Anno quarto

Georgii III. Regis.

An Act for eſtabliſhing a regular and Nightly Watch, and for maintaining, regulating, and employing the Poor within the Pariſh of *Saint Clement Danes*, in the Liberty of *Weſtminſter* and County of *Middleſex*.



WHEREAS the keeping a ſufficient and well regulated Watch, in the Night Time, within the Pariſh of Saint Clement Danes, in the Liberty of Weſtminſter and County of Middleſex, will tend to the Preſervation of the Perſons and Properties of the Inhabitants thereof: And whereas by the Laws now in being, no effectual Proviſion is made for the eſtabliſhing, ordering, and well-governing, ſuch Nightly Watch, or for regulating and governing the Bedles belonging to the ſaid Pariſh; For Remedy whereof, May it pleaſe Your moſt Excellent Majeſty, that it may be enacted; and be it enacted by the King's moſt Excellent Majeſty, by and with the Advice and Conſent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this preſent Parliament aſſembled, and by the Authority of the ſame, That upon the Firſt Day of May, One thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty four, or within Ten Days after, and ſo in every Year enſuing, the Veſtry of the ſaid Pariſh of Saint Clement Danes ſhall meet in the common Veſtry Room of the ſaid Pariſh, due Notice thereof being firſt given in the Pariſh Church the Preamble.

Veſtry to meet;

Vestry next before such Meeting, and then and there shall nominate and appoint such Number of substantial Inhabitants of the said Parish, not exceeding in the Whole Twenty four, to be Directors or Governors of the Nightly Watch and Bedles in the said Parish; and they, or any Seven or more of them, shall, within Ten Days after such Nomination and Appointment, meet in the common Vestry Room of the said Parish, and then and there shall appoint what Number of Watchmen they shall judge necessary and proper to be kept in the said Parish, and in the several Wards thereof, for the Year then next to come; and shall nominate and appoint as well such honest and able-bodied Men to be employed in that Service as they shall think best qualified for the same, as also a sufficient Number of Bedles proportionable to the Extent of the said Parish, and shall then and there direct and set down in Writing at what Stands the said Watchmen shall be placed, in what Manner and how often they shall go their Rounds, and how they shall be armed, and how long they are to watch; and also direct what Wages and Allowances shall be given to the said Watchmen and Bedles for their Attendance and Duty, and all such other Orders and Regulations as the Nature of each particular Service shall seem to them to require: And if any of the said Watchmen so appointed shall die within the Year, or shall be negligent in his or their Duty, or guilty of any Misbehaviour, or if it shall be found necessary to repeal, amend, or alter any of the said Nominations, Appointments, Orders, and Regulations, it shall and may be lawful for the said Directors or Governors, being convened by due and legal Notice, at any intermediate Times of the Year, to nominate and appoint One or more Person or Persons fitly qualified, in the Room or Stead of him or them so dying or guilty of Misbehaviour as aforesaid; and also to make such other Nominations and Appointments, and such other Orders and Regulations for the better Government and Direction of the said Watchmen and Bedles as they shall think proper; and also that it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Directors or Governors, or any Seven or more of them, and they are hereby impowered to repair and keep in Repair the Watch-houses belonging to the said Parish, and also to rebuild them whenever there shall be Occasion so to do; and to do all such other Acts and Things as shall be necessary for the due Execution of this Act.

who are to chuse and station Watchmen, and appoint Bedles.

