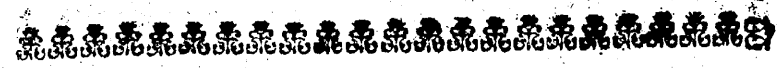
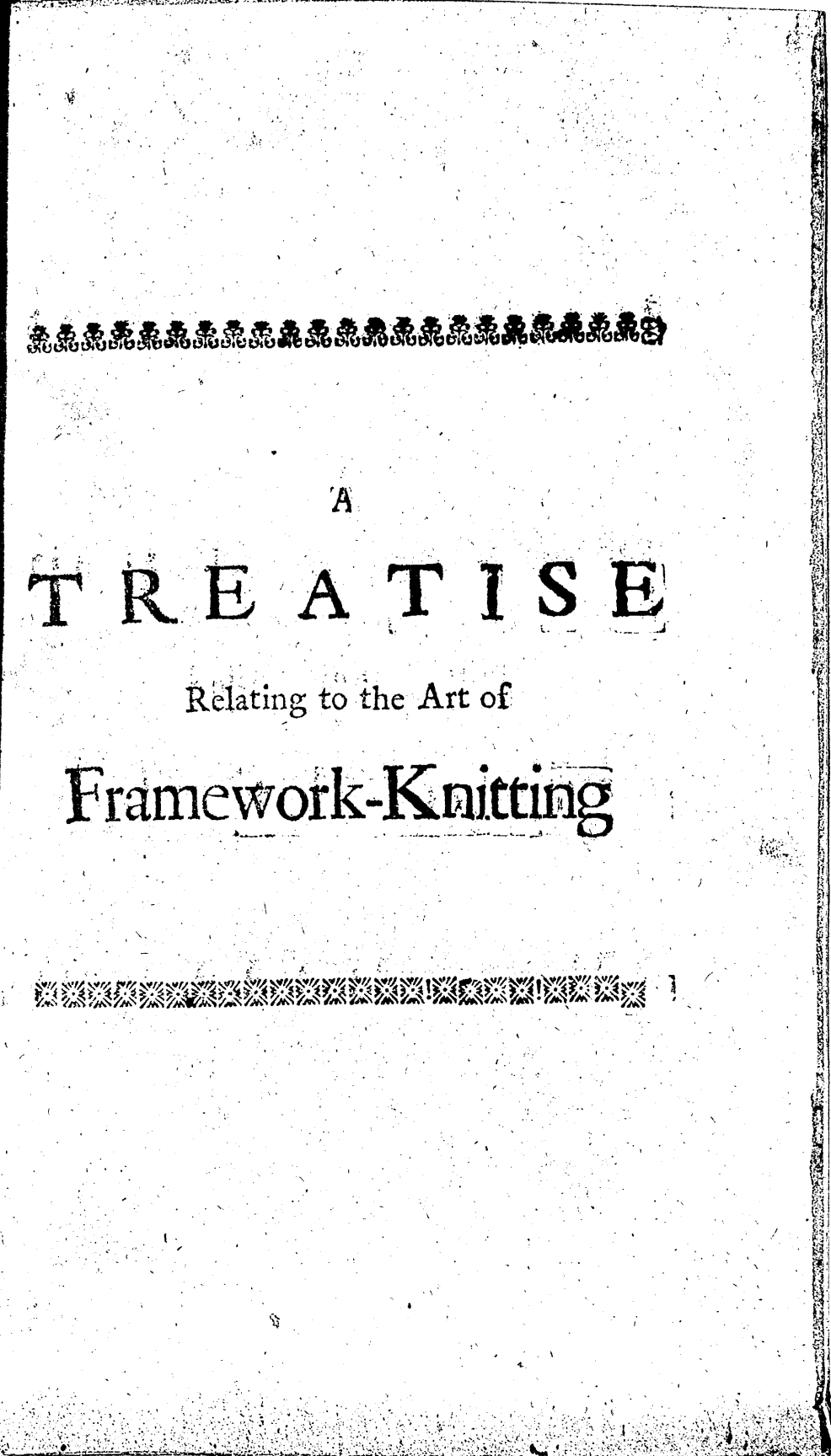
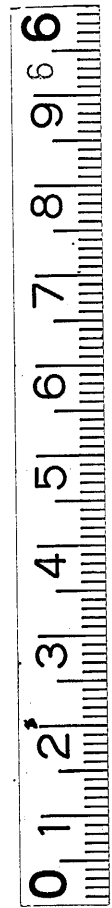


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A  
TREATISE

Relating to the Art of

Framework-Knitting



A N  
T R E A T I S E

Relating to the Art of  
Framework-Knitting;

Being an ADDRESS to all persons concerned in that Employment; wherein, amongst other Remarks never before so much as hinted to the Publick, the Reasons are made Evident to Demonstration, why the Trade is at present at so low an Ebb; and an easy Method is proposed, and at a small Expence, to redress those Grievances that have lain so long and heavy upon the Workmen, as well as upon the fair Trader.

---

By JOSEPH COLVERT, *Framework-Knitter.*

*Forſan & hæc Olim meminiffe Juvabit.*

An Hour may come, with Pleasure to relate  
Your Sorrows past, as Benefits of Fate.

