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FOR

The more effectual Restraining and Suppressing of
divers notorious Sins, and Reformation of the Manners
of the People of this Nation.

W *Hereas the Advancement of the Honour and Service of Almighty
God, and of the Protestant Religion, which by his wonderful Pro-
vidence hath been Established and Preserved in these Nations,
ought at all times to be the Chief Part of the Care as well of the Legisla-
tive as Executive Power of this Kingdom; but more especially at this
time, after so admirable a Deliverance from so great and apparent Danger
as lately threatned us: And for that End a General Reformation of the
Lives and Manners of all degrees of People of this Nation, is earnestly
desired by all good men, and by all Means to be endeavoured, as that
which must Establish both the Church and State, and secure to all their
Religion, Happiness and Peace: All which seem to be in great Danger at
this time, by reason of the Overflowing of Vice, which is too notorious in this
as well as other neighbouring Nations, and more particularly the Sins of
Blasphemy, Prophane Swearing and Cursing, Perjury, Prophanation of the
Lords Day, Adultery, Fornication, and Drunkennels.*

*Therefore for the better carrying on of so good a Work, and for the more
effectual preventing, correcting and suppressing of the Horrid and Hellish sins
of BLASPHEMIE and prophane Swearing and Cursing: Be it En-
acted by the King and Queens Majesty, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal,
and the Commons in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority
of the same, That if any Person not disturbed in Brain by Sicknes or other-
wise, shall at any time hereafter presume in word or writing to Blaspheme,
or speak or write contemptuously or scoffingly of God blessed for ever, his Pro-
vidence, our Blessed Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Sa-
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cred Scriptures, the Christian Religion, or any of them, the Person and persons in whose presence or hearing such Offence shall be committed, shall and are hereby required presently to set down the Words expressing the said Offence, or so much thereof as he or they can remember, and the manner thereof, in writing; and to give notice and testify his and their Knowledge thereof upon Oath within the space of ten dayes, unto some Justice of the Peace of the County or Place where the same shall be committed, who is hereby authorized and required to administer the said Oath, and to take the Information of the said persons in writing. And every Justice of the Peace, who shall have any knowledge of any such Offence committed, either by his own hearing or view, or by any such Testimony, or by Confession of the Party, is hereby authorized and required to cause the said Offender to become bound to appear and answer for the same at the next general Gaol-delivery or Oyer and Terminer to be holden for that County, and to be of Good Behaviour in in the mean time. And likewise to cause the said Witness and witnesses to be bound over to prosecute and give Evidence against the said Offender, who at the said next Gaol-delivery or Oyer and Terminer if it may be, or otherwise as soon as may be, shall be Indicted for his said Offence, and upon the Tryall being found Guilty, shall forfeit the sum of one moiety thereof to the King and Queen, their Heirs and Successors, and the other moiety thereof to the Prosecutor, and shall by the Judge, before whom such Tryal shall be had, be committed to the Gaol, there to remain till he or she shall have paid the said sum, and shall become bound with two good Sureties to the Good Behaviour for the space of seven years then next ensuing, in case it be the Parties first Offence of that kind: but if it be the second Offence of which he is so convicted, then to be of the Good Behaviour during Life. And if it be a third Offence and Conviction, then the Offendor shall be committed to the Gaol, there to remain till he or she shall abjure the Realm.

And be it likewise enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That all and every Person and Persons who shall hereafter offend by PROPANE SWEARING or CURSING, shall forfeit and pay for every such Offence to the use of the Poor of the Parish where the same shall be committed, or if it be out of any Parish, to the use of the Poor of such next adjoining Parish as the Justice or Justices hereafter mentioned shall appoint, according to the Degree, and Quality of the Person offending, in Manner and Form following, that is to say, every Peer and Baron of this Realm, or other the Kings Dominions residing here, and every Person holding and enjoying any Barony, the sum of twenty shillings, every Baronet and Knight the sum of thirteen shillings and four pence, every Esquire, and every Person having and enjoying any Office, Place, Dignity, Promotion, or Employment, Ecclesiastical or Civil, of the value of one hundred pounds per Annum, or more, the sum of Ten shillings, and every Gentleman and Person