On Death or Misbehaviour of Watchmen, others to be appointed.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That a true Copy or Transcript of all such Nominations, Appointments, Orders, and Regulations, as shall be so made from time to time as aforesaid, shall be fairly written and signed by the Vestry Clerk of the said Parish, and shall be delivered to the Constables for the time being of the said Parish, and to every of them; and that from and after the said First Day of May, One thousand seven hundred and sixty four, Two of the said Constables for the time being (that is to say) One for that Part of the said Parish which is in the Liberty of Westminster, and One for that Part of the said Parish which is in the Duchy of Lancaster, shall attend every Night by Turns, and shall keep Watch and Ward within the said Parish, from the Hours of Nine in the Evening till Seven the next Morning, from the Twenty ninth Day of September till the Thirtieth Day of March, and from the said Thirtieth Day of March till the Twenty ninth Day of September, from Ten of the Clock in the Evening till Five of the Clock next Morning in every Year; and shall in their several Turns or Courses of Watching use their best Endeavours to prevent as well all Mischiefs by Fires, as Murders, Burglaries, Robberies, and all other Outrages and Disorders, and to that End shall arrest and apprehend all Night-walkers, Vagrants, and suspected Persons, who shall be found wandering or misbehaving themselves, and shall carry all such Persons, as soon as conveniently may be, to One or more Justice or Justices of the Peace, of the Liberty of Westminster or County of Middlesex, to be examined and dealt with according to Law, and shall Twice or oftener at convenient Times in every Night go about their said Parish, and take Notice whether all the Watchmen perform their Duties in their several Stations, according to such Orders and Regulations as shall have been made for that Purpose by the said Directors or Governors; and in case any such Watchman shall misbehave himself or neglect his Duty, the said Constable shall as soon as conveniently may be, give Notice thereof to One of the Churchwardens for the time being, to the End a Vestry may be forthwith summoned for the Examination and Punishment of such Offence.

Two Constables to attend each Night;

their Hours of keeping Watch and Ward;

to use their best Endeavours to prevent all Disorders, &c.

and see that Watchmen do their Duty.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That it shall and may be lawful for the said Watchmen, or any of them, in the Absence of the Constable, and they are hereby authorized and required in their several Stations, during the Time of their keeping

Watchmen to apprehend Night-walkers, and disorderly Persons.

Watch and Ward as aforesaid, to apprehend all Night-walkers, Malefactors, Rogues, Vagabonds, and other disorderly Persons whom they shall find disturbing the publick Peace, or have just Cause to suspect of any such Designs, and to deliver the Person or Persons so apprehended, as soon as conveniently may be, to the Constable of the Night, who is hereby required to carry him, her, or them, before One or more Justice or Justices of the Peace of the said Liberty of Westminster or County of Middlesex, to be examined and dealt with according to Law.

Assessments may be made by Inhabitants to defray the Expences of Watchmen, &c.

And, for the better raising and levying of Monies for paying the Wages of the said Watchmen and Beadles, and other Charges incident thereunto, and for defraying the necessary Charges and Expences of passing this Act, be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That within Ten Days after the said Watchmen and Beadles shall be nominated and appointed as aforesaid, the Vestry of the said Parish, being convened by due and legal Notice, shall, and they are hereby authorized and impowered, yearly to make an equal Rate or Assessment, according to the Pound Rate, upon all and every Person or Persons who do or shall inhabit, hold, or enjoy any House, Shop, Warehouse, Cellar, or other Building, and the Occupier of the Ground Floor of any House or Building which shall be let in Tenements within the said Parish, for and towards the raising the full Sum of Money by them judged necessary to be charged upon the said Parish; which said Rate or Assessment so to be made (being first allowed and confirmed by Two or more Justices of the Peace of the said County of Middlesex) and all Arrears due upon the same, shall be collected Quarterly from the said Inhabitants and Occupiers by such Person or Persons as shall be appointed by the said Vestry to collect and receive the same: And in case any of the said Inhabitants and Occupiers shall refuse or neglect to pay the Sum so rated and assessed upon him, her, or them, it shall and may be lawful to and for such Collector or Collectors, by Warrant under the Hands and Seals of Two such Justices of the Peace, to levy the same by Distress and Sale of the Goods of the Party so neglecting or refusing to pay the same; rendering to him, her, or them the Overplus (if any be) the reasonable Charge of making the said Distress and Sale being first deducted; and for want of such Distress, by like Warrant to commit him, her, or them, so neglecting

ing or retaining, unto the Constable, Each, until Payment thereof.

