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**DECREE of the King-Regent of Portugal, for the Registration and partial Emancipation of Slaves in the Portuguese Colonial Possessions; so far as relates specifically to the Slave Trade. December 14, 1854.**

(Translation.)

*Marine and Colonial Department.*

**TAKING** into consideration the urgent necessity for obviating the many and serious inconveniences resulting from the uncertainty and vagueness of the law, as observed in the several transmarine provinces subject to the Portuguese Crown, with regard to the rights of ownership of Slaves, which must be tolerated there until such time as the proper measures can be adopted, to the end that the principles of individual liberty and equality may receive the strict and liberal application which the Kings of these realms have, from time immemorial, always proclaimed, and which in the glorious reigns of the King Don José, and of the Queen Dona Maria I, of beloved memory, were ordered to be extended to the entire continent of the Kingdom of Portugal, and to the adjacent islands.

Agreeing to the proposal of the Transmarine Council contained in their Report of 9th December, 1853, amplifying what is enacted by the Royal Letters Patent of 7th February, 1701, and what is now in practice in the Province of Cape Verd in some cases, and in that of Angola in others; and fixing once for all the true acceptation of the term and effect of enfranchisement, which the "Alvara" of 16th January, 1773, justly proscribed as barbarous and anti-Christian in the strict sense of the ancient Roman law, but which in the liberal and civilizing sense of the constitutional charter of the monarchy bears a different, very limited, and humane acceptation; I am pleased in the name of the King, and using the power conferred by Article XV, Section 1, of the Additional Act, after hearing the Council of Ministers, to decree as follows:

**TITLE V.—General and Penal Provisions.**

**XLII.** The share belonging to the State of all penalties and fines levied, or to be levied, upon those who carry on the Slave Trade, or in any way abet it, as also of the securities unredeemed which are mentioned in Article XXIV of the Decree of 10th December, 1836,\* will be ceded in favour of the funds of the Board of Protection of Slaves.

\* See Vol. 5, Page 421.

**XLIII.** Contracts entered into for labour with African chiefs or others, may not exceed the term stipulated in Article X of the Regulation of 25th October, 1853, and will be specially liable to the supervision of the Boards of Protection, and all other authorities being likewise bound to take care that these contracts may not become an abuse in contravention of the laws which prohibit the Traffic in Slaves.

**VISCOUNT D'ATHOQUIA.**

**KING, REGENT.**

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