

THE
 CRY OF A STONE,
 OR,
 A TREATISE;
 SHEWING
 WHAT IS THE RIGHT
Matter, Forme, and Government of the
 visible CHURCH of CHRIST.

How, and wherein the present Church of *England*
 is wanting and defective, both in the body of the
 Land, and in the *Parochiall* branches thereof,

With divers Reasons and Grounds taken from the
 Scriptures, to perswade all that feare G O D, rather to
 suffer any afflictions at the hands of men, than to submit to
 mans carnall policy and humane devices in the worship
 of God, or be deprived of the sweet fellowship of
 the Saints in the right order of the *Gospel*.

Together with a just reproofe of the over-strained and
 excessive separation, contentions and divisions of such
 as commonly are called *Brownists*.

By Robert Coachman.

Jer. 15. 19. *If thou take the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth.*
 Ezra 4. 3. *It is not for you, but for us to build an house to the Lord God of Israel.*
 Psal. 50. 16. 17. *What hast thou to doe to take my Covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest nurture?*

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A FORE-SPEECH To the READER.

Is neither to get moncy nor credit, gentle Reader, that I have undertaken this taske, and written this Treatise; for I am neither in name nor in truth so famous as to gaine either of these by writing, but even simple necessitie, and the violent conviction of truth and mine owne conscience hath drawne me thereunto; and I know, that if I have any reward in this world, it will be none other then to be reckoned and rewarded amongst thieves and malefactors, but let God doe what him pleaseth.

It grieveth mee much, that no man of greater eminence and learning will take in hand this taske, that could have done it better, and also with much better acceptation then ten thousand such as my selfe is; but what shall I say? since they all hold their peace, let this be accounted as the confused murmure, or Cry of a Stone, which uttereth a *vehement* (though unknowne) language, when they that treade

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treade upon it with high lookes, are both deafe and dumbe.

Indeed, these matters concerning the right gathering, constituting and governing the Church, are in our dayes matters of great difficulty, and deserve the greatest care and paines of the deepest wits, and greatest learning that is amongst us; though not in it self more difficult then other points, but because of the strong opposition of the times, which hath long striven to darken the cleare light of the truth in these points, and to uphold humane devices and traditions, which in stead of truth, take up place in our time: That as the preaching of the death and resurrection of Christ was to the Gentiles (that doted on carnall wisdom) foolishnesse; so in our time, when more state and glory is used for the gathering and governing of the Church, then ever Christ or his Apostles appointed, what marvell is it, though it seeme a base and foolish thing, to speake of gathering the visible Church of Christ by here and there a man out of countries and cities? when it is now no great matter to bring a whole Nation, consisting of divers millions of men and women, to be a visible Church of Christ in one day. And indeed if such wonders could be wrought, as are pretended, our Saviour Christ had needlesse feare if he should come in our dayes, that made question whether hee should

Cor. 1. 23.

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should find faith on the earth, or not? For all our Nation is faithfull, and we need not cry out with David for help to God, because not a godly man is left, but may rather stand forth and challenge the powers of hell, and say, bestirre thee Divell, for here is scarce an ungodly man left. Luke 18. 8. Psal. 12. 1.

But if after all these loud boastings it be yet as hard to find faithfulness & sincerity as ever it was, and that our stately Religion, be (in the most part) rather a superstitious custome to breed security, then any matter of weight or worth to rejoyce in; and that Gods people are still few, and scarce one of a hundred; if this be true, as heaven and earth knowes it to be true, then no man should adventure upon the bare applause of the times, or common customes of the multitude; but should try himselfe by a more better and sounder rule, lest he run with the multitude in the broad way that leads to death.

But whom shall I appeale to for judgement of this booke? it is an old maxime, and a new Oracle; that the judgement of the vulgar is worth nothing, so as if it have no approbation of Divines, it may be carryed to the furnace.

And as for the most part of our formall Schollers, who have set Divinity in the pillory, and wrote over it, The Church of England, & make it their deepest study to set times and truth at unity, having by

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Judg. 12. 6.

long custome so clipped the holy tongue, that they cannot pronounce Shibolet, but setting onely a face upon Religion, have like Water-men gone backward so fast from it, till they come betweene the consumption of grace, and the assumption of preferment; from such I must appeale, as no fit Judges in this controversie, expecting rather that they should be tormentors and butchers of all such as call any of their formall courses in question, then be patient hearers of any thing that striketh at their outward glory.

I use these names onely for distinction, not affecting it.

Also for the Reformists, though their grounds looke the same way that mine doe, yet many of them have suffered their eyes so to dazle upon their formall neighbours (who with a little yeelding to the times, sit warme in their nests, and live more like Princes than Apostles) that now they begin to call their owne wisdoms and soundnesse in question, and rather suspect that their owne hearts have deceived them, then that the truth hath overswayed them, and are much more willing to embrace any counsell that may procure them fleshly liberty, then lend an eare to ought that shall perswade them to a stricter or better course, and therefore I dare not permit them for Judges therein. Neither indeed is there any whom these times will acknowledge for a Divine, which is not more or lesse tainted with the
corrupti-

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corruptions of this age, but if he be scrupulous, and will not swallow up all, and hold his tongue at that for which his heart smiteth him, hee may as well be canonized for a Saint in Rome, as registred for a Divine in England, but shall passe under the terme of a puney or busie fellow, notwithstanding any gifts of learning or other endowments, that so the Argument of the Iewes against Christ, Iohn 7. 48. may alwayes be in a readinesse to stop the mouthes of the simple.

And as little hope is there of any equall sentence from any of the strict separation, seeing if a man agree with them in all points, save one onely (though it be but about hearing a Sermon in an old Temple) they will account him as bad as the worst; If any shall like this project, they must surely be men of name, whatsoever they be of nature; and therefore I may well say, I will appeale to no body, but onely to him that judgeth without respect of persons.

And in the meane time, I must account it my greate crosse, that I must thus differ from so many learned and godly men in these points, and loth I was to doe it, but that necessity constrained mee, and the more, for that I see many Christians intangled in the boughs of the tree, which never observe the cause that lyeth in the roote, being assured that if they lived in a Church that in the body
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thereof were the feare of God, those abuses and corruptions would soone be remedied, but being otherwise, you may as well rob Micah of his Idolls, and heare no complaint, as you may strip them of their corruptions, and heare no clamour.

Judg. 18. 24

Three things there are required of him that shall oppose these evils of our dayes: First, integrity of life, and a conversation unblameable, for else it is probable that his strictnesse in these points, proceedes rather from corruption than grace, that hath not taught himselfe the great and weightie points of the Law, before he contend with others for matters of lesser moment, yea, and though hee use never so great wisdom of words, or weight of Argument, yet no great blessing of God, nor reverence of man can be expected upon his labours, who preacheth not as well with his conversation as with his lips.

Mat. 23. 23

The second thing required, is an experimentall knowledge of the things stood for, beside the evidence of Scripture, and force of reason; he that will distinctly discourse of these things, and be able to refell the subtile evasions and colourable glosses of the opposites, had need to have lived sometime in a Church and fellowship of Saints under the pure Ordinances of the Gospel,

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so shall hee be more sensible of the corruption and bondage which is in these Assemblies, and more settled to love and maintaine the purity and liberty of the Gospell in the right order thereof.

The third thing required, is, to count the cost, and to have the price ready to lay downe whensoever it is called for, be it goods, be it liberty, be it life; for should a man be never so able to dispuse, and had never so much experience and sincerity in him, yet if also hee be not of a resolved disposition to suffer and endure all that man can inflict upon him, and to seale with his blood what he hath written with his pen, or practised by his course, it will not much availe, though it be never so cleare and evident: Besides, the Lord doth wonderfully advance his glory and Gospell, by the sufferings and blood of his servants, and giveth a blessed memoriall of them; but as for the timorous and fearefull, that in all their professions must make a faire shew in the flesh, though they have the tongues of men and Angels, yet the Lord never much honoureth such a profession.

Lukc. 14. 28

Gal. 6. 12

1 Cor. 13. 1

Now, how farre my selfe shall be found approveable in these things may be questioned; and for me to speake in praise of my selfe, were worst

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of all; and it is ten times easier to give good counsell to others, than to follow it ones selfe; and confident and conceited men are more often foyled when they come to examination and tryall, then those that retaine in themselves some feare and doubting.

1. As touching my life and conversation, though the conscience of mine owne infirmities which are open and bare before the All-seeing eye, might cast mee upon the earth, and stop my mouth for saying ought, But God be mercifull to me a sinner; yet since by his grace I have beene kept in all my wanderings and temptations, from putting forth my hand to iniquity, or running into any scandalous evill, to the wounding of my conscience, and slander of Religion; why should the operation of this grace be buried in oblivion, and not rather be acknowledged to the eternall praise of his power and goodnesse unto me?

2. And as for my experience in the right order and constitution of the visible Church, I served an Apprentise of ten yeeres in a society of as excellent Christians, and under the purest orders and most profitable meanes that (I thinke) in this fraile life can be obtained. In which Church, though I were one of the least of the least of all the members, and from whom by simple necessity

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I was forced to depart; yet I was neither so idle ^{2 Pet. 1. 8.} nor unprofitable amongst them, but that the things which passed there, made some impression in me, which I trust shall not be worne out whilest I live; neither am I so ungratefull to my friends, or unmercifull to my Countrey-men, or so carelesse of the honour of Christ, that I should bury in oblivion those worthy things which I have learned and seene, and which would at one instant put an end to many endlesse controversies and intanglements wherewith my Christian countrey-men are snared, and know not how to get out of them.

And although there be many more fitter to handle these things, and more able to suffer for them; yet since all our sufficiencie is from God, I despaire not wholly of my selfe, but trust that ^{1 Cor. 3. 15.} for the furtherance of his glory, his power shall be perfected by my weaknesse, and that I shall be made able through him with patience, yea, ^{Heb. 11. 35.} with joy to suffer the spoyling and losse of all that in this fraile state is lent me.

And though the time is come that judgement must begin at Gods House, I trust that I shall be content to be one of the first that shall ^{1 Pet. 4. 17.} leade the way to the shambles, and not feare to give my selfe to him that lent it mee, and ^{Psal. 44. 22.} to lay it downe for his glory on earth, which

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giveth me eternall glory in Heaven, which that I may doe in a right manner, and for a right end, as well as in a just cause, I earnestly intreat the fervent supplications and prayers of all the Saints night and day for me, that I may indeede rejoyce, that I am counted worthy to suffer for that part of the Gospell, which this stately age will not endure to heare of.

I have written very short and briefe, partly for that this age having beene so long dulled with tedious volumes and discourses can now brooke nothing but what runs post, and that which is briefe and various, partly that I might spend little time in writing, and avoyd great charge in printing; but principally because I find, that things are easiest understood, when they are set downe shortly, and when there is no enterlacings or surplussage of words, more then barely to expresse the thing intended. I have endeavoured for a plaine and familiar stile, and yet avoyded light or affected phrases; I have traduced no mans person, otherwise than as the things beare witnesse against them, I have given all the honour to men that I may, with feare of my Maker: And if yet either the matter or manner be defective, or any thing out of joynt, remember still it is but the Cry of a
Stone,

to the Reader.

Stone, which never learned to speake either Latine or English in any Schoole whatsoever: And take heed of stumbling over the truth, for some balkes in the way: but if the thing aimed at be the right setting of the Saints in the order of the Gospel, otherwise than the vaine ostentation and pompe of this age will permit, rather set thy selfe to helpe the Author to beare his crosse, and follow Christ in his temptations, then like a Sycophant, to sit downe and scoffe at his wants of learning and eloquence.

The Lord of his mercy pardon all our aberrations and failings, and give us grace to seeke him earnestly in love and sincerity, that our true comfort may increase here, and our eternail comfort remaine hereafter.

Thine in the Lord,

Robert Coachman.



An Advertisement to the Reader.

TO the end that the ingenuous and godly designe of this Author (of reconciling these differences betwene those Christians of the English Parishes, and those of the Separation) may not miscarry, observe, that in blaming the Church of England, and the Ministry thereof, hee doth not meane the personall Graces, Knowledge and Learning of any Christians there; but he blames the confused manner of gathering Churches by house rowes of all sorts: and by the Ministry, hee meanes the externall office conveyed to them by that authority which hee doth justly oppose.

And when he speaks of the Separation, hee is not against the cause, much lesse the moderate way of the Churches of the Separation, nor their rejecting of the prophane world from those privileges, proper and peculiar to a visible Church; as seales, censures, &c. but he speaks against those personall errors of some who professe separation & their erroneous opinions, who deny all visible Christians in the parish assemblies, and thereupon leave them in personall communion; as Prayer, Preaching, Conference, &c. Now the God of all grace and mercy so dispose of all his servants, that the great affaires of Jesus Christ may not miscarry in their hands, but that they may at last so discover errors, that they may attain both peace and truth, *Amen.*

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The



The CRY of a STONE,

Of the essentiall marks and notes of the visible Church.



Here is nothing that can rightly be described by any speciall Ornaments or priviledges thereof, but hee that will make a true and proper definition of any thing, must describe it by such properties as are so essentiall to the thing, as that being there, they make it to be that it is, and being absent, it ceaseth to be any more the same. **SECT. I.**

The Church is often compared to a house, yea, called Gods *House*: Now, no man can describe a house by the ornaments and furniture thereof, but onely by the matter and forme; both which being together, there is indeed a house, but if either be absent, the house cannot be.

Indeed, when materials are framed, wee sometimes say, there is a house, though no forme appeare; but such speaking is improper, and it may rather be said, there is stuffe for a house, then a house indeed: so in regard of the true materials of the Church, the people of God, whose hearts are framed to holinesse and sanctitie, dwelling here and there in the world, and never combining into a body, nor, perhaps, knowing they should so doe, may yet be said in an improper kind of speaking, to be the Church of God; but this cannot be said, but of the Church in generall and universall, combined and knit together by one spirit, partakers of one hope, and expecters of one glory.

For touching the visible Church, which presents it selfe to the outward eye, the case is otherwise; and we may not account all visible Christians a visible Church; for by a visible Church, wee meane a company or congregation assembling together. Now, a man may be a visible Christian, and never come at such an assembly, much lesse be a joynd member in the policie thereof.

Neither doe we meane that every assembly or congregation is the Church of God, though the word be indifferently used; for there is *the Church of evill doers*, and there is a *Church* of tumultuous railers. *Psal. 26. 5.* *1st. 19. 46.*

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The visible Church described.

1. *Math. 18. 20.*

1 *Cor. 1. 2.*
Phil. 1. 7.
1 Thes. 1. 4.

3. *1 Cor. 14. 26.*
Psal. 110. 3.
Mat. 10. 25.
1 Thes. 5. 14.
Tit. 1. 9. 10.

4. *Mat. 20. 22.*

Mat. 9. 6.
Mat. 10. 33.

Mat. 16. 13.
Phil. 1. 2.

Gen. 28. 12. 17.

Gen. 34. 25.

Psal. 50. 16. 17.

In a word, the visible Church of Christ is a company of people externally holy, or called Saints which combine and meet together, intending to performe the whole will and worship of God, according as it is or shall be revealed to them.

I say they are a company; for one man cannot be a Church, but there must be two or three at least, and not above such a number, as may ordinarily meet together, and these must be externally holy; that is, such as by their faith and conversation appeare unto men to be Gods children and his elect; for of the heart onely God must be the judge; and if the profession be found, and the conversation honest in the outward appearance and manifestation, wee have not to doe to examine any further, but ought in charitie to judge men to be such as outwardly they appeare, leaving secret things to God.

I say further, th it these Saints must combine and assemble together, and that not by compulsion or accident, but voluntarily covenant and gather together to performe with heart and tongue the whole will and worship of God for the building up of themselves in all the knowne wayes of God, *comforting the feeble minded, helping the weak, relifing the stragler, and convince the opposite.*

I say (intending to performe the whole will of God) for they may at the first be ignorant of many things appertaining to the service of God, and yet bethe Church of God: for it is with a Church in her minority, as with a Christian at his first conversion, who hath onely a generall resolution to doe the whole will of God, but the particulars of that obedience, hee performeth by steps and degrees, as hee commeth to learne and understand them: so a company of godly men may become a Church, and performe with sinceritie and modestie, such things as they know and understand at the first, and when God giveth them further knowledge and meanes, to proceed to other practises, as the Christian women in *Philippi*, who at the first assembled together, having (as it seemeth) no other exercise but *Prayer*, and yet afterward there was a very compleate and famous Church of Saints, having both *Bishops and Deacons*.

Wheresoever therefore there is an assembly of godly men knit together, and performing the worship of God (though but in part) it may truly be said of them, as *Jacob* said of the servants of God, when he saw them marching so diligently, this is none other then *Beth-el*, the house of God, this is a proper visible Church.

And wheresoever other assemblies are, then of faithfull Christians, whatsoever ordinances of God they have, yet they stand them in no more head then circumcision did the *Sichemites*, but so often as they take up the name of God, and performe any religious service unto him, whilest they hate to be reformed, so often they are guilty of usurpation and intrusion upon that which appertaineth not to them, and are manifest

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manifest takers of Gods name in vaine, whom he will not hold guiltlesse. *Exod. 20. 7.*

They therefore are much mistaken, who describe and marke out the Church by the Ordinances; for as circumcision availed not the *Sichemites*, nor the *Arke* of God the *Philistims*, even so the most glorious Ordinances of God being used by such as are not his children, are as a Parable in the mouth of a foole, and so farre they are from making wicked men Gods Church, as that the more they use them before they have faith and grace, the greater is their sinne, and the further off they are from being either Gods Church or children. *1 Sam. 5. 4. 9. Prov. 15. 8.*

The preaching of the Word can be no mark of the visible Church, otherwise than as it is an effectual instrument to prepare men therunto; for it was preached amongst *Babels Prophets*, and amongst the *Abhemians, Ninivites, Babylonians, &c.* yet were neither of these Gods Church or people. *Nab* preached powerfully to the old world, yet were they not Gods Church. The *Turks* and *Indians* have had the Word preached to them, yet no man will say they are the visible Church of Christ, neither can the Sacraments be any marke of the Church at all, since they make nothing to be which was not the same before, but onely confirme something which before was. *1 King. 18. 19. 25. and 22. 19. Jer. 17. 20. Ion. 3. 4. 5. 1 Pet. 3. 19. 20.*

A *Spanish* Frier with a scoupe baptized a thousand silly *Indians* at one time, which were drawne together by a stratagem, were these now any thing the more Gods Church; and if he should have given them the other Sacrament also, had it availed any thing the more, or if in stead of this Frier there had been one of the most godliest Ministers in all *Europe*, had it not bene all one, so long as the people had not faith nor grace? so that it is plain, that holy people, and not holy ordinances give the being to the visible Church, & it is no more an argument to prove a company of carnall and irreligious people to be Gods Church, because they have amongst them his sacred ordinances, then a true mans purse in the hand of a thiefe is an argument to prove a thiefe a true man. *The Word and Sacraments no markes of the visible Church.*

The visible Church hath right to all Gods Ordinances.

