

The Petition Concerning those Servants
that have Bastards

Whereas several common Servants within this Kingdom
not having husbands living with them, have begotten
with child in the time of their Servitude to the great dishonour
of God and apparent damage to the M^{tes} or Hon^{rs} of such Servants
and not Law^{ly} yet providing where the Damage shall be
recoverable for remedy whereof it is enacted by the Lord
Proprietary by and with the Consent of the Honourable
House of the present Generall Assembly that every such
Mother of a Bastard shall not be sufficiently to prove the
party charged to be the Mother of such Child in every
such case the mother of such Child shall only be liable
to satisfy the Damage so sustained by Servitude or
otherwise as the Court before whom such matter is brought
shall see convenient.

Provided that where the mother of any such Child as
aforesaid shall be able to prove her charge either by sufficient
Testimony of Witnesses Confession or pregnant Circumstances
agreeing with the Declaration in the Petition of her payne
and Stroud of her oaths or her oath taken by some Magis-
trate Justice party charged if a Servant to satisfy halfe
the said Damage; if a freeman then the whole Damage
by Servitude or otherwise as the Court before whom such
matter is brought as aforesaid shall thinke fitt

And if any such Mother as aforesaid be able to prove
by such Testimony or Confession that the party charged
being a single person and a freeman did before the
begging of such Child promise her Marriage that he
he shall performe the promise to her or he committed
Abuse as the Court before whom such matter is brought
shall see convenient the Quality and Condition of the
persons considered. This Acte to endure for five years
or to the End of the next Generall Assembly

The lower house have
Assented
Wm. B. Brown

The upper house have Assented
John Gittings