

# **ADMIRALTY COURT ACT, 1861**

[24 Vict c 10]

[17<sup>th</sup> May 1861]

## **An Act to Extend the Jurisdiction and Improve the Practice of the High Court of Admiralty**

Whereas it is expedient to extend the jurisdiction and improve the practice of the High Court of Admiralty of England: Be it therefore enacted, etc. as follows:

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### **1. SHORT TITLE**

This Act may be cited for all purposes as “The Admiralty Court Act, 1861.

### **2. INTERPRETATION OF TERMS**

In the interpretation and for the purposes of this Act (if not inconsistent with the context or subject) the following terms shall have the respective meanings hereinafter assigned to them; that is to say, ‘Ship’ shall include any description of vessel used in navigation not propelled by oars: ‘Cause’ shall include any cause, suit, action, or other proceeding in the Court of Admiralty.

### **3. COMMENCEMENT OF ACT**

*[Repealed by Statute Law Revision Act, 1892 (55-56 Vic c 19)].*

### **4. AS TO CLAIMS FOR BUILDING, EQUIPPING, OR REPAIRING OF SHIPS**

The High Court of Admiralty shall have jurisdiction over any claim for the building, equipping, or repairing of any

ship, if at the time of the institution of the cause the ship or the proceeds thereof are under arrest of the court.

**5. AS TO CLAIMS FOR NECESSARIES**

The High Court of Admiralty shall have jurisdiction over any claim for necessaries supplied to any ship elsewhere than in the port to which the ship belongs, unless it is shown to the satisfaction of the court that at the time of the institution of the cause any owner or part owner of the ship is domiciled in England or Wales: Provided always, that if in any such cause the plaintiff do not recover twenty pounds, he shall not be entitled to.

**6. AS TO CLAIMS FOR DAMAGE TO CARGO IMPORTED**

The High Court of Admiralty shall have jurisdiction over any claim by the owner or consignee or assignee of any bill of lading of any goods carried into any port in England or Wales in any ship, for damage done to the goods or any part thereof by the negligence or misconduct of or for any breach of duty or breach of contract on the part of the owner, master, or crew of the ship, unless it is shown to the satisfaction of the court that at the time of the institution of the cause any owner or part owner of the ship is domiciled in England or Wales: Provided always, that if any such cause the plaintiff do not recover twenty pounds, he shall not be entitled to any costs, charges, or expenses incurred by him therein, unless the judge shall certify that the cause was a fit one to be tried in the said court.

**7. AS TO CLAIMS FOR DAMAGE BY ANY SHIP**

The High Court of Admiralty shall have jurisdiction over any claim for damage done by any ship.

**8. HIGH COURT OF ADMIRALTY TO DECIDE QUESTIONS AS TO OWNERSHIP, ETC OF SHIPS**

The High Court of Admiralty shall have jurisdiction to decide all questions arising between the co-owners, or any of them, touching the ownership, possession, employment, and earnings of any ship registered at any port in England or Wales, or any share thereof, and may settle all accounts outstanding and unsettled between the parties in relation thereto, and may direct the said ship or any share thereof to be sold, and may make such order in the premises as to it shall seem fit.

**9. EXTENDING 17 & 18 VICT C 104 AS TO CLAIMS FOR SALVAGE OF LIFE**

All the provisions of 'The Merchant Shipping Act 1854' in regard to salvage of life from any ship or boat within the limits of the United Kingdom, shall be extended to the salvage of life from any British ship or boat, wheresoever the services may have been rendered, and from any foreign ship or boat, where the services have been rendered wholly or in part in British waters.

*[Repealed by the Merchant Shipping Act 1894 (57 & 58 Vic c 60) s 745]*

**10. AS TO CLAIMS FOR WAGES AND FOR DISBURSEMENTS  
BY MASTER OF A SHIP**

The High Court of Admiralty shall have jurisdiction over any claim by a seaman of any ship for wages earned by him on board the ship, whether the same be due under a special contract or otherwise, and also over any claim by the master of any ship for wages earned by him on board the ship, and for disbursements made by him on account of the ship: Provided always, that if in any such cause the plaintiff do not recover fifty pounds, he shall not be entitled to any costs, charges, or expenses incurred by him therein, unless the judge shall certify that there was a fit one to be tried in the said court.

**11 3 & 4 VICT C 65, IN REGARD TO MORTGAGES  
EXTENDED TO COURT OF ADMIRALTY**

The High Court of Admiralty shall have jurisdiction over any claim in respect of any mortgage duly registered according to the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854, whether the ship or the proceeds thereof be under arrest of the said court or not.

