

An ACT for the better protection and for promoting the natural increase and population of Slaves within the Island of Grenada, and such of the Grenadines as are annexed to the government thereof, for compelling an adequate provision for and care of them, as well in sickness and old age as in health; and for constituting and appointing Guardians to effectuate and carry into execution the regulations and purposes of this Act. [9 Dec. 1797.]

WHEREAS the laws heretofore made for the protection of slaves, and for  
divers other of the benevolent purposes intended by this present Act, having been  
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temporary, are expired; and humanity and the interest of the colony require that the same, or other equally salutary and sufficient regulations and provisions should be adopted and ordained, for rendering the servitude and labour of slaves as limited and easy as possible; and for promoting the natural increase of their population, as the most likely means of removing, in a course of time, the necessity of further importations of slaves from Africa: And whereas these desirable ends cannot be more effectually obtained than by compelling the owners and masters of slaves sufficiently and properly to lodge, feed, clothe, and maintain them, as well during health, and their capacity for labour, as in time of sickness, old age, and infirmities, by prescribing reasonable bounds to the power of masters and others having the charge of slaves, by introducing them to the knowledge of the christian religion, and affording them opportunity of improving in morality; and by constituting a proper tribunal of guardianship, for the hearing, examination, and redress of their grievances, and security of their rights and immunities hereby granted and established; May it therefore please the King's most excellent Majesty, and that it may be enacted and ordained.

## Clause I.

Possessors or owners of estates to provide good and comfortable lodging, a sufficient portion of negro grounds, to be approved by the guardians, with sufficient time to cultivate such grounds.

And be it and it is hereby enacted by his excellency Charles Green, esquire, captain general, and governor in chief of the Island of Grenada, and the Grenadines annexed to the government thereof, the honourable the members of the council, and the representatives of the people of said Islands in general assembly convened, and by the authority of the same, that immediately, and from time to time, and at all times from and after the publication of this Act, every proprietor, owner, or possessor of any plantation or estate, shall provide for, and allow to, at least every head of a family of slaves, thereunto attached, one good and comfortable house, with one or more cabanes or beds to sleep upon, raised at least one foot from the ground; and shall also allot and appoint for every slave (domestics excepted) above the age of fourteen years, as, and for his or her proper ground, such a quantity or portion of the land of the said plantation or estate, to which such slave may be attached, of or such other contiguous lands as shall be approved by the guardians of slaves appointed in manner hereinafter mentioned, as sufficiently near and convenient for such provision ground, as in the estimation of the guardians for that parish wherein such plantation or estate shall be situate, or the majority of them, shall be deemed sufficient, when under proper cultivation, to produce such a quantity of ground provisions, as, with the ordinary allowance of salt provisions, of the quantity whereof such guardians are to judge, will be completely adequate to the maintenance and support of such slave; and shall allow every such slave, from noon, in some one day in every week, or one whole day in a fortnight, besides Sunday (except in time of crop), for the purpose of working and cultivating his or her grounds; which said grounds, when once allotted, shall not be exchanged or taken away from any such slaves, without his or her consent, by him or her expressed to the guardians of such district or parish, whilst such slave shall remain on the estate to which such land so allotted to him or her belongs (except in manner and upon the terms next hereinafter mentioned); that is to say, Provided always, that if the person having the charge of any plantation or estate shall find it necessary or expedient to change the provision grounds allotted to the slaves of such plantation or estate; and such consent of the slaves shall not be expressed as aforesaid, it shall and may be lawful for any such person to allot other sufficient grounds for that purpose, and to call on the guardians of the district or parish to examine and approve of the quantity, quality, and situation of such proposed new provision grounds; and if the said guardians, or a majority of them, shall approve of such new provision grounds, then and in every such case, from and after the expiration of twelve calendar months after such new allotment and approbation as aforesaid, or such longer period, according to the season of the year, as the guardians shall judge necessary to enable the slaves to put such newly allotted grounds into proper cultivation, but not sooner or otherwise, it shall and may be lawful for any such person to take in, and put into cultivation, the grounds so first allotted for the use of the slaves.

