THE

Linen and Cotton Broad-Ware Weavers

APOLOGY:

Humbly addressed to the

Gentlemen Manufacturers

OF

MANCHESTER,

And all others whom it may concern.

BY

A Well-Wisher to Trade.

LIVERPOOL:

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M,DCC,LVIII.

THE

Linen and Cotton Broad-Ware WEAVERS

APOLOGY, &c.

ALMIGHTY Providence having created Man with innumerable Infirmities, but at the ſame Time given him a ſupernatural Aid above all other Animal Beings by making him a rational, intelligent, and moral Agent, whereby he is capable in a great Meaſure to ſupply thoſe Defects he was born into the World with, and without which Helps he would be the moſt miſerable of the whole Creation.

THUS it hath been their Wiſdom and Policy to form themſelves into Nations, Communities, and Societies, not only for the Preſervation of each other, but for the reciprocal Good of the Whole. And as it was found neceſſary to ſet on foot and eſtabliſh ſeveral Arts and Sciences, without which they could not have long ſubſiſted; theſe again thought proper to ſub-divide themſelves into different Claſſes, according to the different Trades or Occupations they followed, amongſt which there is none more neceſſary for the Preſervation of the human Species than that of Weaving, if we conſider it in all its different Forms and Uſes; for by it we are not only preſerved from the Inclemency of the Weather, but our Bodies ornamented and decorated in

ſuch a Manner as to render them more beautiful than any other Species of the whole Creation. But as there is a great many different Branches of Weaving, moſt, if not all, of which are eſſentially neceſſary to human Being, I ſhall at this Time confine myſelf to that of Linen and Cotton broad Ware Weaving, the Utility of which equals if not exceeds all others, if we conſider the great Uſefulneſs and Conſumption of it with us at Home, and the immenſe Quantities that are exported to foreign Parts, by which this Kingdom in general doth not only reap unſpeakable Benefits, but the Manufacturers of it in particular have acquired, in a ſhort Space of Time, large and opulent Fortunes, ſuch as has enabled them to vie with the beſt Gentlemen in the County. I could ſay a great deal with regard to the Manufactures of this Branch of Buſineſs, but, as I am not willing to give Offence to any of them, I ſhall content myſelf in apologizing a little in Behalf of the poor Mechanics, by whoſe Labour and Induſtry they have found Means to accumulate ſuch large Fortunes.

It muſt be allowed on all Hands, that the Mechanics and the reſt of the poor labouring People are the moſt uſeful Members in the whole Community: It is them who are the Strength and Bulwark of the Nation: It is by them that the Land is cultivated and the Produce thereof brought to the Market, not only to ſupply the Needy and Neceſſitous with the common Neceſſaries of Life, but to feed and pamper the Extravagant and Voluptuous; a great many of whom may fairly be ſaid to prey upon the very Vitals of the Poor. For by how much theſe fall ſhort of the common Neceſſaries of Life (notwithſtanding their hard Labour to procure it both for them, their Wives, and their little Ones) by ſo much do the great Oppreſſors wantonly prey upon the Lives of the induſtrious Labourer, and innocent Infants, whoſe Cries for Bread, though they are not able to affect the Hearts of the Oppreſſor, yet they may be

be aſſured that they are heard before the Throne of the Great Lord of the Univerſe, who will one Day viſit their Cries upon their tyrannical Oppreſſors.

It is by the poor Mechanic's Ingenuity and Induſtry, and the Weavers in particular, that the Commerce of this Nation is upheld: It is owing to their Induſtry and Labour that the Manufacturers hath acquired immenſe Riches, purchaſed large Eſtates, and can live with almoſt equal Grandeur to a Peer of the Land. Yet how ſhocking muſt the Remembrance be to every impartial Perſon who will but ſeriouſly reflect that this uſeful and neceſſary Set of Mechanics, from whoſe Induſtry and hard Labour ſuch immenſe Riches have been acquired, are at this Day the moſt wretched and miſerable of all Mechanics, I mean ſuch of them as have no Dependence but their Trade; for there are ſome who live upon ſmall Eſtates of their own left them by their Forefathers, and others again, in the Country, who farm ſmall Eſtates, and have learned this Branch of Buſineſs, either for a ſmall Sum of Money, or a few Months Servitude, purely to employ their leiſure Time from rural Employments: But ſuch as theſe can never be reckoned upon an Average with thoſe who have nothing but their Trade to ſubſiſt themſelves and Families by. But indeed it may, with a great deal of Truth, be ſaid that it is owing to the Conduct of ſuch as theſe, and ſome others who have learned the Trade in the ſame Manner, that the poorer ſort of Checque Weavers who have large Families cannot live as all human Creatures ought, in a rich, populous, and polite trading Country. For it is ſuch as theſe, who, for ſome Seaſons of the Year, have taken Work upon any Terms or Wages rather than ſtand ſtill when they could find no Employment either in their Barns or Fields, and what they thus made a Practice of, others, who had no other Dependance but Weaving, were ſoon obliged to comply with. There are others who have