**12. SECTIONS 62 TO 65 OF 17 & 18 VICT C 104  
EXTENDED TO COURT OF ADMIRALTY**

The High Court of Admiralty shall have the same powers over any British ship, or any share therein, as are conferred upon the High Court of Chancery in England by the sixty-second, sixty-third, sixty-fourth and sixty-fifth sections of The Merchant Shipping Act, 1854.

*[The 1854 Merchant Shipping Act gave to the High Court of Chancery the power to prohibit any dealings in shares of British ships which vested in unqualified owners. They were re-stated in the Act which repealed them, the Merchant Shipping Act 1894.]*

**13. PART 9 OF 17 & 18 VICT C 104, EXTENDED TO COURT OF ADMIRALTY**

Whenever any ship or vessel, or the proceeds thereof, are under arrest of the High Court of Admiralty, the said court shall have the same powers as are conferred upon the High Court of Chancery in England by the ninth part of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854.

**14. COURT TO BE A COURT OF RECORD**

*The High Court of Admiralty shall be a Court of record for all intents and purposes.*

*[Repealed by the Statute Law Revision and Civil Procedure Act, 188)] (44-45 Vict C 59) s 3]*

**15. DECREES OF COURT OF ADMIRALTY**

*Concerning the effect of decrees of the High Court of Admiralty.*

*[Repealed by the Statute Law Revision and Civil Procedure Act, 188)] (44-45 Vict C 59) s 3]*

**16. AS TO CLAIM TO GOODS TAKEN IN EXECUTION**

If any claim shall be made to any goods or chattels taken in execution under any process of the High Court of

Admiralty, or in respect of the seizure thereof, or any act or matter connected therewith, or in respect of the proceeds or value of any such goods or chattels, by any landlord for rent, or by any person not being the party against whom the process has issued, the registrar of the said court may, upon application of the officer charged with the execution of the process, whether before or after any action brought against such officer, issue a summons calling before the said court both the party issuing such process and the party making the claim; and thereupon any action which shall have been brought in any of her Majesty's superior courts of record, or in any local or inferior court, in respect of such claim, seizure, act, or matter as aforesaid, shall be stayed; and the court in which such action shall have been brought, or any judge thereof, on proof of the issue of such summons, and that the goods and chattels were so taken in execution, may order the party bringing the action to pay the costs of all proceedings had upon the action after issue of the summons out of the said Admiralty Court; and the judge of the said Admiralty Court shall adjudicate upon the claim, and make such order between the parties in respect thereof and of the costs of the proceedings, as to him shall seem fit; and such order shall be enforced in like manner as any order made in any suit brought in the said court. Where any such claim shall be made as aforesaid, the claimant may deposit with the officer charged with the execution of the process either the amount or value of the goods claimed, the value to be fixed by appraisement in

case of dispute, to be by the officer paid into court to abide the decision of the judge upon the claim, or the sum which the officer shall be allowed to charge as costs for keeping possession of the goods until such decision can be obtained; and in default of the claimant so doing, the officer may sell the goods as if no such claim had been made, and shall pay into court the proceeds of the sale, to abide the decision of the judge.

**17. POWERS OF SUPERIOR COURTS EXTENDED TO COURT OF ADMIRALTY**

*Concerning the extension of the powers of Superior Courts to the Courts of Admiralty.*

*[Repealed by the Statute Law, Revision and Civil Procedure Act, 188)] (44-45 Vict C 59) s 3]*

**18. PARTY IN COURT OF ADMIRALTY MAY APPLY FOR AN ORDER FOR INSPECTION BY TRINITY MASTERS**

Any party in a cause in the High Court of Admiralty shall be at liberty to apply to the said court for an order for the inspection by the Trinity Masters or others appointed for the trial of the said cause, or by the party himself or his witnesses, of any ship or other personal or real property, the inspection of which may be material to the issue of the cause; and the court may make such order in respect of the costs arising thereout as to it shall seem fit.

**19,20. DISCOVERY & SERVICE**

*[Repealed by the Statute Law, Revision and Civil Procedure Act, 188)] (44-45 Vict C 59) s 3]*

**21. AS TO THE SERVICE OF SUBPOENA OUT OF England AND WALES**

The service in any part of Great Britain or Ireland of any writ of subpoena and *testificandum* or subpoena *duces tecum*, issued under seal of the High Court of Admiralty, shall be as effectual as if the same had been served in England or Wales.