SECT. 2. IT is then a societie of religious and faithfull people, that have right to Gods spirituall Ordinances, and such onely may, and must use them, so farre as they are able. They are all of them to strive to
1. Cor. 14. 1. 2. to be Doctors, and that not in bare conceit, but in truth and soundnesse, and such amongst them as excell in gifts and graces they are much to love and reverence, and also to encourage them to the orderly use of the grace they have received, without hiding their talent, that so all may learne and receive comfort.

And because all good men have not one and the same gift, therefore every one is advisedly to consider, what his portion is, and what he may take to, and where he must stay, that none run beyond their line, presume above *that which is meet.*

Some have the gift of utterance, and are fluent in speech, others a gift of discerning to judge of that which is uttered: some are excellent in prayer, others are sweet in singing, some are apt to move profitable questions, others prompt in answering them, some can dispute very profitably, others can receive much helpe by disputation, &c.

And many times they which are of little manifestation, and least sene to meddle in publique passages are most holy and strict in their conversation, whose examples doe often times *preach* as profitably as if they had the greatest fluencie of speech that could be.

Neither must the Saints be envious against one another, because they have not one and the same gift: for one and the same spirit worketh diversly in all the members of the Church, that this spirituall body may be complete, and performe all spirituall offices; as the naturall body hath divers members, and all for severall offices, much lesse may any hide their talent, because it is not of the same measure with others: since he which had but one talent was required to trafficke as well as he that had five, and all the servants are commanded
Mat. 25. 26. 27. to watch as well (though not so much) as the Porter.

This visible Church of Saints stand bound and tied each to other, not onely by the common rule of Christianity; but by their very incorporating and combining together into a Church State, or spirituall policie, from which naturally or necessarily ariseth that which we call the Discipline, or power which is independent amongst themselves, for the curing and purging of sin and sinners that breake out amongst them into any enormous or scandalous practice.

For as in cities and corporations, each member carefully observeth whether

whether his neighbour observe the rules of the Charter wherunto he is sworne, and upon default in matter of weight the partie offending is either disfranchized, or otherwise corrected civilly; so in this brotherhood or spirituall policie of the Church, each man observeth, as him selfe, so his fellow members, that if any find his brother to transgresse against the heavenly Charter, and Covenant made with God and his people, he reproveth and admonisheth him lovingly betwixt them *two alone*, and if it be any capital or scandalous evill, and that he will not repent of it, then the brother offended, taketh with him *one or two*, to helpe, convince and reprove the sinner, and to witnesse both the fact, and the due proceeding thereabout; and if hee will not heare them so as to repent, then to complaine to the congregation, whereof hee is a member, that so being *rebuked of many*, hee may yet at last be ashamed, and give God the glory, and so receive forgiveness of God and men. But if hee will not heare nor regard the Church, nor in reverence to that sacred meanes of his recovery, repent and humble himselfe for his sinne, then the Church with humble and sorrowfull hearts must cut him off as a decayed member, and deliver him unto Satan, that so that proud and corrupt flesh may be destroyed, and the spirit saved in the day of the Lord Iesus.

Provided still, that all these proceedings be in love, lenitie and compassion, and that no man be brought to the Church, much lesse censured; for infirmities and failing in judgement, or for matters in our times doubtfull and controverfall, but for matters of weight, and such evils as being persisted in, doe out of doubt, shut the party out of heaven, of which more hereafter.

And for their more better and orderly proceeding in the use of all the Ordinances of God in the Church, they are as loone as any, fit men rise out of them, or joyne unto them, to make choice of some for their Bishops, Pastors or Elders, upon whom they must ordinarily depend, for the dispensing of the Word, Prayer and Sacraments; as also to rule, guide, and goe before them in their consultations decrees, and execution of Discipline, and all other publique businesse.

These Bishops or Elders may not intrude themselves into their offices and ministrations, by any forreigne or civill power, but must be chosen by that Church and societie of Saints in which they are to administer.

Their ordination or putting in possession, must be with giving a charge to them, with some signe, either of giving the hand, or laying bands upon their heads, which may be done either by the Elders of some other Church, who as brethen may assist and helpe their neighbours, so farre as they can; or rather by some principall man amongst themselves: since it cannot be imagined with any shew of reason, that there is any universall Ministry since the Apostles dayes, neither

The power of the Church.

Mat. 18. 15. 16. 17.

2. Cor. 2. 6.

1. Cor. 5. 5.

1. Cor. 16. 14.

3.

2. Tim. 2. 2.

Tit. 1. 6. 7.

John 10. 1. 2.

Ministers election.

Act. 6. 3. 5. and

14. 23.

Ordination of the ministers.

1. Tim. 5. 22.

No succession of any universall

Ministerie now.

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any that can execute their office out of that particular flocke whereof the holy Ghost hath made them overseers, no more then the Lord Major of London may goe and execute justice in the Citie of Yorke, of which more hereafter.

And although in the Common-wealth, a Lordly and Imperious rule may be tollerable, yet the Ministerie of the Church is of another nature, and may not be imagined to be any matter of State, or to stand for any carnall pompe, but is a matter of meet service, and they are constantly to labor in spirituall works in all humility & patience, giving themselves wholly to their ministrations, and studying to approve themselves to every mans conscience in the sight of God. Neither is their office for name and forme, but for the preservation of order and comlineffe in Church Ordinances, that all the rights and priviledges of the Church may be used and continued in a grave and comly manner, as they are excellent in their substance and matter.

And as these Bishops or Elders are to preach constantly the Word, both on the Lords Day, and other times of the Churches meetings, and to administer the Sacraments in both kinds upon the members of the Church, as there is occasion; as also to execute and declare the publicked decrees, determinations and censures of the Church: So they are not any way to infringe the liberty of the Saints, or ingrosse their priviledges, but still to foster & cherish all those severall gifts and graces which are in all, or any of the members. They must still uphold and maintaine in the Church the stoole of the Prophets, and to have in great esteeme Prophefying or preaching by men of gifts and aptnesse, though not in office, that so all may learne and increase, that so fit and able men may be bred up in the Church, whom the body may appoint into office of Ministerie in after times, or when any of their officers shall any way faile.

Neither may the Elders deprive the Saints of their lawfull and Christian libertie in their elections, rejections or determinations in the Church by any fore-stallings, repressings, insultings, or preventions, but contenting themselves with meeke and grave counsell to goe before the rest in their proceedings: and if the body of the Church shall not agree to that which the officers shall thinke best, that yet the officers thinke it no disparagement to their eminencie, or honour to be overwayed, and led beside their mindes and purposes sometimes by the body of the Church, whose servants they are, knowing, that where the honour and order of God is observed, no man can truly receive any dammage.

And as the visible Church must continue their assembling and communicating together in all actions for the soule, so the duties of love, and their communion in temporall things for the body may in no wise be neglected, whilest this fraile life lasteth, which communion

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nion in giving and receiving, though it be no religious action in it selfe, yet is it of such simple necessitie and affinitie thereunto, as that it may no more be severed from religion, then good workes may be severed from faith; and for their more easie, and substantiall doing these duties, and relieving the wants of their brethren, they are to choole out wise and trustie men, from amongst themselves, whom they are to choole and appoint to this businesse, and to whom they must commit their money and treasure, and to whose wisedome and faithfulness they must referre the distribution and disposing of those temporall things.

And in this contribution the Saints whom God hath blessed with any portion of this worlds goods, must accordingly extend their mercifull liberality with all cheerefulness, yea, and if need to require, to sell even their lands and goods, and whatsoever they have to relieve the wants of their poore brethren, without any murmuring or discontent, remembering, that the life of a Christian is more precious then any thing else in this world.

This distribution of the Churches benevolence, must be to the Elders that toyle in the Word and Doctrine, as also to the poore, aged, sicke, and helpelesse persons, especially those of the household of Faith, that so the will of God may be done, and all comfort and encouragement given to the poore Saints, as also all murmuring complaints and outcries prevented, by which it may be said, (and that not without cause) that the Church hath pietie, but no pitie.

Neither is the widowes office to be forgotten as a needlesse thing, but if it fall out that amongst the Church there be found some aged and grave widowes who are loosed from the bands of wanton youth, and have age upon them as a crowne of glory, being yet healthy, cheerefull, and strong, the Church is there to choole and appoint them for Deaconesses, or tenders of the sick, and to allow them such reliefe and maintenance, as is needfull and fit, knowing that in sicknesse there is required much labour and paines, and most neede of comfort and encouragement.

And thus the Church and people of God, goe hand in hand, both in sicknesse and in health, in poverty and in wealth, in adversitie and prosperitie, rejoycing together, weeping together, and being of like affection, in a sweet and heavenly sympathie, holding out in adversitie without shrinking, and persevering in prosperitie with all moderation.

The

6

Ministers no Lords

1 Pet. 5. 3.

1 Cor. 4. 5. 2 Thes. 5. 12. 1 Tim. 3. 10. 2 Tim. 2. 16. 2 Cor. 4. 2.

4. The Ministers ought still preserve the libertie of the Saints in the Church.

1 Cor. 14. 1. 2.

2 Tim. 4. 5. 6.

1 Joh. 9. 10.

5. The Churches benevolence.

7

Philip. 4. 15. 1am. 2. 22.

1 Tim. 3. 10.

The Deacons office.

1 Cor. 15. 2. Rom. 12. 8.

1 Tim. 2. 15. Luke. 11. 33.

1 Tim. 5. 17. Gal. 6. 10.

1 Tim. 5. 9. 10. Rom. 16. 1. 2.

6. The widowes office.

1 Tim. 5. 9. 10. Rom. 16. 1. 2.

Rom. 12. 15. 16.

2 Cor. 6. 8.

The Church or Churches of England cannot be justified.

SECT. 3.

AND if this be the right patterne of the visible Church of Christ, according to the Gospel, then let us turne our eyes upon our selves, and see what resemblance there is amongst us of these Apostolique orders, and upon notice taken of our defects, let us see if they may not be amended.

And first, whereas the materialls of the Church of the Gospel are none other then a company of converted people gathered out of Nations, and from the world, our nation, and our world is all one with the Church, and hee that is of one, is, or must be of the other; the Apostles first preached and converted men, and afterward united them into a Church; but we first unite the whole nation into the Church, and feed them all with the pledges and seales of Gods love, and then goe about to convert them, afterward by preaching judgement to them; but this is rather to scatter then to gather with Christ, and is more like the Papiests pompe, then the Apostles plainnesse; and although God did once choose a whole nation, which first were in the loynes and family of Abraham, yet that nation being broken off from God, no nation can now succeed them, nor can challenge that right to be Gods people, otherwise then they are found converted, and believe and obey the Gospel, which that a whole nation consisting of many millions of people, should doe in one day should be strange and miraculous, and the way to heaven must cease to be trait, if so many can walke in it at once.

And if any shall think otherwise, let them shew when the generall body of this Land (which are counted the Church of England) was better then now they are, yea, and now after sixtie yeeres preaching the Gospell, whether the greater part be not yet apparently in their sins, and unconverted, and doe not indeede apparently oppose and fight against such as are sincere and faithfull, contemning and despising all admonition and counsell, and serve not the Lord, but serve Satan and their owne lusts; and therefore the generall multitude of this nation cannot in any sense be said to be Gods people, or the true and proper matter of the visible Church.

And if we shall descend at once to the parish assemblies, which are the branches of this nationall Church, and looke upon them indifferently, wee shall finde them of the same stampe with the nation, though no doubt some of them which have long enjoyed powerfull preaching, are much more reformed then others; but taking them one with another, they are for the most part of the people ignorant, prophane

1.
Aps: 16. 35.
Iob: 17. 9.
Mat: 28. 19, 20.
Aps: 18. 11.
1 Cor. 4. 15, &
11. 2. 17.

Our Churches defective in their matter.

Gen. 25. 5.

Dmt. 4. 37. &
7. 6, 7.

Eph. 2. 12.

3.
The parish multitudes unconverted.

prophane and scandalous, being common swearers, liers, drunkards, quarrellers, wantons, Atheists, and even as their owne Propbets have truly complained of them: and as hee that travelleth amongst them about his affaires shall finde them, and whilst the most of them are such, who can justifie their estate, but he shall make himselfe abominable to God; and every time hee goeth about to justifie them, as Gods people, and Church, his owne heart shall give him the lye, neither availeth it to say, they are baptized and professe the true Religion; for if they have all the Baptismes and Ordinances that ever were or are, and professed never so much truth in words, yet whilst they are wicked in their deeds and lives, they are but so much the more the children of hell for their knowledge and profession, and the heathens and Turkes are in farre better case then they. Secondly, indeed they professe no Religion at all, nor may in any sense be called Professors; when doe they professe or speake of any Religion or mention the name of God unlesse it be in their swearing or vain talking; their profession is the service of the Divell; who is their father, and under whose tutorship they are notable Schollers. Thirdly, if any thing make them Professors, it is their comming to Church now and then, to lend an eare to some instruction, and such professors might a company of Turkes be, if they were in England, and would either for feare of Law, custome or fashion, come sometimes to the assembly, though still they returned to their old vomit, and never left off their old sinnes and vices; so that whatsoever can be alledged for them, untill they repent and turne from their wicked courses, all such pleas were as good be never a whit as never the better.

4. Neither can the goodnesse of some few that are in the parish help to salve the matter, no more then Lots being in Sodome could justifie the Sodomites: for those godly are amongst them but as a condemned or despised people, which scarce dare shew themselves in their pious arts, but are overtopped and held under by the vaine multitudes in all places. Indeede, temporall punishments may be withheld, for the righteous sakes, as in Sodome, but that the spirituall State of the carnall multitude should be good because of the presence of some few good men, is no more like then that Ioram and his complices were justified, by the presence of Elisha and Iehazaphat.

Neither will the badnesse of the Iewes State in Christs time and before under the Law, justifie this confused Church of the Gospell. For, first as it is a bad plea to justifie one evill by another: secondly so we must still remember that God now chooseth no more whole Nations, but selecteth his Saints out of all nations: thirdly, the covenants of the Iewes were absolutely temporall and spirituall, and the promises to be believed for this life properly, but our covenants that God maketh with us, are onely spirituallly absolute, and the promises for this

Rom. 8. 28.
John 4. 21. 23.
Mat. 18. 20.

this life, are onely conditionall : Fourthly, Gods face, and the seat of that Church was to be sought in the *Tabernacle* or *Temple*; but now there is no place priviledged or exempted, but where *two or three are gathered in Christs Name, hee is in the midst of them.*

Act. 15. 9.
1 Cor. 5. 12. 13.

Mat. 7. 6.

Act. 8. 23.

To conclude, as the Kingdome of Satan is every where in this world; and as the Lord by outward manifestation *differenteth* his chosen ones from the world, and them within from them without: so must wee every where put difference betwixt the *righteous* and the wicked, and beware of saying to the *wicked, thou art righteous*, or giving *holy things to dogs*, or partaking with them, or joyning to them in their devouring *pearles*, or afford them our fellowship, when they *usurpe* upon such ordinances as are peculiar to Gods Elect and Faithfull.

what Ordinances of God may be used in the Parish assemblies, and what not.

SECT. 4.

I.
2 Tim. 2. 24. 25.
The Word may be preached to cvill men.

Rom. 10. 14.

Act. 9. 26. 27.
Psal. 50. 1. 17.
Isai. 1. 13. 14.

YEt so long as life lasteth there may be some hope of recovery, neither are we to despaire of any, though never so vile, but that they may be converted and turned to God; And therefore wee are still as with patience to suffer the evill men, so to prove alwayes, if at any time they may be brought out of the snare of the Divell; and for this end it is very necessary, that the preaching of the Word be amongst them both publickly and privately, if they will but be brought to it, and have the patience to heare themselves reformed and convinced by it; for as wee know it to be the onely ordinary meanes for their conversion; so also wee see that many are daily by it converted and brought home unto God, and so farre I am from disliking the preaching of the Word to them, as that I would have them heare it where it is most purely and powerfully taught, and wish, that where there is one such Preacher, there were a hundred.

But untill they doe convert and turne, none of the seales must in any case be administred to them or their seed, neither are they to be admitted as members into the Church & fellowship of the Saints, nor to say, or to teach any thing to others, nor take up the name of God, or to offer any oblations or sacrifices to him, untill they have cleansed themselves by repentance, much lesse are the faithfull to partake with them, in such actions prophaning of the Sacraments. But if by any means they should be brought to the fleshly flesch, they have gotten a custome, that they will not be bound to the Lords sacred Ordinances and beleeves, and will grow up againe, as before, if they be not kept by the Lords powerfull and precious promises, and

to their customes, nor have ought to doe with them in their taking the Name and Ordinances of God in vaine; for the proper ends of the seales are to confirm and comfort the faithfull, and such as groan under their finnes; but how can the seale be set, or the assurance given to them that have not faith, neither are wearied with their finnes, but love and delight in them. And how can any godly man consent in, or say Amen to such an holy action, when it is joyntly done by such as for the most part are Gods enemies; for the spirituall supper of the Lord is not like other civill banquets wherein civill fellowship and naturall refreshing is properly aimed at, but the fellowship therein is spirituall, and they that feast at it, must be united to Christ by one spirit, but now carnall men have not the spirit, and so can be no guests at that banquet.

Mat. 11. 28.

1 Cor. 12. 13.

This banquet is even the neerest fellowship that the Saints can have in this world, and most resembleth heaven; and it is not onely a sure pledge of their fellowship with Christ, but also a demonstration of their unity together, as the Apostle teacheth. But what a many lying signes and deceivable demonstrations doe such Christians make, that communicate they care not where, nor with whom, but thinke if they examine themselves, it is enough, forgetting that it is an act of communion, and so called by the Apostle, and though the terme of a holy thing be given to it, yet if wee sever the word Sacrament from communion, wee put out Gods termes, and place in our owne.

1 Cor. 10. 17.

Verse 16.

Many dislike that the godly should be civilly familiar with vaine and irreligious persons, but to be strict in that, and allow them to banquet with all manner of persons at the heavenly supper of the Lord, is even as current counsell, as theirs who said, it was nothing to *sweare by the Temple*, but to *sweare by the gold of the Temple* was a trespassse; for if there be any act in this world that declares Christian amity, peace and sweet friendship in the grace of the Gospell, this doth it, when wee sit and feast together with Christ at his Table, and cate his flesh, and drinke his blood.

Mat. 23. 16, 17.

As Christ therefore preached the Gospel to all sorts of men good and bad, but when he administred the supper, hee drew out such as were apparently *faithfull and godly*. So now, the Word may be preached and heard amongst the worst miscreants that are, but when wee goe to sit with *Christ at his Table*, let us know (as farre as wee can by outward appearance) what guests goe with us.

Luke 22. 11. 14.
Iob. 13. 30.

Neither may these wicked men have any censure of excommunication executed upon them, much lesse execute it upon one another: for, they were never in covenant with Christ, and so have broken no covenant, nor can be punished for any breach of covenant, but were ever as they are, *naught from the wombe*, and downright unbelievers.

