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L A W S *March 1820*  
OF THE  
A S S O C I A T I O N  
FOR  
DISCOUNTENANCING VICE,  
AND  
P R O M O T I N G  
THE  
K N O W L E D G E A N D P R A C T I C E  
OF  
R E L I G I O N  
AND  
V I R T U E.



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L A W S  
OF THE  
ASSOCIATION, &c.

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UNDER THE FOLLOWING HEADS.

- 1st. *Object of the Association.*
- 2d. *Qualification of members.*
- 3d. *Elections of members.*
  - \_\_\_\_\_ of officers.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ of committee of twenty-one.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ of preacher.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ of committee of reform.
- 4th. *Duties of officers.*
  - \_\_\_\_\_ of committee of twenty-one.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ of committee of reform.
- 5th. *Meetings of the Association.*
  - \_\_\_\_\_ of committee of twenty-one.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ and regulation of occasional committees.
- 6th. *Mode of discussing subjects.*
- 7th. *Determinations.*
- 8th. *Limitations in expenditure.*
- 9th. *Publications.*

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*Object of the Association.*

THE sole object of the Association is and shall be to discountenance Irreligion and Vice, and to promote the Knowledge and Practice of Christianity.

*Quali-*

*Qualification of members.*

1st. Every person who shall in future be admitted a member of the Association, shall engage to pay an annual subscription of not less than half-a-guinea to the funds of the Association ; except such persons as shall be elected *honorary* members.

2d. The present annual subscribers shall pay rateably up to the first of January, 1797, and their subscriptions as well as those of all future members shall commence on the first of January in each year.

3d. Every person not a member, who shall make a donation of twenty pounds, or upwards, to the general fund of the Association, and shall afterwards be admitted a member, shall be exempt from the engagement of the annual subscription, if he chuses.

4th. Any member who shall at one time pay the sum of ten guineas, or upwards, to the general fund, shall be exempt from all future annual subscription, if he chuses.

5th. Every member proposing a candidate shall do it in the following form, which shall be printed for the convenience of the members, and regularly filed on the admission of each member.

I propose A. B. to be a member of this Association ; I believe him to be a person of good morals, and religious character ; I consider him worthy to become an associate ; this proposal is made at his desire ; and he engages to pay the sum of  
annually to the fund, from the first of January immediately preceding the day of his admission.

Proposer.

Secunder.

I second the above

Day of

179

Admitted.

Chairman.

*Election*

*Election of Members.*

1st. The names and places of abode of each candidate, together with the names of the proposer and seconder, shall be hung up in a conspicuous place in the board room; one board day at least shall intervene between the day of proposing and that of balloting; and the names of the persons so proposed shall be mentioned in the summonses for the day of balloting.

2d. At least fifteen members shall ballot to make an election, and one negative in seven shall exclude the candidate. The ballot shall commence as soon as prayers are ended, and conclude in one hour—provided fifteen members have balloted.

3d. Six boxes for balloting shall be provided, with two drawers to each; one to receive the beans for admittance, the other those for rejection.

On the balloting days, the Chairman shall appoint two members to conduct the ballot, who shall deliver the balloting beans to each person, after having taken down his name. Only one person shall ballot at a time. A member may ballot for one or more of the candidates, without balloting for all, provided he notifies his intention to the persons conducting ballot, so as to prevent any mistake.

4th. The members appointed to superintend the ballot shall, previous to the commencement of the ballot, and in presence of the Chairman, examine the drawers and see that they are empty, and shall afterwards lock them and deliver the keys to the Chairman.

5th. On the Chairman's declaring that the hour for balloting has expired, the persons who have taken down the names shall bring the boxes to him, and give in a list of the names of the members who have balloted, properly numbered, on which the Chairman shall declare the number of members who have  
balloted,

balloted, together with any observations which may have been made by the members appointed to conduct the ballot.

6th. The Chairman shall then examine the drawers, and reckon the beans in each drawer, beginning with the name first on the list, and proceeding with the other names as they follow. Each candidate shall be declared by the Chairman to be admitted or rejected according to the number of beans which he shall find in the different drawers, agreeable to the rules above mentioned. The Chairman shall compare the number of ayes or noes in each box, added together, with the number of members who shall have balloted, and in case the numbers shall differ, without being satisfactorily accounted for, the ballot for that candidate shall be declared by him to be null and void.

