

Date sent: 15 November 1554

Date received:

Writer: Frankfurt congregation

Recipient: English exiles in Zürich

Location of origin: Frankfurt

Destination: Zürich

Original language: English

Ref: Denbighshire Record Office, Plas Power MSS, DD/PP/839 39-40

Transcript of Later copy

Other Versions: *Troubles* xx-xxii

A copie of the Congregations letter (att Franckford) to Zurick.¹

We have receyvyd yo(u)r towe severall l(ett)res thone dated the 13o of Octob(er) sent to us from Strusburghe, & thother the 27o of the same by thandes of yo(u)r dere frend Mr Chambers, & have confere with him at large towching the contentes theroff. And when as after dyvers assembleis & long debating² the said Mr Chambers perceivyd that we could not in all pointes warrant the full use of the boke of sevyce (which semythe to be yo(u)r cheife scope³ & marke) & also waying in consciens the great benefitt that god hath in this cite offered to owr hole nation, not only⁴ reioysed at the same, but also promised to travail in perswading you to the furtherance therof. As towching theeffect of the booke we desier theexecution therof as mucche as you, as far as Godes worde dothe

¹ Carried by Richard Chambers, *Troubles* xx.

² *Troubles* has 'debatings'.

³ *Troubles* has 'full scope'. The full use of the 1552 *Book of Common Prayer* was regarded by the Frankfurt congregation as the central demand of those at Strasbourg and Zürich.

⁴ *Troubles* has 'he not only'

com(m)emnde it, & as tyme & place will serve,⁵ but as for the rest of thunprofitable ceremonies⁶ as well by his consente as ours are not to be used. And althoghe they were tolerable (as some are not) yeat being in a straunge com(m)on wealthe we could not be suffered to put them in use. And better it were they shuld never be practysed then they shuld be the subvertion of our churche, which shuld fawle in great hazarde by observing of them.⁷ The matter is not ours more then yours (except any excell others in godly zeale) but both wishe godes honour. If a larger gate [40] be opened there to the same then with us, upon your persuasing⁸ ye shall not finde us to draw backe. For this bretherne we wishe, the comfortho & gathering together of owr dispersed bretherne.⁹ If any thinke y(a)t the not using of the book in all poyntes shuld encrease our godly fathers & brethern bands, or ells any thinge deface the worthy ordynances & lawes of our Sovereigne Lorde of noble memory¹⁰ King Edward the sixt, he semithe either lytle to waye the matter, or els letted through ignorance knowithe not that they¹¹ themselves have upon consideration¹² of cyrcumstances, altered here to fore many thinges as towching the same; & if god had not in theise wicked tymes¹³ otherwyse determined, wold herafter have chaunged more.¹⁴ Yea & in our case we doubt not but they¹⁵ wold have done

⁵ *Troubles* has only '(so farr as Gods worde dothe commende it)'. The Frankfurt congregation offered the 'effect' of the *Book of Common Prayer* with the important qualifications that it accord with the Scriptures and with local conditions.

⁶ *Troubles* has only 'as for the vnprofitable cermonies'. This was the first time that the language and argument about 'ceremonies' in the *Book of Common Prayer* was introduced, especially when practised within a foreign country.

⁷ *Troubles* has 'by usinge them'.

⁸ *Troubles* has 'perswations'.

⁹ *Troubles* has a different sentence, 'for this is that necessitie, brethern, that maie not be neglected, yff we wishe the comfortho and gathering together off oure dispersed brethern.' The Frankfurt congregation reiterated their main aim of gathering all the English exiles in a single church and offered to change locations if a better place could be found.

¹⁰ *Troubles* has 'of moste famous memory'. The Frankfurt congregation countered two of the arguments Chambers had probably presented that deviating from the *Book of Common Prayer* would increase the suffering of those in England and show a lack of respect for King Edward VI.

¹¹ *Troubles* has 'even they'.

¹² *Troubles* has 'considerations'.

¹³ *Troubles* has 'wicked dais'.

¹⁴ The assertion that there would have been further revision of the *Book of Common Prayer* if King Edward VI had lived.

¹⁵ *Troubles* has 'but that they'

thelyke. These few lines concernyng both our com(m)unications we have accordingly wryten unto you, referring the rest to the discretion of our good frend Mr Chambers, who knowithe that we have shewed our selfs most conformeable in all thinges that standithe in our powers, & most desyerous of yo(u)r companyes according to our former l(ett)res. The spirite of god move yo(u)r hartes to do that shall be most to his glorye, & the comforte of your bretherne. At Frankford this 15o of November 1554.¹⁶

¹⁶ No salutation and signatures. *Troubles* has 'Your louinge frinds etc'.