ACTS

OF THE

GOVERNOR AND COUNCIL OF LIBERIA.

PASSED JANUARY 1840.

(By Authority.)

Printed at the Herald Office, Monrovia—J. G. MINOY.

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An Act to amend an Act, entitled An Act to establish a Circulating Medium in the Commonwealth of Liberia.

Article 1st. Be it Enacted by the Governor and Council of Liberia, in Legislature Assembled, & it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same,—That from and after the 20th day of this present instant January, the legal currency of this Commonwealth shall consist, First of Camwood & Ivory: camwood at the value of three cents per pound, and ivory weighing less than twenty pounds, sixty cents per pound; twenty pounds and upwards, one dollar per pound. Secondly: Bills on the credit of the Commonwealth of the denomination of Five, Three, Two and One Dollars: Fifty cents, Twenty cents, Ten cents and Five cents, to be issued on the credit of the Commonwealth under such regulations, and in such a manner as shall be provided by this Act. Said bills or notes shall bear in fair and legible characters the date of their issue, and shall be redeemable at the Treasury in two equal installments, the first at the expiration of six months from the date of issue, and the second at twelve; & the Commissioners shall be authorised by the Direction of the Governor, at any reasonable time before the arrival of these specified periods, should there not be an amount of specie, camwood or ivory in the Treasury to redeem the notes, to negotiate loans for the purpose, at any interest not exceeding seven per centum. And further that the Governor and
Council shall appoint one person at Edina, and another at Sincie to receive from the Collector, the amount of duties collected according to this Act, to hold the same subject to the order of the Governor, to be disposed of according to the true intent and spirit of this Act.

Art. 2nd. Be it further Enacted,—That said bills or notes shall be a legal tender in all payments between the Government and citizens, and between citizens and citizens, in all debts and contracts, the payment of which was not otherwise expressly stipulated for at the time of making the contract.

Art. 3rd. Be it further Enacted,—That there shall not in the twelve months immediately succeeding the date of the passage of this Act, be a larger amount of said bills or notes in circulation than Two Thousand Dollars.

Art. 4th. Be it further Enacted,—That from and after the date of the passage of this Act, all captains, supercargoes or agents of foreign vessels trading or landing goods in any of the ports of this Commonwealth, shall before the vessel leaves the port, pay in specie, camwood or ivory, to the proper officer appointed to receive the same, the amount of duties accruing on merchandise so sold or landed, together with the amount of anchorage. And it shall be the duty of the collector or officer so receiving the duties & anchorage, or anchorages alone, as the case may be, to pay the amount so received into the hands of the Treasurer of the Commonwealth immediately and without delay.

Art. 5th. Be it further Enacted,—That in cases of direct importation of goods or merchandise, by citizens of this Commonwealth, in which the duties on the same shall amount to a sum exceeding one hundred dollars, the term of ninety days shall be allowed for the payment of the duties accruing on said importation. The amount shall be secured by a bond with sureties good and sufficient in double amount of said duties, to be executed to the Commonwealth of Liberia, to be taken by the Collector and deposited in the Treasury.
Art. 6th. Be it further Enacted.—That at the expiration of the ninety days, the Treasurer shall demand the payment of the bond, and if the payment be neglected or refused to be made, he shall proceed immediately to attach the property of the principal or sureties, on the face of the bond; which shall be considered as an execution, and shall sell the same by public auction after ten days public advertisement, unless the amount with all expenses incurred shall have been previously paid.

Art. 7th. Be it further Enacted,—That there shall be appointed by the legislature, three persons to be styled Commissioners of the Treasury of Liberia; one of whom shall by the designation of the legislature, be President of the board, and another by similar designation, Treasurer of the Commonwealth of Liberia; said commissioners may be in office twelve calendar months, but shall be removable at any time by the Executive for neglect or violation of duty.

The duty of the President shall be, to sign all the bills or notes that may be issued, to superintend their being printed, to see that all bonds deposited in the Treasury are duly collected, and to take the general supervision of the Treasury.

It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to receive all the money paid into him by the Collector and other officers of the Commonwealth, to countersign all notes or bills that may be issued from the Treasury, to keep fair and open account of all monies received and paid by him, and to hold the money subject to the order of the legislature. If shall further be the duty of the commissioners at all times, whenever demanded by the Executive, to afford a prompt and free access, not only to the books and accounts of the institution, but to personal inspection and examination of the amount and kind of money in the Treasury.