7th. No person who has been rejected shall be balloted for again for twelve months.

8th. The name of each candidate, together with the names of the members who propose and second him, shall be entered in a book to be kept for that purpose by the Secretary, and regularly dated; and the name of no candidate shall be withdrawn after the balloting is commenced.

9th. Every new member, previous to his taking his seat, shall be introduced to the Chairman of the day by the person who either proposed or seconded him; or, in case of their absence, by some other member to be named by the Chairman.

*Election of Honorary Members.*

1st. Every person to be elected an honorary member, shall be proposed by a certificate signed by seven members, stating, that they consider the person proposed highly deserving that honour, from having eminently exerted him or herself in promoting the cause of Religion and Virtue.

2d. The



2d. The recommendation thus signed shall be hung up in the board room, in the same manner, and for the same space of time, and entered in the summonses, as the names of candidates for admission by ballot.

3d. The election shall be *viva voce*; twenty-five members shall be necessary to constitute a legal election; and one dissenting voice shall reject the candidate.

4th. Ladies shall be admissible as honorary members, subject to the foregoing regulations.

#### ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

##### *President.*

The office of President shall be honorary, not necessarily connected with any official duties; and elective and determinable at the pleasure of the Association.

##### *Chairman.*

The fifth member coming to a board shall be Chairman for that meeting, unless the members present shall determine otherwise.

##### *Secretaries.*

1st. As the office of Secretary is of considerable importance, and the duties of it require great attention and abilities, a committee of seven shall be appointed at the first meeting in February, for the purpose of forming a list of six members whom they conceive fit for the office.

2d. The election shall take place on the first meeting in March: the votes of fifteen members shall be necessary to constitute an election, and due notice of such election shall be inserted in the summonses.

3d. The secretaries shall enter upon office the succeeding meeting, and shall continue in the same for one year; in the case of the death, resignation, or removal

removal of either secretary, the office shall be executed by the other, until a successor is elected, whose election shall take place as soon as possible, and be conducted in the same form and manner as before prescribed for the election of secretaries.

*Treasurer.*

The recommendation of a Treasurer shall be referred to the same committee of seven; and his election shall be conducted in the same manner, and take place at the same time, as that of the secretaries.

*Assistant Secretary.*

1st. At the first meeting in April the secretaries shall recommend a proper person to be appointed assistant secretary for the ensuing year, with a salary not exceeding thirty pounds per annum, to be paid quarterly, and the Association shall proceed to the election at the next meeting, which election shall be determined *viva voce*.

2d. If the person so recommended, shall not be approved of by the majority of the Association, the secretaries shall be directed to recommend another; and so toties quoties until an assistant secretary shall be appointed.

*Committee of Twenty-one.*

A committee of twenty-one members shall be elected by ballot at the first meeting in every December and June; to continue in office from the first of January to the first of July, and from the first of July to the first of January following respectively. Every member of the Association shall be eligible to serve on these committees; and notice shall be given of the election of the committee in the summonses for the two meetings preceding the election.

*Preacher.*

*Preacher.*

1st. An annual sermon shall be preached before the Association in the month of February, unless otherwise appointed; and notice of the election of the preacher shall be given in the summonses for the two meetings immediately preceding the day of election.

2d. The election shall be by ballot; not less than fifteen members shall ballot to constitute a legal election; so often as the person elected shall decline to preach, a new election shall take place on the next general board day succeeding the notification of such refusal; and the usual notice shall be given in the summonses.

*Committee of Reform.*

1st. A Committee for conducting the Reform of the Criminal Poor, consisting of fourteen of the existing committee and seven new members, shall be elected at every first general meeting in January; and notice of said election shall be given in the summonses for the two meetings immediately preceding said day of election.

2d. In the event of any vacancy in said committee, by resignation or otherwise, the said committee shall report the same to the Association, who shall fill up said vacancy in the same manner that the original members were elected.

