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METHO

FOR THE

Regular Management OF THOSE

SOCIETIES,

CALL'D

BOX-CLUBS:

Laid down in fuch plain and easy TERMS, as observ'd, will settle and preserve the Tranquillity of the SOCIETY, instruct the Ignorant, satisfy the Curious, and maintain a just Oeconomy among Friends and Acquaintance, who mutually agree in these Proceedings, which are no less an Advantage to the Publick, than a true Sign of a Spirit of Humanity.

To which is added.

A COPY of ORDERS abstracted from the most regular Societies in London, with proper Remarks, advantageous Proposals and Methods for Security for the BOX: Forms of Bonds for Money lent out, and feveral useful Observations for the Benefit of Societies in general, and every Member in particular.

L O N D O N:

Printed for, and Sold by T. Read, in White Fryers, Fleet-street; J. Roberts, in Warwick-Lane; J. Jackson, near St. James's Palace; A. Dodd, at the Peacock without Temple Bar; E. Nutt, and A. Smith, at the Royal Exchange; S. Chastel, in Spittlefields, and by the Booksellers of London and Westmin-(Price 6 A fer. M.DCC.XXVIII.

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METHOD

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Regular Management

OF THOSE

SOCIETIES, &c.

T is the Opinion of several of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace, that there never was a more advantageous Scheme drawn by industrious handicraft Tradesmen, than by raising of those Societies, call'd BOX-CLUBS, which not only keep some Hundreds in a Year from being burdensome to the several Parishes within the Bills of Mortality, but give private Men a publick Spirit. By an Observation of the Calamities and Disasters which daily happen among such a Community of Men,

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it necessarily stirs them up to a Value for their Constitution, by seeing others in a Bed of Sickness, and gives them a View of Providence by a Support that is provided for the Industrious.

It was the Saying of Sir Isaac Tillard to one, who complain'd of the Outrages that too often happen in these Societies, for want of regular Proceedings, If these Societies were to be discouraged or put down, I fear the Parishes would too soon feel the unhappy Effects of it; and tho' mean Men, who have but mean Apprehensions, now and then fall into light Disorders, yet we had much better bear with those, than a thousand other more burthensome Inconveniencies.

Now, to prevent such Extravagancies and Disorders, as frequently happen for want of good Decorum, and a right Understanding, I have made it my Business for some Months past, to search into the several Methods and different Managements of these Societies, and from the whole have drawn the following Observations, which I hope will be of Use and Advantage to the Publick.

It is the unhappy State of these Societies, that they are composed of Men of different Years, Constitutions and Tempers, old and young, wise and otherwise; so that when a Pro-

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Proposition is started by a Man, who is of a more penetrating Genius than the rest. presently some pragmatical Coxcomb, who is proud of hearing his own dear Self speak, with a bellowing Noise, shall declaim against him, only out of a Spirit of Contra, diction. This immediately puts the whole Room into Confusion, so that another who has fomething to advance for the Good of the Society, modestly holds his Tongue, that he may avoid the like ill Treatment; and thus through the contentious Spirit of some ignorant Blockhead, the chief Design of their coming together shall be disappoin, ted. But to put a stop to such Proceedings, if an Article was made, that no one Mem, ber should directly answer or oppose another, but give his Sentiments to the Stewards or Clerk nominated for that purpose, who should with an audible Voice declare the Opinion of such a Person, then the rest would keep Silence, with more Ease by half, than if every one has Power to make a perfonal Objection: Besides, when Liberty is given for such an Objection to be made as aforesaid, he that makes a Proposal, shall at once have 20 or 30 Antagonists upon him; some out of a Dislike to what he has said, others out of private Picque to his Person; so that in this Case it is impossible to keep a Regularity, or to preserve the least Harmony.

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But the Method which I propose, that the Person, who does not approve of any Proposition made, should give his Opinion to the Stewards or Clerk, who are to deliver it to the Society, would at once take off the Edge of Strife and Contention, and introduce things in a clear Light, to the entire Satisfaction of every peaceable Member. But here an Objection will start, and indeed fomething reasonable; which is this, As one Member has the same Right to anfwer as another, suppose 20 or 30 Men should at once demand of the Stewards or Clerk to inform the Society of their different Opinions, what Method must be taken, and how shall one Man more than another make the Stewards or Clerk express his Sentiments?