son in Holy Orders, every Graduate in either University, and every Person having and enjoying any Office, Place, Dignity, Promotion, or Employment, Ecclesiastical or Civil, under one hundred pounds per annum, the sum of six shillings and eight pence; and every person keeping any Publick House of Entertainment, and every other Person under the degree of a Gentleman, (except Labourers and poor people) the sum of five shillings, and every Labourer and other poor person, the sum of two shillings and six-pence; and every married Woman or Widow, according to the Degree and Quality of her present or last Husband, and in case she was never Married, according to the degree and quality of a younger Son of her Father. All which summs and forfeitures all and every person and persons in whose presence or hearing any such Offence shall be committed, are hereby Authorized and required to demand for the use of the Poor of the said Parish, and in case the same shall be paid, to pay it over immediately to the Overseers of the Poor for the use aforesaid. And in case the person so offending shall upon such demand refuse to pay the sum by him so forfeited, then the said persons in whose presence or hearing the said Offence shall be committed, shall, and are hereby required presently thereupon to put the words expressing the Offence into Writing, under his and their Hands, and to give notice of the said Offence, demand and refusal, and to testify his or their knowledge thereof upon Oath within the space of ten dayes unto some Justice of the Peace, of the County or Place where the same Offence shall be committed, who is hereby authorized and required to administer the said Oath, and thereupon (unless the Offendor be a Peer, or such other great Man of this Realm, as in this Act hereafter is mentioned) to direct and send his Warrant to the Constable, Tythingman, Church-Wardens and Overseers of the poor of such Parish as aforesaid, or of the Parish where the Offendor shall inhabit, thereby commanding them or some one or more of them to levy the sum and summs so forfeited for the use of the poor of such parish as aforesaid, and likewise the like sum to be paid to such Witness and Witnesses, for his and their time, travel and pains employed about any such Information, by distress and sale of the Goods of such Offendor, rendering unto him or her the overplus: And in case no such Distress can be had, to apprehend the said Offendor, and him or her to bring before the said Justice or some other Justice of the Peace of the said County or place, who is hereby required to commit the said Offendor to the common Gaol, there to remain until the said Offendor shall have paid the several summs aforesaid, and full Costs and Charges to be taxed by the said Justice for Apprehending and Conveying of such Offendors to the Gaol, if it be the first Conviction for such Offence: But if the said Offendor shall have been before convicted as aforesaid of the like Offence and obstinate Refusal, then to remain there until the said Offendor shall moreover become bound before the Justices of the Peace at their General Quarter Sessions, or the Judge of Assize, General Gaol Delivery, or Oyer

and Terminer, to be of the Good Behaviour for the space of *then* next ensuing. But in case it shall appear to the said Justice, by Confession of the party, or otherwise, that the Offendor so convicted is not able to pay the said several summs, then the said Offendor shall be set in the Stocks for three whole hours for his first Offence, and shall be so set in the Stocks, and moreover be publickly whip'd, not exceeding ten lashes for the second, and every other Offence afterward.

And because it is found by common Experience, that Excess in Drinking doth, besides other inconveniences, very much dispose people to profane Swearing; and that such Excesses are usually promoted by DRINKING HEALTHS: Be it therefore enacted by the Authority aforesaid, that every person who shall begin or pledge any Health, shall forfeit and pay as is before enacted for prophane Swearing, to be leyed in like manner, and for the same Uses; and all persons present required to demand the forfeiture, and give Information of the Refusal, if any be, as in the said Case is appointed, and the Justice thereupon to proceed accordingly.

