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To amend the Laws relating to Dramatic Literary Property.

[Note.—The Words printed in *Italics* are proposed to be inserted
in the Committee.]

WH^{EREAS} by an Act passed in the fifty-fourth year of Preamble
the reign of his late Majesty King GEORGE the Third,
intituled, “ An Act to amend the several Acts for the encouragement
of Learning by securing the Copies and Copyright of Printed
5 Books to the Authors of such Books, or their Assigns,” it was amongst
other things provided and enacted, That from and after the passing
of the said Act, the Author of any Book or Books composed, and
not printed or published, or which should thereafter be composed
and printed and published, and his Assignee or Assigns, should have
10 the sole liberty of printing and re-printing such Book or Books, for
the full term of Twenty-eight years, to commence from the day of
first publishing the same, and also if the Author should be living at
the end of that period, for the residue of his natural life :

And whereas it is expedient to extend the Provisions of the said
15 Act; **BE** it ~~therefore~~ **Enacted**, by The KING’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** from and after the
passing of this Act, the Author of any Tragedy, Comedy, Play,
Opera, Farce, or any other Dramatic Piece or Entertainment com-
posed and not printed and published by the Author thereof, or his
Assignee, or which hereafter shall be composed, and not printed or
published The Author of
any Dramatic
Piece, shall
have as his
Property, the
sole liberty of
representing
or causing it
to be repre-
sented, at any

place of
Dramatic
Entertain-
ment.

published by the Author thereof or his Assignee, or the Assignee of such Author, shall have as his own property the sole liberty of representing, or causing to be represented, at any place or places of Dramatic Entertainment whatsoever, in any part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in the Isles of Man, Jersey and Guernsey, or in any part of the British Dominions, any such Production as aforesaid, not printed and published by the Author thereof or his Assignee, and shall be deemed and taken to be the Proprietor thereof; and that the Author of any such Production, printed and published within *Seven years* before the passing of this Act, by the Author thereof or his Assignee, or which shall hereafter be so printed and published, or the Assignee of such Author, shall from the time of passing this Act, or from the time of such publication respectively until the end of *Twenty-eight years* from the day of such first publication of the same; and also, if the Author or Authors or the survivor of the Authors shall be living at the end of that period, during the residue of his natural life, have as his own property the sole liberty of representing, or causing to be represented, the same at any such place of Dramatic Entertainment as aforesaid, and shall be deemed and taken to be the Proprietor thereof: Provided nevertheless, That nothing in this Act contained shall prejudice, alter or affect the right or authority of any person to represent or cause to be represented, at any place or places of Dramatic Entertainment whatsoever, any such Production as aforesaid, in all cases in which the Author thereof or his Assignee, shall, previously to the passing of this Act, have given his consent to or authorized such Representation, but that such sole liberty of the Author or his Assignee shall be subject to such right or authority.

Penalty on
Persons per-
forming Pieces
contrary to
this Act.

And be it further Enacted, That if any person shall, during the continuance of such sole liberty as aforesaid, contrary to the intent of this Act or right of the Author or his Assignee, represent, or cause to be represented, without the consent in writing of the Author or other Proprietor first had and obtained, at any place of Dramatic Entertainment within the limits aforesaid, any such Production as aforesaid, or any part thereof, every such offender shall be liable for each and every such Representation to the payment of the sum of *Fifty Pounds*, as and by way of liquidated damages to the Author or other Proprietor of such Production so represented contrary to the true intent and meaning of this Act, to be recovered, together with *double* costs of suit, by such Author or other Proprietors in any Court having jurisdiction in such cases in that part of the said United Kingdom, or of the British Dominions in which the offence shall be committed: Provided nevertheless, That the Judge or other presiding Officer of the Court in which the trial of the offence aforesaid shall be held, shall be at liberty, if he shall think

think fit, by certificate under his hand, to reduce the amount of damages to be found by the jury on each such trial, to any sum not being less than *Ten Pounds* for each and every Representation, to be then and there proved to have taken place contrary to the intent and meaning of this Act; and in every such proceeding where the sole liberty of such Author or his Assignee as aforesaid, shall be subject to such right or authority as aforesaid, it shall be sufficient for the Plaintiff to state that he has such sole liberty, without stating the same to be subject to such right or authority, or otherwise mentioning the same.

Provided nevertheless, and be it further Enacted, That all Actions or Proceedings for any offence or injury that shall be committed against this Act, shall be brought, sued and commenced within *Twelve calendar months* next after such offence committed, or else the same shall be void and of no effect.

Limitation of Actions.

And be it further Enacted, That whenever Authors, Persons, Offenders or others are spoken of in this Act in the singular number or in the masculine gender, the same shall extend to any number of persons and to either sex.

Explanation of Words.

3 WILL. IV.—Sess. 1833.

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To amend the Laws relating to Dramatic
Literary Property.

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
13 March 1833.
