ANNO PRIMO

# GEORGII IV. REGIS.

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## C A P. XVII.

## An Act for raising the Sum of Five Millions by way of Annuities. [22d *June* 1820.]

Most Gracious Sovereign,

WE, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal Subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, in Parliament assembled, being desirous to raise the necessary Supplies which we have cheerfully granted to Your Majesty in this Session of Parliament, have resolved, that the Sum of Five Millions be raised by Annuities in Manner hereinafter mentioned; and 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 every Contributor towards raising the said Sum of Five Millions shall, for every One hundred Pounds contributed and paid, be entitled to the Principal Sum of One hundred Pounds in Reduced Annuities, after the Rate of Three Pounds *per Centum*, to commence from the Fifth Day of *April* One thousand eight hundred and twenty, and shall likewise be entitled to a further Principal Sum of Forty-two Pounds Four Shillings in Consolidated Annuities, after the Rate of Three Pounds *per Centum*, to commence from the Fifth Day of *July* One thousand eight hundred and twenty.

Contributors entitled to 100l. Reduced Annuities, and 42l. 4s. in the Three per Cent. Consols.

Y

II. And

Contributors who have made Deposits to pay the Remainder of Subscriptions by Instalments.

II. And whereas pursuant to and upon the Terms and Conditions expressed in the said Resolution, several Persons have, in Books opened at the Bank of *England* for that Purpose, subscribed together the Whole of the said Sum of Five Millions to be raised by Annuities, and made Deposits of Ten Pounds *per Centum* on the respective Sums by them so subscribed to the said Sum of Five Millions to be raised by Annuities with the Cashiers of the Governor and Company of the Bank of *England*; be it therefore enacted, That it shall and may be lawful to and for such Contributors who have made such Deposits with the Cashier or Cashiers of the Governor and Company of the Bank of *England* (which Cashier or Cashiers is and are hereby appointed the Receiver and Receivers of such Contributions, without any other Warrant to be had in that Behalf) to advance and pay unto the said Cashier or Cashiers of the Governor and Company of the Bank of *England* the several Remainders of the Sums by them respectively subscribed towards the said Sum of Five Millions, at or before the respective Days and Times and in the Proportions herein-after limited and appointed in that Behalf, (that is to say), the further Sum of Ten Pounds *per Centum* on or before the Fourteenth Day of *July* One thousand eight hundred and twenty; the further Sum of Ten Pounds *per Centum* on or before the Eighteenth Day of *August* then next following; the further Sum of Ten Pounds *per Centum* on or before the Fifteenth Day of *September* then next following; the further Sum of Ten Pounds *per Centum* on or before the Twentieth Day of *October* then next following; the further Sum of Ten Pounds *per Centum* on or before the Seventeenth Day of *November* then next following; the further Sum of Ten Pounds *per Centum* on or before the Fifteenth Day of *December* then next following; the further Sum of Ten Pounds *per Centum* on or before the Sixteenth Day of *January* One thousand eight hundred and twenty-one; the further Sum of Ten Pounds *per Centum* on or before the Sixteenth Day of *February* then next following; and the remaining Sum of Ten Pounds *per Centum* on or before the Sixteenth Day of *March* then next following.

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 the Money of any Infant, to contribute and pay for or towards advancing the said Sum of Five Millions to be raised by Annuities in manner aforesaid, and such Infant upon the Payment of such Sum or Sums subscribed by such Guardian or Trustee shall become a Contributor 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 Contributor; and the said Guardian and Trustee, as to the said Sum or Sums so advanced, is hereby discharged, so as the Name of such Infant be expressed in the Receipt or Receipts for such Money.

Discount to be allowed on Payment of the whole Subscription by Feb. 15, 1821.

IV. And be it further enacted, That every Contributor paying in the Whole of the Sums by them respectively subscribed in respect of the said Sum of Five Millions, to be contributed as aforesaid, at any Time on or before the Fifteenth Day of *February* One thousand eight hundred and twenty-one, shall be entitled to an Allowance of so much Money as the Interest of each Sum so paid in advance for com-

completing his, her, or their Contribution respectively shall amount unto, after the Rate of Three Pounds *per Centum per Annum*, from the Day of completing the same, to the Sixteenth Day of *March* One thousand eight hundred and twenty-one; which Allowance is to be paid by the said Cashier or Cashiers out of the Money to be contributed in pursuance of this Act, as soon as such respective Contributors, their Executors, Administrators, Successors, and Assigns, shall have completed such Payment.

Contributors entitled to certain Annuities payable Half-yearly, but not till their Subscriptions are completed.