**22. WRITS IN ADMIRALTY**

*[Repealed by the Statute Law Revision and Civil Procedure Act, 188)] (44-45 Vict C 59) s 3]*

**23. JUDGE AND REGISTRAR TO HAVE SAME POWER AS TO ARBITRATION AS JUDGES AND MASTERS AT COMMON LAW**

All the powers possessed by any of the superior courts of common law on any judge thereof, under the Common Law Procedure Act, 1854, and otherwise, with regard to references to arbitration, proceedings thereon, and the enforcing of awards of arbitrators, shall be possessed by the judge of the High Court of Admiralty in all causes and matters depending in the said court, and the registrar of the said Court of Admiralty shall possess as to such matters the same powers as are possessed by the masters

of the said superior courts of common law in relation thereto.

**24. POWERS OF THE REGISTRAR**

*[Repealed by the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894]* (57-58 Vict C 60) s 745]

**25. POWERS OF REGISTRAR AND OF DEPUTY OR ASSISTANT REGISTRAR**

The registrar of the High Court of Admiralty may exercise, with reference to cause and matters in the said court, the same powers as any surrogate of the judge of the said court sitting in chambers might or could have heretofore lawfully exercised; and all powers and authorities by this or any other Act conferred upon or vested in the registrar of the said High Court of Admiralty may be exercised by any deputy or assistant registrar of the said court.

**26. FALSE OATH OR AFFIRMATION DEEMED PERJURY**

The registrar of the said Court of Admiralty shall have power to administer oaths in relation to any cause or matter depending in the said court; and any person who shall wilfully depose or affirm falsely in any proceeding before the registrar or before any deputy or assistant registrar of the said court, or before any person authorised to administer oaths in the said court, shall be deemed to be guilty of perjury, and shall be liable to all the pains and penalties attaching to wilful and corrupt perjury.

**27. APPOINTMENT OF REGISTRAR AND OF DEPUTY OR ASSISTANT REGISTRAR**

Any advocate, barrister-at-law, proctor, attorney, or solicitor of ten years' standing may be appointed registrar or assistant or deputy registrar of the said court.

**28. APPOINTMENT OF EXAMINERS**

Any advocate, barrister-at-law, proctor, attorney, or solicitor may be appointed an examiner of the High Court of Admiralty.

**29.** [*Repealed by Statute Law Revision and Civil Procedure Act, 1875*] (33-39 Vict c 66)

**30. PROCTOR MAY ACT AS AGENT OF SOLICITORS**

Any proctor of the High Court of Admiralty may act as agent of any attorney or solicitor, and allow him to participate in the profits of and incident to any cause or matter depending in or connected with the said court.

[*The rest of this section is repealed by SLR Act, 1875*]

**31. 2 HEN 4 C II REPEALED**

*The Act passed in the second year of the reign of King Henry the Fourth entitled 'A Remedy for him who is wrongfully pursued in the Court of Admiralty' is hereby repealed.*

[*Repealed by Statute Law Revision and Civil Procedure Act, 1875*] (38-39 Vict c 66)

**32. APPEALS IN INTERLOCUTORY MATTERS**

*[Repealed by Statute Law Revision and Civil Procedure Act, 1881]] (44 &-45 Vict c 59) s3]*

**33. BAIL GIVEN IN THE COURT OF ADMIRALTY GOOD IN THE COURT OF APPEAL**

In any cause in the High Court of Admiralty bail may be taken to answer the judgment as well of the said court as of the Court of Appeal, and the said High Court of Admiralty may withhold the release of any property under its arrest until such bail has been given; and in any appeal from any decree or order of the High Court of Admiralty the Court of Appeal may make and enforce its order against the surety or sureties who may have signed any such bail bond in the same manner as if the bail had been given in the Court of Appeal.

**34. AS TO THE HEARING OF CAUSES AND CROSS CAUSES**

The High Court of Admiralty may, on the application of the defendant in any cause of damage, and on his instituting a cross cause for the damage sustained by him in respect of the same collision, direct that the principal cause and the cross cause be heard at the same time and upon the same evidence; and if in the principal cause the ship of the defendant has been arrested or security given by him to answer judgment, and in the cross cause the ship of the plaintiff cannot be arrested, and security has not been given to answer judgment therein, the court may, if it think

fit, suspend the proceedings in the principal cause, until security has been given to answer judgment in the cross cause.

### **35. JURISDICTION OF THE COURT**

The jurisdiction conferred by this Act on the High Court of Admiralty may be exercised either by proceedings *in rem* or by proceedings *in personam*.

