

The People's Complaints

Transcript of the first page of The People of Scotland's Groans and Lamentable Complaints, Pour'd out before the High Court of Parliament, printed 30 May 1700 (NRS reference PA7/17/1/21A)

The people of Scotland, most Illustrious Patriots, like Children in a great measure depriv'd of the Kindness and Protection of One of their Parents, have Recourse to you as the Other. When one Parent is dead, or under a moral Incapacity of performing Their part, if the Other prove unnatural or negligent, the Poor Children must unavoidably be Undone. The People of this Kingdom, whom you Represent, have been depriv'd of the Benign Influences of our Kings these 100 years. Our Neighbours having the Political Fathers of our Country, under their Command, are so far from leaving them at Liberty to Treat Us as Subjects and Children, that they have from time to time Made 'em Treat Us like Enemies; but never more than at present, as is obvious to all the World, to Our great Loss and Dishonour.

We have no other Remedy left Us then, most Noble Representatives, but to prostrate Our Selves at Your Feet, and to throw Our Selves into your Arms, as those of Our Other Parent, humbly imploring, nay Conjuring You by all that is Sacred, and by the Honour of the SCOTTISH Name, that You would not suffer this Ancient and Gallant Nation to be so much Contemn'd and Injur'd. We beg of You to consider, how Our Sovereignty and Freedom is Violated, Our Laws trampled upon, and our Trade interrupted; how Our Brethren have been Starved and made Slaves, Our Colony deserted, and Our Ships burnt and lost Abroad; whilst Our Petitions have been rejected, Our Company baffled, Our People Famish'd, Our Metropolis burnt, and flames of Division kindled amongst

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The Union of 1707

Us at Home. We intreat You to consider, how they that ought in Kindness, nay in Gratitude, to have let Us had Provisions for Our Money, whilst they enjoyed Plenty, and ought to have Protected Us with their Ships, since We are under one Sovereign, and have lost so many Men in their Service by Sea and Land, suffered Us to die for Want, and would not let us have the Use of Our own Friggots, that were built at Our own Charge. We must beg You to take into Your most serious Thoughts, how Your own Authority hath been trod under Foot, Your Acts Violated, Your Address slighted, and the Company of Your Establishment Oppos'd and Oppress'd. We pray You to Remember, how Promises made You to advance Our Trade, have been broke; how those to Our Company have been falsified; and how *English* Ministers have had Private Orders to act contrary to those Promises. We beseech You to Remember, how a Petition for delivering from Slavery, Gentlemen Related to so many of Your Families, etc was slighted and oppos'd; How Our Liberty of a National Petition for Calling You together, Most Illustrious Representatives, to Redress Our National Grievances, was invaded and traduced: How Your Meeting has been unreasonably adjourned from time to time, tho the Bleeding Honour and Interest of Our Nation call'd aloud for a present Remedy.

We beg of You with Tears, as You tender the Honour and Welfare of this Ancient Kingdom, to undeceive His Majesty, who by His Answer to Our Commissioners seems to have been inform'd, *that Your Sentiments, and those of the Nation express'd in Our Petition, would not be the same.*

We hope you will consider the Dishonour put upon your Selves, by the effectual Answers given to the Addresses of a Neighbouring Parliament, whilst yours is unregarded; and that you will assert the Liberties of this Injur'd Nation, against the Insolence....

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