

92-22



200's
p. 20

A
P L E A
FOR THE
P O O R:
IN WHICH

- I. Their inexpressible Hardships and Sufferings are verified from undeniable Facts.
- II. Their Maintenance is evidently shewn to be an intolerable Burthen upon the Public.
- III. Methods are proposed for making Beggars, Vagrants, and Vagabonds useful to their Country, and providing for the Impotent and Disabled.
- IV. A Summary is given of the several Schemes of Judge *Hale*, Sir *Josiah Child*, Mr. *Fielding*, and others, for that Purpose.

Humbly submitted to the Consideration of Parliament.

By a Merchant of the City of LONDON.

Salus Populi Suprema Lex.

L O N D O N:
Printed for J. TOWNSEND, at the Corner of White-Friars, in Fleet-Street.

MDCCLIX.



P R E F A C E.

I T is not altogether my Fondness to appear in Public, as a Writer, that induced me to send this small Tract to the Press. I am too conscious of my own Insufficiency, in that Respect, to flatter myself with Hopes of Success, had I the Ambition, in this learned and critical Age. My chief Employment has always been in Trade, and therefore it may easily be imagined, that I am not Master of that Elegance of Stile, and Purity of Diction, which are the peculiar Requisites in a polite Author. All

iv P R E F A C E.

that I pretend to, is plain common Sense ; and if that has enabled me to express myself intelligibly upon the Subject I have undertaken, my Ambition, as a Writer, is answered.

The Truth is, I never should have exposed my Sentiments to the public Censure, had not my Eyes so often affected my Heart, with the dismal Objects that occur in our Streets, and the miserable Condition of the Poor every where, that I could no longer restrain my Inclination to disclose my Thoughts to my Fellow-Citizens; in Hopes that some of them, who have more Leisure and Ability than myself, may be induced, from these loose Hints, seriously to apply themselves to the Cure of an Evil that calls so loudly for Redress.

The City of *London* has, no Doubt, a Power within itself, to rectify Disorders and Irregularities, which

P R E F A C E. v

which no Parish, out of its Verge, is sufficiently authorized to do. And if the Citizens have any Nuisances or Offences to complain off, they need only exact Obedience from their subordinate Officers, to the Orders, Rules, and Laws already made; and they will soon see a Reformation.

As to *Westminster*, and the suburban Parishes, where these Evils reign to a most enormous Degree, other Methods must be thought of to reform Abuses of so shameful and scandalous a Nature. What those Methods are, the Reader will find suggested in the following Sheets.

But as the whole Kingdom is infected with the same epidemical Distemper, it surely merits the severest Inquisition of the Legislature, to find out the Cause, and their Judgment to apply a proper Remedy.

And

vi P R E F A C E.

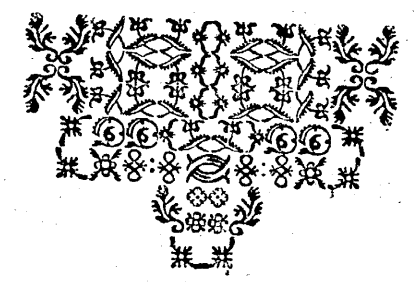
And if any Thing here offered shall contribute to rouse us out of our present Lethargy and Supineness, or induce our Superiors in earnest to set about this desirable and important Work, I shall think my Pains well bestowed. For surely the Malady is not become so inveterate, as to admit of no Remedy. If it be, we have nothing more to do, but to set our Poor at large, and let them ramble and shift for themselves as well as they can, and trust wholly to the Charity and Benevolence of well disposed Christians, as they do in *Ireland, Scotland*, and many foreign Countries. But this would be such a precarious Subsistence, as must produce the same bad Effects, as it does where they have nothing else to depend upon. Many of them would perish in their Miseries, and Property would never be secure from their Invasions: For what will not Men do

P R E F A C E. vii

do rather than starve, or see their Families languishing with Hunger, and crying for Food which they have not to give them? Besides, would it not afford the Avaricious, who are charitable only by Compulsion, a fine Opportunity to excuse themselves from parting with their Money against their Inclinations? And would it not add Weight to the Burthen of those who are best inclined to assist their fellow Creatures in Distress? To this add, the indelible Stain it would fix on this Nation, ever renowned for Generosity and Humanity, and naturally productive of all the Blessings of Life, to suffer a useful Part of its Inhabitants, to perish with Hunger, Cold and Nakedness, and made to undergo all the Calamities possible for human Nature to sustain. But I hope better Things, and that such a permanent Foundation

viii P R E F A C E.

dation will be laid for the future Relief and Comfort of our poor distressed Brethren, that no more Complaints shall be heard in our Streets, either for want of Bread or Work.



A



A

P L E A

F O R T H E

P O O R.

WHOEVER takes a serious View of the English Constitution and Government, and the beautiful OEconomy observed in its Composure, must confess, that the whole is so well contrived to give Happiness and Content to the People under its Protection, that if it does not answer the End, it must proceed from the Fault of those in the Direction. The Prerogative is not now, as in some former Reigns, stretched beyond its legal Bounds; Parliaments have their due Course, and exert their proper Energy in the great Con-
cerns

B

(2)

cerns of the Kingdom; the Laws (from which the highest Subject can plead no Exemption, nor is the meanest excluded from their Protection) are excellent, and the Judges exert themselves with Vigour and Spirit in the Distribution of Justice; every Man enjoys the Fruits of his Labour, sitting under his own Vine, without Fear or Danger from the Hand of Power; and if there is any Oppression in the Land, it must proceed from the Weakness and Inability of the oppressed to do themselves Justice, and not from any Defect in the Laws, which have Power to redress almost any Grievance that can be complained of.

But farther: The Legislature has been always careful to provide for the Maintenance of the Poor, and to that End has obliged every Parish to take Care of its own: So that let a Person be ever so wretched and miserable, he has a right to Relief from the Place of his Nativity or last Settlement. But, as it was impossible for the Sagacity of our Law-givers to foresee the various Casualties and Calamities to which the Poor are liable by their very Condition, the Rich and Powerful, the Noble and Opulent, have come in Aid of the Law, and with a largeness of Heart suitable to their Fortunes, and a Benevolence and Generosity which characterize the *English* Nation, have erected and endow-

ed

(3)

ed Hospitals and other Foundations for the Reception and Cure for the Sick and Maimed, particularly for the Indigent and Necessitous, who have neither Means nor Opportunity of helping themselves any other Way, and consequently must perish in their Misery without such an Assistance.

If this be so, will some say, and there is such ample Provision made for the Poor in all Respects, as well for the Relief of their Poverty, as to assist them in any Casualties that may befall them, what can they desire or expect more? The Law is their Protection and Defence, and the Rich and Great are their Benefactors. Let them then be content with their Condition in which Providence has placed them. Let them be sober and diligent in their respective Callings, and they need not doubt of a Support under every Exigence or Misfortune that may afflict them.

Whoever reasons in this Manner, I will venture to say, has seen but little of the World, or his Observations on the various Calamities, Vicissitudes, and Afflictions to which Mankind are in general liable, have been too cursory and negligent to form a right Judgment in the Case of the helpless Poor. And I shall endeavour to make it appear, that notwithstanding all the foregoing Remedies, there have been, and still are, many poor miserable Wretches languishing

B 2

(4)

guishing in the most forlorn Condition, or lost for want of a due and timely Care. But before I proceed to a full Explanation of this Matter, give me leave to make some Reflections on the Hardships suffered by the Poor for a Year or two past.