been

been of as great Detriment to the poor honeſt Mechanics as theſe, I mean Strangers and Foreigners, who have come into the Town and taken Pariſh Apprentices out of all Towns round about, purely for the Sake of a little Money, ſome of them to the Number of eight, ten, or twelve a-piece, and as ſuch Numbers could not be kept without Employment, and they being but Children, and conſequently could not perform Work as they ought, their Maſters were obliged to take Work for them on ſuch Terms as the Employers were pleaſed to propoſe to them; to make Amends for which, the poor Children have been as it were ſold into worſe Slavery, and harder Bondage, than the Negroes in our *Engliſh* Plantations in *America*; ſome of them have been, through ſuch hard Slavery and worſe Uſage, rendered ſuch ſhocking Objects of Commiſeration and Charity, as to ſoften the Heart even of Tyranny and Oppreſſion itſelf, and have thereby for ever after commenced either Cripples, Beggars, or Paupers, to the no ſmall Detriment of the Landed Gentlemen.

But it hath been ſaid by ſome Tradeſmen in *Mancheſter*, that the Wages are as good now as they were forty Years ago. Now I am a Man upwards of ſixty Years of Age, and have been employed in this Buſineſs for more than forty-five Years, and though I am far from encouraging or abetting Combinations, Riots or Tumults, to the Diſturbance of the Peace, or Detriment of the fair Trader, (being the laſt Man that ever will be concerned in ſuch Practices) yet I do *aver*, and can prove it to a Demonſtration, that Wages are at this Day, near one Third lower than they were about Twenty, or Twenty-five Years ago. I ſhall only inſtance, what we call, Common Yard-wide Checque, which I believe may be reckoned a Standard, to Judge of all the Reſt by, it being neither the Beſt nor Worſt ſort of Work amongſt the Weaving Branch. That ſort of Work was ſome Twenty or Twenty-five

Years

Years ſince warped only Eighty Yards, and the materials it was then made on, were ſo far better, that where a Man can now make one Yard, he would then have made One and an Half; and Wages Two Shillings at the Piece more then, than they are now, notwithſtanding the Piece is now warped from Eighty-ſix to Ninety-ſix Yards, according to the different Rules in the ſeveral Warehouſes in Town. Now it is plain from what hath been ſaid, that here is at every Piece of Checque of this ſort 6, 8, 10 or 16 Yards worked for nothing, and Two Shillings abated at the Whole, and Proviſions more than one Third dearer now than they were then.

I COULD inſtance other ſorts in the weaving Branch, ſuch as Gowns of ſeveral ſorts, and broad Checques, that are more than One Third lower in their Wages now than they were then. The Reaſon why their Prices have been thus reduced was owing, as I have ſhewed above, to ſuch People as had not their whole Dependance on the Trade, and were willing to Work upon any Terms, rather than ſtand ſtill, when they had no other Employment.

IT may be proper in this Place to examine what a Journeyman Weaver of this Kind of Checque can bring Home to his Family of neat Earnings; I ſhall account for it thus, and appeal to every one who knows any Thing at all of Weaving for the Truth of what I ſhall ſay.

