more acute. The Agricultural Bank of Trinidad and Tobago was established in 1925 for the purpose of encouraging agriculture in the colony and of aiding in the development, maintenance and improvement of agricultural lands. Its authorised starting capital was £250,000. Loans were to be secured as first mortgages on the property and the personal covenant of the owner. Each year the borrower was required to pay 8% of the original loan in two half-yearly installments (30 June and 31 December). Of this amount 7% went to interest and 1% to the amortisation. The rate of interest was later reduced to 6%. Because of falling prices, however, some borrowers were unable to meet their obligation to the Bank, others did so only by

seriously curtailing the cost of cultivation, which in turn affected output, or by leasing their lands to an oil company.

The Bank, which was originally set up mainly to assist small proprietors failed to do so in many cases, the bulk of the loans going instead to large scale planters. This was allegedly because smaller properties were already too heavily encumbered.⁸¹ In subsequent discussions on mortgage banking, however, it was revealed that from the start there was a built-in bias against the small man. The Bank was constructed

"to cope with the problems of long-term indebtedness amongst a native population unaccustomed to the use of credit, thriftless and thoughtless, inexperienced in financial and commercial affairs and prone to seek aid from outside sources on all occasions".⁸²

Accordingly, prospective borrowers were approached with full suspicion and prejudice and rigorous screening and sifting methods were used against them. Of the 101 applications made in 1930 - March 1930, 64 were rejected and 37 approved.⁸³ The outcome in the longer run was that of all those receiving loans by 31 December 1931, 64.86% were owners of holdings of less than 50 acres but who received a mere 24.86% of the total value of loans. Those owning holdings of 50 acres and above, i.e. 35.14% received 75.14% of the total value of loans. In raw figures, 216 were small holders receiving £59,426 in loans while 117 were planters who received £179,657 in loans out of a total loan value of £239,087 as indicated in Table 8.14. It appears that the local planters, too, were hostile to the scheme. They maintained that any assistance rendered to the small holders would result in increased labour difficulties for themselves. The Colonial Office felt that the best channel for assisting these small holders was through a limited amount of assistance to the Agricultural

Bank which in turn would assume the indebtedness of a significant number of peasant farms. The Bank felt that the small holders seemed to prefer negotiating with the local shopkeepers.⁸⁴

Table 8.14

Classification of Properties in Relation to Acreage Against Which Loans on Mortgage Had Been Made to 31 December, 1931

Class (Acres)	Cases -	% of Total	Total Loan Value, £
Up to 10 acres	52 -	15.62	£6,125 0s 0d
11 - 25	100 -	30.03	£23,166 13s 4d
26 - 50	64 -	19.22	£30,135 8s 4d
51 - 100	54 -	16.22	£54,878 14s 9½d
101 - 200	33 -	9.91	£50,104 3s 4d
201 - 300	16 -	4.80	£30,395 16s 8d
301 - 400	6 -	1.80	£17,291 13s 4d
401 - 500	8 -	2.40	£26,989 4s 7d
	333 -	100	£239,086 14s 4½d

Source: CO 295/568 76440 Enclosure in Desp. No. 161 of 13 March 1931. Grier to Passfield.

When, in 1930, it was recognised that the help given to cocoa by the Agricultural Bank did not satisfy the needs of the industry, a committee appointed to look into possible ways of further government assistance for the industry came up with the recommendation that advances be made for the following purposes:

to pay salaries and wages of employees; to meet interest on encumbrances; to purchase or maintain live and dead stock; to pay taxes and rates and insurances on buildings; to repay monies which have been applied to the maintenance and cultivation of lands before advances were made by the Government and for any

other purposes to be determined by the Governor.

The borrower was required to pay the entire revenue obtained from sale of the crop into the Treasury either directly if he marketed his own cocoa or through an approved merchant who in turn remitted the proceeds to the Treasury. These provisions were embodied in the Cocoa Relief Ordinance of 1935. It was the opinion of the Association of Cocoa Growers, Trinidad and Tobago, led by President H.E. Robinson, that this assistance was inadequate because of the very low prices and poor crops which forced growers to neglect their cultivations in order to pay taxes and repay the Government. All concessions subsequently requested had been refused.⁸⁵

In June 1933, as a result of a severe hurricane which did considerable damage to cocoa and coconut cultivation on the South Coast of Trinidad, it was decided to institute immediate relief measures. Loans of \$1.00 - \$3.00 (average \$2.50) per acre were made to assist in clearing operations. These loans were later made free gifts, i.e. a government contribution of £117,240 to the sufferers. Additionally, Government loans (of £150,000) free of interest during 5 years were made to enable planters to restock and rehabilitate their plantations with the most suitable crops. Because of the severity of the damages the life of the scheme was prolonged to 31 December 1940.⁸⁶

Additionally, owing to the low prices and poor crops beginning 1931 it was believed by 1934 that the cocoa industry was threatened with extinction. Accordingly, a Government Confederate Despatch, dated 23 April 1935, put forward plans for assisting the cocoa industry based on a flat rate bounty for three years. The Recommendations were accepted without consulting cocoa growers and incorporated

in two parts: the Original Cocoa Subsidy Scheme of 1936 and the Subsidiary Cocoa Subsidy Scheme of 1938.

The scheme specified that during the first year the money was only to be spent under the following heads: pruning of a special type; draining; supplying cocoa and interplanting cocoa with other crops. These stipulations were not only stringent and unreasonable but also very costly. Special pruning, for instance cost \$3.00 an acre while ordinary pruning cost \$1.80 an acre. Small proprietors found it difficult and too costly to carry out the necessary conditions such as draining and special pruning.

As a result of such problems, plus the inadequacy and mismanagement of the scheme, many small proprietors received no subsidy at all. As many as 4000 small proprietors failed to qualify for the original subsidy. Furthermore, the Government resolutely refused to sanction payments under the subsidiary subsidy scheme to those who had not qualified for the original subsidy.

The subsidy scheme, therefore, which was intended to be used by proprietors for the control of witches' broom disease on their properties, operated against the small holders who needed, more than all others, financial assistance in controlling the disease. Furthermore, those small holders who managed to qualify were paid at a flat rate of \$1.00 per acre which was not even sufficient to control witches' broom in badly infected areas of their holdings. To do this would have cost about \$3.00 per acre. Meanwhile large scale planters, those more capable of keeping their estates independently in a good healthy condition, were paid \$5.00 per acre.⁸⁷

It was the opinion of Mr. James Forbes that the cocoa subsidy scheme had been largely unsuccessful - most of its material help being spent on labour rather than on controlling the disease or finding economic substitute crop to replace cocoa. He believed, however, that the future of the Trinidad cocoa industry was dependent on continued subsidy until reorganisation could be effected "failing which, the obvious alternative would be abandonment with resultant unemployment."⁸⁸

Even in the midst of impending ruin, therefore, the screws were turned on to squeeze the peasant proprietors, possibly out of existence. Measures allegedly propounded for their benefit, served instead to facilitate large scale planters, the larger the better. Once again the cause of the peasant proprietary was sacrificed, either intentionally or unwittingly, in the concern for the survival of larger agricultural interests and consequently, national economic survival. The fact remained, however, that even at the worst of times, the proprietors of 50 acres and under accounted for over 40% of cocoa acreage (see Table 8.15).

Table 8.15

Cocoa Acreage Under Cultivation

	1931 (Survey)	1935 (Survey)	1938 (Estimated)
51 + acres	101,600 acres (48.61%)	114,000 (54.55%)	77,700 (43.17%)
50 + under	107,400 acres (51.39%)	95,000 (45.45%)	73,000 (40.56%)
Unclassified			29,300
Total	209,000 acres	209,000 acres	180,000 acres

Source: Compilation from CO 295/594/70154 Desp. No. 601 of 30 Dec. 1935. Hollis to J.H. Thomas. Enclosure. Council Paper No. 113 of 1935. Cocoa Relief Scheme Appendix A; CO 950/953 Ser. No. 904. Written Submission of the Department of Agriculture to the (1938-39) West India Royal Commission. Appendix IV(a) p.4.

Although they contributed indispensably and unsinkably to its continued survival, true concern for their welfare remained a desideratum much desired but sadly lacking. Accordingly, peasant proprietorship lost its attraction for successive generations. In its written submission to the Moyne WIRC (1938-9) the Association of Cocoa Growers of Trinidad and Tobago noted that

Small proprietors are ... being forced to neglect their properties and obtain work elsewhere, where they are able to earn more than their own properties can give them. As this is so, one can hardly expect them to remain on the land, or to return to it. It is very noticeable that the children of those peasants are nearly all looking for occupation that will take them away from their land. They are also being encouraged to do so by their parents after their own experience.⁸⁹

By the 1940s, therefore, the cocoa districts were experiencing an exodus of aspiring young persons who migrated into the urban districts in search of education or economic opportunity. Depressed cocoa districts such as Caura and Lopinot came to be inhabited by the middle-aged, the elderly and the very young while the able bodied sought their fortunes elsewhere.⁹⁰

The urban economy proved attractive to this aspiring group - petty trading, waged labour, the service sector, small scale entrepreneurship. An agricultural peasantry and labouring class was gradually transforming itself into an entrepreneurial

class and proletariat. Once again, the lessons of history, specifically that of 1791, had been ignored. Despite the fact that factor determinants of the prosperity and general performance of the industry were beyond their control, the peasants were made, as per usual, the '*bête noir*' of the Trinidad cocoa industry. Nothing had changed, nor yet was about to do so. It was in resorting to their own creative initiatives that they contained their struggle to realise their dream of economic independence and self-reliance. When cocoa failed them, they sought the most promising and accessible alternatives and pursued their goal with the same zeal and perseverance with which they had planted cocoa.

CHAPTER 8

NOTES

¹CO 295/329 Of. 18934 T'dad. Desp. No. 276 of 10 Sept. 1890. Robinson to Knutsford.

²Notes on the Trinidad Cocoa Market. The Canada-West India Magazine Vol. XX, No. 7, June 1931, p.236.

³The popular Trinidadian maxim "If you have cocoa in de sun, look out for rain" carries the meaning that those whose 'houses' are not in order ought to be on the look-out for trouble. It indicates to what extent cocoa featured in the everyday life of the island.

⁴"The Agricultural Crises and our Land Policy". Port-of-Spain Gazette, Friday 23 November, 1894.

⁵"Cocoa Production in the British Empire" Bulletin of the Imperial Institute, Vol. XVII, 1919, pp 47-9.

⁶D.H. Urquhart. Cocoa. pp.97-8.

⁷"Cocoa Production in the British Empire". Bulletin of the Imperial Institute, Vol. XVII, 1919, p.45.

⁸C. Gunnarson. Gold Coast Cocoa Industry 1900-1937 (London, 1978) p.8.

⁹T'dad Chamber of Commerce (Inc.) and the Agricultural Society of Trinidad and Tobago. Economic Review, p.19.

¹⁰Ibid., p.20; C.Y. Shephard. Cocoa Industry, p.4.

¹¹"Trinidad's Cocoa Industry". The Canada-West India Magazine Vol. XX No. 10 (Sept. 1931) p.346.

¹²Ibid., Vol. XXIX, No. 11 (Nov. 1949). "The Economics of Trinidad and Tobago: Extracts from the Report of the Economic Commission". p.7.

¹³"Cocoa Production in the British Empire". Bulletin of the Imperial Institute, Vol. XVII, 1919, p.60; Trinidad and Tobago Blue Book for 1917.

¹⁴Colonial Reports Annuals for 1930-1938.

¹⁵CO 950/953 Ser. No. 898. Memorandum submitted to the (1938-39) West India Royal Commission by the Association of Cocoa Growers of Trinidad and Tobago, p.3.

¹⁶Ibid., p.1.

¹⁷CO 950/790 Ser. No. 89. File BG/T 6041 W.I.R.C. (1938-39) Oral Evidence of Mr. Jean de Verteuil of the Cocoa Planters Association of Trinidad.

¹⁸Ibid., Evidence of Mr. H.E. Robinson (President - Cocoa Planters Association of Trinidad) to Dame Rachel Crowdy.

¹⁹Ibid., Evidence of Mr. V. Stollmeyer to Sir Walter Citrine. Second Session Feb. 23, 1939.

²⁰Colonial Reports Annuals. No. 1679. Report for Trinidad and Tobago for 1938.

²¹CO 950/790. Ser. No. 890. Evidence of Messrs. James Forbes and Jean de Verteuil to W.I.R.C. (1938-39).

²²Ibid., Written Submission to the W.I.R.C. from the Cocoa Planters Association of Trinidad and Tobago Ltd. dated 4 Jan. 1938. Para 12(a), p.65.

²³Colonial Reports Annual No. 699. Report on Trinidad and Tobago for 1910/11 (699)/ii.211. Cmd. 5467-35.

²⁴Trinidad and Tobago Department of Agriculture, Cocoa Circular 1. 12 January 1909; 2. 4 June 1909.

²⁵The 'Cacao Thrips' (*Selenothrips Rubrocinctus Giard*) feed upon and deposit their eggs on the leaves and may cause defoliation and serious loss of crop. See C.A. Thorold "Cacao Disease in Trinidad". Paper presented to the Cacao Research Conference (London, 1945) C.P. 16 pp.140-141; Alan Pickles, "Pest Problems of Cacao Cultivation in Trinidad and Tobago." Cacao Research Conference (London, 1945) C.P. 12 pp. 141-42; F. Stockdale, Agriculture in the West Indies (H.M.S.O. London, Sept. 1940) p.66.

²⁶Black Pod Disease (*Phytophthora Palmivora*) occurs particularly in the wetter areas and elsewhere during the 'rain'. It is not now regarded as an important disease because the beans are usually little affected whilst in the case of pods affected by witchbroom the beans are partially or entirely destroyed. See C.A. Thorold "Cacao Disease - Trinidad", p.140.

²⁷Colonial Reports Annual. Report on Trinidad and Tobago for 1916. 1917-18 (945) XXII. 731. Cmd. 8434-17.

²⁸Witches' broom (*Marismus Perniciosus*) attracts the young shoot, cushions and pods. It is caused by a fungus which destroys the pod replacing it by a kind of flowering shrub which resembles a witch's broom. It had been found impossible and impracticable to control the spread of the disease by spraying or by broom removal. Mr. F. Stell and Dr. F.J. Pound introduced seed and clonal material into Trinidad. They discovered five types which seemed resistant: 1) a calabacillo type, 2) zambo - a Brazilian importation, 3) called No. 5, 4) Soconusco and 5) Venezuelan Nacional. See C.A. Thorold 'Cacao Disease - Trinidad' p.140; CO 295/595/70180 Desp. No. 316 of 28 June 1931. Hollis to Passfield. 'Need for Strains of Cacao Resistant to Witchbroom'; CO 295/621/70520 Desp. No. 138 of 16 July, 1940. Young to Lloyd. Plant Protection Ordinance.

²⁹'Cocoa Beetle' (*Steirastoma depressum L.*) is a moderately large Longicorn beetle of about 7/8" in length. The principal injury is caused by the larvae which tunnels into the young branches, especially at the base, or, in the case of young trees, at the "collar" of the main stem, causing serious local injury and frequently complete ringing of the affected branch. Adult beetles feed on the bark, their injuries are usually superficial but may be so deep as to cause partial damage or total ringing. Young in vigorous growth are particularly subject to attack. A. Pickle "Pest Problems of Cacao Cultivation in Trinidad and Tobago" p.141.

³⁰Colonial Reports Annual No. 1461. Trinidad Report for 1928.

³¹Colonial Reports Annual No. 1505. Trinidad Report for 1929.

³²Colonial Reports Annual No. 1589. Trinidad Report for 1931.

³³Colonial Reports Annual No. 1767. Trinidad Report for 1935.

³⁴Col. Rept. Annual No. 1679. Trinidad Report for 1933; CO 950/953 Ser. No. 898 BG/T 6049. W.I.R.C. (1938-9) submission by the Association of Cocoa Growers of Trinidad and Tobago.

³⁵The Col. Rep. Annual No. 1679 for 1933 dates the hurricane at 27 June 1933, however the Assoc. of Cocoa Growers Memorandum dates it at 19 June 1933. We accept the former as the more accurate being a first hand account and immediate report. It is indicated, too, that the extent of damage ran 1-5 miles inland. This hurricane was the second of two severe hurricanes to reach Trinidad up to that time; the other being in 1810. In the June 1933 hurricane 7 people died, 2 churches and 3 schools were completely destroyed, and much damage was done to dwelling houses and estate buildings in addition to damage to cultivations.

³⁶See Proceedings of the Cocoa Conference (London, May 1945); CO 295/579/16816 Desp. No. 43 of 24 Jan. 1933. Hollis to Cunliffe Lister and Draft Col. Office Desp. No. 131 of 22 March 1933. Cunliffe Lister to Hollis, Col. Rep.

Annuals 1891. Trinidad Report for 1937 and 1915. Trinidad Report for 1938; Agriculture in the West Indies, p.66.

³⁷CO 950/951 Ser. No. 851. Written Memorandum submitted to the (1938-39) W.I.R.C. Evidence of G.Ltd. Hinds Howell, Ltd. Col. of Arden, Tobago dated 3 Dec. 1938. Articles 10 & 11.

³⁸Ibid., Article 24.