Provided always, and be it enacted, That every Rate or Assessment which shall be made or imposed by virtue of this Act, for or in respect of any House or Tenement which any Ambassador, Resident, Agent or other public Minister of any Foreign Prince or State now doth or hereafter shall inhabit or occupy, shall be paid by the Landlord or Owner of the said Houses or Tenements respectively. Houses wherein Foreign Ambassadors, &c. live, to be paid by the Landlords.

Provided nevertheless, and be it enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That if any Person or Persons shall find him, her, or themselves aggrieved by any Rate or Assessment to be made by virtue of this Act, he, she, or they shall notwithstanding be obliged to pay such Rate or Assessment, and upon Appeal to the General or Quarter Sessions to be held for the County of Middlesex, or at a Petit Sessions to be held in the Vestry Room of the said Parish by Two or more of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the said County, next after the Payment of such Rate or Assessment, or next after making such Distress and Sale for such Rate or Assessment, it shall and may be lawful for the Justices of the Peace, or the greater Number of them, at such Sessions or Petit Sessions then assembled, to cause so much Money to be returned to such Person or Persons who shall appeal as aforesaid, as shall appear to the said Justices to have been over-paid by such Person or Persons to the said Rate or Assessment; and to make such other Order therein as to them shall seem meet; which Order shall be final and conclusive to all Parties. Persons aggrieved may appeal to the Quarter Sessions.

Provided also, and be it enacted, That no such Assessment or Assessments to be made in any One Year shall exceed the Rate of Four Pence in the Pound of the yearly Value of any Houses, Shops, Warehouses, or other Buildings, to be assessed and charged by virtue of this Act. Rate not to exceed 4d. in the Pound.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That all and every Person or Persons who shall be appointed by the said Vestry to collect and receive the Money due upon the said Assessment within the said Parish, or the several Wards thereof, shall from time to time pay over the Monies arising from the same to such Watchmen, Bedles, or other Persons, and in such Proportions as the said Directors or Governors shall appoint; and shall upon the First Day of August yearly (unless the same shall be Sunday, and then upon the Second Day of August, or oftener if required) make and yield up Collectors of Assessments to pay Watchmen and Bedles; and account yearly.

ap to the Vestry of the said Parish a true and perfect Account of all Sums of Money by them received and paid; and also pay and deliver into the Hands of such other Persons whom the said Vestry shall appoint to receive the same, all such Sums of Money as shall remain in their or any of their Hands; which said Sums so remaining in their or any of their Hands, and also all Monies whatsoever by them collected or received by virtue of this Act, shall be applied in defraying the Expence of the said Nightly Watch and Bedles, and the necessary Charges of passing this Act, and not otherwise: And if any of the said Collectors or Receivers shall refuse or neglect to give a just Account of the Monies by him or them collected and received, or to pay the Monies remaining in his or their Hands in Manner aforesaid, it shall and may be lawful, upon Complaint and Proof thereof to Two or more Justices of the Peace for the said County of Middlesex, by Warrant under their Hands and Seals, to commit such Person or Persons to the common Gaol, there to remain without Bail or Mainprize, until he or they shall have made a true Account, and satisfied and paid so much as upon the said Account shall be remaining in his or their Hands, or shall have compounded with the said Vestry for the same, and have paid over such Composition-money to such Person as the said Vestry shall appoint to receive the same; which Composition the said Vestry are hereby authorized and impowered to make and receive.

Penalty on Neglect.

Deficiency of Rates in any one Year, to be made good the next.

Provided also, and be it further enacted, That in case there shall be any Deficiency in any One Years Rate or Assessment so to be made as aforesaid, either by any Houses, Shops, Warehouses, or Buildings being empty, or by the Insolvency, or Removal of any of the Inhabitants, Tenants, Occupiers, or otherwise, out of which or upon whom the said Rates or Assessments were respectively charged, so that the Wages and Allowance to Watchmen and Bedles, and other incident Charges cannot be fully satisfied, paid, and discharged in that Year; then, and in any such Case, the Deficiency so happening in the said Parish shall be carried to the next succeeding Year's Rate, and shall be made up therein; and if there shall happen to be any Surplus Money collected by such Rates and Assessments as aforesaid in the said Parish in any One Year, such Surplus shall be carried on to the next Year's Credit of such Rates, and shall be applied for such Uses, and in such Manner as the Rates or Assessments therein collected are by this Act directed to be laid out and applied.

