

The Cheshire Petition for establishing of the Common-Prayer-Booke, and suppression of Schismatiques, presented to the Kings Majestie, and from him recommended to the House of Peers by the Lord Keeper.

To the Kings most Excellent Majestie, and to the Right Honourable the Lords, and the Honourable the House of Commons Assembled in Parliament.

The humble Petition of divers of the Nobility, Iustices, Gentry, Ministers, Freeholders, and other Inhabitants of the County Palatine of Chester, whose names are nominated in the Schedule annexed.

Your Petitioners will with all cheerfulness and contentation, affying in the happy settlement of the distractions both of Church and State by His Majesties pious care, and the prudent and religious endeavours of this Honourable Assembly, & with due humility and obedience, submitting to the unanimous conclusions thereof, yet conceive themselves bound in duty,

Humbly to represent to your mature considerations, that the present disorders of many turbulent and ill disposed spirits, are such, as give not onely occasion of present discontent to your Petitioners but seeme to import some ill event without early prevention. The pure seed of our faith, (the doctrine of the true Reformed Protestant Religion, established by so many Acts of Parliament, and so harmoniously concurring with the confessions of all other Reformed Churches, being tainted with the Tares of divers Sects and Schismes lately sprung up amongst us.

Our pious, laudable, and ancient forme of Divine Service, composed by the holy Martyrs, and worthy instruments of Reformation established by the prudent Sages of State (your religious Predecessors) honored by the approbation of many learned forraigne Divines, subscribed by the Ministry of the whole Kingdome, and with such generall content received by all the Laity, that scarce any family or person that can read, but are furnished with the Bookes of Common Prayer: In the conscionable use whereof many Christian hearts have found unspeakable joy and comfort, wherein the famous Church of *England* our deare Mother hath just cause to glory; And may she long flourish in the practise of so blessed a *Lyturgie*; yet it is now, not onely depraved by many of those who should teach conformity to established Lawes, but in contempt thereof in many places wholly neglected. All these daily practised, with confidence, without punishment: To the great dejection of many sound Protestants, and occasioning so great insultation and rejoicing in some Separatists, as they not onely seeme to portend, but menace some great alteration; And not containing themselves within the bounds of civill government, doe commit many tumultuous (if not sacrilegious) violences both by day and night upon divers Churches.

Therefore your Petitioners being all very apprehensive of the dangerous consequences of Innovation: and much scandalized at the present disorders,

Doe all unanimously pray,

That there be admitted no Innovation of Doctrine or Lyturgie, that holy publike Service being so fast rooted by a long settled continuance in this Church, that in our Opinion and Judgements it cannot be altered (unlesse by the advice and consent of some Nationall Synode) without an universall discontent. And that some speedy course be taken to suppress such Schismaticques and Separatists, whose factious spirits doe evidently endanger the peace both of Church and State.

And your Petitioners shall ever pray, &c.

The Petition Signed by Lords, Knights, Justices of the Peace, and Esquires, 94.
By Gentlemen of quality, 440. By Divines, 86.
By Freeholders and others, in all. 8936.