

C H A P. VIII.

The means used to render the experiment of the Marine Police permanent and complete.—The existing Laws found to be extremely deficient.—Great Attention and Circumspection necessary on that Account.—A new System of Legislation digested, and grounded on actual Experience.—A Wish suggested to extend the Benefits of the Police to the whole Trade of the River.—A Proposition for raising a Fund adequate to this Object, submitted to the Trade at large.—A Bill modelled with this particular View:—Its leading Objects explained:—To raise a Fund of 10,000l. by a small Tonnage Duty:—To afford Complete Protection, by means of Civil Guards disciplined as a regular Body:—To give extension to the Legal Powers and Penalties of the Act of the 2 Geo. III. cap. 28.—The want of a centre of Union among the Merchants, assigned as a reason for the delays which have prevented the Establishment of a proper Police.—The utility of the Bill in removing the Barrier to future Improvements.—Reasons assigned why Docks will not supersede the necessity of a Police; and why Pillage to a great extent must prevail if no Establishment exist to prevent it:—Exemplified in the Case of the Dock-yards, the East-India Warehouses, and the Docks and Warehouses at Liverpool:—Security only to be obtained by an over-

awing Police:—This System indispensably necessary with or without Docks:—The same Service not to be performed in any other way at an equal Expence.—The Commercial Fund limited to the River and Land Guards.—The Magistrates, &c. to be paid by Government.—The Principle explained upon which the Table of Tonnage Dues is formed.—The advantages resulting from the Protection which this Fund will afford:—Arguments offered in favour of the System:—Doubts suggested whether it will operate at all as a Burthen on the Trade.—Explanation of the Table of the proposed Tonnage Dues.—A permanent and energetic Execution of the whole Police System secured by the Bill.—Concluding Observations.

HAVING, in the seven preceding Chapters, endeavoured to explain the importance of the Commerce of the River Thames; the evils to which it has been exposed, and the partial remedy which has been applied by the successful experiment of a Marine Police; it now becomes necessary to develop the means which have been used to render this remedy permanent and complete.

Very little progress had been made in systematizing this important Design, before it was discovered that the existing Laws were extremely deficient; and

and that various new Legislative Regulations were indispensably necessary, to enable it effectually to restrain the multiplied evils which were discovered to exist.

This deficiency was, in some degree, counterbalanced by the excessive labour bestowed in giving vigour and effect, to whatever appeared to be incomplete in respect to Legislative Regulations, and the caution and circumspection which was manifested wherever difficulties occurred, counteracted, in a great measure, the imperfections and the deficient powers which might otherways have operated to the prejudice of the object which was to be attained, in promoting the ends of Public Justice.

The River Police, like a machine imperfect in the construction, required, and still continues to require, that unremitting attention and dexterity in putting it in motion, which will cease to be necessary, when regulated by Legislative Provisions, adapted to the precise purposes of meeting the various evils with effect;—checking their progress, and ultimately preventing their noxious operation.

It was evident, that the Projectors of this Plan were to be chiefly indebted to practical experience, not only for a correct knowledge of the actual deficiencies; but for those lights which were indispensably necessary, to improve and mature the System, so as to render it permanently beneficial to the Commercial Body, and to the State.

Impressed

Impressed with these sentiments, it was not until after the lapse of six months, from the Commencement of the Institution, that attempts were made to digest a system of Legislation applicable to its improvement, and for the purpose of supplying those deficiencies which were found to operate to the prejudice of the design.

During this interval the most minute attention was bestowed on the effect produced by the various arrangements, for the purpose of preventing Crimes, and also in developing the causes by which Justice appeared to be defeated, or Offences generated, in consequence of the imperfections of the Law.

At length, by means of every aid which could be derived from an extensive judicial procedure, in which all the obstructions to the full attainment of a complete Preventive System were accurately marked, the materials which had been progressively collecting, were ultimately arranged and digested in the form of a Parliamentary Bill, having yet only in view the Protection of the West-India Commerce, for which the Design had been originally formed.

At this period however, the beneficial effects which its partial influence had manifested, with respect to other branches of Trade, began to attract the notice of some of the most respectable Merchants concerned in the general Commerce of the Port, who suggested a wish, that a System found so advantageous to the West-India Merchants, should be extended

tended to the whole Commerce of the Port, and that a permanent Fund should be raised under the Authority of Parliament for its support.