Whoever has travelled the Country, or has read the melancholly Accounts, which for two Years past arrived at this Metropolis from all Parts of the Kingdom, of the inexpressible Miseries to which the Poor were reduced, thro' a Scarcity of Corn, must be struck with Horror and Compassion. What sort of Conscience the rich Farmer must have, who, with full Granaries, could see, unconcerned, a Number of unhappy Creatures at his Door, starving and perishing for Want of Bread, I know not. To feed the Hungry, he allowed, was a Precept very good, but confined the Practice of it to himself and his own Family, judging that a much more rational Maxim, which says, *Charity begins at Home*. His Business was to take Advantage of the Times, and to make Hay whilst the Sun shone, another useful Proverb often in his Mouth: In Imitation of the infamous -----, one of the Managers of the late *Charitable Corporation*, and deeply concerned in those Frauds that ruined that Body, who used to say, *the Poor be d----d, let me get Money*. It was upon the same Principle, that the
Farmers,

(5)

Farmers, Engrossers, and Monopolizers of Corn acted during the late artificial Dearth. That there was a sufficient Stock in Hand for the Supply of every Body, plainly appeared on the Fall of the Price, and the moral Certainty of a plentiful Harvest; when all Hands were set to work to empty their Barns and Storehouses as fast as they could. And it is astonishing to think what vast Quantities were brought to Market, immediately on the Apprehension, that Corn was tumbling down to its old and current Price. This is a Fact so notorious, that, I believe, nobody will presume to deny it. If so, who can reflect, without Indignation, on the cruel Usage of the Poor, from these hard-hearted, inhuman Monsters, who, with full Bellies, and a superfluous Abundance in their Stores, could see their fellow Creatures feeding upon Husks with Swine, or endeavouring to stop their clamorous Appetites with the Refuse of the Earth, or the wild Products of the Fields and Hedges; This I apprehend is one Case in which the Poor could not receive any Assistance either from the Law, or from any of those noble Foundations of Charity which have been laid for their Use. The Parliament alone can provide a Remedy for such an Evil in Time to come, by laying a Restraint on the Avarice of those, who, to raise their own Fortunes, can sacrifice the
B 3 Health,

(6)

Health, Welfare, Comfort, Lives and Happiness of Millions.

Amidst a Variety of Arguments, drawn from Scripture and Reason by the Preachers of our holy Religion, to recommend to their Hearers the Duties of Christianity, those deduced from the Goodness of its Precepts, which so strongly recommend to us a becoming Love and Tenderness to our fellow Creature, are not, in my Opinion, the least Persuasive. St. *John*, who is justly called the *Divine*, from his intimate Acquaintance with the *divine Nature*, enforces this Precept of *Love to the Brethren*, in many Places both of his Gospel and Epistles, and was so eminent a Practitioner of it himself, that when he was ninety Years of Age, and so feeble that he was forced to be carried to his Church on the Shoulders of his Disciples, when brought there, could say nothing more than, *Brethren, love one another*. The frequent Repetition of this only Sentence, a little disgusted his People, who, with great Respect, desired to know his Reason for it. He replied, with some Fervour, *this great Command was given by our blessed Lord; in which if we excel, all we do besides will be accepted*. What greater Character could be given to the Followers of Christ, then that early Remark made on the Behaviour of the first Professors of the Gospel, *viz. See how*

(7)

how the Christians love one another? The evident Purity and Rectitude of those divine Commands, left us by the great Author of Christianity, together with those benign and god-like Principles which flow from the pure Streams of Love, Meekness and Charity, which he so pathetically inculcated on his Disciples and Hearers, cannot fail to direct our Eyes towards that Fountain of all Goodness from which they originally sprung.

It was said by a Person of great Eminence, *that to be a Lover of one's Country is a glorious Eulogy, but to be a Lover of Mankind a much greater*. We have in the *Old Testament* many illustrious Instances of Kindness, Affection and Tenderness between Persons engaged by the Ties of Friendship or Affinity; and with Regard to the Poor, their great Legislator *Moses* took particular Care of them in his Laws. *If, says he, there be among you a poor Man of one of thy Brethren, within any of thy Gates, thou shalt not harden thy Heart, nor shut thine Hand from thy poor Brother: But thou shalt open thy Hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his Need. Beware that there be not a Thought in thy wretched Heart, saying, the seventh Year, the Year of Release is at Hand; and thine Eye be evil to thy poor Brother, and thou givest him nought, and he cry unto the Lord*

B 4

against

(8)

against thee, and it be Sin unto thee: With much more to the same Purpose, the Reader may find in the 15th Chapter of Deuteronomy. But observe, that this Kindness to the Poor was confined to those of their own Nation only; for as to their Enemies, those who did not acknowledge the God of Israel, they were commanded to destroy them utterly; the Reason of which was, lest they should entice them into Idolatry, and draw them to serve the Gods worshipped by those superstitious Nations. However, it was a received Saying amongst them, thou shalt love thy Neighbour, and hate thine Enemy.

But the noble and more exalted Ideas of loving all Mankind, not excepting even our Enemies, was a Law reserved for the Promulgation of that much greater Legislator, *Jesus Christ*; who, by the Example of the good *Samaritan*, taught the *Jews* to regard every Man in Distress as their Neighbour, whether he was of their own Country or a Foreigner, a Friend or Enemy: A Doctrine so noble and beneficent, that it exalts human Nature to the highest Pitch of Glory it is capable of attaining to on this side Immortality, and truly worthy of that divine Person who first taught it to Mankind, and whose Example was a constant Verification of his Precepts.

Bene-

(9)

Benevolence, Compassion and Humanity were Virtues of so bright a Lustre in the heathen System of Morality, that those who possessed them in any eminent Degree were celebrated by their Philosophers and Poets, as raising human Nature to its true Dignity. Nay, so enamoured were they with Characters of this kind, that the most famous of their Gods were Men deified for having, while on Earth, exerted all their Powers in the Service of Mankind: As on the contrary, those who had rendered themselves infamous for their Tyranny, Oppression, and the Mischiefs they had done among their fellow Mortals, were consigned to the most dreadful Torments in the *Stygian* Regions of Darkness and Despair.

The *Egyptians* had a Custom of trying a Man after his Death. If he was a Prince, a Governor, or Minister of State, the Memorials of his Life and Actions were laid before his Examiners, and scrutinized with the most rigid Exactness; and if the Testimonies produced were strong in his Favour, that he had employed his Talents, and laid out his Labours for the good of the Public, and in the Service of his Country, he had all possible Honours done him, and Monuments were raised to perpetuate his Memory. But if he had been a Tyrant and an Oppressor, and had sought only to enrich

(10)

enrich and aggrandize himself at the Expence of the People, he was stigmatized with Marks of the utmost Indignation, and his Memory disgraced in the public Records. If a Man in a lower Station of Life, upon such a Trial, (for none were exempted from it) was convicted, upon the Testimony of his Neighbours and Acquaintance, of having been a wicked, cruel, and oppressive Wretch; without Compassion or Humanity, Justice or Integrity, his Corpse was denied the customary funeral Rites, his Relations were forbid to embalm his Body, or to preserve it in their Families, as was the antient Usage in that Country.

Thus, whether we consult the sacred Oracles of Truth, or peruse the Writings of the Philosophers and Poets among the old Heathens, and read their Histories, we shall find the Virtues of Benevolence, Charity, and Humanity, and all the Obligations to contribute to the Happiness of Society, recommended and enforced both from Law and Reason, from divine Authority and human Institutions. And indeed, Pity, Compassion and Tenderness are Affections so inherent to, and interwoven with our very Frame and Constitution, that it is no less a Matter of Astonishment, than a Subject for the most melancholly Reflections, to see the depraved State into which human Nature is unhappily fallen, the
Bar-

(11)

Barbarities which Men exercise upon one another, and the hard-heartedness and savage Brutality of others, who can behold Creatures of their own Species, who differ in nothing from themselves but in the Circumstances of Fortune, labouring and struggling under the most terrible Calamities of Life, without Feeling or Compassion, or offering the least Assistance to relieve them in their grievous Distresses.

But to apply this Reasoning to the present Times and our own Country: I am sorry to observe, that in this Christian and well-governed City, and in an Age so distinguished for its numerous Charities, the Practice of some amongst us would tempt a Stranger (who is not acquainted with our Religion or Policy) to believe we were under the Restraint of no Laws, either divine or human, but that we were devoid even of the Sentiments of Humanity. And tho' it be universally allowed, that we are governed by the best Laws, and perhaps as good Magistrates as any Country can boast, yet I will venture to mention an Evil, that insults Magistracy, and reflects Dishonour-- I will not say on our Country or Christianity, but on Mankind. And yet this Evil, great as it is, and the Subject of general Complaint, and which might be, I presume, easily redressed, still continues.

Would

(12)

Would any one believe, was he not convinced by daily Observation, that in this great and rich City (as well as in other Parts of the Kingdom) poor miserable Wretches, the most dismal Objects that Nature can present to our Eyes, should not only be suffered to lie for Hours and Days in our Streets, without being properly taken Care of, but even to perish with Cold and Hunger at our Doors, for Want of the Crumbs which fall from the rich Man's Table, who is clothed in Purple and fine Linnen, and wantons in all the Luxury and Extravagances of an Epicure?