3.
The power of excommunication belongs not to the parish multitudes,

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Ioh. 7.

still Secondly, what have they to do to censure others, when they are as ill themselves? May one adulterer or drunkard or swearer, cast a stone at another, when hee is as bad himselfe as the worst? Thirdly, if they should so doe were it any more then a mockery: as if the thieves at Gods hill should hold a session to hang the cut-purses, which were an onely way to make sinne to be counted a trifle, and a jest, rather then to be feared and trembled at; it is onely the Saints that may binde them that are mighty in evill, and none other have this honour.

Psalms 49. 8. 9.

1 Cor. 5. 5.

Fourthly, seeing excommunication is for the destruction of the flesh (supposing the person to have the spirit, though overwhelmed by the corruption of nature, how can it be exercised on them which still were and are, altogether flesh? For if their flesh be destroyed, the whole man is destroyed.

It is no wrong to Gods people, when the carnall multitude is taxed, and they perswaded to leave them.

SECT. 5.

I.

IF now upon these and the like considerations wee leave the generall and carnall multitudes in the parish assemblies, in all such actions, as are proper and peculiar to the faithfull, and in feare of offending God and strengthening his enemies in evill, we joyne into Christian fellowships apart from them, what hurt of injury doe we to any? what hurt was it to Iehosaphat, when Elysha in his presence protested against Ioram, as against one betweene whom and God, he would not intercede? what hurt was it to Christs Disciples, when their naturall friends the Iemes, were taxed by Christ, and called blind guides, and blind leaders of the blind, dissemblers, hypocrites, &c. So when we tax here the multitude of carnall people, and protest against them that they are not Gods children, nor that they have no right to his sacred ordinances, nor to come neere his altar, nor use his name and word, untill they repent. But that those holy and consecrated things belong onely to the faithfull Christians of which there are many in the assemblies, whom we tell that they are not in their proper place, nor right fellowship, but ought to withdraw themselves from that society in all such actions as are proper to the Saints, and unite themselves in the fellowship of godly men, with whom they may freely and comfortably participate, in the sweet mysteries of the Lord; doe wee in this speake blasphemie? and are wee worthy for such words and practises, to be taxed and traduced in print and pulpit; for wicked and damnable Schismattiques? For what Christian man is there, that

2 King. 3. 13. 14. Mat. 25. 14. Luke 12. 52. Mar. 23. 27. It is no fault to tax wicked men, and forbear communi- cation with them.

Aff. 2. 40. 43. 44. 47.

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that had not rather converse with godly men then ungodly? are not the presence of faithfull Christians sweeter to a Christian, when hee commeth to powre out his prayers, and offer his oblations, than the society of carnall men? Well then, what is the matter, that wee for holding and practising these things, must be thus tossed about and abused? Why must we be put in prison, confiscate goods, goe into exile, and death for holding and practising no other wise than every Christian soule in heart desireth? we would begin our heavenly harmony here & our delight should be only in the Satahs, and it is custome, wit and art, that fighteth against grace, conscience and Scripture; and it is they out of their idle visions, that perswade to give holy things to Dogs, and mingle light and darknesse, Christ and Belial together; and though times favour these abuses, and punish us for our right grounded assertions, yet anon we shall come before a most just Judge, and then wee shall see whole righteoufnesse and just judgement shall be brightest, and who hath gone the rightest course.

It is no fault to associate onely with the godly in the Sacraments.

Psal. 16. 3.

Taylor on Titus, pag. 691.

2 Cor. 6. 14. 15. and 5. 10.

Psal. 37. 6.

Wee labour to justifie the righteous, and condemne the ungodly, and would not have the honourable name of Christians or godly men, given to swearers, liars, drunkards, oppressors, slanderers, &c. but would have them know, that as they live and delight in sinne, and hate to be reformed; so no comfort, no priviledge nor favour belongs unto them in that estate, but till they repent and breake off their ungodly courses, no peace can be to them, nor no fellowship in the scales and badges of Saints can be had with them but as they are of the world, so we must account them, and under the kingdome of darknesse, and it belongeth not to them, but unto us to build an house to the Lord our God, unto them belongs no promise of any favour till they repent, but onely the Law, threatnings, judgements, comminations and sharpe rebukes, which they are alwayes to heare, both publikely and privately, upon all occasions, but nothing must ever be said or done to them, by which they have any cause to thinke they are in Gods favour before they turne from their sinnes; for if the most righteous scarcely, and with much adoe, be saved, where shall such wicked and sinners appeare, and what hope is there for them?

2. 1 Cor. 6. 10. 11.

Psal. 50. 16.

Ephes. 2. 2. Eccl. 4. 3.

1 Pet. 4. 18.

And seeing in the things of this life they have their ease, pleasure and priviledges above the godly, what are then the priviledges of the Saints? if also in spirituall ordinances and heavenly prerogatives they are equallized with them; alas the men of this world feast and laugh, and dominere in their purple, scarlet, and fleshly wantonnesse, when many of Gods deare children weepe and mourne in secret before the Lord, and are faine to pinch hard, goe thin, lie in prison, and sometimes goe to the shambles, that they may be tryed as gold in the fire, and all the priviledges of the Saints, is their free access to God, their fellowship in their Sabbaths, Sacrifices, Prayers, blessings, scales, and

2. Psal. 73. 2. 3. Job 2. 9. 10.

2 Sam. 15. 23. 3.

1 Cor. 4. 11. 12.

Rom. 5. 2. Ephes. 3. 12.

It is in vaine to seeke the reformation of a Church, when the materials are naught.

SECT. 7. **T**He Church being a building or house, if it so fall out that the maine pillars and materials are rotten, and that it is founded but upon Briers, brambles and rubbish, how shall this house ever be mended or made sound, otherwise then by a quite demolishing of the frame, and building another of other and sounder stufte? Many have sought divers wayes to reforme and amend this Church, but all helpeth not, except the matter were more sound and solid.

I. Some cry out vehemently upon the *Prelates* and Governours of the Church, thinking, that if they were away, all would be well, wherein how much they are deceived, appears in this: first, The *Prelates* are not worse, nor in any sense so evill, comparatively, as the generall multitude is, either for ignorance, prophanenesse, inhumanity, &c. so as there were ten times more reason to desire to be freed from the generall multitude then from them: secondly, Neither is it possible to governe this rude and unbroken multitude by an Eldership, or *Presbyteriall* policie; for they would laugh them to scorne, and except they had secular power conferred upon them, or attending on them (which were the way to make every Parish a high Commission) their counsell, admonitions, and censures, should be in as base esteeme as *Lois* counsell was among the *Sodomites*; so that the *Prelates* government is the best that can be for such a tumultuous and unbroken multitude.

2. Others there are, that would faine cry downe the *Ceremonies*; as *Cap, Surplice, Crosse, kneeling, &c.* and perswade themselves, that if they might not be urged, all would be well. And most true it is, they are matters neither commendable nor usefull, but might well be spared, without any danger that I know of, but what shall we say; they are such ornaments and jewels, as this multitude and their forefathers brought with them out of *Egyptian* darknesse and they are still good enough for a people, whose Religion stands more in formes and figures, then in truth and substance. and if there were no wiser then I, they should keepe them still, and be halfe Protestants halfe Papists, which is just neither, untill they had reformed their morall vices, which are against the cleare light both of Scripture and Reason, and as for the godly and right informed Christians they should in their Church estate, be farre enough from such vaine assemblies or vaine ordinances.

Others,

Others there are, who thinke, that if every Parish might choose their owne Minister, all would goe well, but these are but vaine suppositions without ground; For, first, if the Parishes had that liberty freely given them, and that the body of the multitude might come together to cast up their caps at such an *Election*, there were like enough to be entertainment for all the loose and idle Schollers and blacke Coats, that any of our well governed Schooles should spew out, of which, though some now be entertained shamefully, yet then doubtlesse many more would be, else how could there be like people like Priest? secondly, What have such men to doe, to give voyce or sentence to choose or refuse any man about the service of God, who care not for God, neither know either him or themselves? thirdly, with what comfort could any godly man stand Minister unto them, to whom in equal proportion (since they have chosen him) hee must prostitute the holy things, whilest they remaine disobedient and unfaithfull?

Some others there are, who stumble at the *Ecclesiasticall Courts*; others are offended at the forme and *Ring in marriage*; some are troubled about the *rosse*; others at the *surplice*; some will not have their wives *Churched*; others will not *kneele* at the Sacrament, &c. and so one in one thing, and another in another thing, even as they affect and have set their mindes, stumbling at a straw, and leaping over a blocke, like *Jonah*, who was angry to death for the *Goard*, but the death of a thousand people never grieved him: or like little children which leave open the doores, that thieves may come in, and then cover them under the bed cloathes. Alas, what safety is there in amending these trifles, when the body is naught, and can brooke no person or thing that is good? were not he a foolish man, that having a rotten carkasse, ready to drop in pieces, would yet send for some furbishing Surgeon to take off the warts, and helpe the wrinces of his face; can any such thing make an evill tree an evill man, or an evill multitude good? If all humane inventions were taken from them, and all Gods pure Ordinances executed among them, were they any thing the better; or were they not indeed so much the worse, and the further in the guilt of taking Gods name in vaine?

And therefore I conclude, it is a sequestration, and not a reformation that will heale us, helpe us, and give us a right Church estate for to joyne unto.

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3.

The Parish assemblies not fit men to choose their Ministers

Esay 24. 2.

Hos. 4. 9.

Iohn 8. 7.

4.

The parish multitude worse then any ceremonies.

Ier. 4. 8. 9. 10. 11.

Mat. 7. 20.

The Bishops in England better then the generall multitude of the Land.

Christian Elders must have no carnall weapons.

Gen. 19. 9.

The ceremonies are fit ornaments for a carnall multitude.

2 King. 17. 33-34

It is a matter of great weight and necessity, for Christians to live in a right ordered Church.

SECT. 8.

Object. 1.

But some, perhaps, may thinke it a small matter, and a needlesse thing for a man to come into any other Church estate or order, but that in the midst of these confusions, he may content himselfe to heare now and then some profitable Sermons in the assemblies, and catch here and there a piece, in reading, hearing and conferring, by which he may not onely become a true Convert, but also be confirmed and stablished in grace, and have his soule fed and nourished to life eternall; and if salvation may be had in that estate, what need is there to come into any other Church order?

Ans. 1.

I answer, that it is not denyed, but it is possible that men may be saved who never come into a right Church-estate and order, but knowing no better, or through weaknesse fearing to doe better, live and die in this Church (or some worser) as it is; for we doe not make the visible Church to be so privileged as that none out of it can be saved; for we receive men into the Church, whom we deeme faithfull, and in Christ before: And the right use of the Offices and Ordinances in the Church are properly to build up, and keepe men in the faith and obedience of the Gospel, rather then to bring them to it; The Church is a spirituall corporation, wherein the subjects of the heavenly King are kept in a more comely order and better obedience, but the incorporating or joyning to the Church doth not make men subjects of Christ, which before were not; but it is an ignorant vanity, to hold that unconverted men may be received into the Church and fellowship of the Saints, under hope of converting them. Wee therefore grant, that conversion, faith, grace and salvation, may possibly be had in many of these assemblies. yea, we know many who have the true signes thereof. who yet live and converse in them.

Ans. 2. 4.

Faith and Salvation is not ryed to the visible Church.

Ans. 11. 17.

But what then? Will men use the utmost liberty they can, that they may also please the flesh and the world, and avoid persecution, if they may but be even thread-bare Christians, and in the end be saved? surely I would not have any good man have such a thought, since it is so near of kin to hypocrisie; for even Hypocrites will serve God for wages, and would doe so much good as might bring them to eternall life. but sincere and conscionable Christians use to have respect to all Gods Commandements, and to such further degrees of obedience, as God from time to time shall reveale unto them; for other wise their faith and obedience may of themselves be questioned, whether it proceed from

Mat. 19. 16. Psa. 119. 6.

Ans. 10. 33. and 19. 25, 26. 1 John 2. 3. 4.

from the love of God or themselves, seeing they can doe nothing further then may barely pleasure themselves?

And as God saw it not good for man in innocencie to be alone, and therefore sanctified marriage for his mutuall helpe, so as he hath gathered Saints out of the world by here and there a man, hee hath also sanctified fellowshipp, and Churches, which must neither be despised nor forsaken; and this brotherly fellowship of the Church hath bene so longed after, and loved of Gods servants, as that they have compared it to the most pleasant dew and sweeter oyntment, the one ravishing the eye, the other delighting the smell, yea, even Balaam that Sorcerer was content to commend the comely harmony and order of the Tents of the house of Jacob, and how excellent and pleasant a thing it is, to see the Saints & servants of God communicate together in his sacred Ordinances; and how fruitfull and profitable such courses are, hath in part bene shewed already, and shall more fully hereafter. And I must out of mine owne experience confesse, that the living in a society of Christians, set in the right order of the Gospel, is one of the greatest helpe we have in this world, to the obedience of the Gospel, yea, and so full it is of sweet and sound comfort that it even ravisheth the Angels, and is indeed next to heaven it selfe, if things be carried with holinesse, wisedome and love.

For in such a Church all the gifts and graces of the spirit are freely shewed forth without restraint, there the Word of God is not bound in by policy, tradition, custome, &c. the utmost extent of Gods revelations to the sonnes of men, are there openly displayed, and the highest straine of pure affections are there shewed; if you have a word of wisedome or exhortation, there you may utter it. If you would learne any thing, there you may aske and receive freely; If you have cause to weepe and mourne, they will mourne with you; or have you cause of joy? they'll rejoyce with you; stand you in need of instruction, exhortation or comfort? they are ready to give it you; doe you stumble or fall, either by error of judgement, or falling in conversation? why, they will help both to raise and hold you up; have you need of some gentile rebukes, as a balme to your soule; or of some sharp and severe threatnings to beat downe your proud flesh; yea, need you ought either for soule or body? why, there it is to be had freely; and whatsoever is wanting in the outward glory, is supplied seven fold in the inward grace; yea, and I may say of it as Sabass Queene said of Salomons wisedome, It was not told me the halfe; nor it cannot be expressed either with pen or tongue, what wonderfull pleasure and sweetnesse there is in a Christian fellowship.

And out of doubt, if wee were not faller of carnall policie and sensuality then wee are of spirituall grace and soundnesse, wee would rather choose to endure afflictions and death, in such a society,

2. Gen. 2. 18.

1 Cor. 11. 22. Heb. 10. 25.

Phil. 4. 1.

Psal. 133. 2. 3. Numb. 24. 5.

The beautie of the visible Church.

1 Cor. 11. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 12.

3.

The profit and sweet comfort of the Church.

1 Cor. 14. 29. 30. 32.

Verse 3.

Gal. 6. 1.

1 The. 5. 14.

Psal. 147. 5.

2 Chron. 9. 6.

Heb. 11. 25. 26.

ciety, then to live in the Courses of Kings, yoked with infidels and evill liver.

1 Pet. 4. 18. And if at the last day the righteous shall scarcely be saved, and that many shall goe so farre, as to preach Christ, and doe many great works in his Name, and yet shall be thus out of the Kingdome, what great care had there need to be to search and found our hearts, and to use and improve all the helps and meanes which God hath left for our growth and stablishing in grace, and for provoking and encouraging of us to proceed from one degree of perfection to another; and if men did but know how much it stood them in hand, to regard and love the conversing in a right ordered Church, they would give their soules no rest till they were in it; but for want of experiential knowledge thereof, they dote upon their Syrtan waters, as Naaman did upon Abanah, and Parpar; but if they had tasted the pleasant streames that flow from this Sanctuary, they would rather be doore-keepers therein, then dwell in the tents of the ungodly.

4. Yea, and we see daily, that even the corruptions and frailties of men do call for such a meanes to help them forward; for such is the ignorance and perversnesse of our nature, as that we are apt to set light by the doctrine taught in the assemblies, and think the Preacher spake to such and such, but it belongeth not to us, like David, who was in a sweet dreame, all the while that Nathan propounded his generall Parable, but when the Prophet told him that he was the man, he began to looke about him: so we have divers that have made some progresse in Religion, and yet sticke in some evill practice or other in conversation, and can smile upon the Preacher, and goe merrily home, thinking, because he named them not, that he hath given them leave to goe on in evill, and so they doe, and there is no further meanes to pull them out.

But in a society of Christians, under the policy of the Gospell, the Word of God followeth them home to their doores, and into their callings and conversations yea, into their chambers and secret places, and the brother offended at their swarving from Christ, reproveth, exhorteth, and perswadeth to obedience, and if gentle admonitions will not prevaile, he useth sharpnesse; and if the sinne be notorious and scandalous, and that the person will not humble himselfe and repent, he proceedeth to open rebuke and censure thereof (as before is shewed) that if it be possible the offender may be recovered and saved, and if not, yet that the fellowship may be purified and purged, and scandall removed from the professors of the Gospell and way of God.

5. Besides, the revolting and back-sliding of many Christians, even cryeth out for this help; many professors of Religion are often drawn aside to bale and servile use of this world, and often times grow covetous, prodigall or wanton in fleshy liberty, and in this doing, they have

many of their parish members to uphold and favour them, and what meanes use the Christian professors to recover such? doe they any more then talke of it one to another; and say such a one hath done this, and he hath done that, tossing the evill about without feare, and glorying in their owne gifts, eminence and integrity, speaking bitterly against them; but other meanes to recover the offender, or remove the scandall from the Gospell, they have none, nor none they looke after, except some unadvised man run and fetch a sentence from some who had need to be first censured themselves.

Whereas, if they had the right use of discipline amongst them, no doubt, thousands of such might be recovered, to the great joy of themselves and others, whereas now, going on without this meanes, who can tell, whether ever they returne out of the snare of the Divell?

And truly, even the most godly stand need oftentimes to be helped by particular rebukes and admonitions, and it is no small priviledge for them to live in such a society, as where the eyes of their brethren are so lovingly set upon them; that they will not suffer them to goe off in sinne; and though it often seeme grievous to our nature, to be rebuked; yet upon second thoughts, and serious deliberation, they count themselves happy men, that ever they lived in such a society, as would not suffer them to transgresse, yea, and though many Christians be so mortified, that they cannot fall into any scandalous sinne, yet their faults may be great in hiding their talents, and not improving their gifts and endowments for the glory of God, in which, though themselves thinke all is well, and please themselves in a kinde of modestie; yet others of their brethren see it to be a great fault in them, and give them no rest till they have drawne them to set their light upon the Table.

And what pitie is it to see so many gifts and graces of God to lie hid and asleepe, for want of opportunity and provocation to use them? all which, if they were in a society and Church of faithfull and zealous men, would be brought forth, and made use of to the glory of God, the benefit of others, and the great comfort of such as have and use these graces: And thus we see of what necessity it is for all Christians to joyne themselves unto, and converse in a society of faithfull men, walking visibly in the order of the Gospell.

The reformed Churches are not condemned, but admonished by this strict practice.

Some object, that this Profession and practice, in admitting no Religious fellowship with wicked men, condemneth all reformed Churches in France, Belgia, Helvetia, &c. since they are very defective in their people and companies for the most part.

