ANNO PRIMO

GEORGII IV. REGIS.

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C A P. XIII.

An Act for funding Exchequer Bills to a certain Amount, and for raising a Sum of Money by way of Annuities, for the Service of the Year One thousand eight hundred and twenty.

[22d *June* 1820.]

Most Gracious Sovereign,

WE, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal Subjects the Commons of the United Kingdom in Parliament assembled, being desirous of making Provision to satisfy the Principal Sums contained in certain Exchequer Bills, to the Amount of Seven Millions Sterling, and to raise the necessary Supplies which we have cheerfully granted to Your Majesty in this Session of Parliament, have resolved that the Persons who, on the Thirty-first Day of *May* One thousand eight hundred and twenty, caused their Names to be inscribed in a Book opened at the Bank of *England* for the Purpose of funding Exchequer Bills, should be entitled, in respect of the principal Sums contained therein, to such Capital Stock in Annuities as are herein-after mentioned, subject to the Provisions of this Act: We, Your Majesty's most faithful Commons, do therefore most humbly beseech Your Majesty that it may be enacted; and be it 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 the several Persons, their Executors, Administrators, and Assigns, who, on the Thirty-first Day of *May* One thousand eight

Persons subscribing to the funding

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of 7,000,000l. of Exchequer Bills, depositing 20 per cent. shall be entitled to 99l. of the 5 per Cents. for every 100l. so subscribed.

eight hundred and twenty, caused their Names to be inscribed in a Book opened at the Bank of *England* for the Purpose of funding Exchequer Bills, and who deposited Twenty Pounds *per Centum* on the Amount of Seven Millions of Exchequer Bills which they subscribed, shall, upon the Completion of the Amount subscribed by them respectively in Manner and at the Times required by this Act, be entitled, for every One hundred Pounds Principal Money contained in the Exchequer Bills so subscribed, to Ninety-nine Pounds Capital Stock in Annuities at the Rate of Five Pounds *per Centum per Annum*, to commence from the Fifth Day of *July* One thousand eight hundred and twenty, which said Annuities shall be paid and payable at the Bank of *England*, at the Times and in the Manner herein mentioned.

Future Instalments to be made in manner herein mentioned.

II. And be it further enacted, That the said several Subscribers shall deposit the future Instalments of Exchequer Bills with the Governor and Company of the Bank of *England*, on or before the Days or Times herein-after mentioned; that is to say, Twenty Pounds *per Centum* on or before the Twenty-eighth Day of *July* One thousand eight hundred and twenty, Twenty Pounds *per Centum* on or before the Twenty-eighth Day of *September* One thousand eight hundred and twenty, Twenty Pounds *per Centum* on or before the Twenty-fourth Day of *November* One thousand eight hundred and twenty, and Twenty Pounds *per Centum* on or before the Twenty-sixth Day of *January* One thousand eight hundred and twenty-one; and that no Exchequer Bills shall be deposited under this Act which have been advertized to be paid off, and the Interest thereof shall have previously ceased.

Guardians may subscribe for Infants.

III. And be it further enacted, That it shall and may be lawful for any Guardian or Trustee having the Disposition of any Exchequer Bills of any Infant, to subscribe for or towards advancing the said Sum of Seven Millions as aforesaid; and such Infant, upon the Deposit of the Amount subscribed by such Guardian or Trustee, shall become a Subscriber within the Meaning of this Act, and be entitled to have and receive the Annuities, Advantages, and Payments in respect thereof, in such and the like Manner as any other Subscriber; and the said Guardian and Trustee, as to the said Sum or Sums so subscribed, is hereby discharged, so as the Name of such Infant be expressed in the Receipt or Receipts for such Exchequer Bills.

Subscribers to be allowed Interest on the Exchequer Bills deposited.

IV. And be it further enacted, That every such Subscriber shall be entitled to receive, at the Office of the Paymasters of Exchequer Bills, Interest on the Amount of the Exchequer Bills deposited by them respectively at the Bank of *England* in pursuance of this Act, in Manner following; that is to say, upon the Amount of the Exchequer Bills deposited for the First Instalment, every such Subscriber shall be allowed Interest from the Day of the Date of such Bills so deposited up to the Thirty-first Day of *May* One thousand eight hundred and twenty; and for the Amount of such Exchequer Bills which shall be so deposited by any such Subscriber for the Second and every subsequent Instalment, according to the Directions of this Act, every such Subscriber shall be allowed Interest from the Day of the Date of such Bills

Bills so deposited up to the several Days upon which such Instalments respectively become due.