To which I answer. As every Member's Name, with the Time of his Entrance, is set down upon the Books, I cannot propose any thing more consistent with Reason, than that he should have Power to put the Question first, who stands first upon the Book; for the longer any one has been a Member, the better acquainted he should be with such Rules, as are proper to be laid down for the Good of the Society.

By this Method, when every Member of the Society is met together on a Quarter-

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ly-meeting, for the Dispatch of Business, Things will be carried on with so much Ease, and settled with so much Discretion, that Contumacy, Contradiction, and unnecessary Wrangling, will be entirely banished out of the Society; and instead thereof, such Decency and Order established, as will make these Societies as agreeable as they are profitable: Whereas on the contrary, the Disturbance which daily happens for want of such a Method, gives the greatest Uneasiness to all quiet Men, and deters others from entring into these Communities.

THE next thing I would premise, is the Advantages which accrue to these Societies, from their chusing a Committee, to ease the Society of the Trouble of deciding petty Differences, that happen among private Members, and contriving such Rules and Methods as may tend to their placing things on a right Basis.

It is true, when a Committee is invefted with Authority to make Articles, by which the Society is to be governed, as the Method is in some Societies, it is attended with innumerable Inconveniencies; for by this Rule, a select Number of Men shall have it in their Power by acting independant of the rest, to involve them in inextricable Labyrinths, and introduce private

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Designs and partial Proceedings. But the Method I shall propose will not only make a Committee safe, but serviceable.

In the first Place, If any Member shall refuse or neglect paying such Forfeits as fall upon him by the Breach of any Article, and shall have a reasonable Plea for so doing, it would be barbarous in the Society to exclude fuch a Member without a hearing, and it would be troublesome to the Society, if at a Quarterly-meeting, the whole Time must be taken up in the Decision of such Controversies; it is to be hoped, that there is not a Society in London of this Nature, but has a regard to Justice, as well as the Good of one another; and therefore it is reasonable, that no Member should be excluded till he has been examined, which Examination being referr'd to the Committee will make it more easy to the Society, who feldom have the Opportunity of meeting all together; when they do, they generally have Matters of greater Consequence before them.

ANOTHER Advantage which a Committee may bring to a Society, is by examining the Book, and having a faithful Account from the Stewards before others are chosen, or the *Monday* following; for otherwise the Society, by reposing too much Con-

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Confidence in the Stewards and Clerk, may be fairly bamboozled without knowing any thing of the matter; a Crime which is too often practis'd in some Societies. And to make this Examination plain and easy, it would be necessary that the Chairman of the Committee should have an Account given him every first Monday in the Month (or when their Meeting is) of the Money which has been received in the foregoing Month, of the Forfeits that have been made, and of the Money which has been paid to fick Members; which Accounts being compared with the Books on a Quarterly-meeting, it will be impossible, that either the Stewards or Clerk, should have it in their Power to wrong the Society; provided at the same time, the Foreman of the Committee calls every Member that has been fick, and asks him what Money he has received, otherways the Stewards may reckon a Man two Weeks Sickness, who has received only for one; but this Method being taken, will clear all Doubts, and give a general Satisfaction to the Society. And to prevent any Member's coming into the Society, who is above Age, or has any Infirmity of Body, it is necessary, that no Member should be enter'd but on a Committee Night, with their Confent, and on a Quarterly-meeting be presented to the whole Society for their general Confent and Approbation: For

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want of fuch a Rule as this, I have known a Society of two Years standing, have more old Men in it than one of twenty Years standing, who took such necessary Precautions; for where the Stewards and Clerk have Power to enter a Member of themselves, it is more easy to let in an old Friend, or lame Acquaintance, than it is to get rid of them. And it often happens, that if afterwards, fuch a Person is excepted against, through Age or Infirmity, yet he is considered as a good Companion, one that has been in some time, and fuch fair Pretences, till the Society feel the Effects of their Folly by the Charge it brings; and then such a one must either be barbaroully turn'd out after he has been accepted, or be kept in, to drain and exhaust the Stock of the Society; which Inconveniency may be easily prevented, if the Committee examine into his Age and State of Health, and then present him to the Society before he is accepted as a Member. Thus far I look upon a Committee as highly ferviceable to a Society; but would not advise the trusting them with the intire Management of all Things belonging to the Society, left they should incroach upon their Privilege, and run the Society into more Disorders by their Authority, than would have otherways hapned, had there been no Committee at all to govern them; nor is it reasonable that a Committee

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mittee should sit above one quarter, or half a Year at farthest; for it would not only be a Hardship to those who are chosen for that Purpose, but it would raise Jealousies in the Society, which would be avoided by a Change, especially if they are taken as they stand entered upon the Book.