The Committee appointed to attend to the general interest of this Trade, readily acceded to the measure, and soon after a Proposal was drawn up “for raising a Fund from the whole Trade of the Port of London, with an Estimate of the Amount, proportioned upon the Tonnage, according to the value of the Goods imported and exported, and the advantages each Branch is supposed to derive from the Protection afforded by the Marine Police Institution.”

This Proposal, with various explanatory Observations, was transmitted by the Chairman of the West-India Committee, to the Governors and Directors of the different Chartered Companies; and also to the Chairman or principal Merchants concerned in the other Branches of Trade to the Port of London, for the purpose of carrying the Design into effect.

Under these circumstances it became necessary to new-model the Bill,—to introduce the financial part of the System, which had not been before in contemplation, and to adapt the various provisions to the general interest of the whole Commerce of the Port.

While the arrangements of this System of Police extends equal security to every species of Commercial Property, the management of the Fund remains exclusively in the hands of Commissioners, appointed by the whole Body of the Merchants

S

themselves,

themselves, never to exceed *Ten Thousand Pounds a year*, and with power to diminish it to any sum, on a supposition, that by degrees the habits and morals of the Labourers and Mariners in the Ships, Vessels, and Craft upon the River, may be so improved as to render a less expensive Guard necessary.

The measure in view is to employ this Fund in extensive Guards upon the River, so as to supersede the necessity of the numerous inefficient Watchmen at present employed, at a very enormous and certain expence, while the Depredations which have been committed prove how uncertain and doubtful the advantages are, which arise from this very deficient System.

The object of the Bill is to substitute to this scanty and incompetent Guard, a well-regulated permanent Establishment of Police Officers, comprehending a Civil Force which shall be competent to afford *Complete Protection*; and so arranged, disciplined, and instructed, as to insure Fidelity in the discharge of the duty required, not only by means of the control of Superior Officers, but by the regular Periodical Reliefs, which are proposed; thereby ensuring the same attention and punctuality which prevails in a disciplined Army, with the absolute certainty, that the Commercial Property laden and discharged in the Port of London, shall never be without that species of Protection, which shall secure it from Pillage and Depredation, in all situations whe-

ther

ther stationary on the Quays, or in transit upon the River.

One of the principal objects of the Bill is to give extension to the legal Powers and Penalties contained in the Act of 2 Geo. III. cap. 28. (already explained) on the one hand ; while on the other it provides a competent Force, adequate in point of Numbers, as well as Funds, to accomplish the Preventive System which is in contemplation.

In the framing of this important Bill, (f) upon which the Security of Commercial Property, whether in *Docks* or in the *River*, will, in so great a degree depend, nothing can exceed the anxiety and care which have been manifested in *guarding Innocence from Oppression, and of divesting Power of the Faculty of Abuse.*

It extends to every object calculated to form a complete System of Prevention at the least possible expence, *and fully provides for the preservation of the Rights and Privileges of the City of London.*

The utmost attention has been bestowed in anticipating and obviating every possible objection which could be urged in opposition to every single Clause : and it is presumed the Bill may be said, with justice, to have originated in the purest spirit of Patriotism, and the most disinterested desire to do good, since the Promoter of the whole of the Design, does not contemplate any personal advantage, from its passing into a law, and has received no reward but

(f) For an Abstract of the Bill, see Appendix, No. VIII.

that which arises from the consciousness of wishing to render an essential service to his Country.— However much he may regret, that the avocations of those who are more immediately interested in the benefits which have arisen, and must unquestionably arise from this arduous undertaking, prevent an accurate and minute investigation of the real advantages which have been obtained, he consoles himself with the hope, that the period is not far distant when in the effect of the System it will be manifest, “*that the Commerce and Revenue, as well as the Public Interest, as it relates to his Majesty’s Stores, have benefited to an extent very far exceeding any Estimate which has been formed.*”

The conclusions which have been made, standing as they do on the immutable basis of Truth, will remain firm and incontrovertible. The more they are considered, the more will they develop the extensive utility of the design.

