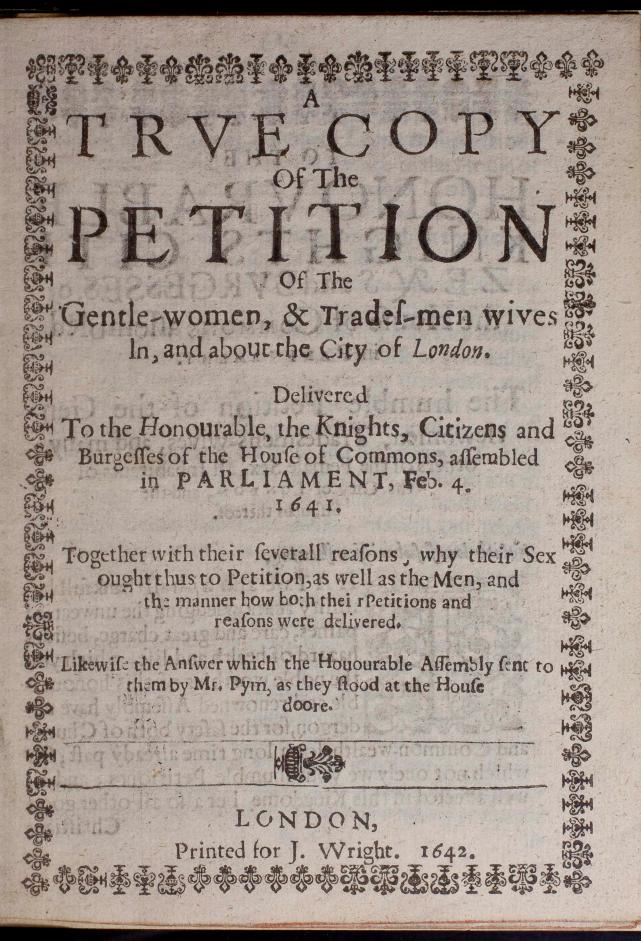
RSR 11/L23

Not-in Thomasm. d. J.p74. E. 134. (17.)



卷卷卷:卷卷卷:卷卷卷:卷卷卷

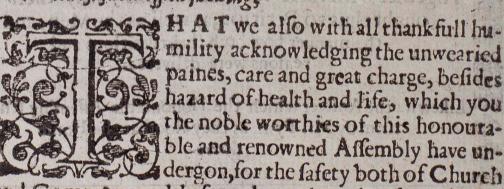
TO THE

HONOVRABLE KNIGHTS CITI-

ZEN Sand BVRGESSES, of the House of Commons assembled in Parl lament.

The humble Petition of the Gentlewomen, Tradesmens-wives, and many others of the Female Sex, all Inhabitants of the City of London, and the Suburbs thereof.

With lowest submission shewing,



Printed for A. Wright. 1542.

and Common-wealth, for a long time already past; for which not onely we your humble Petitiones, and all well affected in this Kingdome, but also all other good

Christians

Christians are bound now and at all times to acknowledge; yet notwithstanding that many worthy deeds have beene done by you, great danger and feare doe still attendus, & will, as long as Popish Lords & superstions Bishops are suffered to have their voice in the House of Peeres, & that accursed and abhominable Idoll of the Masse suffered in the Kingdome, and that Arch-enemy of our prosperity and Resormation lyeth in the Tower

yet not receiving his deserved punishment.

All these under correction, gives us a great cause to suspect, that God is angry with us, and to be the chiefe causes w'ry your pious indeavours for a surther Resormation proceedeth not with that successe as you desire, and is most earnestly prayed for of all that wish well to true Religion, and the slorishing estate both of King and Kingdome; the insolencies of the Papists and their abbettors, raiseth a just seare and suspition of sowing sedition, and breaking out into bloody persecution in this Kingdom, as they have don in Ireland, the thoughts of which sad and barbarous events, maketh our tender hearts to melt within us, forcing us humbly to Petition to this honourable Assembly, to make safe provision for your selves and us, before it be too late.

And whereas we, whose hearts have joyned cheeresully with all those Petitions which have beene exhibited unto you in the behalfe of the purity of Religion,
and the liberty of our Husbands, persons, and estates, recounting our selves to have an interest in the common
priviledges with them, doe with the same considence
assure our selves to find the same gracious acceptance
with you, for easing of those grievances, which in regard of our fraile condition, do more nearly concerne

A 2

us, and doe deeply terrifie our soules: our Domesticall dangers with which this Kingdome is to much diffraeted, especially growing on us from those treacherous and wicked attempts already are such, as we find our

felves to have as deepe a share as any others.

We cannot but tremble at the very thoughts of the horid and hideous facts which modelty forbids us no to name occasioned by the bloody Warres in Germany, his Majesties late Northerne Army, how often did it affright our hearts, whilft their violence began to break out so furiously upon the persons of those, whose Hufbands or Parents were not able to refeue; wee with we had no cause to speake of those insolencies, and savage usage and unheard of rapes, exercised upon our Sex in Ireland, and have we not just cause to feare they wil prove the fore-runners of our ruine, except Almighty God by the wisdome and care of this Parliament de pleased to succor us, our Husbands and children, which are as deere and tender unto us, as the lives and blood of our hearts, to see them murthered and mangled and cut in pieces before our eyes, to see our chitdren dash. ed against the stones, and the Mothers milke mingled with the Infants blood, running down the streets; to see our Houses on flaming fire over our heads : oh how dreadfull would this be! wee thought it misery enough (though nothing to that we have just cause to seare) but sew yeares since for some of our Sex, by unjust divisions from their bosome comforts, to be rendred in a manner Widdowes; and the children Fatherlesse, Hulbands were Imprisoned from the Society of their wives, even against the Lawes of God and Nature, and little Infants suffered in their Fathers banishments: thousands