V. And be it further enacted, That the several Subscribers or Contributors, their Executors, Administrators, Successors, and Assigns, in respect of the said Sum of Five Millions, shall be entitled for every One hundred Pounds by him, her, or them respectively advanced and paid, to an Annuity after the Rate of Three Pounds *per Centum* in respect of the Principal Sum of One hundred Pounds from the Fifth Day of *April* One thousand eight hundred and twenty, until Redemption by Parliament in Manner herein-after mentioned; and shall likewise be entitled to a further Annuity after the Rate of Three Pounds *per Centum* in respect of the additional Principal Sum of Forty-two Pounds Four Shillings from the Fifth Day of *July* One thousand eight hundred and twenty, until Redemption by Parliament in manner herein-after mentioned; which said respective Annuities shall be payable and paid Half-yearly by even and equal Portions; (that is to say), the said Reduced Annuities after the Rate of Three Pounds *per Centum*, on the Tenth Day of *October* and the Fifth Day of *April* in every Year; and the said Consolidated Annuities after the Rate of Three Pounds *per Centum*, on the Fifth Day of *January* and the Fifth Day of *July* in every Year; the First Payment upon the said Reduced Annuities after the Rate of Three Pounds *per Centum*, to be due on the Tenth Day of *October* One thousand eight hundred and twenty, and on the said Consolidated Annuities after the Rate of Three Pounds *per Centum*, on the Fifth Day of *January* One thousand eight hundred and twenty-one, but shall not be payable until the respective Subscribers or Contributors, their Executors, Administrators, Successors, or Assigns, shall have completed the Whole of the Sums by them subscribed for the Purchase of either of the said Annuities.

As soon as Subscriptions are completed they may be transferred.

VI. And be it further enacted, That as soon as any Contributors, their Executors, Administrators, Successors, or Assigns, shall have completed their Payments of such Part of the whole Sum payable by them respectively towards the said Sum of Five Millions as shall be payable in respect of the said Reduced Annuities after the Rate of Three Pounds *per Centum*, or of the said Consolidated Annuities after the Rate of Three Pounds *per Centum*, or of any or either of them, the respective Principal Sums or Annuities shall forthwith be in the Books of the Bank of *England* placed to the Credit of such respective Contributors, their Executors, Administrators, Successors, and Assigns, completing such 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

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 Contributors, and of placing to their Credit the Principal Sums so paid by them respectively; and that such of the said Contributors, their Executors, Administrators, Successors, or Assigns, who shall complete the Payments of such Parts of the whole Sum payable by them respectively towards the said Sum of Five Millions as shall be payable in respect of any or either of the said respective Annuities 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 Sums so 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 paid in Manner aforesaid; and such Sums shall carry the respective Annuities after the Rate of Three Pounds *per Centum*, and Three Pounds *per Centum* respectively, 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.

Contributors paying the whole of their Subscriptions by the Times herein specified, to be entitled to Annuities from certain Periods.

VII. Provided always, and be it further enacted, That all and every such Contributor or Contributors, his, her, or their Executors, Administrators, Successors, and Assigns, who shall have paid into the Hands of the said Cashier or Cashiers the whole of his, her, or their Contribution Money on or before the Seventh Day of *October* One thousand eight hundred and twenty, shall be entitled to have and receive on the Tenth Day of *October* One thousand eight hundred and twenty, at the Bank of *England*, the Half-Year's Annuity that shall become due on the Tenth Day of *October* One thousand eight hundred and twenty, and that all and every such Contributor or Contributors who shall have paid into the Hands of the said Cashier or Cashiers the Whole of his, her, or their Contribution Money 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 thousand eight hundred and twenty-one, 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 Seventh Day of *October* One thousand eight hundred and twenty, or 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 the Year's Annuity on the said several Annuities, from the Fifth Day of *April* One thousand eight hundred and twenty, and the Fifth Day of *July* One thousand eight hundred and twenty, according to the true Intent and Meaning of this Act.



VIII. And

VIII. And be it further enacted, That all 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.

IX. 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 Five Millions, together with the Charges attending the same. Money to be issued out of the Consolidated Fund for Payment of Annuities and Charges, in respect of 5,000,000*l*.

X. And be it further enacted, That all the said Annuities, Interest, and Dividends, which shall become payable in respect of the said Sum of Five 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*. and shall be charged upon the said Fund.

XI. And, for the more easy and sure Payment of all 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 Monies in respect of the said Sum of Five 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 and upon Account for the Payment of the Annuities in respect of the said Sum of Five 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. 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.

Cashier to give Receipt for Subscriptions, which may be assigned before February 16, 1821.