HE muſt be a tolerable good Hand that can work Half a Piece of this ſort of Checque in a Week, which when done, comes to Six Shillings, out of which he muſt pay One Shilling for Pinwinding, and Six Pence for Loom-ſtanding; and I ſhall reckon Three Pence per Week throughout the Year for Candle-light, ſo there Remains for him, of neat Money, Four Shillings and Three Pence, for Houſe-Rent, Proviſions and all other

neceſſaries

neceſſaries for him, his Wife, and perhaps Four or Five ſmall Children. Now I will leave any one to judge how ſuch a Familly as this muſt live Seven Days, upon Four Shillings and Three Pence, even ſuppoſing it all to go for Proviſion, and ſet Rent, Fire, Cloaths, and all other neceſſaries aſide, which will make better than Two Shillings of the Money, and muſt be had ſome how or other; and I do affirm that there is not one Weaver in Six, the Whole Trade through, that can make Half a Piece of this ſort of Work in one Week.

I HAVE ſeen ſuch a Family as this I am ſpeaking on, (and can bring living Witneſſes to teſtify it) that have lived Four Days out of Seven, upon nothing but Water Gruel without ever a Bit of Bread to it; and I doubt not but there are Hundreds of Families, who have formerly lived in good Repute, have had for ſome Years paſt not much better Commons, and when Sickneſs, or any other Common Accidents of Life happens, are with Sorrow conſtrained to fly to the Pariſh for Relief, which hath at preſent raiſed the Poor Rates to ſuch an Height, as in ſome Degree, to affect even the Landholders themſelves.

Now I would not be thought, from what I have ſaid, to be an Enemy to Trade and Commerce, being very ſenſible that it is one of the greateſt Bleſſings this Nation ever enjoyed; and I likewiſe do acknowledge, that ſuch Gentlemen as have, and now do, launch out their Money in Trade, do not only deſerve the Thanks of the Public, but ought to reap the Benefit of their Labour, by acquiring moderate Fortunes for their Deſcendents: But then it muſt be allowed on all Hands, that the Poor Mechanic, by whoſe hard Labour and Induſtry, the Trade in general is ſupported and carried on, is, and ought to be entitled by the Laws of Reaſon and Equity, not only to comfortable Mainte-

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nance, but to have it in his Power to lay up ſome Trifle for the Support of his Family, either in caſe of old Age, Sickneſs, Death, or any other Mortality, to which all Men are ſubject to, but I have not only ſhewn above, that it is at preſent entirely out of their Power ſo to do, but every one that is acquainted with them can witneſs, that the greateſt Part of them cannot get the Common Neceſſaries of Life, without being beholden to the Town they belong to, or to their Charitable Neighbours.

THIS is the Reaſon, and it is to be hoped no One, who hath Common Charity to their Fellow-Creatures, can find fault, that the Linen and Cotton broad Wares Weavers, of *Mancheſter*, and Places adjacent, have univerſally agreed to conform to the following Rules, and Articles, calculated with no other Intent, than if poſſible, to retrieve the loſt Character of one of the beautifulleſt Branches of Trade in this Town, and to ſet it (at leaſt) on a Level with other Trades which are far inferior to it both for Beauty and Ingenuity. This is their Intention, and no other, being determined to give no Offence willfully, either to the Law, or to any particular Perſon or Perſons whatſoever, but to take all the Care that lies in their Power, that their Maſters be ſerved with able, juſt, and faithful Workmen. And in order that this may be the more effectually done, they are determined, for the Future to admit none into their Trade but what have ſerved a Legal Apprenticeſhip of Seven Years, by which Means they will be ſure to have Workmen, who underſtand their Buſineſs and can do their Work without botching, or ſpoiling of it; and they are likewiſe determined for the Future to admit none into their Branch of Buſineſs who ſhall be found ſtealing, embezzling or purloining any Part of the Goods, or Materials to make Goods on, committed to their Care, as will appear by the following Articles, which they in the moſt humble Manner ſubmit to the candid Conſideration of the Gentlemen Manufacturers of *Mancheſter*, and all other charitable Gentlemen who wiſh well

to their Fellow-Creatures, hoping they will overlook and pardon any Thing that they may think amiſs, either in theſe or the following Pages: And they do once more take upon them to affirm, that they have no other Intention but the reciprocal Good both of their Maſters and themſelves, and that their fix'd Reſolution is to behave as becomes dutiful and well-diſpoſed Servants, and as ſuch they are, and for ever purpoſe to remain.

For

For the better Preſervation of the LINEN *and* COTTON *Broad Ware Branch of* WEAVING, *in and about the Town of MANCHESTER; and for preventing Impoſitions in the ſaid Trade.* (It is Agreed)

ARTICLE I.

