

## ORDER IN COUNCIL,

Defining the method of paying the Expenses of safe Custody and Prosecution in cases of Complaints made by Slaves, which are not established, or which are proved to be malicious and unfounded.

*Mark Anthony Bozon.*

WHEREAS it frequently happens that Slaves prefer complaints to the Protector of Slaves, which, upon legal investigation, they cannot establish, or which are proved to be malicious or unfounded: And whereas the owners or proprietors of such slaves have hitherto not only lost the time and labour of such slaves, but have had to pay the expenses of the safe custody of such slaves, as well as the expenses attendant upon the investigation of such complaints;

His Excellency Mark Anthony Bozon, Lieutenant-Colonel administering the Government, taking into consideration the hardship of such cases upon the owners or proprietors of slaves, by and with the advice of the Privy Council, is pleased to order, That in future the following regulations shall be observed:

1. When a slave prefers a complaint through the assistance of the Protector, or otherwise, against his owner, or any free person, if the same shall not be established, any expenses which may be incurred by means of the safe custody of such slave, in the gaol or other place of security, pending the investigation of such complaint, or which may be incurred by means of any judicial proceeding connected with such complaint, shall be paid, not by the owner of such slave, but out of the public treasury of the Colony.

2. On any complaint which is proved to be malicious or unfounded, it shall be the duty of the Judge before whom such complaint is made, to inquire whether the slave making such complaint is possessed of any property; and if it be found that he is possessed of property, the Judge shall order that such expenses be paid out of such property, and if such property shall be insufficient for the entire payment of such expenses, then shall the balance thereof be paid out of the public treasury.

3. All Public Officers connected with such safe custody shall reduce all expenses hereinbefore contemplated to the lowest equitable scale.

4. The bill of such expenses shall be taxed and certified as correct and just by the Judge of the Court in which such complaint may be preferred, and then be delivered to the Protector of Slaves, who shall cause all such bills to be laid before His Excellency the Governor, on the first of every month, with a recommendation of the payment or levy thereof, when they shall appear to him to be unobjectionable; and if in his discretion he shall think fit, the Protector of Slaves may refer the same to the First President of the Royal Court for summary revision, previously to recommending payment or levy thereof to His Excellency the Governor; and the same shall not be paid, or the property of any such slave be sold, until His Excellency the Governor shall give directions to that effect; nevertheless, such property of any such slave may be kept in the safe custody of the owner, master or manager of such slave, in the meantime.

4. Provided always, that nothing in this Order contained shall be construed as affecting or preventing the punishment to be awarded under the 72d clause of the Consolidated

615

Consolidated Slave Law of this Island, against such slaves as may be found guilty of making complaints originating in some malevolent or culpable motive.

ST. LUCIA.

Done and passed in Council before His Excellency Lieutenant-Colonel Mark Anthony Bozon, commanding His Majesty's Forces and administering the Civil Government, this 1st day of August in the second year of His Majesty's reign, and in the year of our Lord 1831.

By His Excellency's Command,

(signed)

*George Washington Busted,*

Chief Secretary.