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

XII. 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 Contributions towards the said Sum of Five Millions, shall give a Receipt or Receipts in Writing to every such Contributor for all such Sums; and that the Receipts so to be given shall be assignable at any Time before the Sixteenth Day of *February* One thousand eight hundred and twenty-one, 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 paying into the Receipt of His Majesty's Exchequer in *Great Britain* as after mentioned, for the Public Use, all the Monies which they have already received, and shall hereafter receive from Time to Time, of and for the whole of the said Sum of Five 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 pay all such Monies as soon as he or they shall receive the same, or any Part thereof, or within Five Days afterwards at the farthest, into, and shall account for the same in the Exchequer of *Great Britain*, 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.

A Book to be kept in the Accountant General's Office for entering Contributors Names. a Duplicate whereof to be transmitted to the Auditor of the Exchequer.

XIII. 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 Contributors shall be fairly entered; which Book or Books the said respective Contributors, 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.

Contributors duly paying their Subscriptions entitled to Annuities Tax free.

XIV. And be it further enacted, That such Contributors duly 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 out of the Monies granted and appropriated in this Session of Parliament for Payment thereof, 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.

Subscriptions paid in Part, and not completed, forfeited.

XV. Provided always, That in case any such Contributors who have already deposited with or shall hereafter pay to the said Cashier or Cashiers any Sum or Sums of Money at the Time and in the Manner

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 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 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 Three Pounds *per Centum* and of Three Pounds *per Centum* respectively, in respect thereof, shall be extinguished; any thing in this Act contained to the contrary thereof in anywise notwithstanding.

Annuities to be deemed Personal Estate.

XVI. And be it further enacted, That all Persons who shall be entitled to any of the Annuities hereby granted in respect of the said Sum of Five Millions, and all Persons lawfully claiming under them, 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, Statute, or Custom to the contrary notwithstanding.

Treasury may apply the Money paid into the Exchequer.

XVII. 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 Five 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.

XVIII. 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 Five Millions shall be entered and registered; which 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: 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;

Stock may be devised.

Transfers not liable to Stamp Duties.

and that no Stamp Duties whatsoever shall be charged on any of the said Transfers; any Law or Statute to the contrary notwithstanding.

Treasury to defray Incidents.

XIX. Provided always, and be it further enacted, That out of the Monies arising from the Contributions towards raising the said Sum of Five 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.

XX. 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 Eight 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 Trust 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.

Monies on which the 3 per Cents. Reduced Annuities shall be attending shall be added to the Joint Stock of 3 per Cents. Reduced.

XXI. And be it further enacted, That all the Monies to which any Person or Persons shall become entitled by virtue of this Act, in respect of any Sum advanced or contributed towards the said Sum of Five Millions, on which the said Reduced Annuities after the Rate of Three Pounds *per Centum per Annum* shall be attending, shall be added to the Joint Stock of Annuities transferrable at the Bank of *England*, which, by an Act made in the Twenty-third Year of the Reign of His late Majesty King *George* the Second, were reduced from Four Pounds *per Centum per Annum* to Three Pounds *per Centum per Annum*, and shall be deemed Part of the said Joint Stock of Annuities; subject nevertheless to Redemption by Parliament in such Manner and upon such Notice as in the several Acts by which the said Annuities after the Rate of Four Pounds *per Centum per Annum* were respectively granted, are directed in respect of the Annuities redeemable by virtue thereof; and that all and every Person and 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 and be deemed to have a proportional Interest and Share in the said Joint Stock of Annuities at the Rate aforesaid.

Three per Cent. Consols. to be added to the Stock of Three per Cent. Consols.

XXII. And be it further enacted, That all the Monies to which any Person or Persons shall become entitled by virtue of this Act, in respect of any Sum advanced or contributed towards the said Sum of Five Millions, on which the said Consolidated Annuities after the Rate of Three Pounds *per Centum per Annum* shall be attending, shall be added to the Joint Stock of Annuities, transferrable at the Bank of *England*, into which the several Sums carrying an Interest after the Rate of Three Pounds *per Centum per Annum*, were, by

several Acts made in the Twenty-fifth, Twenty-eighth, Twenty-ninth, Thirty-second, and Thirty-third Years of the Reign of His late Majesty King *George* the Second, and by several subsequent Acts consolidated, and shall be deemed Part of the said Joint Stock of Annuities, subject nevertheless to Redemption by Parliament in such Manner, and upon such Notice as in the said Act made in the Twenty-fifth Year of His said late Majesty's Reign is directed in respect of the several and respective Annuities redeemable by virtue of the said Act; and that all and every Person and Persons, and Corporation whatsoever, in Proportion to the Money to which he, she, or they shall become entitled as aforesaid by virtue of this Act, shall have and be deemed to have a proportional Interest and Share in the said Joint Stock of Annuities at the Rates aforesaid.

Persons counterfeiting Receipts for Contributions, &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 Contributions towards the said Sum of Five Millions, either with or without the Name or Names of any Person or Persons being inserted therein, as the Contributor or Contributors 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 Contributions 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 or Contribution Monies 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.

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