It has been none of the least of the misfortunes which has attended the interests of the Commerce of the greatest Port in the World, that no general Union existed among its Merchants. That they might be literally compared to a *Rope of Sand*, incapable of uniting either knowledge or talents (although they possess a very great portion of both) in suggesting and carrying into effect Plans for the general interest of the whole Body.

On this occasion an attempt has been made to remove this obstruction, to which is to be attributed,
almost

almost all the evils which have been brought under the review of the Reader in this Work.

To this cause perhaps, is also to be ascribed, the delays which have occurred in obtaining Docks, and innumerable obstructions to the improvements of the Port, and the general benefit of its Commerce and Revenue.

The Bill in question among many other great and incalculable advantages will, without exciting a particle of jealousy by conferring power, remove this Barrier to useful improvements. The Police of the Port of London, from being heretofore attended to by nobody, will have efficient Guardians, with power only to do good, and without the faculty of doing evil. Such an Institution cannot therefore, be too highly appreciated; but perhaps it will remain for Posterity to discover the true extent and value of the benefits which it will confer.

It has been argued speciously, that Docks will supersede the necessity of a Police; but reasons equally conclusive may be offered why those Establishments will increase that necessity.

Men inured to a course of Crimes, are not to be made honest by increasing the conveniences for shipping and discharging Cargoes, whatever these accommodations may be.

The more closely they are connected, and the smaller the bounds in which a multitude of labouring People are collected, the greater is the danger. It is impossible to lade or deliver Cargoes, or to

stow

stow or deposit Merchandise in Warehouses, without the intervention of Labourers; and equally impracticable, to control their unruly passions and rapacious desires, while thus employed by the common measures of Precaution, which can be exercised in the usual course of business. The Common Watchmen, on such occasions, possess no overawing influence. Their power, when compared with that of disciplined Police Officers, operates upon the minds of Delinquents, in the same manner as men without Weapons of Offence, compared with an Army of Soldiers properly accoutred for War. To prevent Crimes, means must be employed to bring constantly under the view of the Delinquent, the fear of Detection and the certainty of being conveyed to a Magistrate. This effect belongs exclusively to the Science of Preventive Police, which is only beginning to be understood. Experience has shewn how powerfully it affects the mind; and it requires only a slight knowledge of Human Nature to conceive a reason why it must operate as a means of prevention.

The want of the application of this Science has exposed the Property in the Docks and Warehouses at *Liverpool* to considerable Pillage. The same will be the case in London, if it does not become the province of those, who are known to have the power of Punishment, to attend to this particular Department.

As soon as the Docks, now in progress, shall have received Fleets for the purpose of discharge, a num-

ber

ber of Labourers, from 2 to 3000, many of them in the habit of committing crimes, must necessarily be admitted constantly into them. In what manner is this multitude of depraved characters, to be prevented from committing Excesses? The Functions of the Dockmaster have no relation to this object, nor would any arrangement he could make for preventing disorders avail. Unskilled in the mode of Detection, and incapable, from other business—from ignorance of the Law, or from timidity at the view of audacious Rapacity and Opposition, it would be impossible for him to act so as to overawe Offenders, or to keep them within bounds. Wherever multitudes of depraved characters are collected in one spot, *Danger is immediately and at all times to be apprehended.* The class of aquatic Labourers on the Thames differ from all others, inasmuch as their attention is constantly directed towards Plunder, and the means of procuring and concealing it. They are in this view placing themselves constantly in direct opposition to the intentions of their Employers, who are perhaps, at the moment unconscious of what is going forward. Being all equally desirous of obtaining Plunder, they are of course disposed, if resistance is necessary, to support one another. Wherever masses of Property are collected together, Crimes will increase, and Labourers will commit acts of Pillage. It is found to be the case in his Majesty's Dock-yards, where the Labourers are much more select than they can possibly be in Commercial Docks. It is even known to exist