The 1873 Supreme Court of Judicature Act empowered the Admiralty Division of the High Court *in personam* (in addition to its special powers *in rem*) to hear any matter upon which the High Court in its other Divisions may adjudicate, subject only to the power the High Court had to order the transfer of a matter between Divisions. The 1840 and 1861 Acts should therefore be read with the following extracts of the 1873 Act:

## **SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE ACT, 1873**

[38 & 39 VICT C 66]

### SECTION 16

The High Court of Justice shall be a Superior Court of Record, and, subject as in this Act mentioned, there shall be transferred to and vested in the said High Court of Justice the jurisdiction which, at the commencement of this Act, was vested in, or capable of being exercised by all or any of the Courts following; (that is to say,)

1. The High Court of Chancery, as a Common Law Court as well as a Court of Equity, including the jurisdiction of the Master of the Rolls, as a Judge or Master of the Court of Chancery, and any jurisdiction exercised by him in relation to the Court of Chancery as a Common Law Court;
2. The Court of Queen's Bench;
3. The Court of Common Pleas at Westminster;
4. The Court of Exchequer, as a Court of Revenue, as well as a Common Law Court;
5. The High Court of Admiralty;
6. The Court of Probate;
7. The Court for Divorce and Matrimonial Causes;
8. the London Court of Bankruptcy;
9. The Court of Common Pleas at Lancaster;
10. The Court of Common Pleas at Durham;
11. The Courts created by Commissioners of Assize, of Oyer and Terminer, and of Gaol Delivery, or any of such commissions:

The jurisdiction by this Act transferred to the High Court of Justice shall include (subject to the exceptions hereinafter contained) the jurisdiction which, at the commencement of this Act, was vested in, or capable of being exercised by, all or any one or more of the Judges of the said Courts, respectively, sitting in Court or Chambers, or elsewhere, when acting as Judges or a Judge, in pursuance of any statute, law, or custom, and all powers given by any statute; and also all ministerial powers, duties, and authorities, incident to any and every part of the jurisdictions so transferred.

## SECTION 36

Any cause or matter may at any time, and at any stage thereof, and either with or without application from any of the parties thereto, be transferred by such authority and in such manner as Rules of Court may direct from one Division or Judge of the High Court of Justice to any other Division or Judge thereof, or may by the like authority be retained in the Division in which the same was commenced, although such may not be the proper Division to which the same cause of matter ought, in the first instance, to have been assigned.

# **COLONIAL COURTS OF ADMIRALTY ACT, 1890**

(53 & 54 VICT)

[25 July 1890]

CHAPTER 27

*An Act to amend the Law respecting the exercise of Admiralty Jurisdiction in Her Majesty's Dominions and elsewhere out of the United Kingdom –*

BE it enacted by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

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## **1. SHORT TITLE**

This Act may be cited as the Colonial Courts of Admiralty Act, 1890.

## **2. COLONIAL COURTS OF ADMIRALTY**

(1) Every court of law in a British possession, which is for the time being declared in pursuance of this Act to be a court of Admiralty, or which, if no such declaration is in force in the possession, has therein original unlimited civil jurisdiction, shall be a court of Admiralty, with the jurisdiction in this Act mentioned, and may for the purpose of that jurisdiction exercise all the powers which it possesses for the purpose of its other civil jurisdiction, and such court in reference to the jurisdiction conferred

by this Act is in this Act referred to as a Colonial Court of Admiralty. Where in a British possession the Governor is the sole judicial authority, the expression 'court of law' for the purposes of this section includes such Governor.

- (2) The jurisdiction of a Colonial Court of Admiralty shall, subject to the provisions of this Act, be over the like places, persons, matters, and things, as the Admiralty jurisdiction of the High Court in England, whether existing by virtue of any statute or otherwise, and the Colonial Court of Admiralty may exercise such jurisdiction in like manner and to as full an extent as the High Court in England, and shall have the same regard as that Court to international law and the comity of nations.
- (3) Subject to the provisions of this Act any enactment referring to a Vice-Admiralty Court, which is contained in an Act of the Imperial Parliament or in a Colonial law, shall apply to a Colonial Court of Admiralty, and be read as if the expression 'Colonial Court of Admiralty' were therein substituted for 'Vice-Admiralty Court' or for other expressions respectively referring to such Vice-Admiralty Courts or the judges thereof, and the Colonial Court of Admiralty shall have jurisdiction accordingly.

