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J A M A I C A.

RETURN to an Address to HIS late MAJESTY, dated 12 May 1830;—for,

COPY of any Information which may have been received from *Jamaica*, respecting an INQUIRY into the TREATMENT of a FEMALE SLAVE, by the Reverend Mr. *Bridges*, Rector of *St. Ann's*, in that Island; with the MINUTES of EVIDENCE taken by the MAGISTRATES on that occasion, and the result of the Inquiry.

Colonial Department, }
Downing-street, }
February 1831. }

HOWICK.

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
10 March 1831.

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J A M A I C A.

No. 1.

COPY of a Despatch from Sir *George Murray* to the Earl of *Belmore*,
&c. &c. &c.

Downing-street, 23d October 1829.

MY LORD,

I HAVE the honour herewith to transmit to your Lordship the Copy of a Letter which has been addressed to me by Mr. Thomas Pringle, describing himself as Secretary to the Anti-Slavery Society. Your Lordship will observe that this Society, on the authority of an unnamed correspondent, attribute to the Reverend Mr. Bridges, conduct of great cruelty and indecency towards a female Slave; although in making this statement the Anti-Slavery Society expressly declare, that they do not vouch for its truth. The imputation, therefore, against the character of Mr. Bridges, is not only repelled by its own inherent improbability, but is not sustained by any evidence properly so called, nor even by the assertion of any producible person. Your Lordship will also observe, that the anonymous author of this statement first represents Mr. Bridges to have been brought "before a Special Court and acquitted of the charge;" and then states the decision to have been, only that "he should not be prosecuted."—The former of these assertions must be incorrect, since if any trial had taken place for this supposed offence, Mr. Bridges must, I presume, have been tried like any other person, either before the Court of Grand Sessions, or some Assize Court, by a Jury of twelve men. The quotation from the Jamaica Newspaper represents the proceeding to have taken place before a Council of Protection, which statement I therefore presume to be so far correct.

6 July 1829.

The determination of the Council of Protection would seem, even from the statement of the Anti-Slavery Society, to have been in favour of Mr. Bridges, by a majority of fourteen against four. So that not only the personal character and sacred office of Mr. Bridges, but the solemn opinion of fourteen of the Gentlemen composing this Council, are arrayed in his favour, against an accuser whose name is not quoted, and for whose truth the Anti-Slavery Society decline to vouch.

Under such circumstances, I might in any ordinary case think it quite unnecessary to institute any further inquiry into the transaction in question. But I conceive it is due to Mr. Bridges, and even to the Council of Protection, to afford them the opportunity, of which I am persuaded they will gladly avail themselves, to make their own vindication against a charge of so serious a nature, however unsupported by proof, and contradicted by fair presumption.

Your Lordship will therefore transmit to Mr. Bridges and to the Council of Protection, a Copy of the enclosed Documents and of this Despatch, and you will acquaint Mr. Bridges and the Members of the Council, that I shall be happy to receive any explanations which they may think it necessary or convenient to transmit to me through your Lordship. You will also desire the Council of Protection to furnish you with copies of the Examinations taken by them upon their inquiry into this case. It would be great injustice to Mr. Bridges and to the Members of the Council of Protection, were I at present to entertain any distrust of the perfect propriety of their decision on the subject. But it will be the most satisfactory mode of proceeding to refer to the Attorney General of Jamaica all the information which may be received, desiring that Gentleman to report to your Lordship his opinion, whether any sufficient grounds exist for instituting a prosecution against Mr. Bridges, and if so, whether the Attorney General would now be precluded, by the decision of the Council of Protection, from instituting it. In the very improbable event of the Attorney General advising such a prosecution, it must of course be instituted.

It is not without sincere regret that I thus commit to your Lordship an inquiry which must subject the Reverend Gentleman, whose name has been implicated in this charge, to much inconvenience, and which may, perhaps, however erroneously,

be thought to imply a distrust of the Magistracy of the Island. But I am not aware that there is any other mode of disposing of this complaint, by which I should equally consult the real interests of the Colony, or the personal reputation of Mr. Bridges and the Council themselves.

I have, &c.

(signed)

G. Murray.

(Enclosure 1.)

18, Aldermanbury, 6th July 1829.