³⁹CO 950/798 Ser. No. 898 BG/T 6049. Memorandum of the Association of Cocoa Growers of Trinidad and Tobago.

⁴⁰"Cocoa Production". Bulletin of the Imperial Institute, Vol. XVII, 1919, p.45.

⁴¹Weekly Report of Commercial Agent, Edgar Tripp. Trade and Commerce No. 867. 16 Sept. 1920, p.744.

⁴²J.H. Collens ed. Handbook of Trinidad and Tobago. Contribution of W.C. Jardine, "How to Start a Cocoa Estate", pp. 95-9.

⁴³A.W. Knapp. Cocoa and Chocolate: Their History from Plantation to Consumer (London: Chapman and Hall Ltd., 1920) p.22. Extract from an early Trinidad Publication "How José formed his Cocoa Estate".

⁴⁴A.W. Knapp. The Cocoa and Chocolate Industry (London, 1923) p.72.

⁴⁵CO 318/438/5 Of. 71120/1 of 30 Jan. 1939. Evidence submitted to the W.I.R.C. by the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture (I.C.T.A.) "Agricultural Co-operation".

⁴⁶Col. Report Annual. Reports for 1912/13. No. 745, 1914 (745) LVIII, 717 Cmd. 6007-45; No. 790. 1914 (790) LVIII 651. Cmd. 7050-31; Report for 1920/11. No. 699. 1911 (699) iii, 211. Cmd. 5467-35.

⁴⁷C. Y. Shephard. Cocoa Industry, Part II, pp. 2-3.

⁴⁸D.H. Urquhart. Cocoa, p.108.

⁴⁹CO 295/573/846459. T'dad. Desp. No. 188 of 27 March 1931. Hollis to Passfield. Enclosure: Trinidad & Tobago Council Paper No. 4-7 1931. Report of Mr. S.M. Gilbert laid before Leg. Co. on 20 Feb. 1931. Cocoa Industry of Trinidad.

⁵⁰B. Brereton. A History of Modern Trinidad p.91 (for example).

⁵¹Col. Rep. Annual. No. 1589. Trinidad Report for 1931; No. 1634. T'dad Report for 1932.

⁵²Editorial. "Absenteeism". Public Opinion. Friday 26 Aug. 1889, Vol. 3, No. 267, p.4.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴CO 950/790 Ser. No. 890 BG/T 6049. W.I.R.C. (1938-39) Oral Evidence of Mr. Jean de Verteuil of the Cocoa Planters Association.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷CO 295/573/86459. Desp. No. 118 of 27 March 1931. Hollis to Passfield Enclosure. S.M. Gilbert. Cocoa Industry of Trinidad.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹C.Y. Shephard. The Cocoa Industry. Part IV. Appendix B Fig. XXX.

⁶⁰Ibid., Appendix B, Fig. XXXI.

⁶¹CO 318/401/4 Of. 6737 of 19 June 1930. Empire Marketing Board Report on the Development of Agriculture in Trinidad 1930.

⁶²C. Gunnarson. Gold Coast Cocoa Industry, pp. 49-50.

⁶³Ibid., p.50.

⁶⁴CO 950/932 3rd Session W.I.R.C. (1938-39), Friday 24 Feb. 1939. Oral Evidence of Mr. James Forbes of the Trinidad Chamber of Commerce; CO 295/384 Of. 4895 Desp. No. 57 of 4 March 1898. Jerningham to Chamberlain. Enclosure: Notes on Cacao Adulteration by Government Analyst. A. Carmody to the Colonial Secretary.

⁶⁵Ibid., Evidence of J. Forbes.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸"Cocoa Production in the British Empire" Bulletin of the Imperial Institute. Vol. XVII, 1919, p.53.

⁶⁹Professor F. Hardy "Soil Types to Cocoa Cultivation". Proceedings of the Cocoa Research Conference, London, May 1945. (Tuesday 29 May 1945. Morning Session), p.35.

⁷⁰CO 295/561/36577. Enclosure. B. Morgan to F. Watts dated 6 Apr. 1927; Enclosure "Co-operative Advertising of Cocoa". Report of Resolutions taken at a Joint Meeting of Representatives of the Agricultural Society, the Cocoa Planters Association and the Chamber of Commerce of Trinidad and Tobago; CO 295/554 D&I. Desp. No. 278 of 29 June 1925. Enclosure: "Cooperation in Cocoa Production" F. Watts of Cooperative Society of Cocoa Producers of Trinidad and Tobago to Mr. Tavares Best, Colonial Secretary; CO 295/556 O&I Of. 20024. 4 May 1925. Memorandum B.H. Morgan to J.H. Thomas. re: Proposals for a Cocoa Producer's Cooperative Alliance.

⁷¹CO 950/932 3rd Session W.I.R.C. Evidence of Messrs. J. Forbes and Emmlyn; CO 295/553 Of. 12291 of 14 March 1924. E. Radcliffe Clarke to J.H. Thomas. Proposals the Trinidad and Tobago Agricultural Society for a Conference in London (June 1924) of all Cocoa Producers of the world.

⁷²CO 295/594. Enclosure in T'dad Desp. No. 28 of 21 Jan. 1936. Godfrey Philip to Malcolm Macdonald. Memorandum submitted by the West India Youth Welfare League of Trinidad for the consideration of the Rt. Hon. Sec. of State for the Colonies.

⁷³CO 318/401/4 Of. 6737 of 19 June 1933. Empire Marketing Board. F.W. Pound to S.G. Talent dated 24 June 1930.

⁷⁴CO 950/932. Evidence of J. Forbes of the Trinidad Chamber of Commerce.

⁷⁵CO 318/401/4 Of. 6737 of 19 June 1930. Flood to Talent.

⁷⁶CO 295/591/86423. Desp. No. 541 of 31 Dec. 1930. Hollis to Passfield.

⁷⁷CO 295/553 Of. 12291 of 14 March, 1924. E. Radcliffe Clarke to J.H. Thomas Sec. of State.

⁷⁸CO 295/594 Desp. No. 28 of 21 Jan. 1936. Hollis to J.H. Thomas. Enclosure: West India Youth Welfare.

⁷⁹CO 950/953 Ser. No. 898; CO 950/798 BG/T 6049. Ser. No. 898. Memorandum of the Association of Cocoa Growers of Trinidad and Tobago submitted to the (1938-9) W.I.R.C.

⁸⁰CO 295/555/35759. Desp. No. 325 of 20 July 1925. Byatt to Amery re: Agricultural Relief Scheme.

⁸¹CO 295/555/47436 Desp. No. 411 of 28 Sept. 1925. Byatt to Amery.

⁸²CO 295/568/76440. Desp. No. 90 of 8 March 1930. Grier to Passfield. Enclosure.

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴CO 295/577/95826. T'dad Desp. No. 120 of 6 Apr. 1932. Hollis to Cunliffe Lister. Enclosure No. 1. Memorandum of H.L. Gayles, Chairman of the Agricultural Bank; CO 295/571/86423 Draft Tel. No. 45 of 15 May 1931. Passfield to Hollis re: Proceedings of a meeting held at the Colonial Office to discuss the scheme of the Government of Trinidad for the Relief of the Cocoa Industry. Tuesday 5 May 1930.

⁸⁵CO 295/571/86423 Desp. No. 541 of 31 Dec. 1930. Hollis to Passfield; CO 295/577/95826. Desp. No. 120 of 6 April 1932. Hollis to Cunliffe Lister.

⁸⁶Col. Rep. Annual. No. 1679. Trinidad Report for 1933.

⁸⁷CO 295/594/70154 Desp. No. 600 of 20 Dec. 1935. Hollis to J.H. Thomas points out that holdings were classified into 3 as follows for the purpose of the execution of the Subsidy Scheme:

- (1) Holdings of 1-10 acres - 10,038 proprietors - 30,000 acres
- (2) Holdings of 11-50 acres - 5,009 proprietors - 59,000 acres
- (3) Holdings of 51 + acres - 1,042 proprietors - 114,000 acres

The Subsidy was awarded on the basis of a sliding scale with a maximum of \$5.00 per acre for the largest category of cocoa holdings.

⁸⁸CO 950/790 Ser. No. 890 BG/T 6041. Session - 4 Jan. 1939. Oral Evidence of J. Forbes of the Cocoa Planters Association.

⁸⁹CO 950/953 Ser. No. 898; CO 950/798 Ser. No. 898 BG/T 6049, p.15.

⁹⁰Taped interviews conducted with several aged residents/peasant cultivators of the cocoa districts of Caura and Lopinot: Sylvestre Guerrero, Lucy Dolabaille Guerrero (Lopinot, 24 March 1982); John Thomas (Mt. St. Benedict, 19 March 1982); Paulina Hernandez Cashie (Maracas, 20 November 1982).

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION: EQUILIBRIUM OR EXIT?

The foregoing examination of the history of the cocoa industry in Trinidad to 1939 reveals several interesting facts, the most glaring of which is the abiding presence of conflict and dialectic and its role as a trigger to generate dynamism internally. There was never any comfortable co-existence of capital and labour within the cocoa industry nor any genuinely symbiotic relationship between labourer/peasant and planter. Each group viewed the other suspiciously and operated on the assumption of inveterate rivalry. This perception polarised the groups at every turn, rather than served to bring them together for mutual benefit and peaceful cohabitation. When this rivalry did not erupt into open struggle as in the case of the Contract System, it simmered dangerously beneath the surface, finding expression through such avenues as Anti-Squatter Regulations, Crown Land Alienation, Mortgage Systems, the Credit System and Praedial Larceny Regulation. The foregoing analysis sketches a continuous and unbroken progression of dangerous dialectic that left no room for the accommodation of consensus.

Planters felt threatened by the smallholding/labouring classes expressly because they perceived in the latter groups the potential of capitalistic challenge, an obvious danger to *statusquoism*. The smallholder was once a labourer and sought to increase the size of his holding as much as possible. The fact that in 1939 small proprietors were advising their children to abandon agriculture and seek other economic alternatives indicates that there never really existed any genuine traditional/cultural or sentimental attachment to land or agriculture as an end in

itself.¹ Land was always, like all other economic assets, an essential factor of production, and land tenure, therefore, was a means to achieve profit and upward economic mobility within a capitalistic structure.

Writing in 1936, W. MacMillan made the observation that the weakness of the peasant was his tendency to neglect cultivation when prices fell.² He pointed out also that planters, too, maintained their interest in agriculture only on prosperous days.³ The indicator is that both peasants and planters were of like mind, seeing agriculture as an avenue for profit to be jettisoned when pecuniary advantage was no longer forthcoming. The smallholder was as capitalistic in his approach as the planter and it was this fact that gave rise to the conflict between them. It must be pointed out that the neglect of cultivation when prices fell was not indicative of peasant lack of staying power and resilience, as Macmillan concluded, but lack of finance for good maintenance of holdings including control of weed, pests and disease. Like all good entrepreneurs, the small-holder saw no sense in pursuing cultivation beyond the point of profitability and practicality. Impoverished planters reacted similarly. What made the difference, however, was that planters had more avenues of access to capital than small-holders and were afforded lower rates of interest on borrowed sums. Planters were not naturally more diligent and industrious than peasant cultivators.

In both cases, response in supply to reductions in price was neither immediate nor commensurate with the fall in price. In fact sometimes when prices fell supply failed to respond appreciably or at all, even describing sometimes an inverse relationship between price and supply. Between 1920 and 1930 (Long Run) for

example, prices tumbled by 55% while quantities supplied for export fell by a mere 14%, showing a low price elasticity of supply (P_{es}). Between 1920 and 1921 (Short Run) prices fell by 58% while supply increased by 20% indicating negative Price Elasticity of Supply (P_{es}). Again between 1930-33 (Medium Run) prices fell by 46% whereas supply fell by 5%.⁴ This not only indicates low or negative P_{es} but it also points to the operation of other crucial variables within the supply function of the Trinidad cocoa industry which were more influential than price above certain levels. Time becomes important here; the time it takes to bring cocoa trees to full bearing maturity and conversely the producer's inability to prevent production by healthy trees for forty years or more once matured. It seemed that, unlike other cash crops, cocoa more or less 'grew itself.'⁵ Another factor to note is that many cocoa producers, especially small-holders, were totally dependent on the income from cocoa growing. For them it made sense, therefore, if possible, when prices fell, to increase supply in order to ensure stable real-incomes and accustomed standards of living. Increased hardship and difficulties, therefore, produced redoubled efforts in peasant cultivation - thus their resilience and perseverance.

Ultimately, however, beyond a certain basal price level a 'minimum trap' real incomes were nevertheless eroded beyond the level of profitability, reducing the producer's ability to maintain healthy cultivations and high yields. When this point was reached (and this point varied according to efficiency of the cultivation), plantations were either abandoned and allowed to revert to the Crown, interplanted with coffee, bananas, tonca beans or rubber; or wholly redeployed into another agricultural concern - sugar, coconuts, citrus. With capital or credit available, large

scale planters found that a number of such options were available to them. For the small-holder with limited capital, the choices were less palatable, either exit via sale or forfeiture of land to more favourably circumstanced neighbours; neglect and abandonment of cultivation allowing them to grow into 'rastrau'⁶; interplanting with ground provisions for quick cash and subsistence. When difficulties appeared, most smallholders quietly weathered the storms using the last alternative while also hiring themselves out as waged labourers to nearby estates. Because of their limited options, therefore, the level of resilience of this class tended to be higher than that of the planters. While planters ranted, raved and misbehaved at every turning of the tide, calling for gubernatorial assistance, imperial vindication and enabling legislation, the peasants, unaccustomed to such favoured treatment, by and large silently stood their ground and persisted in their cultivation, sometimes far beyond the bounds required by good sense. For them, cocoa production became a lifestyle. The negative impact of hard times and consistently low prices was seen in the successive generation rather than in the current.

This leads to another observation i.e. that the true bane of the Trinidad cocoa industry was not disease, which was controllable, but price and size, which were not. Given the size of the local industry and its limited prospects for expansion in terms of scale, there was not much hope of increased ability to influence prices. As a matter of fact, given the nature of the crop, fluctuating prices had always plagued the world cocoa industry. As a result of the susceptibility of the crop to seasonal, climatic and weather conditions as well as to disease, prices came to reflect the buyers' insecurities and thus their speculative activities. This, in turn, made cocoa-

growing a highly unpredictable and unreliable venture for peasants and planters alike. Both sought hedges against unpredictability of prices and thus, against fluctuating fortunes. Large-scale planters looked to agglomeration, diversification and also to vertical integration with the marketing and exporting business. Peasants looked to each other within their own group and to their own creative responses, while remaining open to state help and imperial aid, if available but which often was not. In prosperous times, having a "piece of cocoa"⁷, the bigger the better, meant for peasant as a means of socio-economic advancement. It gave them an undeniable and legitimate right to be considered as belonging to the colony to which they contributed economically, which they could now truly call *El lugal nohotro* (our place).⁸ They sought therefore to recreate previous levels of prosperity.

In their economic aspirations, therefore, peasants and planters were alike. They both desired private proprietorship, expansion of production and improved profits. It is this overlapping of goals which produced conflict. Divergent goals create polarization or disinterested co-existence never heated conflict, neither does it produce what can be called the 'terminator' instinct of fierce competitiveness. When goals converge and interests overlap, however, such intense rivalry is created as existed between labourer/peasant and planter in the Trinidad cocoa industry. This dialectic in turn helped to release dynamic energies within the peasant sector which acted as incentives to perseverance and to the pursuit of improved performance.

Attempts by large-scale planters to dispossess small-holders, therefore, were not ultimately successful once it remained economically viable for them to produce cocoa. Such attempts to eliminate them as a class, while it drove away those who

existed on the margin of that class, nevertheless failed to make any indelible impression on the committed core, once prices remained attractive and the chance of profit-making in the future remained. In pursuit of profits and economic survival, peasants resorted to their own initiatives and resourcefulness when the accustomed sources of credit and capital financing were not forthcoming.

They did so in many and very creative as well as conventional ways, legal as well as illegal, ranging from squatting to the use of time-share systems, the 'gayap', day-work exchanges, contracts, sharecropping or the 'in-half' system and other forms of labour co-operation. The utilisation of formal and informal savings institutions: the 'su-su',⁹ the mattress, friendly societies, building societies and government post office savings banks all helped to generate investment income by harnessing the smallholder's propensity to save, which, given his frugal and simple lifestyles, was far greater than his propensity to consume. Collective and co-operative transportation and marketing also helped to keep costs down and thus to enhance profit earning capacity.

Often the very methods used in an attempt to bring about their downfall and dispossession were turned around by the peasants to their own advantage. Their determined pursuance of contracts, despite the problems of the scheme, for example, arose out of their desire for personal capitalistic advancement moreso than any need to achieve symbiotic co-operation with planters. Contractors, for example, proved themselves as capable as contractees of exploiting the loop holes in the contract system to their own benefit. This system, therefore, like peasant scale agriculture,

was merely a means to an end and not an end in itself - that end was capitalistic acquisition and economic independence.

