

The Dutch Congregation in Norwich.

COMMUNICATED BY

WALTER RYE.

NEITHER I, when I wrote on this subject many years ago,¹ nor the late Mr. Moens, when he published his monumental work on the Walloons and their Church in Norwich in 1888,² had any idea that as late as 1755 the "Strangers" were still subject to very drastic and severe rules as to their trading and general conduct in Norwich. That it was possible that in the eighteenth century a body of men who had practically created the prosperity of the City should be subjected to such harassing restrictions, not only as to their trade but as to their personal behaviour, seems incredible.

Among some MSS. I recently bought is that which I now print, and which, I venture to think, is of the greatest local interest. It was, no doubt, one of the many City documents which were stolen or lost in comparatively recent times, when antiquaries were less conscientious than I hope they are nowadays. I need hardly say that I have restored it to the Corporation now that it is printed. It is on a large sheet of parchment, in the most terrible condition, many of the words being absolutely gone. Fortunately it has been

¹ *The Norfolk Antiquarian Miscellany*, vol. iii., p. 185.

² Huguenot Society of London.

possible to supply what is illegible from an older though very similar edition of the regulations, contained in the *Dutch and Walloon Strangers' Book* in the Corporation Muniment Room, and for this I am greatly obliged to Mr. J. C. Tingey.

Norwich Articles to be enquired of before the Mayor of the City of Norwich for the Dutch Congregation and to present all those Offenders comprised and sett down to be observed and kept upon the Pains hereunder shewed and declared.

1. IMPRIMIS you shall enquire if any of your Masters allowed by the Pattents of the seventh of Elizabeth be wanting since your last presentment.

2. Item that no stranger or any of the Strangers Congregation shall set another Stranger of the said Congregation or any English Man to work except he can shew to be permitted by Mr. Mayor here to dwell and except they can shew by bill from the Politique Men that he or they are free of service upon pain of Five shillings the first time and every time after to be doubled one part to the Mayor, one part to the Poor and the third part to the Bayliffe or presenter And the Servants so sett at work shall deliver their bills to their masters to be kept and showed to the bailiffe that shall search, upon like pain to be levyed by comitting the persons to Prison.

3. Item that no like stranger shall sett another stranger to work except he first satisfye his Master in pain of ten shillings to be levyed and divided as aforesaid.

4. Item that no stranger upon the Lord's day or other day shall walk in the streets or shall go out of the gates to play or sett them down to talk in the

time of preaching the word or during that time shall be drinking or staying in Inns or Tipling houses in pain of five shillings the first time ten shillings the second time and every time after ten shillings to be levyed and divided as aforesaid the Fathers to pay for children and the Masters for their Servants and the Bayliffe making default to present the same is to pay each time six shillings and eight pence one fourth part to the Mayor the other to the presenter and the other two parts to the Poor to be levyed by comitting the Partyes to Prison.

5. Item that no person being a stranger as above said shall buy any Butter or Cheese (otherwise then for their provision) to sell the same again or draw Ale or Beer or sell any other victualls except that they be licensed upon pain to pay for every pound of Butter and Cheese six pence and every other kind of Victualls after that rate in pain of ten shillings to the Mayor the poor and the Bayliffe or presenter to be levyed by comitting the Partyes to Prison.

6. Item that no stranger being a Baker shall buy any corn in the Markett before one of the Clock in the afternoon in pain of five shillings to the Mayor Bayliffe or Presenter to be levyed and divided as before.

7. Item that no stranger shall sell in the streets any aquavitæ neyther receive into their houses any coming to drink either upon the Lord's day or other days except in the houses for themselves and families in time of necessity in pain of ten shillings to be levied and divided as aforesaid.

8. Item that no stranger shall come into the Market to buy any Corn before one of the Clock in the afternoon or to demand the price upon pain of ten shillings for every time to be [paid] to the Mayor the Poor the Bailiffe or presenter as aforesaid.

9. Item that every stranger Dyer shall make his provision of Sea Coals and not burn any Charcoals but in needfull occasions or shall buy any wood in the Markett before one of the Clock in pain of six shillings and eight pence for every load so bought to be levied and divided as aforesaid.

10. Item that no stranger shall at any time buy or cause to be bought of any English Person or of their own or any other Nation whatsoever or of any Keemers of their own Nation any kind of yarn whatsoever for Bays or cheneys or any other work whatsoever and more for the making or occupying thereof in their own houses or shall sell to any other or transport the same or cause the same to be transported or any other chenys or any other work out of the City to sell or work in any other place upon pain of forfeiture of every pound of yarn or work of yarn twenty shillings to be levied by committing the person to prison and the yarn and work to be confiscate and to be divided as abovesaid.

11. Item that no stranger shall contend Defame or strive one with another in pain of six shillings and eight pence to be levied and divided as aforesaid.

12. Item that no persons man or woman being Strangers of the Dutch Congregation shall inhabit in this City either by themselves or with any other above two days except he can lay in sufficient security or else to shew sufficient Tickett for his permission there to dwell in pain of five shillings for every night to be levied and divided as aforesaid.

