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THE
MEMORIAL
OF THE
JOURNEYMEN CALICO PRINTERS,
AND
OTHERS CONNECTED WITH THEIR TRADE.

LONDON:

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PRINTER TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES.

1804.

THE
MEMORIAL
 OF THE
JOURNEYMEN CALICO PRINTERS,
Ec. Ec. Ec.

MEMORIALISTS humbly entreat your reading of the following Pages, which explain the melancholy Situation to which several thousands of industrious Tradesmen are exposed; and surely no case can more forcibly appeal to the Feelings of Man, or more particularly interest the attention of the Legislator, than that of a Body of Tradesmen connected with one of the most important Manufactures of the Country, suffering the utmost distress in the vain search for employment in that Profession, to acquire a knowledge of which they had devoted the better part of their lives.

TO THE
RIGHT HON. AND HON.
THE LORDS AND COMMONS
IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED;

The Memorial of the JOURNEYMEN CALICO-
PRINTERS, *and Others connected with their*
Trade, resident in the several Counties of
Lancaster, Derby, Chester, Stafford, and
Cumberland; in Lanark, Perth, Renfrew,
Glasgow and Edinburgh, &c. &c.

HUMBLY SHEWETH,

THAT Memorialists, assured of the justice
and liberality of Parliament, have presumed
to approach it with a Statement of their Grievances,
in the well-grounded hope of Redress.

That for several years back, but particularly
since the year 1792, there has been such an ex-
treme multiplication of Apprentices, as to exclude
from

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from employment a considerable number of the Journeymen; and various other practices have obtained in the Trade, which materially tend to the oppression of such of the Journeymen as are so fortunate as to retain their employment. In consequence of these hardships, and from a just respect for the Laws, feeling the impropriety of attempting to devise among themselves any measures to remove their own wrongs and ameliorate their condition, they deemed it advisable to refer their Case to the consideration of the Legislature. With that view they sent some of their Body to London about the commencement of the last Sessions of Parliament, in order to present a Petition. Such Petition was accordingly presented to the House of Commons; and after having been referred to a Committee of that Honourable House, was withdrawn, from particular reasons, but principally in consequence of this mistake, that those who were the Witnesses necessary to establish the allegations in the Petition, were among the subscribers to the same. This proceeding, taking all circumstances into consideration, was productive of the expenditure of
upwards

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upwards of 500l.; a sum collected from the small means of a body of poor oppressed Journeymen, the wages of not one of whom exceeds thirty shillings per week; that of many not amounting to twenty shillings; and even that income itself extremely precarious, owing to the circumstances described in the following detail.

That the principal object of Petitioners is to pray that some legislative provision may be made, such as exists with respect to Silk Weavers, and some other mechanical professions, to restrain Masters from taking more than a certain proportion of Apprentices to the number of Journeymen they employ.

In proof of the necessity which calls for some arrangement of this nature, Memorialists have to state, that in one Printing-house in Lancashire, 197 Apprentices were brought up in the course of sixteen years, and in this concern not more than 95 persons, Journeymen and Apprentices included, were, on an average, employed: thus were reared at this house 102 Journeymen more than it could find employment for; and the
Journey-

Journeyman belonging to this Manufactory had not a full year's work since 1793. In 1798, every one was discharged who refused to work on such terms as the Masters thought proper to propose, those terms being little more than what they had while Apprentices. In January 1802, seventeen Journeymen were discharged in one day, and six additional Apprentices taken in, although at this time the house had upwards of sixty Apprentices to twenty Journeymen.

A Printing-house at *Broad-Oak* commenced business in 1792, with thirteen Apprentices, and only one Journeyman; and, according as the time of those Apprentices expired, they were discharged, to make room for others. Such Journeymen as were employed in this house in 1803, were reduced to two or three days work each week, earning of course not sufficient to furnish their families with food, while all the Apprentices were in full work. In ten years this house brought up 119 Apprentices, and never employed, at any period during that time, more than ninety-five persons, Journeymen and Apprentices included. Thus they introduced into the Trade, already overstocked, twenty-four persons

persons more than they could find employment for.