THAT there ſhall be Four general Meetings yearly, of the Preſidents and Stewards of each reſpective Box, (and Clerk if they think proper) at ſuch Place in *Mancheſter*, as is agreed upon; viz. On the third Monday in *March*, the third Monday in *June*, the third Monday in *September*, and the third Monday in *December*, at ten o'Clock in the Forenoon.

ARTICLE II.

THAT a Box or Cheſt be provided, with a convenient Number of Locks, alſo ſuch Books as will be thought Neceſſary, and one of the Members ſhall be choſen as Preſident, and ſome Perſon that is qualified for a Clerk, and ſuch Number of Stewards as may be thought convenient.

ARTICLE III.

THAT for the Eaſe of thoſe Members who dwell in the Country, there ſhall be in every Pariſh, Townſhip, or other large Diſtrict, Boxes

 fixed

fixed, at ſome noted Place in the ſame, and every Box to have a Preſident, Clerk and ſuch number of Stewards as may be thought convenient, with Books, Papers and other Things neceſſary.

ARTICLE IV.

THAT the Members of each reſpective Box, ſhall be ſubject to the Rules and Regulations of the principal Box at *Mancheſter*, and by their Preſident and Stewards, receive Inſtructions, and make ſuch Returns, on the Days aforeſaid, as may be thought Neceſſary.

ARTICLE V.

THAT the Preſident, Stewards and Clerk of the principal Box, and every other Box, ſhall meet Monthly, at the Places appointed for the ſame, not only to receive Contributions, (in order to proſecute Offenders againſt the Act of the 5th of *Eliz.*) but alſo communicate and inform the Society, of any Things neceſſary to be done, regulated or redreſſed.

ARTICLE VI.

THAT Franks ſhall be made at *Mancheſter*, and kept in the principal Box, and delivered to other Boxes as they may have occaſion for, and each Journeyman ſhall be obliged to have a Frank, or be accounted unfair; paying for the ſame Four-Pence. Each Frank to be numbered and regiſtred. No Franks ſhall be delivered but at monthly Meetings.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE VII.

THAT after the 16th of *January*, 1758, no Person shall be admitted as a regular Member, who has not served seven Years legally by Indenture, except the Children of Regular Members brought up and instructed by their Parents, and any of the Members of this Society, who shall have above Two Apprentices (exclusive of his own Children) at any one Time, (according to the above Act of the 15th of *Eliz.*) shall be reckoned an unfair Member; but the Children of Undertakers, tho' they have not served by Indenture, yet they shall receive a Frank when they attain a proper Age, and if their Parents should happen to die before they be at the proper Age, shall be free to receive a Frank, if the President, Stewards, and sitting Members shall find it Necessary.

ARTICLE VIII.

THAT all Persons who are willing to be Members of this Society must enter their Names and be Subject to all the Rules and Regulations thereof, and also pay their Contributions on or before the 16th of *April*, 1758. or otherwise they will not be afterwards admitted, except upon such Terms as shall be agreed upon.

ARTICLE IX.

THAT every Member guilty of Stealing or Embezzling any part of his Work committed to his Care and Trust, upon Proof within Forty Days, shall be reckoned an unfair Member and not stood by.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE X.

THAT every Member guilty of the Breach of any of the Rules, Regulations and Orders now made, or which hereafter ſhall be concluded upon, or who neglects or refuſes to pay their Contributions, ſhall be reckoned an unfair Member.

ARTICLE XI.

THAT the Impoſitions and Abuſes offered by any Perſon whatſoever, upon any of the Regular Members hereof are to be redreſſed as ſoon as poſſible, and that the whole Society ſhall ſtrictly obſerve ſuch Orders, Regulations and Methods, as may the ſooneſt and moſt effectually procure a Redreſs.

ARTICLE XII.

THAT every Undertaker, when Journeymen comes to Work with them, ſhall demand a Frank, which they are to keep during the Time of their Working there; and when they leave that Shop, they ſhall receive their Frank back, paying their Arrears (if any ſuch there be) and making Satisfaction for any Damage in their Work, if any ſuch be committed; any Undertaker refuſing to return the Frank, without ſhewing a juſt Cauſe, ſhall be reckoned an unfair Member: Undertakers ſhall not employ any Perſon without a Frank, longer than the firſt monthly Meeting, on Penalty of paying five Shillings into the Box monthly. The Undertaker and Perſon employed ſhall give one another one Week's Notice at leaſt, in order

to

to provide for themſelves, or one Shilling and Six Pence in Money; and if either Party be abuſed or impoſed upon, no Money to be payed by the injured Perſon.*

ARTICLE XIII.

