

Mr Cotton's
LETTER
Lately Printed,
EXAMINED
AND
ANSWERED

Mr Cotton's
LETTER
Lately Printed,
EXAMINED
AND
ANSWERED
by
Roger Williams

Quinta Press

Quinta Press, Meadow View, Weston Rhyn, Oswestry, Shropshire,
England, SY10 7RN

The format of this volume is copyright
© 2020 Quinta Press

For proof-reading purposes the line breaks are in the same place as the
original, hence the stretched text

The original text is taken from the images on EEBO (Early English
Books Online).

In a few places the text is unreadable, indicated by [?????] or [[GREEK]]
(twice) which will hopefully be corrected after a visit to the British Library.

Sidenotes have been changed to footnotes.

Mr. Cottons
LETTER
Lately Printed,
EXAMINED
and
ANSVVERED:

By *Roger Williams of Providence*

In
NEW-ENGLAND.

LONDON,
Printed by *M. F.* for *L. Fawne*, and *S. Gellibrand*, at the Brasen
Serpent in Paul's Church-yard. 1641.

To the Impartiall READER.

THis Letter I acknowledge to have received from Mr. Cotton (whom for his personall excellencies I truly honour and love.) Yet at such a time of my distressed wandrings amongst the Barbarians, that being destitute of food, of cloths, of time I reserved it (though hardly, amidst so many barbarous distractions) and afterward prepared an Answer to be returned.

In the Interim,¹ some Friends being much grieved, that one, publike-ly acknowledged to be godly and dearely beloved, should yet be so exposed to the mercy of an howling Wildernesse in Frost and Snow, &c. Mr. Cotton to take off the edg of Censure from himself profest both in speech and writing, that He was no procurer of my sorrows.

Some Letters then past between us, in which I proved and exprest, that if I had perished in that sorrowfull Winters flight;² only the blood of Jesus Christ could have washed him from the guilt of mine.

His finall Answer was, had you perished, your blood had beene on your owne head; it was your sinne to procure it, and your sorrow to suffer it.

Here I confesse I stopt, and ever since suppress mine Answer; waiting if it might please the Father of mercies, more to mollifie and soften, and render more humane and mercifull, the eare and heart of that (otherwise) excellent and worthy man.

It cannot now, be justly offensive,³ that finding this Letter publike (by whose procurement I know not) I also present to the same publike view, my formerly intended Answer.

I rejoyce in the goodnesse and wisdom of him, who is the Father of lights and mercies,⁴ in ordering the season both of mine owne present opportunity of Answer: As also, and especially of such Protestations and Resolutions of so many fearing God, to seeke what Worship and Worshippers are acceptable to him in Iesus Christ.

Mine own eares were glad and late Witnesses of an heavenly Speech of one of the most eminent of that high Assembly of Parliament;⁵ viz. why should the Labours of any bee suppress if sober, though never so different? We now professe to seek God, we desire to see light, &c.

I know there is a time when God will not be found,⁶ though men seek him early Prov. 1.

There

1 Mr Cottons reluctancy in himselfe con-|cerning the way of perse-|cution.

2 An unmerci-|full speech from a merci-|full man.

3 Gods wisdom in the season of publishing this letter

4 Times of en-|quirie after Christ.

5 A golden speech of a Parliament man.

6 Times when seeking of God comes too late.

There is a time when Prayer and Fasting comes too late, Jer. 14.

There is a seeking of the God of Israel with a stumbling block, according to which God giveth his Israel an answer, Ezek. 13.

Lastly, there is a Proud refusall of the mind of God, returned in Answer by the Prophet Jer. 42.

Love bids me hope for bettes things: Gods promise assures us, that his people returning from Captivity,⁷ shall seeke him and pray and find him, when they seek him with their whole heart, Jer. 27. And Gods Angel comforts those against all feares, that seeke Iesus that was Crucified, Mark 16.

Thy soule so prosper (who ever thou art) Worthy Reader, as with thy whole heart thou seekest that true Lord Iesus, who is holynesse it selfe, and requires a Spirituall and holy Bride like to himselfe, the pure and spotlesse Lambe.⁸ Hee alone as he is able to save thee to the utmost from thy sins and sorrowes by his Blood. So hath hee brought his Fathers Councell, from his Bosome, and every soule is bound (on paine of eternall Paines) to attend alone his Lawes and Ordinances, Commands and Statutes, Heb. 7. Acts 3.

That Lord Iesus,⁹ who purposely chose to descend of meane and infe-riour Parents, a Carpenter, &c.

