ANNO QUINQUAGESIMO

GEORGII III. REGIS.

CAP. LI.

An Act to repeal so much of an Act, passed in the Seventh Year of King *James* the First, as relates to the Punishment of Women delivered of Bastard Children; and to make other Provisions in lieu thereof. [9th *June* 1810.]

WHEREAS an Act was passed in the Seventh Year of the Reign of His late Majesty King *James* the First, intituled, *An Act for the due Execution of divers Laws and Statutes heretofore made against Rogues, Vagabonds, and Sturdy Beggars, and other Lewd and Idle Persons*: And whereas it is among other Things directed and enacted, that every lewd Woman who after the then present Session of Parliament, should have any Bastard which might be chargeable to the Parish, should be committed to the House of Correction, there to be punished and set on Work during the Term of One whole Year; and that if such Woman should offend again in like Manner, she should be committed to the House of Correction, there to remain until she should put in good Securities not to offend so again: And whereas the Punishment aforesaid, if rigorously inflicted, might be too severe, and might subject the Offender to Imprisonment for Life: May it therefore please Your 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 so much of the said recited Act passed in the Seventh Year of His late Majesty King *James* the First, as relates to the Commitment of Women to the House of Correction, there to be punished and set on Work for having Bastard Children who may be chargeable to the Parish, shall be and the same is hereby repealed.

7. Jac. 1. c. 4.

So much of recited Act as relates to the Commitment of Women for having Bastard Children repealed.

Limitation of Puniſhment.

II. And be it further enacted, That from and after the paſſing of this Act, in Caſes when a Woman ſhall have a Baſtard Child which may be chargeable to the Pariſh, it ſhall be lawful for any Two Juſtices of the Peace before whom ſuch Woman ſhall be brought, and they ſhall or may, at their Diſcretion, commit ſuch Woman to the Houſe of Correction for the Diſtrict or Place, and there to be ſet on Work for any Time not exceeding Twelve Calendar Months nor leſs than Six Weeks.

Juſtices may mitigate Confinement and diſcharge.

III. And be it further enacted, That it ſhall be lawful for any Two Juſtices of the Peace, at any Petty-Seſſion for the Diviſion wherein the Pariſh to which ſuch Baſtard Child may be chargeable is ſituate, upon their own Knowledge or a Certificate, duly authenticated from the Keeper of ſuch Houſe of Correction, in which ſuch Woman ſhall have been confined for any Space not leſs than Six Weeks, of the good Behaviour of ſuch Woman during ſuch her Confinement, and of the reaſonable Expectation of her Reformation, by Warrant under their Hands and Seals, to order ſuch Woman to be immediately (or at the Time to be appointed in ſuch Warrant) diſcharged and releaſed from further Confinement.

No Woman to be committed till a certain Period.

IV. Provided always, and be it further enacted, That nothing in this Act contained ſhall extend, or be conſtrued to extend to authorize any Juſtices of the Peace to commit any ſuch Woman to the Houſe of Correction, until ſhe ſhall have been delivered for the Space of One Calendar Month.

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