THAT at the regular monthly Meetings or other emergent Calls concerning the Trade, every Preſident, Stewards and Clerk, ſhall be allowed Four-Pence to bear their Expences, and the Preſident, Stewards, and other Aſſiſtants being upon Trades Buſineſs one whole Day, ſhall be allowed one Shilling for their Day's Work, and Four-Pence to defray their Expences.

ARTICLE XIV.

THAT the Preſident and Stewards ſhall ſerve their ſeveral Offices one Quarter of a Year, and ſhall thereby be freed from ſerving any of the ſaid Offices for the Space of one Year, except it is their own Choice, and by the Conſent of the Society; and any Preſident for Steward, after being duly

* The Frank mentioned in this, and the Sixth Article, is the Weavers Arms, engraved on a Copper Plate, with this Motto under, THIS IS TO CERTIFY THOSE IT MAY CONCERN, *That* N. B. *of* *in the County of* LINEN *and* COTTON *Broad-Ware Weaver, hath duly ſerved an Apprenticeſhip of ſeven Years in the ſame Buſineſs, with* N. B. *Given at* *this* *Day of* 1758. And it is not only to ſhow that they have ſerved a Legal Apprenticeſhip, but to indemnify all Perſons, they may go to Work with, from any Debts they may contract while with them, for they are to lodge it with them as ſoon as they go to Work, and are not to receive it back until they have paid all their Arrears. And no Perſon is to ſhop a Journeyman without his Frank, on Penalty of paying Five Shillings, as this Article directs.

duly chosen, refuses to serve their respective Offices, shall forfeit two Shillings and Six-Pence to the Box; and such Assistants as may be called upon refusing to obey, and they being able and in Health so to do, shall forfeit one Shilling, and Four-Pence to the Box.

ARTICLE XV.

THAT every Undertaker's Child or Children, as soon as set down to Work at the said Branch of Trade shall be registered in their respective Box they belong to, in one Month after they are set down; and that every Member of this Society shall be free to Instruct his Wife in the said Branch.

ARTICLES

To be obſerved by the Society of LINEN and COTTON Broad-Ware WEAVERS, when met.

GENTLEMEN,

AT your Requeſt, I have drawn up a few Articles, ſuch as I hope will not only be beneficial to this Society, but a laſting Honour to the whole Trade. Before I produce them, It will be neceſſary to inform you, that before every Article, I have thought proper to give you my Arguments for the Uſe of ſuch Article; and after all of them, I have anſwered all ſuch Objections as at that Time occurr'd to my Mind, and that with any ſhew of Reaſon may be made to ſuch Article. This, I thought, would be the beſt Method, both to obviate a ſuperfluity of Arguments, and that your Time might not be trifled with, and ſhall beg your Patience while I produce them. And,

Firſt, I believe there is not in the known World, any Community, or Society of People, whether in a publick or private Station, but its Members are governed by ſuch Laws as are beſt adapted to ſuit the Intereſt and Conſtitution of ſuch People. And agreeable to this received Maxim of all Mankind, there is no particular Aſſembly or Society, whether polite or mechanical, but what have enacted ſuch Laws or Articles, upon the juſt Obſervation of which, depend all their Welfare and Happineſs. And in order that their Laws might be duly obſerved, and juſtly put in Execution, it hath been the Wiſdom and Policy of all ſuch Societies as above, to elect or chuſe one or more in whom they might confide, to ſee that Juſtice was adminiſtered to all,

One of the most essential things that is wanted amongst us, let it be ordered by

ARTICLE I.

That a Chair-Man, or President be chose by the major Part of this Society, who shall serve such Office for three Months. During all which Time, he shall state all such Questions as are to be debated, and shall hear and regulate all Cases that may happen to come before this Society; and when regularly gone through, he shall then call a Poll, which the Clerk shall cast up, and make his Report to him. And any one that shall affront or molest him in his Office, shall be expelled the Society for two Months, or longer, if the Majority think fit.