In order to succeed in cocoa, smallholders needed to gain access to the factors of production. With more liberal Crown Land disposal policies land became available, while labour was solved within the domestic arrangement or on a co-operative basis with neighbours or a few hired hands: Capital, however proved the most elusive factor. It was because of the fluctuating nature of prices and the peasant's attempt to access capital that presented a good avenue for their dispossession through the system of indebtedness which was interwoven into the internally stratified marketing chain in Figure 9.1.

Figure 9.1

The Marketing Chain/Chain of Indebtedness

Small Scale Cultivator

Rural Shopkeeper/Cocoa Dealer

Urban Producer/Dealing Firm/Exporter

Foreign Buyer/Manufacturer's Agent

The marketing chain ensured peasant earnings from crop sales reduced beyond proportion to every fall in price. It must be remembered that prices paid by foreign buyers to intermediaries were not the prices paid by intermediaries to small-scale

producers who were not in a position to transport their beans into town themselves for sale directly to urban dealers/exporters. The process involved for them considerable loss of earnings when prices were especially low and indebtedness rose beyond ability to repay, it involved loss of crops and/or entire properties through forfeiture for peasant proprietors/debtors. Such relationships cannot be misconstrued as symbiotic. This was conflict unrepentant.

The peasant proprietors had formed the backbone of the cocoa industry in its time of establishment and expansion and had brought it, through their unstinting endeavours, to the light of prosperity. The cocoa industry in turn became the spinal cord of the island economy, sustaining its growth and development while the sugar industry was experiencing extreme difficulties. As cocoa prospered and sugar atrophied, large-scale planters became attracted to the cocoa industry and came to share in its prosperity, then gradually sought to gain dominance in industry. When cocoa prospered, the entire island economy prospered also.

This prosperity came with small-scale cultivation, rather than large-scale operations. The influx of large scale cultivation led the industry in the direction of agglomeration, absenteeism and inefficient management, a weakening of the structural base of the industry and the inability to deal with competition. As in the case of the Gold Coast, it appeared that cocoa was better suited to small-scale rather than to large-scale cultivation. Small wonder that the cocoa planters harboured a deep and abiding fear of the small scale cultivators and perceived them as a threat to their continued ascendancy and prosperity as a group. This perceived threat served to

exacerbate the conflict between the two groups and led the planters to throw every imaginable obstacle in the path to progress of the small holders.

In its fight to limit the expansion of the peasant class, the planter class solicited the aid of colonial legislators and imperial policy makers, in overt as well as subtle ways. The colonial and imperial authorities, more often than not, came to the aid of planters rather than of peasants, sometimes intentionally, sometimes inadvertently. When the planters sought the opening up of Crown Lands, the authorities moved to facilitate them while at the same time seeking ways to exclude the labouring class. Crown Land alienation policy, however, proved a boon to the rising peasantry, as did Anti-Squatter Regulation which sought to eliminate them as a class.

Debtor/Creditor Laws, Praedial Larceny Legislation and Mortgagor/Mortgage Laws were also designed to protect the interests of the capitalist classes and the plantocracy. Even when laws were passed to give some aid to small holders such as ordinances in aid of the troubled cocoa industry during the 1920s and 1930s, loopholes, inconsistencies and lack of clarity of these laws enabled large-scale planters to reap the lion's share of the benefits, as seen in the previous chapter. It was clear that policy and policy-makers championed the interest of planter over that of peasant.

One might be tempted, therefore, to conclude that the problem with the late nineteenth and early twentieth century cocoa industry was the increase of large scale operations. There is no conclusive evidence, however, that the failures ought to be blamed on either peasant or planter. Lack of efficiency and poor cultivation practices

were not confined to any one group within the industry. Similarly, inability to compete, to control prices on the international market and to control the scale of the island's production were features of the entire island cocoa industry and affected all its operators, large and small. Neither peasants nor planters realised this and therefore sought to attack, undermine and defraud each other, while the imperial and colonial authorities proved to be the non-too impartial as arbitrators. Even indifference on the part of imperial policy allowed for the exploitation of labour and peasantry by capital to continue unchecked.

The Trinidad cocoa industry might have stood a better chance at survival and continued viability in the absence of such conflict and such divisive tactics. While cocoa peasants and cocoa planters struggled to outdo or eliminate each other, the industry grew increasingly less able to survive in the face of international competition. This is not to speculate that decline would have been abolished forever but that the industry would have been a better structured, organised, integrated and efficient one, better capable of withstanding the rigours of competition. Policy and legislation, on a concerted and co-ordinated, rather than piecemeal and ad-hoc basis could have assisted the industry toward greater efficiency and rationalisation and put it on a sounder footing.

Similarly, while cocoa cultivators and sugar cultivators quarrelled with each other and jostled for the position of imperial 'favourite', these industries were overtaken by petroleum and asphalt in contribution to total export earnings. Cocoa, along with overall agricultural production, had lost its place of prominence and its opportunity to channel the economic development of the island. Had imperial policy,

whenever it did act, been geared not only toward cushioning the planter class especially the 'sugarocracy', had it been able to overcome the internal problems, prejudices and inhibitions, it could have paid more attention to the dynamic potentials of a small-scale proprietary and to assisting its positive contribution to the cocoa industry and thus to the island's economy as a whole.

Successive West India Royal Commissions and Select Investigative Committees since 1897 had been persistently recommending the encouragement of peasant proprietorship as the avenue to sound colonial economic development. The Olivier Commission of 1929-30 called for the encouragement of diversified industries and for the support of peasant development, as did the Norma Commission before it (1897) and the Moyne Commission after it (1938/9). The Land Settlement Committee headed by the Sir Frank Stockdale of the Department of Agriculture (1937) and the publication by W.M. MacMillan in 1937, Warning from the West Indies, also supported this position.

In his advocacy of small-scale land ownership MacMillan argued that a peasantry had purely social rather than economic value.¹⁰ Its economic value, however, was of greater importance than he acknowledged for it was the peasant who broke new ground where planters feared to tread, who advanced the frontiers of pioneer cocoa cultivation and facilitated its expansion while planters came later and reaped the full harvest of prosperity. Their knowledge of the crop and of the terrain, their propensity for back-breaking work and their dynamic energy and resilience coupled with their fervent desire to achieve the capitalist success of those above them led them to chart new paths.

This entrepreneurial drive and enterprising spirit could have been encouraged and harnessed for the benefit of colonial economic development. Instead the role of imperial policy toward this end cannot be described as affirmative action but rather as negligence and wanton inaction. In their defence, one might argue that imperial policy makers were misled by: 1) their own indecision as to which policy was best; and 2) planter-generated, exaggerated reports from the colonial context. One might also argue that they were restricted in their freedom to act given the structure of the imperial decision-making process, or that the Treasury limited the responses of the Colonial Office, or that the blame should be cast on gubernatorial lack of vigour and impartiality. Whatever the variation in explanation, the bottom line remains that despite repeated advice, recommendations and warnings from well-informed sources, imperial policymakers repeatedly failed to come up with a satisfactory blueprint for colonial economic development and to effect positive follow-through action.

In the fifty-odd years following Emancipation, imperial policy toward colonial economic development focussed on the avoidance of unrest and the maintenance of the pyramidal plantocratic power structure. Whenever the suggestion was raised about promoting the development of a peasantry or agricultural diversification, the response was always either extremely cautious or condemnatory. The cocoa industry was caught in this imperial quandary. The greatest, most remembered phase of imperial policy with respect to colonial economic development came with the accession in 1895 of Joseph Chamberlain to the Colonial Office and the institution of his policy of 'enlightened self-interest.' Once again, however, aid to British West Indian agriculture went to the sugar industry rather than to cocoa or to the

development of a peasantry. The concern was not with colonial welfare but with that of the imperial overlords. Later, Secretaries of State for the Colonies, such as Lords Passfield and Milner, seemed more concerned with attending to the welfare of labourers with the aim of preventing them from rioting and disturbing imperial peace than with ensuring their transformation into a vibrant, settled small-scale agricultural or entrepreneurial class. So far, the system of Crown Colony governments had failed to take seriously its responsibility for the welfare of the unrepresented masses in the British West Indian colonies and for their economic development. One major obstacle was its ever-present fear of the upward mobility - social, political and economic - of non-white colonial peoples.

Positive change finally came with the passage of the Colonial Welfare and Development Acts of 1940 and 1945 which ushered in a new policy phase. The Imperial Government had at last become convinced of the benefits of 'sustainable' colonial economic development. The principles of imperial self-sufficiency and 'laissez-faire' non-intervention were jettisoned for one in which the Imperial Government would now assume its responsibility for 'priming the pump' rather than 'bleeding the veins' of colonial economies. Even then, however, the chief aim remained the interest of the mother country and making her 'look good.' Nevertheless the Imperial Government had come at last to accept its 'dual mandate' for the development of colonial economies in the interest of the welfare of the native peoples.¹¹ British imperial economic policy had at last come of age, too late, however, for the Trinidad cocoa industry, which had risen to fame and fallen to

ignominy without any obvious imperial concern in the case, let alone significant or direct aid.

Another typical case in point is the development of cocoa production in the Gold Coast. Polly Hill¹² has shown that cocoa production in the Gold Coast was not only pioneered but also expanded and sustained to prosperity solely on the initiative of commercially oriented small-scale farmers who are reminiscent in many ways of the peasant cocoa cultivators of Trinidad. As in the case of Trinidad, large scale farmers with their 'get-rich-quick' mentality were attracted to cocoa cultivation by the chance of quick and large profits. Evident also in the Gold Coast is the same generation of conflict between small-scale farmers and large-scale producers as in Trinidad between peasant and planter.

In the Gold Coast as in Trinidad it is this internal conflict which determined the direction of development for the cocoa industry, and albeit for the entire colonial economy. The role of imperial policy with respect to cocoa in the Gold Coast also parallels that of the Trinidad case. The tendency of the colonial government here was to favour larger, more immediately profitable economic pursuits such as mining in the Gold Coast, sugar and oil in Trinidad. Small scale cocoa producers, in the absence of assistance from large-scale producers, exploitative merchant firms and a disinterested or uncaring colonial administration, found themselves with no choice but to fall back on their own resourcefulness and work out their own path to salvation. It was not until the marketing crisis of 1937/38 the 'cocoa hold-ups' that the need for a new relationship between producers and colonial administration became clear.

In the British West India colonies, it had taken a series of violent and widespread riots in the 1930s - resulting from a severe economic hardship, falling prices, social discontent, unemployment, deteriorating labour conditions and lack of people political power - to bring imperial policy to its feet. Prior to this, however, indigenous initiative had sought its own salvation, developing its own coping strategies, dynamism for growth and mechanisms for effecting development. The very aspirations, industry, creative energies and dynamic evident in the cocoa peasantry as in the labouring class later formed the basis for the emergence as an indigenous 'transformational class' with capitalist leanings. This class gradually came to present a challenge to the traditional capitalist class of merchants and planters which had sought to hinder its growth, as in the case of the Trinidad cocoa industry. The landless labourer over time transformed himself into a small-scale own-account agriculturalist and/or a small-scale entrepreneur, posing a serious challenge to the traditional landed proprietary and capitalist classes.

The *modus operandi* and patterns of behaviour of this aspiring or 'transformational class' are culled from historical experience and indigenous cultural traditions. The very spirit of industry and enterprise which once defined the transformation of landless labourer into cocoa contractor and thence into small-scale own-account cultivator is still evident in more recent times in the rise of small-scale diversified agricultural concerns and retailing or manufacturing establishments such as roti-shops, local cuisine shops and indigenous handicraft or textile dyeing (tye-dye/batik) establishments.¹⁴

The history of colonial development as sketched above seems to suggest that the role of the imperial power, or of any state, should be to lead the way or at least to provide clear guidelines and firm policy-markers to channel the energies of local enterprise in the most advisable direction towards development with a sound structural base. In the absence of such leadership and encouragement, development will still come, although probably neither in the way envisaged nor preferred by the imperial power or the élite classes.

In the absence of clear policy directives from the Imperial power, therefore, West Indian colonial economies found their own paths to development. The process is still ongoing, however, historical analysis reveals, in conjunction with analysis of contemporary society, that despite the overall veneer of economic underdevelopment, British Caribbean economies have defined a new and unorthodox route - a route which makes traditional capitalists uncomfortable and poses a threat to their continued supremacy. It is a route that has been mapped out through a process of conflict and in the face of Imperial indifference to colonial economic needs. An examination of such dynamics within the Trinidad cocoa industry in the period under investigation therefore becomes necessary to our understanding of the nature and pre-requisites of development in such economies.

CHAPTER 9

NOTES

¹See Chapter 8

²W.M. MacMillan. Warning from the West Indies: A Tract for Africa and the Empire (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1936), p.162.

³Ibid., p.78.

⁴Computation from CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books and Colonial Reports Annual for 1920-1933. See also Table

⁵W.M. MacMillan. Warning from the West Indies, p.17.

⁶i.e. allowing the forest to reclaim its own ("rastrau").

⁷Interview with cocoa small-scale cultivation, Sylvestre Guerrero, Lopinot, Trinidad. 24 March, 1982.

⁸'Cocoa Pagnol' pronunciation of "El lugar de nosotros" meaning "our place". Interviews with Pauline Hernandez Cashie, descendant of peon family of 'Cocoa Pagnol' stock resident in the cocoa-growing Caura valley area. 20 November 1982; Interview with John Thomas, small-holder/wage labourer also of Caura. 19 March 1982. For further information on the Spanish language and pronunciation in Trinidad see Robert Wallace Thompson. A Preliminary Survey of the Spanish Dialect of Trinidad (Trinidad, 1957).

⁹The 'Su-Su' or 'esusu' was a traditional West African means of pooling monetary savings which was made available to each contributor in turn over a specified period of time. See Chapter 7 footnotes 23-24.

¹⁰W.M. MacMillan. Warning from the West Indies, p.185.

¹¹D.G.M. Rampersad. "Colonial Economic Development and Social Welfare: The Case of the British West Indian Colonies 1929-47". D.Phil.Thesis. Oxford: 1979. p.33.

¹²Polly Hill. The Migrant Cocoa Farmer of Southern Ghana. A Study in Rural Capitalism (London: Cambridge University Press, 1963).

¹³This has been argued by G.B. Kay in Political Economy of Columbia in Ghana: A Collection of Documents and Statistics 1900-1960. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

¹⁴Work is presently being conducted by Dr. Vanus James formerly of the Economics Department of the U.W.I., St. Augustine on the nature and economic behaviour of this indigeneous neo-capitalist "transformational" class within the Caribbean economy, towards the development of a definitive theoretical model. It is through our discussions that I came to the realisation that I was not alone in my hypothesis and trend of thought with respect to colonial economic development. Our talks enabled me to fine-tune my ideas on establishing a link between the patterns of behaviour evident in the cocoa labour/peasant nexus and the present-day transformational class. The investigation of recent and current developments, however is the business of the Economist, and therefore lies beyond the scope of this study or my field of operation: My business here is to establish the links, to identify its origins and analyse its teleological development through historical time.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Cmnd./Cmd./Cd.	Command Paper
C.O.	Colonial Office
Col.	Colonial Office Pamphlet
Col. Sec.	Colonial Secretary of State for the Colonies
C.P.	Colonial Paper
f.o.b.	Free on board
G.D.P.	Gross Domestic Product
G.N.P.	Gross National Product
G.P.O.	General Post Office
hhgd.	hogshead
H.M.S.O.	Her Majesty Stationary Office
I.C.T.A.	Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture
I.S.E.R.	Institute of Social and Economic Research
Leg. Co.	Legislative Council
M.	Import(ed)
O.A.S.	Organization of American States
P_{es}	Price elasticity of supply
P.O.S.	Port-of-Spain
P.P.	Parliamentary Paper
P.R.O.	Public Records Office
Q.	Quantity
QX.	Quantity Exported

T.C.C.	Trinidad Chamber of Commerce
TXV.	Total Export Value
U.K.	United Kingdom
U.S.A.	United States of America
U.W.I.	University of the West Indies
W.I.R.C.	West Indian Royal Commission
X.	Export(ed)
XV.	Export Value

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APPENDIX A

Table 1Table Of Measurements

<p>A. <u>Capacity (Sp.)</u></p> <p>1 fanega = 8 almides or gals = 32 millares or qrts</p>	<p>E. <u>Land Area (Eng.)</u></p> <p>40 perches = 1 rood 4 roods = 1 acre 680 acres = 1 square mile</p>
<p>B. <u>Weight/Measures (Sp.)</u></p> <p>1 quintol = 100 lbs (Eng.) 4 arrobas = 100 lbs 1 arroba = 25 lbs 1 Sp. lb. = 1 Eng. lb.</p>	<p>F. <u>Currency (Eng.)</u></p> <p>12^d pence = 1^s shilling 20^s shilling = £1 pound 21^s shilling = 1 guinea \$1 = 4^s 2^d £1 = \$4.80</p>
<p>C. <u>Weight/Measures (Eng.)</u></p> <p>1 fanega = 120 lbs 1 bag = 165 lbs 1 bag = 1½ fanegas 1 cwt = 112 lbs 1 Eng. ton = 2000 lbs 1 metric ton = 2200 lbs 1 metric ton = 20 fanegas</p>	<p>G. <u>Currency (Sp.)</u></p> <p>1 reale = 10 cts piece (Sp.) ½ reales = 5 cts (Sp.) ¼ reales = 1 trampe 1 piece of eight = 8 reales or = 3^s 6^d sterling = 1 peso = \$1 Sp. 1 gold doubloon = \$16.00 \$1 Sp. = 9^s sterling</p>
<p>D. <u>Land Area (Sp.)</u></p> <p>1 quarree = 0.43 fanegas 1 quarree = 3.2 acres 1 fanega = 7.5 acres 3 fanegas = 1 cabellera 15 fanegas = 112 Eng. acres 15 fanegas = 35 Fr. squares</p>	<p>H. <u>Currency (Fr.)</u></p> <p>1 Fr. sous = ½^c (Eng.) 5½ francs = \$1 dollar = £5 (Fr) + 8 cts = \$1.00</p>

Source: Compilation from Pierre Gustave Borde. History of Trinidad under the Spanish Government.