SIR,

I AM desired by the Committee of the Anti-Slavery Society, to convey to you the enclosed Extract from a Letter which has recently been received from Jamaica, and which contains Statements that seem to call for inquiry. The Committee do not vouch for the truth of these Statements, but they know their informant to be respectable. They desire me to transmit along with the extract, two Jamaica newspapers, which seem guardedly to allude to the same transaction which is detailed in the extract.

I have, &c.

Right Hon. Sir George Murray,
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) *Tho^s Pringle*, Secretary.

(Enclosure 2.)

EXTRACT of a Letter from Jamaica, dated 19th May 1829,
received July 2d, 1829

— “THE Reverend Mr. Bridges has been brought before a special court in Saint Ann’s, for maltreating a quadroon female slave in a most brutal manner, and acquitted by a decision of fourteen against four. I shall give the matter as I heard it, for no notice is taken of the trial in the newspapers. Bridges had ordered the girl to get a turkey for dinner, expecting a friend to dine. In the course of the day he learnt that this friend would not come. He called the girl and asked her what was for dinner. She replied, ‘the turkey.’ He immediately said, accompanying his words with a blow, ‘You d—d b—h, who told you to get a turkey?’ The blow blackened both the girl’s eyes, and set her nose in a flow of blood. The poor creature again said, ‘Massa, it was the last thing you told me to do this morning.’ He immediately called two men to cut bamboo rods, and point them. She was then stripped of every article of dress, tied up by the hands, her toes barely touching the ground, and flogged until the back part of her, from the shoulders down to the calves of her legs, was one mass of lacerated flesh and gore. In this state she was locked up, but made her escape in the night, in a state of nudity, to a magistrate, who was about sending her back to Bridges. On hearing she was to be sent back to her master by this inhuman magistrate, she made a start from him and went to Mr. Cox (another magistrate) who detained her. Mr. Cox, as I am informed, said he never saw in his life a poor creature in so miserable a state from punishment. She was almost naked, and flogged from her shoulders to the calves of her legs. Mr. Cox, as Custos of the parish, had a court convened, he, with other magistrates, attending. After hearing all the evidence on both sides, in which Mr. Bridges’ two white servants admitted the severity of the punishment, and he, Bridges, acknowledged his having had her punished for her insolence:—When he was asked, if he did not see the punishment given? He said he was on a hill that looked down on the spot where it was done. Again, if he did not hear her cries? He said he could hear her, but that she was very insolent, and he gave orders for her to be punished. It was then put to the vote, whether he should be prosecuted or not. Fourteen were against, and four for Prosecution. Mr. Cox, Mr. Austin, Mr. Hodgson and another magistrate were the four decidedly for laying the case before His Majesty’s Attorney-General.

TREATMENT OF A FEMALE SLAVE IN JAMAICA.

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(Enclosure 3.)

EXTRACT of a Letter from St. Ann's, dated May 12th, 1829 ;
in a Jamaica Newspaper.

—“I AM sure that you will, as a friend to justice, rejoice with me at our worthy Rector having been yesterday most clearly acquitted by a Council of Protection, after a long and minute investigation, of the Charge of Cruelty and Maltreatment, brought against him by one of his Slaves.”

(Enclosure 4.)

To the Editor of the Jamaica Courant and Public Advertiser.

SIR,

THE serious Charge that was made against a Clergyman of talent and respectability, for maltreating a slave, adverted to in your publication of Monday the 4th instant, was duly and strictly investigated at the Court House on the 11th, and I have pleasure in informing you, that your anticipations are realized. The God of Shadrach was with him ; not a hair of his head is scorched ; he has escaped unhurt, notwithstanding that nearly one-fifth of the furnace was tenfold hot. The numbers for and against the respectable individual alluded to, were as follows :—

	Pro. 14.	
	Con. 4. !!	
St. Ann's Bay, May 13th.	_____	(signed) Hope.

No. 2.

COPY of a Despatch from the Earl of *Belmore* to Sir *George Murray*, G.C.B.
&c. &c. &c.

King's House, Jamaica, 16th December 1829.