Among the many mournful and much to be lamented Instances of this Sort, give me leave to relate one which came within my own Knowledge, and lately happened in the Heart of this City. A poor unhappy Wretch, in a most forlorn Condition, destitute of Friends and the common Necessaries of Life, tho' so many of us abounds even to Superfluity, laid herself down in a weak and sick Condition, half starved and half naked, under the Bulk of a Shop Window, where she continued for a considerable Time without Relief; till some People, whose Duty should have directed them to take Care of her, but without due Examination (on a Supposition she was in Liquor) inhumanly drove her into the next Parish. There she again threw herself,
sick

(13)

sick and weak as she was, under the Walls of a public Building; in which Place she remained several Hours, exposed to the Inclemencies of Wind and Weather, during great Part of a very cold Night. In this deplorable Condition, she was at last (but not before relentless Death had almost closed his leaden Arms arround her) taken up and carried to a Prison, to be punished for lying in the Street, tho' she had neither Money, nor Friends, nor any Abode to go to, and where she soon after expired.

I might make this Discourse more tedious and more melancholly, should I enumerate the various Instances of this Kind which have fallen within my own Observation, or I have been informed of by others, even to a greater Degree of Inhumanity; where the weaker Sex, Women with Child and near their Time, have, in like Manner, been inhumanly thrust, or bribed by a small Gratuity to go, from one Parish to another, till at last the unhappy Mother and tender Infant have both perished together. Shocking Barbarity! But I forbear these gloomy Repetitions; and who indeed would wish to read such melancholly Tales?

Now, would any one believe that such Things should frequently happen in a Country inhabited by rich and prosperous Christians, who, at least a great Part of them, live in the highest Degree of Extravagance?

vagance? And yet these Truths are so well known, that they will not admit of Denial. Facts are stubborn Things, which it is not in the Power of Argument to refute; and these are such as too many People can witness the Truth of. But let us dwell no longer on the gloomy Side of this doleful Prospect, but turn our Eyes to the Cause, and consider how they may be prevented for the Future.

The Source of these Complaints must undoubtedly arise from too great a Neglect in enforcing the Execution of those good and excellent Laws, by which we are, or at least ought to be, governed; for were these vigorously and impartially executed, there is no doubt but these Evils, so long and so justly complained of, but so little attended to, would soon be removed. I shall not take upon me to say where the Fault lies, whether at the Door of the Magistrate, or his under-Officers; but sure I am, a Fault there is, and a great one too, somewhere, and cries loudly for Redress; nor do I know a better or more effectual Remedy, for an Evil which seems to be daily growing upon us, and reflects so great a Scandal upon our City-Government, than to punish the Offender, whoever he be, with the utmost Severity; if a Magistrate, with a heavy Fine; if any of his Officers, with the Loss of Place, or corporal Punishment, according

according to the Nature of the Offence; and this to extend to Parish and Ward-Officers, who shall be found guilty of driving these unhappy Objects from one Ward or Parish to another, before a due Examination of the Case. To me there seems little Difference between having no Laws at all, and Laws unexecuted; nay, for ought I know, we might better be left to the Laws of Nature, which would certainly prompt us to do Justice, and to shew Compassion to the Afflicted and Unfortunate, then to boast of having the most righteous Statutes which lie dormant in the Statute-Book, without giving them their due Force and Efficacy, in ruling the People for whose Benefit they were intended.

The Law provides, that whenever these Objects present themselves for Relief, or are found wandering in the Streets, the Beadle, or other proper Officer, take them up, and carry them before a Justice of the Peace, who is to grant them a Pass to their proper Settlements. And every Body knows, that the sending the Poor to their several Parishes, in this Manner, is attended with little Expence or Trouble; unless the poor Creature is incapable of walking; in which Case the Charges are paid out of the County-Rate.

Since then the Remedy is so easy, made so by the special Provision of the Laws, whence

whence comes it that such Multitudes of miserable Creatures appear daily before our Eyes, to the great Terror and Astonishment of every Beholder? The principal Objection which lies against this Method of Proceeding with Beggars is, that many of those Mendicants who stroll about for Relief are Foreigners, who, by some Casualty or other, have been left among us, destitute of Friends and Money, or any Means of returning to their own Country. These, it is true, have no Settlement with us, yet nobody will deny that they are entitled to our Care and Compassion, especially if we would practice that Golden Rule, *of doing unto others as we would be done unto*; for many of our own People, no doubt, have been in the like Circumstances in other Countries; and Civility to Strangers is certainly a Duty incumbent on all Men. But supposing we have no Law that obliges us to take any Care of these poor, forlorn Foreigners, is that a good Reason, that those who do belong to us, whom we are bound by the Laws of our Country as well as those of Humanity to provide for, should have no Claim to our compassionate Regard?

It is further said, that the major Part of these apparently miserable Objects, are really Hypocrites and Impostors. Let this be likewise granted, and for Argument's Sake
let

let it be supposed that only one in ten of them deserve our Charity----must that unhappy tenth Fellow-Creature be inhumanly treated, or suffered to perish miserably in the Street, merely to save the Beadle or Warderer a little Trouble in examining the Case, or the Parish the Expence of a few Shillings in passing such to their Settlements? No surely! Common Justice, and the Law of Nature forbid it. On the other Hand, supposing the Wretches taken up, to be Vagrants, and Vagabonds; it is as much to the Honour of the Magistrate, and equally his Duty, to punish such; as to relieve the Indigent and Distressed.

But with Regard to these under Officers; they act either by their own Authority, or by the Order of their Masters; who have the Direction of the Affairs of the Parish; and these, too commonly, are as insensible of the Feelings of Nature as their Underlings. So that what by the Brutality of the one, and the Cruelty of the other, many a poor helpless Creature is absolutely lost, who, if proper Care had been taken of them, might have been restored to Health, and become useful Members of Society.

But I have Reason to believe, that however inclined these lower Officers may be to succour poor Wretches in Distress, they durst not obey the Dictates of their own
C Hearts

Hearts and Consciences, for fear of disoblising their Superiors, by whom they are sure to be brow-beaten and reprimanded for officiously meddling in a Matter which may occasion them a little Trouble. Thus the Beadle is intimidated from doing his Duty, and contents himself with getting them out of his Precinct, by which Means the Distressed go unrelieved, and Delinquents unpunished.

This great Metropolis is deservedly famous for the Justice, Integrity, and Humanity of its Magistrates; it may therefore naturally be presumed, that if a true State of these scandalous Nufances was laid before them and their Fellow-Citizens in their corporate Capacity, they would, if there was any Defect in their present Law, pass some public Act, (as they have done in many other Cafes of seemingly less Moment) which would effectually redress the Grievance complained of; and, as Magistrates in their respective Wards, they would charge the Beadles and Warders to be vigilant and active in executing such Orders as should be given them, to take up every Vagarant and idle Wanderer, and secure all Beggars, and bring them before the proper Magistrate, that so each of their Cafes may be enquired into, and all dealt with according to Law and Equity. If this, or some such Method were taken,
 People

People might walk the Streets unmolested, and attend the Business of their Shops and Warehouses without being continually teased and haunted by Beggars and Vagarants, and so often shocked with such dismal Spectacles as are every where exposed to their View, to the great terror of Women with Child, &c.

And that this Scheme or Propofal is practicable, I am persuaded no Man, who is capable of judging of the Fitness of Things, can reasonably deny. That it is so, and that even the Power and Influence of the chief Magistrate alone (how much more then if all the Rest were to concur with him?) is capable of producing such a happy Effect, give me leave to remark, to the Honour of one of our late Aldermen (who has so highly deserved both of this City and Kingdom) that, during his Mayoralty, scarce a Beggar was to be seen in the Streets. What Methods he took to rid the City of such an abominal Nufance, deserves the Enquiry and Imitation of every Successor in the Chair:

It is really astonishing to think to what a prodigious Height these Evils are arrived, as well here, as in many other Parts of the Kingdom, and it is equally amazing, that they are not redressed, especially considering the little Difficulty that would be met with in obtaining the desired End. It is but to

(20)

put the Laws, already made, vigorously in Execution, and the Thing is done. But, according to the old Proverb, *what is every Body's Business, is no Body's*; and thus we not only continue to harbour, but to propagate the Race of Vagabonds, Thieves and Pick-pockets, to the eternal Shame and Disgrace of this (otherwise) well governed City and Realm.

In *Holland* you may pass thro' a whole Province and hardly see a Beggar. But if in the Course of several Miles you happen to meet with one, you will find him clad in a cleanly, descent Garb, by no Means so miserable and wretched as they frequently are seen here.

It may perhaps be asked, by what Finesse in Politics do the *Hollanders* preserve such an excellent OEconomy in their Government? To this I answer, that, as far as it hath come under my Observation, their ruling Maxim is, *that every Hand that can work shall not be idle*. For this Reason they confine Rogues and Vagrants in a Rasp-house, where they are compelled to work for the Public. And as to those who are disabled by Sicknes or Lameness, and are real Objects of Charity, they are decently provided for at the public Expence; so that no mendicant Invalids are ever seen in their Streets.