James Millette. Society and Politics in Colonial Trinidad.

Linda Newson. Aboriginal and Spanish Trinidad.

Carl Campbell. Cedulants and Capitulants.

APPENDIX A

Table 2

Cocoa Production 1797-1939

Year	Q (lbs) Produced Locally and Exported	Year	Q (lbs) Produced Locally and Exported
1797	96 000	1871	6 422 038
1798	n.g.	1872	6 985 904
1799	258 390	1873	7 482 291
1800	284 170	1874	9 396 531
1801	324 720	1875	9 272 540
1802	138 669	1876	9 477 123
1803	361 070	1877	9 726 742
1804	503 210	1878	9 911 865
1805	527 690	1879	11 641 170
1806	588 805	1880	10 999 385
1807	355 000	1881	10 809 796
1808	668 993	1882	10 972 687
1809	719 230	1883	11 649 785
1810	726 173	1884	12 908 770
1811	640 732	1885	13 729 565
1812	1 375 539	1886	17 913 037
1813	1 029 512	1887	11 927 067
1814	1 158 163	1888	21 352 312
1815	1 065 808	1889	15 335 228
1816	1 056 662	1890	21 552 593
1817	1 341 461	1891	16 188 493
1818	1 232 685	1892	25 041 635
1819	1 506 445	1893	19 106 553
1820	1 744 465	1894	21 608 384
1821	1 214 093	1895	29 458 812
1822	2 424 703	1896	23 481 848
1823	2 661 628	1897	23 840 665
1824	2 951 171	1898	24 340 960
1825	3 696 144	1899	16 588 880
1826	2 582 323	1900	30 383 800
1827	2 756 603	1901	30 154 768
1828	1 646 531	1902	37 585 184
1829	2 756 603	1903	36 154 184
1830	1 646 531	1904	36 154 048
1831	1 888 852	1905	40 753 776

1832	1 330 990	1906	48 416 251
1833	3 090 526	1907	49 730 576
1834	3 363 630	1908	49 137 088
1835	2 744 643	1909	51 575 104
1836	3 188 870	1910	57 858 640
1837	2 507 483	1911	49 780 832
1838	2 571 915	1912	41 625 635
1839	2 914 961	1913	48 116 377
1840	3 237 905	1914	63 447 876
1841	3 122 220	1915	54 081 452
1842	3 141 550	1916	53 692 952
1843	2 803 295	1917	70 144 898
1844	3 303 715	1918	58 638 562
1845	2 528 482	1919	60 743 283
1846	4 021 192	1920	62 741 170
1847	3 738 376	1921	75 238 566
1848	2 956 704	1922	50 645 635
1849	4 728 185	1923	67 692 265
1850	3 816 728	1924	56 402 755
1851	5 008 920	1925	49 476 609
1852	4 246 851	1926	50 067 881
1853	4 842 875	1927	51 934 857
1854	3 761 057	1928	58 008 156
1855	5 727 351	1929	61 888 740
1856	4 905 796	1930	53 825 120
1857	4 690 166	1931	57 186 512
1858	5 292 800	1932	41 822 127
1859	4 758 350	1933	51 311 274
1860	4 882 230	1934	26 803 149
1861	8 472 302	1935	44 387 836
1862	4 349 453	1936	28 337 195
1863	7 014 337	1937	26 258 622
1864	5 009 006	1938	42 436 447
1865	6 611 160	1939	16 453 800
1866	5 635 840		
1867	7 641 960		
1868	7 758 048		
1869	6 269 920		
1870	7 176 588		

Source: Compilation from: CO 295 Trinidad Despatches
CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books
Colonial Reports Annuals
C.Y. Shepard. Cocoa Industry (for early years)

APPENDIX A

Table 3

Values of Local Produce Exported (Cocoa, Sugar, Total)
1865-1938

Year	£ Cocoa	£ Sugar	£ Total
1865	147 329	500 924	820 109
1866	165 416	647 595	1 022 338
1867	188 613	673 624	1 106 132
1868	167 445	676 440	1 116 198
1869	132 032	978 366	1 118 695
1870	162 150	718 555	932 884
1871	160 550	938 000	1 171 892
1872	193 614	817 434	1 439 904
1873	170 120	973 774	1 289 522
1874	175 683	668 831	1 412 260
1875	125 450	811 676	1 119 626
1876	227 855	658 696	1 636 618
1877	275 960	924 417	1 351 721
1878	304 080	729 679	1 140 211
1879	424 609	832 533	1 447 711
1880	302 358	858 081	1 340 538
1881	266 615	688 153	1 139 147
1882	316 734	875 269	1 440 061
1883	372 633	886 172	1 517 696
1884	380 878	642 255	1 274 785
1885	385 901	684 675	1 306 863
1886	521 278	546 196	1 291 962
1887	354 420	800 595	1 398 610
1888	611 876	724 163	1 557 710
1889	411 243	874 729	1 566 892
1890	531 025	630 815	1 413 128
1891	439 786	662 789	2 058 761
1892	648 104	675 342	2 005 277
1893	535 055	757 937	2 320 824
1894	587 564	598 010	2 000 748
1895	620 634	596 415	2 065 604
1896	452 141	700 347	2 165 820
1897	532 123	537 107	1 994 926
1898	705 956	602 045	1 516 561

1899	778 679	715 428	1 771 975
1900	852 568	552 158	1 691 282
1901	847 416	452 210	2 372 150
1902	907 531	410 000	1 585 289
1903	897 033	435 931	1 627 229
1904	887 676	722 113	1 857 278
1905	1 041 109	451 986	2 118 747
1906	802 073	430 182	2 670 671
1907	1 786 386	521 054	3 907 503
1908	1 152 285	462 019	2 500 195
1909	1 131 425	565 230	2 028 516
1910	1 230 097	723 549	2 328 377
1911	1 127 372	530 404	2 078 152
1912	1 007 990	529 123	1 964 432
1913	1 403 397	418 067	2 344 366
1914	1 167 893	591 193	2 484 576
1915	1 865 216	1 070 423	3 422 270
1916	1 637 268	1 297 369	3 636 580
1917	1 650 544	1 459 620	4 029 755
1918	1 547 085	811 068	3 559 201
1919	2 592 636	1 041 385	5 064 427
1920	3 536 830	2 656 625	7 435 361
1921	1 361 734	1 519 412	4 093 395
1922	1 196 166	1 158 840	3 706 618
1923	1 286 494	1 121 364	4 298 378
1924	1 165 816	1 277 235	4 521 225
1925	1 257 255	1 127 570	4 677 148
1926	1 270 335	1 028 533	5 006 955
1927	1 671 883	784 992	5 588 091
1928	1 651 179	1 230 547	6 184 464
1929	1 446 127	1 081 729	7 122 857
1930	1 136 056	801 718	5 841 246
1931	826 333	934 633	4 643 859
1932	579 170	845 874	4 577 211
1933	555 907	1 115 567	4 598 42
1934	349 694	951 835	5 271 115
1935	527 212	942 171	5 021 535
1936	487 578	1 276 580	6 238 495
1937	643 123	1 338 693	7 021 311
1938	493 601	1 074 316	7 368 284

Source: Compilation from: CO 295 Trinidad Despatch.
CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books.
Colonial Reports Annuals.
C.Y. Shephard. The Cocoa Industry.

APPENDIX A

Table 4Growth Rate Formula

To calculate average annual percentage growth rate for each period, the following formula was used:

$$r = \left(\frac{M\sqrt{(X_n)^{-1}}}{X_t} \right)^{100}$$

- where r = desired growth rate
 X_n = value at last period
 X_t = value at first period, and
 M = difference in years between first and last period

Procedure

$$\frac{\text{Log } X_n - \text{Log } X_T}{M} = \text{Ans}$$

$$\text{Anti-Log of Ans.} - 1 \times 100 = r$$

APPENDIX A

Table 5

Crown Land Alienated for Agricultural Use 1847-1914

Year	No. of Agricultural Grants	Total Acreage of Agricultural Grants (acres)
1847	16	2
1848	78	135
1849	5	107
1850	1	5
1851	50	30
1852	65	126
1853	20	16
1854	15	38
1855	10	68
1856	83	92
1857	89	643
1858	20	147
1859	125	222
1860	40	380
1861	11	75
1862	64	699
1863	18	18
1864	14	85
1865	55	380
1866	23	226
1867	16	359
1868	20	304
1869	129	2475
1870	688	9316
1871	697	6250
1872	663	6887
1873	954	5927
1874	1025	10491
1875	1047	10131
1876	724	7997
1877	404	4317

1878	297	2793
1879	564	9701
1880	529	7912
1881	374	7479
1882	249	3127
1883	370	6191
1884	438	6010
1885	599	8171
1886	661	11124
1887	739	10800
1888	585	9115
1889	434	5391
1890	487	6165
1891	517	6925
1892	528	5622
1893	684	7222
1894	699	7072
1895	630	6894
1896	407	4390
1897	432	4690
1898	706	8002
1899	1299	14630
1900	1422	13856
1901	1303	11510
1902	1141	9882
1903	1233	12406
1904	1531	13598
1905	1232	12780
1906	991	8004
1907	1157	9494
1908	1369	13402
1909	992	8123
1910	543	3466
1911	342	1425
1912	274	1638
1913	411	3319
1914	405	2508

Source: CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books; Colonial Reports Annuals.
CO 295 Trinidad Despatch.

APPENDIX A

Table 6
Grants of Crown Land and Cocoa Export Production 1847-1918

Year	Crown Land Acreage Granted	No. of Grants	Quantity of Cocoa Produced locally for Export (lbs)
1847	2	16	3 738 376
1848	135	78	2 956 704
1849	107	5	4 728 185
1850	5	1	3 816 728
1851	30	50	5 008 920
1852	126	65	4 246 851
1853	16	20	4 842 875
1854	38	15	3 761 057
1855	68	10	5 727 351
1856	92	83	4 905 796
1857	643	89	4 690 166
1858	147	20	5 292 800
1859	222	125	4 758 350
1860	380	40	4 882 230
1861	75	11	8 472 302
1862	699	64	4 349 453
1863	18	18	7 014 337
1864	85	14	5 009 006
1865	380	55	6 611 160
1866	226	23	5 635 840
1867	359	16	7 641 960
1868	304	20	7 758 048
1869	2475	129	6 269 920
1870	9316	688	7 176 588
1871	6250	697	6 422 038
1872	6887	663	6 985 904
1873	5927	954	7 482 291
1874	10491	1025	9 396 531
1875	10131	1047	9 272 540
1876	7997	724	9 477 123
1877	4317	404	9 726 742
1878	2793	297	9 911 865
1879	9701	564	11 641 170
1880	791	529	10 999 385

1881	7479	374	10 809 796
1882	3127	249	10 972 687
1883	6191	370	11 649 785
1884	6010	438	12 908 770
1885	8171	599	13 729 565
1886	11124	661	17 913 037
1887	10800	739	11 927 067
1888	9115	585	21 352 312
1889	5391	434	15 335 228
1890	6165	487	21 552 593
1891	6925	517	16 188 493
1892	5622	528	25 041 635
1893	7222	684	19 106 552
1894	7072	699	21 608 384
1895	6894	630	29 458 819
1896	4390	407	23 481 848
1897	4690	432	23 840 665
1898	8002	706	24 340 960
1899	14630	1299	16 588 880
1900	13856	1422	30 383 800
1901	11509	1303	30 154 768
1902	9882	1141	37 585 184
1903	12407	1233	36 154 048
1904	13598	1531	40 753 776
1905	12780	1232	48 416 251
1906	8004	991	27 570 928
1907	9494	1157	49 730 576
1908	13402	1369	49 137 088
1909	8123	992	51 575 104
1910	3466	543	57 858 640
1911	1424	342	49 780 832
1912	1638	274	41 625 635
1913	3319	411	48 116 377
1914	2508	405	63 447 876

Source: Compilation from: CO 295 Trinidad Despatches.
CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books
Colonial Report Annuals

APPENDIX A

Table 7

Testing Correlation between Annual Cocoa Production and
Annual Changes in Crown Land Alienated Acreage

Sample = 1852 - 1900

49 Observations

LS// Dependent Variable is COC

Convergence achieved after 4 iterations

VARIABLE	COEFFICIENT	S.D. ERROR	FSTAT	2 TAIL SIG.
C	16281927	6497469.7	2.5058874	0.016
ACR (-5)	0.1595413	0.3290804	0.4848093	0.630
AR (i)	0.8899045	0.0860674	10.3398626	0.000

R-squared	0.706676	Mean of dependent variable	11807195
Adjusted R-squared	0.693923	S.D. of dependent variable	7265316
SE of regression	4019479	Sum of squared resid	7.43D+14
Durbin-Watson stat.	2.889756	F-statistic	55.41169
Log Likelihood	-813.1066		

Computation based on Appendix A, Table 6.

APPENDIX A

Table 8No. of Sugar, Cocoa Estates and Acreages 1880-1915

Year	Cocoa Estates	Cocoa Acreage	Sugar Estates	Sugar Acreage
1880	-	25,188	-	52,162
1885	-	-	-	-
1890	75	94,500	-	58,500
1895	-	97,000	-	58,500
1900	450	190,000	93	52,000
1905	642	207,900	66	62,600
1910	747	290,200	59	62,600
1915	807	336,154	52	50,742

Source: Compilation from: Colonial Reports Annuals
CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books

APPENDIX A

Table 9

Average Annual Yields Per Acre 1859-1931*

Year	Cocoa Acreage** (acres)	Cocoa QP*** (lbs)	Acreage Yield Per Acre
1859	7 000	4 758 350	679.8
1870	13 262	7 176 588	541.1
1874	17 828	9 396 531	572.1
1875	21 344	9 477 123	444.0
1877	21 279	9 726 742	457.1
1879	25 188	11 641 170	462.2
1889	78 000	15 335 228	196.6
1890	94 500	21 552 593	228.1
1895	97 000	29 458 813	303.7
1897	98 000	23 840 665	243.3
1898	102 000	24 340 960	238.6
1900	190 000	30 383 800	159.9
1905	207 900	48 416 251	232.9
1906	214 973	27 570 928	128.3
1907	226 880	49 730 576	219.2
1909	245 706	51 575 104	209.9
1910	290 200	57 858 640	199.4
1911	322 508	49 780 832	154.4
1912	325 503	41 625 635	127.9
1914	336 154	63 447 876	188.8
1915	354 237	54 081 452	152.7
1917	232 533	70 144 898	301.7
1931	209 000	57 186 212	273.6

Source: Compilation from: Colonial Reports Annuals
C.Y. Shephard. The Cocoa Industry.
CO 300 Trinidad Blue Books.