SIR,

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Dispatch of 23d October last, accompanied by a communication from the Secretary of an Anti-Slavery Society, respecting an investigation which took place in Saint Ann's, of a Charge which had been preferred against the Rector of that parish, for having maltreated one of his slaves.

Until I received your Dispatch I was entirely ignorant of any such transaction having taken place, although I have principally resided within sixteen miles of Saint Ann's Bay, where the inquiry was held.

The facts I understand to be as follow : A Female Slave was punished by order of Mr. Bridges, and ran away for the purpose of complaining to a magistrate ; that magistrate recommended her returning to her master, but she proceeded to the residence of the Custos, who thought it proper to summon a Council of Protection, in conformity to the 24th clause of the Slave Law now in force, to inquire into the truth of her story, and to ascertain whether she had been improperly punished or not. Notices were sent to all the magistrates to attend, and a vestry was called to take the subject into consideration, and, after a very long investigation, and the examination of witnesses, two of whom were ladies of respectability, who were at Mr. Bridges' house when the punishment was inflicted, it was determined, That there was no ground for Prosecution, by a majority of fourteen to four. Therefore, as far as public justice is concerned, Mr. Bridges was brought before the tribunal which the Slave Law has established for the protection of slaves, and by that tribunal has been acquitted.

I am not aware, if even it were considered politic or expedient, by what authority Mr. Bridges could be exposed to a Second Trial ; and it certainly would have the appearance of questioning the character and honour of fourteen gentlemen, entirely disinterested, and who could have no motive for acting contrary to their own sincere conviction.

I do not think that the case of the Rector of Saint Ann's requires any adventitious support, otherwise I might remark, that Mr. Bridges is a very indiscreet man,
and

and having been in constant hostility with the sectarians of his parish, has of course exposed himself to all that their ill will could bring forward against him.

For my own part, having no other object in view than to give you the most correct information in my power, I should certainly deprecate the revival of an affair which is no longer remembered here, and which, I fear, would afford a sort of triumph to those who are hostile to the Established Church. At present, therefore, I shall keep entirely private the subject of your Despatch, until I am honoured with the further instructions of the Colonial Office.

I have, &c.

(signed) *Belmore.*

No. 3.

COPY of a Despatch from Sir *George Murray* to the Earl of *Belmore*,
&c. &c. &c.

Downing-street, 20th February 1830.

MY LORD,

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Despatch dated the 16th of December last, reporting the reasons which have induced you to omit to carry into execution the instructions which I had the honour to convey to you in my Dispatch of the 23d October last, with reference to the Charge preferred against the Rev. Mr. Bridges. On referring again to my Despatch, your Lordship will perceive that it was not written without a distinct anticipation of the circumstances which you have stated, and I cannot therefore find in those circumstances any sufficient reason why the inquiry which I then directed should not have been made. I have therefore now to desire, that your Lordship will, immediately on the receipt of my present Despatch, carry my former instructions into execution.

I have, &c.

(signed) *G. Murray.*

No. 4.

COPY of a Despatch from the Earl of *Belmore* to Sir *George Murray*, G. C. B.
&c. &c. &c.

King's House, Jamaica, 12th April 1830.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Despatch of 20th February, and shall, in compliance with your instructions, cause an immediate inquiry to be made into the proceedings which took place at Saint Ann's Bay, in the course of 1829, relative to a Charge preferred against the Reverend Rector of that parish, for Maltreatment of a Slave.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c. &c.

(signed) *Belmore.*

No. 5.

COPY of a Despatch from the Earl of *Belmore* to Sir *George Murray*, G. C. B.
&c. &c. &c.

King's House, Jamaica, 2d June 1830.

SIR,

REFERRING to your Despatch of 20th February last, I have now the honour to enclose a Copy of the Report of the Attorney General on the subject of the proceedings of a Council of Protection held in the parish of Saint Ann, on 11th May 1829.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c. &c.

(signed) *Belmore.*

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(Enclosure.)

S I R,

Spanish Town, 25th May 1830.