## Clause II.

Owners of estates, from the situation or nature of the soil not affording sufficient provision grounds, to have it in their option to make allotments of ground, to give a weekly allowance of provisions.

And whereas there may be some estates, which from the nature of the soil, and particular situation, are not so proper for the cultivation of provisions; and were the proprietors or possessors compelled to allot portions thereof to every slave, for the purpose of cultivating provisions completely adequate to his or her maintenance, as hereinbefore directed, it might be attended with ruinous consequences to such estates, without answering the purposes thereby intended; BE it and it is hereby enacted by the authority aforesaid, That every proprietor, owner, or possessor of

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any plantation or estate, which, in the judgment of the guardians, shall be so circumstanced in point of soil or situation, shall have it in his or her option or choice, with the approbation of the guardians, either to make such allotments of land as aforesaid, as provision grounds for the maintenance of the Slaves attached thereto, or to give them a weekly allowance of provisions completely adequate to their maintenance: Provided always, that there shall be at least one fortieth part of an acre allotted to each slave, contiguous to the negro houses, for the purpose of cultivating a garden for their sole use and benefit.

And be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, That every such proprietor, owner, or possessor as aforesaid, shall annually allow and give to every slave whom he or she shall own, rent or possess, decent and sufficient clothing, according to the respective sex and age of such slave, to be approved of and directed by the guardians of the district wherein the plantation or estate to which such slave may be attached shall lie; and if any proprietor, owner, or possessor of any plantation or estate, do or shall neglect or refuse to comply with or obey any of the provisions of this clause, he she or they shall, for every such neglect or refusal, forfeit and pay the sum of five pounds for every slave who shall not be so clothed as herein is directed, to be recovered, paid and applied in manner hereinafter prescribed.

And be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, That in all cases when slaves are not attached to or resident on any plantation or estate, the proprietors or possessors of all and every of such slaves, shall provide for and furnish such slaves with comfortable lodging, and ample provision of wholesome food, and with decent clothing in every year, to be approved and directed by the guardians of the district where such proprietor, or, in his or her absence, his or her acting attorney shall be resident, under the penalty last mentioned.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, in order to restrain arbitrary punishments, That from and after the publication of this Act it shall not be lawful for any proprietor of a slave or slaves, or for the attorney of such proprietor, or in his or her absence, nor for the manager, overseer, or other free persons having the management or direction of such slave or slaves in the absence of the proprietor, and where there is no attorney resident, to inflict, or cause or knowingly suffer to be inflicted on any slave any corporal punishment, other than imprisonment in a proper and wholesome place of confinement, and whipping not to exceed thirty-nine lashes at one time, and for any one offence or fault which by him or her may be committed; and that in all cases when either the proprietor is resident on the estate, or, if absent, has an attorney resident thereon, it shall not be lawful for any manager, overseer, or free person employed under such proprietor or attorney, to inflict, or cause or knowingly suffer to be inflicted on any such slave any corporal punishment, other than confinement in a proper place, and whipping not to exceed twelve lashes at one time, and for any one offence or fault by him or her committed; nor shall any such proprietor, attorney, manager, overseer, or other free person as aforesaid, inflict, or suffer to be inflicted such punishment, nor any other number of lashes in the same day, nor until the delinquent has recovered from the effects of any former punishment, under the penalty of twenty pounds for every such excess or repetition of punishment, to be recovered against the person directing or permitting the same: Provided always, that in all cases where the proprietor, or other person having charge of any such slave, shall conceive the fault committed (although by law not cognizable by justices of the peace) to be of such enormity as to deserve more exemplary punishment than is hereinbefore allowed to be inflicted; it shall and may be lawful for him to cause such offending slave to be carried before any two justices of the peace; and such justices are hereby authorized to hear and examine into every such complaint, and to direct such corporal punishment, not extending to life or limb, as the offence shall in their discretion merit; after which punishment, inflicted by order of the justices as aforesaid, no farther or other punishment whatever shall be inflicted on such slave for that offence, by any person or persons whomsoever, under the similar penalty last hereinbefore mentioned of twenty pounds.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That if any proprietor, attorney, manager, overseer or other free person employed as aforesaid, do and shall upon any pretence whatsoever, take upon himself or herself to inflict, or cause to be inflicted on such slave or slaves as aforesaid, any heavier, greater or other

provisions in lieu thereof, with the approbation of the guardians.