*Dryd. Virg*




---

Nottingham, Printed by GEORGE AYSCOUGH  
for the Author. MDCCLXXXV.



THE  
P R E F A C E

READER,

**T**HE Treatise I present you with is entirely new, being the first of the Kind that ever yet appear'd in Print; be so candid therefore as to pardon whatever you find in it either Rude, Unskilful, or Imperfect.

The Design of it is without Dispute honest, or at leastwise, if I had not thought so, I should scarce have submitted my Sentiments to publick Censure in an Age in which to put a Man's Name to a Title Page, is one and the same Thing as if he shou'd send out a Challenge, which all manner of Persons think themselves concern'd to answer who can either Write or Read.

## The P R E F A C E.

Nay this is not the worst, for even the bare Pretences of appearing in Print, are so apt to move the Spleen, and awaken the Animadversions of Persons of all sorts, and so out of the way, and uncharitable are their unchristian Distinctions in splitting the Hair of Character, that tho' they have hitherto esteem'd the Man their Friend, yet as an Author, he is now become their Enemy. But let that happen as it will, the Dye is now thrown, and the Chance must be ventur'd.

I cou'd have been glad indeed if some abler Pen wou'd have undertook the Subject, but since (as 'tis commonly said) what is every Bodies Business is Nobodies, and since present Grievances call so loud for Redress, I am resolv'd to break the Ice, let the Event be what it will; for this Truth I am well assur'd of, viz. That I cou'd be well contented to venture out in a Storm to Sea, tho' but in a Cock-boat, if by so doing I cou'd have a Chance to serve my Country; and therefore let the Criticks raise what Storms they please about my Ears, they shall never disturb the natural Peace and Tranquility of my Soul, nor divert me from that unalterable Resolution I have taken up to use my utmost Endeavours to rescue my Countrymen from that groaning Weight of Oppression which they now lye under.

The

## The P R E F A C E.

The Reader will find in the following Pages a particular Account of our Misfortunes, and the Causes, with effectual Remedies for their Cure; and I hope I have made the Matter so plain to all Capacities, that every individual Member of our Community must be sensible, that nothing will be wanting but a little Assistance from himself to crown it with Success. And what do those Persons deserve who refuse to throw in their Mites for their own and the publick Advantage?

I am not conscious to my self that I have said any thing that can justly give Offence to any Person who means, and acts honestly; unless the Ladies happen to be displeas'd with my Observations upon Chevrons, as bearing too hard upon their favourite modern Machine of spacious Circumference the Hoop-petticoat, which (as Fame reports) tho' at first principally contriv'd to conceal a Pregnancy, yet in process of Time, it happen'd, that what was only intended to hide one Part, expos'd another, highly worthy of a Decoration; and from hence, without doubt, the Chevron took its rise. Dux Fœmina Facti.

A Woman, 'tis true, was the Cause of all this, and (as Mr. Otway has it) What mighty Ills have not been done by Woman? Nevertheless, be it far from me to quarrel with the Fair Sex upon this Account, who must stand excus'd

The P R E F A C E.

excus'd from all Malice preence in the matter; and I take this Opportunity to assure them that amongst all the Hardships we suffer, I (for my own part) esteem that the least, which employs me in adding Lustre to their beautiful Supporters; and I cou'd heartily wish they wou'd all be so obliging in return, as when they look'd upon my Clocks to think upon the Clock-maker.

But now I am got upon a Subject unawares, which I dare not enlarge further upon, not only because it is pleasing, and full of Enchantment, but because, tho I pretend to no great Matters of Skill in Writing, yet I wou'd not willingly commit that Fault so noted in Marcellus the Rhetorician, of whom it is observ'd, that when he light upon a beautiful Figure he wou'd pursue it till he quite forgot the Matter in hand.

Begging pardon therefore for this Digression, I return to recommend the following Sheets to the serious perusal of all my Brethren, wherein if they find any Thing which in their Opinion has a Tendency to the general Advantage of the whole Community, it will afford a Pleasure inconceivable to,

GENTLEMEN.

Your affectionate Brother,

And humble Servant,

J. C.



A  
T R E A T I S E

Relating to the Art of

Framework-Knitting

HAVING been long sensible as well from my own Observati- on, as from the Complaints of all honest Persons concern'd in the Art of Framework-knitting, of the many grievous Hard- ships that are daily impos'd upon us; I of late took the Matter into serious Consideration, and upon duly examining every Particular, I cannot but be of Opinion; that all these  
B Misfor-

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Misfortunes are chiefly owing to our own ill Conduct, which if continued, will bring our Affairs even to a worse Condition than they are in at present, and sink the Trade quite to nothing.

And the plain Reason is this, we have in short given up our Rights to Strangers, and to a Set of mercenary Wretches, who spirit Estates out of the Bowels of the Poor, and have now got so much of the Power into their Hands, that 'tis evident the Trade is now brought to so low an Ebb in the working Part, that it is next to Impossible for the most ready Hands to subsist in any tolerable Manner; and I am but too well assur'd that the general Part are actually in a starving Condition, and that the whole Art, which ought to be look'd upon as the most ingenious of Handicrafts in this Nation, is now of no Esteem, but despis'd as the most Ignominious of all others.