To which I answer, first, that these are but popular and needlesse exceptions to make a noyse in the world, and to bring us in the more contempt: secondly, the reformed Churches are not so well knowne unto us, as that we can passe any sentence upon them, simply to justify them or condemne them; thirdly, so farre as we doe know them, we finde them separated and distinguished from the vaine world, and so are not ours: fourthly, the things they doe in the worship of God are voluntary, and without compulsion, so are not ours: fifthly, their officers are chosen by the congregation, so are not ours: sixthly, their worship is onely the Word of God, and the lively graces of his spirit; so is not ours: seventhly, their government is by an Eldership or Presbytery, so is not ours; And all these things sorting together, considered, we are farre from condemning them, and are farre neerer them in our practice, then the parish assemblies are.

And if yet by reason of their great popularitie in some Cities, where divers thousands are of one Church, (and so meete in sundry severall places) and so cannot possibly be knowne of their Officers, or of one another, but that many corrupt persons may lurke amongst them, and not be found out, and so scandall is brought upon them: secondly, or that by long custome, and for feare of inconveniences, all private rebukes are used onely by their Elders and Officers: thirdly, or that for feare of some men, or through error of judgement, they baptize the Infants of all manner of wicked parents, that are, of no Church or Religion, being brought unto them; If I say for these and the like failings we reprove and exhort them, and desire their amendments, and practice otherwise our selves, yet it doth not follow, nor is true, that we condemne them.

Neither is a man bound to determine of other persons then himselfe, for the certainty of their estate, nor of other Churches then that where he lives, for their externall obedience: first a man is bound to see that his owne estate be good with God; next, he is to looke to it, that he live in such a Church and Society, where all the means and helps are to continue him in that estate; but for other persons and Church e

Churches, all meddling with them should be sparing and modest, and except some presumptuous evidences appeare, and that a man be justly called to shew his judgement, the lesse he speaketh of them, the more honesty and wisedome he declares.

And were it so, that we should condemne the reformed Churches, (which God forbid) and therein doe foolishly and rashly, what were that to the justification of the Church of England; or for the hindrance of our exceptions against it; except you will frame this consequence, that because we are in one thing, therefore we are in all, which is too hard a sentence to stand for a maxime.

Neither doe we say, that the Church of England is no Church, or the parish assemblies, false Churches, nor care for those big and loud censures of Antichristian, Babylonish, false, &c. they are but words and termes of provocation, which we can well spare; and it is enough that we finde it not settled according to the order of the Gospel, but by humane authority and compulsion, and that it is one with the world, and that there is not in it all the meanes to establish, comfort confirme and build up every soule in the wayes of God: these and the like are sufficient motives to perswade men that feare God, to finde out a better and safer way to walke in, and a Church that is more neer the Apostles patterne.

And as for strangers, and Churches in forraign nations, as they are not of our language, so we cannot know them as our owne; for he that knoweth strangers and forraigners, as well as his owne neighbours and country-men, it is a signe that he is very unfociable, or else his eyes are not where they should be.

The prohibition of the Magistrate, though he be a Christian, may not hinder our obedience to the Gospel.

Some object, and that not without colour, that since we live under a Christian Magistrate, we must be contented, and thankfully accept so much liberty in the Gospel as he will allow, and that it is a signe of great unthankfuinesse and disloyalty to him, to alter or adde in Church matters, and publike worship, or to doe more, or other wise then he commandeth or alloweth.

I answer, first, that when the Magistrates are Christians, we are the more to love and respect them for their Christianity, but still their Magistracie and civill power is one thing, and their Christianity and Religion is another.

Secondly, the same reverence and conscientious obedience were

Answer 1.

2.

to

to be given to the civill power, as Gods Ordinance, though the person which hath this power, were a *Turke*, or an *Infidell*; but not the same *love*, in the fellowship of the Gospel and communion of grace.

Neither doth the Scripture provide for any other kinde or measure of obedience to Christian *Magistrates* (when any such should arise) then for such as were *Heathens*.

Fourthly, neither can I ever conceive, how this should become a reason, that we must forbear these and these practises which God requireth, because the *Magistrates* are *Christians*, and forbid it, except it follow also, that we must also forbear it if they were *Heathens*; unlesse a man should hold this position, that a man is in more bondage under Christian *Governours*, then under *Heathens*, since the question is not concerning suffering, but concerning doing; and if any Christian *Magistrate* shall by any acts or laws *politically*, hinder the practice of Gods *Laws*; as his *Christianity* cannot excuse him in the Court of heaven, for misleading, so much lesse can it excuse us, when we follow him in evill; and whatsoever the power be, or the person which hath it, if it fight against Gods *Injunctions*, we may answer with them that said God is to be obeyed rather then man; and if we should be forbidden to pray or to preach, or to love brotherly fellowship, &c. yet these things must still be done in the most ample manner we can.

Fifthly, neither is it any disloyalty to Princes and Governours at all, when Gods commands are preferred before theirs, especially since we are willing to suffer their corrections and punishments for so doing, counting, indeed, their corrections, but as Flea-bites; to his which can cast both body and soule into hell.

Sixthly, and in the things wherein we must differ, we endeavour to carry them peaceably, so farre as we can without disturbing, disgracing or depraving any offices or orders by him placed, not denying, but willingly hearing the Word from any conscionable and faithfull Preacher, and so farre as we may without sinne, to submit to other orders; being moderate in our affections; peaceable in our practises, in the things wherein we differ; and if all that serve not, we shall thinke it our further glory to suffer, and endure any punishment, either to bands or death with patience, that we may fulfill our course with joy, and not be ashamed of his baseness, who suffered a shamefull death, to advance us to a glorious life: and we protest in the sight of God, that we can make no other answer or excuse from the *Magistrates* *Christianity*, except wee should flatter him, and deceive our selves.

Moses

Rom. 13. 1. 2.

3.

4.

Christian Magistrates commands may not stand against Gods.

Act. 5. 29.

1 Pet. 2. 17. Dan. 6. 7. 10.

5.

Mat. 10. 28.

6.

Obedience to Magistrates may be in suffering as well as in doing.

Moses example in building the Tabernacle, was no ordinary rule for after times.

Moses the Man of God, a good Governor, did appoint all things for the Tabernacle and publique service of God, without consulting either with Priest or people, and had the wrath of God against any that opposed his courses; so now the people and Ministers must have an eye to the godly Governours to see what they command, and see that they practise it, without imposing, infusing or practising otherwise in any thing then he alloweth.

SECT. II. Object. 4. Exod. 34. 32. Num. 16. 31. cap. 12. 2.

I answer: first, this sheweth what godly Magistrates are to doe in the matters of Gods service, namely, to observe his will; but what the Priests or people might have done, if Moses should have beene defective, is yet questionable.

Ans. 1. I.

Secondly, Moses, as he was a Prince, so he was a Prophet, and the onely Prophet that ever was, except Christ, and he had his familiar talke with God, for all matters about the Tabernacle, and was by him immediately directed; so that for any to go about to direct and order him in those things, had been high presumption and undoubted evill. But now, no Magistrates that I know of, are such Prophets, or have any such immediate Revelations, but learne of God according to the common order of other men; yea, and stand in as much need of counsel and advice (that I say not more); as any other men of any calling whatsoever; and therefore till they have Moses learning, how shall they use Moses teaching?

2. Dmt. 34. 10. Exod. 33. 11. Mosi Magistrate singular.

Thirdly, neither did the Princes of Israel afterward take upon them this sole direction, but were contented to be reproved and counselled by the Prophets & Priests, both for their failings in their conversation, and for their establishing the worship of God, as we may see in David, Asa, Jehosaphat, Joash, Josiah, and the rest, yea, and all the writings of Isaiah, Jeremy, Ezechiel, and the rest, are so many sermons of direction and advice to the Kings of Israel and Iuda: Now, if these godly Kings did thus, who can thinke that any now can be privileged so farre as to be sole Law-givers for the Church of God?

3. 1 Chron. 17. 40. 2 Chron. 19. 2. 2 King. 11. 17. 2 Chron. 34. 23.

Fourthly, the Revelations of Moses were delivered with such heavenly Majesty, Signes, Miracles and Wonders from heaven as no man could doubt or call in question, of the immediate finger of God, in the establishing of them; but never since, nor now neither, are there any Laws or Precepts of Princes confirmed with that heavenly Testimony, but that doubt may be made, whether the King of heaven ratifie them or not?

4. Exod. 20. 18. and 40. 38. & 24. 8.

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Fifthly,

The CRY of a STONE.

5. Fifthly, When *Moses* wrote Lawes, no man had ever written any before him, so that as these Lawes were infallible, so they were alone, but now divers *Magistrates* make their Lawes different, for the Church and Religion, and if we may not amidst them all, and without disparagement to any man, cleave unto the Lawes of Christ, who infallibly hath given the Lawes for the Church as did *Moses* for the *Tabernacle*, and is become our everlasting *Priest* and *Prophet* for ever, and must reigne over his alone; we shall presently have as many formes of Churches, as there arise Governours, and as many Church Lawes as the unsettled mindes, and uncertaine capacity of fraile man pleaseth to make.

6. Sixthly, If *Moses* example in giving the Law for the *Tabernacle* teach us to submit to the Religious Lawes of Christian Princes now, without questioning or altering, then why ought we not also (if we live under them) to submit to the *Lutherian* *Arts*, or *Papish* Princes? for it cannot be denied, but that they are *Christians*? And what folly and ignorance was it in the Martyrs aforesaid to lose their lives so many of them, and expose themselves and theirs to such slavery and misery, if in the Court of heaven, and before God, they might have bene excused, so long as they had followed the Lawes of their Christian Governours?

The examples of the Kings of Israel and Judah, in restoring Gods worship, doe not bind to any fashions in Religion, but Christs.

SECT. 12. IT is further objected from the Kings of *Israel* and *Judah*, as *David*, *Asa*, *Hezekiah* and *Ishab*, &c. who restored Religion, repaired the Temple, and brought in the Law and the Ordinances without any advice or consultation of the people; and so now, the Kings as agents to appoint and command the people as patients to suffer and obey that which is commanded, &c.

Answer 1. I answer, first, all this still sheweth what forwardness there ought to be in good Princes when faithfulness is departed from their Lands, namely, by their examples and edicts, to seeke to raise some life againe in that which is dead, but that the people may doe nothing in Gods worship, till their Princes begin, but may remaine as cold and as carelesse, or superstitious as they, and as the rebellious Jewes were, is an unreasonable and unsound affirmation.

For it cannot be imagined but it had bene lawfull to have read the Law of God, though *Ishab* had not commanded it; as also the Priests

The CRY of a STONE.

Priests might have cleansed the Temple, and have offered the sacrifices, and the people might have eaten the *Passover*, and brought their oblations, though the Princes had forbid it, since these Statutes were nor given onely to the Kings, but to all the House of *Israel*.

As the Kings of *Israel* and *Judah* were types of Christ, the eternall King, so they were successors and imitators of *Moses*, and they onely which most strictly followed *Moses*, are most approved and commended for their faithfulness; but now the succession of *Moses* being cut off by a more perfect and better Lawgiver, there is now no Law or policie that can be devised for the gathering and ordering of the Church that deserves any commendation, but onely Christs, yea, and whosoever is not with Christ therein, is against him, and be he what he will, he is rather a scatterer than a gatherer with him.

So that as the Kings of *Israel* looked into the Lawes of *Moses* for direction to build, repaire and stablish the Temple and Ordinances of God, then; so now, if Princes will establish Religion, and settle a Church, whither shall they goe for a patterne but to Christ?

A Comparison of the patterne of Christs Church with the Church of England.

CHRIST, though he had all power in heaven and earth, yet, he raised no forces nor pitched no fields to compell Nations and Countries to be of his Church, but sent out his Ambassadors and Messengers unarmed in any carnall weapons, to passe thorow Kingdomes and Countries, with intreatings and beseechings, to gather here and there a man to him, and such as by preaching would believe and by voluntary submission would obey, of them onely he became the Captaine and Head: secondly, when hee had gathered his Church together, he fed them not with dead decrees, nor carnall Devices but with his Word, *Eleth* and *Spirit*, which nourished to life eternall: thirdly, hee governed them not by any stately or pompous power, but by such rules and regiments as their necessities required, and themselves desired.

And if now by glittering swords and sounds of trumpets, Churches be gathered by thousands, and that wee are growne to such pomp and swelling in words, that we can talke of a *Catholique* visible Church of a Christian world, of a Nationall Church, &c.

Let the multitudes sound as loud as they will, I feare mee heaven will have never the more of them, but when all is done, his Word will stand that faith, few finde the way to life, and Christ chooseth not a world, but a remnant out of the world.

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And yet, whilst proud flesh and carnall policie thus vainly presumeth how doe men struggle and strive by wit, policie and learning, to make that stand for truth, which onely times have hatched, and to make true Religion stand with all the faire shew in the flesh that may be, but in the meane time, what scattering, scambling and contradicting there is, and how men are plunged and fumbled to bind the truth and the times in a bundell, that even the most wisest and ablest have even lost themselves about it.

A proportionable application of the Jewes State, unto our times.

SECT. 14.

True it is, that when the Kings of *Judah* commanded the Ordinances of *Moses*, the people were bound to obey them even in Religious rites, but if they should have varied from *Moses* rule, the question is, whether the people might have followed them without sinne, though even *David* or *Iosiah* should have done it.

1. First, as for example, whereas *Moses* gave his Statutes to *Israel*, if now *David* should have compelled the *Edomites* or the *Ammonites*, or the *Philistims* whom he conquered, to have come into the Temple, with offerings and oblations, being *Gentiles* and uncircumcised; whether the *Priests* might have offered their offerings, and the people have prayed for a blessing or not?

2. Secondly, if he would have made *Priests* of any other then of the house of *Aaron*; whether the people might have brought their offerings to them or not?

3. Thirdly, if other matters then *Moses* Law had ordinarily beene read and preached in their *Synagogues*; whether the people must have come to heare it or not.

4. Fourthly, if among the *Judicials* hanging had beene used in stead of restitution, burning in stead of whipping, and cutting off the head in stead of pulling off the shoe; whether the people must still have executed accordingly.

Exod. 22. 7.
Dent. 22. 18.
& 25. 9.

1. First, But our assemblies are compact in a manner of blacke *Ethiopiens*, prophane and insulting *Edomites*, mocking and deriding *Ammonites*:

2. Secondly, our *Priests* are made by an invented forme, and must hang upon the universall race, and not by the lineall succession of grace, and therefore election of the people.

Act 14. 23.

3. Thirdly, and wee have other teaching and service than the *Word and Spirit of Christ*, viz. by *Hom. Canons Apocrypha* prayers &c.

Fourthly,

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Fourthly, and in stead of a Christian conviction and censure of offenders by the Christian assemblie, wee have *Comminations* read in *Lent*, and processe comming out of Courts, which are bought and sold, and flie in and out according to the purse rather then according to the offence; and what shall we make of all this, if we put it together, surely wee may compare it to a *leprous* body, in a painted paper coat, which neither hath soundnesse within, nor solidnesse without.

But here is the question, whether the godly mult contentedly submit to all this *patheberie*, and putting out that light, and discerning that they have in these things, may blesse their soules, and say it is onely the fault of our *Governours*? or whether all Christians are not bound to keepe the patencie left by him who was more faithfull then *Moses*, without regarding what any Prince or Potentate doth to the contrary. 1 Tim. 6. 13.

Fifthly, Indeed whatsoever abuse or neglect there had beene of the Temple in *Jerusalem*, by the Kings, yet the people might not without speciall command have built another, but that *Legall* restraint was not by occasion of any Kings command, but by a Statute of the Lord, who onely there had put his Name, and for a time it might not be altered; but now since *iniquity* is every where, and that God is no respecter of places or persons but is in the midst of two or three of his servants, gathered in his Name, I see not how the Church in any sense can be bound or tyed to the pleasure and libertie of any mortall man whatsoever. Dent. 12. 11.
1 King. 8. 29.

Sixthly, and if *Azariah*, being a godly King, was not onely withstood, when he would have burned *Incense*, but even thrust out of the Temple when once he became a *Leper*. And since sinne was typed out by *Leprousie*, and is so much more materjall then it, as a substance is of more value then a shadow; I see not, but if wicked rulers now should offer to joyne to the Church, they may be refused, and then how much easier may such Subjects and servants of theirs be refused, as are wicked and nought on whom the *Leprousie* of all vicioufnesse cleareth and sheweth it selfe in the behaviour, countenance, words and actions, notwithstanding their owne desire, and the desire of any friends that love them not aright. 5.
2 Chron. 26. 18.
19. 20.

The submission of the Jewes to the Heathen Kings about building the Temple, is no imitable practice about the Church.

SECT. 15. OBJECT. 6. Some others object the example of the Heathen Kings, as Cyrus and Darius, without whose leave the Jewes could not build the Temple, and therefore how much lesse may we that are under Christian Princes, gather and establish Churches without their direction or allowance?

ANSW. 1. I answer first, That the time of building the Temple according to the Prophets predictions was not come before they set about it; for if it had, they must have gone about it to their powers so soone as the commandment had beene forth.

HAG. 1. 1. 2. 2. Secondly, The building of the Temple was a matter of great charge and labour, and required such materialls to doe it, as they being poore Captives, neither had, nor were able to accomplish, so that there was an impossibility in it.

3. Thirdly, they were servants, yea, captives and prisoners to those heathen Kings, and must not without a speeiall dispensation from God, (as was that of robbing the Egyptians) have left their Masters and places, under whom by Gods just order they were captivated.

4. Fourthly, It came of the Lord, that those heathen Kings should (after they had for a time corrected his people) become their friends and furtherers, in the service of the Lord, turning their love into hatred, and at Gods appointed time, provoke and strengthen them in building the house of the Lord God of Israel, and these things considered, what force can there be in this example?

5. Fifthly, And how commeth this farre fetched type, to be so blindly urged, when the cleare truth in this point hath followed us so close at the heeles? Did Christ when hee gave his Disciples commission to goe make Disciples in all Nations, bid them first aske leave of the Magistrates which were in those parts? No surely, neither did the Apostles and servants of Christ, when they went to and fro preaching the Gospell, and stablishing Churches in Samaria, Phenice, Antiochia, Corinthe, Galatia, Crete, and the rest, ever so much as aske leave of any of the heathen Governours to publish and stablish the Gospell there?

6. Sixthly, And if the allarime of the Gospell must first be sounded in Princes Courts, and that the Kingdome of Heaven must come with such observations, we may sometimes wait long enough, since the Gospell.

Mat. 28. 19. 20.

Act. 8. 5. and 11. 19. & 18. 1. Tir. 1. 5.

Luke 17. 20.

Gospell, the subject whereof is salvation, by a poore object Carpenter, is too base a matter ever to be set by in such places for the most part, otherw ise then some parcells thereof may be received, so farre as it may procure outward safetie and glory.

The only way to establish the Gospell and the pure Ordinances thereof is to suffer persecution for it.