And

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That an Account of the total Sums assessed, collected, and received within each distinct Ward of the said Parish, and of all the Monies paid and disbursed for all or any of the Purposes mentioned in this Act, shall be fairly entered in a Book or Books to be provided for that Purpose, on or before the Twenty ninth Day of September yearly; and shall be examined, adjusted, and signed at a Meeting of the Vestry duly assembled within the said Parish; which said Book and Account shall be lodged in the Hands of the Vestry Clerk, and shall and may at all seasonable Times be inspected and perused by any of the Inhabitants of the said Parish who shall desire the same, without Fee or Reward. Sums collected and disbursed to be entered in Books.

Provided, and it is hereby enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That no Person or Persons who shall be rated and pay to any Rate or Rates in pursuance of this Act, shall be liable to any Watch or Ward by virtue of the Statute commonly called The Statute of Winchester, made in the Thirteenth Year of King Edward the First, or any subsequent Statute relating thereto, but shall be and are hereby discharged of and from the same. Persons to pay to the Watch by this Act only.

And whereas the Expence of maintaining the Poor in the said Parish of Saint Clement Danes has of late Years greatly increased, for want of a proper Power to establish a Workhouse or Workhouses for employing the said Poor, and inspecting and managing the same; For Remedy whereof, be it enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That from and after the First Day of May, One thousand seven hundred and sixty four, the Churchwardens, Overseers of the Poor, and Vestry of the said Parish, are hereby authorized and required to assemble and meet together in the Parish Church or Vestry Room of the said Parish as often as they shall see convenient, Notice being first given on the Lord's Day next before every such Meeting in the Church of the said Parish, immediately after Morning Service; and the said Churchwardens, Overseers of the Poor, and Vestry of the said Parish, or the major Part of them so assembled, shall ascertain the Monies or Rates to be assessed for the Relief of the Poor, as they in their Discretion think sufficient to answer the Ends and Purposes for the better maintaining and employing the Poor of the said Parish. Churchwardens, &c. to ascertain the Rates.

And whereas there are divers Houses in the said Parish, and other Houses let ready furnished to Lodgers, by which Means the Payment of the said Rates or Assessments may be evaded; be it therefore enacted by

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Landlords to pay for Houses let in Tenements.

the Authority aforesaid, That the Landlord or Owner of each and every such House or Houses, so let in separate Apartments or ready furnished to a Lodger or Lodgers, shall be deemed and taken to be the Occupier or Occupiers of such House or Houses, and shall be liable and subject to the Payment of the said Rates or Assessments directed to be raised and levied by virtue of this Act.

Occupiers of separate Apartments to pay,

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That each and every Person so renting and occupying any separate Apartment in such House or Houses, or ready furnished House, shall be liable and compellable to the Payment of the same.

and may deduct the same out of their Rent.

Provided always, That each and every such Occupier or Occupiers who shall pay such Rates or Assessments, or from whom the same shall be recovered by virtue of this Act, shall and may deduct the same out of the next Rent due and payable from him, her, or them, to the Landlord or Owner thereof; and the Receipt for such Payment shall be a sufficient Discharge to such Tenant or Tenants or Occupiers to his or her said Landlord, for so much Money as he, she, or they shall have paid, or shall have been levied on him, her, or them, by virtue of this Act.