Art. 8th. Be it further Enacted.—That it shall be the duty of the Governor, and in his absence the Lieut. Governor, to draw on the commissioners of the Treasury of Liberia, from time to time, as the same may be required for such sums of money as the legislature shall have appropriated; said orders shall be filed by the
Treasurer as vouchers for the amount.

Art. 9th. Be it further Enacted,—That the Commonwealth bills issued under the former directory and now in existence, shall be entitled to redemption according to the true intent of this Act, counting from the date of the passage of this Act, and those in the hands of the present Commonwealth or County Treasurer, or any other functionary of the Government, shall be paid over to the Treasurer immediately on the creation of the officers mentioned in the seventh article of this Act, and be held subject to the order of the Executive according to the eighth article.

Art. 10th. Be it further Enacted,—That the President appointed under this Act, shall enter into bond for the sum of Two Thousand Dollars, with two good and sufficient sureties of one thousand dollars each, for the faithful performance of his duties; the Governor to determine on the competency of the sureties, the bond to be executed to the Governor on behalf of the Commonwealth, and deposited in the office of the Colonial Secretary. Similar guarantee shall be given by the Treasurer as that prescribed for the President, in all the particulars of amount, competency of sureties and deposite of bond.

Art. 11th. Be it further Enacted,—That the President shall be allowed for his services, the sum of one per centum for all monies issued from the Treasury except on amounts which shall be paid in redemption of bills or notes, on which he shall be allowed nothing. The Treasurer shall be allowed the sum of two per centum on all bills issued, & two per centum on all monies paid by him making four per centum, whether it be paid to the order of the Executive or in redemption of the bills or notes of the Commonwealth.

Art. 12th. Be it further Enacted,—That the Commissioners shall at once issue an order for all persons holding any of the bills or notes issued by the old Directory, to bring the same in to the Treasury by the first day of February next ensuing, to be exchanged by the Commissioners for new bills or notes, or to be designated by such marks of discrimination as the Commission-
An Act to amend an Act entitled an Act to regulate the Judiciary of the Commonwealth of Liberia.

Section 1st. Be it Enacted by the Governor and Council of Liberia, in Legislature Assembled,—That from and after the date of the passage of this Act, any two Justices of the peace for this Commonwealth, associated for that purpose, shall be competent to try and determine all cases of petit larceny, and all cases affecting the peace, except those of murder and high misdemeanor; provided, however, that they shall not be allowed to levy a fine higher than twenty-five dollars, nor commit an offender to prison nor condemn him to labour for a longer term than three months.

Sec. 2nd. Be it further Enacted,—That the Chairman of the County Court shall not exercise the functions, nor perform the duties of a Justice of the peace, but that his duties shall be confined exclusively to the Court of which he is Chairman.

Sec. 3rd. Be it further Enacted,—That the Judge of the Superior Court, shall in presiding in said Court have two associates to be chosen by him for every term of said Court, from among the justices of the peace in said county, in regular rotation as far as the case will allow. It shall be the duty of the Judge of this Court to notify such justices through the clerk of the court, at least one week before the session of the court, but no justice shall be allowed to sit in said court on any case which he has adjudicated.

Sec. 4th. Be it further Enacted,—That all persons feeling themselves aggrieved by the decision of a Justice Court, shall have the privilege of appealing to the quarterly court of session.
and from the quarterly sessions, whether in cases appellant from
the decision of justices, or in those originating in the said court,
appeal may be had to the superior court.

Sec. 5th. Be it further Enacted,—That there shall be appoint-
ed two additional magistrates for each of the counties of Monsterr-
rado and Grand Bassa.

An Act to amend An Act, entitled An Act regulating the Com-
merce and Revenue of the Commonwealth of Liberia.

Section 1st. Be it Enacted by the Governor and Council of Li-
beria, in Legislature Assembled,—That the 25th section of the act
regulating the commerce and revenue of Liberia, be so altered as
to read, fifty cents per ton per annum, instead of one dollar per ton
per annum.

Sec. 2nd. Be it further Enacted,—That the citizens of this
Commonwealth shall be allowed to establish factories on the sea-
board, any where within the territory of this Government, (viz.:)
from Cape Mount on the north to Tabaconee on the south, by pay-
ing an annual license of twenty-five dollars.

Sec. 3rd. Be it further Enacted,—That no person nor persons
shall be allowed to trade or barter with the natives, or others with-
in this Commonwealth, in goods wares or merchandize, on which
the regular duties have not been paid.