Who disdained not to enter this World in a Stable, amongst Beasts, as unworthy the society of Men: Who past through this World with the esteeme of a Mad man, a Deceiver, a Conjurer, a Traytor against Caesar, and destitute of an house wherein to rest his head: Who mad choice of his first and greatest Embassadors out of Fisher-men Tent-makers, &c. and at last chose to depart on the stage of a pianfull shamefull Gibbet.

If him thou seekest in these searching times, mak'st him alone thy white and soules beloved,¹⁰ willing to follow and be like him in doing, in suffering: although thou find'st him not in the restauration of his Ordinances, according to his first Patterne.

Yet shalt thou see him, raigne with him, eternally admire him, and enjoy him, when he shortly comes in flaming fire to burne up millions of ignorant and disobedient.

Your most Unworthy Countrey-man

Roger Williams.

7 Whole hearted seekers the on-|ly seekers of Christ Iesus.

8 Christ Iesus whom he sa-|veth he tea-|cheth,

9 The true Lord Iesus studied hnmility and selfe-deniall.

10 Seekers of Christ are sure of a gracious answer, 2 Thess: 1.

Mr. Cottons Letter

Examined and Answered.

CHAP. I.

Mr. Cotton.



ELOVED In Christ.

Answer. Though I humbly desire to acknowledge my selfe unworthy to be beloved and most of all unworthy of the name of Christ,¹¹ and to be beloved for his sake: yet since Mr. *Cotton* is pleased to use such an affectionate compellation and testimoniall expression, to one so afflicted and persecuted by Himselfe and others (whom for their personall worth and godlinesse I also honour and love.) I desire it may be seriously reviewed by Himselfe and Them, and all men, whether the Lord Jesus be well pleased that one, beloved in him, should (for no other cause, then shall presently appeare) be denied the common aire to breath in, and a civill cohabitation upon the same common earth; yea and also without mercy and humane compassion be exposed to winter miseries in a howling Wildernes?

And I aske further,¹² Whether (since Mr. *Cotton* elsewhere professeth to expect farre greater light then yet shines) upon the same grounds and practise, if Christ Jesus in any of his Servants shall be pleased to hold forth a further light, Christ Jesus himselfe shall finde the Mercy and Humanity of a civill and temporall life and being with them?

Mr. *Cotton.* Though I have little hope (when I consider the uncircumcision of mine own lips) that you will hearken to

B

my

¹¹ A monstrous Paradox, that Gods children should perse-|cute Gods chil-|dren, and that they that hope to live eternal-|ly together with Christ Iesus in the heavens should not suffer each other to live in this common aire together, &c. I am informed it was the Speech of an honourable Knight of the Parlia-|ment: What, Christ persecute Christ in New England?

¹² Mr. Cotton ex-|pecting more Light; must (according to his way of per-|secution) per-|secute Christ Iesus if he bring it.

my voice, who have not hearkned to the body of the whole Church of *Christ* with you, and the testimony and judgement of so many Elders and Brethren of other Churches! Yet I trust my labour will be accepted of the Lord, and who can tell but that he may blesse it to you also, if (by his help) I endeavour to shew you the sandines of those grounds, out of which you have banished your self from the fellowship of all the Churches in these Countries.

Answ. First I acknowledge it an holy Character of an heavenly Spirit,¹³ to make ingenuous true acknowledgement of an uncircumcised lip: yet that discerning Spirit, which God graciously vouchsafeth to them that tremble at his word, shall not only find that not only the will worships of men may be painted and varnished over with the glittering shew of humility,¹⁴ *Coloss.* 2. but also Gods dearest servants (eminent for humility and meeknes) may yet be troubled with a swelling of spirituall pride out of the very sence of their humility: It pleased God to give *Paul* himselfe preventing physick against this distemper, in the midst of Gods gracious revelation to him.¹⁵ And what an humble argument doth *David* use, when himself advised by *Nathan*, went about an evill work out of an holy intention, to wit, a work of will worship, in building the Temple unbidden? *Behold I dwell in an house of cedars, but the Arke of God in a tent,* 2 *Sam.* 7. Humility is never in season to set up superstition, or to persecute Gods children.

CHAP. II.

Secondly I observe his charge against me, for not hearkning to a twofold voice of Christ: first of the whole Church of Christ with me.