The Ten Assistants, with Churchwardens and Overseers, may make Rules, &c.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That the Churchwardens and Vestry of the said Parish, shall assemble and meet on Wednesday in Easter Week yearly, or within Ten Days after, of which Meeting Notice shall be given as aforesaid, and shall then and there nominate and appoint Ten substantial and discreet Persons residing in the said Parish to be Assistants to the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor; and such Persons so appointed, together with the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor, shall and may make such Rules, Orders, and Regulations, for the better Disposition of such Monies as shall be raised and received for the Relief of the Poor of the said Parish, and for the better maintaining, governing, employing, and regulating the Poor of the said Parish, as to them, or any Five or more of them, at a publick Meeting assembled, shall appear necessary and expedient: But no such Rules, Orders, and Regulations shall be in Force, until confirmed by the Churchwardens and Vestry of the said Parish, at a publick Meeting assembled for that Purpose, or the major Part of them; nor shall any such Rules, Orders, and Regulations, when made and confirmed, be repealed or altered, except at a publick Meeting of the Churchwardens

which are not to be in Force till confirmed in a Vestry.

and Vestry of the said Parish; of which Meeting such publick Notice shall be given as aforesaid.

Proviso. Provided always, That no such Rules, Orders, or Regulations, to be made as aforesaid, be repugnant to the Laws of this Realm.

Churchwarden, &c. not to furnish Materials, &c. for the Workhouse, whilst in Office. And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That no Churchwarden or Overseer of the Poor for the time being, or Assistants to the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor, shall provide, furnish, or supply, for his or their own Profit, any Goods, Materials, or Provision, for the Use of the Workhouse or Workhouses erected or to be erected in the said Parish for the Support or Maintenance of the Poor, during the Time of his being Churchwarden or Overseer, or Assistant to the Churchwardens and Overseers; every such Person so offending, shall forfeit the Sum of Fifty Pounds, One Moiety thereof shall go to such Person as shall inform and sue for the same, and the other Moiety shall be applied towards the Maintenance of the Poor of the said Parish.

Churchwardens, &c. may contract for maintaining the Poor. And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor, together with the said Assistants appointed as aforesaid, or any Five or more of them, at a publick Meeting in the Vestry Room of the said Parish, shall, and they are hereby impowered to contract and agree from time to time, if they think fit, with any Person or Persons, for the lodging, keeping, maintaining, or employing, all or any of the Poor of the said Parish, and for purchasing Materials for that Purpose, in any Workhouse or Workhouses erected or to be erected in the said Parish, and there to keep, maintain, and employ, all such poor Persons, and take the Benefit of the Work, Labour, and Service of every such poor Person or Persons who shall be kept or maintained in such House or Houses, to be applied towards the Relief and Maintenance of the Poor of the said Parish.

Proviso. Provided always, That in case the Churchwardens or Overseers of the Poor of the said Parish shall refuse to meet, or to join in such Contracts, then it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Assistants, or any Five or more of them, to make and enter into such Contract or Contracts, and to perform the same; any Law, Statute, or Usage, to the contrary notwithstanding.

Poor offending or misbehaving, how punishable. And whereas the Persons to be maintained in the said Workhouse may refuse to work, or may be guilty of profane Cursing and Swearing, or other Misbehaviour, be it therefore enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That if any poor Person maintained in any Workhouse or

Workhouses

Workhouses belonging to the said Parish shall refuse to perform the Work which he, she, or they, shall be required to do, or shall be remiss therein, or shall imbezzle or purloin the Goods belonging to such Workhouse or Workhouses, or any Materials for Work, or shall be guilty of profane Cursing or Swearing, or Drunkenness, or of any lewd, immoral, or indecent Behaviour, in all or any of the Cases aforesaid, it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor, or any Two of them, or any Three of the said Assistants, to cause such Person or Persons so offending to be punished in such Workhouse, either by moderate Correction, Confinement, or distinguishing them in Dress, or such other Method as may best tend to remedy such Offences for the future, without committing such Offenders to the House of Correction or other Prison; any Law, Statute, or Usage to the contrary notwithstanding.

Children, under 10 Years old, begging in the Streets, to be sent to the Workhouse.

