

An ACT for providing Curates for the several Parishes of this Island, and for promoting Religious Instruction amongst the Slaves.—December nineteenth, one thousand eight hundred and sixteen.

WHEREAS from the extent of many of the parishes of this Island, and the number of the inhabitants resident therein, religious instruction cannot be extended to all, under the present ecclesiastical establishment of this Island : And whereas it is right and proper that religious instruction should be given to the slaves in this Island, and for that purpose it is necessary to increase the number of officiating clergymen ; May it therefore please Your Majesty, that it may be enacted ; and be it enacted by the Governor, Council and Assembly of this Island, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, That from and after the passing of this Act, and as soon as conveniently may be, the rectors of the several parishes in this Island shall be assisted in propagating the Gospel amongst the slaves of this Island, and in educating them in the Christian religion, by curates to be appointed by the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, or person executing for the time being the functions of Governor, and to be distributed in such manner, and assigned to such parts of this Island, as to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, or the person executing for the time being the functions of Governor, may seem best calculated to promote the purposes of this Act : Provided always, that the persons so to be appointed, shall at the time of their respective appointments, be possessed of due testimonials that they are qualified according to the canons of the Church of England, by having taken deacon or priest's orders ; and which testimonials shall be recorded in the office of the secretary of this Island : And provided always, that the number of curates so to be appointed, shall not exceed the number of beneficed ministers established in this Island.

Preamble.

The rector of the parishes in this Island, to be assisted in propagating the Gospel amongst the slaves, by curates to be appointed by the governor.

Proviso.

Proviso.

2. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That each and every curate so to be appointed, shall be allowed a reasonable sum, not exceeding three hundred pounds, current money of this Island, by the year, to be paid and payable quarterly by the receiver general, on the certificate hereinafter mentioned being produced to him.

Salary to be allowed the curates,

JAMAICA.

and the duty which they and the rectors are to perform.

3. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That from and after the passing of this Act, the rectors and curates of the several parishes of this Island shall, in the afternoon of every Lord's Day, at an hour to be by them for that purpose appointed, attend at the parish church, and at such other place as shall be provided for Divine worship as hereinafter mentioned, in order to perform the duties of their function relative to the catechising and the instruction of all such persons, free or slaves, in the Christian religion, who shall attend for the purpose, and shall accordingly perform such duties (accidental or temporary cases of sickness, and other inevitable prevention excepted,) and that without fee or reward.

The rectors or curates to appoint two days, exclusive of Sundays and holidays, for the religious instruction of the negroes on estates.

Proviso.

4. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That from and after the passing of this Act, the rectors or curates of the several parishes of this Island shall, besides the usual duty of Divine service on Sundays and holidays, and the duty hereinbefore required, appropriate at the least two days in each week to go to some one or other of the estates or plantations in the said parish in rotation, and then and there perform the duties of his function, in the instruction of all such of the slaves of the said plantation, who may be willing and desirous to be instructed in the doctrines of the Christian religion: Provided always, that the consent and approbation of the person in possession of the estate or plantation so intended to be visited, shall be first had and obtained for that purpose.

Vestries to appoint proper places for the performance of divine service by the curates.

5. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the justices and vestry of the several parishes of this Island shall and they are hereby required, when and as soon as they shall receive notice from the secretary of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, or person executing for the time being the functions of Governor, that a curate has been provided, to appoint some proper place or places besides the church, wherein Divine service may be performed on Sundays and holidays by the rector or curate.

Receiver general not to pay the sums allowed the rectors and curates without a certificate of the duties required by this Act, being performed by them.

6. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That it shall not be lawful for the receiver general of this Island to pay the sums allowed by law to the rectors and curates of this Island without a certificate from the justices and vestry, in vestry assembled, of the parish of such rector or curate, stating that such rector or curate has performed the duties required by this Act, (accidental cases of sickness or other inevitable prevention excepted.)

Fee of 2 s. 6 d. for the baptism, &c. of slaves.

7. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That for baptising slaves, registering the same, and granting a certificate thereof, the rector shall be entitled to a fee of two shillings and sixpence for each slave.