Subscribers may pay in Money instead of Exchequer Bills, on paying 20s. per Cent. on the Money paid.

V. Provided always, and be it enacted, That it shall and may be lawful for any Subscriber or Subscribers to the said Sum of Seven Millions as aforesaid, instead of depositing Exchequer Bills at the Bank of *England* in Manner aforesaid, to pay to the Cashier or Cashiers of the Governor and Company of the Bank of *England*, (who is and are hereby appointed Receiver or Receivers thereof without any other Warrant to be made in that Behalf), any Sum or Sums of Money in lieu of such Exchequer Bills, upon paying an Addition of Twenty Shillings *per Centum* upon the Amount which such Subscriber or Subscribers may so pay in Money; and that all and every such Subscriber so paying Money instead of Exchequer Bills, shall for every One hundred and one Pounds Principal Money so paid be respectively entitled to Ninety-nine Pounds Capital Stock in Annuities at the Rate of Five Pounds *per Centum*, to commence and be payable as aforesaid.

Interest to be paid where Payments are made in advance.

VI. And be it further enacted, That it shall and may be lawful for such Subscribers as aforesaid to deposit Exchequer Bills, or to pay the several Instalments of their Subscriptions in Money in advance; and in such case, whenever Exchequer Bills shall be so deposited, such Subscriber shall be entitled to, and shall receive at the Office of the Paymasters of Exchequer Bills, the Interest due on such Exchequer Bills from the Day of the Date thereof up to the Day when the several Instalments respectively would have become due if such Deposit had not been made in advance; and whenever any such Payment in advance shall be made in Money, such Subscribers shall be entitled, and shall receive or be allowed by the said Governor and Company of the Bank of *England*, Interest at the Rate of Two Pence *per Centum per Diem* upon such Money so paid in advance, from the Day when such Payment in advance shall be made, up to the Day when the Instalment in respect of which such Payment in advance shall be made would have become due, if such Payment had not been made in advance.

Subscribers, on depositing Exchequer Bills, or paying Money in lieu thereof, to be entitled to Annuities, payable half-yearly.

VII. And be it further enacted, That all and every Person and Persons, Bodies Politic and Corporate, who shall have deposited or shall deposit any such Exchequer Bill or Bills as aforesaid, or shall have paid or shall pay Money in lieu of such Exchequer Bills as aforesaid, shall for every Sum of One hundred Pounds contained in such Exchequer Bills, and for every Sum of One hundred and one Pounds so paid in Money, and so in proportion for any greater Sum, have and be entitled to the Capital Stock in Annuities herein-before mentioned; and the Annuities thereon shall be payable Half-yearly, at the Bank of *England*, on the Fifth Day of *January* and the Fifth Day of *July* in every Year, the First Payment to become due on the Fifth Day of *January* One thousand eight hundred and twenty-one; and that all Persons and Corporations entitled to any such Annuity or Annuities aforesaid, and his, her, and their Executors, Administrators, Successors, and Assigns respectively, and all Persons and Corporations lawfully claiming under him, her, or them, shall have good,

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sure, absolute and indefeasible Estates and Interests in the said Annuities, according to the true Tenor and Meaning of this Act, until the Redemption thereof in the Manner herein directed, and shall be possessed thereof as of a Personal Estate, which shall not be descendible to Heirs, nor liable to any Foreign Attachment by the Custom of *London*, or otherwise; any Law, Custom, or Usage to the contrary notwithstanding.

As soon as Subscriptions are completed they may be transferred.

