

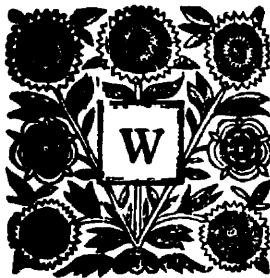


By His EXCELLENCY

Jonathan Belcher, Esq;

~~Captain General and~~ GOVERNOUR in Chief in and over His Majesties
Province of the ~~Old-Plantations-Bay~~ in *New-England*.

A Proclamation.



HEREAS His Majesty hath received repeated Complaints, That the Trade of His Subjects in the *West-Indies*, and else-where, suffers much Damage and Molestation from *Piratical Vessels*, especially from Vessels fitted out from the *Spanish Islands*, in the *West-Indies*, Notwithstanding the Peace subsisting between the two Nations, and contrary to the Orders of the King of *Spain* to his Governours of *Peru* and *New-Spain*, and the repeated Applications made to the Court of *Spain* for Satisfaction, for the Losses and Damages sustained by His Majesty's Subjects: And His Majesty being determined to use all possible Means that may most effectually put a Stop to such Violences for the future, and protect his Subjects in their lawful Trade and Navigation, hath been graciously pleased to signify to me his Royal Pleasure, That when any of his Subjects following their lawful Trade in the *West-Indies*, or else-where in *America*, shall be unjustly Plundered or despoiled of their Ships or Goods by any Persons of what Nations soever, the said

Sufferers do by the first Opportunity give in the most authentick Proofs of the Damages and Losses they have sustained upon Oath before the Judge of One of His Majesty's Vice-Admiralty Courts in the Plantations; Which Judge after a due Examination of the Matter, is to deliver to the Sufferers a Declaratory Sentence under his Hand and the Seal of the Court, setting forth the particular Circumstances of the Fact, When, Where and by Whom committed, From what Port the Vessel or Vessels that did the Damage was or were fitted out, and to what Port the Ship or Goods were carried, and the Value of the same, and that the Whole has been duly proved upon Oath before him; Which Sentence or a Duplicate thereof is to be lodged in the Hands of the Governour of the Colony where such Declaration is made: And that in Case any such Sentence or Duplicate thereof shall happen to be lodged with me, His Majesty has Ordered that I deliver the same to the Captain of any of His Ships of War within this Government, who is thereupon with the Ship under his Command, to repair to the Port where such Ship or Goods of His Majesty's Subjects shall have been carried in, or from whence such Ship or Ships, or Vessels were fitted out, in Order to procure the immediate Release of such of His Majesty's Subjects, as may have been carried there, together with full Restitution of the Ships or Goods so Plundered or taken, or the Value thereof; or else the delivering up to him or them the Persons and Ships which committed the Fact, or to make Reprizals in such Manner as is directed by the Orders in that behalf to the Commander in Chief, and to the Captains of His Majesty's Ships in *America*:

Pursuant therefore to His Majesty's Order aforesaid, and for Direction to such of His Majesty's Subjects within this Province whose Ships or Effects have been or shall be thus Piratically taken;

I Have thought fit, with the Advice of His Majesty's Council to Issue this Proclamation, That so all Persons concerned in His Majesty's Order above recited, may Know Where, and in what Manner to apply for Redress of the Injuries they have suffered; Hereby Requiring the Judge of His Majesty's Vice-Admiralty Court within this Province, upon proper Application to him made, to take Proof upon Oath of the Losses, and Damages such Persons have sustained, as aforesaid, and to grant his Declaratory Sentence thereon in Manner as is before directed; And upon Laying before me such Sentence, or a Duplicate thereof, I shall take Care that the same be delivered to the Commanders of His Majesty's Ships of War that may be in this Government, that so they may pursue His Majesty's Orders there-upon.

Given at the Council Chamber in *Boston*, the ~~Sixth~~ Day of *April*, 1731. In the Fourth Year of the Reign of Our Sovereign Lord *GEORGE* the Second, by the Grace of *GOD* of *Great Britain, France & Ireland*, KING, Defender of the Faith, &c.

By His Excellency's Command,
with the Advice of the Council,

J. BELCHER.

~~Jonathan Belcher~~, Secy.

G O D save the King.