Provided, and it is hereby further Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That if any Peer of the Realm, Prelate, or other person expressed in the Statute of 2 Ri. 2. entitled, The Penalty for telling of Slanderous Lyes of the great Men of the Realm, or any Baron of the Exchequer, upon committing any such Offence of Prophane Swearing or Cursing, as aforesaid, shall refuse to pay the Penalty thereby forfeited, being demanded as aforesaid, the Justice of the Peace before whom such Information shall be given, shall cause a Copy of the said Information to be delivered to the said Offendor, his Lady or Steward, and shall bind over the Witness and Witnesses to prosecute and give Evidence of the said Offence, Demand and Refusal at the next Gaol-Delivery, or Oyer and Terminer to be holden for the County, or Division. Where such Offendor having notice as aforesaid, shall be obliged to appear and Travers his Enditment. And in case he shall not appear, or upon his Appearance and Travers shall be found Guilty, he shall incur the several Disabilities hereafter mentioned, and forfeit the sum of twenty pounds, one moiety to the King and Queen, and the other to the Prosecutor or Prosecutors.

And because it may be feared that Perjury is often committed in this Nation by the Neglect of Officers and persons sworn to the due performance of their Offices, Places, and Employments, or Duties: Be it therefore Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, for the preventing the like for the future, that every wilful neglect after the 24th. day of June next, of any Officer or other person, duly sworn to the performance of any Office, Place, Employment, or Duty, in the due performance thereof, shall be deemed and adjudged Perjury, and be prosecuted and punished as other Perjury by the Law of this Land.

And for the more effectual Execution of the Statutes heretofore made for the

the Reformation of sundry Abuses, and better Observation of the LORDS DAY, commonly called Sunday, be it likewise Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That all and every Constable, Tythingman, Headborough, Church-Warden, and Overseer of the poor, and other Officers in their respective Parishes, may and are hereby authorized and required upon notice of any Offence contrary to the said Statutes, or either of them, immediately to repair to the place where any such Offence is said to be committed, and upon their own view thereof, without any Warrant from any Justice of Peace to seize all such Goods as they shall at any time find exposed to sale, contrary to the said Statutes or either of them, and to dispose thereof as by the said Statutes, or either of them is directed; and likewise to stop, apprehend, and secure all persons offending against the said Statutes, or either of them, and them to carry before some Justice of the Peace, to be dealt with according to the Law, unless the said Offendor and Offendors shall forthwith pay the penalty forfeited by the said Statutes to such Officer or Officers.

3 Car. 1. c. 2
29. Car. 2. c. 7.

And for suppressing of the brutish Sins of ADULTERY and FORNICATION, Be it also enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That if any Man after the tenth day of June, in this present year of our Lord, 1690. shall have the carnal knowledge of the Body of any Woman other than his Wife, (except in the case of a Rape,) or shall be found in Bed, or in any such posture of Nakedness, with any other Woman than his Wife, from which it may be reasonably presum'd that any such Act of carnal Copulation was committed by the said parties, either of the said parties being at the same time in the State of lawful Matrimony with any other person not absent beyond the Seas, or otherwise unknown to the said party to be living, by the space of seven years, the same shall be taken, reputed, and adjudged lawful and sufficient Evidence of ADULTERY, and the said parties being thereof convicted by Verdict upon Indictment or presentment before any Judge or Justices of Gaol Delivery, or Oyer and Terminer, shall suffer Death as in case of Felony, without benefit of Clergy: But if neither of the said parties be at the same time in such State of Matrimony, the same shall be taken, reputed, and adjudged lawful and sufficient Evidence of Fornication only, for which being thereof convicted as aforesaid, each of the said parties shall for every such Offence be committed to the common Gaol without Bail or Mainprize, there to continue for the space of *and further* until he or she respectively shall give Security, to be taken by one or more Justice or Justices of the Peace, of the said County or place, to be of the Good Behaviour for the space of *Year* then next ensuing, if it be the first Offence, but if the second for the space of *Years*, and if the third during life.

Provided that no Attainder by vertue hereof shall extend to Corruption of

of Blood, or forfeiture of the Estate real or Personal of the person so attainted.