IN compliance with the instructions received by his Excellency the Earl of Belmore, to refer to me the proceedings of a Council of Protection held in the parish of Saint Ann's on the 11th May 1829, for my Opinion, whether any grounds exist for instituting a Prosecution against Mr. Bridges, and whether the decision of the Council of Protection precludes the Attorney General from instituting it; I beg leave to report, that I have maturely considered the Evidence which was at that time offered to the magistrates and vestry, and can feel no hesitation in declaring, that grounds do exist for a criminal Prosecution, and that the decision of the Council of Protection forms no barrier whatever to the adoption of such proceedings.

A Council of Protection, which is composed of the Justices and Vestry of a parish, under the provisions of the 25th clause of the Slave Law, is invested with authority to make further and full inquiry upon view, and by the examination of witnesses, into any alleged complaint of mal-treatment of a slave, and at its discretion to prosecute the party complained against, at the expense of the parish, with a remedy over against the owner, if he be capable of sustaining the costs and charges of such prosecution by action at law. Its proceedings, therefore, are merely ancillary to a prosecution before the supreme courts of criminal judicature in the colony. Its decision is not final; the party accused is not put upon his trial; they possess no power of condemnation or acquittal. Every magistrate is clothed with the same authority, and may exercise the same jurisdiction of investigating the complaint of a slave, and may or may not adopt the necessary proceedings in order to bring the matter before the Grand Court or Courts of Assize; with this exception, that he acts on his own personal responsibility; whereas in the case of a Council of Protection, the resort to ulterior measures is or is not sanctioned by the magistrates and vestry of the parish, and the slave is withdrawn from the control of his master by being committed to the workhouse until the trial shall have taken place.

During the period of my practice at the bar in Jamaica, I remember a conviction obtained by the late Attorney General against an individual, for mal-treating a slave. Although the complaint had been rejected by a Council of Protection, and a bill sent in to the grand jury of the county of Middlesex, *ignored*, yet the Attorney General persevered; another bill was sent in and found, and a conviction, as I have stated, was ultimately obtained.

The grounds on which I have formed my opinion as to the propriety of instituting further Proceedings against Mr. Bridges, are,—The infliction of a Punishment on a female so disproportioned to the offence which she was charged to have committed, and the Severity of that punishment, as proved by those who had ocular demonstration of its effects, viz. Mr. Cox, Mr. Raffington, Mr. Harker, Dr. Stennett, and Mr. Smith; of whom Mr. Cox and Mr. Raffington stated, that they had never witnessed such severity.

The Statement of the slave appears to have been corroborated in its most material points, although John Colin stated that there were no marks on her face, and that he did not perceive any black eye or marks of violence about her neck, yet it might have been proved by this witness, that the parts of her person exhibited those marks, had a question to that effect been put to him; his evidence, however, is contradicted by Dr. Stennett and Mr. Harker.

A circumstance was distinctly proved, which is calculated to excite strong suspicion. I allude to Mr. Bridges compelling the slave to destroy the clothes which she had on when she received the punishment.

For these reasons I am of opinion that this matter ought to undergo a further investigation before a tribunal which is by law competent to pronounce on the guilt or innocence of the accused.

I may also observe, that the question which was put to the Justices and Vestry who composed the Council of Protection, was not, Whether Mr. Bridges was guilty or not of having mal-treated his slave, but whether he should be prosecuted or not, which latter question involves considerations such as were calculated possibly to influence the majority in disapproving of a prosecution.

I have, &c.

(signed) *Hugo James.*

PAPERS RELATING TO THE

No. 6.

COPY of a Despatch from the Earl of *Belmore* to Sir *George Murray*, G. C. B.
&c. &c. &c.

King's House, Jamaica, 18 June 1830.

SIR,

REFERRING to my Despatch of 2d instant, I have the honour to inform you that the grand jury of the county of Middlesex, before whom an Indictment against the Rector of Saint Ann's was preferred, have returned the bill *ignoramus*.

I am, &c.

(signed) *Belmore*.

No. 7.

COPY of a Despatch from Sir *George Murray* to the Earl of *Belmore*,
&c. &c. &c.

Downing-street, 15th August 1830.

MY LORD,

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Lordship's Despatch of the 18th June last, in which you report that the Bill of Indictment against the Rev. Mr. Bridges has been ignored by the grand jury.

