



# Slave Trade Act 1873

## 1873 CHAPTER 88

### *Seizure of Slave Ships*

#### **3 Visitation and seizure by cruisers, &c. of suspected slave ships.**

Where a vessel is, on reasonable grounds, suspected of being engaged in or fitted out for the slave trade, it shall (subject, in the case either of the vessel of a foreign state, or of the commander or officer of a cruiser of a foreign state., to the limitations, restrictions, and regulations, if any, applicable thereto contained in any existing slave trade treaty made with such state) be lawful—

- (a) If the vessel is a British vessel, or is engaged in the slave trade within British jurisdiction, or is not a vessel of a foreign state, for any commander or officer of any of Her Majesty's ships, for any officer bearing Her Majesty's commission in the army or navy, for any officer of Her Majesty's customs in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, or Isle of Man, for the governor of a British possession, or any person authorised by any such governor, and for any commander or officer of any cruiser of a foreign state authorised in pursuance of any existing slave trade treaty; and
- (b) If the vessel is the vessel of a foreign state, for any commander or officer of any of Her Majesty's ships, when duly authorised in that behalf, in pursuance of any treaty with that state, and for any commander or officer of any cruiser of that foreign state,

to visit and seize and detain such vessel, and to seize and detain any person found detained or reasonably suspected of having been detained as a slave, for the purpose of the slave trade, on board any such vessel, and to carry away such vessel and person, together with the master and all persons, goods, and effects on board any such vessel, for the purpose of bringing in such vessel, person, goods, and effects for adjudication.

All vessels, slaves, persons, goods, and effects which may be forfeited under the enactments with which this Act is to be construed as one, as herein-after mentioned, may be visited, seized, and detained by any commander, officer, governor, or person authorised by this section to seize a British vessel.

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*Status: This is the original version (as it was originally enacted).*

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**4 Vessels equipped for traffic in slaves to be deemed engaged in the slave trade.**

Where any of the particulars mentioned in the first schedule to this Act are found in the equipment or on board of any vessel visited, seized, or detained in pursuance of this Act, such vessel shall, unless the contrary be proved, be deemed to be fitted out for the purposes of and engaged in the slave trade, and in such case, even though the vessel is restored, no damages shall be awarded against the seizer under this Act in respect of such visitation, seizure, or detention, or otherwise upon such restoration.

Provided that this section shall not extend to the vessel of any foreign state except so far as may be consistent with the treaty made with such state.