*Duty of Chairman.*

1st. The Chairman, immediately after taking the chair, and before any business shall be admitted, shall cause prayers to be read by the junior clerical member present, or if no clergyman be present, he shall read them himself: he shall then cause the proceedings signed by the chairman of the foregoing board to be read by the secretary, while he compares them

them with a copy of them in the fair book, and if he finds them agree he shall sign the copy.

2d. He shall require every member who proposes a resolution to the Association to write down the same, and to sign it with his own name and that of the seconder ; he shall put the question on every such resolution, if required so to do by the mover, and, if it is carried, shall number the same in succession, affix the initials of his name, and deliver it over to the secretary to be entered in the minutes.

3d. When two or more offer to speak at the same time, the Chairman shall determine who shall speak first ; and if, while any subject is in debate, any member introduces matter which the Chairman shall deem irrelevant, he shall call him to order.

4th. The Chairman shall not, except in balloting, have a vote, unless the votes of the other members be equal, in which case he shall determine the question by a casting vote.

5th. As the sole object of the Association is to discountenance irreligion and vice, and to promote the knowledge and practice of christianity, if any member shall directly or indirectly introduce any subject not tending to that object, the Chairman shall interpose and prevent any debate thereon.

6th. The Chairman shall not leave the chair without permission, until the meeting is regularly adjourned.

#### *Duty of the Secretaries.*

1st. One at least of the two Secretaries shall always be present at the meetings of the Association, unless unavoidably prevented ; and when so prevented, or if obliged to leave the meeting before its conclusion, he shall procure some member to act as a substitute.

2d. He or they shall take care that the several memorandums of the proceedings be regularly filed, at each

each meeting, in the same order in which they are passed ; shall examine the file before it be delivered to the assistant secretary, in order to see that all the particulars are properly prepared for transcription ; shall compare them after they are transcribed, and take care that all business respecting the orders of the day, &c. be duly arranged for the next meeting.

3d. They shall keep an exact registry of the members of the Association, and they shall notify to each new member his election, immediately after his admission, according to the following form.

We are directed to inform you that in compliance with your desire, signified to us by our worthy member A. B. you have been this day elected a member of the Association for promoting the practice of Religion and Virtue.

The objects for which this society has been formed, are sufficiently expressed in its title, and the mode by which these objects are pursued will in a good measure appear from a perusal of the laws, a copy of which accompanies this notification.

As the views of the Association are directed to matters of great magnitude, and undeniably of the last importance, viz. a moral and religious reformation in all ranks and orders of society, so it must be obvious, that to produce any considerable effect, an active and general concurrence of its members must be requisite ; such they have a right to claim, and they trust that in your conscientious and zealous co-operation, they shall not be disappointed.

Signed by order,

} Secretaries.

4th. They shall acquaint themselves, as accurately as possible, with the laws, to enable them to set the Association right, when necessary, in all points of order.

*Duty*



*Duty of Treasurer.*

1st. He shall make regular entries of the receipts and disbursements of the Association, in a book to be kept for that purpose.

2d. He shall lay before the Association every board day, an account of the unappropriated balance in his hands, to serve as a guide to the society in the expenditure of their funds.

3d. He shall lay before the Association, a fortnight before the expiration of his office, and at any other time the Association shall appoint, an account of the receipts and disbursements for the year, in order that the same may be audited.

4th. He shall not pay any sum of money exceeding two guineas, on account of the Association, without an order signed by the Chairman and three members; or any smaller sum without an order signed by one of the secretaries.

*Duty of Assistant Secretary.*

1st. He shall attend the meetings of the Association regularly, and those of the Committee of Twenty-one when required, and act as secretary to the same.

2d. He shall receive from the secretaries the resolutions and minutes of the day, and transcribe the same into a fair book.

3d. He shall issue the necessary summonses for every general or extraordinary meeting of the Association and Committee of twenty-one, and take care that the same are punctually delivered by the messenger.

4th. If he be prevented by sickness or any any other necessary hinderance, from personally discharging the duties prescribed, he shall be obliged to provide a deputy to be approved of by the secretaries.