Sec. 4th. Be it further Enacted,—That any person convicted
of violating the provisions of this Act shall forfeit and pay the a-
mount of the goods so sold and bartered contrary to law.

Sec. 5th. Be it further Enacted,—That the first, second, fourth
and fifth sections, of the above named Act be, and the same are
hereby repealed.

Sec. 6th. Be it further Enacted,—That the duty on all spiritu-
ous liquors landed in this Commonwealth, shall be twenty-five cents
a gallon, and that no drawback in any case be allowed on spirit-
nous liquors.

Sec. 7th. Be it further Enacted,—That merchants or others, who may retail ardent spirits, shall previous to doing so, pay the sum of twenty-five dollars per year, as special license.

An Act entitled An Act to amend An Act, to regulate the Militia of this Commonwealth.

Article 1st. Be it Enacted by the Governor and Council of Liberia, in Legislature Assembled,—That citizens of this Commonwealth who are regularly employed on board the vessels of this colony, whether as seamen or supercargoes, shall be exempt in time of peace from doing military duty, excepting such as shall be belonging to volunteer companies.

Art. 2nd. Be it further Enacted,—That persons so claiming to be exempted, shall enrol their names in the book of the clerk of county courts, of this colony: and on proof being furnished to the captain or commander of the militia that any such person or persons so registered, shall have been unemployed in their appropriate duty for the space of three months at any one time, he or they shall be enrolled and be compelled to do military duty, the registration of his or their names in the clerk of the county courts' books notwithstanding.

Art 3rd. Be it further Enacted,—That every seaman and supercargo of this Commonwealth exempted from military duty, shall pay monthly into the hands of the county Treasurer of the county in which the port he hails from is situated, the sum of fifty cents, to be accounted for by the Treasurer to the proper authorities, and to be applied in such a way as the legislature may direct.

Art. 4th. Be it further Enacted,—That no seaman or supercargo of this Commonwealth, whether attached to volunteer or militia companies, shall be compelled to do military duty in time of peace, when he is actually engaged in his appropriate em-
ployment, or about to go to sea on the days of muster.

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An Act amending An Act, regulating the Post Office Department.

Section 1st. Be it Enacted by the Governor and Council of Liberia, in Legislature Assembled, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same,—That from and after this date, it shall be the duty of the Collector, immediately on the arrival of a vessel, to demand all letters which she may have brought, and deposite them in the Post Office, and on all such letters two cents shall be paid to the Captain of the vessel in which the letters came, to be collected from those receiving them.

Sec. 2nd. Be it further Enacted,—That from and after this date, it shall not be lawful for carries to take letters outside of the mail within four miles of any post office.

Sec. 3rd. Be it further Enacted,—That the Post Master General and Colonial Secretary, shall have all letters hereafter received or sent by him free of postage.

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An Act regulating the Tariff of the Commonwealth of Liberia.

Sec. 1st. Be it Enacted by the Governor and Council of Liberia, in Legislature Assembled,—That from and after the passage of this Act, that all goods, wares and merchandise, landed in this Commonwealth except such as are herein exempted, shall pay an ad valorem duty of four per centum.

Sec. 2nd. Be it further Enacted,—That on all spirituous liquors landed in the Colony after the passage of this Act, the duties shall be twenty-five cents a gallon.

Sec. 3rd. Be it further Enacted,—That in all direct importations, the duties shall be assessed on the cost of goods; but in the sales of transient traders the Commission Merchant's account shall be assumed as the ad valorem price, and the duties assessed accordingly.
Sec. 4th. Be it further Enacted,—That all goods, and merchandise imported by the American Colonization Society, and by any Missionary Societies, shall be free of duties, provided such goods, wares and merchandise so imported by Missionary Societies, are not applied in the way of trade.

Sec. 5th. Be it further Enacted,—That from and after the passage of this Act, all vessels anchoring in the harbour of Monrovia, shall pay a “light” duty of Three Dollars.

An Act to amend An Act regulating the Towns and Villages in this Commonwealth.

Sec. 1st. Be it Enacted by the Governor and Council of Liberia in Legislature Assembled,—That so much of the fourth section of the Act, for the regulation of the towns and villages in this Commonwealth, be so altered as to read: “not exceeding twelve working days in each year, to assemble and clear out the streets,” instead of “twenty six working days in each year to assemble and clear out the streets.”

Sec. 2nd. Be it further Enacted,—That all natives residing within the several townships, be compelled to work the same number of days as is directed by law for the citizens of this Commonwealth, they being ordered out at the discretion of the commissioners.