## Clause III.

Annual allowance of decent and sufficient clothing, to be approved by the guardians.

Penalty for neglect or refusal thereof.

## Clause IV.

Slaves not attached to, or resident on estates, to be provided by the proprietors with comfortable lodging, ample and wholesome food, and decent clothing

## Clause V.

Proprietors of slaves, or attorneys of such proprietors, or in their absence, the manager, overseer, &c. restrained from inflicting on any slave any corporal punishment, other than confinement, and whipping not to exceed 39 lashes at one time, and for any one offence.

Proprietors or attorneys being resident, the manager, overseer, &c. not to inflict any corporal punishment, other than confinement, or whipping not to exceed 12 lashes at one time, or for one offence.

Penalty for inflicting a greater number of lashes on the same day, or before the delinquent is recovered from the effect of any former punishment.

Proviso—When the fault committed is of such enormity as to deserve a more exemplary punishment, the delinquent is to be punished at the discretion of two justices of the peace.

No further punishment to be inflicted for that offence. Penalty for the same.

## Clause VI.

Penalty for proprietor, attorney, manager, &c. inflicting a greater or other punishment than before described.

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kind of corporal punishment than those which are hereinbefore in that respect limited and prescribed, every such proprietor, attorney, manager, overseer or other free person employed as aforesaid, shall and may for every such offence be proceeded against by presentment, information or indictment, in the same manner as if the offence was committed against a free person; and if found guilty, shall be punished by fine or imprisonment, or both, at the discretion of the court wherein such offender shall have been tried and convicted; and in very atrocious cases, when such offence shall appear to have been accompanied with any aggravating circumstance of singular inhumanity or maihem, and the person so convicted shall be the proprietor or owner of such slave or slaves, it shall and may be lawful for the justices of the said court, and they are hereby required to order and adjudge such slave or slaves to be delivered to, and taken possession of by the guardians of the parish or district in which the plantation or estate to which such slave or slaves is or are attached, or where such proprietor resides, to be by them forthwith sold and disposed of to some person of humane repute, for such price as the said guardians shall deem fair and adequate, and can be procured for the same; and such guardians are hereby authorized and required to sell the same, and the money arising therefrom to be forthwith paid to the proprietor of such slave or slaves so sold as aforesaid: And such sale shall be deemed competent and sufficient in law to vest the absolute property of such slave or slaves in the purchaser or purchasers thereof.

Proprietors committing any atrocious acts of inhumanity and maihem on slaves, the guardians empowered to dispose of such slaves.

Money arising from such sale to be paid to the proprietor.

## Clause VII.

Slaves not to be compelled to work before day break, or after sun set, except in making sugar, or carrying grass or stock-meat, under penalty of 10/.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That it shall not be lawful to or for the proprietor, owner or possessor of any plantation or estate, or any person or persons employed by or under such proprietor, owner or possessor, except in the act of manufacturing such species of produce as necessarily requires night or extra labour, to compel or oblige any slave attached to or upon such plantation or estate, to leave his or her house in order to work in the field or at his trade until day-break, or to work during the times of breakfasting and dining; for the first of which, such slave shall be allowed one half hour in the morning, and for the latter, two hours, to wit, from twelve o'clock at noon to two in the afternoon; nor to compel any such slaves to work after sun-set, except in the carrying of a bundle of grass or stock-meat from the field to the stable or other place where the same is to be consumed, under the penalty of ten pounds for every offence.