exist to a considerable extent in the East-India Warehouses, where still greater pains are bestowed in respect to the character of those who are employed. In the Liverpool Docks it has been already mentioned to be an evil which neither the Docks nor the Warehouses has been able to prevent. The reason is obvious. No means of overawing Delinquents exist at any of these Repositories: when detected in acts of Pillage, they are often suffered to escape on restoring the Plunder. The barrier between Crimes and Punishments is strong wherever the facilities arising from a Police cannot be obtained. The mind of man relents—The teasing difficulties attending Prosecutions restrain the disposition, which otherwise would exist to make examples, and hence petty Thieves have become more audacious and numerous as property has increased. It is only by the direct application of an appropriate Police, that Delinquents can be overawed and restrained. Deprive the Docks of the Security attached to Regulations founded on the Science of Police, and enforced by its Power, and Excesses and Crimes will be committed in spite of *Locks, Gates, and every other Preventive Arrangement, short of an overawing System.* Security in this respect is only to be obtained, by making it the sole duty of a certain number of Individuals, properly instructed and relieved at certain periods by others, to watch over the conduct of those loose characters, to whose rapacity the immense Property deposited in the Docks must unavoidably be exposed. But these

these guards must be trained to this particular duty, and kept pure by checks, to be established under the control of a vigilant magistracy. If not—they will be of little use.

It is the dread of the existing power of immediate detection, and the certainty of punishment as the consequence of this detection, that restrains men of loose morals from the commission of offences. Experience has shown how inadequate common Watchmen are to excite such impressions, and how powerfully they have operated in cases where Officers of Police stood in the same situation.^(g) This truth cannot be too forcibly, or too frequently impressed upon the mind, wherever arrangements are to be

^(g) The Marine Police, as recently exemplified, may be considered as quite a new Science, not yet perfectly understood. It operates as a restraint of the most powerful kind upon classes of delinquents, who would be restrained by no other means. To the System of vigilance which has overawed the Criminal actions of Labourers upon the River, joined to the imminent danger of detection, is to be attributed the general success of the design. Wherever this species of Police attaches, good order and security will prevail even among the most depraved and ferocious in civil society. Where it does not, confusion, irregularity and crimes must be expected. Wherever great bodies of aquatic labourers are collected together, the risque of danger from turbulent behaviour, will be greater, in proportion to the number of depraved characters who are collected together in one spot; and hence it follows, that mischief may be more easily hatched in Docks than on the River. A Police only can counteract this; and to the same preventive system will the Commerce of the Port be indebted for securing both the Docks and the Pool from conflagration. In fine, under every circumstance where property is exposed, a preventive Police must be resorted to in order to be secure.

formed,

formed for destroying the Criminal Confederacies, which the gradual increase of Commerce generated, while no Police existed to cut down the noxious exuberances which grew up as property increased; sapping the foundation of all morals, and annoying the industrious and innocent part of the Community.

These evil propensities and noxious qualities in the human mind in a state of depravity, are not to be removed by *walls*, within which evil doers must be admitted; neither will *locks* nor *bars* avail, where indiscriminate multitudes are to be congregated in one spot. Restraints are only to be effected by the strong and overawing hand of power, constantly exhibited in the view of those who contemplate the commission of crimes, more especially where the moral turpitude of the action has no repulsive effect upon the mind.

Nor can it be argued with truth, that any solid objection exists on the score of *expence*, since that will be shared among the vast quantity of Shipping and their Cargoes to which the general system of Police, so indispensably necessary to protect the Property in question, will apply. These, it has been seen, amount to upwards of *Thirteen Thousand Trading Vessels*, besides the multitude of Craft already enumerated, which, in the course of a year, will lade and discharge in the River, independent of the 400 West-India Ships, for which the Docks are appropriated.

A general

A general Police therefore, aided by an improved Legislative System, such as has been already explained, will be found indispensably necessary under all circumstances, even if all the Docks which have been in contemplation were carried into execution. It is by such means only that disorders are to be repressed, good order maintained, and conflagrations prevented.

Detachments of Police Guards, can be furnished at a less expence to protect Merchandise locally situated, than the same service can be performed in any other way; with this great additional advantage, that while these Guards secure the Property of Individuals, and the Revenue of the State from waste and spoliation, they repress and prevent tumults and maintain good order.