Provided as always:

- (a) Any enactment in an Act of the Imperial Parliament referring to the Admiralty jurisdiction of the High

Court in England, which applied to a Colonial Court of Admiralty in a British possession, shall be read as if the name of that possession were therein substituted for England and Wales; and

- (b) A Colonial Court of Admiralty shall have under the Naval Prize Act, 1864 and under the Slave Trade Act, 1873, and any enactment relating to prize or the slave trade, the jurisdiction thereby conferred on a Vice-Admiralty Court and not the jurisdiction thereby conferred exclusively on the High Court of Admiralty or the High Court of Justice; but, unless for the time being duly authorised, shall not by virtue of this Act exercise any jurisdiction under the Naval Prize Act, 1864, or otherwise in relation to prize; and
  - (c) A Colonial Court of Admiralty shall not have jurisdiction under this Act to try or punish a person for an offence which according to the law of England is punishable on indictment; and
  - (d) A Colonial Court of Admiralty shall not have any greater jurisdiction in relation to the laws and regulations relating to Her Majesty's Navy at sea, or under any Act providing for the discipline of Her Majesty's Navy, than may be from time to time conferred on such court by Order in Council.
- (4) Where a Court in a British possession exercises in respect of matters arising outside the body of a county or other like part of a British possession any jurisdiction exercisable under this Act, that

jurisdiction shall be deemed to be exercised under this Act and not otherwise.

### **3. POWER OF COLONIAL LEGISLATURE AS TO ADMIRALTY JURISDICTION**

The legislature of a British possession may by any Colonial law

- (a) declare any court of unlimited civil jurisdiction, whether original or appellate, in that possession to be a colonial Court of Admiralty, and provide for the exercise by such court of its jurisdiction under this Act, and limit territorially, or otherwise, the extent of such jurisdiction; and
- (b) confer upon any inferior or subordinate court in that possession such partial or limited Admiralty jurisdiction under such regulations and with such appeal (if any) as may seem fit:

Provided that any such Colonial law shall not confer any jurisdiction which is not by this Act conferred upon a Colonial Court of Admiralty.

### **4. RESERVATION OF COLONIAL LAW FOR HER MAJESTY'S ASSENT**

Every Colonial law which is made in pursuance of this Act, or affects the jurisdiction of or practice or procedure in any court of such possession in respect of the jurisdiction conferred by this Act, or alters any such Colonial law as above in this section mentioned, which has been previously passed, shall, unless previously approved by Her Majesty

through a Secretary of State, either be reserved for the signification of her Majesty's pleasure thereon, or contain a suspending clause providing that such law shall not come into operation until Her Majesty's pleasure thereon has been publicly signified in the British possession in which it has been passed.

**5. LOCAL ADMIRALTY APPEAL**

Subject to rules of court under this Act, judgments of a court in a British possession given or made in the exercise of the jurisdiction conferred on it by this Act, shall be subject to the like local appeal, if any, as judgments of the court in the exercise of its ordinary civil jurisdiction, and the court having cognisance of such appeal shall for the purpose thereof possess all the jurisdiction by this Act conferred upon a Colonial Court of Admiralty.

**6. ADMIRALTY APPEAL TO THE QUEEN IN COUNCIL**

- (1) The appeal from a judgment of any court in a British possession in the exercise of the jurisdiction conferred by this Act, either where there is as of right no local appeal or after a decision on local appeal, lies to her Majesty the Queen in Council.
- (2) Save as may be otherwise specially allowed in a particular case by Her Majesty the Queen in Council, an appeal under this section shall not be allowed.
  - (a) from any judgment not having the effect of a definitive judgment unless the court appealed from has given leave for such appeal, nor

- (b) from any judgment unless the petition of appeal has been lodged within the time prescribed by rules, or if no time is prescribed within six months from the date of the judgment appealed against, or if leave to appeal has been given then from the date of such leave.
- (3) For the purpose of appeals under this Act, Her Majesty the Queen in Council and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council shall, subject to rules under this section, have all such powers for making and enforcing judgments, whether interlocutory or final, for punishing contempts, for requiring the payment of money into court, or for any other purpose, as may be necessary, or as were possessed by the High Court of Delegates before the passing of the Act transferring the powers of such court to Her Majesty in Council, or as are for the time being possessed by the High Court in England or by the court appealed from in relation to the like matters as those forming the subject of appeals under this Act.
- (4) All Orders of the Queen in Council or the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council for the purposes aforesaid or otherwise in relation to appeals under this Act shall have full effect throughout Her Majesty's dominions, and in all places where Her Majesty has jurisdiction.
- (5) This section shall in addition to and not in derogation of the authority of her Majesty in Council or the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council arising

otherwise than under this Act, and all enactments relating to appeals to Her Majesty in Council or to the powers of Her Majesty in Council or the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in relation to those appeals, whether for making rules and orders or otherwise, shall extend, save as otherwise directed by her Majesty in Council, to appeals to Her Majesty in Council under this Act.