At a Printing-house in *Church-Bank*, in 1798, the Journeymen were obliged to work at the rate of 12s. per week or leave their employ, and some were unable to obtain even so much. Twenty of them quitted the business altogether on this occasion, to seek for bread in any employment they could find. Such of the discharged Journeymen as were chargeable to the Parish, were, through the influence of the Overseers, re-instated in their employment on the before-mentioned terms, and to make room for them, others were discharged who had smaller families. During this time, the Apprentices in this concern, not less than fifty in number, were kept in full employment. Of all these Apprentices not one was under any Indenture, the agreement being merely verbal, and to enforce the performance of it, the Masters retained a certain proportion of the Boys' earnings in their hands until the time agreed upon should expire. In March 1803, out of 84 Journeymen usually employed in this house, 50 were standing for work.

At *Edgeworth*, and several other Printing-houses, the Journeymen are limited, at certain times,

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times, to earn no more than ten or twelve shillings per week, while the Apprentices have always plenty of work; and even this limited allowance to the Journeymen is considered a great indulgence. That the Masters should keep the Journeymen who have served their apprenticeships to them from starving, is deemed an act of humanity, and indeed even such instances of attention are rare.

At a principal house at *Catteral*, where a great number of men are employed, the Masters had at one time a quantity of printed cloths and shawls, which had been damaged, and which were taken to the counting-house, put up in bundles, with the prices affixed to each: these bundles the Journeymen were obliged to take in payment for their work, nor durst they examine or refuse them, whatever the charge, lest they should be dismissed, although they were in every instance obliged to dispose of such bundles at little more than half the price originally fixed upon them. This imposition continued about a year and a half, during which the Journeymen were obliged to submit, having no opportunity of bettering themselves, in consequence of the impossibility of finding employment elsewhere. This was but too manifest

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manifest to them, from the number of Journeymen they daily saw in search of work.

At a principal house in *Manchester*, the Master, in 1800, told his Journeymen, that as other Masters had comparatively more Apprentices than he had, he would imitate their example; he accordingly gave orders for the discharge of several Journeymen, whose places he immediately supplied with Apprentices. This Master lately manifested an intention of making a further addition to his Apprentices, and at the very time that several Journeymen had been discharged from a neighbouring manufactory.

The following is a statement of the proportion of Apprentices to Journeymen, in several manufactories, as they stood in January last:

	Journeymen.	Apprentices.
Messrs. Norris and Sandiford,	2	8
Mr. Heald,	9	16
Messrs. Jackson, Nash and Co.	9	8
Messrs. Fort and Hargreaves,	49	44
Do. do. another house,	51	39
Messrs. Berry, Mellor and Co.	51	50
Messrs. Jackson and Stephenson,	35	32
Messrs. Greenway, Potter and Co.	28	29
	c 2	Messrs.

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	Journeyman.	Apprentices.
Messrs. Peel, Yates and Co.	20	15
Messrs. Duxbury and Co.	22	16
Messrs. Messenger, Patterson and Co.	15	11
Messrs. Fieldings and Co.	49	35

The following are a few of the Cases which have come to the knowledge of Memorialists, and which serve to shew the Sufferings to which Journeymen are exposed, in consequence of the difficulty of finding Employment.

JOHN BEARD travelled 1400 miles in four years and a half, through England, Ireland, and Scotland, and in the whole of his progress obtained only two years and a half employment, being frequently obliged, for the sake of food, to work at any rate his employers chose to allow him, although the said Beard was sober, industrious, and ingenious in his profession.

JOHN DUNCAN, who is a sober, industrious, and unexceptionable character, and has a wife and four children, has had only six months employment in his own business since November 1799.

GEORGE AINSWORTH has for the last five years been able to procure only two years employment, although

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although he travelled above 1000 miles in search of it. This poor man was frequently compelled to work in quarries, and mending highways, &c. in order to procure the means of subsistence for his family.

JOHN HACKING, unable to procure employment in all Lancashire, or to obtain parish relief, was in 1800 literally starved to death; the Journeymen in work having too many objects in great distress to relieve, to be able effectually to support him.

WILLIAM ENTWISTLE has had, from Christmas 1793 to November 1802, namely, nine years, only five years employment; and since November 1802, could find no work whatever in the trade.

That Memorialists could cite numerous instances of Journeymen who have been condemned to endure equal sufferings, all of whom are under forty years of age, and fully capable of doing their business. In order to shew this, they have only to mention that at one house in *Manchester*, upwards of 240 Journeymen applied in vain for work in the course of the year 1802.