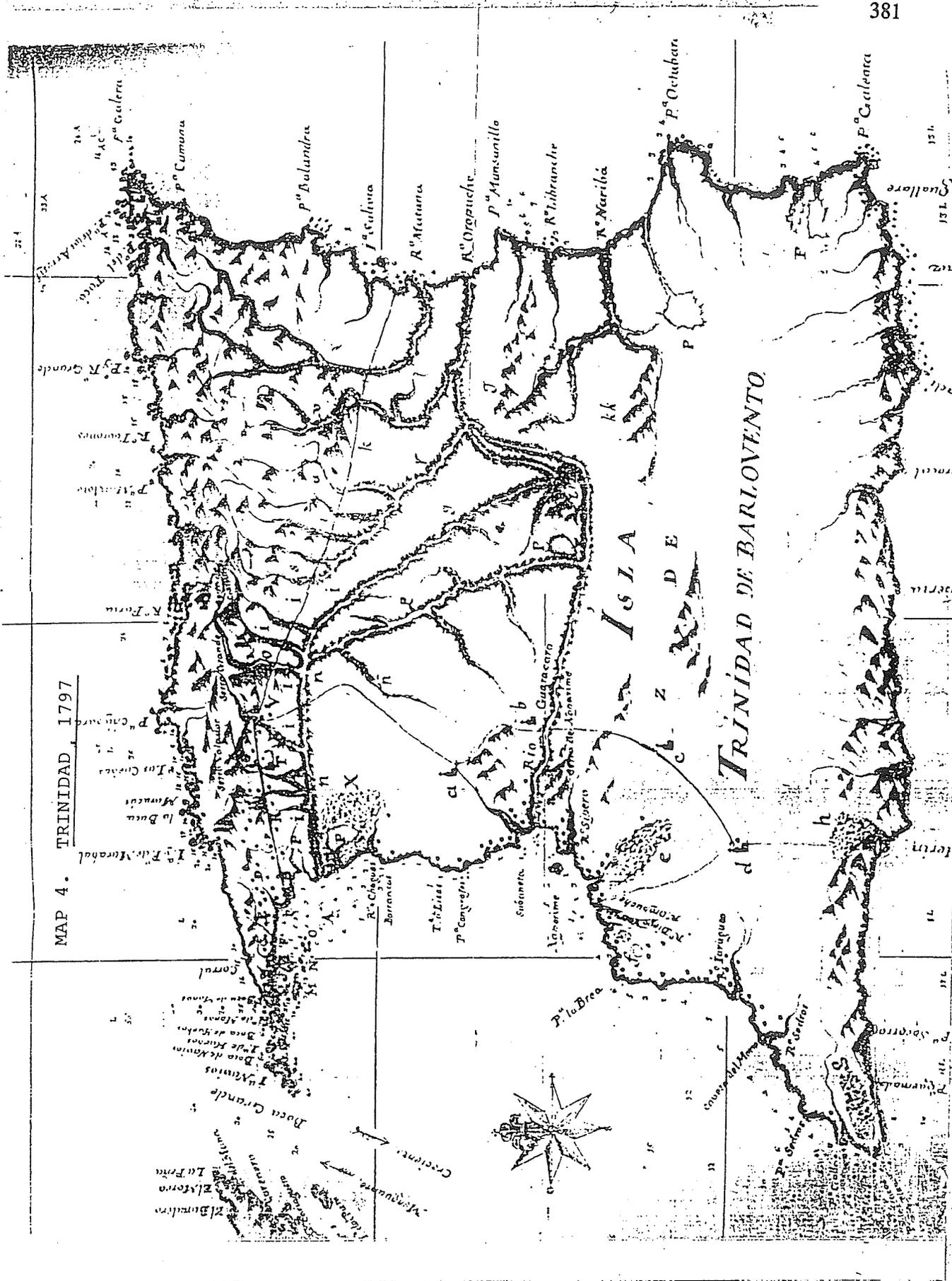
- * Using typical years for which updated figures are available. Giving an annual yield of 277.9 lbs per acre
- ** The apparent fall in cocoa acreage in the year is the result of the use of more accurate survey methods.
- *** This indicates an absolute decline in cocoa's role in the economic life of the island

APPENDIX B

Maps

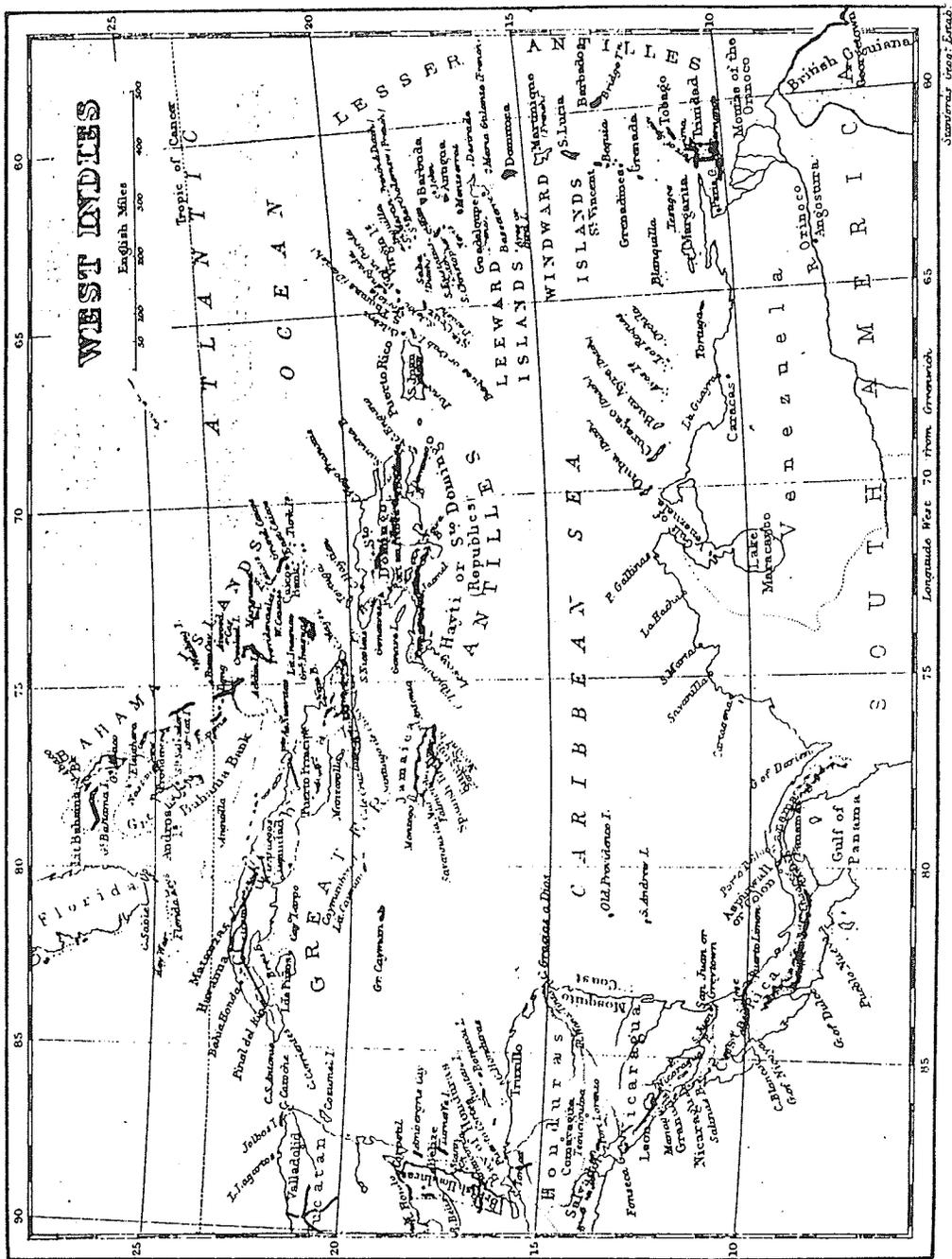
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MAP 4. TRINIDAD, 1797



SOURCE: Public Domain. Digitized by Google.

MAP7. The Caribbean 1906.



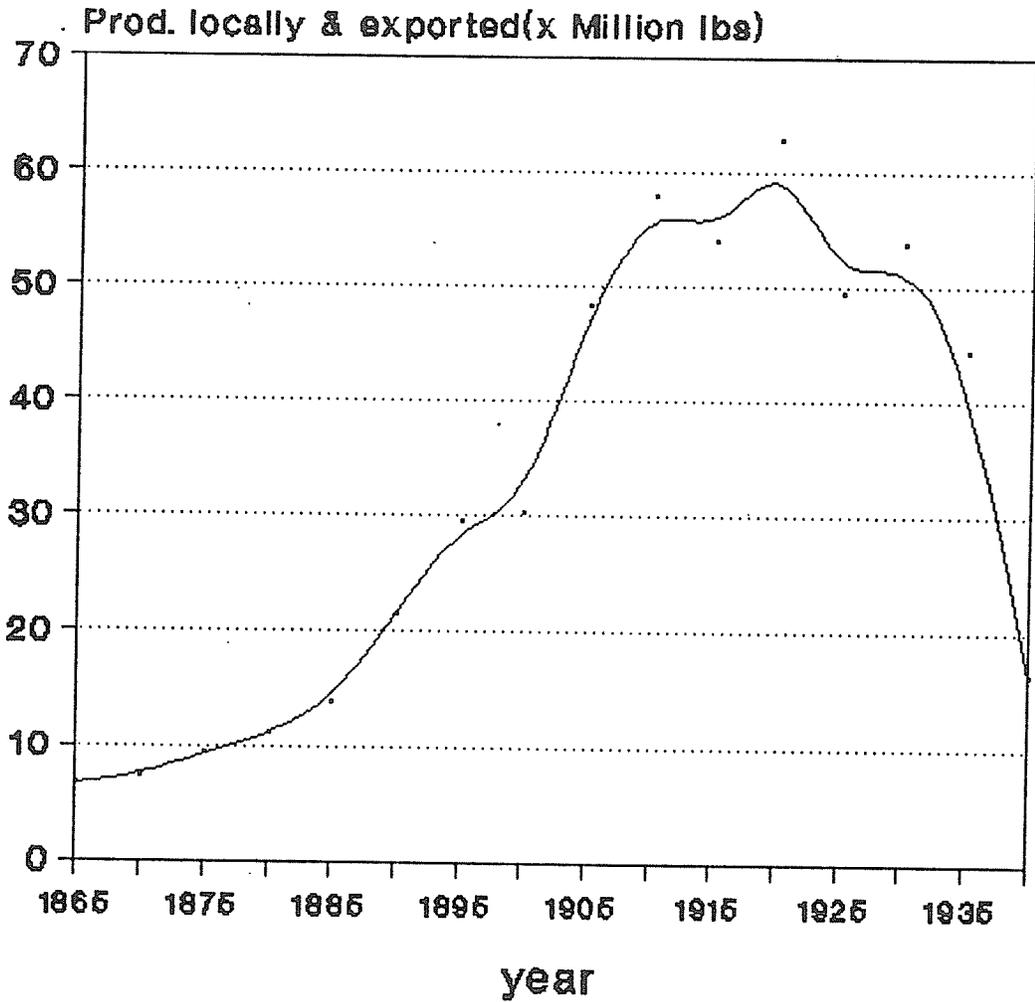
SOURCE: A. Macmillan. The West Indies.

APPENDIX C

Graphs/Charts

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Fig. 1
COCOA PRODUCTION 1865-1940



— Series 1

Source: Based on Appendix A Table 2

Fig. 2. Value of Cocoa and Sugar Exports

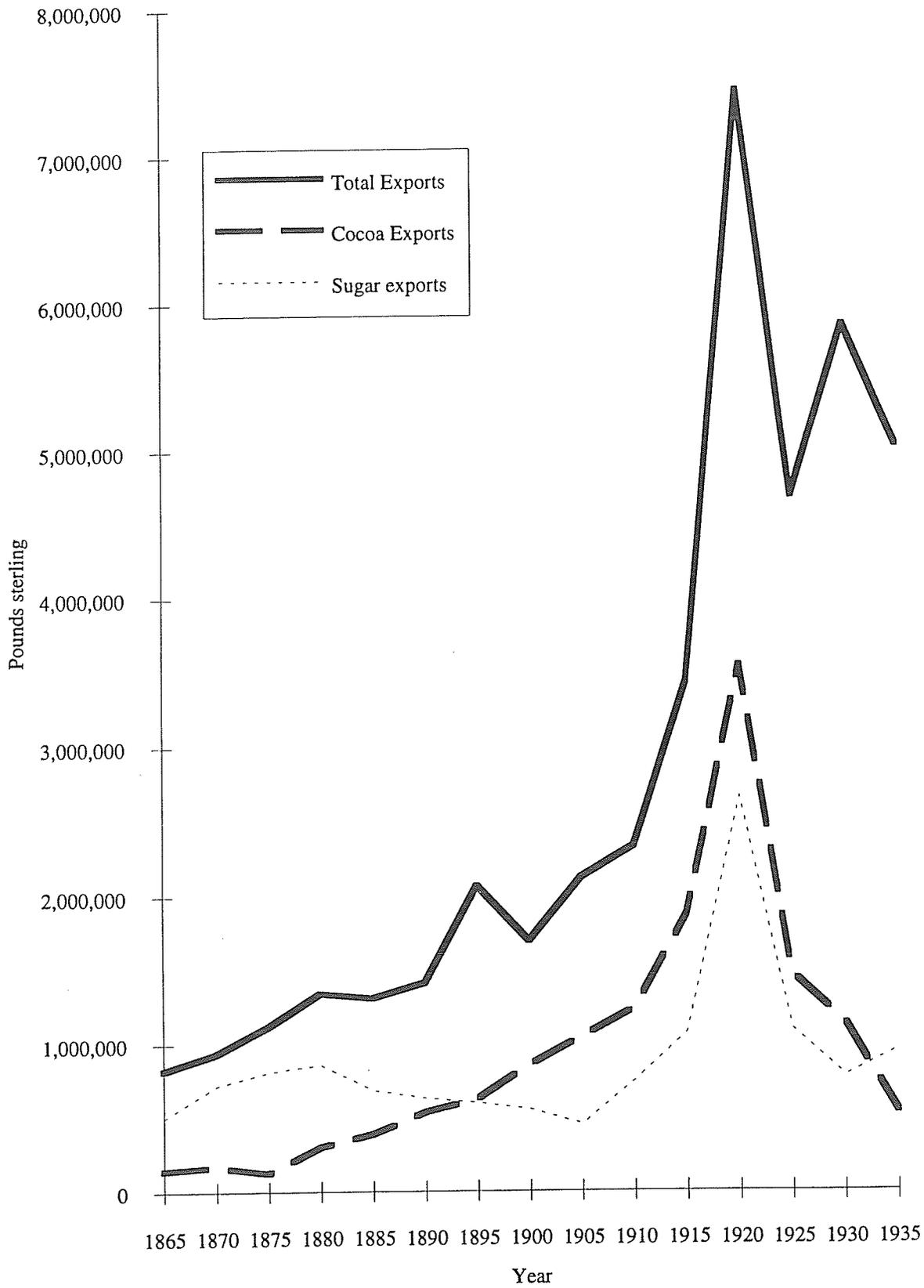
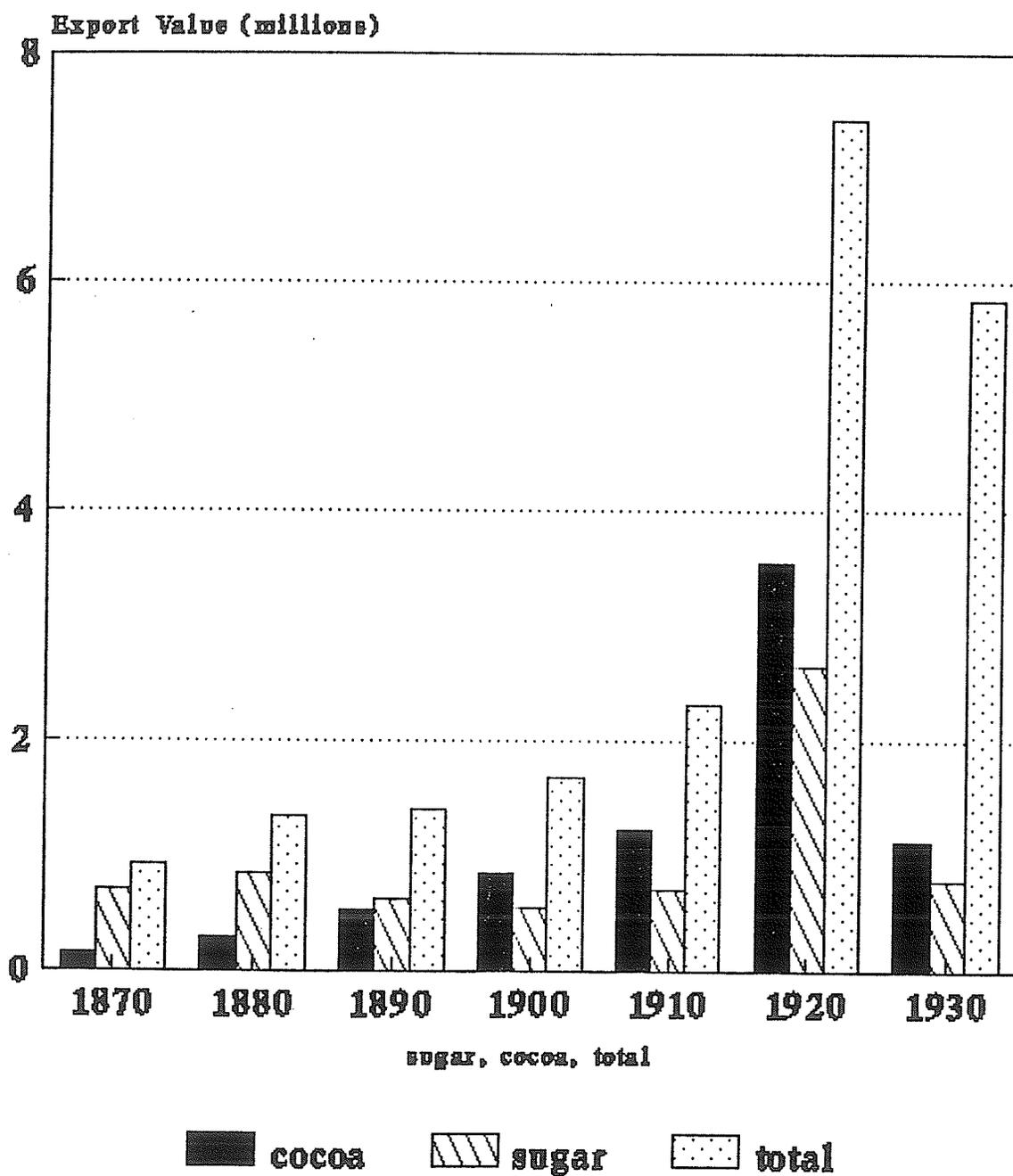