Here

(21)

Here again, I suppose I shall be asked, have not we as good Laws in *England* for the Regulation of the Poor, as they have in *Holland*? If this be granted, whence comes it to pass, that no such miserable Objects are to be seen there, and yet that our Streets should be continually pestered with them. The Answer to this is easy. Every Magistrate and Burgher in *Holland* is vigilant and assiduous in the Discharge of his Duty to his Country, and punish their Officers with the utmost Severity whenever they find them negligent in their Office, or disobedient to the Orders of their Superiors. By which Means, Order and Decorum are preserved thro' every Branch of their Government, and in every Rank and Class of their People. The Rich are not suffered to oppress the Poor with Impunity, and the Poor have all the Encouragement they can desire, to get a Livelihood for themselves and Families; which they do with great Alacrity, well knowing that when old Age and Infirmities shall render them incapable of Work, a proper Care will be taken of them by the State.

Here then lies the Difference. It is universally allowed, that the *English* Laws are the best calculated of any in the World to make a People happy. But this is our Misfortune: We want a proper Spirit and Activity to put them vi-

C 3

gorously

gorously in Execution. Our Magistrates are too indolent, and their inferior Officers too corrupt and mercenary. The first being easy in their Fortunes, don't chuse to fatigue themselves in the Service of the Public, or to make troublesome Enquiries into the Misbehaviour of their Officers; and the latter, being left too much at their Liberty, are too apt to forget the chief Points of their Duty, and rather study to increase the Profits of their Office, than to discharge their Duty with a good Conscience. Thus Virtue goes unprotected and discouraged, while Vice and Immorality grow and flourish upon the Ruins of Probity and Honesty. This seems to be the unhappy Situation of these Kingdoms at this Time; and to the Indolence and Remissness in the executive Part of the Law, may in a great Measure be imputed the Irregularities that are but too visible in the inferior Parts of our Administration.

As for Vagrants, Rogues, and Vagabonds, which these Neglects undoubtedly encrease, who wander about from Place to Place, without any settled Abode, or visible way of living, otherwise than by cheating, tricking, imposing upon, or pilfering from honest and unwary People; they are so well described and provided for by the *Vagrant Act*, passed in the 17th Year of the present Reign, that we need only consult that

that Statute, to be advised what to do with them. It may, however, be proper to take notice, that the numerous Tribe of Gypsies, Fortune-tellers, &c. are punishable by the same Act, and very deservedly; for they are the Pest of Society, and a Disgrace to our Country. They are certainly the most wicked and atrocious that ever scandaliz'd a civil Government; and do as much Mischief by inveigling ignorant and thoughtless People out of their Money, under false Pretences, as the Highwayman, who boldly takes your Purse on the Road at the Hazard of his own Life. But as by this and other Acts, they are render'd obnoxious to Punishment; 'tis our own Fault if we suffer such a Nuisance to remain any longer among us.

As for those Vagrants and Beggars that come from abroad, import themselves from *Ireland*, or wander from *Scotland*, let them be confined, if in *London*, to the City Workhouse; if in the Country, in the County-House of Correction, till Opportunity offers of sending them to their native Land; and if there is no Law in Being to provide for them in any other Manner, it may be hoped, that the Parliament will, in Time, think such an Act necessary. My present View is to point out and distinguish the real Objects of our Charity, such as the humble, modest, and disabled Poor, from

the clamorous, mouthing, and sturdy Beggars, who are ready to insult us, if we are not as willing to give, as they are to ask an Alms.

There is another Nuisance which as much deserves the Inquisition of the Magistrate, and the Exertion of his whole Authority to remove, as any we have yet mention'd. It is well known, that in the Skirts of this City, and especially in *Westminster*, and in the large Parishes in the Outparts, there are many beggarly Hedge-Alehouses, which entertain no other Sort of Guests besides these Wretches, where they spend the Money that had been given them in Charity, in all Manner of Riot, Excess and Debauchery, Drinking, Gaming, and Wenching. It is also well known, that there is a Species of Traders in and about this City, who by their Profession, when they are abroad, are oblig'd to appear exceedingly dirty, indigent and wretched; but in their Families are clean and well dress'd, where they eat, drink, and are merry; and as they live well and happy, and sometimes entertain their Friends in a handsome Manner, they think it proper when Questions are ask'd them, to assume the Credit of some Trade or Profession; but as the Word *Beggar* is look'd on with some Degree of *Dare dit*, these Mendicants have chosen a softer Term, by which
to

to distinguish themselves, and that is by the Appellation of *Askers*.

Such are the Miscreants, who by their pitiful Cries, and doleful Complaints, and by shewing their withered Arms and maimed Limbs, impose upon the Benevolent and Well-disposed, who in relieving the imagin'd Distress, are only encouraging the most shameful Debaucheries. Hither resort not only these Crews of Beggars, but likewise Street-Robbers, House-breakers, Pick-pockets and Thieves of all Sorts, and the most abandoned of both Sexes, and mix in the general Rendezvous. So that these Places may be justly deemed the Nurseries wherein are hatched and contrived all the Villainies and Outrages which every where insult the Laws and Government. This is an Evil too notorious to be denied, and therefore deserves the most serious Consideration of those in Power, who, as they have sufficient Authority, it is to be wished would exert it in a speedy and effectual Suppression of these Seminaries of Impiety, Immorality, and the most abominable Wickedness of all Kinds. Till this be done, it is no wonder that the Beneficent and Humane withhold their Hands from bestowing their Benevolence on such as appear real Objects of Charity, because they may be deceived.

Another

(26)

Another Nufance no lefs scandalous and offensive to civil Society than thofe we have before mentioned, and which we often meet with in the Streets, is, to fee a Woman with a Child or two in her Arms, another perhaps at her Back, and it may be, one or two more at her Heels, the oldeft not above three or four Years of Age, all half naked and more than half ftarved with Hunger and Cold, importunately begging your Alms, and urging you by all the facred Ties of Religion and Humanity; when it is more than probable that fhe has borrowed or ftole moft of thefe little Wretches for the Purpose of exciting your Charity. An Imposition fo flagrant and flagitious deferves the fevereft Punifhment; nor is it difficult to bring fuch notorious Offenders to Juftice. It is but to employ one of your Beadles, or parifh Officers to carry her before a Magiftrate, who would immediately commit her to Bridewell, or pafs her to her own Parifh, and perhaps fend the poor Infants to the Foundling Hofpital, where fuch Care would be taken of them that, in Time, they might be made ufeful Members of the Community.

From what has been above faid, it plainly appears, that there are two Sorts of Poor, *the Able* and *the Impotent*. The Former may be thrown into two Divifions, the *Lazy*, who being the Offspring of Beggars,
are

(27)

are brought up to the fame Trade, and confequently known not how, if they had an Inclination, to apply themfelves to any other Calling; from thefe commonly proceed Vagrants and Vagabonds, who perhaps were born in a Barn or under a Hedge, but where they know not, and confequently have no Claim to any Place of Settlement. The other Part of the Divifion are the *industrious Poor*, who are able to work, and would be glad to be employed, but being deftitute of Bufinefs, they and their Families are ftarving for Want of Bread, and the common Neceffaries of Life, and to get a little precarious Subfiftence fend out their Children to beg in the Streets, while themfelves wander abroad in fearch of Employment.

The other Clafs into which I have divided the Poor, namely, *the Impotent*, confifts of the Aged who are paff their Labour, the Maimed who are disabled in their Limbs, the Blind, the Infant, the Natural, the Friendlefs and Unfortunate.

By obferving thefe Distinctions between the Poor, we may be enabled to direct our Charity to its proper Object, I mean as to private Alms-giving; but with Regard to the Care which the Public ought to have of them, other Methods muft be taken to render them more ufeful or lefs burthenfome to Society than at prefent they are.
For

For it is a Policy highly commendable in a well regulated Government, to make all its Members contribute towards the Support and Welfare of the whole Body. And here I would gladly recommend to the Trustees of the several Charity Schools of this great Metropolis, to train up their Children to some laborious and useful Employments, instead of letting them spend so great a Part of their Time with such Parents as too often set them no good Example; by this Means they would be innured to Industry; making their Work habitual and agreeable to them, as well as contribute greatly to their Health and Strength, and would in Time undoubtedly make them useful Members of Society, and prevent in them that Slothfulness and Indolence of Temper which is the constant Fore-runner of Indigence, Idleness and Beggary. As in the Body natural it often happens that some of its Members are rendered useles by unavoidable Accident or Infirmity, and instead of affording their usual Assistance in maintaining the Order and Reguarity of the human Frame, do themselves require the Care and Attention of the Rest to relieve their Ailments: So in the Body Politic, notwithstanding the utmost Vigilance and Circumspection of its ruling Powers, some of its Members will be found so feeble and infirm, that instead of being of any Use or Service

Service to the State, they must be supported by it. And indeed the great Inequality we see in the Condition of the Rich and the Poor, seems to have been intended by Providence for wise and excellent Ends, viz. to give the Rich an Opportuuity of exercising the Virtues of Condescension, Benevolence, Charity and Humanity: And the Poor, Occasions for practising those of Meekness, Humility, Patience, and Resignation; and to instruct both the one and the other, that a reciprocal Affection and Dependance is necessary for their mutual Happiness.

