

An ACT to enable the Justices and Vestry of the several Parishes of this Island to fit out parties of confidential Slaves.—[4 December 1813.]

WHEREAS it has been found beneficial, in several parts of this Island, to employ confidential slaves for the taking and bringing in or destroying runaway or rebellious slaves; We, Your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the assembly of Jamaica, humbly beseech Your Majesty, That it may be enacted; BE it therefore enacted by the governor, council and assembly of this Your Majesty's Island of Jamaica, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, That it shall and may be lawful for the governor, or person exercising the functions of government for the time being, on the representation of the justices and vestry of any parish in this Island, that hordes of runaway or rebellious slaves, dangerous to the peace of the community,

Preamble.

On representation of justices and vestry of any parish, governor empowered to authorize them to hire and fit out parties of confidential slaves to

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go in pursuit of run-
aways, and to appoint
officers thereto.

are collected within or in the neighbourhood of the parish, to authorize the justices and vestry of any parish within this Island, when and as often as to the said governor or person exercising the functions of government, it shall on such representation appear necessary or expedient to raise such number of negro and other slaves, or persons of free condition, as to them shall seem meet, and at such hire as can be agreed on between the said justices and vestry and the owners of such slaves, to go in pursuit of, and to take, bring in, or destroy all such runaway or rebellious slaves as may be assembled in the said parish or neighbourhood, and to appoint officers for commanding such parties; and such party so to be sent out, shall be supplied with good arms, accoutrements and ammunition, by the justices and vestry, and at the expense of the said parish: Provided always, that with every such party of slaves there shall be at least one white person for every twenty negro or other slaves.

Proviso.

Such officers and non-commissioned officers to be appointed by warrant under hand of custos or senior magistrate; and they are to be paid agreeably to the rate allowed by 48 Geo. 3, cap. 4.

2d. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the officers and non-commissioned officers employed to command and conduct such parties, shall be appointed by warrant under the hand and seal of the custos or senior magistrate presiding at any vestry, on the nomination of the majority of the justices and vestrymen present, when the said officers shall be appointed under the authority to be given by the governor, or person exercising the functions of government as aforesaid; and that such officers, non-commissioned officers, and others employed in any such party, shall be allowed and paid at and after the rate allowed in and by an Act passed in the forty-eighth year of the reign of His present Majesty, commonly called The Party Law, during such time as such officers shall be employed in actual service.

Besides their pay and hire, such parties are to be allowed the like rewards as are granted by the above act.

3d. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That over and above the said pay and hire of the negroes employed in such parties, the said parties shall be allowed the like rewards for taking or killing rebellious or runaway slaves, as are in and by the said Act allowed to be distributed in the proportions and manner thereby directed.

All slaves going on such parties are to be valued and appraised; and if any be killed, the owner to be allowed such value; and if any disabled, adequate compensation to be given.

4th. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That all and every the slave or slaves who shall be employed in such parties, shall previously be valued and appraised by the said justices and vestry, or any two persons to be appointed by them, such valuation not to exceed the sum of two hundred pounds; and in case any slave or slaves shall be killed, the master or owner of such slave or slaves shall receive for every slave so killed the sum at which the said slave shall have been valued; and in case any such slave or slaves shall be disabled by loss of limb, the master or owner of such slave or slaves shall receive such sum as shall appear, upon a revaluation, to be an adequate compensation, not exceeding one hundred pounds; such revaluation to be made by the said justices and vestry, or two persons to be by them appointed, after such slave or slaves shall become so disabled as aforesaid.

Tax to be levied on each parish for defraying the above expenses.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the said justices and vestry shall and may and they are hereby authorized and required to raise and levy on the inhabitants of the parish where such party or parties may be fitted out, such sum or sums of money as may be requisite and necessary for the pay, hire, maintenance, and rewards to which such party or parties may be entitled, and as may be required to pay for such slave or slaves as may be killed or disabled in such party or parties, to be received, levied, and enforced as the other parochial taxes: Provided always, that nothing herein contained is meant or intended to interfere with the hereinbefore mentioned Party Law, or Militia Law, or any of the articles, matters, and things therein contained.

Proviso.

In case two parishes join to fit out parties, officer whose warrant is of the oldest date is to have the command.

6th. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That in case two or more parishes shall join in fitting out parties, the officer whose warrant, signed as aforesaid, shall be of the oldest date, shall take the command of such joint parties; and the other officers shall take rank and command according to the date of the warrants under which they shall be then actually acting and receiving pay.