Upon this Account a general Regulation seems highly necessary, and I dare affirm is the sincere Wish of every honest Man amongst us; but I do not see how this can be brought about, unless every individual Person, or at least the greatest Part by much of our Community, be made sensible of the Reasons of the present Decay of Trade; for unless they be touch'd with a just Resentment of their Sufferings,

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ferings, it is not to be suppos'd that they will be so Zealous as they should be in embracing any Proposals for bettering their Condition.

Upon this Account, and for the sake of Order, I shall digest what I have to say into these three following Heads,

*First*, I shall make some Remarks on the former and present State of our Trade, and what Alterations it has suffer'd for the worse, from those Persons whose Honour and Interest ought to have been concern'd to support it.

*Secondly*, I shall make some general Remarks upon the Proceedings of the Masters or Employers. And

*Thirdly*, That I may not seem like some modern Innovators in Religion and Politicks, to pull down whatever they can, without building any Thing in the Room of it, I shall make such Proposals for a thorough Regulation and Amendment as may be easily put in Practice in a short Time, and at a small Expence.

As to the First of these Heads, you must agree with me, that it has been always observ'd that whilst Bands, or Societies of Men, in any Station or Condition whatsoever, have held together, and submitted themselves to

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some Laws, and Limits suitable to their Occasions; and have cemented, or knit themselves into a Body of Order, they have liv'd with most Ease, Felicity, and Security, one amongst another.

I cannot give you a more pertinent Instance to illustrate this Truth, than by putting you in mind of our own happy flourishing Condition heretofore; when by Virtue of a Grant from the Crown in the Reign of King *Charles* the 2d; we were enabled to defend ourselves from all foreign Encroachments, having Power within ourselves to punish all Offenders, I mean such as offer'd to crowd in themselves amongst us by unlawful Means. Our Trade (I say) then flourish'd as well as most of the mechanical Employments of this Nation; and what was all this owing to but Order and Discipline? That brought us into such Credit, that none but the better sort of People put out their Sons to the Business, and that, not without giving considerable Sums along with them, which was not only of immediate Service to the Master, whilst he was teaching them their Business, but likewise, having Boys out of such Families, they must be suppos'd to be better educated than ours are now a Days, and consequently were more tractable and capable of receiving good Instructions, being also, before they were admitted to the Trade, arriv'd to Years of more Discretion

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Discretion than our raw Callow Youngsters, and were therefore more likely to do a Master some real Service. The working Rates then too were sufficient to get a decent Livelihood in a reasonable Time, I mean by working twelve Hours in a Day, and if a Man cannot get a good Livelihood by any Business that is follow'd in that Time, more especially by one of so tedious a Confinement and Strefs upon the Sight as ours, I should be inclin'd to think, that same Business does not deserve a Servitude. But this is not all, for when those Boys had serv'd their Apprenticeship their Friends were then in a Capacity of putting them into a handsome Way to begin in the World, and to enable them to live in a decent Manner, out of the Reach and Lash of every pretending Coxcomb that might start up in Opposition to them: But now the Face of Affairs is quite alter'd,

*Tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis.*

For we are at this Time not only divided, but sub-divided amongst ourselves, the greatest Part of us not knowing, and the rest not considering, that a Division of every Man's Love between himself and the Publick, is due in all Societies, and that those Causes that preserve the Whole, preserve its Parts also; and that those that preserve the Parts, preserve the Whole. Wou'd they seriously consider

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sider this, we shou'd now have no Occasion to complain of so many, that breaking loose from all the Restraints of Reason, give a Power to all Persons that are willing to crowd in amongst us, and permit them to partake of our Benefits, let the Thing be never so unreasonable or unjust.

Neither is it the concern (as far as I can find) of any Persons in our Society, to procure a Revival of that Act which was of so great Service to our common Welfare, I mean that against the Attempts of those who have crept into the Business of *Framework-Knitting*, by giving the corrupted Members of it a small Sum of Money to learn their Art, without the regular Servitude of seven Years; and against such, who by taking Apprentices for the space of three or four Years, to the great Prejudice of those who have lawfully served the full Term of seven Years, and against those who take more in Number than the Laws of this Nation have ordained to other mechanical Employments, by so doing, filling the Trade too full of Hands, but with those in general of the poorest Sort in the Nation, which when they come out of their Apprenticeships are often oblig'd to work for under Rates, rather than starve, and are by these Means imposed on by the Employers to come to their Measures, let them be never so mean or unjust,

This

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This is another great Reason of the Decay of our Trade in the working Part, and such a one, as (if there were no others) wou'd be sufficient alone, in Time, to reduce the most ready and industrious Hands amongst us to bare Food and Raiment, the common Necessaries of Life; and not only so, but it has expos'd us to the common Contempt and Derision of all Mankind, and brought Matters to that pass, that no Person will put a Boy Apprentice to us, unless it be one born of poor Parents, who are oppress'd with so large a Stock of Children, that they know not how to bestow them elsewhere, unless they send them to a Workhouse, which is now almost become the same Choice in those Places where the Miseries of the working Part are known; since it is now become a perpetual Slavish Confinement, those Boys that perform an usual Task, being oblig'd to work (as several of them do) sixteen or seventeen Hours in the four and twenty, which hard Article, if they have not very good Eyes, is enough to deprive them of their Sight.

