

## No. 3. (Voucher.)

Barbadoes.—An Act allowing the Testimony of Free Negroes and Free People of Colour to be taken in all Cases.

WHEREAS free Negroes and free people of colour are by the laws of this island debarred from giving evidence in certain cases, and whereas from their steady and meritorious conduct on frequent occasions, but more particularly during the late calamitous insurrection of the Slaves, they evinced the greatest attachment and fidelity to the white inhabitants of the island, so as to entitle them to the favourable consideration of the legislature, in removing the disabilities under which they thus labour.

Clause 1.

Persons of free condition, baptised, and professing the Christian religion declared to be competent witnesses in all cases.

But those hereafter freed not to give evidence for twelve months.

Clause 2.

Those hereafter manumitted not to have the privileges of the Act, unless freed according to the laws of the island.

Be it therefore enacted by the Honourable John Spooner, Esq., President of His Majesty's Council and Commander-in-chief of this island, Chancellor, Ordinary, and Vice Admiral of the same; the Honourable the Members of His Majesty's Council, and the General Assembly of this island, and by the authority of the same, that from and immediately after the publication of this Act, all and every person and persons of free condition, and who have been baptised and instructed in the principles of the Christian Religion shall and lawfully may be admitted and received to give evidence on any trial or suit of any nature or kind whatsoever, or on the hearing any complaint instituted or exhibited in any of the courts of law or equity in this island, or before any magistrate or coroner: Provided that no Negro or Mulatto who shall be made free shall be admitted to give evidence by virtue of this law unless he or she has been manumitted or made free for the space of twelve months previous to the commission of the offence or existence of the fact respecting which he or she shall be produced to give his or her evidence.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that no Slave resident in this island who shall hereafter be manumitted shall be admitted as a competent witness under this Act unless he or she shall be manumitted according to the Acts of this island now in full force.

Read three times and passed the Council unanimously this 4th of February, 1817.

(Signed)

WM. HUSBANDS, Deputy Clerk of the Council.

Read three times and passed the General Assembly this 7th of January, 1817.

(Signed)

R. PHILLIPS, Clerk of the General Assembly.

(Signed)

JOHN SPOONER.

Assented to by his Honour the President on the 5th of February, 1817.

(Signed)

WM. HUSBANDS, Deputy Secretary.

## No. 4. (Voucher.)

SIR,

Barbadoes, October 30th, 1826.

IN compliance with your Excellency's desire, I beg leave to lay before your Excellency, the substance of the communication I made to you on Wednesday last, when I had the honour to wait on your Excellency respecting the Manumission Act, which had recently passed in the Legislative Council and House of Assembly; the Act was drawn and brought into the Council by myself, as the most effectual to facilitate the voluntary manumission of Slaves in the colony. By the Act all fines (as the deposit money has been termed) on the manumission of Slaves in the colony are entirely removed. Slaves could be set free in the colony at a very trifling expense for the proof and record of the deed of manumission, much less than is now paid for a deed of manumission in England under a corporate seal. Having considered this point as necessary to meet the suggestions of Earl Bathurst as to voluntary manumissions, it would at the same time appear unjust towards the resident proprietors of Slaves in the