It is likewise necessary, that the Committee should make a strict Enquiry if the Clerk or Steward are just in the Payment of Fines and Forfeits, which ought to be paid without Favour or Affection, when any one has committed an Error in the Breach of any Article; for if once a Liberty is given and Indulgence granted to fuch as are brought into a Fine or Forfeit, adieu to Order and Decorum; for a bad Example given does but raise an Expectation in another to receive the like Favour, which Practice will unavoidably breed Confusion: and therefore those Societies who would preferve a Regularity must be careful above all Things to let no Forfeits be unpaid after quarterly Meetings, but exclude all fuch Members as refute to pay upon Notice given, or the Box will not only fuffer, but others continuing in the fame Neglect will alledge the Precedent.

It is likewise necessary to preserve the Harmony of a Society, that an Order should

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be made to expunge all private Quarrels and Animolities, that no one be suffered to desturb the Society with any Difference that may happen between him and another, without such Difference being decided by the Society, shall have a tendency to the general Good; but not upon every little Quarrel which may occasionly happen, on Things which have no Regard to the Society.

Thus, if Two of a Trade, as the Proverb is, should disagree, on Matters relating to their Art or Science; to preserve the Peace of the Society, a Method should be taken that such Disputes should not disturb the Company; but if Things arise to such a Height as to make the Company uneasy, a Fine should be laid on them as common Dissurbers, and the Stewards after commanding Peace should either make them pay the Fine or represent the Case to the whole Body on a quarterly Meeting, that such unruly Members may by a general Vote be excluded from the Society.

INDEED to maintain a Brotherly and Friendly Harmony, it is an Article with some Societies, That if any one Member goes to law with another upon any Account what-soever, without first acquainting the whole Body, he shall be excluded: But this is a Hardship which may keep a Man out of a

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just Debt, if the Creditor can but infinuate himself so far into the Affections of the Society as to get a Majority of Votes to forbid the Action: It's true, an Article in this Nature may be of Use to a Society, provided it is taken in a moderate Sense, that is, to prevent vexatious Suits, such as have no Regard to Justice but Power, when one Member out of Malice to another shall for a Trifle put him in the Crown, the Commons, or any other Court where Property is not fo much contended for as Perogative, and where a poor Man for a hafty Word may be ruined to all Intents and Purposes: In such a Case as this, for the Society to interfere, is but just and reasonable; but in Cases of Debt, the Law should be open, for a Man to recover his own Property without the Interpolition of a Society, who cannot possibly judge of the Case without an Infringment upon Law and Justice.

I shall in the next Place lay down some few Rules to be observed at the Burial of their Members, and then proceed to draw up a Copy of Articles, &c.

In the first Place, when Notice is given to the Stewards of the Death of any free Member, they are to acquaint the Clerk, who is to summon every one to the Burial; and here it is to be observ'd how vastly it would

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would contribute to the Decency of the Solemnity, if every Member at his Entrance into a Society should be oblig'd to buy a Pair of Mourning Gloves and Hatband to wear on these Occasions: It's true, such Things in themselves are of but light Signification, but to fee a hundred Men walk before the Corps thus equipt, would convey fuch an Idea of Humanity in the Beholders, as would make every one for joyning in these Societies, which are thus decently fet out to accompany a departed Member. It is now become the most common Way for the Society to walk before the Corps, and the Relations of the Deceased afterwards, and indeed it is not only proper, in order to distinguish them, but they being at the Expence of the Funeral, should fignalize themselves in this Manner, that the Procession may be obferved with the more Advantage. It is a general Rule to fix a certain Sum of Money for the Burial, and it would be well, and for the Credit of the Society to see that the Widow or Friends of the Deceased lay out all the Money which is allowed for that Purpose; otherwise, if the Money is partly apply'd to other Uses, as is but too frequently done, instead of Decency, it makes the Society appear scandalous: To prevent which, it would be proper, That the Society should always employ

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employ one Undertaker that they can confide in, and order it so, that the Money should be paid him by the Stewards, and that they should inspect into the Value of things provided; and it may be reasonably thought that one Man having the entire Custom, and the Stewards the Over-sight, a Member may be buried handsomer with forty Shillings than with three Pounds, if the Money was given to the Relations; the Undertaker being afraid of disobliging the Society, and the Society through Custom being too well acquainted with the Value of Things to be imposed on.