## Clause VIII.

Owners, &c. of slaves not to discard them on account of age or disorder, but to provide them with every necessary, and not suffer them to wander about.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That no master, owner or possessor of any slave or slaves, whether in his or her own right, or as attorney, guardian, trustee, or otherwise howsoever, shall, under any pretence whatsoever, discard or turn away any such slave or slaves being rendered incapable of labour or service, by reason of sickness or disorder, age or infirmity; but every such owner, master or possessor shall keep such slave or slaves upon his her or their respective properties, and feed and provide them with wholesome food and decent comfortable cloathing and lodging and other necessaries, and not suffer them for want thereof, to wander about at large and become a nuisance, and burthensome to others for subsistence: And it shall and may be lawful for any white or free coloured person to take up all such diseased or infirm slave or slaves who may be found going about at large as above mentioned, and to carry him her or them before any of His Majesty's justices of the peace, or any of the guardians for the town or parish where taken up; which justices of the peace or guardians shall, and he is hereby directed to make immediate inquiry into the conduct of such owner, possessor, attorney or trustee; and if it shall appear to the said justice or guardian that the slaves going about at large be owing to neglect or maltreatment from the owner, possessor, attorney or trustee, he she or they so offending shall forfeit for every such offence the sum of ten pounds current money, to be levied on their goods and chattels, by warrant under the hand and seal of the justice or guardian before whom convicted, one moiety to be paid to the person taking up the slave as aforesaid, and the other moiety to be paid into the hands of the treasurer for the public uses of this government; and the owner, possessor, attorney or trustee shall forthwith enter into recognizance in the sum of fifty pounds, with two sufficient securities in the sum of twenty-five pounds each, that the slave shall in future be well treated, lodged, fed and cloathed; but in case of neglect or refusal to enter into recognizance as aforesaid, then it shall and may be lawful for the justice or guardian to commit the slave to the charge of the cage-keeper of the nearest town where taken up, to be by him lodged and fed, for which he shall be entitled to receive from the owner, possessor, attorney or trustee, at the rate of half a dollar per diem, recoverable on his goods and chattels weekly, by warrant under the hand and seal of the justice or guardian committing, until he shall have entered into recognizance as aforesaid.

Lawful for white or free coloured person to take up such slaves found wandering at large, and carry them before a magistrate or guardian.

Penalty if owner, &c. from neglect or maltreatment, are found offending.

Owners to enter into recognizance that such slave shall in future be well treated.

On refusal or neglect, the justice or guardian to commit such slave to the charge of the cage-keeper, and owners, &c. to pay 4s. 6d. per diem for feeding and lodging such slave.  
How recoverable.

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And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That all masters and mistresses, owners, or in their absence, managers and overseers of slaves, shall, as much as in them lies, endeavour the instruction of their slaves in the principles of the Christian religion, whereby to facilitate their conversion, and shall do their utmost exertions to fit them for baptism, and, as soon as conveniently can be, cause to be baptized all such as they can make sensible of a duty to God and the Christian faith: which ceremony the clergymen of the respective parishes are to perform gratis, and also to attend them in sickness, when their spiritual aid may be required.

Clause IX.  
Owners, &c. to endeavour the instruction of their slaves in the christian religion, and to cause them to be baptized.  
Clergymen to perform the same, and other duties, gratis.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That, upon every plantation or estate in these Islands, there shall, within four months from and after the publication of this Act, be erected and built a good and sufficient hospital, in proportion to the number of slaves on such plantation or estate, in a proper and healthy situation for the infirm and sick slaves, with proper attendants, into which all the slaves who shall be absent from their work under any pretence of sickness, shall be ordered and put by the manager or person having the charge of such plantation and slaves, who is hereby further required and directed to keep an hospital book, with the names of the slaves so admitted, the dates of their admission, and also of their dismissal, or death; and in which shall be inserted by the surgeon, or other medical attendant of the said plantation, the nature of their complaints or diseases.

Clause X.  
Hospitals upon every plantation to be erected in a healthy situation.

Managers to keep hospital books with the names of the sick, the time of their admission, dismissal, or death.