VIII. And be it further enacted, That as soon as any Subscribers, their Executors, Administrators, Successors or Assigns, shall have deposited at the Bank of *England* Exchequer Bills, or shall have paid Money in lieu thereof to the full Amount of the Sums subscribed by them respectively, the principal Sum or Annuity, to which such Subscriber is entitled under the Provisions of this Act, shall forthwith be in the Books of the Bank of *England* placed to the Credit of such respective Subscribers, their Executors, Administrators, Successors and Assigns, completing such Deposits or Payments; and the Persons to whose Credit such principal Sums shall be so placed, their respective Executors, Administrators, Successors and Assigns, shall and may have Power to assign and transfer the same, or any Part, Share or Proportion thereof, to any other Person or Persons, Body or Bodies Politic or Corporate whatsoever, in the Books of the Bank of *England*; and the said Governor and Company of the Bank of *England* are hereby required, as soon as conveniently may be after the passing of this Act, to prepare proper Books for the Purpose of entering the Names of all such Subscribers, and of placing to their Credit the Principal Sums so paid by them respectively; and that such of the said Subscribers, their Executors, Administrators, Successors or Assigns, who shall complete the Deposits or Payments of such Parts of the whole Amount payable by them respectively towards the said Sum of Seven Millions, at any Time before the Governor and Company of the Bank of *England* shall have prepared their Receipts according to the Directions of this Act, shall be entitled to have the Amounts so deposited or paid, forthwith placed to their Credit in the Books of the Bank of *England*; and the said Governor and Company are hereby required to cause such Sums to be forthwith placed to the Credit of the Persons entitled to the Annuities in respect thereof in the Books of the said Bank of *England*, and such Entries in the said Books shall be in lieu of the Receipts hereby directed to be given for all Sums deposited or paid in Manner aforesaid, and such Sums shall carry the Annuities after the Rate of Five Pounds *per Centum* redeemable by Parliament, and shall respectively be taken and deemed to be Stock transferrable according to the true Intent and Meaning of this Act, until Redemption thereof in such Manner as is herein-after mentioned.

Subscribers depositing the Whole of their Subscription by the Times herein specified, to be en-

IX. Provided always, and be it further enacted, That all and every such Subscriber or Subscribers, his, her, or their Executors, Administrators, Successors and Assigns, who shall have deposited with or paid to the Governor and Company of the Bank of *England* the whole of his, her, or their Subscription, on or before the Second Day of *January* One thousand eight hundred and twenty-one, shall be entitled to have and receive on the Fifth Day of *January* One

One thousand eight hundred and twenty-one, at the Bank of *England*, the Half Year's Annuity that shall become due on the Fifth Day of *January* One thousand eight hundred and twenty-one; and that all and every Person or Persons who shall not have completed the whole of their said Payments on or before the said Second Day of *January* One thousand eight hundred and twenty-one, shall, on completing the same within the Time in this Act prescribed, be entitled to receive, on the Fifth Day of *July* One thousand eight hundred and twenty-one, the Year's Annuity on the said Annuities from the Fifth Day of *July* One thousand eight hundred and twenty, according to the true Intent and Meaning of this Act.

titled to Annuities from certain Periods.

X. And be it further enacted, That the Annuities aforesaid shall be payable and paid, and be transferrable, at the Bank of *England*, and shall be subject to such Redemption as is herein-after mentioned.

Annuities payable and transferrable at the Bank.

XI. And be it further enacted, That so much Money shall from Time to Time be set apart and issued at the Receipt of the Exchequer in *England*, out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, to the said Cashier or Cashiers of the Governor and Company of the Bank of *England*, as shall be sufficient to satisfy and pay the respective Annuities to be created in respect of the said Sum of Seven Millions, together with the Charges attending the same.

Money to be issued out of the Consolidated Fund for Payment of Annuities.

XII. And be it further enacted, That all the said Annuities, Interest, and Dividends, which shall become payable in respect of the said Sum of Seven Millions, shall be charged and chargeable upon, and are hereby charged upon and made payable out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*.

Annuities to be charged on Consolidated Fund.

XIII. And for the more easy and sure Payment of the Annuities established by this Act, be it further enacted, That the said Governor and Company of the Bank of *England*, and their Successors, shall from Time to Time, until all the said Annuities shall be redeemed or shall cease, appoint and employ one or more sufficient Person or Persons within their Office in the City of *London*, to be their Chief or First Cashier or Cashiers, and one other sufficient Person within the same Office to be their Accountant General; and that so much of the Monies by this Act appropriated for the Purpose, as shall be sufficient from Time to Time to answer the said Annuities and other Payments herein directed to be made out of the said Consolidated Fund, in respect of the said Sum of Seven Millions, shall by Order of the Commissioners of the Treasury of the United Kingdom of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, or any Three or more of them, or the Lord High Treasurer of the United Kingdom of *Great Britain* and *Ireland* for the Time being, without any further Warrant to be sued for, had, or obtained in that Behalf, from Time to Time, at the respective Days of Payment in this Act appointed for Payment thereof, be issued and paid at the Receipt of the Exchequer of *Great Britain*, to the said First or Chief Cashier or Cashiers of the said Governor and Company of the Bank of *England* and their Successors for the Time being, by way of Imprest

The Bank to appoint a Cashier and an Accountant General; and the Treasury to order Money to be issued to the Cashier for Payment of Annuities.

prest and upon Account, for the Payment of the Annuities in respect of the said Sum of Seven Millions payable by virtue of this Act; and that such Cashier or Cashiers, to whom the said Money shall from Time to Time be issued, shall from Time to Time, without Delay, pay the same accordingly, and render his or their Accounts thereof, according to the due Course of the Exchequer in *Great Britain*; and that the said Accountant General for the Time being shall from Time to Time inspect and examine all Receipts and Payments of the said Cashier or Cashiers, and the Vouchers relating thereto, in order to prevent any Fraud, Negligence, or Delay.