It is indeed a wonder what those Masters mean, or can propose to themselves in the Account (if they wou'd seriously reflect on their own Conduct) who never consider what will inevitably be the Consequence of suffering such Numbers to encroach daily on the Trade

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as is manifest they do: But I suppose their Views are all directed to their present imaginary Interest, without the least regard to future Contingences of any kind whatsoever; they are resolv'd in short to drive on at all Adventures, lending only a deaf Ear to all the Dictates of Reason, which (if they wou'd listen to its Admonitions) wou'd soon inform them that by taking in such Numbers, they crowd more into the Trade than by a regular Course of Service wou'd become free in several Years, and by taking them so Young, 'tis Ten to One they spend half their Time before they can be brought to any reasonable Understanding in their Business, or come to get even their own Bread, and by that time a Master shou'd have any Benefit of them, they become free.

'Tis further observeable, that by admitting such poor Boys, and at such an Age when they ought to have been under the Discipline of other Instructors, the Boys themselves are under an indispensable Necessity to continue in a State of substantial Ignorance for Life, which makes them often very Troublesome in their Places, and by being so very close confin'd in their Business, they learn nothing more than the slavish Drudgery of it, with which they are so gaul'd, and haras'd, that when they come to their Liberty, they rather chuse to list them-

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themselves into some poor unprofitable Employment that may be taken up, and laid down again at any Time, than to submit to their former Slavery and Confinement, without the least Hopes of any suitable Encouragement.

And then what proves the greatest Inconvenience and Misfortune of all the rest is, that as most other Handicraft Trades require but a moderate Sum of Money to begin with, ours require a much larger Expence than these Persons at a Time when they most need it can be Masters of, for it is more than a Peradventure, that they are not then able, either out of their own small Stock, or even from the united Interest of all their Friends to muster up such a Sum as may be then wanting.

These Things being consider'd, what a forlorn Prospect before him has any young Person in these Circumstances, who is just releas'd from the more than Egyptian Slavery of an Apprenticeship? He must find to his Sorrow, when he reflects, that the Season of his Life is now lost in which he might have been moulded for greater Purposes to serve either his Country or himself, but that now, he is put into a State of Beggary without Reprieve, for having no ready Money to set up withal in his Business in which he was educated,

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educated, he must be oblig'd, that he may keep Body and Soul together, to hire what Frames he has occasion for of the Extortioners; which one single Article is enough (if he were not so already) to make him, and keep him Poor, to his Lives end.

These Articles, Gentlemen, are very great Cuts upon our Business, but great as they are, those are not less, which I propose to lay before you under the second Head of my Remarks, and these relate to some Proceedings of the *Masters* or *Employers*.

There are several (God forbid I shou'd say all) of these Employers, who have intruded into our Business without either Right to it, or true Notion of it, any further than what they have pick'd up from the Common-Place Lectures of some pragmatical Blockhead of the Fraternity, who turns Tutor to them upon this Subject, either to insinuate himself into their good Graces, or upon a Promise in return, of great Benefits in his own Business, or perhaps, in order to be promoted Pimp Extraordinary of their Undertakings.

These Masters then not Understanding the Trouble and Fatigue of the Working Part, nor willing to inform themselves in it any further than in what relates to their insatiable Desire of Gain; advance their first Step, by engrossing

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engrossing a Set of Workmen, and getting a Quantity of Goods made at common Rates, then they fall out in pursuit of Chapmen, some of which understanding the Business a great deal better than they do, beat down the Prices in spite of their Teeth, till at last, fearing they shou'd overstand their Market, they bargain, sign and deliver, at a much cheaper Rate, than the fair Trader can afford to do; however, this is a President for the next that comes, that they can buy so and so. Then the next Thing in Course is, when these Masters come home, the Times are very bad, and they must settle the Working Part, or else (say they) this Trade will never do.

This makes those Masters who are more knowing, and of fairer Principles, oblig'd to settle Rates as they do in their own Defence, for they must otherwise quit their Livelihood, and Right of Business, to a Pack of Canibals, who for want of Courage, are worse than Highwaymen, but no better without it than errant Pickpockets.

Another Artifice of the Monopolizer, is to call a Counsel, (that is to say) of the neighbouring Employers of his own Kidney, to enquire what Rates they give for such and such sorts of Goods, and if they give more than he, they are sure to be call'd to severe Account, and to be tax'd with a great Breach of good

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Management ; for he tells them, that he can have them made at a much cheaper Rate, and being Chairman of the Company, he proceeds in his Doctrine, by adding, that he has been acting the Spy upon the Circumstances and Temper of the Workmen, and that he finds upon Examination, that they are not only extremely Poor, but miserably divided amongst themselves, and that therefore this is the only Time to strike a Blow with one consent, by taking all Advantages of their present urgent Necessities, for by this Means, Gentlemen, (lays he) we can bring them to what Terms we please ; I have already taught them the hungry Proverb, viz. *that half a Loaf is better than no Bread.* And if you will take my Advice, we'll bring them to quarterly Allowance, and there we'll hold them,

This is the Substance perhaps of a long Harangue, which as it favours of immediate Profit, is swallow'd, and gorg'd, by this *Gotham Assembly*, who have hitherto remain'd in profound Silence, and gaping and staring Admiration at the Sagacity and Eloquence of Mr. Speaker ; yet no sooner is his Speech ended, but every Man bursts out into Expressions of Thankfulness for his wise and beneficial Instructions, and being good and true Men as ever were pannell'd on a Jury, unanimously order the Thanks of the whole House may be given  
him

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him for the same ; after which the Company breaks up, and (we will suppose) each married Man returns home to his Spouse, whom he immediately acquaints, that he has heard such good News, that he can afford to get her a Boy upon it, she of Course is out of all Patience to know what this News shou'd be ; whereupon, he then imparts to her all the Droppings he has catch'd from the gracious Lips of the Chairman, then hurries her to Bed, and *Hymen's* Rights being perform'd with more than ordinary Devotion, he composes himself to Sleep, and Dreams of golden Mountains.