BUT now, seeing this age will goe no further than they are, nor endure no other courses in religion than that which is by Law established, how shall wee doe? Must wee spend our money, and be disturbed in our Calling? Must wee alter our diet, abate our habits, and change our lodgings? Alas, must we goe to prison and lie there? O! that I would be loth to doe; many lie there and are poysoned by the ill ayre and usage, and besides one knoweth not whether they will hang one or not, they are so violent and mercilesse to all opposites, &c.

I answer, Doe not thousands die in their beds of Feavers, Fluxes, Surfs, &c. And can a man give his life for a better thing then for the honour of Christ, and be sacrificed for the redeeming and recovering that liberty of the Gospell which this age refuseth to heare of, and which fighteth against the confusions and corruptions of our times? O that some Christians rightly informed in these things would stand forth and suffer, and would not be delivered, but would rather die, then live to see Gods Ordinances so basely contemned and thrust out of place, and humane traditions upheld with strong hand.

Secondly, who seeth not that for want of resisting unto blood, all as sayes and beginnings, which men have made, have come to little, many have set on upon a purer practice, in divers places and so long as things could be carryed secretly, they went well on; but as soone as it began to be noted and talked against. Some would flie off presently. And if they were once called in question by authoritie, and threatned, there was presently a scattering; and if some two or three were more stout then the rest, then to prison a while they were sent; and then their friends and acquaintance would resort to them; some with compassionate complaints, others with bigge speeches, but all in carnall reasons, till at last some mincing under hand acknowledge- ment, or some equivocating Protestation must be framed and shewed to their opposites, and so they should get out with great charge to take heed of factions, schismes and conventicles; and so there lies the life and soule of that begun practice, and the parties afterward, either become conformable, or else keep themselves very close.

SECT. 16. OBJECT. 7.

ANSW. 1.

Hel. 11. 26.

2. Heb. 12. 4.

Gal. 5. 7.

There must be no yielding in the cause of Christ.

And

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And what construction can be made of this, but that either it was not truth they stood for, or that they were not rightly informed in it: but fell lightly and wantonly upon it, and so left it as lightly againe: or else that they made not conscience of doing the will of God in the things revealed to them: whereas, if they had stoutly stood out, and borne their crosse with patience even to bands and death: some other events would have followed, and besides their pretious & honourable death, they should have given some furtherance to the glory and truth of God, whereas by their cowardly yeelding, the arme of flesh exulteth, and reproach and scandall is cast upon the sincere profession and practice of Gods Ordinances, and themselves commonly languish for losing the day, and are as men livelesse amongst their neighbours, and comfortlesse within themselves.

The time of suffering is now come.

SECT. 17.

AND such is the carnality of our times, even of the professors of Religion, that they are never weary of ease, pleasure and plentie, nor feare the taking of too much *thoughts for the flesh*, neither will they ever have the time come for judgement to begin at Gods House, much lesse with the Apostle *Paul* will they take pleasure in *afflictions and persecutions*; belike we are borne in the time when men must *die in their nests*, and goe to heaven in *feather-beds*; and the gate to heaven is growne so wide, that men may runne in at it with all invented formality and fleshly libertie that can be invented or desired.

Some there are, who will pray earnestly, that the abuses in the Church may be removed, and the cleare light of the *Gospell* really discovered, and that the Saints may rejoyce together in the sweet fellowship of the Church, and it is well they doe so; but in their prayers they looke the wrong way for it ever to come in, they looke it should be done with sound of Trumpet, by decrees of *Parliaments*, by *Edicts* of Princes; alas, the Kingdome of Christ is not of this world, he gaines his glory here, by abasement, and they that will doe any good in his cause, must cast away all carnall helps. and henceforth know Christ *according to the flesh no more*, but walke close with him in his temptation.

And what doctrine is there in the Scriptures more cleare than this? Did not Christ himselfe by death vanquish sinne and Satan, and so enter into glory? and was his whole life here any other then a continuall suffering? and were not these his sufferings as well imitable

The day of suffering for Christ is a day of honour.

Rom. 13. 14.

2 Cor. 12. 10.
1st 29. 18.

2.

John 18. 36.

2 Cor. 5. 16.

3.

Luke 24. 26.

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table as meritorious? Are not we to looke unto him who is *the Author and finisher of our Faith*, and follow him in his temptations? and are not all his promises made with the condition of the crosse? Did not *Paul* desire to have fellowship with Christ in his afflictions, and to be made conformable to his death? Well, how commeth it to passe, that wee never examine our selves by these things? nor thinke of suffering afflictions, but imagine that the common pace and prevailing course of the times and multitude will serve the turne to bring us to glory? What priviledge have we above Christ, above *Paul*, and the Christians in the Primitive time? Belike no *Prophet* nor good man can perish, or be wronged in our Nation; but we are borne in the day, in which he that is most godly is the most secure.

Well, if it be not so, I would it were so, but it is rather to be feared we joyne too much carnall libertie with our Profession, and too eagerly desire to make a faire *shew in the flesh*, and measure Gods favour too much by temporall blessings; and we thinke, because we build us faire houses, and make us costly apparell, and eat our meate merrily, and lie and turne upon our feather-beds, with our braines full of roving thoughts, and traine up our children according to the fashion, if withall we lend our eares sometimes to a Sermon, and conferre sometimes cursarily of the Scripture, and sometimes use a forme of Prayer in our Families; we thinke God is wonderfully beholden to us, and we are some rare instruments of his glory, and notable *pillars* in his Church; for we sit fast and quiet, and are not moved with errors, nor *schismes*; but when other *bustie and giddie headed* men that can never be quiet, rove and range about, troubled in minde, and distempered in affections, and foolishly pulling trouble upon themselves, and beggery upon their wives and children; we live at wealth and peace, and die quietly in our beds, and are honourably buried amongst our friends, and leave behinde us a *paterne* and *patrimony* to our children.

Other motives to persuade us to suffering.

SECT. 18.
BUT surely, if we had that zeale for the glory and house of God which *David* had, wee would not dwell in our *seeled houses*, nor give our selves to *sleep and slumber*, and see the house of the Lord lie waste, and the *stones thus scattered amongst the rubbish*, which must not now be understood of any materiall Temple, but of the *spirituall* building of those *lively stones*, the soules and bodies of the faithful into an *holy Temple in the Lord*; And this holy Temple lyeth yet

F

waste,

Heb. 12. 3.

Mark 10. 30.
Phil. 3. 10.

Luke 13. 33.

Gal. 6. 12.

A vaine conceit.

1st 26. 24.

Psal. 132. 23.

Hag. 2. 4.

Psal. 102. 13, 14.

1 Pet. 2. 5.

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Ephes. 2. 21.
1 Pet. 1. 12.
Rev. 2. 1.
Can. 1. 6.
Luke 14. 18, 19.

wast, and the stones hid in the dust and dung of the earth; And although the Lords time be come to delight in the fellowship of his Saints, and the *Angels* stand ready to rejoyce in the beautie of this House, and Christ desireth to walke amidst the *Candlesticks*, and to take his repast *with his beloved at noone*. And yet here's all asleepe; and taking care for their wives, children, cattell, farmes and merchandize. &c. and they cannot come to this *Supper* of the Lord to which they are invited, for feare of losing some worldly toyes and trifles.

1 Sam. 18. 22.

Some will not trust their owne judgments, others will not controll their betters; some are right in judgement. but are too cold and droufie to come to action: others are fearefull and timorous, some runne lightly and foolishly without their errant, others are so wise, that they can doe nothing. And thus by all and all, there is not that done that should be: many labour to hew, polish and prepare stones, and timber for the building, but there is no sound frame yet reared, or right forme appearing.

Psal. 84. 10.
Mat. 24. 13.

And it were well if yet *at the last houre of the day* we could set our selves to this worke, and bring our soules and bodies into this *holy house*, in which a *dayes* dwelling were better then a *thousand* elsewhere; and truely, if wee had but tried the excellencie of this house, wee would thinke nothing too deare for it. And what if it should cost us our precious lives? can we bestow them upon better termes? can wee live ever? or can we passe the time that God hath set? will not death as well finde us in our beds, as in the *laule*, or at *Tiburne*?

Psal. 106. 45.
Psal. 57. 6.
Dan. 3. 17. 18.
Psal. 66. 12.
1 Pet. 16. 37.
1 Sam. 15. 26.

And who can tell, whether we by carrying our selves humbly, modestly, and conscionably before God and men, without depraving or abusing them in authority, may not cause our *haters* to become our *lovers*, and our enemies our friends, when our *righteousnesse* is brought forth as the light, and the judgement as the bright shining noone, yea, if it be best for his glory, we are sure he will deliver us from the oppressions of men and *strife of tongues*, prolonging our dayes, and honouring us with *gray hayres*, as a *Crowne of glory*, being found in the way of *righteousnesse*, notwithstanding all the oppositions of the times and violence of men. *But yet if he will not, but say he hat's no pleasure in us, nor that we shall not see the glory of his house, but shall die in the very endeavouring of it. let him doe what he please;* and let it be enough, if our children may *build this house*, and enjoy the fruit of that which our lives payed for.

Our lives are not too good to be given for Gods truth.
Act. 5. 41.
Gal. 2. 16.

And if wee must honour God with our bloods; let us doe it cheerefully, rejoycing that we are found *worthy to suffer for his name* and let us cast off this nice flesh, and idle vanitie, consult no more with *flesh and blood*. but forsake our selves in that kinde, and if we will talke of heaven, let us contemne the earth, and be content to *lose lands,*
goods

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Mark. 8. 38.
Prov. 15. 4.

goods and life for Christ and his Gospels sake; for else in looking after heaven, we doe like the *slug gard which lusteth, but bath nought*; and as children which gape for all their parents wealth, but will take no paines to please them.

Mark. 8. 36.
Mat. 13. 20. 21.

Away with this selfe-love, that will have heaven and earth too, where is our love to Christ, that purchased heaven, since we will not part with one dram of ease, pleasure or profit for the furtherance of his Gospel? And how can we be said to honour him that will rather cease our obedience to him in the things he requireth then part with a few worldly toyes and trifles.

It is no strange thing for Christians to be persecuted of Christians.

BUt this is a very grievous thing, when a man shall not onely be opposed and cruelly dealt withall at the hands of ignorant and *vaine men*, but when many wise, *Religious* and godly men shall set themselves against one, and be instruments of ones ruine and destruction? Me thinketh it cannot be, that such good men should be deceived and misled as they are if I be right?

Answer 1.
2 Chron. 16. 10.
2 Sam. 16. 4.
2 Chron. 24. 2.
Gen. 37. 28.
Job. 19. 2. 5.
1 Cor. 4. 3. 10. 1.
1 Sai. 9. 20. 21.

I answer, first, Did not good *Asa* put faithfull *Hanan* in prison? Did not godly *David* dispossesse true hearted *Mephibosheth* of his lands? Did not reforming *Ioash*, cause zealous *Zachariah* to be stoned? Did not *Iosephs* fellow *Patriarches* sell him into *Egypt*? Did not *Iobs* wife and godly friends, vex and torment his soule more than all his other crosses? Was not the holy *Saint* of God, *Paul*, despised and derided, even of his spirituall sonnes? yea, sometimes *Manasses* eateth *Ephraim*, and *Ephraim* *Manasses*, and therefore it is no strange thing, to see one Christian abused, reviled, & cruelly handled at the hands of another.

2.
Mat. 22. 23.

Yea, and if it were ever in any age, it must needs be in ours, since greater strictnesse and censoriousnesse was never found against one another, then is now, and no opposition or contrary opinion can be endured, but there must be a uniformity, even to the tying of *mint and annis*.

And if men be not borne all in one day, and brought up all in one Schoole, or enured to one Preacher, or that one man have learned a little faster or slower then his fellowes, and begin to speake either more plainly, or more darkely than ordinary, he is by and by distasted and talked with, to see if he be not some *Arian*, *Anabaptist*, *Familist*, *Brownist*, *Puritane*, &c. and if any one of his allegations looke towards any of these Sects (as it were marvell if some should not) then the op-
our times.
ponent

ponent hath somewhat to busie himselfe and his friends about, and there is a rare piece of worke done. an infected sheepe discovered, and now he must be worried, and hunted, and where shall the instruments be had to chafe this creature? not from the rules of Divinity or Logicke, except once or so, for recreation; but the weapons must be fetched out of the *Cutlers shop* that must cut the throat of those errors, ad bring this *Irregular fellow* to a *non plus*, and the next newes he hears, there is a *pursivant* at his back to carry him before authority, but when he comes there, some informers, (richer in clothes than in grace) have beene before him, and told his tale for him, so as there is nothing for him to say, except he will *swear* hee knowes not wherefore, and make answer hee knowes not to what, and after short worke. the man with the *keyes* must become his Host: and with him he must eat hard meat, till either his withered Carkasse fall in the dust, or be drawne upon a hurdle to *Tiburne*.

And thus hath many a worthy Christian been served, and brought to his end, and what sound and *zealous* Christian is there more, which can say he is sure he shall not be so served? For though the things they hold have a good ground, and an honest intent, and the differences are rather about *formes* of words, than matters of weight; yet we live in such a strict and zealous age as will have a conformity, even betwixt the tips of mens tongues, and amongst such notable wise men, that can spy a fault where there is none.

It is reported of Bishop *Grindall*, that though his love to honest and zealous Preachers was such, as that for favouring of them, himselfe was suspended from his *Bishoprick* before his death; yet even in the midst of this his large love and lenity, by the instigation, and forestallings of some *Parasites* & idle bellied *Priests*; he put to silence, one of the most famous & worthiest Preachers that ever was in that Dioces.

I have also heard of a very excellent Preacher in *Canterbury*, who was both a lover of goodnesse and good men, and yet (partly by his owne mistaking, partly by others provocation) hee persecuted an honest *religious man*, and one of his Parish, causing him to be put from his office which he had in the *City*, then to be deprived of worke or any reliefe from honest men. afterwards caused him to be *imprisoned*, where he lay above a yeere, till himselfe, his wife and children were almost starved; and had starved but for some secret course, by which they were relieved, and afterward comming out of prison, he caused him to be banished the *City*, and often threatned him with *fire and faggot*, and all for a triuiall controversie, wherein there was ten times more heat of blood than weight of difference.

And untill our Preachers and Professors have better learned the doctrine of forbearance, which hereafter God willing, I will treat of, and have made their *Canons* for uniformitie a little larger, but especially

A notable weapon to repress errors.

Many good Christians abused, and lose their lives for trifles.

3. Bishop *Grindall*.

Mr. *Strood*.

Master *T. W.*

G. G.

A lamentable example.

The true cause of cruelty for Religion.

especially till they better know themselves, and are affected with their owne ignorances, errors and mistakings, they are fitter to *Lord* it over their brethren, then bearing their *burthen* to serve them in *Love*, *1 Cor. 1. 24.* and can with more ease set themselves to butcher one another, then to informe, cherrish and comfort one another, and untill this *spirit is abated*, and this inordinate zeale quenched, wee must looke for afflictions and persecutions at the hands of those that are *partakers of the same grace wish us*, and wait for the comming of the *Lord Iesus* from heaven as well as we. *Gal. 6. 2. Indg. 8. 3.*

But what shall we say? even this the Lord doth, that hee may try us every way, that not onely Infidels and *prophane wretches* may revile, accuse and wrong us, but even our *familiar and knowne friends*, which have familiarly and sweetly borne us company in Gods *worship*; and even they which should be comforters are tormentors. They which are begotten by one *word*, & quickned by one *spirit*, crush one another to hell, and this is no small triall; for that there should be continuall enmity and spirituall warre betwixt the seed of the woman, and the seed of the *Serpent* is no wonder, seeing they are as contrary as *light and darknesse*, but that even the seed of the woman should be at such enmity amongst themselves is strange and wonderfull, and sheweth the greatnesse of *Satans* malice, the strength of mans corruption, and the marvellous operation of Gods grace, which prevaileth even in sight of all misorders, and bringeth great light out of the blackest darknesse. *Psal. 55. 13, 14. Gen. 3. 15. 16. 2 Cor. 6. 14. 15. All worketh for the best.*

The scandalls in the separated Churches, is no argument to condemne their practice.

I See no such excellency, or perfection in the separated Churches more then in others, but they often runne into many scandalous evils. and are full of jarres, *emulations* and *contentions*; so that for ought I see, a man were as good keepe where he is, as goe to them, except they were otherwise then they are? *SECT. 20. Object. 9. 2 Cor. 12. 20.*

I answer first, As *Lot* fell into a more grievous sinne, when onely he and his daughters were in the *cave*, then he ever did when he was in the midst of the *Sodomites*: And as *David* in his great advancement committed a more soule fact then ever hee did in his former abasements; so there is no estate in this world free from temptation and danger neither is our enemy idle, or slothfull, to take his opportunities, from our estates, occasions and condition, but followeth us, to the gates of heaven, that he may either get us, or cause us to *scandalize*, by which means he may get some others. *Ans. 1. Gen. 19. 33. 34. 2 Sam. 11. 4. Job 1. 7.*

2. When therefore wee speake of such glorious things in the Church, we doe not yet meane that they are a company of *Angels*, or of men free from corruption and *Temptation*; for were it so, it needed no ordinances, nor meane to helpe, recover and uphold it, but as I said before, even therefore is a Church-fellowship appointed of God to prevent frailties and offences, and to purge out such as grow wilfully scandalous in evill; and such as will except against all such Churches as in whom they find failing in manners, must goe seeke the Church in *heaven*; for whilest we are here, we are fraile men, and some frailties will still appeare in us, though by the grace of God, many are kept all their life from *scandalous* evils.

The visible Church hath no Angelicall perfection.

The *Papists* with like colour object against the *Protestants*, that they are evill livers, and given to wanton lusts, being full of swearing, whoring, drunkenesse, theft, &c. But he that is acquainted with both can tell, that even the *Papists* in the greater part of them are more frequent in such vices than the *Protestants*, and by their leave, they that will condemne another for an euill, must be cleare of it themselves, else their owne mouth will accuse them.

The frailties of men no argument against a Religion.

Object. 10.

But both will object against the separated Churches, and say you are but a handfull, and those also of culled men, and wee are many, and of all sorts, as Cities and Countries yeeld, therefore there is no reason to expect like holinesse from us as from you, but if you looke upon the better sort of us, you shall not see no such evils breake out in us, as are printed and recorded against you?

Ans. 1. Mar. 22. 11.

I answer, first, when Christ had culled out his wedding guests, yet there was one which had not a *wedding garment*; so though those men be culled out, yet some hypocrites will lurke amongst them, though they be never so poore and contemptible; as *Iudas* did adhere unto Christ: for though they professe a separation from the open wicked, yet they professe no separation from Hypocrites, neither may, nor can, till they are discovered.

The separated Churches are not free from hypocrites.

Inde 4. 17.

Secondly, Hypocrites, that *burne the Grace of God into wantonnesse*, are most forward of all to *separate themselves from others*; and therefore how can those Churches be free from them?

Ans. 2. Mar. 8. 19. 20.