Fig 3
**COCOA, SUGAR EXPORT VALUE AS SHARE OF
 TOTAL EXPORT VALUES 1870-1930**



Source :Based on APPENDIX A Table 3

Fig. 4. Cocoa Production / Exports

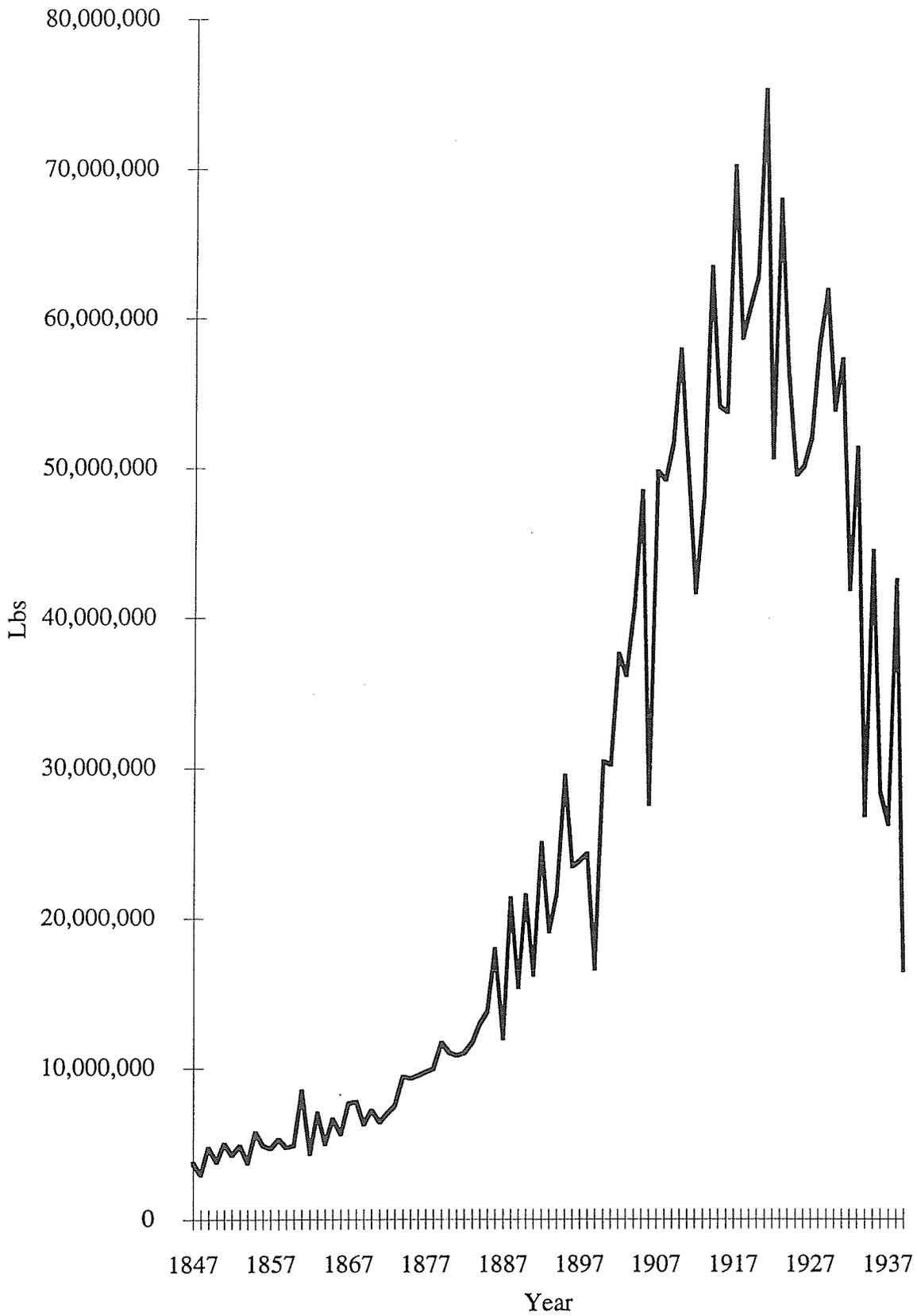


Fig. 5. Aggregate Cocoa Production

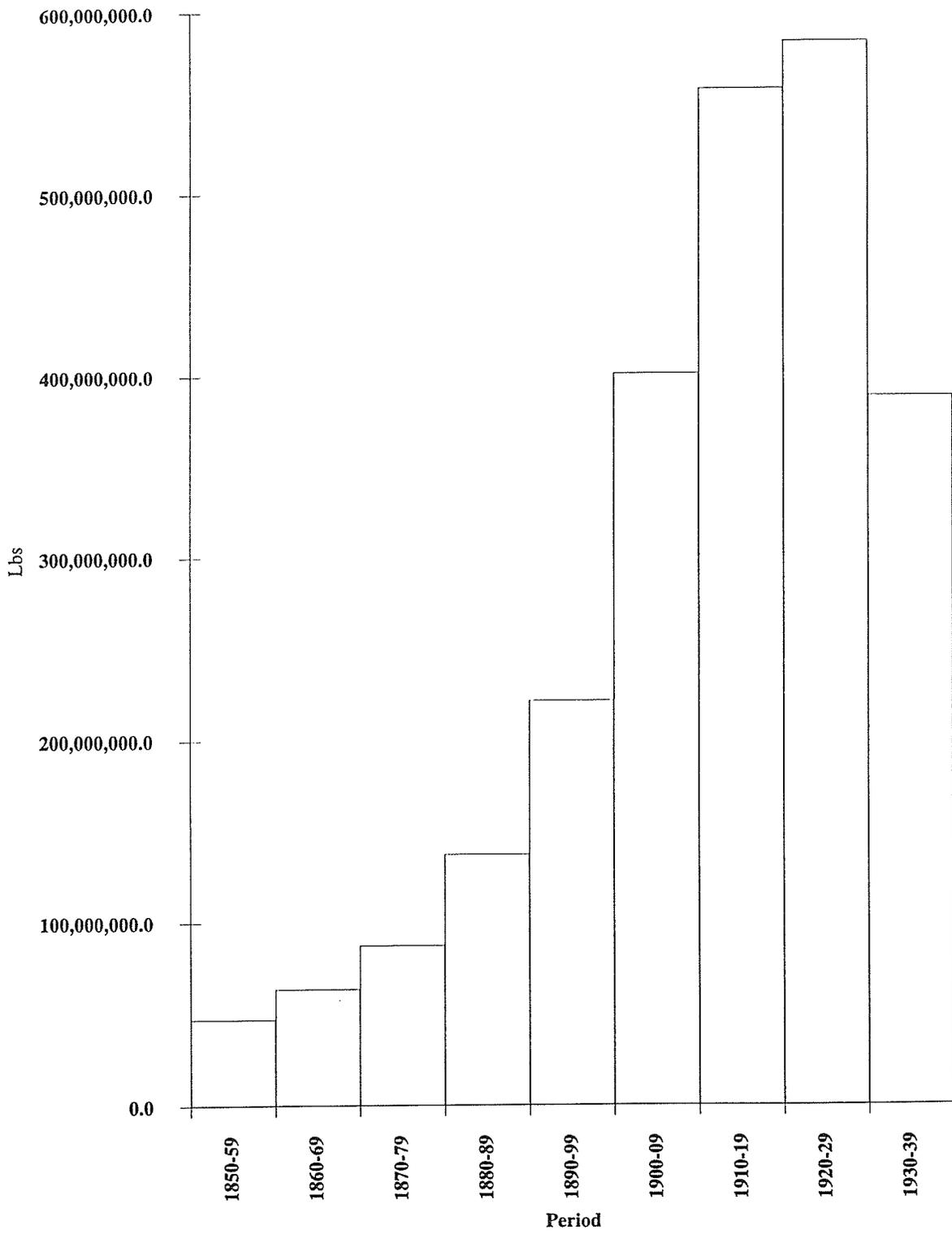


Fig. 6. Mean Annual Production

Ten Year Averages

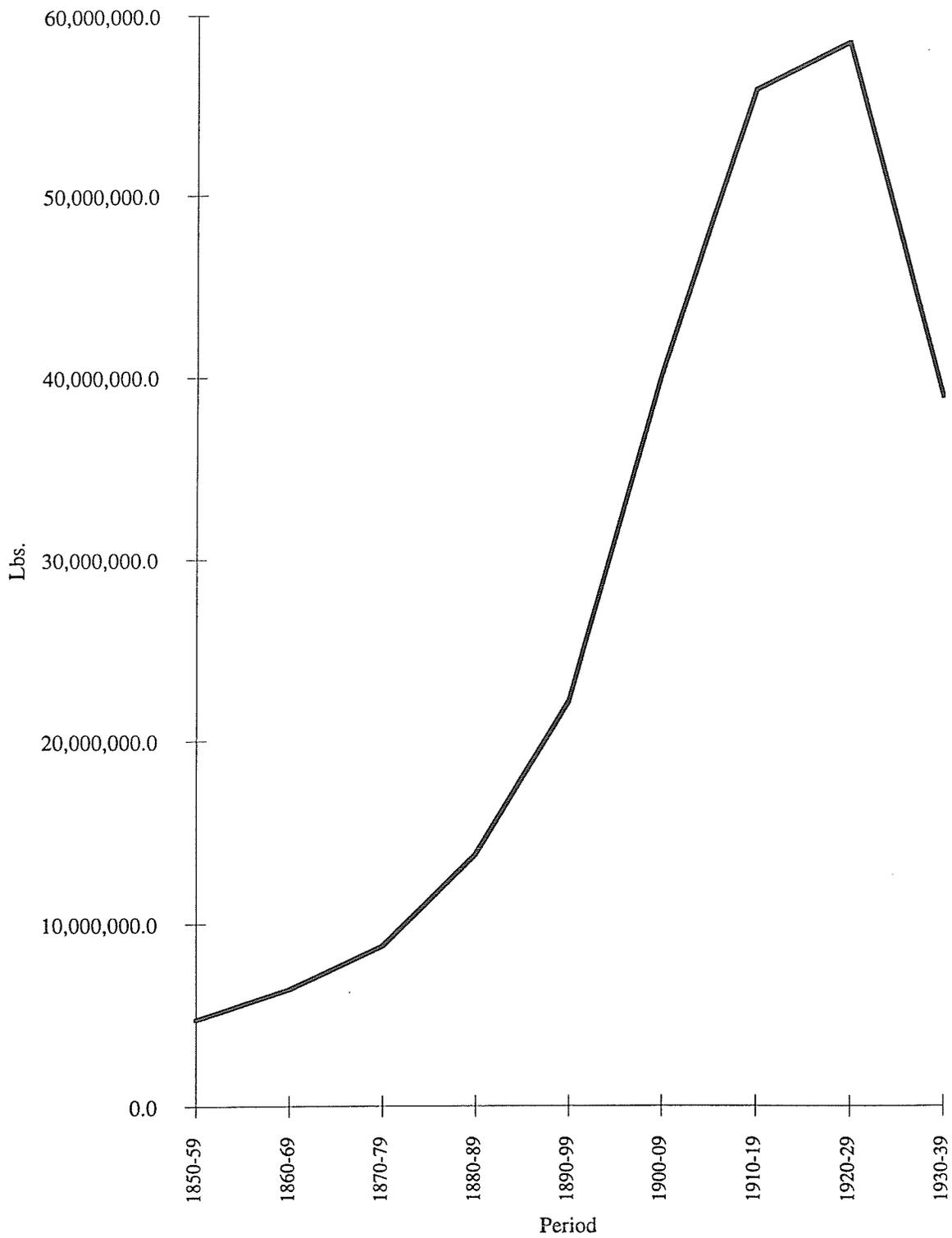
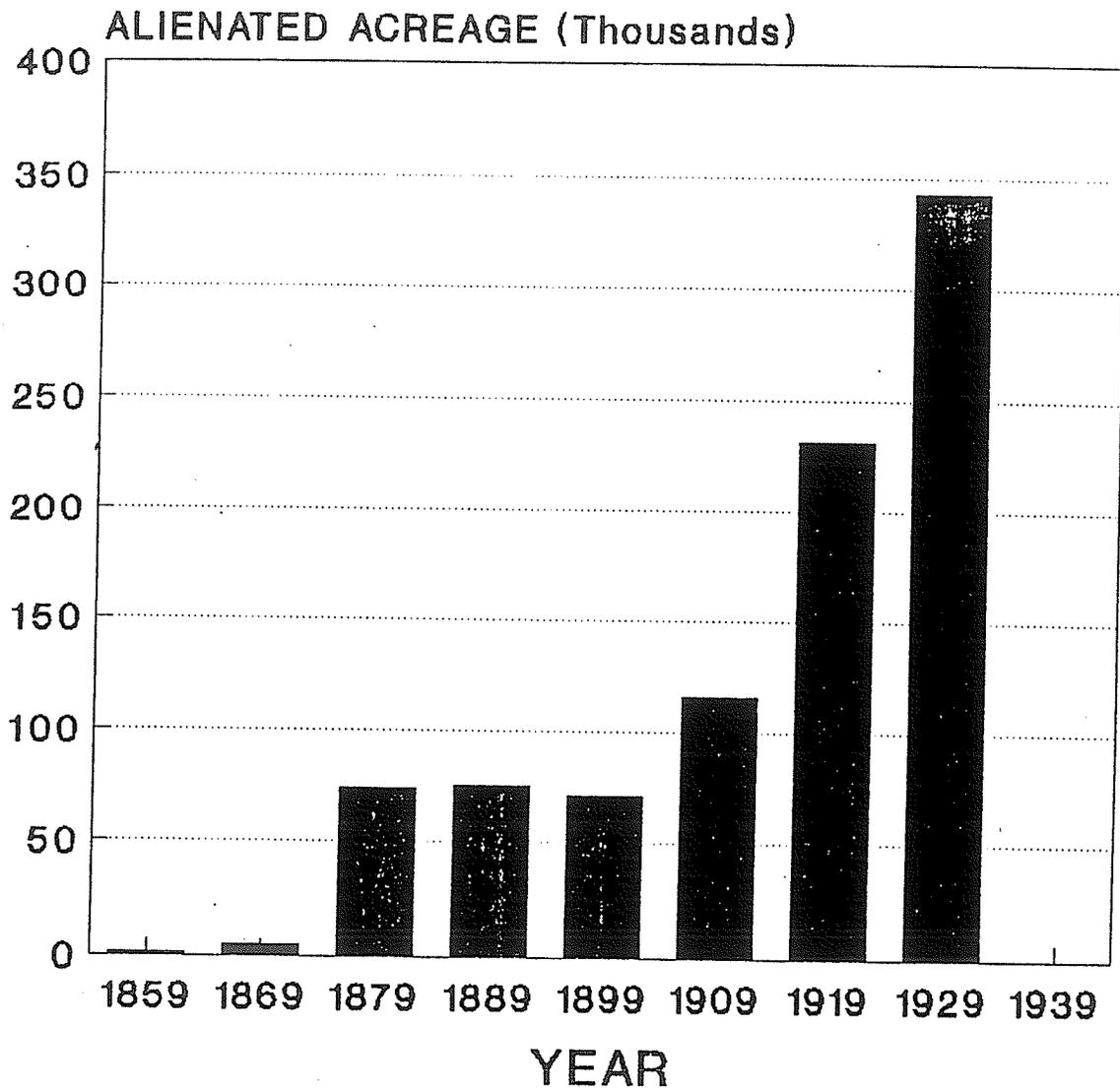