## **7. RULES OF COURT**

- (1) Rules of court for regulating the procedure and practice (including fees and costs) in a court in a British possession in the exercise of the jurisdiction conferred by this Act, whether original or appellate, may be made by the same authority and in the same manner as rules touching the practice, procedure, fees, and costs in the said court in the exercise of its ordinary civil jurisdiction respectively are made:

Provided that the rules under this section shall not, save as provided by this Act, extend to matters relating to the slave trade, and shall not (save as provided by this section) come into operation until they have been approved by Her Majesty in Council, but on coming into operation shall have full effect as if enacted in this Act, and any enactment inconsistent therewith shall, so far as it is so inconsistent, be repealed.

- (2) it shall be lawful for Her Majesty in Council, in approving rules made under this section, to declare that the rules so made with respect to any matters

which appear to Her Majesty to be matters of detail or of local concern may be revoked, varied, or added to without the approval required by this section.

- (3) Such rules may provide for the exercise of any jurisdiction conferred by this Act by the full court, or by any judge or judges thereof, and subject to any rules, where the ordinary civil jurisdiction of the court can in any case be exercised by a single judge, any jurisdiction conferred by this Act may in the like case be exercised by a single judge.

## **8. DROITS OF ADMIRALTY AND OF THE CROWN**

- (1) Subject to the provision of this section nothing in this Act shall alter the application of any droits of Admiralty or droits of or forfeitures to the Crown in a British possession; and such droits and forfeitures, when condemned by a court of a British possession in the exercise of the jurisdiction conferred by this Act, shall, save as is otherwise provided by any other Act, be notified, accounted for, and dealt with in such manner as the Treasury from time to time direct, and the officers of every Colonial Court of Admiralty and of every other court in a British possession exercising Admiralty jurisdiction shall obey such directions in respect of the said droits and forfeitures as may be from time to time given by the Treasury.
- (2) It shall be lawful for Her Majesty the Queen in Council by Order to direct that, subject to any conditions, exceptions, reservations, and regulations

contained in the Order, the said droits and forfeitures condemned by a court in a British possession shall form part of the revenues of that possession either for ever or for such limited term or subject to such revocation as may be specified in the Order.

- (3) If and so long as any of such droits or forfeitures by virtue of this or any other Act form part of the revenues of the said possession the same shall, subject to the provisions of any law for the time being applicable thereto, be notified, accounted for, and dealt with in manner directed by the Government of the possession, and the Treasury shall not have any power in relation thereto.

## **9. POWER TO ESTABLISH VICE-ADMIRALTY COURT**

- (1) It shall be lawful for Her Majesty, by commission under the Great Seal to empower the Admiralty to establish in a British possession any Vice-Admiralty Court or Courts.
- (2) Upon the establishment of a Vice-Admiralty Court in a British possession, the Admiralty, by writing under their hands and the seal of the office of Admiralty in such form as the Admiralty direct, may appoint a judge, registrar, marshal, and other officers of the court, and may award any such appointment, and in addition to any other jurisdiction of such court, may (subject to the limits imposed by this Act or the said commission from Her Majesty) vest in such court the whole or any part of the jurisdiction by or by virtue of

this Act conferred upon any courts of that British possession, and may vary or revoke such vesting, and while such vesting is in force the power of such last-mentioned courts to exercise the jurisdiction so vested shall be suspended.

Provided that –

- (a) nothing in this section shall authorise a Vice-Admiralty Court so established in India or in any British possession having a representative legislature, to exercise any jurisdiction, except for some purpose relating to prize, to Her Majesty's Navy, to the slave trade, to the matters dealt with by the Foreign Enlistment Act, 1870 [33 & 39 Vic c 51 -], or to matters in which questions arise relating to treaties or conventions with foreign countries, or to international law; and
- (b) in the event of a vacancy in the office of judge, registrar, marshal, or other officer of any Vice-Admiralty Court in a British possession, the Governor of that possession may appoint a fit person to fill the vacancy until an appointment to the office is made by the Admiralty.
- (3) The provisions of this Act with respect to appeals to Her Majesty in Council from courts in British possessions in the exercise of the jurisdiction conferred by this Act shall apply to appeals from Vice-Admiralty Courts, but the rules and orders made in relation to appeals from Vice-Admiralty Courts

may differ from the rules made in relation to appeals from the said courts in British possessions.

