



BREAD FOR ALL.

A PLAN

FOR DOING

Away with the Poor's Rates;

OR,

PAROCHIAL,

AGRICULTURAL, AND NATIONAL,

HINTS.

BY AN ENGLISH GENTLEMAN.

London :

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR AND PROPRIETOR, BY E. THOMAS,
DENMARK COURT, STRAND.

[Entered at the Stamp Office, and Stationers Hall.]



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THE POOR'S FRIEND

PARADISE

AGRICULTURAL AND NATIONAL

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Houses of the Oireachtas

ADVERTISEMENT.

Parishes may be Effectually relieved from Poor's-Rates.

EVERY parish in England and Wales, may learn how to get rid of all the burden of Poor's-Rates, and at the same time obtain unlimited employment for the poor, and labouring classes in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, by subscribing at least £1, each parish, as a reward to the author and inventor of this new system.

It cannot be expected that any individual should run the risk of losing a heavy sum of money in attempting to serve a whole nation of people in so important a manner, without the aid of some of those persons most interested in doing away the poor's-rates, by making this plan known under the heads of

Parochial, Agricultural, and National Hints : Which hints will clearly explain how parishes may be effectually relieved. Therefore, to enable the proprietor to sell these Hints at the low rate of 1s. each pamphlet, in order to procure a general reading, which, no doubt, will

be productive of universal good to all, added to the wish of the author to ascertain the genuine patriotic feelings of the heads of the people, and to prevent any possible deception being practised upon the public, the proprietor (*in full confidence of their honour towards himself*) hath sent copies of this work, at his own expense, to many members of both Houses of Parliament, the clergy, magistrates, and bankers in London, and through the United Kingdom. Each subscribing, *parish* or *person*, to have one copy sent to them as soon as possible, before it is advertised for sale, which will not take place until *parishes*, or *patriots*, have shewn a disposition to receive it, by paying *in* their subscriptions in an ample manner. Then, as many as each parish or person, may choose to order, shall be sent at 1s. each book, over and above the one that was subscribed for.

N. B. The orders may be sent in the letter that incloses the subscription, "For the author and proprietor of *The Plan for doing away with the Poor's Rates*," directed to No. 19, Thavies-Inn, Holborn, London.

TO THE READER.

SIR, London, May, 1824.

I deem it necessary, in the outset, to inform you that I am an observing traveller of upwards of forty years' standing; consequently, it may be assumed of some little experience in common matters, that may promote or retard the welfare of my country; and few things have engaged my attention more than the enormous sums collected under the head of poor's-rates in England, and the totally neglected state of the poor in Ireland. From the returns of English parishes, as laid before Parliament at different periods, it appears that upwards of *six millions* of pounds sterling has been collected in a year. In the year ending March 25, 1815, *seven millions*, twenty three thousand, three hundred and eighty-six pounds, eighteen shillings and eight-pence, had been collected for the poor in England.

(This sum is more than the whole revenue that half the powers in the universe can raise for every purpose of their state) one third part of which, upon an average, has been expended in law, and travelling expences in the removal

of paupers. This is the very point that hath induced me to take up my pen, not without a sincere hope but that the ideas here submitted to the public may ultimately prove of general utility to the nation at large ; more especially, as the government of this truly great empire hath shewn a pointed disposition to assist in relieving parishes, by offering to lend several millions of money towards the employment of the poor: but as parishes in general are ignorant of the means of employing the poor to advantage, in their local situation, so are they also fearful of borrowing money upon so hazardous an undertaking, particularly where so many interests as that of a whole parish are to be consulted. Individuals withhold their capital from employing the poor for the very same cause, seeing at best, but a very precarious chance of a return. These, and other reasons, equally cogent, have led me to imagine that a general system under the conduct of government, may operate as a certain, lasting, and effectual relief of every parish in the United Kingdom ; and provided a majority of the people should agree in this principle here laid down, I most humbly conceive that they have only to signify their approbation in petitions to the legislature, in order to its being carried into effect, after it

