

the Merchants and others, to whom the same were directed, in want of that speedy Advice and Intelligence, which they might have had, if the same had been forthwith dispatched by the Settled Posts, and sometimes such Letters have been delivered by the Masters or Passengers of such Ships, to ignorant and loose hands that understand not the ways and means of speedy Conveyance and Delivery of Letters, whereby great prejudice hath Accrued to the Affairs of Merchants and others, as well by the Miscarriage of many Letters so brought, as oftentimes by the Opening the same, to the Discovery of the Correspondency and Secrets of the Merchants; Be it therefore further Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That all Letters and Packets, that by any Master of any Ship or Vessel, or any of his Company, or any Passengers therein, shall or may be brought to any Port-Town, or which shall arrive or touch at any Port belonging to any Port-Town, within any Her Majesties Dominions, or any the Members thereof, or which shall be on board any Ship or Vessel, that shall or do touch or stay at any such Port-Town (other than such Letters as are before excepted) or may be sent by Common known Carriers in manner aforesaid, or by a Friend, as aforesaid, shall by such Master, Passenger, or other Person or Persons, be forthwith delivered unto the Deputy or Deputies only of such Postmaster-General for the time being, by him appointed, for such Place or Port-Town, and to be by such Deputy or Deputies, sent Post unto the said General Post-Office, to be delivered according to the several and respective Directions of the same; upon pain of forfeiting the Sum of five Pounds of British Money, for every several Offence against the Tenor of this present Act.

And for the Encouragement of all such Masters of Ships or Vessels, or such other Persons, on their Arrival at such Ports, as aforesaid, from any Parts beyond the Seas, to deliver unto the Deputy or Deputies of such Postmaster-General for such Place or Port-Town at which they shall so Touch or Arrive, all such Letters and Packets as they shall respectively have on Board such Vessel or Vessels, every such Master or other Person for every Letter or Packet of Letters he or they shall so deliver unto such Deputy or Deputies, shall receive the Sum of One penny of such Deputy or Deputies, he or they Signing a Certificate of the Number of Letters delivered, and by what Vessel they came, and of the time when he or they delivered the same to such Deputy or Deputies, and giving a Receipt for such Number of Pence as he or they shall receive of such Deputy or Deputies; which Certificate and Receipt shall be by such Deputy by the next Post returned to the said Postmaster-General, together with the Letters so delivered, who shall have Credit on his Account for so much Money as any such Deputy shall pay on that Account.

And be it further Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That no Person or Persons whatsoever, or Body Politick or Corporate, in any part of these Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland, or other Her Majesties Plantations and Colonies in the West-Indies and

America,

At Port Towns
Deputy Post-
master to re-
ceive all Letters
from on board
Ships, &c.

And to give
the Bearer a
Peny a Letter,
&c.