Unto which I answere, according to my conscience and perswasion. I was then charged by Office with the feeding of that flock: and when in the apprehension of some publike evils,¹⁶ the whole Countrey profest to humble it selfe and seek God, I endeavoured (as a faithfull Watchman on the walls to sound the Trumpet and give the Alarum: and upon a Fast day, in faithfullnes and uprightnesse (as then and still I am perswaded) I discovered 11 publike sins, for which I beleaved (and doe) it pleased God to inflict, and further to threaten publike calamities. Most of which [?????] (if not all) that Church then seemed to assent unto: untill afterward in my troubles
the

13 Will-worship | varnished over with the glit-|tering shew of Humility.

14 Spirituall pride may swell, out of the sence of a mans Hu-|mility.

15 Humility most unseasonable in setting up will-worship, or persecuting others.

16 Publike sins the cause of publike Cala-|mities, must be faithfully dis-|covered by spi-|ritual watch-|men.

the greater part of that Church, was swayed and bowed (whether for feare of persecution or otherwise) to say and practise what to my knowledge, with signes and groans many of them mourned under.

I know the Church of *Colosse* must say to *Archippus*,¹⁷ *Take heed to thy Ministry*,¹⁸ &c, which he may negligently and proudly refuse to hearken to: But let my case be considered, and the word of the Lord examined, and the difference of my case will shine forth, and my faithfullnes and uprightnes to God and the soules of that people will witnesse for me, when my soule comes to *Hezechiahs* case on his death bed, and in that great day approaching.

For my not hearkning to the second voice, the testimony of so many Elders and Brethren of other Churches (because I truly esteem and honour the persons of which the New-English Churches are constituted.)¹⁹ I will not answer the argument of numbers and multitudes against One, as we use to answer the Popish universalitie, that God somtimes stirs up one *Elijah* against 800. of *Baals* Priests, one *Micaiah* against 400. of *Ahabs* Prophets; one *Athanasius* against many hundredth of *Arrian* Bishops; one *Iohn Hus* against the whole Council of *Constance*; *Luther* and the 2 Witnesses against many thousands &c.²⁰ Yet this I may truly say, that *David* himself and the Princes of *Israel* and 30 thousand *Israel*, carrying up the *Arke*, were not to be hearkned to nor followed in their (as I may say) holy rejoycings and Triumphings, the due Order of the Lord, yet being wanting to their holy intentions and affections, and the Lord at last sending in a sad stop and breach of *Vzzah*, amongst them (*Perez Vzzah*) as he hath ever yet done, and will doe in all the Reformations that have been hitherto made by his *Davids*, which are not after the due Order. To which purpose, it is maintained by the Papists themselves,²¹ and by their Councils that Scripture only must be heard: yea one Scripture in the mouth of one simple *Mechannick* before the whole Council. By that only do I desire to stand or fall in triall or judgement: *For all flesh is grasse, and the beautie of flesh, (the most wisest, holiest, learnedst) is but the flowre or beautie of grasse, only the word of Jehovah standeth fast for ever.*

B 2

CHAP.

17 Coloss. 4.

18 Faithfullnes to God and Man (though for present Censu-|red) will give rejoycing in day of Death and judgement

19 The Popish ar-|gument from Multitudes.

20 David and the Princes and 30 thousand of Israel, a type of Gods best servants refor-|ming, yet not after the due Order.

21 An excellent confession of the Papists concerning Scripture.

CHAP. III.

Thirdly Mr. *Cotton* endeavoureth to discover the sandines of those grounds out of which (as he saith) I have banished my selfe, &c.

I answer, I question not his holy and loving intentions and affections,²² and that my grounds seem sandie to himselfe and others. Those intentions and affections may be accepted (as his person) with the Lord, as *David* of his desires to build the Lord a Temple, though on sandy grounds. Yet Mr. *Cottons* endeavours to prove the firm rock of the truth of Jesus to be the weak and uncertain sand of mans invention those shall perish and burn like hay or stubble. The rockie strength of those grounds shall more appeare in the Lords season, and himselfe may yet confesse so much, as since he came into New *England* he hath confest the sandines of the grounds of many of his practises in which he walked in Old *England*,²³ and the rockinesse of their grounds that witnessed against them and himselfe, in those practises, though for that time their grounds seemed sandie to him.

When my selfe heretofore (through the mercy of the most high discovered to himselfe and other eminent servants of *God*, my grounds against their using of the Common Prayer; my grounds seemed sandie to them, which since in New *England* Mr. *Cotton* hath acknowledged rockie,²⁴ and hath seen cause so to publish to the world in his Discourse to Mr. *Ball*, against set Forms of Prayer.