In my Despatch of the 23d of October last, I requested that you would desire the Council of Protection to furnish you with copies of the Examinations taken by them upon this case. If you have accordingly obtained from them an authentic copy of these Examinations, you will be so good as to transmit it to me. If you have not yet obtained such a copy, you will lose no time in procuring and transmitting it.

I have, &c.

(signed) *G. Murray*.

No. 8.

COPY of a Despatch from the Earl of *Belmore* to Sir *George Murray*, G.C.B.
&c. &c. &c.

King's House, Jamaica, 5 October 1830.

SIR,

WITH reference to your Despatch of 15th August, I have the honour to inform you, that I have called upon the Chief Magistrate of the parish of Saint Ann, for a copy of the Examinations taken by a Council of Protection, in the case of the Reverend Mr. Bridges, which I shall lose no time in forwarding to the Colonial Office.

I have, &c.

(signed) *Belmore*.

No. 9.

COPY of a Despatch from the Earl of *Belmore* to Sir *George Murray*, G.C.B.
&c. &c. &c.

King's House, Jamaica, 1st December 1830.

SIR,

REFERRING to your Despatch of 15th August last, I have now the honour to enclose for your information the copy of Proceedings and Examinations of a Council of Protection held at Saint Ann's Bay, on 11th May 1829, relative to a slave belonging to the Reverend Mr. Bridges, which I only received from the Crown Office since the sailing of the last packet.

I have, &c.

(signed) *Belmore*.

(Enclosure 1.)

Jamaica, S. S.

I, Thomas Farquhar Hill, Clerk of the Crown for the said Island of Jamaica, do hereby certify, That the several annexed paper writings are just and true copies of the Proceedings and Examinations, remaining in my office, of a Council
of

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of Protection held at Saint Ann's Bay, on the 11th day of May 1829, relative to a slave belonging to the Reverend Mr. Bridges, called Kitty Hilton.

Given under my hand and seal of office, this second day of November in the year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty.

Seal.

Tho' F. Hill. C^t Cr.

(Enclosure 2.)

Jamaica, SS. } AT a Council of Protection holden this 15th April 1829, before
Saint Ann. } the Honorable Henry Cox, Custos, and other Justices and Vestry-
men of the parish of Saint Ann—Kitty Hilton, a Slave belonging to the Rev.
Mr. Bridges, came forward and complained against her said Overseer, for having
maltreated her. The Rev. G. W. Bridges was cited to appear, but in conse-
quence of severe indisposition, he could not attend. Having heard the evidence of
Kitty Hilton, It was Resolved, That in consequence of Mr. Bridges' indisposition,
and the evidence warned not attending, Kitty Hilton should be remanded to the
workhouse, to be taken care of, and not worked until a Special Vestry should meet
on the 11th May, and that all parties should be summoned to appear on that day.

(signed) *Henry Cox,*
Custos.

Jamaica, SS. } AT a Council of Protection holden this 11th May 1829, before
Saint Ann. } the Honorable Henry Cox, Custos, and others, Justices and
Vestrymen of the parish of St. Ann,—Kitty Hilton, a Slave belonging to the Rev.
G. W. Bridges, was brought forward in pursuance of the above-written order.
The several parties having been duly served, the Council of Protection proceeded
to investigate the said Charge.

Kitty Hilton, sworn; states,—That she belongs to the Rev. Mr. Bridges, Rector of Saint Ann's. On Friday, after breakfast went to her master in the library, and asked, what he would have for dinner, who asked what witness had done with all the turkeys; had the turkey killed about two o'clock, P. M.; when he saw it killed, master was angry; took her into the pantry and nailed witness against the dresser in the pantry, and kicked her with his foot. Witness begged not to be kicked so severely, as she would buy another turkey and have it for the Sunday's dinner. Being asked, if any one was present?—she said, Miss Moreland;—was kicked for upwards of an hour; master said he wished he could see her a corpse, as he hated her so. Called old Charles to pick the largest bundle of bamboo switches he could find, which he did. Master followed her and old Charles to the cow-penn, and had her laid down. He was standing over witness, beating her with a stick, and telling the man to cut all the flesh off her:—was going to lay down on the grass, but was ordered off to the rocks. When master had done flogging her, and witness rose up, the blood was running down her heels. He ordered old Charles to run her down to the pond; and went as ordered, washed her skin, and the blood off her clothes. Did your master follow you?—No, he stopped at the cow-penn: That on her return from the pond her master was pelting her up to the house with stones; the pond can be seen from the house; it was about two o'clock in the day; was struck by her master at the cow-penn; on her return from the pond to the house, her master was following her with a stick, but as he could not catch her, he continued pelting her. On her return to the house, the blood gushed out as bad as ever. Her mistress called for a kettle of water, which she went to take up; she met her master, he gave her a kick, and told her to go out and change her clothes. He followed her into the washhouse and beat her there with a stick; and as he was beating her, witness begged and said she had only two suits, but one was dirty and one was on. He went out of the washhouse and locked her up in it, and returned and brought an Oznaburgh frock, and said witness must put it on, and pull off the one she had on, and made witness carry it, with the handkerchief off her head, into the kitchen and burn it. Her master remained there until they were burnt. Mrs. Taylor was in the kitchen, and before the gown was done burning, Miss Moreland

