

A
B I L L

F O R

*Encouragement of Learning, and for Securing
the Property of Copies of Books to the
Rightful Owners thereof.*



HEREAS the Liberty which Printers, Booksellers and other Persons have of late frequently taken, in Printing, Reprinting, and Publishing, or causing to be Printed, Reprinted, and Published Books, and other Writings, without the Consent of the Authors thereof, in whom the undoubted Property of such Books and Writings, as the Product of their Learning and Labour, remains; or of such Persons, to whom such Authors, for good Considerations, have lawfully Transferred their Right and Title therein, is not only a great Discouragement to Learning in general, which in all Civilized Nations ought to receive the greatest Countenance and Encouragement, but is also a Notorious Invasion of the Property of the Rightful Proprietors of such Books and Writings, to their very great Detriment, and too often to the Ruin of them and their Families:

FOR PREVENTING therefore such Unjust and Pernicious Practices for the future, and for the Encouragement of Learned Men to Compose and Write Useful Books, and for the Preservation of the Property of the Rightful Owner thereof, May it please Your Majesty, that it may be Enacted, And 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, That where any Author shall hereafter Compose or Write any Book or Books, and shall reserve to himself the Copy or Copies of such Book or Books, Share or Shares thereof; Or any Bookseller, Printer, or other Person, who hath already Purchased or Acquired, or shall hereafter Purchase or Acquire the Copy or Copies of any Book or Books, Share or Shares thereof, in order to Print or Reprint the same, That in any or either of these Cases, if any other Bookseller, Printer, or other Person whatsoever, from and after the Day of shall Print, Reprint, or Import, or Cause to be Printed, Reprinted, or Imported, any such Book or Books, without the Consent of the Proprietor, or the of the Proprietors thereof first had and obtained in Writing, signed in the Presence of Credible Witnesses; Or shall Sell, Publish

Publish, or Expose to Sale, or cause to be Sold, Published, or Exposed to Sale, any such Book or Books, without such Consent first had and obtained as aforesaid; then such Offender or Offenders shall

AND WHEREAS many Persons may through Ignorance offend against this Act, unless some Provision be made whereby the Property in every such Book, as is intended by this Act to be secured to the Proprietor or Proprietors thereof, may be Ascertain'd; as likewise the Consent of such Proprietor or Proprietors for the Printing or Reprinting of such Book or Books may from time to time be known;

BE it therefore further Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That nothing in this Act contained shall be Construed to Extend to subject any Bookseller, Printer, or other Person whatsoever, to the Forfeitures or Penalties therein mentioned, for or by Reason of the Printing or Reprinting of any Book or Books, without such Consent as aforesaid, unless the Title to the Copy of such Book or Books hereafter Published, shall, before such Publication, be entred in the Register-Book of the *Company of Stationers*, in such manner as hath been usual, (which Register-Book shall at all Times be kept at the Hall of the said Company:) And unless such Consent of the Proprietor or Proprietors be in like manner Entred, as aforesaid: For every of which several Entries shall be paid, and no more: Which said Register-Book may at all seasonable and convenient Times be resorted to and inspected by any Bookseller, Printer, or other Person, for the Purposes before-mentioned, without any Fee or Reward, any thing in this Act to the Contrary notwithstanding.

PROVIDED nevertheless, And it is hereby further Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That if any Bookseller or Booksellers, Printer or Printers, shall, after the said Day of set a Price upon, or Sell, or Expose to Sale any Book or Books at such a Price or Rate as shall be Conceived by any Person or Persons to be too high and unreasonable, it shall and may be lawful for any Person or Persons to make Complaint thereof to

who, or any of them shall, and have hereby full Power and Authority from time to time to send for, Summon or Call before him or them, such Bookseller or Booksellers, Printer or Printers, and to Examine and Enquire of the Reason of the Dearness and Enhancement of the Price or Value of such Book or Books by him or them so Sold or Exposed to Sale; and if upon such Enquiry and Examination it shall be found that the Price of such Book or Books is Enhanced, or any wise too high or unreasonable, Then and in such Case the said

or any or more, of them so Enquiring and Examining, have hereby full Power and Authority to Reform and Redress the same, and to Limit and Settle the Price of every such Printed Book and Books from time to time according to the best of their Judgments, and as to them shall seem

Just and Reasonable. And in Case of Alteration of the Rate or Price from what was Set or Demanded by such Bookseller or Booksellers, Printer or Printers, to Award and Order such Bookseller and Booksellers, Printer and Printers, to pay all the Costs and Charges that the Person or Persons so Complaining shall be put unto by Reason of such Complaint, and of the Causing such Rate or Price to be so Limited and Settled. All which shall be done by the said

or any of them, by Writing under their Hands and Seals, and thereof publick Notice shall be forthwith given by the said Bookseller or Booksellers, Printer or Printers, by an Advertisement in the Gazette: And if any Bookseller or Booksellers, Printer or Printers, shall, after such Settlement made of the said Rate or Price, Sell or Expose to Sale any Book or Books at a higher or greater Price than what shall have been so Limited and Settled as aforesaid, Then and in every such Case, such Bookseller and Booksellers, Printer and Printers shall

PROVIDED always, and it is hereby declared, That one Copy of each Book or Books upon the best Paper that from and after the said

Day of shall be Printed and Published as aforesaid, or Reprinted and Published with Additions, shall be Delivered to the Treasurer of the said Company of *Stationers* for the time being at the Hall of the said Company, before such Publication made, for the Use of the Universities of *Oxford* and *Cambridge*, and the Royal Library respectively.

PROVIDED, that nothing in this Act contained do Extend, or shall be Construed to Extend to Prohibit the Importation, Vending or Selling of any of the Classicks, either with or without Notes, or of any other Book or Books Printed Originally beyond the Seas; Any thing in this Act contained to the Contrary notwithstanding.

AND be it further Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That if any Action or Suit shall be Commenced or brought against any Person or Persons whatsoever, for doing or causing to be done any thing in Pursuance of this Act, the Defendants in such Action may Plead the General Issue, and give the Special Matter in Evidence: And if upon such Action a Verdict be given for the Defendant, or the Plaintiff become Nonsuited, or Discontinue his Action, then the Defendant shall have and recover for which he shall have the same Remedy as a Defendant in any Case by Law hath.