And be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, That at the time limited and appointed, or to be limited or appointed, in any and every tax bill, for giving in a list of taxable objects in every year, the owner, overseer, or manager of every plantation or estate shall give in, on oath, a particular account of all the births and deaths of the slaves of such plantation or estate, for the preceding year, under the penalty of twenty pounds for every omission, to be recovered from the owner of such plantation or estate: And if the not giving in on oath such accounts, shall be owing to the neglect of the manager or overseer of such plantation or estate, it shall and may be lawful for the owner or possessor of such plantation or estate, to stop and detain the penalty he or she shall suffer by this law, out of the wages of such manager or overseer.

Clause XI.  
Account of the births and deaths to be annually given in, upon oath to the commissioners appointed for taking the taxable objects.  
Penalty for neglect.

And be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, That such account shall also contain the causes of the deaths of such slaves as shall have died during the preceding year, to be certified by the surgeon or principal medical attendant of such plantation or estate, to the best of his knowledge, judgment, and belief.

Clause XII.  
Surgeon or medical attendant to certify the causes of the deaths of such slaves.

And in order that encouragement may be given to the increase and protection of negro infants, be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That every female slave, who shall have six children living, shall be exempted from hard labour; and the owner or possessor of such female slave shall be exempted from all taxes for such female slaves; and a deduction shall be made for all such female slaves from the taxes of such owner or possessors, by certificate of the person or persons to be appointed by any tax bill to be hereafter passed, for taking the list of taxable objects directed to the treasurer of this Island for the time being; for which purpose proof shall be given on oath, to the satisfaction of such person or persons, not only that the requisite number of children, together with the mother, are living, but also that the mother is exempted from all kinds of hard labour, and is provided with the means of an easy and comfortable maintenance.

Clause XIII.  
Female slaves having 6 children living, exempt from hard labour, and the owner exempt from taxes for such female slave.

And in order to prevent any person from mutilating or dismembering any slave or slaves, be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That if any master, mistress, owner, possessor, or other person whatsoever, shall, at his her or their own will and pleasure, or his her or their direction, or with his her or their knowledge, sufferance, privity or consent, mutilate or dismember, or cause to be mutilated or dismembered any slave or slaves, he she or they shall be liable to be prosecuted by information or indictment, for every such offence, in the Court of King's Bench and Grand Sessions, or any other court of similar jurisdiction in these Islands; and upon conviction, shall be punished by fine, not less than one hundred, nor exceeding five hundred pounds, and imprisonment not exceeding twelve months, for each and every slave so mutilated or dismembered; and such punishment is declared to be without prejudice to any action that can or may be brought at common law for recovery of damages for or on account of the same; and in very atrocious cases, where the owner of such slave or slaves shall be convicted of such offence, the justices of the court before whom such offender shall have been tried and convicted, are hereby empowered, in case they shall

Clause XIV.  
Penalties for mutilating or dismembering slaves.



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shall think it necessary for the further protection of such slave or slaves, to declare and adjudge him her or them free, and discharged of and from all manner of servitude to such owners, to all intents and purposes whatsoever; and in all such cases, the justices of such court are hereby authorized and empowered, if to them it shall appear necessary, to order and direct the fine adjudged by them to be paid into the hands of the treasurer of these islands to the use of the public; the treasurer for the time being, in consideration thereof, paying to such of the said slaves so freed and discharged from servitude as aforesaid, the sum of ten pounds per annum towards his her or their maintenance and support during life; and in case of any such mutilation or dismembering of any slave or slaves being committed as aforesaid, it shall and may be lawful to and for the said guardians, or any one or more of them, upon complaint and application to him or them made by such slave or slaves so mutilated, and they are hereby required, upon view and certainty of the fact, to send such slave or slaves so mutilated forthwith to the nearest cage where such offence shall have been committed; or if such complaint and information that any slave or slaves is or are so mutilated shall arise from the probable intelligence of any other Slave, or otherwise, to issue their or his warrant to any constable, ordering him immediately to proceed to the place where such slave or slaves so mutilated may be, and bring him her or them, and if under confinement, to release and bring him her or them before such guardian or guardians, who on view and certainty of the fact as aforesaid, shall send such slave or slaves so mutilated, to the nearest cage as aforesaid; which slave or slaves shall be there safely kept by the cage-keeper, but not worked, at the public expense, until the determination of the prosecution, which the said guardians are hereby directed and required to pursue and carry into effect against the perpetrators of the said mutilations, in manner aforesaid; and the keeper of such cage is hereby required to receive such slave or slaves into his custody, and during such time as such slave or slaves shall be detained in the cage, to provide and allow a sufficient quantity of proper food daily for his her or their sustenance and support, at the expense of the person offending as aforesaid, and under the direction and approbation of the said guardians, who are hereby authorized to issue their warrant for payment of the same, to be levied on the goods and chattels of the offender.