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A

COPY

OF

ARTICLES.

IMPRIMIS, It is agreed by every Member of this Society, that their Times of Meeting shall be from fix to nine, every Monday Night, from Michaelmas to Lady. Day; and for the other half Year, from seven to ten; and that each Member then present, shall spend three Pence, and put two Pence into the Box, which is provided for that Purpose; which Money shall be converted to the Uses hereafter mentioned.

II. THAT if any Member of this Society neglects paying the aforesaid two Pence per Week, for more than six Weeks, he

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he shall forseit three Pence each Time; and if he farther neglects, till the Quarterly-night is pass'd, he shall be excluded the Society, and from the Benefit of the Box.

III. THAT if any Person neglects clearing the Book, on the first Monday Night after Quarter-day, he shall pay one Shilling to the Box, for such Neglect, or be excluded this Society, except it shall appear that such Persons were Sick, Lame, Blind or in Prison.

IV. THAT there shall be a Box with three Locks, kept by the Landlord of the House, where the Society meets; and that the Stewards shall each of them have the Charge of one Key, and the third to be kept by the Landlord, except when he is Steward, and then it is to be kept by the oldest Member.

V. That if any Member of this Society, who has been a Member for one whole Year, shall fall Sick, Lame or Blind, he shall receive seven Shillings from the Box, during such Sickness, Lameness or Blindness; except it continue above six Months, after which, he is to have but one half of the said Money: And at the Death of any free Member, there shall be forty Shillings paid out of the Box, for his Burial, and every Member shall be there, or forseit one Shil-

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ling, except he is hinder'd by Sickness, Lameness, Blindness, or being in Prison; and that the Steward shall cause Notice to be given to each Member, of such Burial, or forseit six Pence for every Neglect; (if within the Bills of Mortality) and the Person who is employed to give Notice of the same, shall receive one Penny, from each Member of the Society.

VI. THAT no Person shall be admitted a Member of this Society, who is above the Age of 41 Years, or under 21, or that hath any Insirmity of Body; and if it should be afterwards discover'd, that any Member had an Insirmity of Body upon him at the Time of his Entrance, he shall be excluded this Society, and have no Money return'd him out of the Box.

VII. THAT the Box shall not be broke, shared or parted, so long as any three Members or more will hold it a Society; and that if any Member shall make a Proposition to break this Society, and share the Money, he shall be finally excluded.

VIII. THAT all Things tending to the Good and Advantage of this Society, shall be carried by the Majority of Votes; and he that refuseth to stand by such Decision, shall be excluded.

IX. THAT

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IX. THAT if any Member of this Society shall swear, or use lascivious Discourses, or offer to sight, or quarrel, or play at any Game; being warned of the contrary by the Stewards, he shall forfeit two Pence to the Box for every such Offence.

X. THAT if any Member of this Society, shall call for Drink or Tobacco, without Leave of the Stewards; he shall forseit two Pence for every such Offence.

KI. That every Member of this Society, shall take it by Turns to be Steward, as they stand enter'd upon the Book; he or they that refuse to serve that Office, shall forfeit five Shillings to the Box; which Money shall be paid within the Term of seven Weeks, or such Member to be excluded the Society; and that the Stewards shall be oblig'd to appear every Club-Night, or forfeit each of them three Pence to the Box, and three Pence to be spent, unless they are hinder'd by Sickness, Lameness, &c.

XII. THAT if any Person refuseth to keep Silence, after it has been three Times demanded by the Stewards; he shall forseit two Pence to the Box.

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XIII.

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XIII. THAT the Stewards shall see the Reckoning clear'd at the Time appointed.

XIV. THAT every Member shall pay one Shilling to the Stewards, towards the Feast, or be excluded.

XV. That if any Member shall call the Stewards, by any other Name than that of Mr. Steward, during Club-hours; he shall forfeit two Pence to the Box, or be excluded.