- (4) If Her Majesty at any time by commission under the Great Seal so directs, the Admiralty shall by writing under their hands and the seal of the office of Admiralty abolish a Vice-Admiralty Court established in any British possession under this section, and upon such abolition the jurisdiction of any Colonial Court of Admiralty in that possession which was previously suspended shall be revived.

#### **10. POWER TO APPOINT A VICE-ADMIRAL**

Nothing in this Act shall affect any power of appointing a vice-admiral in and for any British possession or any place therein; and whenever there is not a formally appointed vice-admiral in a British possession or any place therein, the Governor of the possession shall be ex-officio vice-admiral thereof.

#### **11. EXCEPTION OF CHANNEL ISLANDS AND OTHER POSSESSIONS**

- (1) The provisions of this Act with respect to Colonial Courts of Admiralty shall not apply to the Channel Islands.
- (2) It shall be lawful for the Queen in Council by Order to declare, with respect to any British possession which has not a representative legislature, that the jurisdiction conferred by this Act on Colonial Courts of Admiralty shall not be vested in any court of such

possession, or shall be vested only to the partial or limited extent specified in the Order.

**12. APPLICATION OF ACT TO COURTS UNDER FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACTS**

It shall be lawful for her Majesty the Queen in Council by Order to direct that this Act shall, subject to the conditions, exceptions, and qualifications (if any) contained in the Order, apply to any Court established by Her Majesty for the exercise of jurisdiction in any place out of Her Majesty's dominions which is named in the Order as if that Court were a Colonial Court of Admiralty, and to provide for carrying into effect such application.

**13. RULES FOR PROCEDURE IN SLAVE TRADE MATTERS**

- (1) It shall be lawful for Her Majesty the Queen in Council by Order to make rules as to the practice and procedure (including fees and costs) to be observed in and the returns to be made from Colonial Courts of Admiralty and Vice-Admiralty Courts in the exercise of their jurisdiction in matters relating to the slave trade, and in and from East African Courts as defined by the Slave Trade (East African Courts) Acts, 1873 [36 & 37 Vic c 59] and 1879 [42 & 43 Vic c 38].
- (2) Except when inconsistent with such Order in Council, the rules of court for the time being in force in a Colonial Court of Admiralty or Vice-Admiralty Court shall, so far as applicable, extend to

proceedings in such court in matters relating to the slave trade.

- (3) The provisions of this Act with respect to appeals to Her Majesty in Council, from courts in British possessions in the exercise of the jurisdiction conferred by this Act, shall apply, with the necessary modifications, to appeals from judgments of any East African court made or purporting to be made in exercise of the jurisdiction under the Slave Trade (East African Courts) Acts, 1873 and 1879.

#### **14. ORDERS IN COUNCIL**

It shall be lawful for Her Majesty in Council from time to time to make Orders for the purpose authorised by this Act, and to revoke and vary such Orders, and every such Order while in operation shall have effect as if it were part of this Act.

#### **15. INTERPRETATION**

In the construction of this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,-

The expression 'representative legislature' means, in relation to a British possession, a legislature comprising a legislative body of which at least one half are elected by inhabitants of the British possession.

The expression 'unlimited civil jurisdiction' means civil jurisdiction unlimited as to the value of the subject matter at issue, or as to the amount that may be claimed or recovered.

The expression 'judgement' includes a decree, order, and sentence.

The expression 'appeal' means any appeal, rehearing, or review; and the expression 'local appeal' means an appeal to any court inferior to Her Majesty in Council.

The expression 'Colonial law' means any Act, ordinance, or other law having the force of legislative enactment in a British possession and made by any authority, other than the Imperial Parliament or her Majesty in Council, competent to make laws for such possession.

## **16. COMMENCEMENT OF ACT**

- (1) This Act shall, save as otherwise in this Act provide, come into force in every British possession on the first day of July one thousand eight hundred and ninety-one.

Provided that-

- (a) This Act shall not come into force in any of the British possession named in the First Schedule to this Act until Her Majesty so directs by Order in Council, and until the day named in that behalf in such Order; and
- (c) If before any day above mentioned rules of court for the Colonial Court of Admiralty in any British possession have been approved by Her Majesty in Council, this Act may be proclaimed in that possession by the Governor thereof, and on such proclamation shall come into force on the day named in the proclamation.

