

greater part of the stock; so that no general court could oblige them to produce their books, nor call them to an account even for the grossest mismanagement. At the request, therefore, of the petitioners, it was moved, that the Company should be ordered to give in a list of their proprietors, distinguishing how many shares each person possessed of the stock, that it might appear in how few hands the bulk of it lay: but this being strongly opposed, from a persuasion that a compliance with it would expose the secrets of the Company, and that it was a matter of mere curiosity and of no importance to the public, who held the stock; and the petitioners apprehending, that debating these points would too much retard the principal business, this motion was withdrawn; and also another motion made to oblige the Company, to lodge their original books: by which last step, all the evidence that could be brought against them, was limited to those who either were or had been their servants; no others having been at the Bay except the people of the discovery-ships, who had no means of judging how affairs were administered there.

IN N^o. II the Company give a list of nine vessels, which they pretend they had fitted out upon the discovery of a north-west passage; but by their instructions already cited, it appears that there were only five sent upon that expedition, two with Knight, two with Napper, and one with Scroggs. Of the four others here mentioned, two were the Prosperous-sloop under Henry Kelsey, and the Success John Hancock; the first sailed from York-fort, June 19th, and the other from Churchill, July 2d, 1719, and both returned the 10th of August. These had no instructions about the passage; their business was only to try