Fig. 7. **ALIENATED ACREAGE**



■ ALIENATED ACREAGE

TEN YEAR TOTALS

Fig. 8. Alienated Acreage

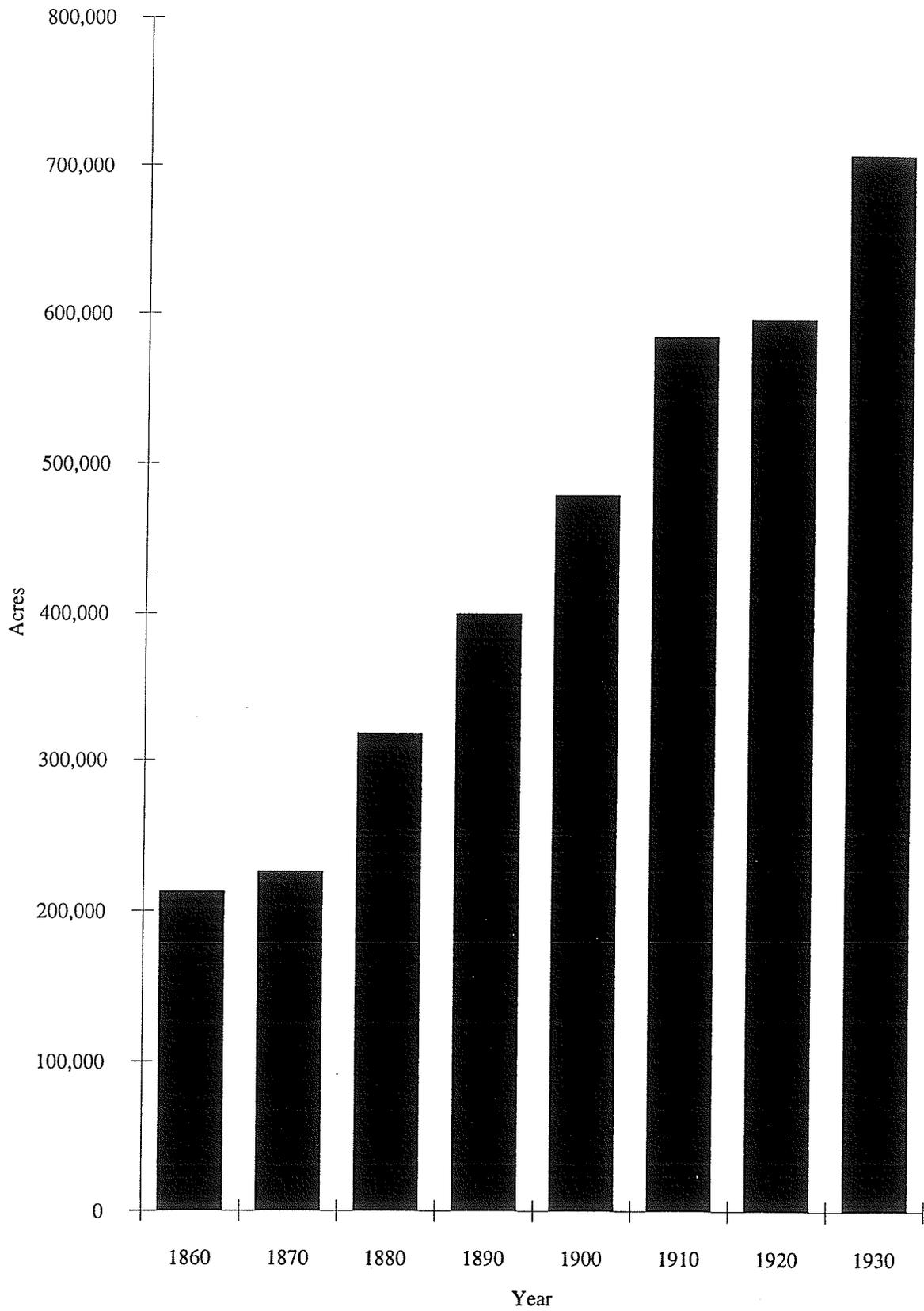


Fig. 9. Land Acreage 1860-1930

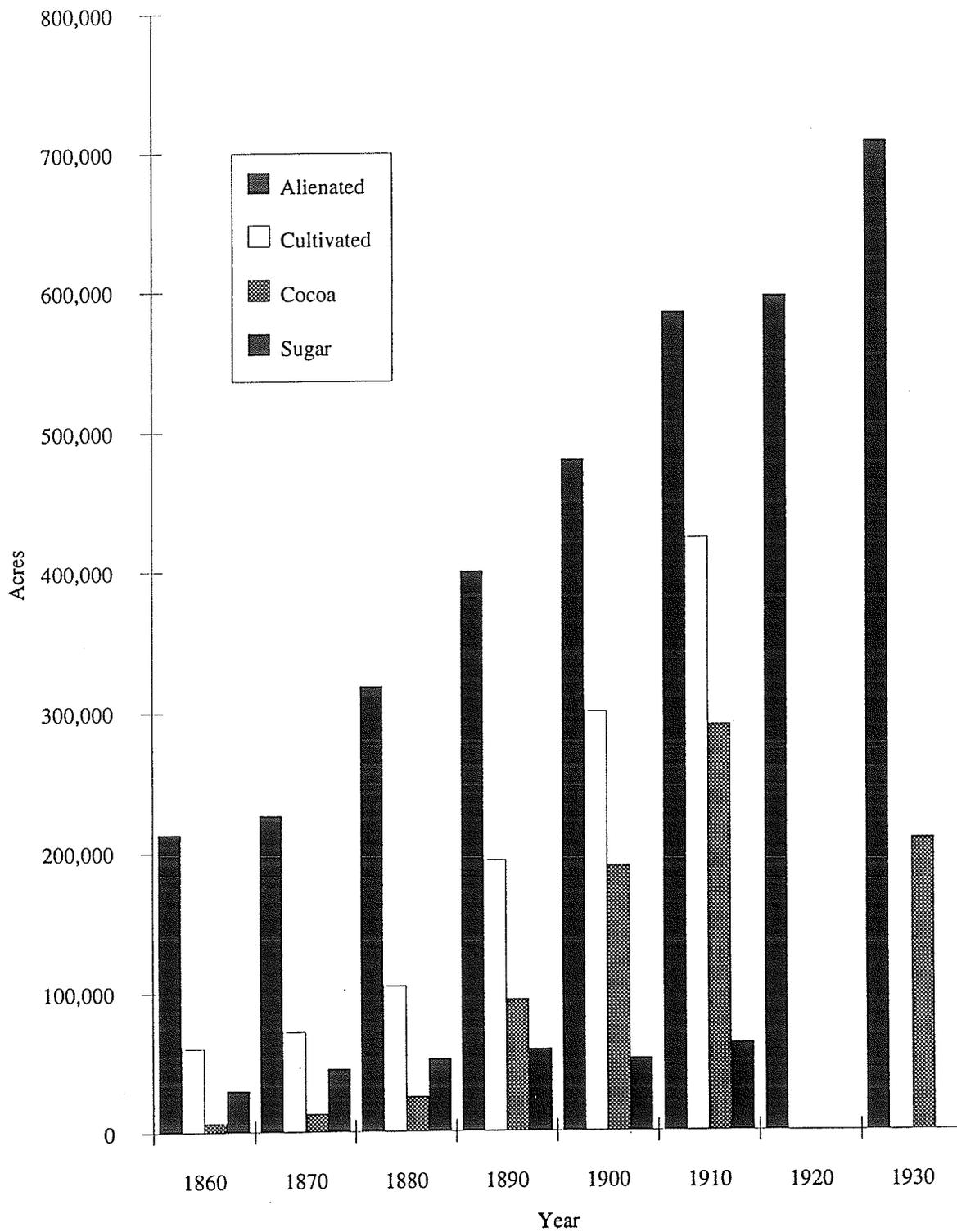


Fig. 10. Alienated Acreage

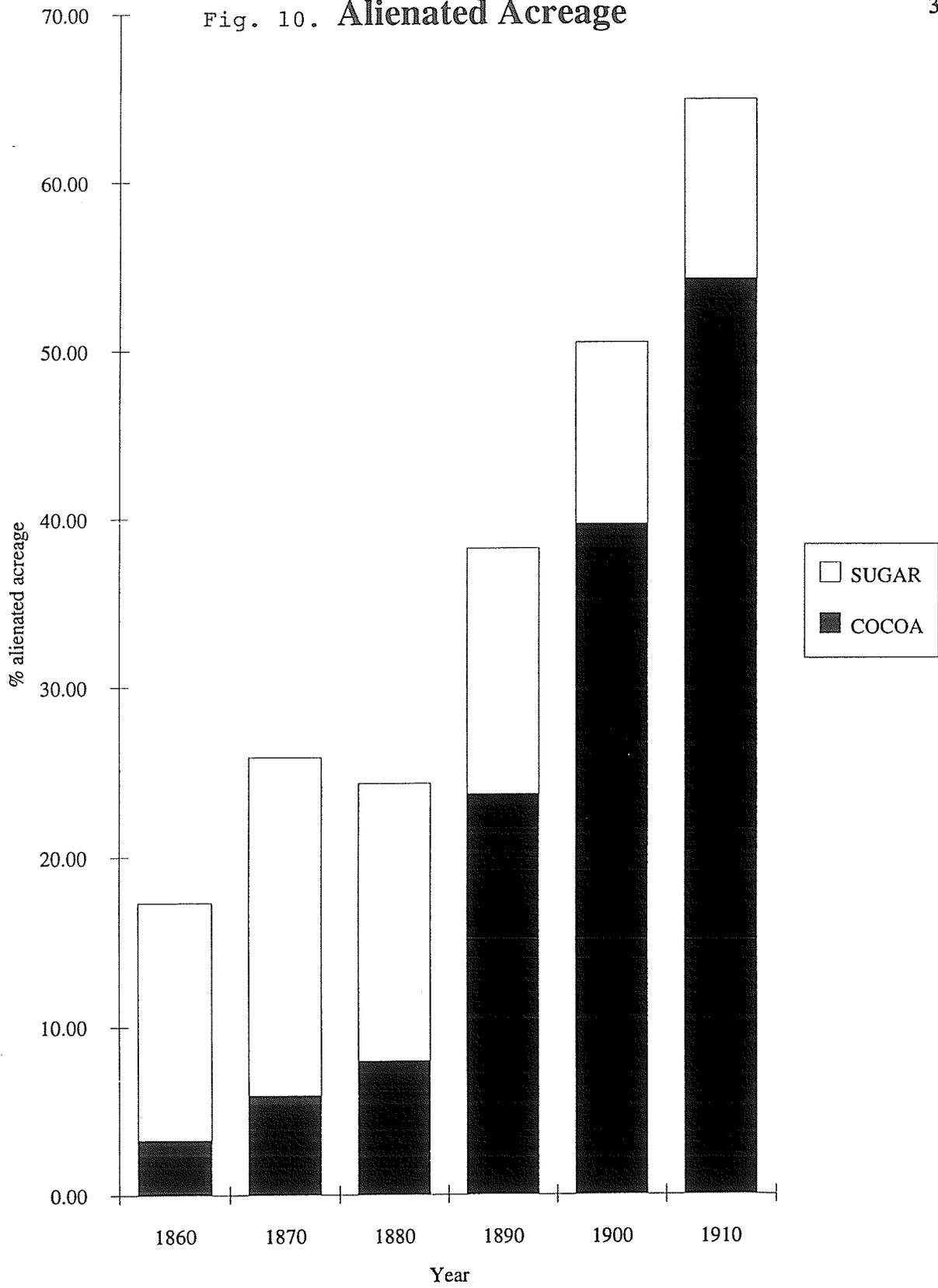


Fig. 11. Cultivated Acreage

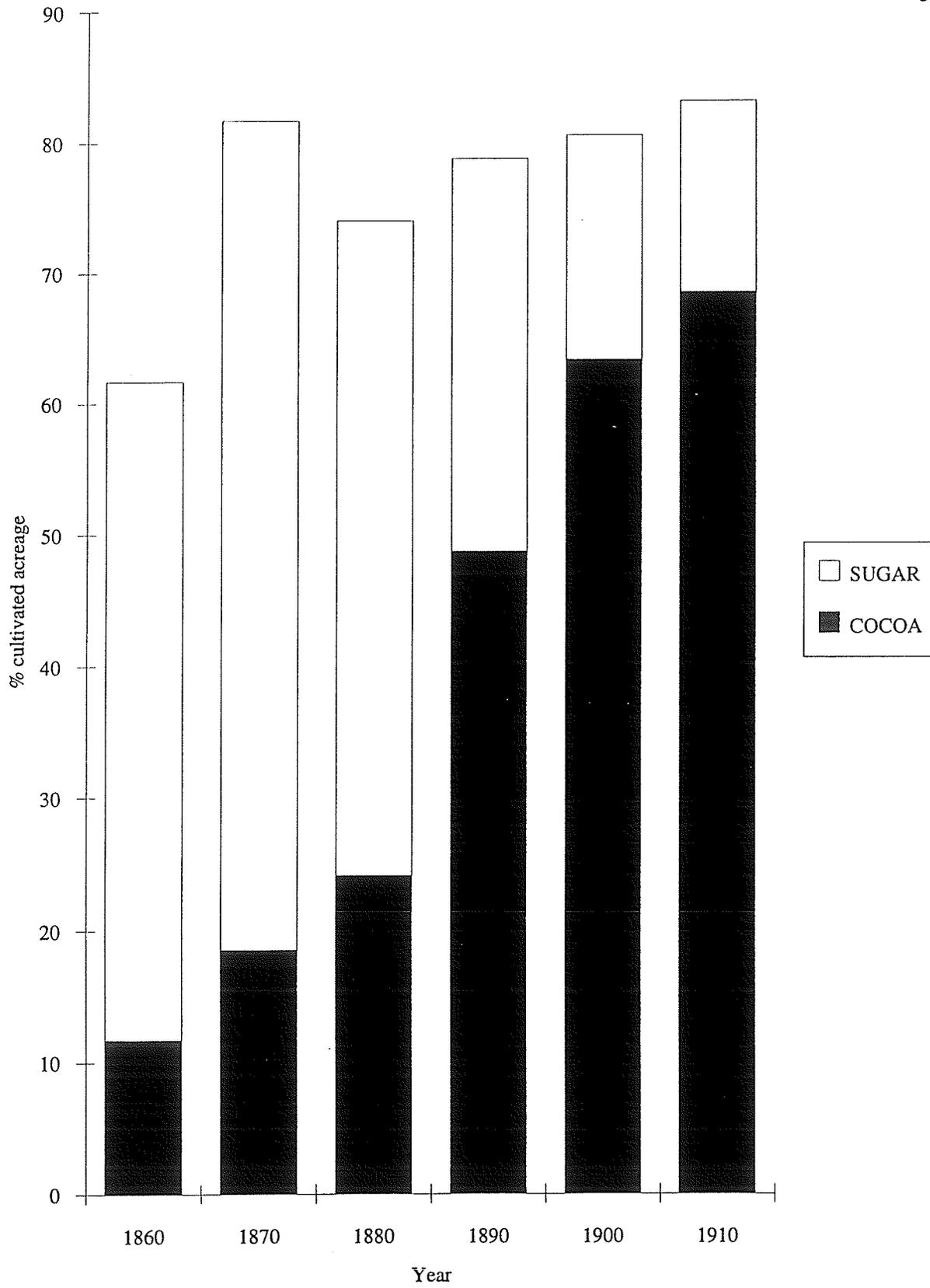
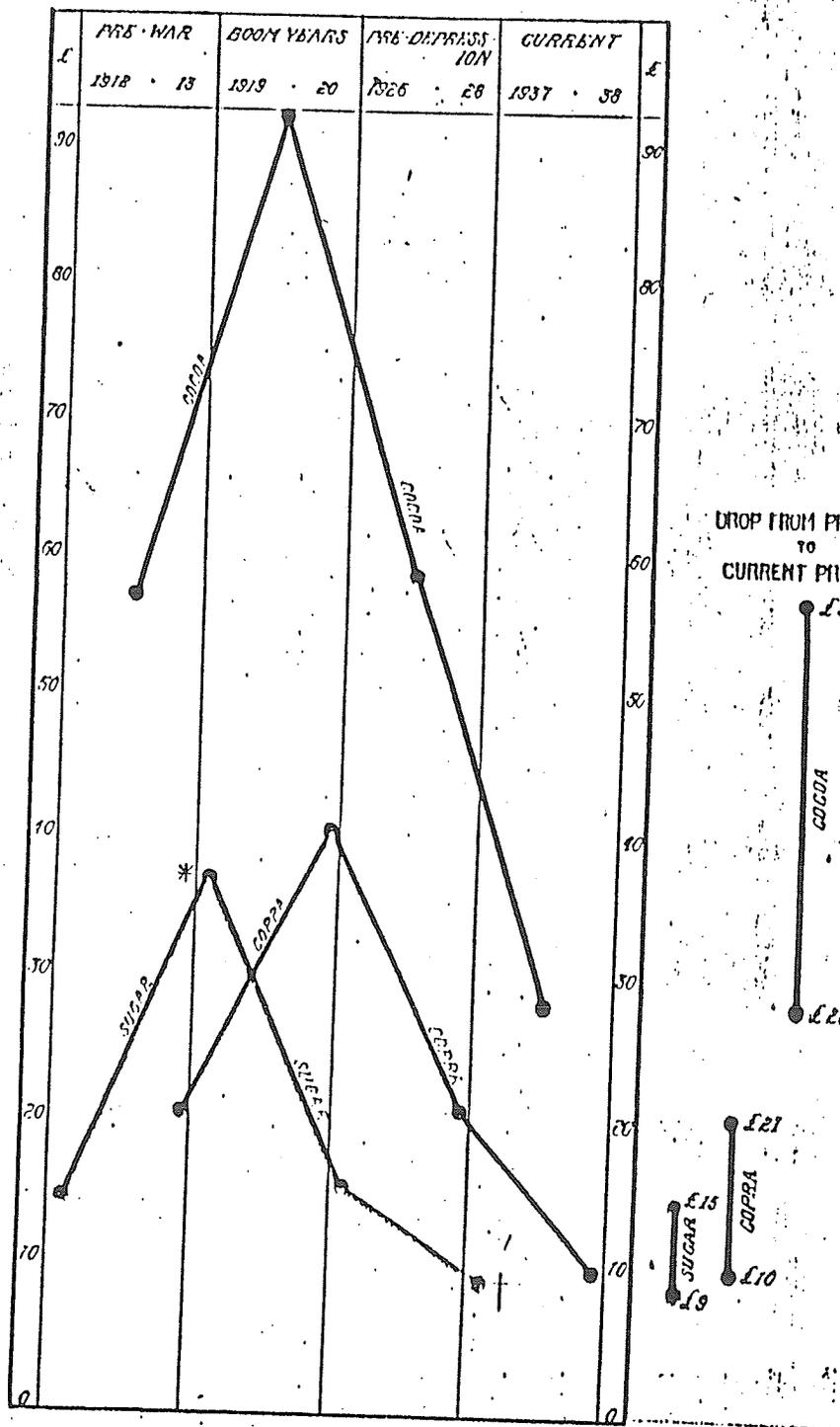