A general System of Police therefore, applicable to every part of the River, and to every Dock and Landing-place, would seem to be indispensably necessary; while, on the score of expence, it would be found infinitely more œconomical than any other mode that could be adopted; and when the proposed actual burden upon the Trade and Shipping is known to be limited to *Ten Thousand Pounds a year*, beyond which it cannot be extended, although it may be reduced to any sum; and when it is also considered that the whole is to be appropriated by the *Commercial Commissioners chosen by the Trade at large*, to the expence of the River Guards, without any appropriation for remunerating Magistrates

trates (on whom the whole weight and responsibility of management will rest) or in supporting the Judicial Establishment; (*h*) it would seem that every difficulty is removed, and every objection anticipated in the structure of this design, which could operate as an obstruction either to its execution or its permanency.

In apportioning this expence upon the Trade, due attention has been paid to the degree of benefit which each branch will enjoy, by taking into consideration the *extent of the Tonnage*, the value of the aggregate property exposed to depredation, and the degree of risque which attaches to the Merchandise imported and exported by each class.

In calculating however, these risques, the actual losses heretofore estimated to be sustained by each branch of trade, has not been considered as the criterion; nor can it be deemed a just rule, since the operations of the temporary Police has reduced the loss on West-India property to one-fiftieth part of the amount of former depredations, and placed all the other branches of Commerce nearly on an equal footing.

In forming, therefore, the general estimate (which will of course be subject to such modifications as those who are appointed to act for the Trade

(*h*) The Judicial Institution is proposed to be supported by Government, whose munificence already in keeping up the Establishment, while the West-India ships were on their voyages, and in contributing in other respects to the pecuniary aid of the System, deserves the thanks of the whole Commercial body.

at large shall deem fit, before the Bill passes into a law,) the judgment exercised has been without bias, and with an immediate view to the relative interests of all who are to contribute to this fund, which is explained in the following

PROPOSAL,

For raising a fund applicable to Police purposes, calculated on the Importation and Exportation of the Port of London, for the year ending January 5, 1798, according to the value of the Goods imported and exported, and to the advantages each branch of Trade is supposed to derive from the protection afforded.

Specification of different Trades.	Value of Imports.	Value of Exports.	Total value of imports and exports	No. of Ships.	Tons.	Rates.	Total Tonnage Dues.
	£.	£.	£.			d.	£.
East Indies	6,544,000	3,958,000	10,502,000	53	41,466	6	1036
West Indies	7,118,000	3,895,000	11,013,000	346	101,484	6	2537
Brit. American Colonies	291,000	1,347,000	1,638,000	68	13,986	5	293
Africa and the Cape . . .	82,000	449,000	531,000	17	4,336	4	72
Southern Fishery	250,000	[54]	250,000	29	7,461	2	62
Greenland Fishery	64,000		64,000	16	4,769	1	20
United States of America	1,517,000	3,899,000	5,416,000	140	32,213	5	670
Mediterranean & Turkey	390,000	119,000	509,000	72	14,757	4	245
Spain	776,000	171,000	947,000	121	16,509	4	275
Portugal	414,000	439,000	853,000	180	27,670	3	345
France	16,000	860,000	876,000	56	5,573	4	97
Austrian Flanders	21,000	118,000	139,000	66	5,104	2	42
Holland	673,000	1,538,000	2,211,000	329	19,166	2	159
Germany	2,658,000	8,014,000	10,672,000	235	37,647	5	784
Prussia	221,000	211,000	432,000	608	56,955	1	355
Poland	207,000	35,000	242,000	69	17,210	2	143
Sweden	153,000	169,000	322,000	109	14,252	3	178
Denmark and Norway	95,000	711,000	806,000	202	48,469	2	404
Russia	1,565,000	452,000	2,017,000	230	56,131	3	700
Guernsey, Jersey, &c.	219,000	83,000	302,000	46	5,344	2	44
Ireland	1,879,000	660,000	2,539,000	276	32,824	2	270
Coasting Trade	4,100,000	2,500,000	6,600,000	6,500	560,000	1	583
Coal Trade	1,700,000	10,000	1,710,000	3,676	656,000	1	683
	30,953,000	29,638,000	60,591,000	13,444	1,779,326		10,000

Of this aggregate $\frac{1}{2}$ or three-sixths is proposed to be raised on Imports 5000
 $\frac{1}{2}$ or two-sixths on Exports 3334
 one-sixth on Shipping 1666

(Without Fractions.)