## Clause XV.

Assembly to appoint guardians on the first meeting thereof, every year.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That at the first meeting of the Council and Assembly after the first day of January in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety-eight, and at the first meeting thereof after the first day of January in each and every subsequent year during the continuance of this Act, the House of Assembly shall proceed to nominate and appoint, with the approbation and concurrence of the Council, three fit persons for each parish, and for the island of Carriacou, and the other Grenadines, who shall serve as guardians of and to the slaves belonging to the respective parishes, and the Islands for which such guardians shall be so nominated and appointed; and also three persons, being freeholders, resident in the town of Saint George, as guardians of and to the slaves within the said town; and the clerk of the Assembly shall publish in the first gazette or public newspaper to be printed after such nomination and appointment, the names of the several guardians so appointed.

## Clause XVI.

Oath to be taken by the guardians.

And be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the guardians of Slaves hereinafter named and appointed, within ten days after the publication thereof, and all guardians of slaves within ten days after such notice of their appointment being given as aforesaid, and before they proceed on the execution of their office, shall apply themselves to some justice of the peace, and before him take the following oath:

“ I, *A. B.* do Swear, That I will diligently, truly, faithfully, and impartially perform the office of a Guardian of Slaves, in the parish of  
 “ [or, the town of Saint George] for which I am appointed  
 “ this present year, and will not, for favour and affection, on any consideration whatsoever, excuse any person or persons offending against  
 “ or neglecting his her or their duty, as enjoined by an Act, intituled,  
 “ An Act for the better protection, and for promoting the natural increase  
 “ and population of Slaves within the Island of Grenada, and such of  
 “ the Grenadines as are annexed to the Government thereof; for compelling an adequate provision for and care of them, as well in sickness  
 “ and old age as in health; and for constituting and appointing Guardians  
 “ to effectuate and carry into execution the regulations and purposes of  
 “ this

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“ this Act;” nor will I, for hatred, malice, ill-will or partiality, prosecute,  
 “ present or punish any one, but in all things will comply with and  
 “ conform to the directions, orders and duty enjoined me by the said  
 “ Act, according to the best of my understanding, skill, power, and judg-  
 “ ment. So help me G O D.”

Which said oath every justice of the peace, on application to him for that purpose made by the guardian, is hereby authorized and required to administer and transmit, within ten days afterwards, a certificate thereof, to be filed in the secretary's office : And if any guardian so nominated, and having such notice of his nomination as aforesaid, shall refuse to act in his said office, or shall neglect or refuse to be sworn as aforesaid, or who being sworn and acting, shall neglect his duty, or abuse the powers by this Act vested in him, he shall for every such offence forfeit fifty pounds current money, to be recovered in the court of King's Bench and Grand Session, by indictment or information, to be paid into the public treasury for the public uses of the colony ; and any person having served the office of guardian for one year shall not be compelled or compellable to serve the same office again, until the expiration of two years thereafter, and in the mean time, until such appointment of guardians can be made as aforesaid.

Penalty on guardian refusing to act, or to be sworn, &c.

Guardians having served one year, not compellable to serve again until the expiration of two years.