Fig. 12. PERIOD PRICES

COCOA - SUGAR - COPRA
Lab. price per ton in £

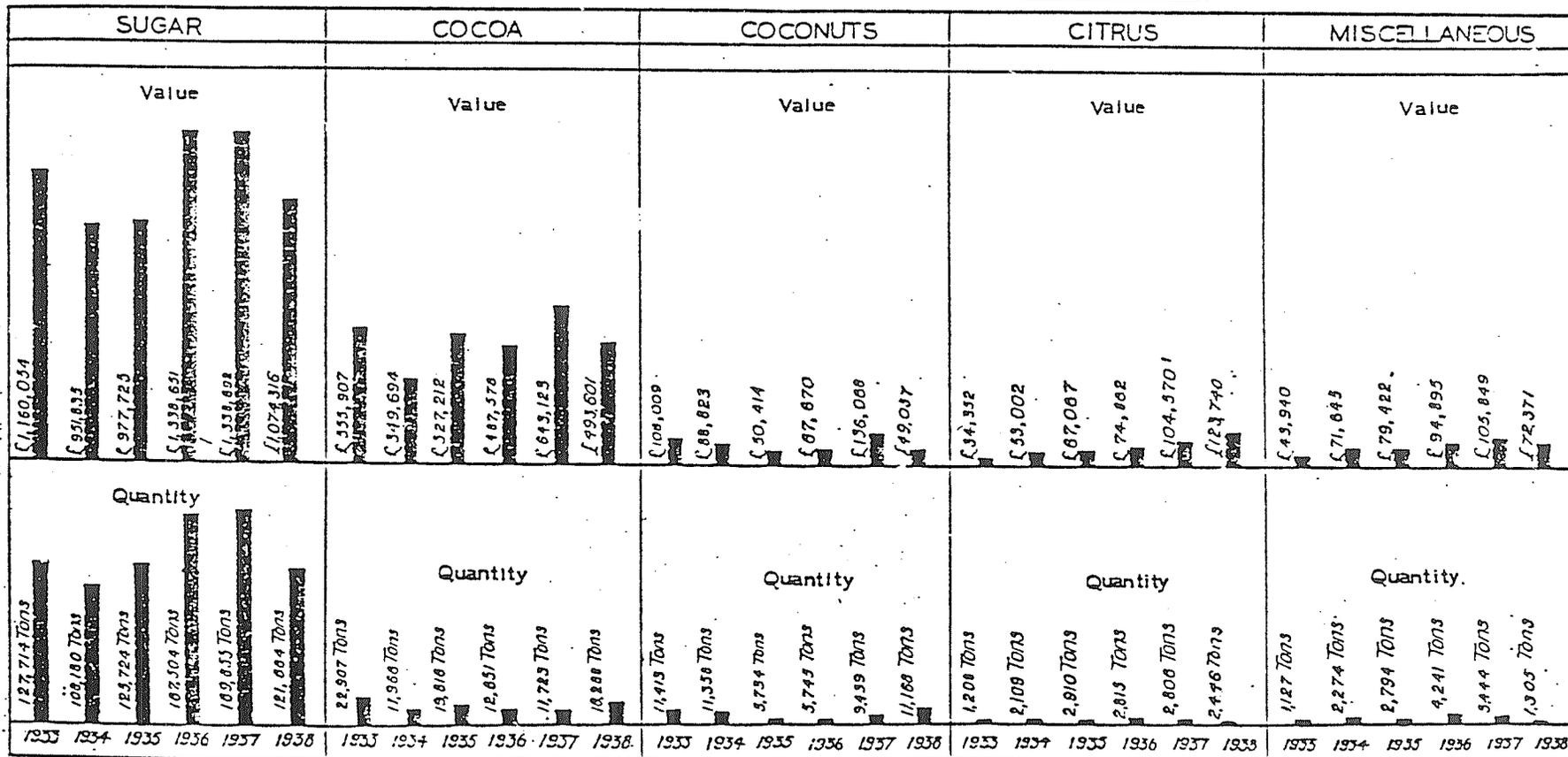


* 1920 only, peak price over £90.

† Includes Colonial Certificates.

Source: CO 950 / 953. Written Submission of the Trinidad Cocoa Growers Association to the 1938-39 W.I.R.C. headed by Lord Moyne.

Fig. 13.
EXPORT VALUES & QUANTITIES 1933-1938
 QUANTITIES & VALUES INCLUDE ALL BYE-PRODUCTS EXPORTED



SOURCE: CO 950 1953 Memo written Submission of the Trinidad Cocoa Growers Association to the 1938-39 W.I.R.C. headed by Lord Moyne.

APPENDIX D

Miscellaneous Exhibits (Printed)

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Exhibit 2	Schedule of Fees i.e. Agricultural Contracts, 18 July 1889	402
Exhibit 3	Freight Rates for Cocoa for Trinidad, Gold Coast, and Bahia, 1938	403
Exhibit 4	Manifesto to the Cocoa Producers of the World, 5th January 1924	404

APPENDIX D

Exhibit 1Agricultural Contract
Form V

It is agreed as follows:

1. On the signing of this contract the owner shall deliver to the contractor possession of _____ acres of land or thereabout, bounded in the north by lands of _____ for the space of _____ years, computed from the date _____
—.
2. The contractor shall commence to cultivate within one month from the date hereof, or in default the owner may proceed to recover possession of the land under contract.
3. The land shall be cultivated with cocoa, nutmeg, orange or lime trees, tobacco or other product.
4. Within _____ days from such delivery the contractor shall clean, burn and prepare the said _____ acres of land for planting.
5. Within _____ days from the land being so prepared the contractor shall plant the whole of such land (in cocoa or whatever else required) in a regular and husbandlike manner such _____ trees to be planted at _____ feet by _____ feet and immortelles at _____ feet by _____ feet (add here the different things to be done by the contractor, each clause being separately numbered).
6. The contractor shall not plant any rice (or whatever else may be objected to) nor more than one crop of corn on the land without the consent in writing of the owner being first obtained.
7. At the termination of this contract (or whatever the terms or manner of payment may be) the owner shall pay the contractor the sum of _____ cents for each healthy bearing _____ tree on the said land and (add whatever price may be agreed upon for supplies and for trees not bearing) the

contractor shall deliver possession of the said land to the owner.

8. The contractor shall have the full benefit of all provisions growing on the said land until the determination or cancellation of this contract.
9. Add whatever other benefit the contractor is to derive.

N.B. The foregoing can be varied as circumstances may be required.

To be signed by owner, contractor, stipendiary Justice of the Peace or Warden or other officer.

Source: CO 297/12 Trinidad Acts 1888-1890. Appendix to Ordinance 9 of July 1889 (Sir Henry Fowler). An Ordinance respecting agricultural contracts.

APPENDIX D

Exhibit 2Schedule B: Table of Fees (with respect to Agricultural Contracts)

	Π	s	d
For attesting each copy of contract	0	1	0
For taking acknowledgement of any contract	0	1	0

	Above £5			£ 5 and under		
	£	s	d	£	s	d
Entering a Plant	0	1	0	0	1	0
For every summons to the Defendant	0	1	0	0	0	6
For every summons to a Witness	0	0	3	0	0	3
For every other summons	0	0	6	0	0	6
For every conveyance of land	0	5	0	0	4	2

to the Registrar General

	Π	s	d
For searching Book of Agricultural Contracts	0	1	0
For copy of any Contracts to the Bailiff	0	1	0

	Above £5			£5 and Under		
	£	s	d	£	s	d
For every Writ of Execution	0	6	0	0	4	0

Exhibit 3. Freight Rates for Cocoa from Trinidad, Gold Coast and Brazil.

FREIGHT RATES.			
United Kingdom Terminal Ports.	Continental Terminal Ports.	Distance to London.	
	(Direct or with transhipment at continental ports).	(Direct or with transhipment at U.K. ports).	
Cocoa From Trinidad	70/- per 2,240 lbs. gr. wt. Rebate 10%.	85/- per 2,240 lbs. gr. wt. Rebate 10%.	4,005 Nautical miles.
	(The above include lighterage).		
" Gold Coast	37/6 per ton.	40/- per ton.	3,893 ditto.
" Bahia	52/6 plus 10% per 800 Kilos. (55/6d net per 1,000 Kilos).	52/6 plus 10% per 800 Kilos. (55/6d net per 1,000 Kilos).	4,230 ditto.

Appendix L.

SOURCE: CO 950 /798. Written Submission of the Trinidad Cocoa Planters Association to the 1938-39 W.I.R.C. headed by Lord Moyne.

Exhibit 4.

MANIFESTO TO THE COCOA PRODUCERS OF THE WORLD.

Now that the 25th June, 1924, has been fixed for the opening in London of the Conference of all the Cocoa Producers of the World, under the auspices of The British Empire Producers' Organisation and the West India Committee and the movement may pass into more competent hands, I claim indulgence to make a few observations.

I may say, without fear of contradiction, that in the perilous condition of the cocoa industry it behoves each one to think seriously of what it may be possible to achieve by the united effort of the whole to place the product in a position of security and stability, and free it from dangers of the present and future, that may be the natural consequence of supineness on the part of those concerned.

I exhort the producers seeking the ways and means not to create confusion in their minds by conjuring up thoughts of complicated schemes that may lead to bewildering entanglement, unconsciously heading for the "Impossible" (the shortest cut so dear to the unwilling), as they will most assuredly find it; nor ought they to be animated by feelings of resentment for what they conceive to be existing wrongs; nor ought they at too early a stage to worry about controversial questions as to whether the cause is the natural result of supply and demand, or of the successful machinations of covetous commercialism; but to search for what is common ground to all, and with the earnestness that the position calls for, to seek and apply what may be the simplest but most potential means for creating the remedy.

The following I suggest would form common ground (whatever the influence and whatever the obligations may be):—

1. In the mind of the producer there is too great a disparity between the price of the raw product and that of the manufactured article.
2. The grower or producer is entitled to a fair reward for his labour and enterprise, which he is not getting (whatever the cause).
3. It is up to the producer to find the best means he can to remedy the evil.

I do not propose to interfere with the freedom of trading in cocoa that has hitherto existed (unless this is made necessary) any more than to block the business of the manufacturer, but it may be pertinent for the producers to ponder whether it is to their benefit or injury that commercial men in the countries of origin (particularly West Africa) should be encouraged to fix a killing price for the grower's product for the "next crop" by long forward sales, even before it is on the trees, thereby fixing a basis on which all other cocoas must be sold.

I beg to affirm that idly waiting on a settlement of economic conditions anywhere is the function of a corpse; and that if economic conditions do revive or prices rise, the reason for the meeting of the Producers would be stranger.

I should gladly welcome at the Producers' Conference, manufacturers and dealers, as mutuality of understanding might serve the best interests of all.

E. RADCLIFFE CLARKE.

Port-of-Spain, Trinidad,
6th January, 1924.

Source; CO 295/553. Fo. 12291 . 14 March 1924. E.Radcliffe Clarke
to J.N.Thomas, Sec. of State for the Colonies.

APPENDIX E**Photographs (Plates)**

- | | |
|---------|--------------------------|
| Plate 1 | Cocoa Tree |
| Plate 2 | Picking Cocoa |
| Plate 3 | Breaking the Cocoa Pod |
| Plate 4 | Drying Cocoa |
| Plate 5 | Cleaning "Sweated" Cocoa |

Plate 1.



[Photo: Day, Port-of-Spain.

COCOA TREE.

Plate 2.



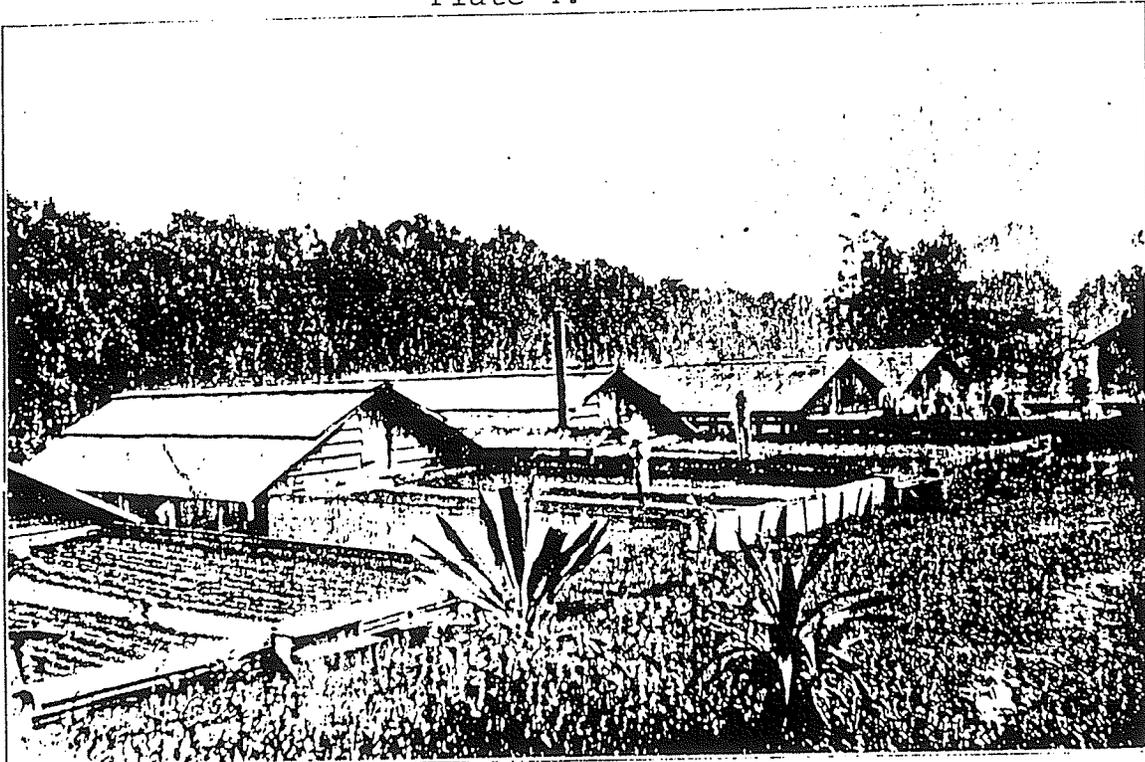
[Jacobson Photo.

PICKING COCOA.



[Jacobson Photo.]

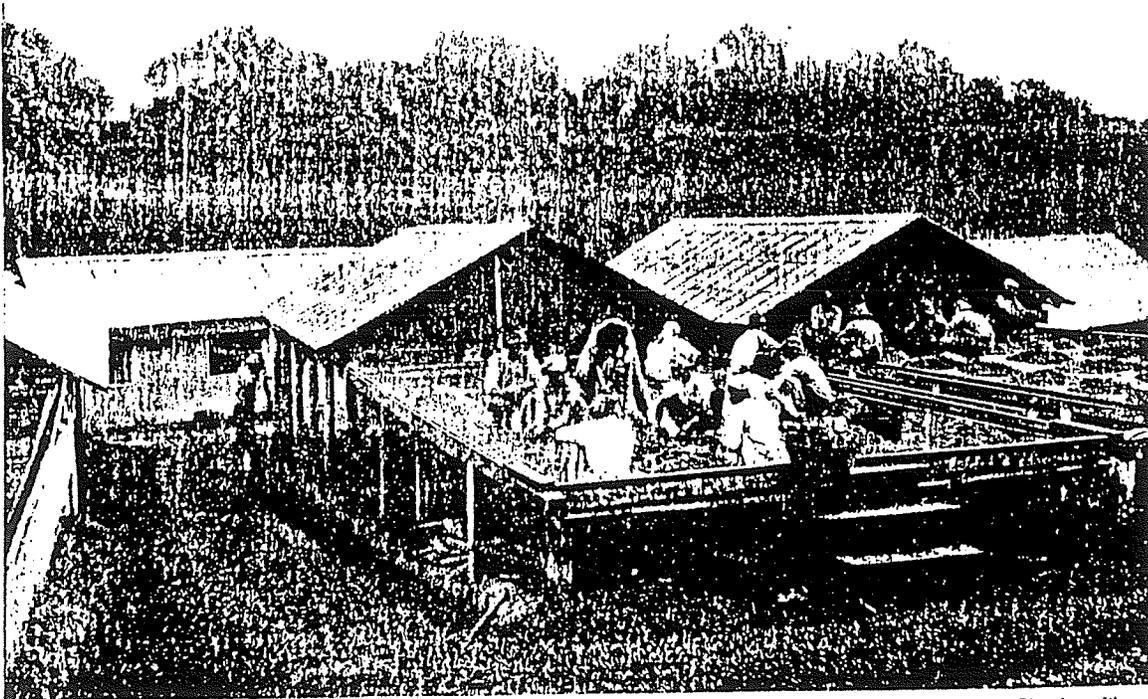
BREAKING THE COCOA PODS.



DRYING COCOA.

[Jacobsen Photo.

Plate 5.



CLEANING "SWEATED" COCOA.

[Jacobsen Photo.