

# Toilers Final Fight For Liberty

## Four Thousand Electors Ask Kean's Arrest Charging Him With Criminal Negligence.

### Latest Attempt To Prove Kean Innocent Of Having Committed a Grave Error

#### Judge Johnson Belittles the Intelligence of Kean's Victims

Not until to-day have we had a chance to read carefully that long winded report by Judge Johnson, in which he makes attempt to whitewash Abram Kean.

Our gorge rises when we read it, for it is the most revolting exhibition of a mind and intellect subverted to and made the pandor to an evil cause.

Judge Johnson has added insult to injury and to save one man from just condemnation does not scruple to belittle the intelligence of more than a score of other men, men who are superior in a hundred ways to the man Judge Johnson would defend. But Judge Johnson has defamed and damned his own reputation, and not in the least effected the standing of the others.

He could not touch dirt and not befoul himself, he could not take up the defense of Kean without soiling his hands. Judge Johnson has passed judgment on himself, and he stands to-day in the eyes of the people a man on whom mistrust has fallen.

Judge Johnson went miles further than even did Judge Knight last year. He makes a statement that involves the charge that the Newfoundland's crew did not know in what direction they were travelling when they left the patch of seals in the storm to go hunt their path of the morning. He claims that they walked N.E. and he makes this claim in order to support Kean. For if Kean put them out where he claims to have put them, it was only by travelling N.E. that they could intersect the path they travelled in the morning on their way to the Stephano.

Did the men travel N.E., as Judge Johnson is so anxious to prove, and that is an all important point in Kean's case, and if Judge Johnson could prove that, he might be able to prove that Kean brought the men nearer to their ship, and only by this proof could it be admitted. If the men did not walk N.E. then it is a clear as daylight that Kean did not take the men nearer to the Newfoundland, and that is a damning case against Kean.

Now let us see. Let us for the moment grant that those men were so stupid as not to know S.E. from N.E. at a time when their very lives depended on their taking an exact course.

Granting that Tuff and Dawson and the other master watches do not know as much about the compass as does Judge Johnson. Will Johnson go so far as to say that those men did not know if the wind was blowing in their faces or not? That is in effect just what is stated. Now if Johnson will but take the trouble to go back to last Spring's evidence, he will find that the men stated they went S.E., and directly to windward. If Johnson can shift the direction of the wind we believe he would have a good case, but as it is, we believe he admits the wind was S.E.

Another point Kean told Tuff that his ship was S.E. from him, when he put him out to go after the seals, and having found the seals the men turned to windward and came to the path they had been travelling in the morning and Johnson admits the wind was S.E. Judge Johnson is now simply trying to justify Kean's map, which Kean, since it has been so clearly pointed out to him, that his map was a fabrication, which belied his other evidence, repudiates.

Judge Johnson is willing to prove everyman of the Newfoundland's crew a dunderhead, sailors who do not know, what going to windward means or who do not know N.E., from S.E. Could contempt go further. And what about Tuff. Judge Johnson lauds him as being a superior man, does he know S.E. from N.E. or does he know when the winds is blowing in his face.

We have no time to go deeper into question just now but we are not by any means done with it. We intend to expose Judge Johnson and his base designs to save Kean at the expense of much better men's reputation.

#### A Question of Judgement or Criminal Negligence

Now let us see if Captain Kean's conduct on March the thirty-first last, was as to lead us to believe that he is possessed of these qualities—the qualities of a safe man.

First is he humane?

Now let us keep before our minds that we are examining Captain Kean as Master of the Stephano on March the 31st, and at no other time. For on other occasions and at other times when greed for seals is not possessing him, he may be quite reasonable and safe. Captain Kean knows what is right and what is wrong, he has a conscience, but he also has a way of submerging that still small voice, that marks him an unsafe man. That he knows what is right and what is wrong is plainly shown by his effort to convince the Country that he did what a humane man should do. He told the Country that when he knew the Newfoundland's crew were coming to his ship, he sent for his chief cook, and told him to get a dinner ready for the weary men. That is evidence of conscience.

The dinner consisted of hard tack and cold unsweetened tea, and an order to hurry up and get out, an order which compelled some of the men to leave the ship without their dinner, which proves that the voice of conscience was not heard or heeded by Captain Kean.