came into the kitchen; afterwards she was ordered to cook dinner, and afterwards her master continuing to beat her, she could not bear it, and she went away (about five o'clock, p. m. not quite an hour after the clean frock was put on her) and walked part of the night to Mr. Raffington's. Miss Steer was in the house, and saw witness after her return from being flogged: went to Mr. Raffington's and saw him, he was coming down to Nutshell. He ordered her to come down to his residence at Nutshell on Sunday morning, and that he would see her master on Sunday, and would speak to her master. Mr. Raffington told witness her master had consented to sell her. On Tuesday morning she went to Mr. Charles Smith, and he consented to purchase her. On Wednesday morning her master sent for her, being the day she returned from Richmond, and was carried home that day; he sent a horse, but could not ride. Was returning to Mr. Raffington's house with Mr. Saunders, who had Mr. Smith's letter, but was hindered from going there by Mr. Saunders, who said Mr. Raffington had ordered that she should not put her foot near his yard, as she should have gone home before. Went home (Saunders having left her) with the man that was sent for her. Her master did not see her that night; got fever and was lying out of doors. Mr. Colly told witness, her master had desired him to tie her two hands behind her, and put her in the watchman's hut, under the charge of old Charles, which he did. Heard that her master intended sending her to Saint Thomas in the Vale workhouse, from Mr. Colly; found she could not bear such punishment, and escaped about three o'clock in the morning, and went to Industry, having contrived to get loose, and reached there about four p. m. on the same day.

Miss Moreland, sworn; states,—That she was in the pantry where she saw Mr. Bridges and Kitty Hilton, who was struck or kicked by him, but had not seen any previous flogging. Kitty Hilton said, that her master had desired her to kill a turkey, and her master said he had not, but she insisted on it. Saw the woman after she was flogged; she showed her punishment to witness at a distance; she was in the same clothes she had on as those in which she was sent down to be flogged. She saw the clothes burned. Mr. Bridges continued in the pantry with Kitty Hilton until the switches were brought up, but she did not see them.

Cross Examined:—She is very provoking and insolent, is the general conduct of Kitty Hilton. Being asked, if she knew of any particular instance of insolence towards her master and mistress?—She declines answering the question.

John Colin, sworn;—Knows the woman; he has been residing with Mr. Bridges three months, and knows she is a troublesome woman in the house; knows Mr. Bridges punished her once during that period. Witness ordered her to be tied on her return, and gave her in charge to the watchman, from whom she escaped; did not tell the woman she was to be sent to Saint Thomas in the Vale workhouse; could not, as he knew nothing about it.

Cross Examined:—Saw Mr. Bridges once strike her for insolence; the watchman tied her; was insolent to Mr. Bridges before he struck her; went at daylight in search of the woman, and she was gone: sent a watchman in quest: have often heard her insolent to Mr. Bridges. Witness is apt to hear her insolence more than any one else: has heard her say to Mr. Bridges, "I will do it when I think proper," when ordered by him to perform any duty: there were no marks on her face. I saw her after her punishment, there were no marks on her neck; would have seen them, as the gown was sufficiently low; she was tied, in case she should go away when she was brought back, and he ordered her to be tied by the watchman, where there was a good fire. Witness did not perceive any black eye or marks of violence about her neck.