Then as for Stories invented to support their Scheme, and delude these poor Wretches, they have set Places, and set Days, in which they spread them abroad, and in setting these of with an Air of Plausibility, they have a great deal more Art, than they have in the main Occasion for, as being concern'd with a Race of Mortals of such narrow Education, and of so little Discernment, that they can make them swallow, and digest, the most monstrous Absurdities, as for Instance, how cheap Stockings are made in the unknown Part of the World, and that the Inhabitants of *Terra Incognita* slip into *England* in the Night, and run away with our Wool, which when made into Stockings, the Merchants can buy great Quantities of them for almost nothing,  
because

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because the Natives of the Place live upon Roots, and consequently can afford them cheaper.

With such bald disjointed inconsistent Trumpery as this they easily throw a Mist before the Eyes of these poor ignorant Creatures, with whom they give themselves no further Trouble, reserving what they have to say that looks more plausible, for those Persons they happen to meet with of greater Penetration, for they have Stories calculated for all sorts of People, which tho' all equally false, yet have some of them Art enough in their Contrivance to deceive some Persons, who one wou'd imagine, shou'd have more Wit than to listen to them; tho' to do the others Justice, 'tis agreed on all Hands, that they have made such wonderful Improvements of late in the fruitful Study of Invention, and are arriv'd at such a modest Assurance, that 'tis thought they far exceed the most eminent Stockjobbers upon the Royal Exchange in their impudent boasting Pretences to Foreign Correspondence, and private Letters of Intelligence from all Parts of Christendom.

Another clandestine Practice much in vogue, is, when a poor Workman, of mean Circumstances, and meaner Spirit, perhaps owing chiefly to his Circumstances, comes into the Ware-

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Warehouse with his Work, 'tis then but too observeable, with what Coldness and Indifference he is entertain'd with, and how well the Master (knowing the Temper, and miserable Circumstances of this forlorn Wretch) acts the Tyrant; whilst he struts about his Warehouse, in a pretended Passion that the Goods are no better; and resolving to find Fault with every thing, and like nothing, the poor Fellow at length is so damp'd, and dumbfounded, with his Cavils, that approaching nearer him (tho' trembling) he whispers, in a low submissive Voice, and says, *Sir, pray take them, and I will rather abate something of the Price than loose your Favour.* This is all the other waited for, and the Bargain being thus struck up, he sets the Dice upon him, and brings him to his own Terms; then laying him down a poor scandalous under Price upon the Board, which is a Shame even to Name, and much more to Practice, he puts on a Smile to clear up his Countenance, and assures him, that it is by no means his Delight to abridge him in any respect; for he had much rather at any time give a better Price for Goods of ready Sale. Thus is Mr. Tate's Observation quite inverted, who says,

Pharaoh's *lean Kine devour'd the Fat,*

FOR

Now, *The Fat devour the Lean.*

But

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But as these Truths are by sad Experience too well known amongst ourselves, I need not enlarge further upon them.

I am abundantly sensible, there are several honest ingenious knowing Men in the Station of Employers, who have an utter Abhorrence to such Male-Practices, (as before-mention'd) and such, I am well assur'd, wou'd be willing to fulfil the good old Proverb, *Live and let Live*, if it were not for others, who under-tell them, and endeavour to engross their Chapmen with obliging them with larger Points, and Chavrons, which must be had it seems now a Days; or no Lady can be equipt for either Ball or Masquerade, tho' the poor Workman is scarce consider'd a Farthing extraordinary for his Labour: But this comes of Hoop-Petticoats.

I hope however these honest Gentlemen will not endeavour to obstruct this our good Design, but will rather lend us their helping Hands, when they are so good as to consider, that the sole End of it is to bring our Business into such Order amongst ourselves, as that with our united Forces we may be able to resist the prevailing Tyranny of these merciless Oppressors, and by that means prevent such Wholesale Dealers (unless to their own Detriment) from under-selling one another, And  
if

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this is effected, all impartial Judges must allow, that it will prove a great Support to all Persons employ'd in the working Part of our Business, of singular Service to the fair Trader; and I am sensible of no Detriment to the Publick.

And now I hope I have given the Reader ample Satisfaction in relation to the two first Promises I made him in the Preface to this Treatise, viz. To give him a particular Account of our Misfortunes, and their Causes; but I am not ignorant, that the great Demand is yet behind, for we are all but too sensible of our Misfortunes, at many Times when the proper Remedies lye remote and conceal'd from us; and therefore the Cure of these Evils is what the Reader depends upon me for, and I must tell him plainly, in this Case, (if my Endeavours are crown'd with Success) I shall have as much Reason to depend upon him in some Respects, as he will upon me in Others; that is to say, as he may be indebted to me for the Hints he receives from this rude Essay, so I shall be equally oblig'd to him for his Zeal, and best Endeavours in either pursuing the Directions I have laid down, or for obliging the Publick with others in their stead, of more general Advantage.