Objection. To this Article, it may perhaps be obected, That it is investing one Man with too much Authority; to which I answer: That his Authority only has regard to this present Society; for with respect to the Trade, he hath not so much as another, having no Vote whilst in his office, but only to see that Order and Regularity be kept amongst the Members. And the Utility of such an Office, I have not only above shewn, but the common Practice of all Mankind justifies it; even a petty Jury has a Foreman; and without it, all would be Anarchy and Confusion.

Secondly, In order that Decency, Regularity, and Concord may be observed in all Affairs that may happen to come before this Society, and that all their Debates may be carried on with that Decency, Rule, and Order, that hath hitherto been wanting; and without which, all will, as it hath been, and always will be, nothing but Hurry, Bustle, and Confusion; and nothing done to the Satifaction either of the Society themselves, or to the Persons concerned with them: To avoid which, let it be ordered by

ARTICLE II.

That if any particular Township, District, or Division have

such any Grievance to be redress'd, or any Thing they would have passed into an Article, the same shall be delivered in Writing, which the Clerk shall read; and it shall then be debated in the following Manner, viz. *He that delivers it, shall stand up and speak first in Defence of it; and when he hath done, if any hath a Mind to second, or oppose him, he shall in like Manner stand up, but not 'till the other is set down. And no one shall offer to contradict any one while they are speaking, but all shall keep their Seats and Silence; and all Discourses shall be directed to the Chair-Man.*

Objection. To this Article it perhaps may be objected, That there is too much Formality observed in it; but let it be observed, the want of Formailty, and doing Things with some Kind of Regularity, is at present our greatest Misfortune, and in Time may prove the Ruin of this Society; for without Form and Order no Society can long subsist. And I humbly conceive, there is nothing of Superfluity in this last-mentioned Article; for as to delivering Complaints in Writing, if any one thinks it not worth his While to do it, how must your Time be trifled with in debating on Things which the Complainant did not think worthy writing down.

Thirdly, To avoid a Multiplicity of Laws, which always involves a Community or Society into the utmost Perplexity, and but too often is its Destruction, let it be ordered by

ARTICLE III.

That at the Election of every Chair-man, the Clerk shall read over all the old Articles that any Ways regard the Trade, as likewise these present Articles; and all shall keep a profound Silence, while in reading, upon pain of being censured by the Chair-man. And before every Article, he shall mention the Time when it was made, and the Subject it treats upon.

Objection. As I cannot see where any Objection can lie against this Article, I shall only beg Leave to observe, That by thus regularly reading over our old Articles, they will not only be better understood, and inculcated in the Minds of those that are

make new ones; and as I obſerved before, that a muliplicity of Laws is always the ruination of a Society, beſides when a Law or Article hath Juſtice and Equity ſo its Baſis, as I believe moſt, if not all our old Articles have, they cannot be made too publick, or too well known, eſpecially when we conſider, that the Intereſts of ſome hundreds of People in this Town are concerned in them; and again, by letting our old Articles lie thus dormant, they at laſt become obliterated and quite forgot, and new ones are introduced in their ſtead, which fall infinitely ſhort of the former.

Fourthly, That all Animoſity, Intemperance, and Profaneneſs may be baniſhed this Society, let it be ordered by

ARTICLE IV.

That if any one ſhall come into this Society drunk, or diſorderly, or ſhall curſe or ſwear, or offer to lay Wagers with any of its Members, he ſhall for every ſuch Offence ſtand the Cenſure of the Chair-man, or be expelled the Society for two Months, or longer, if the Chair-man think proper.

Objection. As no Objection can be made againſt this Article, the Utility of it will beſt appear, if we conſider, That Intemperance, Animiſity, and Profaneneſs are the Peſt and Vermin that gnaw out the very Vitals of all Society; but Love and Unanimity are like the Spring and firſt Movers in a well regulated Piece of Machinery, and like them when broke, all goes to Ruin and Deſtruction; therefore I hope no one will be againſt this Article.

Fifthly, And that Decency, Order, and good Manners may preſerved, and ſome Kind of Reſpect paid to this Society, not only by its Members, but by all thoſe who may have occaſion to tranſact any Buſineſs with it, let it be ordered by

ARTICLE V.

