

An Act to empower the Justices of the several County Courts, to make Provision for the late Inhabitants of *Nova-Scotia*, and for regulating their Conduct.

Preamble.

I. **W**HEREAS the Governor and Council of *Nova Scotia* have thought it most advantageous to the *British* Interest, in *North-America*, to transport many of the Inhabitants thereof, into other of his Majesty's Colonies, Numbers of whom have been brought into this Province, and in Compassion to their unhappy Circumstances have been permitted to Land, and have been dispersed into different Counties within this Province, in order to give them an Opportunity of exercising their own Labour and Industry, thereby to procure a comfortable Subsistence for themselves: Notwithstanding which, many of them, through Obstinacy, and others, from Indolence, have absolutely refused and declined making Use of such Means of Subsistence, and have thereby become a considerable Burthen upon the charitable and well disposed People in the several Counties: For the Prevention whereof for the future, and to prevent such of them as are not able to subsist themselves from perishing,

Justices to take Care of and provide for such of the *French* Neutrals, as shall be real Objects of Charity.

II. **B E** it Enacted by the Right Honourable the Lord Proprietary, by and with the Advice and Consent of his Lordships Governor, and the Upper and Lower Houses of Assembly and the Authority of the same, That the Justices of the several Counties within this Province, shall, and they are hereby empowered, in the same Manner that they now take Care of and provide for the Poor of their respective Counties, to take care of and provide for such of the said *French* Neutrals in their respective Counties, as they shall deem to be real Objects of Charity. And if there shall be in any County, a greater Number of the said *French* Neutrals than is already allotted by his Excellency the Governor, that then the Justices of such County shall, and they are hereby authorized and empowered to convey or transport such Overplus or Part thereof to any other County or Counties, as will make up the Number allotted them as aforesaid: And the Justices of such Counties are hereby obliged and required to receive and dispose of the *French* Neutrals, so sent, in the best Manner they can, so as that they may become Residents of their respective Counties. *Provided always*, That none of the said Neutrals shall be sent into *Frederick* County.

Justices to bind out such of their Children, as they shall be unable to support.

Proviso.

III. **A N D** be it further Enacted, by the Authority aforesaid, That if any of the said Inhabitants of *Nova-Scotia* shall be unable to support their Children by their own Labour and Industry, that then, and in such Case, it shall and may be lawful for the Justices of the several County Courts respectively to bind out such Child or Children to some Person, upon the best Terms they can make, for the Ease of the County, as well as the Benefit of such Child, in the same Manner that Orphans are bound out by the Laws of this Province. *Provided nevertheless*, That if his most Sacred Majesty should be graciously pleased to order the said Inhabitants of *Nova-Scotia* to any other Part of his Majesty's Dominions or elsewhere, that then, in such Case, all Manner of Contracts, which shall have been made by the Justices aforesaid with any Person or Persons, with regard to such Child or Children, shall be absolutely void and of none Effect; and the said Justices shall make the Person or Persons, to whom any of the Children aforesaid shall have been bound, such an Allowance in the County Levy, as they shall think just and reasonable.

Constables to return an exact List of all the *French* Neutrals, in their several Hundreds, to next *August* Court.

Proviso.

IV. **A N D** be it further Enacted, That the Constables of every Hundred shall, and they are hereby directed to take and return to the next *August* Court of their respective Counties, to be entered in the Records of the said County, an exact List of all and every such *French* Neutral, in their several Hundreds, distinguishing therein the Men, Women, Boys, and Girls; and on Failure thereof, every such Constable shall be adjudged, by the Court to whom such List should be returned, in a summary Way, to pay the Sum of Thirty Shillings Current Money, to be applied for the Use of the County.

V. **P R O V I D E D** always, and be it Enacted, That no Constable shall return any of the said Neutrals as Taxables, but that all and every such Neutral *French* Man shall be exempt from the Payment of all Taxes.

French Neutrals not to travel ten Miles from their Place of Abode, without a Pass.

VI. **A N D** be it further Enacted, by the Authority aforesaid, That if any of the said late Inhabitants of *Nova-Scotia* commonly called *French* Neutrals, shall be found travelling above the Distance of ten Miles from the Place of his or her Abode, or out of the County where he, she or they, shall reside, without a Pass from some Provincial or County Magistrate, describing the Person or Persons of such *French* Neutrals, mentioning their Place of Residence, and whither they are going, and limiting a Time for their Return, it shall and may be lawful for any Person or Persons to take up such *French* Neutral or Neutrals, and him, her, or them, carry before some Justice of the Peace; and if, on Examination, it shall appear to such Justice, that such *French* Neutral or Neutrals is or are travelling beyond the Place or Places, or after the Time mentioned in the said Pass, it shall and may be lawful for such Justice, and he is hereby required to commit such Person or Persons to the Public Goal of the County where he, she or they reside, there to remain for the Space of five Days, unless he, she or they give Security for his, her or their good Behaviour and Appearance at the next County Court. And if any of the said *French* Neutrals shall be found in any other County, than that in which they are registered as aforesaid, without such Pass as aforesaid, it shall be lawful for any Person to take up such *French* Neutral or Neutrals, and carry them before some Magistrate of the County, who is hereby empowered to confine such *French* Neutral or Neutrals, until, upon Examination, it can be known from what County they departed, and then, by Warrant under his Hand, to order him, her or them to be conveyed back, from Constable to Constable, to the County where they belong, or shall properly reside, there to be confined