

The London Gazette.

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From Saturday February 2. to Tuesday February 5. 1723.

By the King,

A PROCLAMATION, GEORGE R.

WHEREAS by an Act of Parliament made in the First Year of the Reign of our Royal Predecessor King Henry the Seventh, (Intituled, *An Act for shewing the Penalty for Hunting in the Night, or with Disguising*) reciting, That forasmuch as before that Time divers Ordinances and Statutes had been made in divers Parliaments for the Punishment of inordinate and unlawful Huntings in Forests, Parks, and Warrens, within this Realm: Notwithstanding which Statutes and Ordinances, divers Persons in great Numbers, some with painted Faces, some with Vifors, and otherwise disguised, to the Intent they should not be known, riotously, and in manner of War arrayed, had oftentimes then of late hunted as well by Night as by Day, in divers Forests, Parks, and Warrens, in divers Places of this Realm, by Colour whereof had ensued great and heinous Rebellions, Insurrections, Riots, Robberies, Murders, and other Inconveniencies; which Offences, in certain Cases in the said Act Specified, are thereby declared to be Felony; and that if any Person or Persons should thereafter be Convict of any such Huntings with painted Faces, Vifors, or otherwise disguised, to the Intent they should not be known, or of unlawful Hunting in time of Night, that then the same Person or Persons so Convict, should have like Punishment, as he or they should have, if he or they were Convict of Felony: And whereas we have received Information upon Oath, that, in Defiance of the Act before recited, and of several other Statutes and the Laws of this Realm, which provide se-

vere Punishment for such Offenders, great Numbers of disorderly and ill-designing Persons, having of late associated themselves under the Name of Blacks, and being armed with Swords, Fire-Arms, and other offensive Weapons, to the great Terror of our Subjects within the Counties of Berks and Southampton, and other Places, several of them in disguised Habits, with their Faces blacked, have entred into our Forests, broke into the Parks and inclosed Grounds of several of our good Subjects, and killed and carried away Deer, some belonging to ourselves, and several to our said Subjects; that some of the said Persons have rescued, by open Force, Offenders from the Constables, into whose Hands they have been committed by our Justices of the Peace, and have frequently sent menacing Letters to Gentlemen, Owners of Parks, and to their Keepers, demanding Venison and Money to be sent them to certain Places therein appointed; and threatening, in case of Failure of Performance of their illegal Demands, to murder the Persons to whom they sent such Letters, or to burn their Houses, Barns, and Hay-Stacks; and that some of them have actually assaulted several Persons with the utmost Violence; shot at them in their Houses, maimed their Horses and Cattle, broke down their Gates and Fences, and cut down Avenues, Plantations, and Heads of Fish-Ponds, and robbed them of the Fish: To the Intent therefore that a speedy and effectual Stop may be put to all such outrageous Practices, we have thought fit, by and with the Advice of our Privy-Council, to issue this our Royal Proclamation, hereby strictly charging and commanding all our Officers and Ministers whatsoever, and all other Persons whom it may concern, to take Care, that the Laws against such illegal Practices be put in Execution with the utmost Rigour: And we do hereby Charge and

[Price Three Half Pence.]