

10 Feb. 1687-8



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By the King,

A P P R O C L A M A T I O N

For Suppressing and Preventing Seditious and Unlicenced Books and Pamphlets.

JAMES R.

Whereas in and by an Act of Parliament made in the Fourteenth year of the Reign of Our late Dearest Brother King Charles the Second, Entituled, An Act for preventing Abuses in Printing Seditious, Treasonable, and Unlicenced Books and Pamphlets, and for Regulating of Printing and Printing-Presses, (Which said Act is, by another Statute or Act of Parliament made in the First Year of Our Reign Revived and Continued) It is amongst other things Enacted, That no person or persons Whatsoever, not being Licens'd in that behalf by the Lord Bishop of the Diocess, nor having been Seven Years Apprentice to the Trade of Bookseller, Printer, or Bookbinder, nor being a Freeman of the City of London by a Patrimonial Right, as Son of a Bookseller, Printer, or Bookbinder, nor being a Member of the Company of Stationers of London, shall, Within the City or Suburbs of London, or any other Market-Town, or elsewhere, receive, take, or buy, to barter, sell again, change, or do away any Book or Books Whatsoever, upon pain of Forfeiture of the same. And Whereas of late several Persons not being qualified by the said Act, and particularly great numbers of loose and disorderly people commonly called Hawkers and Pedlers of Books, have taken upon them to receive or buy several Unlicenced, Seditious, and many times, Treasonable Books and Pamphlets, framed and contrived by malicious persons on purpose to amuse and disturb the minds of Our loving Subjects, or for other evil or indirect ends and purposes, and have carried, sold, and dispersed the same about the Streets, and in other places of Publick resort, and also in Coffee-Houses, Taverns, and private Families, to the great abuse and scandal of Our Royal State and Government, and in open and manifest Breach and Contempt of Our Laws. We therefore considering the great Mischiefs that doth ensue upon such Licentious and Illegal Practices, and being Resolved effectually to provide against the like Mischiefs for the future, are pleased by this Our Royal Proclamation, by and with the Advice of Our Privy Council, to Command and Require that the said Act be put in Execution, and duly and strictly observed and kept: And We do also streightly Prohibit and forewarn, That from henceforth no person or persons commonly called Hawkers, or Pedlers of Books, or any other person or persons Whatsoever not being qualified as aforesaid to buy or sell Books, do or shall presume to go about the Streets, or from house to house, to sell, or expose to Sale any manner of Book or Books, Pamphlet or Pamphlets Whatsoever, nor do or shall by any Ways or means Whatsoever Buy or Sell, or expose to Sale any manner of Books or Pamphlets Whatsoever, contrary to the purport and true meaning of the said Act of Parliament, under such Pains, Penalties and Forfeitures as by the said Act are Provided, and upon pain of incurring such further Punishments as by the utmost Rigour of the Laws, and by Our Prerogative Royal may be inflicted on such Offenders for their Contempt of this Our Royal Commandment: Hereby strictly Charging and Commanding all Judges, Justices of the Peace, Mayors, Sheriffs, Bayliffs, Constables, and all other Our Officers and Ministers; as also the Master and Wardens of the said Company of Stationers now and for the time being, and all other Our Subjects whom it shall or may concern, That they and every of them do from time to time use their and every of their best and utmost Powers, Skills and Endeavours respectively, for the utter Suppressing and Preventing of the Printing and Publishing of all such Unlawful Books and Pamphlets aforesaid, and for Prosecuting, Punishing, and utterly Suppressing all and every person and persons offending in the Premisses, according to the utmost Rigour of the Law, and Our Royal intent and meaning herein Declared, as they Our said Officers and Subjects do tender Our Pleasure, and will answer the contrary.

Given at Our Court at Whitehall the Tenth day of February 1687. In the Fourth Year of Our Reign.

G O D S A V E T H E K I N G .

London, Printed by Charles Bill, Henry Hills, and Thomas Newcomb, Printers to the King's most Excellent Majesty. 1687.