That in the trade of Memorialists there are two denominations of persons, entitled Cutters and

and Drawers; four of whom are, on an average, sufficient to supply 40 Calico Printers; that is to say, only four of those persons are necessary in a house where forty Journeymen Calico Printers are employed. Of course any disproportion of Apprentices to Journeymen in these departments, is still more glaringly unjust; yet the inordinate increase of Apprentices, of which the Journeymen Calico Printers complain, is much more severe with respect to those persons. In justification of this remark, they deem it necessary only to relate the following few instances:

At a Printing-house at *Sabden*, the numbers employed at present are:

6 Journeymen Cutters to 13 Apprentices.
 2 ————— Drawers to 5 —————.

Since the year 1791 there have been bound at this house twenty-eight Apprentices to the trade of the Cutters, and eight to that of the Drawers, including those that are serving at present; so that there have been introduced into the business within that period, twelve Journeymen Cutters, and two Journeymen Drawers, more than the House can give employment to.

There were, sometime ago, in one eminent house only,

5 Jour-

5 Journeymen Cutters to 22 Apprentices.
 2 ————— Drawers to 8 Ditto.

That Journeymen Cutters and Drawers are of consequence compelled to roam about in search of employment, and with still less success than the Journeymen Calico Printers. Of three Journeymen who served their apprenticeships at *Sabden*, and who were afterwards *favoured* by their Masters with about twelve months employment before they were dismissed, one has been out of employment three years and four months; another three years; and the third, one year and five months, although they all searched for employment in every direction, with the utmost assiduity. Some of the Apprentices even, belonging to particular houses, have been occasionally dismissed for months for want of work, and obliged to resort to their parents for food; but, strange to tell, that Masters have afterwards compelled such Apprentices, when they had occasion for them, to serve over again the time so spent, or have deducted, in lieu of such service, a proportion of the Apprentice's wages each week.

REMARKS.

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REMARKS.

That Memorialists wish it to be distinctly understood, that to the cases already described, of oppression practised by the Masters, and of suffering endured by the Journeymen, they might add the most afflicting accounts of persecution inflicted upon the Apprentices; but with the state of the latter they have no desire to interfere, although for them they most sincerely feel; and it is not therefore the wish of Memorialists that any attention which the Legislature may have the benevolence to shew towards their situation, should at all interfere with the interests of those who are Apprentices at present.

That Memorialists, influenced by a wish to be as concise as possible, have stated but a few of the many melancholy effects of the system at present existing in their Trade, which they have it in their power to bring forward, if necessary, and to establish the truth of which they can adduce the most unquestionable evidence.

That in many instances, Apprentices are discharged from work the very day their apprenticeships expire, and Boys are taken in their place,
without

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without any imputation whatever upon the capacity or attention of the former, but merely with a view to increase the profits of the Masters; and such is the nature of the Calico-printing trade, that a Boy, on the first day of his apprenticeship, may become the substitute of a Journeyman, although it requires much time, application and talent, to acquire a perfect knowledge of the Business.

That on several occasions, the number of Boys collected in Printing-houses from various parishes, has been such as to induce the remonstrance of the parish officers in which such houses are situated, and in consequence, the Masters have declined taking any *Indentures* of the Boys, but merely entered into a verbal agreement with them, to enforce the performance of which they keep a certain proportion of the Boys' earnings in their hands, until the period of service understood between them expires. At several Printing-houses in Lancashire, there are not less in each than fifty Boys, not one of whom is bound by Indenture. The motive of such conduct is obvious, and the effect is, that the Stamp Tax on Indentures is evaded, and the fair interests of both the
D Journey-

Journeyman and Boys are materially injured, as the latter are frequently discharged upon the most trifling pretences; there existing no contract whatever to compel the Masters to do justice to those poor Boys.

That the Journeymen Calico Printers are liable to much oppression, in consequence of a practice that prevails among the Masters, of mulcting them for any imperfections that may appear in their work, which imperfections proceed generally from the inattention of Boys employed by the Masters to prepare their colours. To protect the Journeymen against such exactions, and to settle such other differences as do exist, or as may hereafter arise between the Masters and them, Memorialists would humbly suggest the appointment of Arbitrators, in some way more precise and appropriate than is provided for by the Combination Act.

That the Calico-printing business is evidently overstocked; nor is it at all probable that it ever can be able to provide employment for the number of hands likely to be introduced into it, under the present system; and the peculiar misfortune of the Journeymen is, that from the effluvia of

of the drugs used in their business, and the excessive heat of their workshops, &c. they are totally unable to labour in any out-door work.