And be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, That, for the town of *St. George*,—The honourable Alexander Cockburn, John Orr, and William Arnold, Esquires : For the parish of *St. George*,—The honourable Alexander Scott, John Ross, and Wilson P. Richardson, Esquires : For the parish of *St. David*,—The honourable Samuel Mitchell, James Hay, and Henry Palmer, Esquires : For the parish of *St. Andrew*,—Thomas Robertson, Isaac Horsford, and James Campbell, junior, Esquires : For the parish of *St. Patrick*,—John Harvey, Nicholas Herbert, and Alexander Fraser, Esquires : For the parish of *St. Mark*,—Alexander Campbell, Gordon Turnbull, and William Sandback, Esquires : For the parish of *St. John*,—John Hays, James Mays, and Alexander Brander, Esquires : For the Island of *Carriacou*, and the other Grenadines,—William Arbuthnot, Andrew Whitman, and John Bell, Esquires, shall be and they are hereby appointed guardians of and to the slaves within their respective districts, and shall take the same oath of office, and act and discharge the duty of guardians in the same manner and under the same penalty, to be recovered and applied in the same manner as if they were guardians nominated and appointed in manner prescribed by this Act.

Clause XVII. Guardians appointed.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That it shall and may be lawful to and for the said guardians, or any two of them in their respective districts, and they are hereby authorized and required once in every six months, (except the guardians hereinbefore named and appointed, who are hereby authorized and required within the first three months), and at all other times when any complaint or information shall appear to render their presence necessary, to visit the several estates and plantations within their respective districts, and to hear and enquire into the complaints, and enquire into and inspect the grounds, clothing, lodging, maintenance, and treatment of the slaves within their respective districts, and into the state and condition of furniture and conveniences of the hospital ; and for a more effectual discovery of the truths with respect to the cloathing, lodging, feeding and maintenance of the Slaves, as well in sickness as in health, shall examine the manager and principal overseer, and the surgeon or medical attendant on such estate or plantation, and all other persons likely to be able to give testimony, if from any suspicious circumstances or circumstance it shall appear necessary to a majority of the said guardians, touching the same, after having first administered to such manager, principal overseer, or other free person, an oath of the following tenor :

Clause XVIII. Guardians required once in every six months to visit the estates in their several districts, to hear and enquire into the complaints, and to inspect the grounds, &c. of the slaves. And to examine manager, &c. respecting any suspicious circumstance relative to their treatment, &c.

“ I, *A. B.* will true answer make to all such questions as shall be put to me,  
 “ touching the numbers, ages, cloathing, feeding, maintenance, and treat-  
 “ ment of the Slaves upon and belonging to the estate of  
 “ [*or*, within the town of *St. George*]. So help me G O D.”

Oath to be administered to manager, overseer, &c.

And if any manager, principal overseer, or other white or free person, shall refuse to be sworn, or when sworn, to answer such questions as shall be put to him relative to the several matters mentioned in the said oath, he shall forfeit fifty pounds, to be recovered in the manner hereinafter mentioned, and to be paid into the treasury, for the public uses of the colony : And in case of the wilful and corrupt perjury of any such

Penalty for refusing to be sworn.

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such white or free person, he shall and may be prosecuted by presentment, indictment or information, and be punished as in cases of wilful and corrupt perjury at common law; and if, on enquiry into the complaint or complaints made by any of the slaves of any estate, plantation or town, or on view, or from the examination of the manager, principal overseer, or such other white or free persons or otherwise, it shall appear to the said guardians in their respective districts, or any two of them, that any offence hath been committed against this Act, then and in every such case they are hereby authorized and strictly required, without delay, by all or some of the ways and means hereby in that respect provided, to sue and prosecute the offender and offenders for the recovery of such penalty or penalties, or to such punishment or punishments as is or are by this Act annexed to the offence or offences by him or them committed; and all suits and prosecutions carried on by or in the names of the said guardians, any one or more of them, with the approbation of two of them at least, shall be maintained by the public, and the expenses attending the same defrayed out of the public treasury.

Clause XIX.  
Persons manumitting slaves to pay 100*l.* in the public treasury.