That each Member of this Society, as ſoon as he comes into the Club-Room, ſhall take his Seat in the following

Manner

presentative of the first Township, District, or Division in the Roll, then the second, after him the Third, and so on 'till they are all seated; but no one shall sit down with his Hat on.

Objection. Tho' this Article may seem to have something of Novelty in it; yet I hope no reasonable Objection can be made to it. For if we consider this Society, not as a Company of Men met to regale themselves with Ale and Tobacco, and talk indifferently on all Subjects; but rather as a Society sitting to protect the Rights and Privileges of a Trade by which some thousands of People (I might say Families) subsist; and that no Violence or Encroachments be offered either to *it* or its *Dependants*. I say, when we view in this Light, and sure I am it deserves it, how aukward does it look to see its Members jumbled promiscuously one amongst another? some with their Hats on, and some with them off, talking indifferently on all Subjects.—I hope no Exception will be took at my Freedom of Speech, for I have no Intention to affront any one; besides this Decency and Regularity I am speaking of, tho' a Thing of Indifferency in itself, *(for an Alderman's Robe, a Judge's Ermine, and a Bishop's Mitre, are no Essentials to their Authority)* yet the like of this will cause a Reverence in the Beholder: And it will likewise be the only Means to cause it to be respected by its own Members; and while they do not pay a Regard to the Orders of their own Society, they must expect nothing but Ridicule and Burlesque from its Enemies.

Sixthly, As it is found necessary to have a Door-keeper and Cash-keeper for the Night, as likewise one to call for Liquor and collect the Shot; for the sake of quicker Dispatch, let it be ordered by

ARTICLE VI.

That the Chair-man shall for every Night nominate a Cash-keeper, and one to call for all the Liquor, and collect the Shot. The Door-keeper shall always be him that comes last in, with a Key, except the Chair-man shall think otherwise.

Thus,

here presented you with six Articles, which are in their own Nature short, plain, and easy to be remembered; and tho' I have not the Vanity to imagine they are infallible, yet I am morally confident, that these, or some thing like them, will be the greatest Benefit to this Society (and consequently to the whole Trade) of any Thing that hath been done for it in my Time.

Objection. But I am now aware of a grand Objection that may possibly be made to the whole, and that is, That it will be acting too much against Common Law, to which I answer, That we have hitherto been acting more so, than we shall, when once Unity, Order, and Decency is established amongst us. For when Gentlemen and Magistrates of the Law see a Trades-Society acting upon Principles of Justice, and ordering all their Affairs by the strictest Rules of Decency, they will rather revere than punish such a Society. On the other Hand, when a Company of Men are collected together at Random, making Articles, without knowing why, or ever considering the Consequences that may ensue from them; and as ready to break through all others, for any little Mistake or Prejudice that may be conceived either against them, or any one concerned in them; dealing out Threats without Reason, and discoursing without Order: Well may they then be looked upon as Rioters in the strictest Sense; and it gives Reason sufficient to Men of Learning and Credit, to decline joining such a Society. But if it be once established upon an honourable Foundation, and hath *Justice* for its Basis, and *Honour* and *Concord* for all its Actions; then will those Men (who before thought it a Scandal to be amongst them) think it an Honour to be elected one of its Members.

Give me leave, Gentlemen, before I conclude, to recommend to you once more, Unity, Concord, and brotherly Love; and think nothing too difficult to be done, that tends to promote Justice, Regularity, and Order. Let it be remembered, that one of the most honourable of Societies, and a great many worshipful Companies, now held by Charter in this Nation, had once no better a Beginning, and acted as much contrary to Law as this.—In short, I know nothing too hard for Men to do, who guide all their Actions by Reason, and have Resolution and Courage to persist. But if we should here fall short, and let drop what hath already been done, (which I am afraid is but too likely, without preserved by such Articles as above) the Enemies to our Trade would then, like Water long pent up, whose Banks are broke down, rush out with the greater Fury.

To

Articles, through the mean Capacity of their Author; for if they be found necessary, and answer the End for which they were wrote, I shall think my Pains well bestowed, having nothing in View but the good of a Trade, by which both I (and for ought I know my Posterity after me) must get their Livelihood. But, if rejected, I shall content myself with thinking that I have attempted to risque from Ignominy and Scandal, one of the beautifulest Branches of Trade, and to which, I shall always wish the utmost Prosperity.

F I N I S.
