

# *Renascence Editions*

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## **An Ordinance for the suppression of all Stage-Playes and Interludes.**

**Parliament, 1647.**

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AN  
ORDINANCE  
OF THE  
LORDS and COMMONS  
Assembled in  
PARLIAMENT,  
  
FOR,  
The utter suppression and abolishing  
of all  
**Stage-Playes**  
AND  
INTERLUDES.  
With the Penalties to be inflicted upon

the Actors and Spectators, herein exprest.

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Die Veneris 11 *Februarii*. 1647.

**O**Rdered by the Lords Assmbled in Parliament, That this Ordinance for the suppression of Stage-Playes, shall be forthwith printed and published.

Joh. Brown Cler. Praliamentorum.

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Imprinted at *London* for *John Wright* at the Kings Head in the Old Bayley. 1647.

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Die Mercurii 9 *Februarii*, 1647.

A N  
O R D I N A N C E

FOR,  
Suppression of all Stage-Playes and  
Interludes.



[hereas] the Acts of Stage-Playes, Interludes, and common Playes, condemned by ancient Heathens, and much lesse to be tolerated amongst Professors of the Christian Religion, is the occasion of many and sundry great vices and disorders, tending to the high provocation of Gods wrath and displeasure, which lies heavy upon this Kingdome, and to the disturbance of the peace thereof; in regard whereof the same hath bene prohibited by Ordinance of this present Parliament, and yet is presumed to be practised by divers in contempt thereof. Therefore for the better suppression of the said Stage-Playes, Interludes, and common Players, It is Ordered and Ordained by the Lords and Commons in this present Parliament Assembled, and by Authority of the same, That all Stage-Players, and Players of Interludes, and common Playes, are hereby declared to be, and are, and shall be taken to be Rogues, and punishable within the Statutes of the thirty ninth yeare of the Reigne of Queene Elizabeth, and the seventh yeare of the Reigne of King James, and lyable unto the paines and penalties therein contained, and proceeded against according to the said Statutes, whether they be wanderers or no, and notwithstanding any license whatsoever from the King or any person or persons to that purpose.

And it is further Ordered and Ordained by the Authority aforesaid, That the Lord Mayor, Justices of the peace, and Sheriffs of the City of London and Westminster, and of the Counties of Middlesex and Surrey, or any two or more of them, shall, and may, and are hereby authorized and required to pull downe and demolish, or cause or procure to be pulled downe and demolished all Stage-Galleries, Seates, and Boxes, erected or used, or which shall be erected and used for the acting, or playing, or seeing acted or plaied,

such Stage-Playes, Interludes, and Playes aforesaid, within the said City of London and Liberties thereof, and other places within their respective jurisdictions; and all such common Players, and Actors of such Playes and Interludes, as upon view of them, or any one of them, or by Oath of two Witnesses (which they are hereby authorized to administer) shall be proved before them, or any two of them to have Acted, or played such Playes and Interludes as aforesaid at any time hereafter, or within the space of two Moneths before the time of the said Conviction, by their Warrant or Warrants under their hands and seales, to cause to be apprehended, and openly and publikely whipt in some Market Towne within their severall Jurisdictions during the time of the said Market, and also to cause such Offendor and Offendors to enter into Recognizance, or Recognizances, with two sufficient Sureties never to Act or play any Plaies or Interludes any more, and shall returne in the said Recognizance, or Recognizances, into the Sizes or Sessions to be then next holden for the said Counties and Cities respectively; and to commit to the common [Gaole] any such person and persons as aforesaid, as shall refuse to be bound, and finde such Sureties as aforesaid, untill he or they shall so become bound. And in case any such person or persons so Convicted of the said offence, shall after againe offend in the same kinde, that then the said person or persons so offending, shall be, and is hereby Declared to be, and be taken as an incorrigible Rogue, and shall be punisht and dealt with as an incorrigible Rogue ought to be by the said Statutes.

And it is hereby further Ordered and Ordained, That all and every summe and summes of Money gathered, Collected, and taken by any person or persons, of such persons as shall come to see, and be Spectators of the said Stage-Playes, and Interludes, shall be forfeited and paid unto the Church-wardens of the Church or Parish where the said summes shall be so Collected and taken, to be disposed of to the use of the poore of the said Parish, and shall from time to time be leaved by the said Church-wardens, and Constables of the said Parish, by Warrant, under the hands and seales of any two of the Justices of the Peace of the County, City, or Town Corporate where the said summe are so taken and Collected, upon complaint thereof to them made, on the Goods and Chattels of the person or persons Collecting the same, or of the person and persons to whom the same shall be paid by them that Collect the same, by Distresse, and sale of their Goods and Chattels, rendring to them the overplus, upon examination of the said persons, or prooffe made upon Oath before the said Justices of the summe or summes so Collected and received, which the said Justices are hereby authorized to take and examine.

And it is hereby further Ordered and Ordained, That every person or persons which shall be present, and a Spectator at any such Stage-play, or Interlude, hereby prohibited, shall for every time he shall be so present, forfeit and pay the summe of five shillings to the use of the poore of the Parish, where the said person or persons shall at that time dwell or sojourne, being convicted thereof by his owne confession, or prooffe of any one Witsesse upon Oath, before any one Justice of Peace of the County, City, or Towne-Corporate where the said offence is committed (who is hereby authorized to take the same Oath) to be leaved by the Church-wardens or Constables of the said Parish, by warrant of the said Justice of Peace, by distresse and sale of the Goods of the said person offending, rendring to him the overplus.

And it is hereby further Ordered and Ordained, That all Mayors, Bayliffes, Constables, and other Officers, Souldiers, and other persons being thereunto required, shall be from time to time, and all times hereafter, aiding and assisting unto the said Lord Mayor, Justices of the Peace, and Sheriffes, in the due execution of this Ordinance, upon paine to be fined for their contempt in their neglect or refusall thereof.

*Joh. Brown, Cler. Parliamentorum.*

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FINIS.

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