Cashier to give Receipt for Subscriptions, which may be assigned before Nov. 24. 1820.

XIV. And be it further enacted, That the Cashier or Cashiers of the Governor and Company of the Bank of *England*, who shall have received or shall receive any Part of the said Subscriptions towards the said Sum of Seven Millions, shall give a Receipt or Receipts in Writing to every such Subscriber for the Principal Money comprized in the Exchequer Bills deposited by them respectively, or for the Sum or Sums of Money paid in lieu thereof; and that the Receipts so to be given shall be assignable at any Time before the Twenty-fourth Day of *November* One thousand eight hundred and twenty, and no longer: Provided always, that such Cashier or Cashiers shall give Security to the good Liking of any Three or more of the said Commissioners of the Treasury, or the said Lord High Treasurer for the Time being, for duly answering and delivering over to the Paymaster of Exchequer Bills, or for paying into the Receipt of His Majesty's Exchequer in *Great Britain* as after mentioned, for the Public Use, all the Exchequer Bills and Monies which they have already received and shall hereafter receive from Time to Time, of and for the whole of the said Sum of Seven Millions, and for accounting duly for the same, and for Performance of the Trust hereby in him or them reposed, and shall from Time to Time deliver to the Paymaster of Exchequer Bills, all the Exchequer Bills which shall be so deposited, and pay into the Receipt of the Exchequer all the Monies which shall be so received, as soon as he or they shall receive the same, or any Part thereof, or within Five Days afterwards at the farthest, and shall account for the same in the said Exchequer according to the due Course thereof, deducting thereout such Sums as shall have been paid by him or them in pursuance of this Act, for which Sums so paid Allowance shall be made in his or their Accounts.

Cashier to give Security for paying the Money he receives into the Exchequer.

Exchequer Bills deposited to be delivered to the Paymaster to be cancelled.

XV. And be it further enacted, That all the Exchequer Bills so deposited or to be deposited, according to the Directions of this Act, with the Governor and Company of the Bank of *England*, shall be from Time to Time transmitted by the said Governor and Company, and delivered over to the Paymasters of Exchequer Bills to be cancelled; and the Receipt for such Exchequer Bills, signed by any Two of the said Paymasters, shall be a sufficient Acquittance to the said Cashier or Cashiers, in accounting for the Exchequer Bills and Monies to be received by them in pursuance of this Act; and the said Paymasters of Exchequer Bills are hereby authorized and required, upon Receipt of any such Bill, to mark and cancel the same, and to pay the Interest thereupon according to the Provisions of this Act.

Books to be kept at the Bank, in which Subscribers Names shall be entered.

XVI. And be it further enacted, That in the Office of the Accountant General of the Governor and Company of the Bank of *England* for the Time being, a Book or Books shall be provided and kept, in which the Names of the Subscribers shall be fairly entered; which Book or Books the said respective Subscribers, their respective Executors, Administrators, Successors, and Assigns, shall and may from Time to Time, and at all seasonable Times, resort to and inspect without any Fee or Charge; and that the said Accountant General shall, on or before the Fifth Day of *July* One thousand eight hundred and twenty-one, transmit an attested Duplicate, fairly written on Paper, of the said Book or Books into the Office of the Auditor of the Receipt of His Majesty's Exchequer of *Great Britain*, there to remain for ever.

A Duplicate to be delivered to the Auditor of the Exchequer.

Subscribers duly paying their Subscriptions entitled to Annuities Tax free.