King *Alfred*, justly stiled *the Great*, was the first of our Monarchs who instituted Laws for regulating the different Classes of his Subjects, and depriving them of the Power of injuring one another. *Alfred* (as *Rapin* tells us) was sensible, that the Spirit of Oppression naturally grew upon Men in Authority, and therefore he applied himself to remedy that Inconvenience. To that End he ordered, that in all *Criminal Actions*, twelve Men, chosen for that Purpose, should determine concerning the Fact, and the Judge give Sentence according to their *Verdict*. This Privilege, which we enjoy to this Day, is doubtless the noblest and most valuable that Subjects can have. An *Englishman* accused of any Crime, is to be tried only by his *Peers*, that is, by Persons

(30)

sons of his own Rank; by which Means he is out of all Danger of being oppressed, how powerful soever his Accusers may be.

Rapin further informs us, that *Alfred* observing great Disorders and Licentiousness, occasioned by the Wars, in all Parts of his Kingdom, and that *Vagabonds* and *Vagrants* every where abounded, who committed all Manner of Crimes with Impunity, their poor and mean Condition screening them from Justice; and having no settled Abode, upon committing any Offence, shifted their Quarters to Places where it was difficult to discover them, by which Means honest Men were exposed to the Insults of these Villains, was extremely desirous to put a Stop to so great a Mischiefe. Having consulted those whom he judged capable of giving him good Advice, he took the following Method to prevent any Person from living in his Dominions, without being obliged to give an Account of his Actions. He divided all *England* into *Shires* or *Counties*, the *Counties* into *Hundreds*, and the *Hundreds* into *Tithings*. This being done, all the Inhabitants of the Kingdom were obliged to belong to some *Tithing*; whoever did not, were looked upon as *Vagabonds*, and as such denied the Protection of the Law. If any one by his Way of Living fell under Suspicion, he was obliged to give Security for his good Behaviour:

(31)

viour: In Case he could find none, the *Tithing* threw him into Prison; to prevent their being liable to the Penalty he should incur by any Offence. Thus the *Householders* being responsible for their Families, the *Tithing* for the *Householders*, the *Hundreds* for the *Tithings*, and the *Counties* for the *Hundreds*; every one was watchful over his Neighbour's Actions: If a Stranger guilty of any Crime made his Escape, Information was taken of the House where he lodged, and if he had been there three Days, the Master of the Family was condemned to pay his *Fine*. But in Case he had not stayed so long as three Days, the Householder was acquitted upon making Oath he was not privy to his Crime. Thus the *English* beheld with Pleasure in these wise Regulations, the Origin of those Laws they so happily live under at this present Time; and by these wise Institutions such good Order and Tranquility was preserved, as the like had never been known before in *England*.

I cannot forbear adding what is said in the *Mirror of Justice*, concerning this great and good Prince, that he used to re-examine the Causes that were tried in his Absence, and in Case he found any Injustice done out of *Favour* or *Interest*, he punished the Judges severely. If they pleaded Ignorance, he sharply reprimanded them, and

and asked how they durst presume to take a Commission to determine about *Life* and *Property*, when they knew themselves so wretchedly unqualified; and ordered them either to know better or quit their Post. Thus the Earls and great Men, rather than be turned out of their Office with Disgrace, applied themselves to Study. *Brompton* says, Justice was so strictly administered in *Alfred's* Reign, that tho' there were gold Bracelets hung up at the Parting of several High-ways, no Man durst touch them.

Thus, were Justice is strictly administered, the Kingdom is happy, the Sovereign loved and feared, the People easy and cheerful, Vice discountenanced, and Virtue triumphant. Such were the Blessings of *Alfred's* Reign. But alas! This beautiful Scene of Order and Harmony was too delightful to be of long Duration; and his Successors soon degenerated from the Purity of his Principles. Ambition, Glory and Grandeur were the chief Objects of their View, which gave them but little Leisure to complete the Happiness of their Subjects, not considering that the highest and truest Glory consists in doing good to Mankind, and administering to their Happiness. And when the *Normans* came in, they introduced so many of their own Laws and Customs, that but little remained of the old *English* Constitution. Afterwards the

the long and bloody Contests between the rival Houses of *York* and *Lancaster*, and the Barons Wars, occasioned such Confusion and Disorder thro' the whole State, that its surprizing it should ever be able to recover its former Splendor and Vigour, and that our Constitution was not totally destroy'd. Yet, this we may be assured, that during these terrible Convulsions, but little Care was taken of the Poor, and that every one was left to shift for himself as well as he could. And I don't find any regular Provision was made for them by any Act of Parliament, till the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, which was about 700 Years from King *Alfred*: For the Piety and Charity of those Times consisted chiefly in Building and endowing Monastries, and enriching the Monks, who (it was then believed) had the Power of opening and shutting of the Gates of Heaven to whom they pleased; that is to those who paid them well they gave free Admittance; but they who had nothing to give, had very little to expect from the good Offices of those ghostly Fathers.

But Queen *Elizabeth* and her Parliament had a different Way of thinking. They were persuaded that the Poor were as much entitled to their Care and Protection as the Rich and Opulent; and observing how much they were exposed to the Cruelty of Oppressors, and that Parishes were left almost

(34)

most to their own Option, whether they would maintain or provide for them or not; they made a Law, entitled an *Act for the Relief of the Poor*, appointing the chusing Overseers, and the Manner of raising Money for the Relief of the Poor. Such a Law was then very necessary, and did, no Doubt, at that Time, and long afterwards, answer the Ends for which it was made. But whether the Poor have since become more numerous, or a greater Variety of Cases arise among them now, to occasion Dispute, than there were near two hundred Years ago, certain it is, that the Poor are in as bad, if not a worse Condition, than they were before any Act was passed in their Behalf. Whether this be owing to any Defect in the Laws, or for want of a due Execution of those already made, may deserve the Consideration of the Legislature. However this be, various Schemes have been proposed for a better Regulation of the Poor than was contrived by the Makers of the Statute of *Queen Elizabeth*. I will give you an Abstract of some of the Principal of them, as it may give the Reader a full View of the Subject, and perhaps afford some Hints, that, if properly improved, may be form'd into a regular and practicable System.

The

(35)

The first I shall mention is that of Chief Justice *Hale*, who observing how indifferently the Poor were provided for in some Parishes, proposed a Union or Conjunction of several Parishes for the same Purpose.

The next Writer of Eminence, who plan'd out a Scheme of this Kind, was the great Sir *Josiah Child*. In discoursing upon this Subject he takes for granted, 1. That our Poor in *England* have always been in a most sad and wretched Condition. 2. That very many of our Poor bred up in Beggary and Laziness, do by that Means become not only of unhealthy Bodies, and more distemper'd Qualities, but breed many loathsome Diseases, whereof many died in their tender Age. 3. That if all our impotent Poor were provided for, and those of both Sexes and all Ages, that can do Work of any Kind employed, it would rebound some hundreds of thousand Pounds *per Annum* to public Advantage. 4. That it is our Duty to God and Nature, so to provide for and employ the Poor. 5. That by so doing, one of the great Sins (for which this Land ought to mourn) would be removed. 6. That our Forefathers had pious Intentions towards this Work, as appears by the many Laws made by them to this Purpose. 7. That there are Places in the World, wherein the Poor are so provided

D 2

(36)

vided for and employed, *viz.* *Holland, Hamburg, New England,* and some others.

If these are allowed to be indisputable Facts, how comes it to pass that in *England,* we do not, nor ever did, comfortably Maintain and emply the Poor?