XVI. THAT if any Member of this Society, shall get his Sickness, Lameness, &c. by wilfully fighting, or by the foul Disease; he shall not be entituled to the Benefit of the Box, for such Sickness, Lameness, &c. But notwithstanding if such a Member should chance to dye, forty Shillings shall be allowed for his Burial.

XVII. THAT if any Member shall reflect on another, for his having received the Benesit of the Box, he shall on sull Proof thereof, forseit two Shillings and six Pence, or be excluded from this Society.

XVIII. THAT no Member of this Society shall have any Benefit of the Box, who is in a Capacity of working at his Trade;

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and if it can be prov'd he did work at his Trade, or follow any other Business, whereby he made an Advantage by his Labour, during the Time of his receiving the Benefit of the Box; he shall be finally excluded this Society, and the Benefit thereof.

XIX. THAT if any Member removes from his Habitation, he shall acquaint the Stewards, and give Directions to the Place unto which he is moved, within fourteen Days, or forseit one Shilling to the Box.

Money to every fick Member, the same Day it becomes due; and about the middle of the Week the fick Member shall be visited by one or both of the Stewards, who shall give their Report to the Society, on the Monday Night following; and in Case of Default, they shall forfeit six Pence each to the Box.

XXI. THAT every Member of this Society shall meet on the seventh Night after every quarterly Meeting, and spend three Pence, and he that does not come or send, shall forfeit three Pence; and if another pays it for him, it shall not be repaid again.

XXII.

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XXII. THAT the Landlord shall have a Fire in the Club-room, during Club-hours, from *Michaelmas* to *Lady-Day*, with Pipes and Tobacco in the said Club-room, at six of the Clock, or forseit six Pence.

XXIII. THAT if any Member come into the Club-room disguised in Drink, or offer to lay any Wager, he shall forfeit two Pence to the Box, or be excluded.

ber of this Society, each furviving Member shall pay to the Widow or Nominee one Shilling, which Money shall be paid out of the Box, the first Monday after the Burial (besides the forty Shillings mentioned in the fifth Article) and he that doth not pay his Dividend, as a Part thereof, within one Month, shall be excluded: And if the Money so collected does not amount to three Pound, it shall be made up out of the Box.

XXV. THAT if any Member of this Society belongeth to another, he shall either quit that, or be excluded this, and from the Benefit of the Box.

XXVI.

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XXVI. THAT each Member shall pay one Penny per Quarter, (and no more) to the Clark, for looking after the Books; and he that resuseth to pay, shall be excluded.

XXVII. THAT if any Member of this Society does not keep up to the Rules of this Society, laid down in the foregoing Orders, he shall be excluded, without having any Money returned from the Box. And if any such Person out of a contentious Spirit, shall arrest the Stewards or any other Members, on such an Occasion, the Suit shall be prosecuted at the Expence of this Society.

XXVIII. THAT if any Debate shall arise in this Society which no Article herein can fully determine, or direct, it shall finally be determined by the Majority of Votes on a quarterly Meeting, when only one Person shall speak at a Time, or forseit Six-pence.

Member's Wife, every Member shall pay one Shilling towards her Burial, which Money shall be paid out of the Box; and every Member shall be oblig'd to pay his Dividend in one Month, or be excluded this

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this Society. If the Money so rais'd, does not amount to forty Shillings, it shall be made up out of the Box; and if the Money so rais'd, amount to more, the overplus shall be paid into the Box.

XXX. THAT if any Member of this Society shall be press'd into his Majesty's Service, and shall return in three Years in perfect Health, he shall be received as before; but if he goes voluntarily, he shall be excluded.

XXXI. THAT the Stewards shall not have Power to disburst any Sum of Money without Leave of the Society, otherwise than what is paid to sick Members, on the Forseit of sive Shillings; and that at a Feast the Steward shall produce a Bill of Charges, to the Satisfaction of the Society, or forseit ten Shillings, besides making good all Desiciencies.

XXXII. THAT if either of the Stewards or Clerk shall defraud the Society by taking Money out of the Box, or by wilfully imposing on any Member with regard to their Payment on the Book, he or they so offending shall be wholly excluded, and be liable to an Arrest at the Expence of the Society.

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XXXIV. THAT the Stewards shall not ave Power to open the Box but on a Monday Night, on the Forfeiture of five Shillings.

