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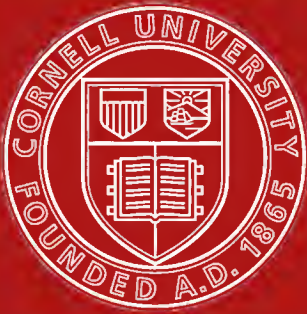


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A farther case relating to the poor keel



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A F A R T H E R
C A S E

Relating to the Poor Keel-men of *Newcastle*.

THE Poor *Keel-men* having made farther Discoveries of the Design laid against them by both the Magistrates and Hoast-men of *Newcastle*, desire to lay open the same to this Honourable House, imploring the Justice and Protection of the Parliament, against the most unjust, and most wicked Design that has been known for these many Years, and the like of which they believe has not come before any Parliament, at least not without meeting a just Censure and Reproof.

It has been already represented, that the Poor Keel-men have raised a voluntary Contribution of Charity spared out of their Daily Labour, in order to Maintain and Support their own Poor; and that themselves when by Age or Accidents, to which their hazardous Employment is very much exposed, are past their Labour, may not perish thro' Want, and be miserably Starved.

They humbly represent, that it is notorious that they have been cheated and abused by the Hoastmen, and even by some of the Magistrates themselves, who are Hoast-men, in the disposing their said Charity, and great Sums of the Money Wasted and Embezzelled by them, for which the Poor Men cannot bring to Account, not being Incorporated, and therefore not able to Sue, unless they would bring a Thousand Fifteen Hundred Writs against one Man, the Charge of which, their Enemies know, they cannot Support.

The Distresses which these Abuses brought the Poor to, and a clear Prospect they had of the imminent Ruin of their Hospital, and of their Charity, obliged them to Petition Her Majesty for a Charter of Incorporation: They saw many of their Poor already starved for Want of Bread, even while great Sums of Money lay in the Hands of the said Hoast-men, and Magistrates, which they refused to pay, and the said Hoast-men particularly kept back their Money, in order to disable them from carrying on the Expence of obtaining, and compassing the said Charter.

But the said Magistrates finding they could not prevent the Poor Men Solliciting for the said Charter, and that their Petition having been Presented to Her Majesty, was Graciously received, and referred to the Attorney-General, they entred their Caveat against it, alledging; that the Keel-men had agreed to Sign another Petition to the Parliament against the former, desiring the Magistrates should have the Government and Management of the said Hospital and Charity, which was the very Thing the Poor Keel-men always opposed, and universally protested against; resolving, rather than they would consent to it, they would put a stop to their said Contribution, and let their Hospital sink, tho' it had already cost them above Three Thousand Pound.

However, the Hoast-men and Magistrates resolving to try, if possible, to get the Poor Men in their Power, set Engines at Work, by Threats and Promises, to bring in such of the Poor Men as they thought they could Influence, to Sign such a Petition or Request against themselves, as above, threatening to take their Keels from them, and turn them out of their Employ, if they would not; by which they obtain'd about Two Hundred of the Poor Men, and some Boys among them, to Subscribe; some of the Poor Men exclaiming against the Force put upon them at the same Time, and declaring they would revoke it before the Parliament, as they now do.

With these Arts having drawn in a few Poor Men, and added some Names, by Way of Forgery, which the Men named never writ, or agreed to, the Magistrates laid a specious Scheme before the Parliament, and no Body opposing them, obtain'd Leave of Course to bring in a Bill, under the Pretence of Establishing, and Perpetuating the Charity of the Keel-men, in which they have taken Care to make themselves, and their Successors, perpetual Governours of the said Charity, and consequently of the Keel-men themselves.

And being Conscious to themselves, that when the Keel-men should find that they were to fall thus into the Hands of those who had already Enriched themselves with the Poor's Bread, the said Poor Men would with one Consent refuse the said Contribution, and pay it no longer, the same being their own Voluntary Payment, the said Magistrates and Hoast-men have obtained a Clause in the said Bill to enforce the said Payment, and thereby to turn their said Charity into a Tax or Duty upon their Labour, which they humbly hope they cannot legally be made subject to, upon any Reasonable Foundation, especially as the said Magistrates have contrived it.

They humbly represent, that if they are thus subjected to the Hoast-men, who are Magistrates on the one Hand, and Coal-Owners on the other, all the Laws lately made by this present Parliament against Combinations, Contracts, and Engrossing of Coals, will be rendred Ineffectual; for that the said Coal-Owners having the Poor Keel-men thus at their Command, will be able to put what Price they please upon the Coals, load and refuse to load what Ships they please, and by the same undue Preferences, both at *Newcastle* and at the Markets, which they formerly practiced, bring the Coal Trade to the same Degree of a Monopoly, which it was in before.

The Keel-men also humbly represent, that strange Accounts have been given to the House of the Numbers of Keel-mens Hands, obtained by the Magistrates to join in their said Request, which have been sometimes called a Thousand, sometimes Eight Hundred: But the Keel-men desire no better than to have them be obliged to produce them, since it is well known the whole Number of the Keel-men is within 1600, near One Thousand whereof have put their Hands to this Petition, 400 of them are yet in *Scotland*, whither they go always in the Winter to their Families; and they do not doubt but they shall get all the rest to sign, within about Twenty or Thirty, who have been Confederates, and concern'd in the Embezzlements of the Poor's Money, are in a just Dread of being called to an Account for the same.

All these Evil Practices of the said Magistrates and Hoast-men being now detected, the Poor Men, who were violently and fraudulently Imposed upon before, now openly declare the said Force, and revoking their said Subscription, have joined as One Man with their Brethren, as aforesaid, humbly to Petition the House that the said Bill may not pass; but that they may have the Protection of this Honourable House, that their Contribution and Charity, which is Free and Voluntary, may still remain so; and that they may be Incorporated, as in like Cases other Societies of Freemen are Incorporated, with Power to chuse their own Governours, Stewards, and Officers, and to call to Account the Knaves that have Cheated and Robb'd the Poor.

All which is humbly submitted to this Honourable House, &c.