That Memorialists conceive with great deference, that so long as skill and ingenuity shall be deemed necessary in the practice of a mechanical profession; so long as the principles upon which the statute of the fifth of Queen ELIZABETH were grounded shall be recognized; so long, in a word, as seven years apprenticeship shall be required, in order to qualify any person for following a trade, at least as a Journeyman, it is but fair that such Journeyman should have at least the probability of employment, and should be enabled to derive subsistence from a profession, to entitle him to work at which, he is obliged to undergo so long a probation. This will appear to be still more just and reasonable, when it is understood that the Masters belonging to the trade of Memorialists, will not employ any others as Journeymen, than those who have served seven years apprenticeship; in some instances, indeed, they oblige the service of eight years. Such resolution they rigidly act upon, because it obviously is their interest to enforce the apprenticeships; but how far those apprenticeships may

hold out the prospect of future maintenance to those who serve them, is a consideration to which the Masters have ever shewn the most perfect indifference.

That Memorialists do not presume to dispute the principle for which some high authorities have contended, that "trade should be allowed to find its own level:" they only object to a partial application of that principle; and as the Legislature has thought proper to interpose its authority, to restrain Journeymen from concerting measures among themselves to settle their affairs with the Masters, they trust (and the character of their Legislators justifies the confidence) that they will give the fullest attention to their Case, and endeavour to remove complaints which Memorialists know to proceed from the advantage which Masters have taken of the existence of such restriction. To the reasons which induced the Legislature to adopt the Combination Law, Memorialists most respectfully bow; and they have no doubt that reasons equally strong, seconded by the call of humanity, would induce it to set aside any grievance which might afford even an excuse for the violation of that Law—a Law which originated in a desire to prevent the activity of
turbulent

turbulent spirits from interrupting the progress of trade; to check those who might be disposed to promote confusion, or to live in idleness; but not from a view by any means to give impunity to oppression; not to give any undue advantage to the Masters, who can combine with very little danger of detection, and can carry their projects into effect with very little fear of opposition; not to subject to inconvenience those whose anxiety is to obtain employment, to derive their subsistence from their labour. Such alone is the object of Memorialists, and indeed to that alone can they ever look; for, from the particular nature of their trade differing much from others, they never can hope to be Masters: it would be quite absurd for them, from the capital required, to calculate upon ever ascending so high; it is entirely above their reach.

That the excessive increase of Apprentices, which is the principal complaint of Memorialists, as they feel it to be the great cause of their calamity, is likely, among other consequences, to have the effect of preventing any parents who can afford to educate their children, from binding them to such a trade; thus none but Boys without even perhaps the common elements of education,
the

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the children of mere paupers, will become Apprentices to the trade of Memorialists; for as it does not *appear* to be necessary that persons should serve apprenticeships to follow the trade as Masters, the consideration of the employment and revenue to be had as a Journeyman, can be the only inducement to any Boy to serve an apprenticeship; and from the foregoing statement, it is but too manifest that that consideration offers the contrary of an encouragement. The probable result will be this, that persons of inferior skill being employed in this branch of our manufacture, the work is of course likely to be inferior, and the advantage which it at present has in the Foreign Markets, from its superiority, may be lost. Indeed, from the present system, there is reason to apprehend the total loss of the business to this country. That endeavours have been made, in the course of the last Peace, to seduce the Journeymen of the several branches of the Calico Manufacture to emigrate to other countries, is a fact not unknown; and that the love of their country, a solicitude for its interests, and a respect for its Laws, enabled the Journeymen to withstand such arts, cannot be denied even by their enemies. It is also to be observed, that Capital

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pital can be easily had, and would be readily applied, in any manufacturing country, to carry on a business so valuable in any state as that of Memorialists. It should be recollected also, that although to the Master Calico Printers belong the Capital vested in the Trade, the skill and capacity necessary in the execution of the business rests entirely and solely with the Journeymen. Should this subject not be attended to, the removal to a foreign land of this Business, which affords such incalculable benefits to the Revenue, &c. of this Country, may be the consequence.

That, from the nature of their sufferings, Memorialists conceive it unnecessary to make any further comment, to shew the impolicy and injustice of longer tolerating the present injurious system: they confide in the humanity and wisdom of the Legislature for an improvement of their condition; and should they succeed in their application, many thousands of poor industrious Journeymen, their Wives and Families, will ever pray, &c. &c.

THE END.

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