XXXV. THAT if the Stewards, or eiter of them shall fall sick, the next succeeding Stewards shall officiate for them, till their Recovery, or be excluded.

XXXVI. THAT on a Quarterly-meeting every Member shall be at the Book
to make up his Accounts, within an
Hour after the Time mention'd in the
Articles, or forseit Six-pence.

XXXVII. THAT each Member at his loming into the Room on a Quarterly-night, shall pay the Expences for the Night to the Stewards, upon which a Ticket shall be delivered them, that they may call for Drink, &c. without giving Trouble to the Stewards.

XXXVIII. THAT the Box shall not be moved to another House, without the whole Society being summoned together, and then it shall not be moved without a Majority of Votes.

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XXXIX. THAT at a Feast, if any Member of this Society shall bring his Wife or Acquaintance, and shall partake of such Provision as was provided or should have been proposed for the Society; he, or they so offending shall forfeit sive Shillings.

GOD Save King GEORGE.

A Copy of Articles after this Nature being drawn up, and put in a Frame in the Room where the Society meets, it is of absolute Necessity that a Form of Agreement should be made on a Sheet of Stamp-paper, binding every one to the Performance of these or such Articles as shall be agreed on; to which Form every Member should subscribe his Name.

The Form as followeth.

WE whose Names are hereunto subscrib'd,
do hereby bind ourselves to be obedient to the Articles made for the Preservation of Friendship, and the Security
of the Box belonging to the Society; all
which Articles we will maintain and see
executed in full Force, as we consent by
these

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these Presents to forfeit all the Privileges belonging to the said Society: Witness our Hands,

These Provisions being made, it is necessfary that Security should be given by the Landlord of the House for the Money which shall be collected for the Use of the Society; in order to which, I have drawn up the following Preamble, which being wrote on Stamp-paper and signed by Men of Credit, the Money may remain in the Box, and the Society be secure till the Sum shall so far increase as to make it worth while to put it out to Interest.

WNOW all Men by these Presents, that A we A, B, C, D, E, F, &c. of the Parish of &c. and County of &c. do hold ourselves firmly bounden to the Society now kept at the House of A, B, in the Parish of &c. in the sum of one hundred Pounds, of good and lawful Money of Great Britain, to be paid upon Demand by us, or either of us, jointly or separately, if Day of from this and in the Year of our Sovereign Lord George King &c. the said Society shall be any Ways cheated or defrauded of the Money belonging to the aforesaid Society, whilst the said Money is in Charge and Custody of the Landlord Mr. A, B, of the \mathbf{D}_{2}

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Parish of &c. provided at the same Time that the Money of which the said Society Shall be defrauded or cheated amount to the Sum of an hundred Pound; otherwise we bind ourselves by these Obligations only to pay the sum which shall appear to be lost by Proof of the Book and the Depositions. of the Stewards; which Money being lost, stole away, or any otherways confiscated before the Day of 172 &c. whilst it is in the Charge of &c. we our Heirs Executors and Administrators or Assigns will well and truly pay, or cause the said Money to be paid to the Society. upon Demand, as witness onr Hands and Seals, &c.

HE Condition of this Obligation is fuch, that if A B of the Parish of and County of does not well and truly keep the Money committed to his Charge, for the Use of the Society now residing at his House in the Parish then the aforesaid A B, C D, E F, their Heirs, Executors, Administrators and Assigns, &c. shall by these Presents make good all Deficiencies to the Value of one hundred Pounds of good and lawful Money of Great Britain; but if the aforesaid A B, his Heirs, Executors, Administrators or Assigns, shall produce the Money committed to his Charge by the

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Stewards of the Society on the Day of then this Bond and Obligation to be void and of none Effect.

WHAT remains is that I give such Directions as shall tend to the Security of the Society, if any Sum of Money is let out of the Box for Interest.

In this Case the Preamble of a common Bond is sufficient, only instead of making the Bond payable to a single Person, it is most proper to make it over to six, eight, or ten of the Society, leaving out the Term to their Heirs, Executors, Administrators &c. and instead thereof adding or to such Persons as the Majority of Members belonging to the aforesaid Society shall appoint to receive the same, which Bond should be kept in the Hands of an indifferent Person to prevent Controversies.

FINIS