£10,000

When

When the immense property which is to be protected is taken into consideration, estimated according to the foregoing Table, to amount to upwards of Sixty Millions a year, contained in above three Million of Packages, all subjected, more or less, to the risque of Pillage, the sum proposed to be raised to attain so great a purpose, as the preservation of half a Million sterling, which is estimated to have been plundered annually, can certainly be no object.—Upon such an extensive scale of Commerce, it is scarcely a drop in the bucket. To use a commercial metaphor, it is employing money where the yearly return (exclusive of the West-India Trade) will amount to 2500l. per cent. But it is even doubtful when the present expence of watching is taken into the account, whether it will cost the Trade a single farthing upon the whole.

It will be seen also by a reference to this Table, that it is proposed to raise the Police fund in the first instance upon the Tonnage of the Ships, nearly upon the plan which is adopted with respect to Light-houses. The Bill provides, that it shall be received at the Custom-house before the Ships enter or clear, and paid regularly by the Collector to such Treasurer as the Commercial Commissioners shall appoint, and that it shall be entirely under their control.

The Ship-Owners, or their Agents, who advance this money, in the mean time are authorised by the Bill to make a charge in their freight notes to each shipper

shipper or importer according to the Tons of Goods, which may either be exported or landed according to the rate specified in the Table, deducting therefrom one-sixth part which falls upon the Ship.—While much consideration has been bestowed in framing the clauses in the Bill which relate to this object, with a view to prevent trouble ; nothing can exceed in point of anxiety, the pains which have been taken to guard both the shippers and importers against frauds in proportioning the charge, so that no greater expence than the *bona fide* Tonnage shall fall upon the Merchants, which will be found in its innumerable subdivisions, to be a very trifling burden to the various classes of Importers and Exporters, who are to benefit so essentially by the very useful application of this inconsiderable sum of money.

Were its benefits to extend no farther than to restrain and keep within bounds, the evil habits and unprincipled dispositions of nautical labourers, and to guard the Shipping and the Port against accidents by fire or by tempestuous weather in the night, it would, to attain such objects, become a cheap purchase ; but when it has been seen in this, and the preceding Chapters, that it is intended and expected, to compass the great object of renovating the relaxed morals of the lower classes who labour on the River, and to secure the vast floating Property from pillage and depredation ; candour must admit, that even ten times the proposed sum would not be too high

high a price for the benefits which are contemplated, and which will, most assuredly, result from the system, if the Bill, which has already been brought under the review of the Reader, shall pass into a law.

Under this mild and appropriate system of legislation, in framing which every aid that could be derived from labour and experience, has been exhausted to render it as perfect as possible, there will be no reason to apprehend any relaxation of the energy of the system. In whatever hands the superintending execution may be placed, it must retain its vigour and preserve its utility. To secure this essential point, without which, many of the best institutions moulder into sinecures, the powers of the mind have been anxiously employed in establishing checks, which cannot fail to secure a permanent energetic execution.*(i)* To the Commercial body, therefore, who trade to and from the Port of London, this Bill will prove a treasure which can never be sufficiently

(i) The uninterrupted energy of the system is secured by the power vested in the Commissioners, who manage the Police fund, to withhold supplies, in case they are not satisfied with the proper conduct of those in the immediate management, or with respect to the advantages resulting from the Police in general, in securing Commercial Property against depredations.

The checks thus established, cannot fail to secure a permanent and unceasing attention to the means of supporting the system in its full vigour. Since the subsistence of those engaged in the execution, will depend on the energy they display, and the good effects which it produces.

estimated. The good effects which it will produce, will develop themselves every year in the removal of evils and pressures, in a manner hitherto conceived impracticable, because the labour of previous investigation was Herculean, and such as was not likely to be undertaken.

The ground, however, has been at length cleared. The evils have been brought within a focus capable of being contemplated, both in the mass and in the detail. Their extent and magnitude have been finally understood, and such remedies have been suggested, as, when fairly applied, will unquestionably be successful, if the System of Legislation which has been proposed shall receive the sanction of Parliament. An explanation of the advantages to be derived from this salutary measure, together with a summary view of the proposed Bill, will form the subject of the succeeding Chapter.