And whereas the manumitting and setting free slaves, deceased, blind, aged or otherwise disabled from working, without making provision for their sustenance and comfort, ought to be prevented, as it obliges them to ramble about and beg for subsistence, which frequently compels them to the necessity of robbing and stealing, and leads them to other bad practices to support themselves:

And whereas it is also necessary to discourage the too frequent and indiscriminate manumission of slaves, without a sufficient provision being made for their support; BE it therefore enacted by the authority aforesaid, That from and after the publication of this Act, it shall not be lawful for any person or persons to manumit or set free any slave or slaves belonging to him her or them, without first paying in to the treasurer of these Islands for the time being, the sum of one hundred pounds current money, for each and every slave so manumitted; and the treasurer is hereby directed and required to certify on the back of the manumission, that such sum has been to him paid; and no manumission executed after the publication of this Act, without such certificate, shall be of any force or validity whatsoever.

Clause XX.

And be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, That each and every person so manumitted, shall be entitled to receive an annuity of ten pounds, current money, to be paid by the treasurer, one moiety every six months, who is hereby authorized and required to pay the same for and during the natural life of such person or persons so manumitted, and set free as aforesaid.

Clause XXI.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That in case any person or persons so manumitted as aforesaid, shall be absent from this government, he she or they shall be entitled to receive such annuity as aforesaid, upon transmitting or producing to the treasurer of these islands, a certificate from the rector of the parish where such person or persons may actually reside, or from any of His Majesty's justices of the peace in such parish, island, or place, of him her or them, being then alive, and conducting or behaving him her or themselves as peaceable and good subjects, and such certificate shall be a sufficient warrant to the treasurer for the time being to pay the annuity, or arrears of annuity as aforesaid.

Clause XXII.

Penalty on persons manumitted, being convicted of any heinous offence or disorderly conduct.

And be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, That in cases of any heinous crime, misdemeanor, or other disorderly conduct of any such person or persons so manumitted and set free, on conviction thereof, on the oath of one or more credible witness or witnesses, before any three of His Majesty's justices of the peace, such person or persons so offending shall forfeit to His Majesty, his heirs and successors, the whole of such annuity, or so much thereof as the said justices in their judgment may think proper, in proportion to the heinousness of the offence committed; such forfeiture to be applied to the public uses of this government.

Clause XXIII.

Persons whose usual residence has been in this government and obtaining a manumission in any other place, deemed void, until the sum of 100*l.* be paid by every such person into the treasury.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That if any person or persons, whose usual residence has been in this government, shall at any time after the publication of this Act, be manumitted or set free by any deed of manumission, executed in any other place than within this government, such manumission shall be and is hereby declared to be null and void in this government, to all intents and purposes whatsoever, any law custom or usage to the contrary in anywise notwithstanding, until the sum of one hundred pounds be by each and every such person so manumitted, paid into the hands of the treasurer as aforesaid, which shall



shall entitle the person paying the same to receive the annual sum of ten pounds, as hereinbefore mentioned. GRENADA.

And be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, That all penalties and forfeitures in this Act mentioned, the recovery and application whereof have not already been declared, shall be recovered in the said court of Common Pleas, by action of debt, bill, plaint, or information, and paid into the hands of the public treasurer for the public uses of this colony.

Clause XXIV.  
How penalties and forfeitures are to be recovered.

And be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, That if any guardian of slaves shall be sued or molested for any thing done by virtue of this Act, he shall and may plead the general issue, and give this Act and the special matter in evidence: And if the plaintiff be nonsuited or discontinues his action, or a verdict be found against him, he shall pay treble costs of suit: And this Act shall be deemed a Public Act; and all judges, justices, and jurors, are to take notice thereof accordingly, without specially pleading the same.

Clause XXV.  
Guardians being sued or molested, to plead the general issue.

And be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, That this Act shall be and remain in force from the publication thereof, for and during the term of two years thereafter, and until some further or other provision shall be made by the Legislature for the purposes of this Act.

Clause XXVI.  
Duration of the act.

\* \* \* The 20th, 21st, and 22d Clauses of this Act, as well as a part of the 23d, have been repealed by an Act of the Legislature of the 25th October 1806.