Thomas Raffington, Esq. sworn. Kitty Hilton came to witness on Saturday morning, the 4th; a servant came in and told witness a sick woman wanted to see him; saw her and her situation; never saw a female in such a situation. Had seen the woman before, but did not know her: desired her to remain at his residence; she came to Nutshell. Witness spoke to Mr. Bridges, and requested him to consent to sell her, which he said he would. Afterwards desired her to remain at Nutshell, and left a woman to take care of her, but she went away. Witness did not examine her particularly, but she was terribly lacerated, and never saw a woman so ill treated. Mr. Raffington said he had not ordered her to Nutshell.

Charles Smith, Esq. sworn. On Tuesday morning met Kitty Hilton, and asked her what was the matter, she said her master had most killed her. Witness did
not

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not recognize her, she said she was going to Mr. Smith to buy her. Witness told her to go to Richmond, and wait his return. When witness saw the woman, she had received a severe punishment, but did not examine her particularly.

Several Letters read, showing a disposition to sell the woman to Mrs. Smith.

Dr. Stennett, sworn. States the woman had two black eyes when the woman was sent to the workhouse. Witness examined her, and saw severe marks of punishment. If the woman had thirty-nine, she would not have been healed so soon.

W. T. Harker, sworn. Saw the woman on the morning of Wednesday; had heard a report of a woman being severely flogged; examined her,—her eyes were black, as if she had received a severe blow; her posteriors were very much cut up; on the inner part of her thigh, on each, there were several black marks.

The Hon. Henry Cox, sworn. Kitty Hilton came to witness to complain against her master, Mr. Bridges; she was very much injured; saw her bruises, evidently switching, from the nape of her neck to her posteriors; her face and thighs dreadfully bruised. Has never seen any thing so severe of the kind; in consequence ordered her before the Council of Protection.

Mr. Bridges called upon for his defence. Admitted, that he had ordered the woman to be switched for her insolence, but denies that he went down from his house; on the contrary, he had sent her down to be switched by the watchman.

Miss Steer, sworn. Was at Mr. Bridges on the 2d of April. The dinner was shamefully cooked, and a part of it was obliged to be sent away; Mr. Bridges told her, he should remember her. On the following day she killed a turkey, saying to Mrs. Bridges she had been ordered to do so, and Mrs. Bridges told her, it must have been a mistake. Heard she was to have been punished; switches were sent for; and she was sent down to the watchman for punishment. Saw Mr. Bridges on the top of the hill.

Question to Mr. Colen, by Mr. Bridges. Had I any other negro than Charles, or any other coloured person about me, to punish the woman? Replied—No.

The Justices and Vestry having heard the Evidence on behalf of Kitty Hilton, and the Evidence on behalf of the Reverend Mr. Bridges; on its being put to the vote, whether Mr. Bridges should be prosecuted or not, it was carried, by a majority of thirteen to four against the Prosecution.

(True Copy.) (signed) *Henry Cox,*

May 14th, 1830.

Custos.

No. 10.

COPY of a Despatch from Viscount *Goderich* to the Earl of *Belmore*,
&c. &c. &c.

Downing-street, 18th February 1831.

MY LORD,

I HAVE received your Lordship's Despatch of the 1st of December 1830, enclosing a Copy of the Proceedings before the Council of Protection, in the complaints of Kitty Hilton against the Rev. Mr. Bridges.

Your Lordship was instructed to obtain this information, in my predecessor's Dispatch of the 23d October 1829, and the instruction was repeated on the 15th August 1830.

Obviously desirable as it was that this Department should be in full and early possession of all the documents bearing upon this case, I cannot but express my regret that your Lordship should have allowed more than twelve months to intervene before you transmitted the copy of the proceedings before the Council of Protection.

I have perused this record with feelings of the deepest concern. For a trifling mistake in the execution of her master's orders, this female slave appears to have
231. been

been first violently struck and kicked by her master, and then, by his directions, flogged with such severity as to have excited the commiseration of every person who bore witness to her appearance after the punishment.

