A LINCOLNSHIRE LIBEL*

The pooremans Joy and the gentlemans plague

You gentlemen that rack yor rents, and throwe downe Land for corne.
the tyme will com that som will sigh, that ever they were borne.
Small care you have for to maintayne trueth or godlines.
Yee seeke yor gayne and still the poore oppresse. 5
Yee throw downe townes and howses to[o], and seek for hono^{r} more,
When we yor tenants arre Constraynde to beg from doore to doore.
Redres we will haue, or we will knowe whye no.
We will adventure lief & goods and so the matter shall goe.
The King Comaundes and wisheth all things well 10
He askes if all be don[,] nothing but lies you tell.
Therfore we have agreed even for the comons sake
a bloody enterprise to tak[e].
Yet meanyng no harme to o[u]^{r} gracious King Quene Prince or any of those
but to pull downe those hawghty myndes wch against his Com[mon]^{s}
themselves oppose. 15
ffor usurping Jupiter we will throwe downe
and restore dispossessed Saturne to his princely Crowne
Then will not Ambicious Phaeton seeke Phebus chariot to guide.
nor hunger sterved Midas covet gold or worldly pride.
It is that wch o^{r} Tyrants haue and we do lack. 20
for they cary whole townes upon their back.
They arre as Cruell as Titus wch never did good
nay, worse than Med[e]a for secking after blood.
They lyve secure and thinke to make a golden voiage
but what was Scipio Africanus rich^{r}, when he had won great Carthage 25
Here they lyve in pompe & glory, & may not be Controulde
they think scorn of there faults for to be told
Lyving the poore doth wante, and lyving thay shall haue
and the prowdest of all at o^{r} handes mercie shall crave.
Their peacock plumes & golden coates, shall then nought avayll 30
when soden deathe shall sodenly them call.
do not looke to dye in bed, as othrs have don before
but let som thinke to hang upon the dore.
This taske shall well be p:formd eare Martilmas be one fortenight gone.
and of yor goodly howses we will not leave one stone upon a stone. 35
We wilbe mery and take o^{r} fill of ioye.
As Priams had to trayle Hectors body about the walles of Troye.
yee arre lyke to Esops curre in greedines.
wch snatched at the shadowe, and so lost the flesh. [fo. 41]
Yo^{r} dealings are so bad, the peoples harts they break. 40
In tyranny yo^{u} excell Gelo wch not let his subiects speak.
What was his end, histories do shew
As yt was wth him, so shall yt be wth you.
Yo^{u} feare nought, but we will make you all to quake
wth Canon shot, we will yor greedy mynds once shak. 45
When we com out, yo^{u} tyrants to ynvade
We neede not feare for helpe, thowsands have sworn to Ayde
Then let some feare, when the night yo^{u} heare the drum or
goon to enquire in the woodde
that shalbe the true foreteller of his blood. 50
Yet that tyme yo^{u} must Leave yor whores & dainty dames.
whose lascyvious apparell and dainty chere, the pooreman
still Maintaynes.
Therfore take ordre som, wch be very good.
or ells as we haue saied, yt shall cost the price of blood. 55
But we care not, wheth^{r} yo^{u} order or noe
forwards the enterprise is lyke to go.
Yet Pelham and Harton[?] take corage still
to yo^{u} & Sheffoild [Sheffield] we owe all good will.
the howse of the Henneage let us call to mynd 60
men good to the poore & to the comons kynde.
And to all oth^{rs} that arre knights or stand in Justice steede [i.e. absence]
Against them our sword the cause shall pleade.
Oh yt shall do us good to see, those tyrants wallowed in their
blood 65
God blesse o[u]^{r} King Quene and prince all waies.
God send them happy lief and old Nestors dayes.

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