has undergone the due deliberation of parliament, by which means all those parts of my proposed plan that are defective may be corrected, so as to render the English paymaster more easy and comfortable under this head, than he ever expected to be, when looking at the present ruinous and growing evil of the Poor's-rates. From the totally neglected, and destitute state of the Irish poor, and labouring classes, I expect this measure only wants to be known, to be most cordially embraced, as general employment is the thing of all others most wanted to make that industrious people happy, and contented at home. The prudence of the Scotch in the management of their poor, very far exceeds any general system adopted on this side the Tweed; yet as a change of times hath rendered the manufacturing poor of that country more numerous and burdensome than formerly, it could do that part of the United Kingdom no possible injury to get rid of three parts out of four of their present expences; therefore, if they will examine this system with their usual becoming carefulness, it may answer a good purpose to them: and provided all three countries should unite in expressing the same opinion in their petitions to Parliament,

the universality of the measure will tend greatly to advance its national usefulness and prosperity.

In the first place I propose proper houses, (numbers of which are already built, and with judicious enlargements, will answer the purpose, and no doubt with the furniture, &c. now in them, may be leased, or sold to government) and proper persons, as inspectors, into each house, or *farm*, to be appointed by government in the different districts to *receive* the *poor* of *any parish* in the United Kingdom. This will save law, and travelling expences, which, from the parliamentary returns, amount to considerably more than *two millions* sterling a year, besides local abuse in many parishes. The poor may be employed in part in the cultivation of land, as farmers, and gardeners, and with capital in almost every branch of common and useful trades, according to the local situation.

I have weighed this matter so long, that I conceive, after the poor have been under the skilful management of government for some time, that the real helpless young and old, will not cost one quarter of the money to keep them comfortable, that is now collected for that real or pretended purpose; and that class of unfor-

tunates who have known better days, will be more happy, and conformable to the orders of a government officer, than to one who was hardly their equal in former days.

Therefore, my grand proposal is, that each parish should subscribe and pay *only one quarter* of what they now pay, to support this national establishment; all the remainder that is necessary to carry on this undertaking well, and to advantage, to be found by the government, and paid from the treasury, or national purse. In respect to farming and gardening, as there are large tracks of land in almost every county in the United Kingdom, that may be brought into use for this purpose, a great quantity of flax and hemp may be grown, as well as corn, and all kinds of vegetables, both for man and beast; and, that the land shall in no way be injured, or deteriorated by the growth of flax, or hemp, I recommend,* that ten or twelve bushels of clean salt be sown upon every English acre of land upon the top of the next crop after the flax or hemp, the land being made perfectly clean from weeds, to receive both crop and salt. This dressing of salt will be found equal, if not superior, to thirty cart-loads of common dung; and the good effects

* More may be put with safety upon poor land.

of it will last longer in the land, at the same time ridding it of various noxious insects that destroy wheat, and other grain ; and there is little cause to doubt that, when the extraordinary virtue of salt is clearly and generally understood, as to its power and effect, by farmers and gardeners, it will be found a grand auxiliary in agriculture, and become one of the best and cheapest manures that can be applied to land in general ; that is to say, either meadow, pasture, or tillage, as a top dressing, more particularly if sown upon turnips just springing out of the ground, as it may secure that crop from vermin of any sort. But I must caution those who have never used it, not to be too lavish with it at one dressing, as that may injure the first crop of corn, therefore about ten or twelve bushels may be considered a sufficient quantity at any one time, which, in all probability, will be amply paid for by the first crop only, independent of the succeeding ones. The immensity of useful labour for men, women, and children, that will arise from the growth of flax and hemp, is too well known to need any comment here.