And whereas divers Children deserted by their Parents are frequently found wandering and begging, and not able to give an Account of themselves or the Place of their legal Settlement: And whereas if such Children were properly employed and inured to a Habit of Industry, they might be furnished with Means for their future Maintenance; be it therefore enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor and Assistants, or any One or more of them, to cause such Child or Children as he or they shall judge to be under the Age of Ten Years, who shall be found wandering or begging in the said Parish of Saint Clement Danes, if they think proper, to be taken and sent to any Workhouse or Workhouses belonging to the said Parish, there to be detained until he or she shall attain, or (in case his or her Age cannot be ascertained) until he or she shall be adjudged to have attained the Age of Twenty one Years, or Day of Marriage, if a Female, unless sooner discharged by the said Officers or Assistants, or any Five or more of them, or by due Course of Law.

Landlords of Ambassadors Houses, &c. to pay the Rates.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That every Rate, Tax, or Assessment, which shall be made or imposed by virtue of this Act, for or in respect of any House or Tenement which an Ambassador, Resident, Agent, or other publick Minister of any Foreign Prince or State, now doth or hereafter shall inhabit or occupy, shall be paid by the Landlords of the said Houses or Tenements respectively.

And

Deficiencies may be levied.

or Money be further raised by the Authority aforesaid, than the Rates or Assessments directed to be made by this Act shall be levied and recovered by the said Churchwardens or Collectors on the Person or Persons hereby directed to pay the same, in such Manner as the Rates made for the Relief of the Poor are directed to be levied and recovered by the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor, by an Act passed in the Forty third Year of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, intituled, An Act for the Relief of the Poor, or by any subsequent Act or Acts relating to the Relief of the Poor; which said several Methods of levying and recovering the said Rates or Assessments for the Relief of the Poor shall and they are hereby declared to be legal Methods and Ways of enforcing the Payment of the Rates or Assessments directed to be made in pursuance of this Act, and all Arrears thereof, as fully and effectually as if such Rules and Methods were repeated and re-enacted in the Body of this Act.

Charges of Distress to be paid.

And it is hereby further enacted, That when and as often as any Distress shall be made by Authority of this Act, or of the said recited Acts, for Non-payment of any of the said Rates hereby directed to be made, or any Part thereof, it shall and may be lawful to and for the Person or Persons making such Distress, to raise and levy the reasonable Charges of making such Distress, over and above the Sum of Money due upon the Rate or Rates for which such Distress is or shall be taken.

Persons aggrieving the Rates,

Provided nevertheless, and be it enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That if any Person or Persons shall find him, her, or themselves aggrieved, by any Rates or Assessments to be made by virtue of this Act, he, she, or they shall notwithstanding be obliged to pay such Rates or Assessments; and upon Appeal to the General or Quarter Sessions to be held for the County of Middlesex, or at a Petit Session to be held in the Vestry Room of the said Parish, by Two or more of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the said County, next after the Payment of such Rates and Assessments respectively, or next after making such Distress and Sale for such Rates or Assessments, it shall and may be lawful for the Justices of the Peace, or the greater Number of them, at such Sessions or Petit Sessions then assembled, to cause so much Money to be returned to such Person or Persons who shall appeal as aforesaid, as shall appear to the said Justices to have been over-paid by such Person or Persons to the said Rates or Assessments respectively, and to make such other Order therein as to them shall seem

if adjudged upon Appeal to be over-rated, to be repaid.

meet; which Order shall be final and conclusive to all Parties.

Poor Laws to continue in Force, except, &c.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That the several Laws relating to the Office of Overseers of the Poor, and for the Relief and providing for the Poor, shall continue in Force within the said Parish of Saint Clement Danes, except where the same are declared to be altered by this present Act; any thing in this Act contained to the contrary notwithstanding.

Rates to be made by virtue of this Act only.

Provided always, That no Rate or Rates shall be made in the said Parish for the Relief of the Poor thereof, other than is in and by this Act directed.