It is answered, 1. That our Laws to this Purpose are as good as any in the World, but we fail in the Execution. 2. That formerly in the Days of our pious Ancestors the Work was done, but our Charity is decreased. In both which Answers, the Effect is mistaken for the Cause: For tho' there hath been a Failure in the Execution of those Laws, yet the Cause of that Failure hath been occasioned by Defect of the Laws themselves, as he proves by Instances.

As to the second Answer to the aforesaid Question, wherein Want of Charity is assigned for another Cause why the Poor are now so much neglected, he thinks it a slanderous, ungrounded Accusation of our Contemporaries; and therefore must proceed from Defect of the Laws.

His next Question is, wherein lies the Defect of our present Laws, relating to the Poor? To this he Answers, there may be many, but takes Notice of one only, which he thinks is fundamental; *i. e.* the leaving it to the Care of every Parish to maintain their own Poor only. (The Poor, in most Places,

(37)

Places, are grown a great deal more numerous than they were 40 or 50 Years ago: In one Parish, for Instance, within my own Observation, from about Six, to above 30 Families. The Dearness of Provisions, and the Poor indulging themselves in what to them is Luxury; such as Tea, Spirituous-Liquors, &c. contribute more than any Thing to increase their Numbers: As doth also their too common Maxim, *hang Care, drown Sorrow, the Parish is bound to find us.* So that it is much to be wished, that some other and better Method could be devised for their Maintenance, than what is now provided by Law.) Upon which follows the shifting off, sending or whipping back the poor Wanderers to the Place of their Birth, or last Abode, which signifies nothing to the Good of the Kingdom in general, or to the Poor thereof; which he proves by several Instances.

His third Question is, if the Defect be in our Laws, how shall we find a Remedy that will be rational and consistent?

This, he confesses, is a hard and difficult Question, and deserves the most deliberate Consideration of our wisest Counsellors. This brings him to offer some general Proposals, which he thinks, if improved by wiser Men, may effect so great a Work.

He Proposes, 1. That the Cities of *London* and *Westminster,* Borough of *Southwark,*

D 3

and

(38)

and all other Places within the Limits of Communication, described in the Weekly Bills of Mortality, may by Act of Parliament be associated into one Province, or Line of Communication for Relief of the Poor.

2. That there be one Assembly of Men, entrusted with the Care for, and Treasurer of all the Poor within the said Pale or Line of Communication.

3. That the said Assembly be incorporated by Act of Parliament, with perpetual Succession, by Name of *Fathers of the Poor*.

4. That all Constables, Churchwardens, Overseers, or other Officers in all Parishes, within the said Line, be subordinate and accountable to the said Fathers of the Poor, or their Deputies, for, or in all Things relating to the Poor.

5. That the said Fathers of the Poor may have Liberty to assess and receive into their common Treasury, for Relief of the Poor, so much Money from every Parish as they yearly paid to that Purpose, any of the three Years preceeding this Constitution, and to compel the Payment thereof, but not of more.

6. That the said Fathers of the Poor, and their Deputies, may have very large and sufficient Power in all Things relating to the Poor, and particularly to have and receive the charitable Benevolence of all
Persons,

(39)

Persons, once every Lord's Day, in every Parish, and in any other Meetings of pious Christians, and at any other Time or Times which they shall think fit.

7. That the said Fathers of the Poor, and such as they shall authorize, may have Power to purchase Lands, erect and endow Work-houses, Hospitals, and Houses of Correction, and to exercise all other Powers relating to the Poor, that any Number of Justices of the Peace may now do, in their Quarter Sessions, or otherwise.

8. That the said Fathers of the Poor may have Power to send such Poor beyond the Seas as they shall think fit, into his Majesty's Plantations, taking Security for their comfortable Maintenance during their Service, and for their Freedom afterwards.

9. That the said Fathers of the Poor may have Power to erect petty Banks, and Lumbarbs, for the Benefit of the Poor, if they shall find it convenient, and also to receive one Half of all that is paid at the Doors of the Play-houses, and have the Patent for Farthings, and to do whatever else his Majesty and the Parliament shall think fit to recommend to them, or leave to their Discretion.

10. That the Treasure that shall be collected for this Purpose, shall be accounted sacred, and that it be Felony to misapply,

D 4

conceal,

(40)

conceal, lend, or convert it to any other Use or Purpose whatsoever.

11. That there be no Oaths, or other Tests, imposed upon the said Fathers of the Poor, at their Admission, to bar our Non-conformists, among whom there will be found some excellent Instruments for this good Work, and such as will constantly attend it.

12. That the said Fathers of the Poor may constantly wear some honourable Medal, besides the green Staff, which is now used in *London* to such like Purpose, to denote their Office and Authority at all Times, and in all Places, and will be a sufficient Warrant to command Obedience from all Parish-Officers wherever they come.

13. That the said Fathers of the Poor may have Liberty to admit into their Society, and all Power and Priviledges equal with them, any Persons willing to serve God, their King and Country, in this pious and public Work, the Persons desiring to be so admitted, paying at their Admission 100l. or more, into the Poor's Treasury, as a Demonstration of the Sincerity of their Intentions.

14. That the said Fathers of the Poor, besides the Authority now exercised by the Justices of the Peace, may have some less limited Powers given them, in relation to the Punishment of their own, and Parish-Officers,

(41)

Officers, by pecuniary Mulcts for the Poor's Benefit in Case of Neglect.

15. That the said Fathers of the Poor may have Freedom to set the Poor on Work about whatsoever Manufacture they think fit, with a *non obstante* to all Patents that have been or shall be granted to any private Person or Persons, for the sole Manufacture of any Commodity.

16. That all Vacancies, by Reason of Death of any of the said Fathers of the Poor, be perpetually supplied by Election of the Survivors.

These Fathers of the Poor he proposes should be chosen at a Common Hall of the Liverymen of *London*; seventy of them to be chosen for the City, ten out of *Southwark*, for that Borough, and twenty for *Westminster*.

The Advantages accruing to the Kingdom in general, and to the Poor in particular from such a Society of Men, will be such as these. 1. The Poor, of what Quality soever, as soon as they are met with, will be immediately relieved or set on Work where they are found, without hurrying them from Place to Place, and torturing their Bodies to no Purpose. 2. Charitable minded Men will know certainly where to dispose of their Charity, so as it may be employed to right Purposes. 3. Housekeepers will be freed from the intolerable

(42)

terable Incumbrance of Beggars at their Doors. 4. The Plantations will be regularly supplied with Servants, and those that are sent thither well provided for. 5. The said Assembly will doubtless appoint some of their own Members to visit and relieve such as are Sick, as often as their shall be Occasion, together with poor labouring Families both in City and Suburbs. 6. Poor Children will be instructed in Learning and Arts, and thereby rendered serviceable to their Country.

But what shall the Poor be employed about? It is answered, that the Girls may be set to mend the Cloaths of the Aged, spin, card, or in other little Manufactures; and the Boys in picking Oakum, making Pins, rasping Wood, making Hangings, or any other Kind of Manufacture.

If it be objected that the Work may be done as well in distinct Parishes, if all Parishes were obliged to build Workhouses, and employ their Poor; as *Dorchester*, and some others, have done with good Success.

To this he answers, that such Attempts have been made in many Places, which have proved vain and ineffectual, except that of *Dorchester*, which yet signifies nothing in Relation to the Kingdom in general, because all other Places cannot do the like; nor doth the Town of *Dorchester* entertain any but their own Poor only, and
whip

(43)

whip away all others; whereas that which he designs, is to propose such a Foundation as shall be large, wise, honest, and rich enough to maintain and employ all Poor that come within the Pale of their Communication, without enquiring where they were born, or last inhabited: Which nothing but a *national*, or at least a *provincial* Purse can so well do, nor any Persons in the Kingdom, but such only as shall be picked out by popular Election.

This is Sir *Josiah's* Scheme for the Relief and Employment of the Poor; whether practicable or not, is uncertain, no Experiment having been made of it, tho' published many Years since. The Design is undoubtedly very extensive, and seems to promise great Utility both to the Nation and to the Poor, and with some Modifications and Amendments, might, I think, be carried into Execution; at least, it seems as feasible as that of the late Mr. *Fielding's*, which I shall next give an Account of.

This famous Plan, projected by Mr. *Fielding*, and approved by many Gentlemen of great Abilities in the House of Commons, was published in the Year 1753. I shall only give a Summary of its principal Contents, without entering into a minute Detail of the Particulars, but refer the Reader to the Pamphlet itself.

He

(44)

He proposes, that there shall be erected for the County of *Middlesex*, a large Building, consisting of three several Courts; the two outermost of which to be called the County-house, and the innermost, the County-house of Correction; with a Chapel and Offices. The County-house to be large enough to contain 5000 Persons and upwards, and the House of Correction 600. That a House for the Governor, and one for each of the principal Officers, shall be built, as likewise nine Houses on each Side of the County-House, for providing the Labourers and Prisoners with the Necessaries of Life.