In the Scheme which I propose to lay before the Reader, I do not pretend to remove any  
D Persons

Persons (which some falsely suppose may be done) I mean such as have already intruded into the working Part of our Business by such clandestine Means as I have before mention'd, but to bring them into the same Freedom for the present, as those of lawful Servitude; hoping they will be as ready to embrace any Thing that hath a Tendency to Order, and their future Safeguard, as the rest of our Brethren.

And as our Business is carry'd on chiefly by pretty large Numbers together in great Towns and Villages adjacent, I suppose them very easily to be regulated by common Consent, or the general Part, in the Manner following, viz. To form ourselves into certain Districts, or Divisions, as thus,

For the County of Nottingham { Town of Nottingham.  
And  
Mansfield.

For the County of Derby, { Town of Derby,  
Bakewell,  
Chesterfield,  
And  
Alfreton.

For

For the County of Leicester, { Town of Leicester  
Mountsorrel,  
Loughborough,  
Hinckley,  
And  
Asby-de-la-zouch

For the County of Northampton, { Town of Towcester.

For Middlesex, { London.

For Surrey, { Godlyman.

The next Thing propos'd is, that in these Divisions Five sufficient Persons be chosen at the Discretion of the Members of our Community, to meet four Times in the Year on certain Days appointed; and sit as Regulators of the whole Body, and each Division to have two Stewards yearly chosen by the Voices of the Members, which Stewards shall attend the Regulators at the Place or House they shall appoint for such Sittings, and each Member shall enter his Name, and the Names of his Apprentices, into the Stewards Book of the Division wherein he resides; and each Master and Journeyman shall pay Six-pence each into the Stewards Hands, to have their Names register'd

gister'd, and shall in return receive from the Stewards, a Certificate printed upon Parchment, the Form whereof may be seen in the following Articles, sign'd by the Regulators, or the Majority of them, of each Division, to enter him a free Member of the Trade for the Time to come. And it is further propos'd, that from that Time forward, no Master shall employ any Person as Journeyman, without such Certificate.

As to the Money received by the Stewards, it must be laid out in a Register Book, in printing Certificates, and other necessary Charges, the Particulars of all which, they are to stand accountable for to the Members concern'd in each respective Division; and if any Money shall remain after these necessary Expences shall be discharg'd, it is propos'd, that the same shall be lodg'd forward in the Hands of the aforesaid Stewards, and Regulators, towards raising a common Stock for Uses hereafter mention'd.

I likewise propose, that each Member shall pay Twelve-pence per Quarter for himself, and Six-pence for each Apprentice, for the support of these common Stocks; which will soon raise very large Sums, and will scarce be felt even by the poorest of our Members, at least when they come to consider, how well it may be apply'd for the general Advantage of

the whole Community; which I suppose, by a moderate Computation, to be at least twenty Thousand of what we call Freemen, that is, Masters and Journeymen employ'd in the working Part of our Business, which twenty Thousand at Twelve-pence per Quarter amounts to the Sum of Four Thousand Pounds per Annum.

I likewise propose that each Apprentice shall be bound by an Attorney or proper Person for the Term of seven Years at least, and that the Quarter-Day ensuing, his Master shall present him and his Indentures before the Regulators and Stewards of his Division, for them to see that such Indentures are made good, for the full Term aforesaid; and the Master shall pay one Shilling into the Stock, for the Register of such Apprentice. And that each Apprentice when he becomes Free shall receive a Certificate printed upon Parchment to certify his lawful Servitude, (the Form in the Articles) sign'd by the Master he serv'd, and the Regulators of the Division he serv'd in, for which Certificate he shall pay two Shillings and Six-pence into the common Stock, and no Member to Employ him without such Certificate.

The Quarterage, Registers, and Certificates of Apprentices will amount yearly to a considerable

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derable Sum, and greatly augment the common Stocks.

And in the next Place, as soon as a sufficient Sum is rais'd by the aforesaid Means, which may be easily known by the Stewards from one Division to another of the Strength of their several Stocks, each Division contributing an equal Share, according to their Power. It is then propos'd that the Regulators and Stewards of each Division join their Interest in the Measures they shall think most proper to pursue towards obtaining an Act of Parliament for the support of our Trade.

I have here digested some proper Articles, because no Order can be kept where Rules are not observ'd; not that I am so vain as to propose the following as Standards to all Futurity, let them only take Place till better are establish'd by common Consent as wiser Heads shall think proper, or the Alteration of our Circumstances may determine, and I shall rest satisfied.

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## The ARTICLES

*Imprimis.*

THAT there shall be five sufficient and knowing Men chosen amongst the Fraternity of Framework-knitters, in this DIVISION of ----- to meet together as Regulators of these our honest Designs, and these Men to be Establish'd during Life or their own Pleasure, Except any just Cause be given against any for his Removal: and at the Death or Removal of any of them, that another shall be chosen in his Room at the Discretion of the Stewards then in Office.