Thirdly, it is a punishment of their former hypocrisie to be discovered where they looked for greatest esteeme, and so being disappointed of the praise of men which they desired they are in a better way to come to *Repentance*, then in living amongst a company as ill as themselves, where their *vizard* should not have beene plucked off.

The separated Churches not so evill as the parishes.

Fourthly, true it is, there may be lesse evils amongst the separated, then amongst the parish multitudes, and so I am sure there is; for whereas three *Scribes* in a few sheets of paper did note and discourse of all the evils and *scandalls* that fell among the separated in many yeeres, If in the Parishes all the evils should be noted and chronicled; there

there had neede at every fifth house to dwell a *Scribe*.

Fifthly, And though I love not to make comparifons, to cause disparagement; yet I freely confesse and with great comfort acknowledge, that there are many in the parishes in *England* which are of a very godly life and conversation; and some that goe as farre therein, as any I ever saw in my life. And if I should preferre any of the separated before them in conversation, I should speake against my owne conscience, but in the Church state and order I must prefer the other before them.

5. Many Christians in the parishes excellen in personal grace but not in Church order.

Sixthly, And yet if a man had a minde to breed and foster *idolatrie*, he might cull out a number of *scandalls*, which noted men, both *Preachers* and *Professors* in the Parishes have fallen into, in a few yeeres, but why should wee make worke for wanton eares? let us rather feare our selves, and let him that thinketh *hee standeth, take heed lest hee fall*.

6.

Seventhly, It is a fault of the professors, that the Churches of separation are no better; they have lingered, and refused to bring their foules and bodies into an holy *Temple*, whilest *Sanballat* and *Tobiah* have bene building there, whose separation hath rather bene from *grace than from corruption*; and these *creeping in* under a *show of godlinesse*, have filled all with scandal, contention and division; whereas if those that had bene found and sincere men, and grounded and experienced in the knowledge of God and themselves, would have bene gathered together, and filled the Sanctuary, there would have bene no roome nor use for such instruments:

7. Eze. 4. 1. 2. Jude 1. 4.

Wherefore, hereafter doe not you sit still and controll others, and doe just nothing your selves; for I tell you, it is a worke well besitting and becoming the most holiest and godliest people that are in the world, and altogether unfitting and unlawfull for such whose lives and conversations are not otherwise answerable.

8. It is the fault of the professors, that the separated Churches are no better.

Eighthly, Admit that all the separated Churches have hitherto but dallied and trifled, and puzzled themselves, by reason of their ignorance, weaknesse, and evill carriages, and are rather scattering then combining, yet this is no just exception against the course. *Israel* ranged about divers yeeres in the *wilbernesse* and effected nothing, except it were to dig each others *grave*, yet was their generall ayme good.

Dent. 3. 48. Iudge 20. 18. 25. 35.

The eleven *tribes* made two sallies out against the *Benjamites*, and lest the field, yet was their cause good, and in the end they prevailed; errors in actions are best found out, when they are really discovered: and if you have scene these mens failings you owe the more diligence, if you find your owne Church estate not right; doth that helpe you to talke of the *Brownists* contentions? Are you borne to find fault with others, and doe nothing your selves? rather you should mend

The failings of the separated Churches, serve to teach them that now are begin to doe better.

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mend it where they have failed and when you are come into the right order of a Church, then let other mens harmes teach you.

And where you have seene the separated Churches to be contentious, be you more quiet; where they have beene full of divisions, cleave you close together; If they would beare nothing, yet beare you one anothers burthen; If they have beene too censorious, be you more charitable; If they have lived loosely, live you strictly; If they have beene cold, be you zealous; If they have beene fearefull, be you more stout; If they have revolted, stand you fast; And if you thinke all they have done is in hypocrisie, take heed all that you doe be in sincerity. And thus much for the first Generall part of this Treatise, tending to direct and perswade all Christians to come into the fellowship of the Saints in the order of the Gospell.

An excellent imitation.



THE



THE SECOND PART OF THE TREATISE;

WHEREIN THE TWO MAINE FAILINGS OF the Rigid Separation are reproved, and their Objections answered.

The rigid Separationo verrun their course in their first onset.



Now, that I may not be unjust nor partiall, I must turne my selfe to the other side, to the strict seperation, who are even as much beyond the marke, by their over-strained grounds and strait affections, as the Professors in England are short, by their timorous formalities; so as, if the one would come a little forward, and the other step backe, and meet both at the marke, what a sweet harmony might there be; but who shall live to see this done? yet so them both, as my loving friends and brethren, I must speake, and let God doe what he pleaseth.

SECT. 21.

The first thing they are faulty in, is, that they not onely condemne and flie from such evil persons and things as are found in the Parish assemblies, but also, condemne even the most godly there, and all religious practices and ordinances, they esteeme none other than an Idoll worship, and all that use it, Idolaters, notwithstanding any holinesse or sincerity which the persons have; but how unjust their

There would be an excellen harmony, if the separation and the professor could reunite.

I.

The separation have gone too farre. accusa.

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accusations of the godly people in the assemblies are, is evidently shewed in a Treatise published by Master L. Robinson, to that of that I need say little.

Indeed Master BARROW, and some others being under oppression, which, as Solomon saith, maketh a wife man madde, did harshly and hastily tumble up all things together, esteeming the fruits and effects of their preaching, with all the comfortable feelings and inward-rejoycings in the spirit obtained in the parish assemblies, to be nothing else but a delusion of Satan, to betray their soules.

But words spoken or written in hastie passion of the minde and inordinate zeale, must not stand for Oracles: for, even the holy Prophets of God themselves have called such speeches, and chosen rather to confesse their owne faultes in using them, then adventuring them upon the Church in succeeding ages, for a further and remediless danger; as we may see in Moses, David, Asaph and others.

Though then we esteeme Master BARROW and the rest (who first set upon a second Lutheran course) other wise good men, and are doubtlesse at rest with the Lord, yet this must be accounted their error. And no man must thinke it any dishonour to them, though they were as good as Paul himselfe; if we cease to follow them, where they followed not Christ.

So that leaving the justification of the forward and better sort of people in England, to the things written of them in M. R. booke, I come to take a viewe of the ordinances which are in the parish assemblies, to see if there be none among them that is Gods, and is used without mixture of humane traditions; and though it were a round and ready course, to make wath way of all; yet even Iehou had so much care when he destroyed the Prophets of Baal, as to enquire if none of the Lords Prophets were there.

So then, though wee be carefull when wee come to the worship of God (as we ought to be) that we neither submit our selves nor our bodies to human traditions; so neither must we condemne all for humane traditions, which is not comprehended and kept within the limits of a right Church state; for as some of the Lords Prophets were in Samaria, even in the height of Ababs wickednesse, and some holy vessels in Babylon, in the depth of captivety, so whatsoever may be said of the Church estate in England, yet there are some of Gods Ordinances there, which even in the midst of iniquities hath wrought effectually for the salvation of many.

And although all things amongst them have bene so mixed and wrapped in amongst mens inventions, as that the good and bad can hardly be severed; yet there is one thing, which in my judgement, standeth for the most part cleare from any evill or abuse, and that is the preaching of the Word in the assemblies of England.

Yet

Eccles. 7. 9.
M. Barrow discovry, pag. 112.
A dangerous sentence.

Numb. 20. 10. 11.
Psal. 116. 11.
Psal. 73. 22.

1 Cor. 11. 11.

2 King. 20. 23.

1 King. 16. 31.
2 Cor. 10. 17.
Eph. 4. 17.

Preaching in England Gods Ordinance.

The CRY of a STONE.

Yet not all preaching there, by every Rhetoricall Kidler, or prating Parasite, of which there are too many, but such honest and sincere handling the Word of God, as by some few there is used, whose aime properly and mainly is to beat downe sins and corruptions, and to build up and stablish in true grace and godlinesse; and who can deny this to be the worke of the Lord, and his ordinance to save his elect? though even the best of these Preachers be in some other things awry and mis-led through the corruption of the times, against all which evils and errors of theirs, I am as ready as any to protest and beare witness, but they must give me leave to spare their graces, when I condemne their corruptions.

What Preachers in England may be heard.

The efficacy of sound and zealous preaching.

The generall Objection against hearing in the Parish assemblies answered.

The generall objection is, that all Gods Ordinances are given to his Church, and so if their Church state be not good, what have they to doe with any of Gods Ordinances; it is out of Sion, that the Law must goe, and such as are of the world have nothing to doe to meddle with it.

SECT. 22. Obiect. II. Mich. 4. 2.

I answer, first, Preaching is not an action that is proper to a visible Church, neither are all Gods Ordinances so given to the Church; as that many of them may not elsewhere be used. The Church must be no ingrosser; nor the world no obruder; a covetous impious wife is more hatefull then a free hearted servant.

Answer I. All Gods Ordinances are not peculiar to the visible Church.

And though the Law went first out of Sion, a proper place, yet now mount Sion is every where, and every Christian is both the Temple of the Lord in a sense, as also a little mountaine of holinesse, from whom the Law of God and his Will must flow out upon all just occasions, to neighbours, brethren, country-men, strangers, &c. yea, to any good or bad, that will give attention, and so farre are godly Preachers in England from blame, because they preach, as that I rather blame them that give over, and desire from my heart, that where there is one of these plaine and powerfull Preachers, that there were a hundred; and that not onely their Temples, but even their houses, and all places where people might heare, were filled with the voyce and Word of God, and though this might suffice, being rightly considered, to answer this objection, and to shew that preaching may not be ingrossed by the Church, much lesse by the officers of the Church, yet because a word is not sufficient to those that make these objections, I will a little more distinctly open and prosecute the difference.

Job. 4. 21, 23. 1 Cor. 6. 39.

The increase of godly Preachers in England is a thing much to be desired.

What Preaching is, and who may preach; as also where, and to whom.

SECT. 25. Preaching what it is. Job. 3. 4. Acts 2. 22. 36. Luke 12. 42.

Preaching is a reverend declaring of the Will and Word of God in many words or in few; or an effectually evincing and speaking to the heart and conscience, without fearefull withholding the portion from any, or immoderate lashing out that which belongeth to none.

I. Mat. 4. 6. 1 Sam. 28. 18. 19. 1 Cor. 2. 17.

If say it is reverend declaring, &c. For every Scripture phrase and good words, used by idle and vaine discoursers, is not preaching, but rather prophaning; that speaking then which is called preaching, must be done with premeditation, and due consideration of the Author (God) of the matter (his Word) the end (his Glory), and the salvation of the hearers.

2. Acts 10. 29. Job 42. 7. 8.

Of the Will of God; wee must not preach our owne wills, or empty our stomachs against such as personally oppose us, lest it be justly ascribed to humour and passion, rather then to the grace of preaching, but when with reverence, onely the Will and Word of God is told, that is properly preaching.

3. Acts 19. 20. 1 Cor. 14. 19. Prov. 25. 11. Luke 9. 60. 62.

In many words, or in few; I doe not say that a speech of an houre long only is preaching; but also a few words, ten words, five words, a word in his place, being seasonably spoken, may be an effectually Sermon, a pithy exhortation; and whether the speech be long or short, if the Will of God be reverently declared, and rightly applied, it is preaching.

Who is a Preacher. Luke 19. 13. 11. 1 Pet. 4. 10. 22. Rom. 12. 6. 7. Acts 8. 1. 4. & 11. 19.

Secondly, it is demanded, who may preach? And for that I affirme, that every Christian, which hath received any Talent or gift of God, enabling and fitting him thereunto, may at fit occasions and opportunities, minister the gift he hath received; as a good disposer of Gods secrets, without hiding his talent, or withdrawing himselfe from the Lords barrest, but when a doore is opened, and an occasion given, let him that hath a word of exhortation, say on; And this must be done with Christian discretion according as the talent is, some men, as they travell and labour in their affaires, to fill with gracious speeches and counsell, such as they are sorted withall: others more eminent and fluent in speech to doe it more publicly, as they can, amongst the multitude, where they dwell or travell, at such time and occasions as people meet together, and are willing to heare them.

Acts 18. 26.

In what place preaching may be used.

Thirdly, It is demanded, where preaching must be? And for that I affirme, that as there is now no holy or unholy place, so there can be no place simply appropriated to it, but it is as lawfull in one place as in another; and may as lawfully be done in Fairnes,

Faires, Market-places, Passage boats, Fields, and dwelling houses; as in any Churches or Temples, provided the place be convenient, and the audience silent and attentive.

The fourth question is, To whom preaching must be used, and for that I answer, That it may be to any of the sonnes of Adam, whether Jewes, Turkes, Indians, Nigers, Papiests or Protestants, religious or prophane, one or other, provided, the Preachers matter be suited to his audience, and that he be such a workeman in handling the Word of God, as that he give each his portion thereof, whether terror and judgement, or compassion and comfort, taking heed still of that sentence used by the Holy Ghost against such, as either justifie the wicked, or condemne the righteous.

Now, the summe of all this is thus much, That every Christian that hath received a gift of God, for that purpose, may preach the Word, and so consequently be heard, in any assembly, where there may be audience, and upon these grounds, which I take to be sound, I intend to frame these ensuing consequences.

Of the libertie that the word of God ought to have.

SECT. 24. And though now both the Papiests, and some ignorant Protestants would have no Word of God sounded forth by any, but their selected Clergie; and also the Brownists would ingrosse it into their secret assemblies, yet the same key which unlocked the old Catholicall Latine box, wherein they kept all the Latine from the Letter of the Scriptures, must now be used to free the preaching thereof out of the prison, wherein these ingrossers have bound in chaines the very Gospel of our Lord Iesus, that if there should rise up a man as learned and eminent as Paul; yet, except he would come into their order, he must remaine silent all his life long.

But the Word of God must not thus be bound, nor the graces of his servants must not be buried in silence alwayes. but the light must be set on the Table, and the glory of the Lord must be shewed, though vaine man be forced to couch under board, neither is it much matteriall, though the greatest that is borne of woman, doe decrease, as long as the Saviour of the world increaseth.

First, then here falleth to the ground that opinion of theirs which tie the preaching of the Word to an order of Ministry; for as it is certaine, that there hath beene no universall office of Ministry since the Apostles, but all Ministers since have had their office bounded within the limits of their particular flockes, and the succession from the Apostles, is none otherwise now, then in doctrine, faith and

and grace, so as now it is not possible that a Church should ever enjoy a lawfull ordinary Ministry, which is raised or made by any other then themselves; and therefore, if preaching may not be without an ordinary office of Ministry, how shall there ever be faith or grace, or matter prepared for a Church, except such Christians as have the knowledge and feare of God, may publish and spread the same amongst their neighbours for their edification and conversion?

2. Secondly, from these grounds we see how absurd the opinion of the separation is, that tie all preaching and publishing the Gospel to such as are of their handfull, which are few in number, and lesse in ability; and this of all other would make the miserablest scarcity: for whereas in some whole Shires of this Land, there is scarce one of them, and in other places two or three in some townes, and those for the most part, such as scarce know well their principles? What a misery should all the people about them be in, if no Word of God, nor found of the Gospel must be heard, til they were able and willing, and could intend to preach it; but let not the Word of God be thus bound.

3. Thirdly, by this ground also, that every Christian that hath a gift may use it for the edification of others: it followeth, that if the Countrey and Kingdome where we live take no publique course for preaching, yet the Gospel may still sound in families, and from neighbour to neighbour; and also if there be any that cannot, or will not come to publique preaching, or that the publique preaching begin to be fraughted and stuffed with policie, eloquence, and vaine ostentation, as that it becomes unprofitable, &c. Yet still the word of God is not bound, but *helpe commeth another way*, and when they hold their peace that should speake, the mouth of the very stones are opened.

4. Fourthly, it followeth from these grounds, that Kings and Princes may not onely themselves study and preach the Word, as did King Salomon, and Oswalduw, King of Northumberland, but also it teacheth them to approve, protect and maintaine by their civill power, the preaching of the Gospel, and spreading the knowledge of Christ, by all meanes, and by all them to whom God hath given a gift: thereunto, whether they be Lawyers, Physicians, or other *mechanicall* men that are able and doe it orderly, and to be so farre from tying it to a place or houre, as that they should rejoyce to have it found in private houfes, *Ferry boats, Eales and Markets*, being done without civill disorder and detraction from men of greater eminencie, remembering the example of that godly Magistrate, *Moses*, who was so farre from forbidding *El-lad* and *Medad* to prophesie, (though *Ioshua*, a good man requested him) as that he also wished that *all the Lords people could also prophesie*.

5. And lastly, according to our proper intent, *If every gifted Christian may*

may preach where they can have audience; then if any of the Preachers in England be Christians, and have a gift to preach (both, or any of which to deny, were shamefull) they may then preach the Word in any place where the people are assembled of what kinde soever, or for what cause soever, and consequently in their parish Churches where the people of the parish meet, to use *Divine service*, and other *Rites* established by Law. I say, when all is done, if yet they will give their attendance, to heare a *message from God*, and that there be one of a thousand there so fitted, he may and ought there to declare his *Word* of exhortation, and it is lawfull and good for any godly man to come and heare him.

The particular objections against hearing in the parish assemblies answered.

Now though these grounds and consequences doe clearly evince the truth of this point, and also we know that so long as the ground and foundation of a thing standeth, there is little good to be done against the thing by other working, yet because this age is fuller of catching wits, to cavill against some appendixes and leaves of the tree; then of solid and able men to undermine and wade into the root of things, therefore I will apply my selfe to goe a little aside from the currant of the matter to answer their exceptions. The Preachers in the assemblies receive an unlawfull office from the *Prelates*, and they which heare them approve of their office, since they preach by it.

I answer, first, this and a thousand such exceptions cannot remove the ground before laid downe; for it is his Christian state and gifts that maketh him a Preacher, and not his office; whether it be right or wrong. It is indeed his sin to take such an office from the *Prelates*, and a further sin to execute the office, as he doth in the customes and rate of the Church, but no man can say this sinne maketh him cease to be a Christian, so long as in his generall course and carriage hee shewes himselfe honest and conscionable, but wee are in charitie to esteeme it an infirmity in him which the times sway him to, and no more, and we are to cover it in his other vertues, and love and respect him still for the good he hath, and not cast him off for some failings, lest we be served so our selves. Indeed, if for every such error and failing we will ranke them amongst those which hate to be reformed, we may then conclude apace, that they may not take Gods covenant in their mouths.

And

Preaching must not be tyed to Ministers.

Preaching not tyed to the separated Churches.

Though publike preaching become vaine or fraile, yet private must not.

Heb. 4. 14. Luke 19. 42. Eccl. 3. 4. Fox in Monument, pag. 100. 110. Edw. 3.

It is a worke becoming a King to preach the Word.

And good government must promote preaching all manner of wayes.

Numb. 11. 29.

No gift may be lost.

Judg. 3. 20. Word 1eb. 33 23. 1st. 3. 15.

SECT. 25.

Object. 1. 2.

Ans. 1.

If any of the Ministers in England have gifts, and be Christians, they may preach.

Pal. 50. 16. 17.

