

*An ACT to prevent the tumultuous Meetings and other Irregularities of Negroes and other Slaves.*

**W**HEREAS this present Sessions of Assembly have had under their Consideration, the evil Consequences that do and may attend the suffering of Negroes and other Slaves, to meet in great Numbers on Sabbath and other Holy-Days, and keeping of Horses, Cattle or Hogs of their own.

*Be it Enacted, by the Right Honourable the Lord Proprietor, by and with the Advice and Consent of His Lordship's Governour, and the Upper and Lower Houses of Assembly, and the Authority of the same,* That the Justices of the severall and respective County-Courts within this Province, be and they are hereby empowered and required immediately after the Publication of this Act, and so Yearly in November Court, to appoint the Constable of every Hundred, where the said Justices, at their Discretion shall think proper and expedient to suppress the Assembling and tumultuous Meeting of Negroes and other Slaves; and that every Constable so to be appointed, shall be obliged to repair once a Month, to all suspected Places within his Hundred; and if at any such Place he shall find any Negroes or other Slaves besides the Negroes or other Slaves belonging to the Owner of such Place, not having a Licence under their Owner or Overseers Hand, that it shall and may be lawful for the Constable, and he is by this Act required, to whip every such Negroe on the bare Back at his Discretion, not exceeding Thirty Nine Stripes. And to the End that every Constable may be enabled to put this Act in due Execution,

Justices to appoint Constables of Hundreds to suppress Negroes Meetings.

Punishments of such Negroes as assemble together without Leave.

*Be it Enacted,* That it may be lawful for the Constable to require as many Persons as may be necessary to repair with him to such Places, and that every Person that shall be so required and shall refuse, shall forfeit One Hundred Pounds of Tobacco, to be recovered and applied as hereafter expressed; and all white Persons (being Free,) that shall be present, shall aid and assist such Constable, on Pain of forfeiting one Hundred Pounds of Tobacco to the Lord Proprietor, One Half to the Use of the County, and the other to the Informer, on being convicted by the Oath of the Constable or other lawful Witness, or Confession of the Party before any Magistrate; and that all Negroes and other Slaves belonging to the Owner of the Place where such Assembly shall be, if required, shall aid and assist the Constable in putting this Act in Execution, on Pain of being whipt each of them with Thirty Nine Stripes on the bare Back.

Constables may require Persons to go and assist.

Who must not refuse, on Penalty.

Negroes, if requir'd, to assist, or be whipt.

*And be it Enacted,* That every Constable that shall be appointed to put this Act in Execution, shall be allowed Five Hundred Pounds of Tobacco in the County Levy: And if it shall so happen at any Time that any Negro or other Slave shall strike any White Person, it shall and may be lawful, upon Proof made thereof, either by the Oath of the Party so struck, or otherwise, before any Justice of the Peace, for such Justice to cause One of the Negroes or Slaves Ears so offending to be cropt.

Constables Allowance.

Any Slave striking a White Person, to have an Ear cropt.

*And be it likewise Enacted,* That the Owner of any Plantation or Plantations that shall at any Time discover any strange Negroe or Negroe