*2dly.* That there shall be two Stewards Annually chosen of Men selected out of the Society, at the Discretion of the Members; which Stewards, shall attend these Regulators at the Place appointed; who shall receive the Subscriptions, and make regular Entries of the Subscribers Names, and of Apprentices Names, and of all the Money Received; and shall from Time to Time, make all necessary Payments out of the Stock; and give up to the Regulators a true Account of all the Money received and paid during their Stewardships, which Accompts, shall be liable to Inspection of every Subscriber, and the said Regulators shall allow all just Objections to any such Accompts.

*3dly.*



3dly. That every Member shall subscribe Six-pence for Entering his Name in the Stewards Book.

4thly. That the Times appointed for the meeting of the Regulators and Stewards shall, for special Sittings, be but once in three Kalender Months, that is, *Midsummer-day, Michaelmas-day, New-Years-day, and Lady-day*; and at every one of these Quarterly Days, every Member shall bring or send one Shilling for Himself, and Six-pence for each Apprentice, to be paid into the Stock for the Uses hereafter mentioned.

5thly. That every Subscriber to the Stewards Book shall receive a Certificate, printed on Parchment, to enter him as a Freeman to the Trade for the Time to come, sign'd by the Regulators of the DIVISION; and no Member to Employ any Person as Journeyman without such Certificate, which Certificate shall hold good throughout the whole Fraternity.

The Form of the Certificate.

*These are to Certifie that A. B. of C. B. in the County of \_\_\_\_\_ and DIVISION of \_\_\_\_\_ is duly admitted a Member of the Fraternity of Framework-knitters, and that the said A. B. is well qualified to follow the said Art.*

Sign'd and allow'd by E. F. G. H. &c.  
Regulators.  
6thly

6thly. That no one Member of our Community shall for the Time to come be allow'd above two Apprentices at one Time, and those lawfully bound by some Attorney, or proper Person, for the full Term of Seven Years at least; and that the Master shall present such Apprentice and his Indentures to the Regulators and Stewards of his *Division* the next Quarter-Day ensuing after such Apprentice is bound, for them to judge of the Validity of such Indentures, to see they are made for the full Term aforesaid; and the Master shall pay one Shilling into the Stock for the Registring of such Apprentice; and upon Neglect, upon Information given by any one Member, he shall be oblig'd to pay ----- Shillings into the Stock.

7thly. That the eldest Son of every Freeman that is put to the Trade shall be Register'd in the Stewards Book of that DIVISION whereunto he belongs, for which he shall only pay Six-pence into the Stock, and only such eldest Son to be admitted Free of the Trade by his Father's Indentures; the others, if put to the Trade, to be bound and serve a regular Apprenticeship.

8thly. That no Member of our Community shall, for the future, take into his Service, or entertain any Apprentice who has absented himself from his lawful Master; for if it can be  
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prov'd that any one doth entertain any such Apprentice, he shall, upon Information of any one Member, be prosecuted out of the common Stock of the DIVISION wherein he resides, as the Law directs in such Cases.

9<sup>thly</sup>. That when each Apprentice becomes Free, he shall have a Certificate from the Stewards of that DIVISION wherein he serv'd his Apprenticeship, printed upon Parchment, to testify his lawful Service, for which Certificate he shall pay two Shillings and Six-pence into the common Stock; and that no Member shall employ him without such Certificate.

#### The Form of the Certificate.

*These are to Certifie that A. B. of C. D. in the County of \_\_\_\_\_ and DIVISION of \_\_\_\_\_ hath justly and faithfully serv'd me as my Apprentice, in the Art of Frame work-knitting, for the space of seven Years, according to his Indentures; and that he is well qualified to follow the said Art.*

Sign'd, E. F. Master.

Allow'd by G. H. J. K. &c, Regulators.

10<sup>thly</sup>. That no Member of this Society employ any Person as Journeyman, unless he will consent to pay one Penny per Week into the Stock of that Division; which such Master shall receive and be accountable to the Stewards for the same, during such Journeyman's Abode with him.

11<sup>thly</sup>

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11<sup>thly</sup>. That if the Stewards, or Persons intrusted with the publick Cash, offer to embezel the same, and are detected of applying it, or any Part of it, to any other Uses than those hereafter mentioned, or to such as the Society shall at any Time appoint, these Persons shall be prosecuted by the Members of the Society for thus fraudulently abusing the general Trust and Confidence repos'd in them.

12<sup>thly</sup>. That there shall be a Book of By-Laws annexed to these our Articles, containing such other Articles as the Regulators and Stewards of the Societies shall think necessary to be added, as different Times and Circumstances may direct to carry on our main Design.

13<sup>thly</sup>. That no By-Law shall be entered into the Book design'd for that Purpose, without communicating the same from one Division to another, to pass a general Approbation before such Article be inserted.

We the Members of this Society judging these Articles to be for the general Good and Support of our Trade of a *Hosier*, or *Frame-work-knitter*, do hereby severally Promise faithfully to keep and observe the same.