And for the better preventing of the said Sins for the time to come, be it Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That the Constable, or Tythingman, and the Church-Wardens of every parish for the time being, shall once every Month at least, or oftener if they see cause, make diligent enquiry throughout their respective Parishes, to discover all persons who shall prostitute themselves as common Strumpets, and shall certifie the Names, or reputed Names, and the places of abode of all such persons as they shall find either by Information of Neighbours, or other probable circumstances to be suspicious in that respect, unto some Justice of the Peace residing in or near their respective Parishes, who upon receipt of such Certificate, shall direct his Warrant to the Constable or Officer of the Parish where any such suspected person shall be found, to bring before him all or any such suspected person or persons: And shall examine her or them, and such Witnesses as shall appear in their behalf, concerning their way and course of livelihood. And that all such persons so suspected, and not being able to give a good account of themselves, shall be punished as Vagabonds, and sturdy Beggars are liable to be punished by vertue of the Statute made in the 39th year of the Reign of the late Queen Elizabeth in that behalf.

And be it further Enacted, that all such Persons as shall keep Houses of Bawdry, or wittingly and knowingly admit lewd Persons, Men and Women, into their Houses to Commit Uncleaness, or shall receive, or continue to entertain in their Houses as Lodgers or otherwise any common Strumpet, knowing that she continueth such her lewd Course of Life, or shall wittingly and knowingly procure Meetings between Men and Women in order to their committing Adultery or Fornication together, shall forfeit for the first Offence the summe of 5 l. and for the second the summe of 10 l. together with Costs of Suit to be recovered by Action of Debt, Bill, plaint or Information, at the suit of such Person as will prosecute for the same, to and for his or their own use, in which no Essoyn, Protection or Wager of Law shall be allowed: And in default of such prosecution within six Months after each severall Offence, shall forfeit the like summe and summs, being thereof Convicted by Presentment or Indictment before the Justices of the Peace at the Quarter Sessions to be held for such County, Division, or Place where any such Offence shall happen to be committed as aforesaid: One moiety to the King, and the other to the Poor of the Parish where the Offence shall be committed. And moreover for such second Offence shall be set in the Pillory in the next Market-Town or open Place: And for the third Offence upon Conviction shall abjure the Realm.

And be it further enacted for the end and purpose aforesaid, that no Person whatsoever keeping or that keep any publick Tavern, Ale-house, Tipling-house, or other House of common Entertainment within the Cities of London or Westminster, or Burrough of Southwark, or places adjacent, shall keep any Organ

or other Instrument or Instruments of Musick for the Entertainment of Guests, on pain of forfeiting the summe of 20 l. being thereof lawfully convicted upon Presentment or Indictment at the Quarter-sessions of the Peace, and upon the further penalty of being disabled to sell Ale, Wine, or other Liquors by Retail for the space of a twelve Month after such Conviction. And every person so convicted and yet selling any such liquors, contrary to this Act, shall be punished as selling the same without License.

And be it further Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, that if any Women or Woman shall at any time after Sun-set and before Sun-rising be entertain'd or received into any Tavern, Ale-house, or other publick House of Entertainment as Guest or Guests (except in Case of Travellers received into their Inns) then the Master, Mistris or Dame of such Tavern or House upon proof thereof made before one or more Justice or Justices of the Peace shall forfeit 40 s. Unless the said Master, Mistris or Dame, shall prove by good and sufficient Testimony, that such Woman and Women are of good Behaviour and Reputation: And if afterwards the said Master, Mistris or Dame, shall permit the like Offence, the said Tavern or House shall be taken and deem'd a Bawdy-house, and the said Master, Mistris and Dame, shall be punished as Keeper thereof.