2. Mar. 23. 3. 4. 1 Cor. 3. 14. 15.

And yet were they such (as they are not) yet so long as their gifts remaine they may be heard, as well as the Scribes and Pharisees, and the evill and corrupt teachers in Corinth; for though themselves sin by using the Name and Word of God, whilst they neither feare nor obey him, yet till God taketh away their gifts and facultie, I see not but an use may be made of it.

3. Ad. 28. 24. 25. An office no argument to approve or disprove a mans preaching.

And seeing a man of knowledge, judgement and utterance with gravity, authority and power, is a compleat Preacher, as was Apollo, whether he have an office or no office, a good office or an evill office, it is to no more purpose to bring in his office, to prove the lawfulness or unlawfulness of his preaching, than to alledge against a man the unlawfulness of his marriage, to disprove his workmanship in his Trade, and as absurd it is for to enquire into the office of him that is to preach before we heare him, as to enquire into an Artificers marriage, before we will rather acknowledge him for a worke-man, or employ him in any business.

4. Preaching accidental to the Priest-hood in England.

And when a man is to make any good and profitable speech, either in Law, Physique, or divinitie, he is like to prove the wiser man, that asketh what he saith rather then whence he is.

Neither can any man be said to approve of their office, except he joyne with them in such things as appertaine to their office, as doth their service and ceremonies, but preaching is an accidentall thing, and no part of the office properly, but an ornament or appendix about it, which may be wanting, and yet the Minister a full officer in the order of Priesthood, and though he never preach whilst he lives, yet the Law cannot tax him for not performing his office; and thus God hath even provided of purpose, that his owne ordinance of praying, should not be bundled up in the bedroll of humane rites, but be refused of the builders, as a needlesse thing, that his owne honour might be the more, when the power thereof is seene.

Objett. 13.

But both Ministers and People here professe, that they preach by vertue of their office?

Ans. I. Learn wisdom by other mens abundance.

They also professe, that all that will not joyne with them in their service and Sacraments, are Schismatiques, but they may be deceived in both, for any thing I know, and if they will thus conclude still, that their Preachers preach by vertue of their offices, and erre about it, I must not erre with them, since I know, that all the offices in the world cannot make a man a Preacher, an office indeed, if it be right makes him their Preacher which have chosen him, but hee is still a Preacher, and preacheth onely by vertue of his gift.

Objett. 14.

But they take a license from the Bishops to preach, and therefore they are their messengers, and not Christs?

Ans. I.

I answer, first, if the license they take of the Bishops be onely or properly to allow them to preach which are fit thereunto, I have nothing

nothing to say against it, but wish they also would license the separation to assemble together, and use the Ordinances freely and without danger; and I would be sorry any man should be any thing the more afraid to use that liberty, because they had licensed it. The Bishops license no let to preaching.

Secondly, it is not meet that every one should hand over head goe preach publicly, without some triall and approbation of some grave and learned men.

Thirdly, If the license enjoyne them any unlawfull thing, they ought not to doe it, but if it either enjoyne, or permit them to preach, they may out of doubt doe it, notwithstanding the license, or whatsoever else is in the license enjoyned.

Fourthly, Admit it be their sinne to take this license, yet since they may lawfully in respect of God, and the right of the thing preach without it, why not also with it? as well as a man may live with his lawfull wife, which he had lawfully married before, though some oppressing tyrant should force him to take license anew from him to live with her?

Fifthly, And what if no man should be suffered to use conceived prayers in his family without examination and license of the Bishops, and that men for their safety therein should take license from them for it? I suppose there is no man will say they must now cease to pray, or that it is unlawfull, being godly men, for their wives and families to joyne with them; even so the Bishops license, not making it lawfull in respect of God for a man of gifts to preach, but onely safe in regard of the oppositions of men, whether it be obtained or not obtained, the gifts of God must still be used.

Sixthly, The Bishops, or their substitutes doe also give license to Physicians and Schoole-masters, yet I never heard of any that held, that the taking physique from one, or learning from the other, was any approbation or supportance to the Bishops unlawfull power.

Seventhly, As Peter was both Satan and an Apostle of Christ, so these men in a sense may be said to be the messengers and Ministers, both of Christ and the Bishops; of Christ in preaching his Word according to the measure of grace given them by him, and of the Bishops in taking power from them, and performing humane rites and Traditions enjoyned by them. Mar. 16. 23.

Other objections against hearing answered.

SECT. 25. *Obje. l. 15.*

Ans. l. 1.

Humane learning maketh not a man a Preacher.

Many preach, but doe no good thereby.

Mat. 15. 14.

Jerem. 14. 15. 16. Jerem. 23. 21.

1 Cor. 12. 8. 10. Tit. 2. 7.

Luke 10. 18.

1 Cor. 2. 15. 16.

But many of these Preachers are of evil life, and preach nothing but v. roall Sermons, fraught with ostentation and pomp of words, wherein there is neither power nor plainnesse?

It must needs be confessed, that not one of twentie of them that are trained up in the University, are fit to be Preachers, seeing it is not humane learning that maketh a man a Preacher; but other helps of nature and grace, without which humane learning makes a man play the foole rather then the wise man; and indeed, if a man have not naturall parts and graces of modestie and humility, whereby to overshadow and swallow up his humane learning, he rather seemeth vicious then vertuous in any thing he doth, and it is one of the evils of this age, and that which drives many to *desiresne*, that all University Schollers that will but professe *Divinity* may step into pulpits as Apprentizes in *o Trades*, though they have neither grace nor wisdom, nor any naturall abilities, but having read over, and got by heart some *Antiquities*, partly *Divine*, partly *Philosophicall*, and partly *fabulous*; they can sometimes powre them out together, and so get a name of fine Schollers among the carnall multitude; but all these verball discourses of such fine Schollers, being used yeere after yeere, and joynd with a carnall and dissolute life, serve for nothing but for ostentation and name, never converting or drawing any from their finnes, but rather lulling them fast asleepe in the cradle of security, wherein they are carried to hell, whilest neither themselves nor their *blinde Watchmen* are aware of the danger.

But such straglers and striplings I will not perswade any man to heare, especially since there are others who are no runners to this work without their errant, who even in zeale of God, and in desire of the salvation of men, being endued with the gifts of *Knowledge*, *Wisdom*, *Persistence*, *Gravities*, and authority of speech, as also of a godly & sober life, set themselves to thame all vices & work out the corruptions out of the vaine heart of man, and to drop into them, and draw them into the grace and feare of God, whose carefull and effectuall labours are not in vaine, but they doe daily wound and weaken the Kingdome of *Satan* and *Sinne*, and advance the Power and Scepter of *Christ*, at least in the hearts and conversation of many, and leave such an impression in the hearts of the most obstinate, that they *savour* the sentence of *their condemnation* daily from them, and goe up and down as men condemned with their halters about their necks; and such kind

kind of Preachers onely would I perswade to the hearing of, without respect to townes or parishes; but let civill order give place to spirituall necessitie, and rather beare a civill *mult*, then neglect a spirituall Ordinance.

Civill orders may not annihilate Gods Ordinances.

Jerem. 23. 21.

And the exception concerning the shallow and insufficiency of the other, maketh no more against them, then the trifling *Prophets*, who ran before they were sent, were a just objection against the Prophet *Jeremy*, who was sent of the Lord.

Object. 16.

But the Preachers in the parishes preach not the whole truth, but run into many errors and absurdities, either to please the State, pleasure the times, or advance themselves, and yet a man may not reprove them, and how then shall he heare them?

Ans. l. 1.

I answer first, It is not meet to preach all truths to all men, but first their consciences must be urged with that which they stand most need of, and that they can conceive of, and to busie their heads about other high matters, before they have learned the *doctrine of faith* and repentance, and have reformed their wayes, were even just as if one should give a man an oration in *Latine* to construe, which knew never a letter of the *Booke*, and where such teaching is ordinarily used, you have a number that can spie out faults in others, but very few that are truly reformed themselves.

Heb. 6. 1. 2.

2.

Secondly, Niether can it be expected of any *Pastor* or *Preacher* in this world or fraile life, that he should never let fall any errors or unsound positions; for, *Who knoweth the errors of this life?* and who can wonder, seeing the formall state hath here so long prevailed (and that with such prosperity and applause) if even some of Gods holy *Prophets*, at some time, *say even as they?*

Psal. 73. 2, 3, 13.

But if there be any who make it their drift and custome to propound and maintaine evill practices and unsound grounds, and to inveigh against the faithfull servants of God, such are to be *taken heed of*; but such, whose drift and common course, is soundly to interpret and apply the Word of God, beating downe mans corruption, and stablishing them in grace and holinesse (though in some things they swarve from the rules of truth) yet they may and must be heard.

1 Cor. 11. 19.

Thirdly, Errors *myst* sometimes be let fall, even in the purest and best reformed Churches, for the triall of the faithfull soundnesse, and the discovery of *Hypocrites*: that the love of the truth in the one, may the more gloriously be displayed, and the want of love to the truth in the other may be punished, with strong and *constant* believing of lies: so that it is better for a man to be soundly grounded in the truth and stiled sincerely to love it, that so he may discern and resist errors, rather then once imagine he can live where none is taught.

2 Thef. 2. 10, 11.

Fourthly, Neither may we nourish in our selves a perswasion that all or any of the godly Preachers in *England* preach and declare those

Construe all things in the best part.

unsound positions and unwritten verities, for fleshly ends; as favour of men, love of advancement, and the like; but rather charity should teach us to impute it to their ignorance, feare and humane frailtie, which is more or lesse in us all, remembering, that they which make such evill constructions of other mens actions, are againe afterwards paid home with like measure.

5. Fifthly, Neither are we bound to reprove alwaies every error and absurdity we heare, but to consider as well our place, calling, interest and authority that we have in the place or with the person, and consequently what likelihood there is of doing good by our reproofe; for if wee cast admonitions abroad at all adventures, without considering these circumstances, wee rather expose our selves to scorne, and the Word of God to reproach and scorne, then doe any good at all.

Object. 17. But though it might be lawfull to heare the Preachers in England, yet it is better to forbear it, because of offence?

Answer. I. To be offended at a thing in the Apostles sense, is not when one is discontent, angry, or vexed for a thing; but when he staggereth and stumbleth so at anothers practice; as that he is drawne by his example, to imitate him, contrary to the judgement and persuasion of his owne heart and conscience, but such offences (in this particular especially) doe hardly any of the strict separation take, but the worst hurt it can doe them, is but onely to anger them.

2. Secondly, Offences are always given, either in things evill, or things indifferent; but to preach and heare, the Word of God, is neither evill nor indifferent, and least of all can it be thought indifferent, but an action wherein the name of God is so much used, as it is in that, must either be a proper part of his service, or else a horrible blasphemy; and taking his name in vaine, which farre be it from us to thinke.

3. Thirdly, Admit it were indifferent (which cannot be) yet in giving offence in matters indifferent, we have respect onely to the weak, of which there are thousands in the assemblies in England, which by our example in refusing to heare their Preachers, are often drawne so to refuse both them and their teaching, as that they have even been left without all help means & to repent and believe the Gospel, for the soules of whom the strict separation have much to answer.

But it were a great disparagement and shame in the separation, to plead weaknesse; and sure I am, they are strong enough to hold the conclusion in this and many other points, how weak, soever they may prove in their grounds, or prosecuting and practice of the things they hold.

4. Fourthly, Experience hath taught, that the most part of such as have lightly and contemptuously refused to heare the godly Preachers

in England, have had little esteeme of preaching amongst themselves, but have had more delight to busie themselves in triviall controversies to try their wits then to have their hearts wrought upon by sound and wholsome doctrine; the event of all hath beene, that they have had no peace in themselves, nor brought no profit to others.

But we see what commeth by giving way to heare Sermons in the assemblies, even this; that one thing followeth another, that with Sermons they partake also in *services, ceremonies and Sacraments*, yea joyn in all their corruptions, and at last turne prophane and loose in their lives and conversation also?

Answer, first, this may be true, and for it the Churches of the separation are much to be blamed, that will force every one that heareth a Sermon in the Parish assemblies, to confesse it to be a sin, and manifest repentance for it, or else exclude him quite from their society and felowship, and so some of their members, out of a good affection, having heard some Sermons, and not beene convinced of evill in it; have undergone their censure, and afterward walked alone, as desolate men, catching here and there a crum where they could catch it till at length by persuasion of friends and weaknesse in themselves, they have beene drawne into some practices apparantly evill: whereas if they had beene lovingly borne with in their suspected evill: no doubt many of them would either have returned to the society whereof they were, or some other like, or else still have retained in themselves a reverend respect and longing after the pure order and ordinances of the Gospel.

2. Secondly, what if some have made it a path-way to serve their lusts? that is no argument against it; but onely sheweth the vanity and unstability of some men: when Absalom made sacrificing a cloke for his rebellion, was sacrificing any thing the more to be disliked in those dayes? Yea, what evill is there almost that goeth not with some presence of good apparantly? It sheweth indeed the vanity, lightnesse and unstability of some men, who neither had distinct rules and grounds to goe by, nor were conscionable, nor carefull to attend on God for his direction; but as they ran lightly to separation upon some humour or discontented motion, so againe they left it as wantonly, when a new toy tooke them in the head againe.

3. Thirdly, And indeed, even this very thing should make the Churches of the separation looke better about them, and take heed of drawing young heads and unstable wits with lesse honesty to them; for the truth is, they so dote upon separation, as that if a man have it, though hee have all other points and parts of Religion to learne and seeke, yet he may even for it onely be admired and advanced amongst them; but if he be not wholly separated, but will retain some love and respect to some persons and things in the Parish assemblies, had

he all the holinesse and Religion that else possibly he could have, yet he must never be admitted amongst them, but held out as an *Idolator*; and one under the power of darknesse, and of *Satans* kingdome. And though for this their unreasonablenesse they have bene beaten sore with their owne *rods*, when they that came to them with censorious mouthes, against all practices in the Parish assemblies, have within a few yeeres returned, railing worse at them; and though they have been advised, not to measure men by one particular practice, but have an eye to the generall worke of Gods grace in them, yet all in vaine, for they will not heare nor regard, *charme the Charmer never so wisely*.

Fourthly, their going to the *holy Supper* in the assemblies, sheweth still their ignorance, that come back from the separation even as wife as they went to them, not knowing what religious actions are proper to Church communion, and what are common to be used every where, nor regarding any more with whom at the *Table of the Lord* they feast, then amongst whom they stand to heare a good speech; since the thing is plaine, that those that keepe that feast together, must be united to Christ, and one to another by the spirit; but they that together manifest no more then the patience to heare, there can be no just scruple, though amongst a hundred, there are not two that have any signe of grace or holinesse.

Fifthly, At a word, as *Jacobs* Posteritie might lawfully enjoy that blessing which their father got of *Isack*, by lying and deceit, and as a poore man may receive and use that money which is given him by one that got it by extortion or bribery; so, though even all and every of the Preachers in *England* doe some evill that good may come of it, and submit themselves to humane traditions, which they ought to shun, that they may preach the Word, yet the good they doe, being at any time severed from the evill, and their preaching from their Traditions they may then be heard, and reverently respected, and the Lord in his mery pardon their evill, and *heale them*, whose hearts are upright with him, though many failings have bene in their courses.

They that goe about to justifie the Ministers in England in their Office, drive men from the Church altogether.

AND now I will say no more at this time for the justifying of hearing in the Parish assemblies, till I see this ground taken away, and the answers to these objections over-turned, which if they could be with evidence of truth, let the Lord be a gainer, and let me be a loser.

I am

They have been beaten with their owne rod.

2/21. 58. 4. 5.

Communion in the L. supper a Church action.

1 Cor. 10. 17.

5.

the Preachers in England sin, to get liberty to preach.

Chy. 27. 28. 29. 30.

ECT. 27.

I am not ignorant, that the common way which is used to persuade men to heare them, is to defend and justifie their Calling and Office of Ministry to be of divine institution.

And to prove it, some descend to their parents which set them to schoole, others to their aptnesse and willingnesse to learne, and to their choice in the Universities for their reading and studies, and desire to preach &c. in all which I know the providence of God worketh but all this serveth but for the ability and fitnesse, and is not essentiall to the externall office at all, which is an outward state or station conferred upon him for some inward and eminent gift or quality.

Others there are, who will fetch a successfull Ministry from *Adam* in *Paradise*, lineally to reach to this day, others come lower and fetch the pedigree from *Christ* and his *Apostles*, and will have those holy functions to leap over all the *Popes* heads and be borne up with both their shoulders for a thousand yeeres and upward, till in the daies of *Queen Elizabeth*, a piece thereof fell to the *late Bishop of Canterbury*, from which wind-fall bough all those thousands of spirituall functions now in *England* have sprouted and spread themselves, untill it is become a *Protestant Ministry*, and desies those many fathers from whom their branches tooke life, and will now be of themselves, and contest with the *Pope*, from whose chaire their authority is derived.

Others more ashamed of that old dung-hill of *Romanists*, will goe but to *Luther* for their pedigree, whom they fancy to be some new *Apostle*, and so might create a new Ministry; but as neither the foundnesse of *Luthers* doctrine, nor the temperature of his affections, was *Apostolike*; so he neither did nor might create any universall Ministry, whose *Dioces* could reach into this *land*, and if he should, yet still it must be of the nature, (though not of the name,) with that of the *Romish* *Dioces*, and not one jot neerer to *Christs* institution.

Others will have their very office and function to stand in the consent and approbation of the parish.

But, first, as the parishes are unfit and incapable of making a Minister, so they doe nothing at all therein, but are as meere patients, to suffer whom the *Diocesan* pleaseth to put in or pull out.

Secondly, and indeed, who knoweth not that all the parish Vicars and Parsons in the Land, doe solemnly receive and take their charge, orders, office and function from the *Bishops* and their adherents, before they may come to administer in any parish whatsoever.

Thirdly, they stand at the will of the *Bishop*; so as if he bid them be silent, they dare say no more. Now, if the consent and approbation of the parish be such a divine institution as they pretend, how perfidious and unconstant are they with God that at the word of a mortall man dare neglect that calling of the Lord?

At a word, when men shall scruple at hearing their Sermons, and they

The office of the Ministry in England is not right.

1.

They that plead for succession cannot satisfie the conscience.

See D. Mafons Booke of consec.

Succession from Luther a fiction.

The approbation of the parish no part or parcel of the Ministers office.

2 Theol. 2. 15. Aff. 1. 29. 28. 29. 1 Cor. 9. 16.

5.

they can satisfie them no other way. but by alledging their office and function, which neither is agreeable to Scripture, nor to it selfe. but hanged together by vaine suppositions, and popish assertions, which serve ten times more to staine and blame it, then to justifie it; what can they looke for in the event but to see themselves despised and contemned for pleading so lame a case, and whither shall men be driven hereby but to separation and Anabaptisme, or else to worse matters?

But when this law and lawlesse office is passed by, and covered in a serious love of their graces, (as the Lord, no doubt, covereth it in Christ Jesus) every man will lay his hand on his mouth; for in their gifts and graces of preaching, no man can deny the Lord to be in them indeed; and in such actions as God eminently shewes his grace, we may be evidently present in person and affection.