XVII. And be it further enacted, That such Subscribers duly depositing or paying in the whole Sum so subscribed at or before the respective Times in this Act limited in that Behalf, and their respective Executors, Administrators, Successors, and Assigns, shall have, receive, and enjoy, and be entitled by virtue of this Act to have, receive, and enjoy the said Annuities by this Act granted in respect of the Sum so subscribed, and shall have good and sure Interests and Estates therein, according to the several Provisions in this Act contained; and that the said Annuities shall be free from all Taxes, Charges, and Impositions whatsoever: Provided always, that in case any such Subscribers who have already deposited with, or shall hereafter deposit or pay to the said Cashier or Cashiers, any Exchequer Bills, or any Sum or Sums of Money in lieu thereof, at the Time and in the Manner herein-before mentioned, in Part of the Sum or Sums so by them respectively subscribed, or their respective Executors, Administrators, Successors, or Assigns, shall not advance and deposit or pay to the said Cashier or Cashiers the Residue of the Sum or Sums so subscribed at the Times and in the Manner before mentioned, then and in every such Case so much of the respective Sum or Sums so subscribed as shall have been actually deposited or paid in Part thereof to the said Cashier or Cashiers, shall be forfeited for the Benefit of the Public; and all Right and Title to the said Annuities after the Rate of Five Pounds *per Centum* in respect thereof, shall be extinguished; any thing in this Act contained to the contrary thereof in anywise notwithstanding.

Subscriptions paid in part and not completed forfeited.

Treasury may apply the Money paid into the Exchequer.

XVIII. And be it further enacted, That it shall be lawful for any Three or more of the said Commissioners of the Treasury, or the said Lord High Treasurer for the Time being, to issue and apply from Time to Time all such Sums of Money as shall be so paid into the Receipt of His Majesty's Exchequer of *Great Britain* by the said Cashier or Cashiers in respect of the said Sum of Seven Millions, to such Services as shall then have been voted by the Commons of the United Kingdom of *Great Britain* and *Ireland* in this present Session of Parliament.

Accountant General to keep Books for entering Transfers.

XIX. And be it further enacted, That Books shall be constantly kept by the said Accountant General for the Time being, wherein all Assignments or Transfers of all Sums advanced or contributed towards the said Sum of Seven Millions shall be entered and registered, which Entry

Entry shall be conceived in proper Words for that Purpose, and shall be signed by the Parties making such Assignments or Transfers; or if such Parties be absent, by their respective Attorney or Attornies thereunto lawfully authorized in Writing, under his or their Hand and Seal or Hands and Seals, to be attested by Two or more credible Witnesses; and that the several Persons to whom such Transfers shall be made, may respectively underwrite their Acceptance thereof; and that no other Method of assigning and transferring the said Annuities, or any Part thereof, or any Interest therein, shall be good or available in Law:

Stock may be devised.

Provided always, that all Persons possessed of any Share or Interest in the said Annuities, or any Estate or Interest therein, may devise the same by Will, in Writing, attested by Two or more credible Witnesses; but that no Payment shall be made upon any such Devise until so much of the said Will as relates to such Share, Estate, or Interest in the said Annuities be entered in the said Office; and that in Default of such Transfer or Devise, such Share, Estate, or Interest in the said Annuities shall go to the Executors, Administrators, Successors, and Assigns; and that no Stamp Duties whatsoever shall be charged on any of the said Transfers, any Law or Statute to the contrary notwithstanding.

Transfers not liable to Stamp Duty.

Incidents to be discharged.

XX. Provided always, and be it further enacted, That out of the Monies arising from the Contributions towards raising the said Sum of Seven Millions by Annuities, any Three or more of the said Commissioners of the Treasury, or the said Lord High Treasurer for the Time being, shall have Power to discharge all such incident Charges as shall necessarily attend the Execution of this Act, in such Manner as to them shall seem just and reasonable.

Allowance for the Expence of Management.

XXI. Provided also, and be it further enacted, That it shall be lawful to and for the Governor and Company of the Bank of *England* to retain out of the said Contributions at the Rate of Four hundred Pounds for every Million thereof, as an Allowance for the Service, Pains, and Labour of the said Cashier or Cashiers employed in receiving, paying, and accounting for the same; and also for the Service, Pains, and Labour of the said Accountant General for performing the Trusts reposed in him by this Act; which Allowance in respect of the Service, Pains, and Labour of the said Cashier or Cashiers and Accountant General of the said Governor and Company, shall be for the Use of the said Governor and Company, and at their Disposal only.

Annuities under this Act shall be added to the Joint Stock of 5 per Cents.