AN EXPLANATION OF THE TWELVE ARTICLES.

13. That such women that remain here whose husbands be elsewhere known to dwell shall be commanded to repair to their husbands within twelve days after

warning given in pain of five pounds for every month to be levyed and divided as aforesaid.

14. Item that all such Strangers upon warning given to appear before the Politique men and shall not obey but refuse their judgment in matters of controversy between party and party according to equity shall for the first fault forfeit ten shillings, for the second twenty shillings and for the third offence to be committed until he have paid such moneys as shall be sett by Mr. Maior and the more part of the bretheren to be levyed and divided as aforesaid.

15. Item no such Strangers having occasion to travel beyond the Seas or any other place whatsoever within this nation but first shall come to Mr. Maior and have his passport to pass and repass upon pain of six shillings and eight pence to be levyed and divided as aforesaid.

16. Item that no young men or widows being strangers of the Strangers Congregation shall have any house by themselves to dwell in upon pain of ten shillings to be levyed and divided as aforesaid.

17. Item such strangers that do harbour or keep any young Men or Maids in their houses to dwell and do not first present them to the Politique Men to be put to service shall forfeit twenty shillings to be levyed and divided as before.

18. Item whosoever of your company is found debtor to the Politique Men and is judged the Defendant without any arrest shall be committed to prison by Mr. Mayor until the debt be paid and no other suit be laid in any other Court but it is permitted that the defendant being adjudged may appeal to Mr. Maior.

19. Item that the Wardens of the Dutch Congregation shall seal all cloths of their Commodities made at Lynn after the order here and all Cloths from thence put to Callendering without seal shall be fined according

to the fifteenth article and not forfeited and no Cloth shall be put to sale unless they have first the Hall Seal in pain of forfeiture thereof to the Mayor and presenter to be levied and divided as aforesaid.

20. Item that no Stranger Bakers shall not bake any white bread but only of wheat from the Mill in pain of five pence for every loaf to the Mayor but they that will eat white bread will buy the same of the English Bakers.

21. Item that no such persons buy any butter by the pints or gallons in the houses or in the Street but in the Market upon pain to forfeit the same and three pence for every Pint to be levied and divided as aforesaid.

22. Item that no stranger shall abuse another stranger in an offending manner especially to speak evil of their sealers or other officers in pain of five shillings to be levied and divided as aforesaid.

23. Item that no stranger buy any Niles to the end to sell them or convert them to work upon pain of paying double the value thereof to the Mayor nor buy any Niles at all but in the Hall only upon pain as aforesaid to be levied and divided as aforesaid.

24. Item that none to skore Bayes on this side the White Fryers bridge in pain of three shillings and four pence to be levied and divided as aforesaid.

25. Item none to Keem Wool outwardly in pain of three shillings and four pence for every time to be levied and divided as aforesaid.

26. Item none to carry skore or wash in the streets in the day time under pain of three shillings and four pence for every time to be levied and divided as before.

27. Item the said Strangers shall leave their work for three weeks in the time of harvest upon such pains as shall be set on them by Mr. Mayor from year to year.

28. Item that everyone of their Colledges being warned at the house and appear not at the Assemblies shall forfeit five shillings (that is to say) two shillings to the Mayor two shillings to the poor and one shilling to the bayliffe or presenter to be levied by imprisonment.

29. Item that if the Bayliffe do make default in finding out the said Offenders or do not present the same accordingly shall pay for every such offence Six shillings and eight pence to Mr. Mayor to be levied by committing the persons to prison.

EXPLANATION OF THE TWELVE ARTICLES.

To prevent scandalous misdemeanours and also unnecessary charge occasioned by such as come to this City from beyond the seas as from other places within the realm it is ordered that all such strangers before they have their Tickett of admission into this City from the Mayor shall enter [into] bonds to the Politique Men of the Dutch Congregation that they shall be no wise chargeable to the Common purse of the said Church until such time as by their admission to the Lord's Supper they shall be acknowledged members of the said Congregation; And also that the said Politique shall draw a sufficient provisoer to their content from those that receive or set to work any such Stranger that they will inform the said Politiques of the bad and scandalous carriage of such aforesaid Strangers to the end that such further order may be taken for their reformation for the disburdening the City of such unprofitable and scandalous persons.

Norwich 20 June 1744 John Black Mayor.³

19 June 1745 Simeon Waller Mayor.

³ This is endorsed. The other signatures are at the foot of the document itself but not in order of date as I have so placed them.

- 8 June 1746 John Wood Mayor.
Norwich 17 June 1747 Wm. Crowe Mayor.
22nd June 1748 Thomas Harvey Mayor.
28 June 1749 Benjn. Nuthall Mayor.
20 June 1750 Jno. Custance Mayor.
19 June 1751 Tim^o Balderston Mayor.
17 June 1752 Thos. Hurnard Mayor.
Norwich 25 June 1753 John Press Mayor.
19 June 1754 John Gay Mayor.
27 June 1755 Peter Colombine Mayor.