Penalty on Persons buying or taking any Poor's Apparel in Pawn.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That if any Person shall knowingly buy or receive into Pawn any of the Cloaths and Wearing Apparel of any of the Poor who shall hereafter be received into and maintained in any Workhouse or Workhouses of the said Parish, having the Parish Mark thereon, or who shall knowingly buy or receive into Pawn any of the Goods and Materials carried into the said Workhouse or Workhouses to be wrought up, manufactured, or used by the Poor there, or any of the Goods and Furniture of any such Workhouse or Workhouses, the Person or Persons so offending, shall forfeit for every such Offence, the Sum of Forty Shillings, upon Conviction by the Oath of One or more credible Witness or Witnesses, before any One or more Justice or Justices of the Peace for the said County of Middlesex; which Penalty of Forty Shillings shall be levied by Warrant under the Hand and Seal or Hands and Seals of the said Justice or Justices of the Peace, by Distress and Sale of the Goods and Chattles of the Offender, One Moiety of the said Penalty to be paid to the Informer, and the other Moiety to the Overseers of the Poor, for the Use of the Poor of the said Parish; and if no Goods and Chattles can be found whereon to make such Distress, or that the said Penalty shall not be forthwith paid, then and in such Case such Justice or Justices shall and may, by Warrant under his or their Hand and Seal, or Hands and Seals, commit such Offender or Offenders to hard Labour for any Time not exceeding One Month.

Accounts to be entered in Books, and adjusted yearly.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That an Account of the total Sums assessed, collected, and received, within each distinct Ward of the said Parish, and of all the Monies paid and disbursed for or on Account of the Poor of the said Parish, shall be fairly entered in a Book or Books to be provided for that

Purpose by the Vestry Clerk of the said Parish for the time being; and on or before the Twenty-ninth Day of September yearly shall be examined, adjusted, and signed, at a Meeting of the Vestry of the said Parish duly assembled; which said Book and Account shall remain in the Hands of the said Vestry Clerk, or his Successors, and shall and may at all reasonable Times be inspected and perused by any of the Inhabitants of the said Parish who shall desire to see the same, without Fee or Reward.

Charges of the Act how to be paid.

And be it enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That the Charges of passing this Act, and other Charges incident thereto, shall be borne, paid, and defrayed, out of the First Monies to be raised by the Rates to be made by virtue of this Act.

Any Inhabitant of the Parish may be present at Meetings.

Provided always, and be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That any of the Inhabitants of the said Parish may at any Time or Times attend and be present at any Meeting or Meetings of the said Governors or Directors, and at any Meeting or Meetings of the said Churchwardens, Overseers, and Assistants, which shall or may be held in pursuance of this Act.

Limitation of Actions.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That if any Suit shall be brought or commenced against any Person or Persons for any thing done in pursuance of this Act, or in relation to the Premisses, that in every such Case the Action shall be commenced within Six Months next after the Fact committed, and not afterwards; and shall be laid and brought in the County of Middlesex, and not elsewhere; and the Defendant or Defendants in such Action or Actions to be brought may plead the General Issue; and give this Act and the Special Matter in Evidence at any Trial to be had thereupon, and that the same was done in pursuance and by Authority of this present Act; and if it shall appear so to have been done, or if any such Action or Suit shall be brought after the Time before limited for bringing the same, or shall be brought in any other County or Place than the County of Middlesex, that then and in such Case the Jury shall find for the Defendant or Defendants; and upon such Verdict, or if the Plaintiff or Plaintiffs shall become Nonsuit, or discontinue his, her, or their Action or Actions, or if a Verdict shall pass against the Plaintiff or Plaintiffs, or if, upon Demurrer, Judgement shall be given against the Plaintiff or Plaintiffs, the Defendant or Defendants shall and may recover Treble Costs; and have the like Remedy for the same, as any Defendant or Defendants hath or have for Costs of Suit in other Cases by Law.

General Issue.

Treble Costs.

And

Publick Act. And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That this Act shall be deemed and taken to be a Publick Act, and shall be judicially taken Notice of as such by all Judges, Justices, and other Persons whomsoever, without specially pleading the same.

FINIS.