In regard to trade, this nation never stood in so exalted a point of view as at this moment ; the government having proposed to place Bri-

tens in union with all the world, and as it were, become one family with all the nations of the earth, by permitting the ships of any country to bring their produce here, duty free, provided they, in return, will receive our manufactures upon the same terms. This is a grand stimulus well worthy of the notice of our manufacturers, and ought to cause them to continue to excel all others in useful workmanship; and a strong reason also why Britons should endeavour to free their capital from all unnecessary burdens of useless people, or extravagant payments; and as the government hath now declared their inclination and ability, there cannot be any want of money to do this national business as it ought to be done, therefore I propose for it to be upon that extended scale that may afford occasional employment to any number of working tradesmen in general, common trades, according to the local situation of the district establishment, which work may be given out of the house upon security being given for its return, without debasing the minds of the persons so employed, with the idea of their being paupers, because they have met with temporary employment at, or from, a district establishment, yet upon all occasions the wages given to those comers and goers, should be such as would

only afford a comfortable existence; not such as to create an opposition in trade, or to induce any workmen of any sort or kind, to quit their masters to get into this employment. These intended government establishments must be considered as receptacles for such sort of persons as may be thrown out of work by a change of times, or the failure of their usual trades or employers; but the wages to be given to those itinerant workmen ought not in any way or degree to interfere with the salary or wages, given to those who are regularly employed to teach the trades necessary for each district house: their pay must be such as to make it worth while for men of sound, cool judgment to conduct the department that they undertake.

As this regulation is intended to be a permanent one, I wish it to be clearly understood that no hostile steps are to be taken to force any poor person from his, or her home, into these district houses, who at present, or who may hereafter be deemed worthy to receive something weekly from the parish, for a time to be fixed, to enable them to support themselves, or rear their families in humble cheerful ease. As every parish will be relieved from the bulk of their expenditure, I do hope, and expect, to see a cheerful and universal will to assist their

worthy poor neighbours with temporary means, to keep somewhat near the station they once filled as paymasters, or respectable tradesmen, or labourers, which I propose to have secured and confirmed to them by one or more disinterested magistrate, if required. It is not my intention to compel any grown person, or persons, who hath served his time in the house, and arrived at the age of twenty-one years, to stop in these district employments, who can make it appear to the government, or a magistrate, that they have a visible and laudable view of getting a living in a manner more agreeable to their own feelings. It must be observed that these houses are intended to receive the poor and unfortunate, and in no way meant or expected, to get a profit from the labour of the honest and industrious, when they can obtain employment more to their own individual satisfaction or advantage.

Here I beg to say that when this arrangement is adopted, the helpless young poor will be properly educated, and with the sick and aged, will receive every comfort suitable to their situation; while those who are able, and capable of work, will be compelled to earn their livelihood, so as not to be troublesome to any one. This plan will also form a complete check upon

juvenile thieves in the metropolis, and other large towns, and instead of our prisons being filled with wicked children, who are made the instruments of vice in the hands of the more artful ; these district houses will form an asylum for the reformation of these poor things, many of whom are the offspring of honest virtuous parents, who are almost broken-hearted, because they have neither the time to spare, nor the means of restraining their wickedness ; yet I fear that too many of these poor idle wretches are of the most abandoned sort of parents, who by their extreme bad examples lead their tender offspring into all manner of mischief. These poor children may be snatched from the jaws of destruction, and their evil propensities corrected, if in early days they are sent to a district-house, and there *reasoned* (not beat) into good *manners*, and religious habits ; which habits, as they are to be apprenticed in the house, will not easily be broken through, when they come to riper years, and know the sweets of earning their bread honestly, and without a constant fear of falling under the lash of the laws of their offended country : and by these means the whole community, without taking any harsh measures, will be cleared of a very great nuisance, that the best intentioned indi-

vidual in the present day hath not the power to prevent, and those very children who were in train for being a *terror* and *pest* to society, may, through those means, be rendered a useful ornament to their country, and the world at large.

