

[GOVERNMENT OF GREAT BRITAIN, 1760] [1]

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[Proclamation for encouraging virtue and punishing immorality]

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By the KING,

A PROCLAMATION,

For the Encouragement of *Piety and Virtue*, and for Preventing and Punishing of *Vice, Profaneness, and Immorality*.

GEORGE R.

WE most Seriously and Religiously considering, that it is an indispensable Duty on Us to be careful, above all other Things, to preserve and advance the Honour and Service of Almighty God, and to discourage and suppress all Vice, Profaneness, Debauchery, and Immorality, which are so highly displeasing to God, so great a Reproach to Our Religion and Government, and (by Means of the frequent ill Examples of the Practices thereof) have so fatal a Tendency to the Corruption of many of Our loving Subjects, otherwise Religiously and Virtuously disposed, and which (if not timely remedied) may justly draw down the Divine Vengeance on Us and Our Kingdoms:

We also humbly acknowledging, that We cannot expect the Blessing and Goodness of Almighty God, (by whom Kings reign, and on which We entirely rely) to make Our Reign happy and prosperous to Our Self and Our People, without a Religious Observance of God's Holy Laws:

To the Intent therefore that Religion, Piety and good Manners may (according to Our most hearty Desire) flourish and increase under Our Administration and Government, We have thought fit, by the Advice of Our Privy Council, to issue this Our Royal Proclamation, and do hereby declare Our Royal Purpose and Resolution to discountenance and punish all Manner of Vice, Profaneness, and Immorality, in all Persons of whatsoever Degree or Quality, within this Our Realm, and particularly in such as are employed near Our Royal Person;

and that, for the Encouragement of Religion and Morality, We will, upon all Occasions, distinguish Persons of Piety and Virtue, by Marks of Our Royal Favour.

And We do expect and require, that all Persons of Honour, or in Place of Authority, will give good Example by their own Virtue and Piety, and to their utmost contribute to the Discountenancing Persons of dissolute and debauched Lives, that they, being reduced by that Means to Shame and Contempt for their loose and evil Actions and Behaviour, may be thereby also enforced the sooner to reform their ill Habits and Practices, and that the visible Displeasure of Good Men towards them, may, (as far as it is possible) supply what the Laws (probably) cannot altogether prevent.

And We do hereby strictly enjoin and prohibit, all Our loving Subjects, of what Degree or Quality soever, from playing on the Lord's Day at Dice, Cards, or any other Game whatsoever, either in Public or Private Houses, or other Place or Places whatsoever;

and We do hereby require and command them, and every of them, decently and reverently to attend the Worship of God on every Lord's Day, on Pain of Our highest Displeasure, and of being proceeded against, with the utmost Rigour that may be by Law.

And for the more effectual reforming all such Persons, who, by reason of their dissolute Lives and Conversations, are a Scandal to Our Kingdom, Our further Pleasure is, and We do hereby strictly charge and command all Our Judges, Mayors, Sheriffs, Justices of the Peace, and all other Our Officers and Ministers, both Ecclesiastical and Civil, and all other Our Subjects, whom it may concern, to be very vigilant and strict in the Discovery, and the effectual Prosecution and Punishment of all Persons, who shall be guilty of excessive Drinking, Blasphemy, Profane Swearing

[1] *London Gazette*, no. 10048, 28 October to 1 November 1760, p 1.

and Curfing, Lewdnefs, Prophanation of the Lord's Day, or other diffolute, immoral, or diforderly Practices;

and that they take Care alfo effectually

to fupprefs all Public Gaming Houfes and Places, and other lewd and diforderly Houfes;

and to put in Execution

the Statute made in the Twenty-ninth Year of the Reign of the late King Charles the Second, intituled, "*An Act for the better Obfervation of the Lord's Day, commonly called Sunday*:"

And

alfo an Act of Parliament made in the Ninth Year of the Reign of the late King William the Third, intituled, "*An Act for the more effectual Suppreffing of Blafphemy and Prophanenefs*;"

and

all other Laws now in Force for the Punifhing and Suppreffing any of the Vices aforefaid;

and

alfo to fupprefs and prevent all Gaming whatsoever in Public or Private Houfes on the Lord's Day;

and likewise, that they take effectual Care to prevent all Perfons keeping Taverns, Chocolate-houfes, Coffee-houfes, or other Public Houfes whatsoever, from felling Wine, Chocolate, Coffee, Ale, Beer, or other Liquors, or receiving or permitting Guefts to be or remain in fuch their Houfes in the Time of Divine Service on the Lord's Day, as they will anfwer it to Almighty God, and upon Pain of Our higheft Difpleafure.

And for the more effectual Proceeding herein, We do hereby direct and command all Our Judges of Affize, and Juftices of the Peace, to give ftrict Charges at their refpective Affizes and Seffions, for the due Profecution and Punifhment

of all Perfons that fhall prefume to offend in any of the Kinds aforefaid; and

alfo of all Perfons that, contrary to their Duty, fhall be remifs or negligent in putting the faid Laws in Execution;

and that they do, at their refpective Affizes and Quarter Seffions of the Peace, caufe this Our Royal Proclamation to be publickly read in open Court immediately before the Charge is given.

And We do hereby further charge and command every Miniſter in his refpective Pariſh-Church or Chapel, to read, or caufe to be read, this Our Proclamation, at leaſt Four Times in every Year, immediately after Divine Service, and to incite and ftir up their refpective Auditors to the Practice of Piety and Virtue, and the Avoiding of all Immorality and Prophanenefs.

And to the End that all Vice and Debauchery may be prevented, and Religion and Virtue practiſed by all Officers, private Soldiers, Mariners, and others, who are employed in Our Service by Sea and Land, We do hereby ſtrictly charge and command all Our Commanders and Officers whatfoever, that they do take Care to avoid all Profanenefs, Debauchery, and other Immoralities, and that by their own good and virtuous Lives and Converſations, they do fet good Examples to all ſuch as are under their Care and Authority; and likewise take Care of and inſpect the Behaviour of all ſuch as are under them, and puniſh all thoſe who ſhall be guilty of any the Offences aforefaid, as they will be anfwerable for the ill Conſequences of their Neglect herein.

Given at Our Court at Leiceſter Houſe the Thirty-fiſt Day of October, 1760, and in the Firſt Year of Our Reign.

GOD Save the KING.