Did Captain Kean display any of that commendable zeal for the men, in respect to the dinner he had served them? Judge Johnson will answer this question.

The dinner that was served to the men, and the brutal hurry that compelled some men to go away without as much as a drink of tea, both show that Captain Kean's solicitude for the men was of a very peculiar cold blooded kind, that does not comport very aptly with that spirit of commendable zeal we are told Captain Kean displayed towards the men.

For the present we will say no more of Kean's tender regard for the men, but will turn to examine him on those other qualities that a sealing master should possess. Of these we will first take judgment, particularly as it applies to weather forecasting.

We will first admit for the sake of argument, that Captain Kean saw no signs of an approaching storm, when he put the men out on the ice. That the storm did come, very shortly after those men had left the Stephano, there is no need to argue, as everybody knows that. Here Captain Kean showed that he does not possess the quality of being able to foretell the weather. He erred in judgment, and his error cost seventy-eight precious lives.

Is there anything like criminality in this failure to apprehend a storm. We believe there is. Captain Kean had a barometer on board, which had he consulted intelligently, and with that frequency and regularity which we understand the Board of Trade requires would have told him that a storm was imminent.

His log shows that the barometer was not consulted as it should have been, by a man with commendable zeal for the welfare of those under his care that Judge Johnson so glibly tells us, Captain Kean displayed.

"I have had ample proof when sitting in Supreme Court that Captain Abraham Kean's powers of correct observation at the seal fishery and his ability to recall and describe the positions of several moving ships at different times of the same day (even where his own vessel was not concerned) are very remarkable. They account for his consistent and extraordinary success as a seal-killer."

Did Judge Johnson stop to consider when he was penning this soapy suds, that Kean has always had the most powerful ship in the fleet and that he would deserve imprisonment if he could not locate the white coats in such ships as the Florizel and Stephano? We venture to assert that every year Kean sailed to the seal fishery, he carried 50 men in his crew that knew just as much about getting seals as he did and had they been in command of his ship would have secured as many or more seals than he did.

This talk about a man's great ability because he runs into the patch of white coats is all chaff, for when a man commands the most powerful ship in the fleet he must strike the seals if he can keep his ship free—for those ships scour the locality until they run upon the seals. In the sailing vessel time a successful sealing master was indeed a great man, for it required some thinking and doing to reach the fat in those days.

Kean has demonstrated that he possess one qualification that in all probability arrested the attention of Judge Johnson at the Supreme Court, and that is his pomposity, and vain conceit. He does truly surpass all men we have known in those respects and had he been born with less of those qualifications and more sound common sense he may have passed without much comment and would probably not be the marked man he is, for no man in this Colony before was ever placed in the position of having 300 petitions signed against him, of which a few with other 4000 signatures have already been handed to the Governor.

Does Judge Johnson imagine that those neighbors of Kean, who know him from stem to stern residing in the North—and those sealers who have sailed in his ship, who are signing petitions in their thousands, are not aware of their actions and don't know what they are doing or what it means? I should like Judge Johnson to go somewhere where the relatives of the massacred men reside and tell them the disaster was the will of God. Everywhere he goes in future to hold Court the people will rush to behold the Commissioner who stated Kean had no right to look after those men he left on the ice to perish, and that he was in no way responsible for what happened and that he did all a hero could possibly do and a great deal more which was highly commendable.

Yes fishermen's friends, make sure you see this great Judge when you know he is holding Court in your outport towns. It is not often such a great Judge is found in our land, and as his wisdom exceeds his modesty and his powers of observation once you see him you will never crave a similar privilege.

Commissioner Johnson states Kean did no wrong and he believed him when he asserted he believed the men had reached their own ship. Well if Kean was so positive, why did he keep his whistle blowing from 5 to 8 that evening? That is conclusive evidence that Kean was not convinced that the men had reached their ship.

Again we ask Judge Johnson where Kean's wonderful observant powers were when he assured Tuff that there would be no weather when Tuff was leaving the Stephano and which remark caused Tuff to be less considerate about the weather as he relied upon Kean's long experience and he went out into the blizzard because he believed he saw those great powers of observation in Kean which Judge Johnson had so often beheld in the Supreme Court?