The Commissioners for carrying this Act into Execution, or three of them, shall meet once a Week for the first half Year, and afterwards once a Fortnight, and every *Lady-Day* make up their Accounts before a Committee of the House of Commons, till 1755, and then the Commission to cease.

He then nominates the Officers who were to have the Charge of the different Inhabitants of this great Building; and the Numbers of them, if we include, as he does, the Superintendents of the Rooms, one to each, together with the Nurses, will amount to above an hundred.

That the Governor shall have very large Powers, particularly with Regard to the buying

(45)

buying Implements and Materials, for employing the People in all Kinds of Manufactures, and once a Month to hold a Market for the Disposal of such Wares.

That any Person, convicted of being a Rogue or Vagabond; may be sent to the County-House, or County-House of Correction; also Persons accused of small Thefts, and Wanderers without a Pass.

That poor Persons, having occasion to travel into another County, may have a Pass from the Magistrate, Minister, or Churchwarden of the Parish; and so for Journeymen, Servants, or Labourers, who may hire themselves to Masters in another County or Parish. But if such Pass or Certificate be counterfeited, or if the Person do not return at the Expiration of his Pass, he shall be sent to the County-House of Correction, be whipt, and remain there to hard Labour till the next Sessions.

That every Person offering himself to be admitted into the said House, shall be examined as to his Age, Ability, and Skill in any Work or Manufactures, and be entered in the Book for that Purpose, and receive the Sum of two Shillings, and so weekly, till the first Sale of the Manufacture wrought by him, but not afterwards without a special Order; such Advancements to be afterwards deducted by the Receiver, at the Rate of 4d in the Shilling, due from the Sale

(46)

Sale of the Manufacture. That Persons committed to the House of Correction shall have one Shilling at Entrance, and the same weekly afterward.

That a Person committed to the County House of Correction, shall be immediately confined in the Fasting-Room, and there to live upon Bread and Water for twenty-four Hours, and then put to hard Labour; or, if refractory, may be confined to a Cell, on Bread and Water, till he behaves better,

Rules and Orders are likewise given for Hours and Times of Worship; for Work; for Rest; and for Recreation; likewise about the Sick and Dead. Also for making up Accounts after a Sale. Teachers of Manufactures might be hired, and Labourers be let out to Service.

Conspiracies to break the said County-House, or House of Correction, to be made Felony, without Benefit of Clergy to all the Conspirators. To beat, bruise or wound any Officer, so as to endanger Life or Limb, to be made Death without Benefit of Clergy. To assault the Governor, &c. or wound any Officer in the Execution of his Office, Transportation for fourteen Years.

Frauds of Officers in making false Entries, to be punished with Transportation. Persons introducing Spirituous Liquors, guilty of a Misdemeanor, and punishable by
Fine

(47)

Fine or Imprisonment. Persons wilfully destroying, spoiling, or injuring any of the Furniture, or any of the Implements, Tools, Materials, or Stock, besides Fine and Imprisonment, may be corporally punished. Persons escaping from the County-House of Correction, to be confin'd in one of the Cells for ten Days on Bread and Water. Those that escape from the County-House, shall be committed to the House of Correction, and be whipt.

Every *Monday* and *Thursday*, the Governor or his Deputy, to hold a Court, to hear and determine the following Offences, *viz.* Quarrels amongst the Labourers, where no dangerous Hurt is done; profane Cursing and Swearing, Drunkenness, Absence from Chapel without Cause, or irreverend Behaviour there; Absence from Work, Idleness or Negligence; obstinate Disobedience to any of the Rules of the House; all which are punishable by Rebuke, small Fine, or short Confinement, but the Punishment to be increased if the Offences are repeated. The Governor, or Deputy, shall likewise enquire of all Persons who have merited Reward, and minute them in a Book, of the Conduct of all their Officers; of all Offences; of the Prices of Provisions brought into the said House, and regulate the same.

Sessions at *Hick's-Hall* to be adjourned to the Country-House, to enquire of all Neg-
lects,

(48)

lects, Corruptions or Misdemeanors in any of the Officers, and to punish them accordingly; except the Governor, Deputies, and Chaplains; also into the general Conduct of the said House; and on finding Default in the Governor, Deputies, or Chaplains, shall report it at the next Sessions at *Hicks's-Hall*, where if it be well proved, and of a heinous Nature, may report the same to the Lord Chancellor; also into the Prices of Provisions, and regulate the same; likewise into the Behaviour of the Prisoners in the House of Correction, and reward or punish as they see fit; also of the Behaviour of the Labourers confined in the County-House, and reward or punish according thereto. They shall likewise inspect all the Accounts relating to the said House, and have Power to examine on Oath the Treasurer, Receiver, Store-keeper, with their Clerks, and if they appear fair and just, shall sign them; but if otherwise, they may examine into them, and finally determine the same, and suspend or dismiss the Guilty. They may likewise order Rewards to deserving Labourers, to be paid them in open Court, and in Presence of all who are to receive any Punishment at that Time.

The Governor, or Deputy, to be always present when any are whipt. All the Officers and Ministers to be chosen at *Hicks's-Hall*, by the Majority of the Justices present,

(49)

sent, by Ballot, who shall first take an Oath to give their Suffrage without Favour or Affection, Promise or Recommendation. All Fines and Forfeitures, not otherwise disposed of, will be paid to the Treasurer for the Use of the said House. The Governor may make By-Laws, with the Consent of the Justices, and to be approved by the Lord Chancellor.

This is Mr. *Fielding's* Plan; and the Reader will observe, that it comprehends only Vagrants, Vagabonds, and those that are able to work. As to the impotent Poor, the Blind, Lame, or under any incurable Impotency, as old Age, Infancy, &c. all such he leaves to the Hospitals, Infirmaries, and various Charities, or to their own Parishes, to take Care of.

We may further observe, that in the foregoing Schemes, the Authors assert there is a Defect in the Laws, particularly in that of the 43d of *Elizabeth*, which they affirm has not sufficiently provided for the Maintenance and Employment of the different Sorts of Poor. This, however, is not allowed by some others, who seem to have examined this Matter with great Exactness; particularly by the Author of a Pamphlet entitled, *Considerations on several Proposals lately made for the better Maintenance of the Poor*; and published in 1751, two Years before the Publication of Mr.

E

Fielding's

(50)

Fielding's Plan, which he had promised in some other Tracts, and which at that Time was the great Subject of Debate in Parliament, and among the greatest Lawyers in the Kingdom. This Author disapproves a of County Work-house, and insists that the Laws now in being, particularly that of the 43^d of *Elizabeth*, if duly executed, are sufficient for the Purpose: Because a great Multitude is certainly better governed, and more easily provided for, by being divided into many subordinate Parts, than in great and unwieldy Numbers. But why has not this Method succeeded? Because nothing can succeed, however true in Principle, if it be neglected, and not put in Practice. It was this induced Judge *Hale*, Sir *Josiah Child*, and others, to think, that the Fault was in the Statues, more than in the Execution; whereas the Defect lies just the contrary Way.

His Objections to the new Scheme are, that a right Management of such Numbers got together, will be quite impracticable. The Morals of the better Sort of Poor will be corrupted by the Vagabond and the Idle. The Parishes cannot send such of the Poor thither who fall under accidental Distresses. The Charge and Trouble of Conveying backwards and forwards, those they do send, will be very great. The Accounts
between

(51)

between the Parishes and the great Corporation of the County, will be liable to Frauds without Numbers, as well as unnecessary Profusion; besides the immense Expence of Paying a little Army of Officers, for the Care of Poor of a whole County, carried into one Place.

But how was the public Peace heretofore maintained in the high Degree that makes our Histories shine in the Representation of it? Why, by dividing and sub-dividing the People into small Classes, each of which was answerable for its own Inhabitants, according to King *Alfred's* Laws. Now does not this Point out the Excellence of Queen *Elizabeth's* Law, which is a Step towards the old Method that wrought such Miracles? And can we proceed more wisely than in following that Track, till it leads us as near as possible to those Heights of good Government?

China and *Japan* are the most popular Countries in the known World, and in these Respects, are very like those of our *Saxon* Ancestors, and attended with the same good Consequences. In *China*, every Town is divided into four Parts, and those sub-divided into smaller Districts, each containing ten Houses, over which an Officer presides, who gives his Account to a Sort of Headborough, who is set over a Hundred, and makes his Returns to the Mandarines.

