

Book XI.
Title XXVI. (XXV)

Concerning healthy beggars.
(De mendicantibus validis.)

11.26.1. Emperors Gratian, Valentinian and Theodosius to Severus, City Prefect.

All those, whose poverty calls them to begging from the public, shall each be thoroughly examined as to the soundness of the body, and as to his age. The slothful and those who deserve no pity on account of weakness, shall, if they are slaves, become the property of those who zealously and diligently expose them; those who were born free, shall become the perpetual serfs of the person who exposes and proves such laziness, reserving to owners the right of action against those who have kept fugitives concealed or have advised beggary.

Given at Patavia June 20 (382).

C. Th. 14.18.1.

Note.

This law was enacted doubtless mainly against persons who flooded the capitals from the provinces, consisting frequently of fugitives from slavery or serfdom. Novel 80 made somewhat different provisions. It directed the inquisitor (quaesitor) whose office was specially established by Justinian for Constantinople, to examine beggars as to their physical condition and age, to send slaves back to their masters, free persons from the provinces back to the place from which they came, and to put beggars in the city to work.