Why did Kean go back to the spot where he took the Newfoundland's crew on board? He had doubts, and as his hero worshiper states he went there fearing some of the men had not reached their own ship and may have concluded to return to the place where the Stephano took them on board that evening.

Laymen of course know nothing about legal points or judges whims, but the public will not be surprised in future when they find two Judges for one side and one for the other, in view of the two findings by the Commission.

#### GRATE'S COVE ALL UNANIMOUS

Grate's Cove, March 8.—We are all unanimous here re the decision arrived at by Spaniard's Bay Convention re Kean going to seal fishery as Captain. Will assist in any any every lawful way to uncaptain him. Petition four days gone.

#### WINTERTON WILL STAND BY COAKER

Winterton, March 8.—Winterton is resolved to stand by President Coaker. Bowring and Kean's matter considered an outrage here. Kean too dangerous to command ship and crew of men. We approve of your stand to safeguard sealers. Will stand to your back in any steps taken. Keep Kean ashore. LOCAL COUNCIL.

#### Change Island's Annual Parade

(Editor Mail and Advocate.)  
Dear Sir,—As I have not written to your paper or a very long time, perhaps you could spare me space for a few words. We told our annual parade to-day, but owing to the war, we did not have a tea as everyone wanted to avoid mirth and enjoyment when so many poor fellows are facing death at this time. The day was beautiful, so we paraded to North-end Church and there listened to a good address delivered by the Rev. Mr. Prescott, the official minister of St. Margaret's church. The preacher based his remarks on truth, and the buying and selling of it. His treatment of the subject gave much food for thought and we all felt that it was good for us to have been there. About one-third of our members were up in the hay cutting firewood and so could not attend.

Times are extremely dull here. We are hoping that Mr. Coaker will be able to help us out in the herring fishery this spring, for money will be badly needed. Wishing the Union success, I am, yours truly,  
JACOB LEDREW  
Change Islands, Feb 10th, 1915.

#### "Bill"—The Overdue

Cawn't yer get to Calais, Willy?  
Ain't yer feelin' ill?  
Wot's the other fellow doin'?  
You know—little Bill!  
What abaht this trip to Paris?  
Think y'll manage it—next year!  
Feelin' sorter run down—are yer?  
Try a drop o' gin, old dear.  
Wot's the matter with the navy?  
Ain't yer goin' to let 'em fight?  
Be a sport and chawncie it, Billy,  
I amine—wot's it be a sight!  
Me and Frenchy's gettin' led up,  
Gettin' pretty desprit, too,  
Gardenin' ain't our favorite 'obby,  
Fighin's wot we're 'ere to do.  
So make a move and risk it, Billy,  
Send a fleet aht—not a few—  
Else our kids'll read in 'istory  
Of Kaiser Bill—the Overdue.

#### A Horrible Inferno

Presented by the Decks of  
the Blucher as She Disappears  
geared For Ever

"A horrible inferno," such was the phrase used by one of our sailors to describe the condition of the Blucher's decks just before the great battle-cruiser disappeared for ever. The sight, he said, was unforgettable; it had made him realise as he had never done before the awful destructive powers of heavy naval guns. Small wonder is it that an officer of the lost cruiser should have exclaimed, when picked up from the water, "I am jolly glad to be out of that hell. Within half an hour of the time that you opened fire on us we had from 200 to 300 either killed or wounded. The havoc caused by your guns was terrible."

This officer, like some others, displayed a perfect knowledge of English, and found no difficulty whatever in conversing with his rescuers. Descriptions have already been given of the scene when the Blucher sank, but one incident is reported which does not appear up to the present to have been recorded. From the deck of a British warship the Blucher was seen slowly to heel over. It was evident she could not last many minutes longer. Then those who were watching the last struggle saw a sight which touched them profoundly. A number of officers climbed on the side of the ship as she turned over, shook hands with each other, and then stood with linked arms until the vessel was engulfed beneath the waves, apparently making no attempt whatsoever to save their lives.

In the Police Court this forenoon two citizens, drunk, when arrested, were discharged sober, and another citizen for his sixth offence since the year came in of getting drunk, had to pay ten dollars or go down for 30 days.