E. 2

If

If a Robbery is committed in the Night, the Neighbourhood must contribute to the Loss; and in every Family, the Father is responsible for his Children and Servants.

But what is all this to the Poor? It is answered, that the same Methods must be used, for the right Employment and due Maintenance, as for the good Government, of them. Queen Elizabeth's Parochial Law approaches nearly towards King Alfred's; and it is our own Fault if it does not go still nearer, and that without Innovation or Expence. And the Legislature will, no Doubt, find out the proper Way, when once convinced that the Foundation is right.

He then proceeds to make some Observations on many other Faults found with our present Statutes, and shews that the chief of those Faults may be better amended under the present Laws, than by a County Scheme.

Having explained himself very largely and judiciously on these Heads, the Author proceeds to offer a Scheme of his own, for redressing the Evils complained of, in Substance as follows.

The City of London, he observes, is already well governed with regard to the Poor, as well as in other Respects, and have a Power of correcting many Things themselves.

The

The vast out Parishes of London, and the great Parishes in Westminster, require the most immediate Relief. And for these the Methods chalked out by the antient Laws, seem the most natural and effectual.

Thus, every one of these Parishes ought to be divided by the Justices in Sessions into as many Hundreds, and these divided into as many smaller Districts, as they from Time to Time shall see proper.

Over every one of these a Tithing-man (to be a sworn Constable) should be appointed; who should constantly visit the Houses under his Care, should set down the Names of all the Inhabitants and Lodgers, with their Trades and Ways of Life, their Behaviour, and how their Children are provided for and set to work.

This Return to be made weekly to the Headboroughs, or chief Constables, and they to carry them, with their own Return of the Behaviour of the Tithingmen or petty Constables, every Month, to a special Sessions of the Justices to be held for that Purpose.

There ought to be an Overseer of the Poor for every Hundred, who should at the same Sessions bring in his monthly Account of Provision for the Poor, and of the State of such poor People.

In these great Parishes there should be one or more Workhouses for the Poor, with

(54)

with Stock to employ them in useful Labour, where the Justices and Overseers may send such as want Work, or are idle, and likewise Children not properly taken Care of by their Parents.

If the Houses of Correction are too few, more may be added; but all of them should be made Workhouses, and not merely Prisons; and an Account of them by the Masters, be monthly given, at the same special Sessions. These Houses to be visited weekly by a chief Constable, and one of the Justices, at least once a Month, and a Report made at the Sessions.

For this Purpose, an Order should be made at the Easter Sessions, in every Year, directing the holding a special Sessions in every Month, and where: And as the Justices at the General Quarter Sessions have now only 4s. a Day for their Expence, the Justices of these Special Sessions should be allowed half a Guinea a Day, to be paid by the County Treasurer; and they who do not attend, to pay half a Guinea to the same. About five Justices would do for a Special Sessions, and three of them always to attend a Court.

Reasonable Salaries for Headboroughs, or chief Constables, for the Tithingmen, or petty Constables, should be paid by the Parishes, at 5s. a Day, for one Day in the Month, when the Headborough attends the
Special

(55)

Special Sessions, and brings in his Returns; and 2s. 6d. a Day for one Day in the Week, for the Tithingmen to go round, and make their Returns to the Headboroughs. And if the Poor, who are able to work, are all kept to it, as by this Means they certainly may, the Parishes will save much more than these Salaries come to. The present Beadles may be made Headboroughs or Tithingmen, according to their Capacity.

Every Tithingman should put this Inscription over his Door, I. B. *Tithingman*, which will direct a stranger where to apply for an Officer; on seeing a strolling Vagabond, a deserted Child, or any such Object, to take care of them.

If the Overseers, or Justices, are not sufficiently authorized by the Law, to send idle Persons, or the Children of the Idle to the Parish, or other Work-houses, a Clause may be easily obtained for that Purpose.

If this Method be thought right for *Westminster*, the same may be pursued for the Counties at large; viz. the Justices, at every Quarter Sessions at Easter, may either continue the present Division of the County, or make more, if they find it convenient.

The Directions he gives to be observed in the Counties being much the same as those above for *London* and *Westminster*, it is needless to repeat them; especially as what
has

has been already said, is, I believe, sufficient to give a right Idea of the proposed Scheme. To which I shall only add from him: 'Here will be no Innovation upon our Constitution, but a nearer Approach to the Spirit and Meaning of it, and almost all in the old Forms. The Expence will not be great in the Execution of this Plan; but, on the Contrary, the general Savings to the Public will be immense, if by this Means the Poor can be well employed, and the Idle and Profligate restrained.'

Thus I have given the Reader a cursory View of all the Schemes that have been proposed for the better Regulation of the Poor, at least of such as deserve Regard from the excellent Characters of those bright Genius's who formed them. They all agree that the Poor, as well the Able as the Impotent, are an intolerable Burthen and Scandal to the Nation in general, and that hence are derived an infinite Number of Evils and Inconveniences to civil Society, and the many cruel Hardships and Sufferings which they themselves undergo. It is therefore high Time to provide a Remedy for so great a Mischiefe, which is daily growing upon us, notwithstanding all the good Laws that have been made to prevent it. The Wound must be probed to the Bottom, if we mean to prescribe an effectual Care; to skin it over

over with Lenitives will produce a worse Consequence, and only serve to promote a more violent Erruption. Let the Poor-Laws be thoroughly examined by Men of Knowledge and Sagacity; if they are not sufficient for the Purpose, let a new and good one be enacted, that will reach all Cases. If they shall be found to answer the End, let them be enforced with a vigorous Execution. But let us by all Means be careful how we break into our Constitution, by Innovations, which may be attended with dangerous Consequences.

The Parliament, about five or six Years ago, took abundance of Pains, and the best Heads among the Lawyers were employed, in finding out Methods for redressing these Grievances; but it seems the Task was too arduous for their Strength. Indeed in the Year 1751, they came to some Resolutions, which rather shew their Skill in discovering the Cause and Symptoms of the Distemper, than Ability in prescribing a proper and adequate Remedy. These Resolutions are as follow, with which I shall conclude this Essay,

13 Die Janii, 1751.

- Resolved,
- That the Provision for the Poor of England and Wales, is become a very great

F

(58)

‘ great, and is at present an increasing
 ‘ Charge on the real and personal Estates of
 ‘ the Subjects.

‘ That one great Cause of this Expence,
 ‘ is, that the vast Sums, raised for their
 ‘ Use, are in general expended on their
 ‘ mere Maintenance only, and very little or
 ‘ no Care taken to provide for their Em-
 ‘ ployment.

‘ That another Source of this great Ex-
 ‘ pence, is, the Removals of poor Persons
 ‘ from one Part of this Kingdom to another,
 ‘ as to the Place of their legal Settlements,
 ‘ and the Numbers of Controversies arising
 ‘ thereon.

‘ That another great Source of Expence,
 ‘ is, that there is in general little or no Care
 ‘ taken to educate the Children of the Poor
 ‘ in Habits of Industry, so that when they
 ‘ grow up, they are not able to provide a
 ‘ Maintenance for themselves, and so live
 ‘ in Idleness, partly thro’ Necessity, and
 ‘ consequently propagate a new Race of
 ‘ chargeable Poor.

‘ That many Parishes are too small sepa-
 ‘ rately to raise a Stock, sufficient where-
 ‘ with to employ the Poor to any Ad-
 ‘ vantage.

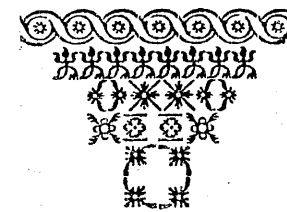
‘ That it would, in all Probability, be a
 ‘ great Means of lessening to a considera-
 ‘ ble Degree, the Charge of the Poor, and
 ‘ of greatly decreasing their Number in a
 very

(59)

‘ very few Years, if some Method should
 ‘ be agreed on to maintain and employ the
 ‘ Poor, by one common Fund in every
 ‘ County.

‘ That after such Method shall be agreed
 ‘ upon, the Repeal of the several Laws
 ‘ concerning the Settlements and Removals
 ‘ of, and Certificates for, the Poor, would
 ‘ be a Saving of very great Sums now ex-
 ‘ pended on those Occasions.’

F I N I S.



(2)

I have been thinking of you very
 much lately and wondering how
 you are getting on in every
 way. I hope you are all
 well and happy. I have
 been very busy lately but
 always find time to write
 to my friends. I hope you
 will write to me soon. I
 am always with love to
 your family.

Yours truly

John Doe

11
 12
 13