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A Proclamation agaynst the maintenaunce of Pirates.

Elizabeth I

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By the Queene.

A Proclamation agaynst the maintenaunce of Pirates.



THE Queenes Maiestie vnderstandeth, that although by her former commaundementes notified by proclamation to all her subiectes, and namely to her officers in her Portes, for the staying, ceassing, and suppressing of all occasions of piracies: yet some numbers of vessels armed with certayne disordered persons mixt of sundry nations, do still haunt the narowe seas, and resort secretly into small Creekes and obscure places of this Realme for reliefe of vitayles, and suche lyke: And for their better defence to escape apprehension, do colourably pretende that they be licenced to serue on the seas, and are not to be accompted culpable as pirates. For remedie whereof, and to the intent no maner of pretext shall serue eyther suche persons to commit piracies, or any other that shall relieue them for priuate gayne or fauour by fayned colours or pretence of ignoraunce: Her Maiestie straightly chargeth and commaundeth all maner officers and ministers, hauyng rule and charge within any Port towne, or hauyng auctoritie to make deputies vnder them in any Creeke or landing place whersoer the same be, that from hencefoorth no maner of person comming from the sea, be suffred to haue any vittayle, munition, or any other reliefe for hym selfe, his company, or vessell, except it be suche as are notoriously knowen to apparteyne to marchauntes shippes, passengers, or fishermen, hauyng neede thereof. Neyther that any person do bye or receaue any wares or goodes of any person directly or indirectly comming from the seas, vntyll the same wares or goodes be brought and landed openly

according to the lawes of the Realme in places accustomed, with consent of the officers of the customes, and that all dueties be first payde for the same, accordyng to the vsage of marchauntes, vppon payne that whosoouer shall do the contrarie, or be consentyng thereto, shalbe vppon due information committed to prison, there to remayne without bayle, vntyll inquisition be made (accordyng to the lawes of this Realme) of them and their factes, as in cases of piracies, and to be adiudged and executed as pirates, as by lawe shalbe ordered. And whosoouer shall geue information hereof agaynst any officer of the customes, or any their deputies, and shalbe able to proue the same, if any wise the Infourmer be meete to exercise the same office, they shall inioy the same, or otherwyse shalbe duely and liberally recompensed accordyng to their demerites.

Furthermore her Maiestie wylleth and commaundeth all maner her officers, and specially Wardens of Portes, Uiceadmiralles, Constables, or Capitaynes of Castles vpon the seas, and al other hauyng any office in Port townes or places of landyng, that they shall foorth with, as they wyll aunswere at their vttermost peryll, to do theyr vttermost in their iurisdictions to enquire, lay wayte, and thereby apprehende al maner of persons that do haunt the seas with any kynde of vessels armed, beyng not an apparaunt marchaunt, and vtterly to stay all others makyng preparation therto, and their vessels, other then such only as shalbe openly knowne to be ordinarie marchauntes, passengers, or vsuall fisshermen: And not from hencefoorth to alowe or admit any allegation of licence to sayle vpon the seas with any vessell armed, but suche as are notoriously belongyng to her Maiestie, and may be sent to the seas for keping the same free from pirates. And if any maner of person shall herein be founde culpable, or manifestly negligent: her Maiestie letteth them certaynely to vnderstande, that their punishment shalbe pursued agaynst them with such seueritie, as the example thereof shall hereafter remayne for others to beware howe in suche cases to offende.

Gyuen at Otelande the thyrde day of August, 1569, in the eleuenth yere of her Maiesties raigne.

God saue the Queene.

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