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THE MARYLAND GAZETTE.

Containing the freshest Advices, Foreign and Domestic.

WEDNESDAY, April 26, 1749.

From the NEW YORK GAZETTE, No. 322.

To all married Men to whom these Presents shall come,
The humble Petition of a Society of young Women known by the Name of the Petticoat Club, in Behalf of themselves and several Hundred of others, betwixt the Age of Sixteen and Forty, in this City and Province; Sheweth,

THAT your Petitioners, being all of the ancient and honourable family of the *Wife would be's*, and being arrived to the age of maturity, are as we flatter ourselves, of as good abilities both of body and mind as any the world does afford, and have his majesty's honour and the interest of this province at heart; yet notwithstanding all our accomplishments and utmost endeavours, together with the vast expences to set ourselves out to the best advantage; we are frustrated of this our laudable design, by the unfeeling stupidity and obliquity of a set of men called *Old Bachelors*, who know and ought to do better, and who, in contempt of the laws both of God and Nature, and to the inexpressible damage of this province, do oblige us, contrary to our desires and inclinations, to remain useless, and ever burdensome members thereof.

For our relief in these our deplorable circumstances, 'tis our earnest desire, that you would so far commiserate our condition as to use your utmost endeavours, that there be such a fine laid on all offenders of this nature, as may bear some proportion to the heinousness of their crimes; and that all batchellors above 26 years of age may be obliged to pay a moderate tax, which should yearly increase 'til they arrive at 40; that the said fine may be applied to the education of the boys of this province, that so they may have the opportunity of learning more sensible and better manners; and wherein the true interest of their country does consist. — And if any of the aforesaid drones shall presume to continue in their obstinacy 'til the age of 40, then we pray, that there may be some public mark of distinction, that they may be known from other men; and we think it not improper to oblige such stubborn offenders to wear one side of their beard at full length, to shew their age, and the other half shaved bare, as a mark of their folly; unless they can make appear that they have done something of equivalent advantage to their country; which we think can hardly be, and believe will be the case of very few of them. We hope you will not deny us your kind assistance, and your petitioners, as in duty bound, shall ever pray, &c.

But considering oftentimes, when good and wholesome laws are proposed, there have not been wanting some, who, out of sinister and selfish principles, have endeavoured to hinder and impede the same; and lest this may be our case, and that thereby we may suffer irreparable damage, we shall beg leave to support our cause, first, by endeavouring to prove the things asserted in the preamble to this petition; and in the next place to make appear the reasonableness of the thing petitioned for, and also wherein it would be for the interest of this colony.

That there are such numbers of the ancient and honourable family of the *Wife would be's*, in this province, is so manifest it needs no proof; that the treatment they meet with, is in contempt to the divine law, is plain; for no sooner was man created male and female, but God commanded them to *increase and multiply, and replenish the earth*, which command the *Old Bachelors* have no regard to, unless to replenish it with such an illegitimate race, as would be a standing reproach to their parents, and which oftentimes they are ashamed to own. We could multiply texts of Scripture to the purpose; but that being the particular business of the priest, who in the end would be no loser by promoting what we so much desire, we shall rest

ther, by which their kind is propagated and maintained in the world; so that many, even of the savage beasts, chuse their mates, and mutually assist in providing for their young, 'til they can help themselves. The very fowls of the air are an undeniable proof of this assertion; nay, 'tis a general rule with the whole creation, and the *Old Batchelor* seems to be the only exception; and how he will account for the *whore* committed to his charge, we know not, but fear his doom will be with the unprofitable servant who hid his lord's money in the earth; which we would willingly prevent if we were able.

The next thing to prove is, that what we petition for, is reasonable; and this will appear, if it be considered, that those who are best able, and have least charge on their hands, ought to pay the most tax: That the Batchelor has the least charge is plain, having none but himself to support, and yet has the same liberty and opportunity to pursue his business as other men; for which reason, if he is not capable it's his own fault, which often happens; for having no suitable companion at home, he is often inclined to indulge himself in drunken frolics abroad, not only to the damage of his own health, but often to the great disturbance of the whole town in which he lives.

As to the distinguishing mark we mentioned, it cannot be denied, but as he who acts for the benefit and interest of his country, deserves public marks of honour; so he that does otherwise, as well deserves some public badge of disgrace; for if both are alike esteemed, what encouragement is there for virtuous actions?

Now, that these men do not pursue the true interest of their country, is the next thing in order. It must be allowed the riches, strength, and security of a country, consists in the number of its inhabitants, well employed, disciplined, and instructed: We don't mean such inhabitants, transported convicts or slaves, who, like *Joseph's* ass, care not what master they serve; but such free born natives as have ever been esteemed the best defence, and most to be depended on in time of need. Now, that the honourable state of matrimony may be brought into such credit and reputation, as it may be counted a shame long to keep out of it, is what we propose as the only lawful method to attain this great and necessary end, and those who oppose it can't be esteemed true to their country's interest; for could we accomplish our desires, we would answer for it, that we would quickly fill the country with such a numerous race; as would bid defiance to both *French* and *Spaniards*; and would sufficiently challenge any enemy that durst presume to attack us: And since the children of this province are endowed with good faculties, and are as capable of learning, as in any other country; if the five above mentioned were applied to their education, why may not some of us hope to be a *mother of a Boyle, a Marlborough, or even a Newton*; and then what honour and renown would this reflect upon this province!

*Were Batchelors but wise enough to see
 The Way to Bliss, and true Felicity;
 How soon would they exchange their senseless Nests
 For prattling Girls, and lovely smiling Boys;
 Who round the Table would their Praise proclaim,
 Maintain their Honour, and preserve their Name;
 Defend their Country, and their Fame convey
 To future Generations; Thus we pray,*

A M S T E R D A M, November 19, 1749.

WE have good reason to believe, from the concurrence of a great number of letters lately received from France, that one powerful motive to the conclusion of the late peace, was the prospect of disunion in the North. If this had