

Barry's talent and eloquence, though of the *forensic* kind. While in Jamaica in 1829, Mr. Barry was called to defend himself in an action maliciously brought against him by A. H. Beaumont, Esq., a Magistrate, for an alleged libel in having said in a letter, published in the Kingston Chronicle in reference to that gentleman, that he "never saw magisterial dignity so sunk." The plaintiff and defendant both pleaded their own cause. Mr. Beaumont having opened his cause, and the evidence for the prosecution having been gone through, Mr. Barry, without calling any witnesses, immediately commenced his defence. The following are extracts :—

*May it please your Honours,  
Gentlemen of the Jury,*

You have just heard the lengthy and elaborate address of the plaintiff—an address into which he has thrown whatever talent and energy he possesses; attempting to prove the charge against me of having insulted him in the discharge of his duty as a Magistrate. You have heard him cite a variety of precedents and authorities to prove, what I am willing in a moment to admit, that to libel a Magistrate as such, in the execution of his duty, is not only cognizable, but punishable by law. It may appear strange to you, gentlemen, that an individual, sustaining the character of a Minister of Religion, should appear in his own proper person to plead to an action like the present. But when I consider the frivolous nature of the charge, a charge the mere submitting of which to a British Jury is an open insult to their judgment and integrity; when I consider the character of the plaintiff, *an unceasing and notorious libeller*; when I consider his conduct in Courts of Justice, as calculated to lessen and undermine that respect which ought ever to be cherished in the public mind towards our judicial institutions; when I consider the sovereign contempt with which he *appears* to treat the Jamaica bar, a bar composed of gentlemen whose attainments would render in the plaintiff the bare idea of comparison unpardonable arrogance and presumption; and, above all, when I consider the plaintiff's motive in sending out this action, a desire to come in personal collision with me (for this he has avowed)—yes, gentlemen, he has declared that were I to retain counsel, he would withdraw the action, but, were I to plead *propria personâ*, he would follow it up—I say that, under all these circumstances, I should feel degraded to have employed counsel to plead to such an action, instituted by *such a man*, and tried by a jury of my countrymen, bound by the solemn obligation of an oath. I am perfectly aware, gentlemen, that were it not for the public situation I hold in the Wesleyan Society, you would never have been called on to try this action. The plaintiff, fully conscious of the prejudice which unfortunately exists in this island against some bodies of Dissenters, and judging, no doubt, from his own views and principles, that he might *possibly* find a jury, who, under the influence of this prejudice, would feel disposed to grant him a verdict, makes the trial, and institutes the process; and I fearlessly aver, gentlemen, that were I a mere private citizen, such a course would never have been adopted. But does the existence of this unhappy feeling make me afraid to place my cause in