But because the Reader may aske both Mr. *Cotton* and me, what were the grounds of such a sentence of Banishment against me, which are here called sandie, I shall relate in briefe what those grounds were, some whereof he is pleased to discusse in this Letter, and others of them not to mention.

After my publike triall and answers at the generall Court, one of the most eminent Magistrates (whose name and speech may by others be remembred) stood up and spake:

Mr. *Williams* (said he) holds forth these 4. particulars;²⁵

First, That we have not our Land by Pattent from the King, but that the Natives are the true owners of it, and that we ought to repent of such a receiving it by Pattent.

Secondly, That it is not lawfull to call a wicked person to Swear, to Pray, as being actions of Gods Worship.

Thirdly

22 Good intenti-|ons and affe-|ctions in Gods people, accepte with God, when their in-|devours perish and burn like stubble, &c.

23 Many grounds seemed sandie to Mr. Cotton in Old Eng-|land, which now he confes-|seth to be rockie.

24 Mr. Cotton formerly per-|swaded to pra-|ctise Common Prayer: but since hath writt'n against it.

25 The 4 particu-|lar Grounds of my Sentence of Banishment.

Thirdly, That it is not lawfull to heare any of the Ministers of the Parish Assemblies in *England*.

Fourthly, That the Civill Magistrates power extends only to the Bodies and Goods, and outward state of men, &c.

I acknowledge the particulars were rightly summ'd up, and I also hope, that, as I then maintained the Rockie strength of them to my own & other consciences satisfaction, so (through the Lords assistance) I shall be ready for the same grounds, not only to be bound and banished, but to die also, in *New England*, as for most holy Truths of God in Christ Jesus.

Yea but (saith hee) upon those grounds you banished your selfe from the society of the Churches in these countries.

I answer, if Mr. *Cotton* mean my owne voluntary withdrawing from those Churches resolved to continue in those evils, and persecuting the witnesses of the Lord presenting light unto them,²⁶ I confesse it was mine owne voluntary act; yea, I hope the act of the Lord Jesus sounding forth in me (a poore despised Rams horn) the blast which shall in his owne holy season cast down the strength and confidence of those inventions of men in the worshipping of the true and living God. And lastly, his act in inabling me to be faithfull in any measure to suffer such great and mighty trials for his names sake. But if by banishing my selfe he intend the act of civill banishment from their common earth and aire,²⁷ I then observe with griefe the language of the Dragon in a lambs lip. Among other expressions of the Dragon are not these common to the witnesses of the Lord Jesus rent and torne by his persecutions?²⁸ Goe now, say you are persecuted, you are persecuted for Christ suffer for your conscience: No, it is your schisme, heresie, obstinacie, the Divill hath deceived thee, thou hast justly brought this upon thee, thou hast banished thy selfe, &c. Instances are abundant in so many bookes of Martyrs, and the experience of all men, and therefore I spare to recite in so short a treatise.

Secondly, if he mean this civill act of banishing, why should he call a civill sentence from the civill State, within a few weeks execution in so sharp a time of *New Englands* cold.²⁹ Why should he call this a banishment from the Churches, except he silently confesse, that the frame or constitution of their Churches is but implicitly National (which yet they professe

B 3

against)

²⁶ Christ Iesus speaketh and suffereth in his witnesses.

²⁷ The Dragons language in a Lambs lip.

²⁸ Gods children persecuted are charged by their enemies to be the authors of their own persecution.

²⁹ A Nationall Church the silent Common weale, or or world, silently confest by Mr. Cotton to be all one.

against) for otherwise why was I not yet permitted to live in the world, or Common-weale, except for this reason, that the Common weale and Church is yet but one, and hee that is banished from the one, must necessarily bee banished from the other also.

CHAP. IV.

Mr. *Cotton*. Let not any prejudice against my person, I beseech you, forestall either your affection or judgement, as if I had hastened forward the sentence of your civill banishment; for what was done by the Magistrates in that kind, was neither done by my counsell nor consent.

Ans. Although I desire to heare the voyce of God from a stranger,³⁰ an equall, an inferiour, yea an enemy; yet I observe how this excellent man cannot but confesse how hard it is for any man to doe good to speak effectually to the soule or conscience of any whose body he afflicts and persecutes, and that onely for their soule and conscience sake.³¹ Hence excellent was the observation of a worthy Gentleman in the Parliament against the Bishops, viz. That the Bishops were farre from the practice of the Lord Jesus, who together with his word preached to the soules of men, shewed their bodies so much mercie and loving kindnesse: whereas the Bishops on the contrary persecute, &c.