Again I must remark that those persons who imagine that coercive means are the best, or only means, for preventing poor English, or Irishmen, or their children, from doing wrong, have not studied their character, or genius;—experience hath taught me that *soldiers*, *sailors*, and *children*, are *better*, and more *easily* managed by persuasion, than by harsh treatment: in short it is by persuasion they are led into evil, and those who will take the pains to persuade them to do right, I mean those who have the patience to impress it upon their minds, will ultimately have their feelings highly rewarded for the trouble that they have taken, by the most grateful and heartfelt acknowledgements of the reclaimed.

In this place I wish to call the attention of the reader to what I deem the greatest beauty in the British constitution, is the power that it gives to the people to alter, or repeal any given law that in practice, becomes hurtful to any part of the community; and however laudable

and praiseworthy the enactment of Poor's-rates were in their institution, they are now, from want of judgment, supineness, or some other cause, become a well-known national evil, and very severe oppression, as appears from the number of petitions respecting agricultural distress; from these petitions which were laid before parliament, I collect the extreme anxiety of both landlord and tenant, to rid their property and capital of all the existing burden that is possible, perhaps if they scan over these Hints they may discover the very thing that they want, viz. a certain, lasting, and effectual method for each individual's relief; and at the same time that they are being relieved themselves, they will promote the *real*, and truly humane, and charitable spirit of our wise and christian-like ancestors, towards their poorer brethren: and I do assure my worthy readers that if the ministers of state in their places in parliament, had not shewn the willingness and ability of the government to assist parishes with many millions of money towards the employment of the poor, this scheme would not have been submitted for the consideration of the public; but as it is now brought forward, every person in this kingdom who is subject to the payment of Poor's-rates, will see the possibility

of his being immediately relieved of three parts out of four of his usual payments, and when these lasting monuments of British policy, liberality, and charity, begin to make a return for the first expenditure, the now existing burden of Poor's-rates, will uniformly decrease, until they become merely nominal.

I think rewards should be given for the encouragement of good conduct and industry, from the schools, to every branch of employment through the whole concern, a part of which rewards may be placed in the national banks for each individual to receive, and do as he likes with, upon going from the house, or employment.

I also propose for a book to be kept in the visitor's room, for any respectable person to enter his, or her name and opinion, as to any improvement that may be made in any department, or to report any abuse, or improper conduct that may come within their observation, always signing their place of abode, in case the improvement pointed out should require further explanation, when taken under the due deliberation of the managers at the next weekly, monthly, or quarterly meeting; but no visitor whatsoever, is to have the power to alter, or interfere with the rules and regula-

tions already laid down by the conductors of each different department.

It is assumed that under the inspection of the whole community, these establishments may in time, be rendered as useful and as perfect as the nature of the case will admit.

Again the author of nature hath so wisely ordained it, that for one person who is born to wealth and ease, there are a thousand who must depend upon their own abilities and exertions, for an existence; with a greatly increasing population of this sort in every part of this United Kingdom, a certain, lasting, and large deduction in the Poor's-rates could hardly be looked for, or expected, by the thinking and discerning, until the probable way of accomplishing so desirable a thing was pointed out in this little work.

I here wish to impress this vitally important object upon the minds of such of my readers who are in the habit of thinking and acting for their own present, or future interests. The grand and principal point that I wish to call your attention to, is, that I calculate that at least *one million* of pounds sterling will arise annually from the *fourth* part of the now existing Poor's-rates in England, which million should be collected in equal portions, and paid

over half yearly; and provided the ministers, by a voluntary act of their own, or if the advocates for this system can persuade the government to have *five hundred thousand pounds* placed every half year at compound interest, for the *sole use* of *parishes*, this, in a very few years, will form a capital sum, sufficient not only to repay all the interest, and money advanced by government, to carry these district establishments into full effect throughout England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, but it will also enable the government to dispense with, or do without any payments from parishes a few years hence, at the same time reserving an ample, and sufficient fund to pay for all improvements, increase of population, repairs, or any other possible contingent expense that may arise in future to these district establishments, so that ultimately an increasing population through the whole empire may prove, (instead of an apparent *poverty-stricken curse*) a source of real, and never-failing *wealth*, and an invaluable *national blessing*.

