To the Honorable General Assembly of the State of North Carolina now in Session —

The Petition of Mary Collins, wife of John Collins, of the County of Orange —

Your Petitioner begs leave to inform your, that she and John Collins her husband intermarried on the 23d day of June 1790, at which time, they had a sufficiency of property to make them with reasonable industry and care to live comfortably. For some years next after their marriage he behaved himself tolerably well; but gradually indulged himself in drinking more and more intoxicating liquors, and as this habit increased, he, in equal ratio, became negligent and inattentive to his affairs, and ill natured and cruel to your Petitioner; until he became a perfect slave to that habit — spent the whole of his property — and ~~and~~ brutally cruel to your Petitioner, frequently beating her, without any cause, in the most barbarous manner. Your Petitioner bore his ill treatment until November 1814, when he, not only beat her most cruelly, but drunk and with a large open knife in his hand, threatened to put her to death, and thereby compelled her to fly from him and seek safety elsewhere. He still continues to drink and spend what little he earns without yielding any part thereof, to the support of his children. His perseverance in the habit of Drunkenness, and his unfeeling conduct towards his Children have hitherto deterred your petitioner from returning to him with him again — Your Petitioner has seven Children by her said husband all of whom are young the oldest being only about fifteen years of age, and she has supported them ever since her seperation from her husband. Your Petitioner is advised that his Creditors may, and he threatens, to appropriate her little earnings to the payment of his debts — Your Petitioner prays that the property which she may hereafter acquire may be secured to her, and that she may be impowered to make