Now to the ground from whence my prejudice might arise, he professeth my banishment proceeded not with his counsell or consent.³² I answer, I doubt not but that what Mr. *Cotton* and others did in procuring my sorrowes, was not without some regret and reluctancie of conscience and affection (as like it is that *David* could not procure *Vriahs* death, nor *Asa* imprison the Prophet with a quiet and free conscience.) Yet to the particular that Mr. *Cotton* consented not, what need he being not one of the civill Court? But that hee counselled it (and so consented,) beside what other prooffe I might produce, and what himselfe here under expresseth, I shall produce a double and unanswerable testimony.

First,³³ hee publickly taught, and teacheth (except lately Christ Jesus hath taught him better) that body-killing, soule-killing, and State-killing doctrine of not permitting, but persecuting all other consciences and wayes of worship but his own in the civill State, and so consequently in the whole world,

³⁰ Persecutors of mens bodies seldome or never do these mens soules good.

³¹ An excellent observation of a worthy Parliament man.

³² Gods children are not so free in persecuting Gods children, as persecutors, whose profes-|sed nature & trade it is.

³³ M. Cotton by teaching persecution cannot but consent to it, &c.

world, if the power or Empire thereof were in his hand.

Secondly,³⁴ as at that sentence divers worthy Gentlemen durst not concurre with the rest in such a course, so some that did consent, have solemnly testified, and with teares, since to my selfe confessed, that they could not in their soules have been brought to have consented to the sentence, had not Mr. *Cotton* in private given them advice and counsell, proving it just and warrantable to their consciences.

I desire to bee as charitable as charity would have me, and therefore would hope that either his memory faild him, or that else he meant that in the very time of sentence passing he neither counselled nor consented (as hee hath since said, that he withdrew himselfe and went out from the rest) probably out of that reluctance which before I mentioned; and yet if so, I cannot reconcile his owne expression: for thus hee goes on.

CHAP. V.

Mr. *Cotton*. Although I dare not deny the sentence passed to be righteous in the eyes of God, who hath said, that *he that withholdeth the corne* (which is the staffe of life) *from the people, the multitude shall curse him*, Prov. 11. 26. how much more shall they separate such from them, as doe withhold and separate them from the ordinances, or the ordinances from them (which are in Christ the bread of life.)

*Answ.*³⁵ I desire to informe the Reader why it pleaseth Mr. *Cotton* to produce this Scripture.³⁶ One of our Disputes was concerning the true Ministry appointed by the Lord Jesus. Another was concerning the fitnessse and qualification of such persons as have right (according to the rules of the Gospel) to choose and enjoy such a true Ministry of the Lord Jesus. Hence because I professed, and doe, against the office of any ministry but such as the Lord Jesus appointeth, this Scripture is produced against me.

Secondly, let this be observed for satisfaction to many, who enquire into the cause of my sufferings,³⁷ that it pleaseth Mr. *Cotton* onely to produce this Scripture for justifying the sentence as righteous in the eyes of God, implying what our chief difference was, and consequently what it was for which I chiefly suffered, to wit, concerning the true Ministry of Christ Jesus. But to the Scripture, let the people curse such
as

34 Mr. Cotton privatly satisfied the consciences of some that questioned, Whether per-|secution for conscience were lawfull.

35 Pro. 11. 26.

36 The Scripture produced by Mr. Cotton to prove my banishment lawfull, dis-|cussed.

37 Mr. Cotton satisfies all men concer-|ning the chief cause of my banishment.

as hoord up corporall or spirituall corn;³⁸ and let those be blessed that sell it: will it therefore follow, that either the one or the other may lawfully bee sold or bought but with the good will, consent and authority of the true owner?

Doth not even the common civill Market abhorre and curse that man, who carries to market and throws about good corn, against the owners mind and expresse command, who yet is willing and desirous it should bee sold plenteously, if with his consent, according to his order, and to his honest and reasonable advantage? This is the case of the true and false Ministry.³⁹ Far bee it from my soules thought to stop the sweet streams of the water of life, from flowing to refresh the thirsty, or the bread of life from feeding hungry soules: And yet I would not, and the Lord Iesus would not that one drop or one crum, or grain should be unlawfully, disorderly, or prodigally disposed of: for, from the scorner, contradicters, despisers, persecuters, &c. the Apostles messengers of the Lord Iesus, were to turne and to shake off the dust of their feet: yea, it pleased the Spirit of the Lord to forbid the Apostles to preach at all to some places, at some times: so that the whole dispose of this spirituall corn, for the persons selling, their qualifications,⁴⁰ commissions or callings, the quantities and qualities of the corne, the price for which, the persons to whom, the place where, and time when the great Lord of the harvest must expresse his holy will and pleasure, which must humbly and faithfully be attended on.