Thomas Raffington Esq. was sworn ; and deposed,—That Kitty Hilton came to witness “on Saturday morning the 4th, A. M. A servant came in, and told witness a “sick woman wanted to see him ; saw her and her situation ; never saw a female “in such a situation : had seen the woman before, but did not know her name. “Witness did not examine her particularly, but she was terribly lacerated, and “never saw a woman so ill treated.”

Dr. Stennett, who was sworn, states,—That the woman had two black eyes when sent to the workhouse, and that he examined her and saw severe marks of punishment ; but he says, if she had had “thirty-nine, she would not have been healed “so soon.”

Mr. F. Harker, sworn ; states,—That he saw the woman in the morning of Wednesday : “had heard a report of a woman being severely flogged ; examined her ; “her eyes were black as if she had received a severe blow ; her posteriors were “very much cut up ; on the inner part of her thigh on each there were several “black marks.”

The Hon. Henry Cox, sworn ; states,—That Kitty Hilton came to him to complain against her master, Mr. Bridges. “She was very much injured ; saw her bruises, “evidently switching, from the nape of the neck to her posteriors ; her face and “thighs dreadfully bruised : has never seen any thing so severe of the kind.”

It is further stated, and is corroborated by the evidence of Miss Moreland, that Mr. Bridges struck or kicked the slave after she had been flogged, as well as before, and that he caused her to burn the clothes which had been stained with her blood. The only part of this evidence which is in any degree impugned, is that of Dr. Stennett and Mr. Hacker, to the fact of her having “black eyes ;” and all that appears to the contrary is the evidence of “Colin,” apparently a servant, or at all events an inmate in Mr. Bridges’ house, who says that he did not perceive marks of violence upon her face.

When Mr. Bridges was called upon for his defence, all that appears upon the record is, that he “admitted that he had ordered the woman to be switched for “her insolence, but denies that he went down from his house ; on the contrary, “he had sent her down to be switched by the watchman.”

The result of these proceedings was, that “on its being put to the vote, whether “Mr. Bridges should be prosecuted or not, it was carried by a majority of 13 to 4 “against the Prosecution.” And when a Bill of Indictment was nevertheless preferred against Mr. Bridges, by the Attorney General, under the directions of the Secretary of State, it was thrown out by the Grand Jury.

It would be with extreme reluctance that I could be induced to doubt that the Gentlemen who composed the Grand Jury upon this occasion, performed their duty conscientiously, according to the terms of the oath which they had taken ; but I have the Opinion of the Attorney General for Jamaica before me, who reported, that having maturely considered the Evidence which had been offered to the Magistrates and Vestry, he could feel no hesitation in declaring that grounds did exist for a criminal Prosecution ; and I cannot but be apprehensive that the Grand Jury have committed an error of judgment, which, for every consideration of what is due to the ends of public justice, to their own good repute, and to the credit of the Colonial Society, is deeply to be deplored.

Were I to assume the judgment of the Grand Jury to be correct, it would follow that the Laws of Jamaica afford to the Slave no protection from such sufferings as those which are shown, by evidence on oath, to have been undergone by the Slave Kitty Hilton.

With respect to the offender in this case, your Lordship will readily conceive how much the regret, which I should feel at such conduct on the part of any person filling a respectable station in society, is aggravated by the circumstance of that person being a Minister of the Gospel.

Unmanly

TREATMENT OF A FEMALE SLAVE IN JAMAICA.

13

Unmanly and disgraceful as the conduct of Mr. Bridges would have been, even had it proceeded no further than the blows inflicted by his own hand, I should have been willing to seek some apology for it in a momentary ebullition of anger, however apparently unprovoked, and however unbecoming the sacred character of his profession. But, for the repeated and persevering cruelty of his subsequent conduct, I can find no extenuation; and I can only lament that the ends of justice have been defeated, and that the crime of Mr. Bridges must be left unpunished.

If Mr. Bridges be a Magistrate, your Lordship will lose no time, if it be not already done, in erasing his name from the Commission of the Peace.

I have, &c.

(signed) *Goderich.*

JAMAICA.

COPY of any Information received from *Jamaica*,
respecting an INQUIRY into the TREATMENT
of a FEMALE SLAVE, by the Rev. Mr. Bridges,
Rector of *St. Ann's*, in that Island.

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
10 March 1831.