

Proposals for carrying on a Manufacture in the Town of Boston, for Employing the Poor of said Town.

WHEREAS for many Years past, there have been, and still are great Numbers of the Inhabitants of Boston, very poor, and altho' in Health, are unable to support themselves for want of Employ, and these so daily increasing, that the Expence and Charge of the Town for their Maintenance is almost insupportable, the same being the last Year near *Nineteen Thousand Pounds* Old Tenor; and the Town having at their general Meetings several Times taken this Affair into their serious Consideration, did on the 28th of October last, appoint a Committee "to consider of some Measures for employing the Poor, by reviving the "Linen Manufacture, or in any other Ways that "should be thought beneficial". And the said Committee on the 28th of December last, reported to the Town, their Sentiments as to the carrying on the Linen Manufacture, and that such Difficulties must necessarily attend it, as it could not be undertaken at present in a Factory, without incurring a great Loss, and the good Intention of the Town, viz. employing the Poor, be defeated; but that upon an Alteration of some Circumstances relating to that Manufacture, they were in hopes, it might be carried on to Advantage. The said Committee in a second Report on the 13th of January last, recommended to the Town the carrying on a Manufacture for making of Duck or Sail Cloth, which might be done with less Expence, would be a more constant Employ for the Poor, and they judged more beneficial to the Publick, than the Linen, provided suitable Encouragement was given to such Persons as should appear to undertake the same on their own Account and Risque, viz.

First, That the Government grant the Use of the Manufactory-House in Boston, to the Undertakers, for a certain Term, or so long as they may continue to carry on the Manufacture of Duck, Check, or Plain Linen.

Secondly, That a Sum be immediately raised by Subscription, to be given to the Undertakers, for purchasing Looms, Wheels, and other Utensils, necessary for carrying on said Manufacture, learning of Spinners, repairing the House, and such other incidental Charges as may arise.

Thirdly, That as the Prospect of Advantage to the Undertakers, is not sufficient to induce any to engage in it, without some Assistance from such as are of Ability to afford it; and as it will be necessary for them to hire a considerable Sum of Money, for a Stock to carry on this Manufacture, for which they must give their own personal Security, and pay the Interest thereof: The Committee proposed, that a

Subscription should be opened, for the annual Payment of such a Sum, as each Person should incline to give, for the Space of five Years at least; and this to be given to the Undertakers, to enable them to pay the Interest of the Money they may borrow for this Purpose.

Which Report after the most mature Consideration, was unanimously accepted by the Town, and thereupon it was then

Resolved, That the Committee be desired to procure Undertakers for the Execution of the Scheme; and when Undertakers shall appear, "the Town recommended to the Inhabitants, a Subscription for the "Purposes aforesaid". Also,

Resolved, "That the Gentlemen who Represent the "Town in General Assembly, be desired to countenance and forward all in their Power, any Application that may be made to the Court, by the "Undertakers, for their Assistance in said Undertaking".

And no Persons having as yet appeared to undertake this Business, although Application has been made to several. And We the *undersigned*, who were part of the said Committee, being sensible of the Advantages that will arise to the Town, from such an Undertaking, in case it is pursued with Resolution, and can be established; informed the Gentlemen the Select-Men, that rather than the good End intended by the Town should be frustrated, We would undertake the carrying on said Manufacture, upon the Encouragement mentioned in the Committee's Report; and the Select-Men having expressed their great Satisfaction upon our engaging in it:

We would now inform the Publick, that we have procured the Manufactory-House in the Common for seven Years, for that Purpose, on keeping the same in Repair at our Expence. This House will contain about twenty-five Looms, in which 1200 or 1500 Pieces of Duck may be made in a Year; and that we hope to make that Quantity every Year, unless we shall find, that Check or Plain Linen, can be made to equal Advantage: And should this be the Case, we shall with Pleasure improve Part of the Stock in that Manufacture, provided the late Society will grant us the Looms, and other Utensils for that Purpose, now in the Factory.

We are well informed Duck has been made here of a superiour Quality to any Imported from Russia, and for about the same Price, as that Sort of Duck costs when

when Imported from London. This Manufacture will be fully as beneficial to the Publick, as the Linen, the Yarn being spun by Women and Children, will be a constant Employ for them; and besides, it has this peculiar Advantage, that it may be made with Hemp or Flax of our own Growth, or with Foreign Hemp, which can at all Times be procured, so it is not liable to fail by reason of a Drought. Whereas the Linen Manufacture, depending on the Growth of Flax, has, when a Drought has happened, and some other Accidents that attend that Manufacture, been the Cause of putting a Stop to it, none of which the Manufacture of Duck are subject to.

We would further inform the Publick, that as the greatest Part of the first Year will probably be taken up, in learning of Spinners, procuring Weavers, and such Utensils as will be necessary to carry

on this Business; We are of Opinion, if the Subscriptions should be continued for seven Years, the Manufacture may be so established as afterwards to support itself, and thereby the heavy annual Charge of maintaining the Poor, will be greatly lessened. Should it prove otherways (which we have no Reason to expect) at the Expiration of said seven Years, we propose to lay the whole of our Proceedings before the Publick for their Inspection and Satisfaction; and should the good Ends proposed by setting up this Manufacture be accomplished, the Gentlemen subscribing will have no Reason to repent their encouraging it; nor will they be Loosers by this Means, as they will thereby be esed, as much in their Taxes, as they may subscribe to this Undertaking.

We therefore hope the Inhabitants of the Town will cheerfully subscribe to promote the same.

*John Barret,
Ezekiel Goldthwait,
Melatiah Bourn,
Edward Payne,
Henderfon Inchet.*

Boston, March 1st, 1768.

WE the Subscribers, Select-Men of the Town of Boston, having perused the foregoing Proposals, approve of the same, as the most likely Method for employing the Poor of this Town; and we judge

it will thereby reduce the heavy Tax, which for some Years past has been levied for their Support. We therefore earnestly recommend to the Inhabitants, that they encourage the same by a generous Subscription.

*Joseph Jackson,
Samuel Sewall,
John Ruddock,
John Hancock,
William Phillips,
Timothy Newell,
John Rowe.*