These Articles, I think, will be sufficient for the present, which are chiefly calculated to con-

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tracted

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tract Expences as much as possible, and for that Reason it may be observ'd, that I have made as few *Divisions* as the Nature of the Thing will bear; because it being suppos'd that these Regulators and Stewards must have some Allowance made them for their Trouble, and loss of Time, the fewer *Divisions* there are, the less Expence it will be upon the Stock, and consequently we shall have more Money in Bank, not only to defray necessary Expences, but enable us to do such Deeds of Charity, as may distinguish our Characters, and cause our Memories to be esteem'd.

And now I mention Charity, which (it is said) begins at home, give me leave to observe what a large Field we have lying before us, amongst the distress'd Members of our Community, for the Exercise of this most exalted Christian Virtue; the Parishes wherein our Manufactory is chiefly carried on, are in general stock'd with such Numbers of poor and indigent Members of our Community, that it is well known, several young Persons who are married, tho' they have but a small Stock of Children, are very often beholden to the Parishes where they live, for the Payment of their House-Rent, or Frame-Rent, and sometimes both, even when they have been in full Employ, and have us'd their utmost Care and Diligence to prevent it.

This will appear no strange Thing, if it is consider'd

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consider'd, that in the Woollen Branch of our Business, a Country Stocking-maker (generally speaking) cannot by his utmost Industry, earn above Five Shillings per Week; nay, several to my Knowledge cannot get above Four Shillings, taking one Week with another, when a Deduction therefore is made from this, of Frame-Rent, Needles, Seaming, and Candles, the whole of which will amount at least to 1 s. 6 d. per Week, let any impartial Person judge, how any Person, out of the Remainder, can be able to support a Family, or even himself in a single State. It is therefore propos'd, that the Money that remains after necessary Expences are defray'd, be employ'd in relieving the Necessities of the poorer Sort amongst us. How easy a Thing wou'd it be, and how great an Act of Charity, upon due Information of the Character and Circumstances of any poor Member of our Society, to order a Frame to be bought for him (if he wants one) out of the Stock of his *Division*, and to allow him seven Years time to pay the Money back into the Stock, provided he gives good Security to the Regulators and Stewards for the said Frame, during the Term of Years aforesaid? I am content at present, that I may not quite tire my Readers, to mention but this single Instance, tho' I am sensible there are many other Opportunities of doing good afforded us by this Scheme, even such, as will not only raise us to a wealthy and happy State of Independency, but

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but will set our Names high in the Annals of Fame, and make our Memories last as long as the *Sun, Moon, and Stars* endure.

P O S T S C R I P T.

**I**T has just occur'd to me, that it may not be improper to inform my Readers before I take my Leave of them, that,

As the making a good Commodity is without Dispute the main Support of any Trade whatsoever, so undoubtedly, the making, or vending of a bad one, must have the quite contrary Effect. To confirm this Truth, I need only appeal to yourselves, who are all but too sensible, that the making of slight Goods has been of the greatest Prejudice to us imaginable; for by this Male-practice alone, our Rates of others are not only lessen'd, but we have lost our Reputation into the Bargain; for our National Trade diminishes upon this Account, which puts a great Stop to the Consumption of our Wool. There are (I affirm) at this Time, several thousand Dozens of Stockings made in such a slight scandalous Manner, that Wool uncomb'd, is Weight for Weight, better than they, notwithstanding they have gone thro' so many Hands, and at so great an Expence to fit them for the Market. I cannot say indeed, but this may be in some Measure owing to the Ignorance of those Persons that intrude into our Business, either as to the working Part, or in the way of Employers, very few of whom ever arrive to the Knowledge

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Knowledge of either making or understanding a good Commodity. But the Practice of making bad Goods, does not only impose upon that Branch of Trade which makes them better, but it likewise takes in a great many of our Chapmen, who are not skilful enough to discover their true intrinsic Value, and for this Reason many honest Tradesman into whose Hands such bad Goods have fall'n, have had their Shops mark'd with an ill Character, and some have been entirely ruin'd upon this very score. It is certain that one Dozen of well made Frame-Stockings, will weigh near as much as two Dozen of bad ones; and this is a Truth which is not hid from our Correspondents abroad, for it is not many Years ago, that the sending so many bad Stockings amongst them, occasion'd such a Stop in Trade, that few Frames were half employ'd, and many Families driven to great Distress, and oblig'd to shift for themselves. Had those Stockings therefore been well made, and sold as soon as made, they might have made way for many thousand Dozens of others of equal Goodness; and this wou'd have made much more for the Advantage, and Credit of Trade, and in all Probability, for the Consumption of ten times as much Wool.

Indeed in the silk Branch of our Business the *French* have much the Advantage of us, the Duty on Silk, to us being so considerable; that they may afford their Silk Stockings something cheaper than we can, tho' we far exceed them

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in the Workmanship, and have now brought that to the greatest Perfection the World can boast of. But,

As his present Majesty, has (out of his most liberal Bounty and christian Charity) given such great Encouragement to the Peopling of the new Colony of *Georgia in South Carolina*, we may in a few Years, by the Blessing of God, and the Industry of the People, raise a Silk Factory there, in as great Perfection, as in any known Part of the World, which may be a Means of restoring so ingenious a Part of our Business, as that is, which is now so reduced in the working Part, that it is scarce worth the following.

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E R R A T A.

*Preface p. 3. l. 3. for the r. their; p. 9. l. 11. for require r. requires; p. 15. l. 30. add Kine.*