thousands of our deerest friend, have been compelled to fly from Episcopall persecutions into desert places amongst vild Beasts, there finding more favour then in their native soyle, and in the midst of all their sorrowes, such bath the pity of the Prelates beene, that our cryes could never enter into their erres or hearts, nor yet through multitudes of obstructions could never have accesse or come nighto those Royall mercies of our most gracious Soveraigne, which we considently hope, would have relieved us: but after all these pressures ended, we humbly fignisie, that our present feares are, that unlesse the blood-thirsty faction of the Papists and Prelates be hindred in their designes, our se ves here in England as well as they in Ireland, shall be exposed to that misery which is more intollerable then that which is already past, as namely to the rage not of men alone, but of Devilsincarnate, (as we may so say) besides the thraldome of our soules and consciences in mutters concerning God, which of all things are most deare unto us,

Now the remembrance of all these fearefull accidents aforementioned, doe strongly move us from the example of the womin of Takoa to fall submissively at the feet of his Majestie, our dread Soveraigne, and cry Help O King, help O yee the noble Worthies now litting in Parliament: And we humbly beseech you, that you will be a meanes to his Majestie and the House of Peeres, that they will be pleased to take our heartbreaking grievances into timely consideration, and adde strength and incouragement to your noble indeavours, and futher, that you would move his Majestie with our humble requests, that he would be graciously pleased

A 3

pleased according to the example of the good King Asa, to purge both the Court and Kingdome of that great Idolatrous Service of the Masse, which is tollerated in the Queenes Court, this sinne (as we conceiv) is able to draw downe a greater curse upon the whole Kingdome, then all your noble and pious indeavours can prevent, which was the cause that the good and pious King Afa would not suffer Idolatry in his owne Mother, whose example if it shall please his Majesties gracious goodnesse to follow, in putting downe Popery and Idolatry both in great and small, in Court and in the Kingdome throughout, to subdue the Papists and their abetters, and by taking away the power of the Prelats, whose government by long and wofull experience wee have found to be against the liberry of our conscience and the freedome of the Gospell, and the sincere prosession and practise thereof, then shall our feares be removed, and we may expect that God wil powre down his bleffings in aboundance both upon his Majestie, and uponthis Honourable Assembly, and upon the whole Land.

IOV/Ashkun ada 60%

breeking grisunces and timely consideration, and adde trees gris and incourage mentro your noble inter-

· Deciperage Discontinues & Day or side on two days

es, well information to the move his in the lies

bolistia

For which your new Petitioners
[ball pray affectionatly Ge.

the they declared which town to the terms of the The

The Reasons follow.

It may be thought strange, and unbeeseeming our sex to shew our selves by way of Petition to this Honourable Assembly: but the matter being rightly considered, of the right and interest we have in the common and publique cause of the Church, it will, as we conceive (under correction) be found a duty commanded and required.

First, because Christ hath purchased us at as deare a rate as he hath done Men, and therefore requireth the

like obedience for the same mercy as of men.

Secondly, because in the free enjoyning of Christ in his own Laws, & a flourishing estate of the Church and common wealth, consisteth the happinesse of wo-

men, as well as men.

Thirdly, because women are sharers in the common Calamities that accompany both Church and Common Wealth, when oppression is exercised over the Church or Kingdome wherein they live, and an unlimited power hath bin given to the Prelats, to exercise authority over the Consciences of Women, as well as men, Witnesse Newgate, Smithsield, and other places of persecution, wherein Women as well as Men have selt the smart of their Fury.

Neither are we left without example in Scripture, for when the state of the Church, in the time of Ring Abssuerus, was by the bloody enemies thereof sought to be utterly destroyed, we find that Hester the Queen, and her Maids sasted and prayed, and that Hester petitioned to the King, in the behalfe of the Church, and though she enterprized this duty with the hazard of her owne life

life, being contrary to the law to appeare before the King before she were sent for, yether love to the Church carryed her thorow all difficulties, to the performance

of that duty.

On which grounds we are imboldned to prefer tour humble Petition unto this Honourable Assembly, not we ighting the reproaches which may and are by many cast upon us, who (doe well weighing the premisses) scoffe and deride our good intent. We doe it not out of any selse conceit, or pride of heart, as seeking to equal our selves with men, either in Authority or wisdome: But according to our places to discharge that duty we owe to God, and the cause of the Church, as farre as lyeth in us, sollowing herein the example of the Men, which have gone in this duty before us.

A Relation of the manner how it was delivered, with their answer sent by Mr. Pym,

This petition, with their Reasons, was delivered the 4th of Feb. 1641. by Mrs Anne Stagg. a Gentlewoman, and Brewers wife, and many others with her of like ranke and quality, which when they had delivered, after some time spent in reading of its the Honourable assembly sent them an answer by M.

Pym, which was performed in this manner.

M. Pym came to the Commons doore, and called for the Wonden, and spake unto the min these words, ood women, your petition and the Reasons have bin read in the House, and is thankfully accepted of, and is come in a seasonable time, you shall (God willing receive from us al the satisfaction which we can possibly give to your just and lawfull defires. We intreat you to repaire to your Houses, and turne your Petition which you have delivered here, into Prayers at home for us; for we have bin, are, and stall be (to our utmost power) ready to relieve you, your Husbands and Children, and to performe the trust committed unto us, towards God, our King and Countrey, as becometh faithfull Christians and Loyall Subjects.

FINIS.