And be it further Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, that if any Offender within this Act shall not be Convicted and Punished by the Justice of Peace, nor prosecuted at the Suit of any Party, as is by this Act directed within the space of Months after the Offence committed, that then the said Offender shall and may be Prosecuted at the Quarter-Sessions of the Peace, or at the Assizes holden for the County where the Offence is committed, by Indictment or Information within one Year after the Offence committed.

And be it also Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, that when and as often as any Person shall be Convicted upon Indictment for any Offence contrary to this Act, the Judge, Justice and Justices before whom the Conviction shall be, shall immediately thereupon signifie the same to the Bishop of the Diocels where the Offence shall be committed, to the end that he may thereupon proceed to EXCOMMUNICATION of the Offender, who shall not be absolved but by special Order of the Bishop, upon Certificate by the Parson or Vicar, and Church-Wardens of the Parish where the Offender shall inhabit, that the said Offender shall on some Lords-Day in the Morning immediately after the Creed appointed for the Communion Service, in the body or greatest Ile of the said Parish Church have publicly confessed his or her Offence, and solemnly declared his or her unfeigned Sorrow and Repentance for the same.

And be it also Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, that no Person Excommunicated or bound to be of Good Behaviour, or Convicted of any Crime or Offence by Virtue or in pursuance of this Act, shall be admitted to Vote or sit in Parliament, or be capable to be Elected to serve in Parliament, or to Act as Judge, Justice of the Peace, or Minister of Justice, or to perform any publick Ecclesiastical Office within the Kingdom of England or Dominion of Wales,

or

or to maintain any Action of the Case for Scandalous Words, or upon the Statute de Scandalis Magnatum, until he shall be duely discharged of his Security for the good Behaviour, and be absolved from his Excommunication as aforesaid; and shall have paid and performed all Forfeitures, Pains, Penalties, Costs and Charges, incurred, forfeited, taxed or imposed by Virtue of this Act, any Priviledge of Parliament or other whatever in any wise notwithstanding.

Provided that no Person excommunicate by Vertue or in pursuance of this Act, shall by reason of any such Excommunication incur or suffer any other temporal Punishment, Disability or Incommodity than is by this Act appointed or Ordained, any Law, Statute, Canon, Usage or Custom to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding.

And because the Effect of all Laws, and the Honour of the Government in that respect doth depend upon the due Execution thereof, to the end that this Act may be the more effectually put in Execution, be it Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, that the same shall be publickly read in all Cathedral Collegiate and Parish Churches, and in all Chappels, where the Common Prayers usually are or ought to be read, immediately after the Creed appointed for the Communion Service, on some Lords-Day before the 24th. day of June next, and afterwards once every Year upon the second Lords-Day in March; and that for that purpose it shall be provided by the Church-Wardens of every Parish, at the charge of their respective Parishes: And that all Constables, Tything-men, Headboroughs and Church-wardens shall at the time of their Entrance upon their respective Offices be Sworn to put this Act in due Execution, and to give Information of all Offences committed in their respective Parishes, or by any person of the same Parish contrary to this Act, or to the Statutes against Drunkennels, unto some Justice of the Peace of the same County or Place within ten Dayes after the same shall come to their knowledge, according to their best Skill and Understanding: And also that this Act shall be given in Charge to the Grand Jury by the Judges and Justices at their several Assizes and Quarter-Sessions, to enquire and present the several Offences aforesaid, and all Neglects of Justices, Constables, Church-Wardens and other Officers and Persons in the due Execution thereof.

And be it also Enacted, that the Judge, Justice and Justices, before whom any Person shall be Convicted of any Offence by Vertue of this Act, shall Order and cause to be paid unto such Prosecutor and Prosecutors, as shall otherwise receive no benefit by this Act, and to the several Witnesses, such reasonable Costs and Charges, and in such manner, as he or they shall think fit: And that in any Action brought against any Justice, Constable, or other Officer or Person for any thing done by Vertue or in pursuance of this Act, the Defendant may Plead the General Issue, and give the special matter in Evidence, and upon Verdict for him or Non-suit of the Plaintiff shall recover his treble Costs.

The END.