Neither can there be any other succession from the Apostles and Primitive Churches, otherwise then in faith, gifts and graces, since their office is wholly ceased, and he is now the lineall successor of Peter and Paul which commeth neereft to them in gifts, graces and holinesse; And what in this world can be more absurd, than to make every popish Priest and idle Dunce, (which hath got onely an upstart ordination of some antiquitie) to be the true successor of the holy Apostles, when they have neither grace in their hearts, wit in their heads, or honesty in their conversation: and if the office be that which must be pleaded to justifie all their ministrations; even all these blind Priests and verball Teachers have as good reason for their standing as the best.

The strict separation cannot hold together amongst themselves.

SECT. 28. **A**ND as these men have been too extreme and censorious in their separation, so are they in their Church covenant and combination, by meanes whereof they need no other persecutors then themselves; for their owne swords enter so fast into their own bowels, as that if all the persecutions in this world were against them, it could hardly make such havocke as they make amongst themselves. I meane not in regard of civill punishments, for that power they have not any where, and if they had, and should have such spirits in their civill judgements, as they have in their spirituall censures, the one halfe of them had need to become hangmen, but it is onely in regard of their extreme worrying one another, for every difficult question and controversall practice, in solemne and vehement charges, quarrellsome and captious invectives, short and sudden excommunications, in all which

It is best to cover the deformity of the Ministers of office.

1 Cor. 14. 24. 25.

6. Succession is onely in faith and grace. 2 Tim. 3. 10. Phil. 4. 8. 9. 2 Pet. 1. 11. 12. 13.

No grace, no succession.

SECT. 28. 1.

The separation eat up themselves.

which they have so wearied and wasted themselves, that a man may truly say of them, that no society under any persecution (warre excepted) did ever decrease and ruinate as they doe.

And as the professors in England are justly taxed for living in confusion, without a society of faithfull Christians in a Church estate, and without the order and discipline, &c. so these men may be as well blamed for bringing themselves to confusion, by following their wits, and abusing both their gifts and the discipline of Christ to their owne shame and ruine, and to the dishonour of Christ, the peaceable Law-giver of his Church.

And although for the ancient of them, who now live (as also the first English Anabaptists, who harpe all upon one string) if I had the tongues of men and Angels, yet have I no hope to change their mindes, or moderate their affections, since no counsell, warning, or experience can teach them any thing, but still bitterness is in their hearts; and violence is in their tongues; and they will rather quarrell with ten men for one trifle, then lovingly agree with any man in any thing.

Yet, to prevent such as shall come after, from running their course, and that their extremities may die with their persons (as they have already begun) and the truth they hold receive no wrong, I will discover, and put to silence that opinion and practice of theirs, which breakes, divides and rents them allunder daily, notwithstanding all other truths and appearance of zeale which is amongst them.

It is held and practised amongst them for a maxime, That they must suffer no evil, in any man, nor no appearance of evil; but every one that is of them must jump with them in judgement and practice, and he must not goe a foot before them, nor come one inch behind them, but must in all things say as they say, and doe as they doe, and if he swarve from them in any thing which they thinke to be truth, they will solemnly admonish him, and if hee will not repent, they will forthwith excommunicate him, be the evil never so small and doubtful, and whatsoever other graces or holinesse be in the person, or whatsoever bands betwixt him and them either in grace or nature, the unreasonableness whereof I will reprove by these reasons following.

2.

3.

1 Cor. 13. 2. 2.

4.

A dangerous opinion. This rule is ordinarily low, but not always.

I There

There are some finnes that must be borne in the Church.

SECT. 29.

I.

EXcept some sins may be borne in the Church, why speaketh the holy Ghost thus to the Churches? *Bear ye one anothers burthen, Love covereth a multitude of finnes, forsake not the fellowship, but exhort one another daily.* Why rather suffer ye not wrong? If he had meant to make such short work as these men do, he would have said, bear with no man, love no man that is faulty, suffer no wrong, but abandon every fellowship and person that hath any evill in him not reformed.

Gal. 6. 2.
Heb. 10. 25.
1 Cor. 6. 7.

2.

If no evils in the Church may be borne, then why did not Paul write to the Church of Corinth, to cast out more offenders then the incestuous man, seeing there were those that wronged their brethren, and went to Law with them amongst the heathen rulers, others that went to the Idol feasts, and are said to have fellowship with devils, others that schismed in their love feasts, and inordinate cleaving to their Sectory teachers, despising Paul, yea, and some whose emulations, contentions and wantonnesse, was not repented of in a long time; and yet he giveth no order for the excommunicating any more then he which had committed a sin, which the very light of nature condemneth.

1 Cor. 5. 1. 2. 3.
Eccl. 6. 8. & 10.
12. & 13. 22.

3 Cor. 12. 20. 21.

3.

If no finnes might be borne in the Church, then Christ when he gave direction to proceed against sinners, would have used the same word which Paul doth, which signifieth infirmity, or feeblenesse of mind, and not that which Iohn useth, which signifieth a scandall; for both Christ in the rule, and Paul in his direction for practice, speake of such evils as are notorious and scandalous. Secondly, David is never taxed for scandall in all the infirmities he shewed at Nob, Gath, and in the matters of Iacob, Ziba, Achish, Hophni, and others. but only in the matters of adultery and murder, with Bathsheba and Uriah, he is said to scandall, or lay a stumbling block.

Math. 18. 19.
19. 18.
2 Cor. 10. 10.

1 Cor. 5. 4. 5.
2 Cor. 10. 10.
2 Tim. 2. 16.

1 Sam. 12. 14.

4.

If no sins in the Church may be borne, how could David say, *Who can tell the errors of this life, or how oft he offendeth?* and againe, *The righteous falleth seven times a day, and riseth againe,* and that of James, *In many things we sinne all, &c.* We may not thinke that the Prophets and Apostles were either ignorant of grosse evils, or fell seven times a day into them but that they had their continuall failings in inferiour and doubtfull things, and having to, if they were now alive, belike they were not good enough for the strict separation, that fall so often, and into so many things as they did.

Rom. 7. 12.
1 Cor. 1. 13. 2.
1 Cor. 3. 1. 2.

Indeed, the example of these holy men thus complaining, may lead us all to a more thorow search of our selves; for if they pronounced such a sentence upon themselves, much more may we if we looke well

well to it; and what mad men are we to quarrell and strive with our neighbours and brethren for their infirmities when we have such in our selves, for grosse and scandalous evils indeed, we may and must strive, for all good men have not such in themselves.

If no sins must be borne with, then no two men in this world could walke together in Christian fellowship, no, not any man with his wife, nor no father with his child, neither can any Church fellowship if they be true to this ground, possible hold together; for no men can converse much together, but they shall see some fault in each other either in omission or commission. One man will be too remisse and cold in family duties of instruction, prayer, &c. Another too sluggish in hearing, Sacraments and other publique exercises. one man is too full of worldly cares, another is too carelesse in his worldly affaires; one man even kills himselfe with hard labour: another spoyles himselfe with too much idlenesse; one man is too talkative and busie, another is too naive and silent. At a word, in all men there is to be seene some partiality, some pride, some conceitednesse, some selfe-love, some tollie, some ignorance, some error and unsoundnesse, some anger and impatience, all which are evils, and will more or lesse appeare in men, whilest they live, notwithstanding all adimonitions ad censures that can be past upon them. And therefore except we will by excommunication cast the Church out of the Church, we must cover their infirmitie in love, as they must also ours; and bury them in a loving delight in their graces, exhorting and perswading them, but not provoking, biting or censuring them, but freely forgiving them, as God for Christs sake freely forgiveth us.

5.

Some things amisse in the best men.

Ephes. 4. 32. 33.

6.

No perfection in this life.

If no sins must be borne, then there must be perfection, even in this life, either in truth, or in conceit; for they that are perswaded that other men doe cover their failings in love, will as lovingly cover other mens againe, seeing it is worse then beast-like, not to give love for love; indeed, one man hath a more prying and piercing eye to see into his neighbours faults, then his neighbour hath to see into his, and so he is apt to please himselfe, as if he were not as other men are, but he whose infirmities are most of all ript up and raked into, is oftentimes rather justified before God, then the other, to whom nothing is spoken; and indeed, he which truly examineth and searcheth into himselfe, cannot possibly be voyd of charity towards others.

1 Tim. 5. 24. Luke 11. 14. 1 Tim. 1. 10. 15.

What kind of finnes and sinners they be that may be borne in the Church.

SECT. 30. That some sins then may be borne and covered in love in the Church and amongst Christians, is out of question, and that some other sins may not be borne, is also certaine, but to set downe every particular sin which is to be borne, and every particular for which men must be abandoned without repentance, were impossible, and mere trifling; for when we oppose godly men, and wicked men, we doe not mean that they onely are godly which never doe nothing but what is godly; nor they onely wicked, which never doe ought but wickednesse; for there is no man so good, but that he sometimes falleth into some evill, nor none so wicked, but hee sometimes stumbleth upon some good. It is indeed the common and customary course in practising grosse evill, and refusing to doe good, that proveth a man to be wicked, and the frequent performance of good duties and ordinary abstinence from evils, that shewes a man to be godly; for as one saith, evill men can doe good by accident, and good men by accident fall into evill, but the common trade of a godly man is to doe good; and of a wicked man to doe evill.

A godly and an ungodly man describ'd.

Godlinesse and wickednesse are two severall trades.

Exod. 21. 12. Levit. 24. 17. & 29. 10. & 34. 24. Deut. 22. 22. 1 Cor. 5. 13. 1 Tim. 1. 20. 2 Cor. 6. 9. 10.

Mat. 23. 29.

Mat. 18. 19.

Excommunication must be used warily.

Indeed, such sins as under the Law were death, as Incest, Adultery, Blasphemy, &c. being now committed by any in the Church, except they repent, they may, and must be cast out; but otherwise, except they be such as the light of nature condemneth, or such as the Scripture in expresse termes forbiddeth, and threatneth to shut out of Heaven for them, men should be wary how they excommunicate for them; and although by this rule few would be excommunicate in Churches that are made of fit matter, and the fewer the better, so long as grosse wickednes is not there harboured; for it is better to offend in too much lenity, then in too much severity; better to let some bales stand, then to plucke up the good wheat; for though Christ have given that sharp and severe censure into the hands of his Saints, yet they must take heed they be not too buisie with it, sharpe instruments must be skilfully and warily handled; and though Christ have promised to binde in Heaven, such as his Church bindeth on earth, yet this promise, must be restrained onely to such cases as wherein the censure is deserved, for else the Church rather binde over it selfe to the wrath of God for wronging his servants, and abusing his ordinances, and taking his name in vaine, then commits the person either to Satan or Gods wrath; so that we must be sure to see that the case be just,

just before we censure; and if the Word of God have not said, that such shall be shut out of Heaven, we must moderate our zeale, and re-
straine our passions, and not thinke to make Christ follow us, but we must follow him, and be mercifull as he is mercifull. Luke 6. 36.

And as in civill judgements, death is never inflicted justly, but for some grosse and haynous crimes; so in the spirituall judgements of the Church, excommunication, which is the most severest censure that a Church can have, should not be administr'd upon any, but for such haynous evils, which being persisted in, doe barre a man for ever out of Gods Kingdome.

Men must not be hang'd for trifles.

Indeed, some peremptory and presumptuous men have got such a habit of bitterness, that they thinke their speech is of no force, except they sling the first brand of hell at every one whom they deale against, though the matter be small, and sometimes also doubtfull and disputable, and it is well such kinde of men keepe not the keyes of heaven gate for if they did, none but themselves should come there; and if also they had civill power, I know not what havocke they would make amongst some men that are better then themselves.

Job 11. 2. 6. Peremptory dangerous members.

Many of the separation complaine (as they may) of oppressors by civill power, and wrong by penall statutes and commissioners sentences, by which often they are imprisoned, banished, and sometimes put to death. And surely, though these things are done by their opposites in a rage that geth up to heaven, which the Lord, no doubt, will one day call to reckoning; yet it is also just with God to pay them home with bloody and bodily cruelty, which spare not to racke, teare, and turmoyle the soules and consciences of their brethren by opprobrious and bitter speeches, and violent and dangerous censures undeserved.

Unjust excommunication more evill then civill oppression. 2 Chron. 28. 9.

Three cautions concluding the Doctrine of forbearance.

SECT. 31. TO conclude, wee must alwayes beare in mind, that the Scriptures have in them in all places a double sentence and determination of such things as they treat of, the one cleare and certaine, the other probable and doubtful.

2 Tim. 2. 14. 15. 16. 17.

In the things which the Scripture it selfe clearely determineth, we may boldly proceed to professe and practise accordingly; but where there is but a bare probabilitie in the Scripture, we must be wary what we doe, for a hundred probabilities doe not conclude a certainty: neither is it sufficient that we have some reverend mens glosses and guesses to goe before us; for when all is done, if the Holy Ghost be not both Text man and Comment, and conclude the point somewhere, either

No Expositor found but the Holy Ghost.

The Cry of a Stone.

either in plaine words, or ordinary examples, we are as farre off from the matter as before, and doe rather bundle up more ignorance with our ancients in taking things from their mouths and pens then bring any honour either to the truth or them.

And for a man to use either wit or learning, to make the Scripture seeme to speake that which it doth not indeed speake, is rather a vanity than a vertue, and how much was Christ offended for Peters snatching at a doubtfull word; as also what a fearefull sin did those witnesses run into that came against Christ, by wresting an ambigubus phrase to their owne advantage?

In things therefore probable and doubtfull, it better becomes us to seeme ignorant, then to grow presumptuous, and rather conclude against our selves, that we know nothing as we ought to know it, but have our knowledge in part, as is our obedience; then presume above that which is sober and mute, or imagine that we know and can determine all things.

And as wee must be sparing and modest in determining such points, as wherein the Scripture is doubtfull, so wee must be much more sparing in using any violent or cruell words or practices against men in matters doubtfull, yea, though in thy apprehension it be cleare in the letter of the Scriptures, yet if thorow custome and ignorance of our times, it be growne a matter questionable, and that amongst godly men, as was once Polygamy amongst the Fathers, and Fornication among the Churches of the Gentiles, though thou must reraine it thy selfe in conscience of God, yet must use no violent words or practice whereby to force all others to doe like thee.

And so, if thy neighbour or thy brother, hold or practise any thing which thou judgest amisse, except thou have an expresse Scripture, whereby to strike the matter dead, and out of which thou canst say, *Thus saith the Lord*, it is better to be silent then to use much disputing; for witty and Logically disputes serve more often to feed light and corrupt affections, then to settle a sound judgement, yea, and men upon a little snach therein, are apt to set their wits a plodding about every nice and triuall question, whilest better things passe by them, or are stolne and lost out of their mindes; Besides, except the reasons brought against an opinion be cleare and strongly backed by evidence of Scripture, they rather strengthen the persons in their opinions then draw them from it, neither will ever the truth and Church of God be settled and stablished, either by outward violence or subtill disputes, but if a certaine and expresse word cannot be brought to put to silence a mans contradictory opinion, the only way is to let him alone, and to goe on lovingly and brotherly with him in the fellowship of his other graces, till God reveale further, putting aside all occasion of speech about that wherein the difference lieth.

left

The Cry of a Stone.

left from talking, you fall to chiding, and from chiding to bitter strife, hatred and heart-burning, to the weakning of your comfort with God, and the hindering of your favour and respect with men.

The Conclusion and Summe of all.

Now although I have written much, and that with all plainesse that I can, yet I live amidst so many sleepers and drouse Christians, that me thinketh, I heare some starting up about mine eares, and asking me *what it is I have said*, and what I would have, and therefore I will summe up all my aime in a word.

First, I finde in this world two sorts of men, *wicked and godly*, and both these must live in one world, but not in one Church.

The godly I would have to gather themselves together, and combine in a spirituall fellowship, apart from the vaine world, and wicked therein abandoning all mans inventions, worshipping God onely by his Word and Graces, choosing their owne Ministers, executing Discipline amongst themselves, and rather lose their lives, then lose this liberty; but to continue feasting and feeding together in the fellowship of Gods sacred Ordinances all the time of their dwelling in this *Tabernacle*, even till they are translated to the mount of glory.

Secondly, And because the policie of the times will allow no such things, but compells as well the *uncircumcised Philistines*, and the blacke mouthed *Ethiopian*, to the Temple and *Saerssees*, as the sons of *Abraham*, and *Israel* of the Lord; imposing also upon them other officers, governments, Traditions and Ceremonies, then ever the infallible writings of Christ or his Apostles mentioned:

Therefore I have exhorted all that feare God to resolve to suffer with patience and courage all such oppressions and persecutions, as for their abstinence from the aforesaid evils, or practising the contrary good, shall be imposed and afflicted upon them by any authority whatsoever, and as meeke and gentle Lambes to goe with *Christ* to the *Crosse*, and with the Apostles to the prison, even with gentle intreaties, and earnest prayers for their opposites, that so advancing the glory and name of Christ here in this world, they may sit for ever in glory with him in heaven.

Thirdly, And seeing the straggling opinions and opposite practices of some godly men, is a maine hinderance hereof, therefore I have proposed certaine wayes whereby the overstrained heat of the strict separation may be mitigated and ordered, and the sluggish conformity of the professors awaked and revived, that both may re-unite together,

Gal. 15.
A.H. 15:38, 39.

SECT. 32.

Ben. Strach.
cap. 22. 10.

1

1 Cor. 5. 10.

John 17. 14, 16.

A.H. 44. 48, 49.

2 Cor. 6. 16, 17.

Col. 2. 8, 23.

John 4. 23, 24.

A.H. 6. 5. & 14.

230

1 Cor. 5. 4, 12.

John 21. 13, 14.

Heb. 10. 25.

1 Pet. 2. 17.

1 Pet. 2. 42, 44.

Eph. 1. 5. 1. 20.

2.

Eph. 12. 480.

Rom. 23. 29.

Luke 14. 27.

A.H. 16. 22, 23.

1 Cor. 4. 120.

A.H. 7. 90.

Mat. 23. 44, 45.

3.

A harmony in-
deed.

The Cry of a Stone.

together, and converse sweetly in one Church, as the Lord hath prepared for them one heaven.

4. Fourthly. And because the vaine heart of man is subject to be lifted up with it's owne conceits and persuasions, and to be vehement against others for every small difference, therefore I have propounded and proved the Doctrine of forbearance, by many infallible grounds; and have shewed, that it is the duty of all Christians to serve one another in love, and continue their fellowship in the free and familiar use of that knowledge and gifts wherein they agree, without entring into any tedious and doubtfull controversies, to disturbe and provoke one another, much lesse abuse, revile and abandon one another, remembering that the Word of God came not to one Church or person alone, but others have understanding as well as they, and the most confident speaker is oftentimes more awry than hee that keepes silence, however the largest knowledge must have the largest love, lest whilst wee thinke to teach, wee doe nothing but devoure and make havocke.



FINIS.