XXII. And be it further enacted, That all the Exchequer Bills or Monies converted into Annuities after the Rate of Five Pounds *per Centum per Annum*, by virtue of this Act, or intended so to be, shall be deemed, reputed, and taken to be One Capital or Joint Stock, and shall be added to and made Part of the Joint Stock of Annuities with, and shall be redeemable at the same Time and in like Manner as the Annuities carrying an Interest after the Rate of Five Pounds *per Centum per Annum*, established by the Acts of the Twenty-fourth, Twenty-fifth, Thirty-fourth, Thirty-fifth, Thirty-sixth, Thirty-seventh, Forty-eighth, Forty-ninth, Fiftieth, Fifty-first, Fifty-second, and Fifty-fifth Years of the Reign of His late Majesty King *George* the

Third, for granting Annuities to satisfy certain Navy, Victualling, and Transport Bills, Ordnance Debentures, and Exchequer Bills; and that all and every Person or Persons and Corporations whatsoever, in proportion to the Money to which he, she, or they shall become entitled as aforesaid by virtue of this Act, shall have or be deemed to have a proportional Interest and Share in the said Stock of Annuities, at the Rate aforesaid.

Persons counterfeiting Receipts, &c., guilty of Felony.

XXIII. And be it further enacted, That if any Person or Persons shall forge or counterfeit, or cause or procure to be forged or counterfeited, or shall willingly act or assist in the forging or counterfeiting any Receipt or Receipts for the whole of or any Part or Parts of the said Subscription towards the said Sum of Seven Millions, either with or without the Name or Names of any Person or Persons being inserted therein, as the Subscriber or Subscribers thereto, or Payer or Payers thereof, or of any Part or Parts thereof, or shall alter any Number, Figure or Word therein, or utter or publish as true any such false, forged, counterfeited, or altered Receipt or Receipts, with Intent to defraud the Governor and Company of the Bank of *England*, or any Body Politic or Corporate, or any Person or Persons whatsoever; every such Person or Persons so forging or counterfeiting, or causing or procuring to be forged or counterfeited, or willingly acting or assisting in the forging or counterfeiting, or altering, uttering or publishing as aforesaid, being thereof convicted in due Form of Law, shall be adjudged guilty of Felony, and shall suffer death as a Felon, without Benefit of Clergy.

Bank to continue a Corporation till the Annuities hereby granted cease.

XXIV. Provided always, and be it further enacted, That the said Governor and Company of the Bank of *England*, and their Successors, notwithstanding the Redemption of all or any of their own Funds in pursuance of the Acts for establishing the same or any of them, shall continue a Corporation for the Purposes of this Act, until the Annuities by this Act granted shall be redeemed by Parliament as aforesaid; and that the said Governor and Company of the Bank of *England*, or any Member thereof, shall not incur any Disability, for or by reason of their doing any Matter or Thing in pursuance of this Act.

No Fee to be taken for receiving Subscriptions, or paying or transferring Annuities, on Penalty of 20*l*.

XXV. And be it further enacted, That no Fee, Reward or Gratuity whatsoever shall be demanded or taken of any of His Majesty's Subjects, for receiving or paying the said Subscription in Exchequer Bills or Money, or any of them, or for any Receipt concerning the same, or for paying the said Annuities or any of them, or for any Transfer of any Sum, great or small, to be made in pursuance of this Act, upon Pain that any Officer or Person offending by taking or demanding any such Fee, Reward, or Gratuity shall for every such Offence forfeit the Sum of Twenty Pounds to the Party aggrieved, with full Costs of Suit, to be recovered by Action of Debt, Bill, Plaint or Information in any of His Majesty's Courts of Record at *Westminster*, wherein no Essoign, Protection, Privilege, or Wager of Law, Injunction or Order of Restraint, or any more than one Imparlance shall be granted or allowed.

Persons sued, may plead the General Issue.

XXVI. And be it further enacted, That if any Person or Persons shall be sued, molested, or prosecuted for any Thing done by virtue or in pursuance of this Act, such Person or Persons shall and may plead the General Issue, and give this Act and the special Matter in Evidence in his, her, or their Defence or Defences; and if afterwards a Verdict shall pass for the Defendant or Defendants, or the Plaintiff or Plaintiffs shall discontinue his, her, or their Action or Prosecution, or be nonsuited, or Judgment shall be given against him, her, or them upon Demurrer or otherwise, then such Defendant or Defendants shall have Treble Costs awarded to him, her, or them against any such Plaintiff or Plaintiffs.

Treble Costs.

Act may be altered this Session.

XXVII. And be it further enacted, That this Act may be altered, amended, or repealed by any Act or Acts to be passed in this present Session of Parliament.

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