

late years, suffered very considerably for want of an efficient law, for the more effectually enforcing the agreements they are necessitated to enter into with persons employed in that service.

That a practice has of late prevailed amongst many of that class of persons, commonly called *engagés*, of hiring, or engaging themselves to make or perform voyages, and thereupon receiving monies and goods in advance, which they afterwards refuse to fulfill or comply with.

That advances, from the nature of the trade, are unavoidably made to their *engagés*, or men; and great losses have accrued to the petitioners from a deceit which many of their said *engagés* practice, by hiring or engaging themselves to different traders at the same time, and often under feigned or different names, whereby they fraudulently obtain money and goods in advance from each.

That others, who have *bona fide* engaged themselves and received their advances, and have actually set off on their intended voyage, have by their desertion from that service, occasioned a very sensible injury to the petitioners, by leaving their property and effects unprotected and frequently causing a total loss.

That owing to such want of good faith in many of the persons they are obliged to employ in their said trade, and the total deficiency of coercive laws, to bind them to their duty, and to prevent such deceitful and fraudulent practices; the trade to the Indian or Upper Country has been materially impeded.

The petitioners, fully persuaded that the attention of the Legislature will be directed to the advancement and prosperity of so valuable a branch of commerce as the fur trade, and generally to the interests and happiness of the community at large, humbly solicit that the honorable House will take into its serious consideration the subject of this their petition, and by their interference, enact, that offences, no less injurious to the commerce of the country than subversive of good morals, may meet with an adequate punishment; and that the honorable House will be further pleased to provide such other remedy in the premises, as in its wisdom it may judge proper and expedient.

*Ordered*, that the said petition do lie upon the table for the inspection of the members.

The order of the day, for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to take into further consideration the Bill, for

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