

An Act for the Security of his Majesty's Dominion, and to prevent the Growth of Popery within this Province.

WHEREAS the Right Honourable the Earl of *Holderness*, one of his Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, by his Letter to the Governor of this Province, dated *Whitehall, August* the 28th, Seventeen Hundred and Fifty Three, hath signified the March of a large Body of *French*, to commit Hostilities on his Majesty's Dominions here, and directing him to keep a Correspondence with the other Governors of his Majesty's Territories on this Continent, in Order to concert the needful Means for preventing any evil Consequences therefrom; and, since which, the *Indians* and *French* have, not only dispossessed his Majesty's Subjects of Settlements, which they had in the Territory of *Virginia*, within the King's Dominions, but committed barbarous Murders, and made Prisoners of several Traders, and taken their Effects, and are now actually fortifying themselves in those very Places, from whence they have dispossessed his Majesty's Subjects.

AND whereas the Insolence and Disaffection of Papists within this Province, to his Majesty's sacred Person and Government, has been too often manifested by many of them; and as many Popish Priests, and Jesuits, hold sundry large Tracts of Land, Manors, and other Tenements, within the Province, and on them, or some of them, have Dwellings, where they live and cohabit, as in a collegiate Manner, having public Mass-Houses, where they celebrate their Religious Functions, in the most public Manner, perverting many of his Majesty's dutiful Protestant Subjects to Popery, as also many Servants and Slaves belonging to his Majesty's Protestant Subjects, which, from their known Principles, in Church and State, must prove of most dangerous Consequence to his Majesty's Dominion and his Protestant Subjects here, as well as from the Vicinity of the *French*, and their allied *Indian* Nations, and the manifest Incroachments, making by them, on his Majesty's Territories adjoining to this Province, and the Danger of their being joined and assisted by these our domestic Enemies: To prevent, therefore, such Evils, and the further Growth of Popery, within this Province, it is humbly prayed that it may be enacted,

AND be it Enacted, by the Right Honourable the Lord Proprietary, by and with the Advice and Consent of his Lordship's Governor, and the Upper and Lower Houses of Assembly, and the Authority of the same, That all Manors, Lands, Tenements, and Hereditaments, which were vested in any Popish Priest or Jesuit, or Popish Priests or Jesuits, or reputed Popish Priest or Jesuit, on the first Day of October, in the Year, One Thousand