*Duty*

*Duty of the Committee of Twenty-one.*

1st. The special business of this committee shall be to arrange and prepare for the final determination of the Association, all such matters as shall be referred to them for that purpose, and to report thereon to the Association, at least once in every month, or oftener if required.

2d. This committee shall be at liberty to discuss at their meetings, any subject which shall appear to them conducive to the general ends of the institution; provided always, that no new matter so introduced in the committee shall make any part of their reports, or be otherwise introduced to the Association, than as the motion of an individual member of the Association.

3d. Any member of the Association who chuses, shall have liberty to be present at, and to take part in the deliberations of this committee; but as the object of this committee is merely to prepare matter for the determination of the Association at subsequent general meetings, the right of voting in the committee shall be reserved to the members of the committee exclusively.

*Duty of the Committee of Reform.*

1st. The Committee of Reform shall have the power of directing all matters relative to the Reform of the Criminal Poor, and shall report to the Association every six months, or oftener if required, the state and progress of the institution.

2d. This committee shall be responsible to the Association for the due appropriation of the funds of the Reform; seven shall be a quorum for granting money, and three for ordinary business.

*Duty of Collector.*

1st. The duty of Collector shall be annexed to that of assistant secretary.

2d. The

2d. The collector shall have an allowance of one British shilling out of each guinea which shall be actually received by him and paid into the hands of the treasurer.

3d. The collector shall pay once a week to the treasurer, or oftener if required by him, all sums received by him subsequent to his last settlement.

*Messenger.*

As from the great increase of the numbers of the Association, and from other causes, the business of the Messenger is considerably augmented, a person shall be appointed to that office, with a fixed salary not exceeding 15*l.* per annum, who shall be immediately under the controul of the secretaries.

*Meetings of the Association.*

1st. The general Meetings of the Association shall be held once in every fortnight only, except in case of special adjournment, or of extraordinary meetings, the latter to be called on a requisition signed by seven members of the Association, addressed to the secretaries ; which requisition shall be inserted in the summonses, and one clear day at least shall intervene between serving the summonses and the day of meeting.

2d. Every board shall consist of nine members at least.

*Meetings of the Committee of Twenty-one.*

The Committee of Twenty-one shall meet on every intermediate Thursday, or oftener if they shall find it necessary ; five to be a quorum.

*Meetings of Special, or Occasional Committees of the Association.*

1st. Every such committee shall consist of three members



members at least, and all members of the Association may attend, without the power of voting.

2d. Upon any such committee's being appointed, the mover shall consider himself as particularly bound to procure the attendance of the committee previous to the next meeting of the Association.

*Mode of discussing Subjects.*

1st. No motion shall be passed into a resolution on the day it is first proposed, if three members present shall sign a requisition, to postpone the further consideration of it to the next succeeding general meeting.

2d. All reports to be made from committees shall be received and read before the order of the day shall be proceeded on; but no debate shall take place thereon until the order of the day shall be disposed of, unless the Association shall see cause for immediate discussion.

3d. In case any member at a general meeting, shall notify in writing his intention of bringing forward a specific motion on the succeeding day of meeting, such motion shall have precedence of any unnotified motion.

*Determinations.*

1st. In case any member shall make a motion in writing, duly seconded, proposing a new law, or an alteration in, or repeal of a subsisting law, notice shall be given of the same in the summonses for the next meeting.

2d. No new law shall be passed, or any subsisting law altered or repealed, but at two successive meetings, at which fifteen members at least shall be present, and not less than two thirds of the members present agreeing to the measure.

*Limitations*

*Limitations in Expenditure.*

1st. No measure or measures, inducing in the whole an expence of more than four guineas, or an annual expence to any amount, shall be determined at any meeting of the Association, when there shall be fewer than fifteen qualified members present, two-thirds of whom shall agree to the same.

2d. No member who has not yet subscribed to the general funds of the Association, nor any member six months in arrear, shall have a right to vote on any question of expenditure.

*Publications.*

No composition, whether in print or manuscript, shall be adopted by the Association for publication, until it shall have been referred either to the committee of twenty one, or to a special committee, and their approbation confirmed by the Association.

F I N I S.