Finally, worthy reader, if you carefully examine this measure, you may very naturally be led to draw these correct conclusions that a law founded upon these Hints, will relieve the people of England and Wales from between 6 and

7 millions of annual locally oppressive taxes, as the remainder of those taxes will be put in train for being for ever done away from you, and your children's children ; the poor will be better employed and protected, youth will be saved from destruction, and the people from all parts of the empire will be cemented, and consolidated into one real union of heart and mind, to the great joy and comfort of all classes of men: and while the English paymaster is serving his neighbours in this most essential manner, he will *actually, and immediately*, be relieved himself of *three parts out of four* of his now existing Poor's-rates, and absolutely get rid of all that burden at a future day; and I presume, Sir, that you cannot avoid seeing but that the whole system may be fully accomplished without any possible risk to the state, either in money or otherwise. Therefore, all that remains to be done, is for the **PEOPLE** to **PETITION** the Legislative to adopt it, as the Government hath already offered the money for the employment of the poor.

Lastly, after all that I have endeavoured to do for the good of the state, and the benefit of the people at large, I do presume to think, as an old Englishman, that I am justly entitled to a national *reward* ; and in no way liable to be

reproached for selfishness, when I say, that I consider, I have also a just claim upon the honor and liberality of every parish, and opulent person in the United Kingdom, who may approve of this, my *original* system, for their lasting welfare, for at least the sum of *one pound*, to be voted by each parish for the use of me, or my *heir*, the same to be paid over by the clergyman to the Proprietor, 19, Thavies-Inn, Holborn, London.

This sum could not be felt by parishes, or opulent persons, but it would form a very handsome remuneration for my long studied trouble, and the expense that has been, and will be incurred, to make this extensive new principle generally known through the United Kingdom, and it will prove a grateful and honorable testimony of the universal approbation of my countrymen, which will be duly appreciated and publicly acknowledged,

By, Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

The Essentials to form an Act of Parliament for the Relief from Poor's Rates of every Parish in the United Kingdom.

First.—The existing Poor Laws to be repealed, and all that may be found good, and absolutely necessary in them, to form part of the new code.

Secondly.—Government to take the management of all the poor in the United Kingdom into their own hands, excepting such only who are now, or who may hereafter be deemed worthy persons to be relieved for a time in their own parish, which must, if required, be determined by one or more disinterested magistrate.

Thirdly.—Proper houses, or farms, with proper persons to inspect them, to be found, and appointed by government in every district, to receive the *poor of any parish* in the United Kingdom.

Fourthly.—Each, and every parish, is to pay to the government *one quarter* of the amount of the money now collected, under the head of Poor's-rates, which said sum is to be in full for each parish's share, for the maintenance of

their poor under this new system, government being to find all the remainder necessary for the proper support and employment of the poor.

Fifthly.—That no travelling expences may be charged, or rate levied for that purpose, all paupers shall be removed in a carriage not worse than a covered cart, to the nearest district establishment, at the expence of each individual paymaster, who shall take their turns as they stand upon the rate-book ; they shall, also, if necessary, victual the poor during the journey, with good bread, meat, and beer, at the said paymaster's expense.

Sixthly—No parish officer to be allowed to charge the parish for eating and drinking, at a parish meeting.

Seventhly.—All infringements upon these laws to be liable to a fine and imprisonment, provided the fine is not paid by an order from a magistrate.

EPURMCEVT.

E. THOMAS, Printer, Denmark-court, Strand.

The Poor Law Commission, in their report on the new system, government being to find all the remainder necessary for the proper support and employment of the poor.

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