- (2) The day upon which this Act comes into force in any British possession shall, as regards that British possession, be deemed to be the commencement of this Act.
- (3) If, on the commencement of this Act in any British possession, rules of court have not been approved by Her Majesty in pursuance of this Act, the rules in force at such commencement under the Vice-Admiralty Courts Act, 1863 [26 & 27 Vic c 24 -, and in India the rules in force at such commencement regulating the respective Vice-Admiralty Courts or Courts of Admiralty in India, including any rules made with reference to proceedings instituted on behalf of her Her Majesty's ships, shall, so far as applicable, have effect in the Colonial Court or Court of Admiralty of such possession, and in any Vice-Admiralty Court established under this Act in that possession, as rules of court under this Act, and may be revoked and varied accordingly; and all fees payable under such rules may be taken in such manner as the Colonial Court may direct, so however that the amount of each such fee shall so nearly as practicable be paid to the same officer or person who but for the passing of this Act would have been entitled to receive the same in respect of like business. So far as any such rules are inapplicable or do not extend, the rules of court for the exercise by a court of its ordinary civil jurisdiction shall have effect as rules for the exercise by the same court of the jurisdiction conferred by this Act.
- (4) At any time after the passing of this Act any Colonial law may be passed, and any Vice-Admiralty Court may be

established and jurisdiction vested in such Court, but any such law, establishment, or vesting shall not come into effect until the commencement of this Act.

**17. ABOLITION OF VICE-ADMIRALTY COURTS**

On the commencement of this Act in any British possession, but subject to the provisions of this Act, every Vice-Admiralty Court in that possession shall abolish; subject as follows, -

- (1) All judgements of such Vice-Admiralty Court shall be executed and may be appealed from in like manner as if this Act had not passed, and all appeals from any Vice-Admiralty Court pending at the commencement of this Act shall be heard and determined, and the judgement thereon executed as nearly as may be in like manner as if this Act had not passed;
- (2) All proceedings pending in the Vice-Admiralty Court in any British possession at the commencement of this Act shall, notwithstanding the repeal of any enactment by this Act, be continued in a Colonial Court of Admiralty of the possession in manner directed by rules of court, and, so far as no such rule extends, in like manner, as nearly as may be, as if they had been originally begun in such court;
- (3) Where any person holding an office, whether that judge, registrar, or marshal, or any other office in any such Vice-Admiralty Court in British possession,

suffers any pecuniary loss in consequence of the abolition of such court, the Government of the British possession, on complaint of such person, shall provide that such person shall receive reasonable compensation (by way of an increase of salary or a capital sum, or otherwise) in respect of his loss, subject nevertheless to the performance, if required by the said Government, of the like duties as before such abolition;

- (4) All books, papers, documents, office furniture and other things at the commencement of this Act belonging, or appertaining to any Vice-Admiralty Court, shall be delivered over to the proper office of the Colonial Court of Admiralty or be otherwise dealt with in such manner as, subject to any directions from her Majesty, the Governor may direct:
- (5) Where, at the commencement of this Act in a British possession, any person holds a commission to act as advocate in any Vice-Admiralty Court abolished by this Act, either for Her Majesty or for the Admiralty, such commission shall be of the same avail in every court of the same British possession exercising jurisdiction under this Act, as if such court were the court mentioned or referred to in such commission.

## **18. REPEAL**

The Acts specified in the Second Schedule to this Act shall, to the extent mentioned in the third column or that schedule, be repealed as respect any British possession as from the commencement of this Act in that possession, and

as respect any court out of Her Majesty's dominions as from the date of any Order applying this Act:

Provide that-

- (a) Any appeal against a judgement made before the commencement of this Act may be brought and any such appeal and any proceedings or appeals pending at the commencement of this Act may be carried on and completed and carried into effect as if such repeal had not been enacted; and
- (b) All enactment and rules at the passing of this Act in force touching the practice, procedure, fee, cost, and returns in matters relating to the slave trade in Vice-Admiralty court and in East African courts shall have effect as rules made in pursuant of this Act, and shall apply to Colonial Courts of Admiralty, and may be altered and revoked accordingly.

## SCHEDULES

### FIRST SCHEDULE

BRITISH POSSESSION IN WHICH OPERATION OF ACT IS DELAYED

(The commencement of the Act was delayed in New South Wales, Victoria, St. Helena and British Honduras.)

### SECOND SCHEDULE

#### ENACTMENTS REPEALED

[The following Acts are repealed:

7 & 8 Vict c 69, 26 Vict c 24, 30 & 31 Vict c 45, 36 & 37 Vict c 59, 36 & 37 Vict c 88, and 38 & 39 Vict c 51.

The 1840, 1873 and 1861 Acts remain in force, and the 1890 Act should thus be read with those Acts.]