In which regard Mr. *Cotton* deals most partially: for would Mr. *Cotton* himself have preached in Old, or will hee in New *England* with submission but to some few ceremonies, as the selling of this spirituall corn in a white Coat, a Surplice? Did hee not rather choose (which I mention to the Lords and Mr. *Cottons* honour) to have shut up his sacks mouth,⁴¹ to have been silenced (as they call it) and imprisoned, then to sel that heavenly corn otherwise then as he was perswaded the Lord appointed? yea hath hee not in *New England* refused to admit the children of godly parents to baptism, or the parents themselves unto the fellowship of the Supper, untill they came into that order which he conceived was the Order of the Lords appointing?

Againe (to descend to humane courses) doe not all civill
men

38 The word of the Lord is the soules corn, yet must it be dispensed according to the word of the Lord.

39 To some parts the Apostles were forbidden to preach, and from others to depart shaking off the dust, &c.

40 All the Lords corn must bee sold according to the Lords ordinance.

41 Mr. *Cotton* himself choosing rather to sell no spirituall corn, then [?????] to some ceremonies

men throughout the world,⁴² forbid all building, planting, merchandizing, marrying, execution of Justice; yea, all actions of peace or warre, but by a true and right Commission, and in a right Order? Is it not, in this present storm of *Englands* sorrows one of the greatest Quaeries in all the Kingdom, who are the true Officers,⁴³ true Commanders, true Justices, true Commissioners; which is the true Seale? And doubtles as Truth is but One, so but the one sort is True, and ought to be submitted to, and the contrary resisted; although it should be granted that the Officers questioned and their actions were noble, excellent and beyond exception.

I judge it not here seasonable to entertaine the dispute of the true power and call of Christs Ministerie: I shall only adde a word to this Scripture, as it is brought to prove a righteous sentence of Banishment on my selfe or any that plead against a false office of Ministrie.⁴⁴ 'Tis true in the Nationall Church of *Israel* (the then only Church and Nation of God) he that did ought presumptuously was to be accursed and to be put to death, *Deut* 15. a figure of the spirituall putting to death an obstinate sinner in the Church of Christ, who refusing to heare the voice of Christ, is to be cut off from Christ and Christians, and to be esteemed as an Heathen, that is, a Gentile or Publican *Math.* 18. Hence consequently the not selling, or the withholding of Corne presumptuously was Death in *Israel*: But Mr. *Cotton* cannot prove that every willfull withholding of Corne,⁴⁵ in all or any State in the world, and that in time of plenty, is death: for as for Banishment, we never heare of any such course in *Israel*. And secondly, least of all can he prove, that in all civill States of the world, that man that pleadeth against a false Ministrie, or that being able to preach Christ and doubting of the true way of the Ministrie since the Apostacie of Antichrist dares not practise a Ministrie. Or that many excellent and worthy Gentlemen, Lawyers, Physitians and others (as well gifted in the knowledge of the Scripture, and furnished with the gifts of tongues and utterance, as most that professe the Ministry, and yet are not perswaded to sell spirituall corne; as questioning their true Calling and Commission. I say, Mr. *Cotton* doth not, nor will he ever prove that these or any of these ought to be put to Death or Banishment in every Land or Country. The selling

C

ling

42 In civil thing nothing law-|full but what is according to law and order.

43 In England now not per-|sons fit, but also truly au-|thorized, are true officers.

44 The curse of death in Isra-|el of old, is spirituall death, and spirituall cut-|ting off in the Church of Christ, and Christian Is-|rael now.

45 Such as are excellently fitted to sell the spirituall corne of the word of the Lord, and yet find not their call to the mi-|nistry, are not to bee put to death or ba-|nished.

ling or withholding of spirituall corne,⁴⁶ are both of a spirituall nature, and therefore must necessarily in a true parallell beare relation to a spiritual curse. *Paul* wishing himselfe accursed from Christ for his Countrey mens sake (*Rom.* 9.) he spake not of any temporall death or banishment. Yet neerer, being fitly qualified and truly called by Christ to the Ministrie,⁴⁷ he cries out (*1 Cor.* 9.) *Woe to me if I preach not the Gospel:* yet did not *Paul* intend, that therefore the Roman *Nero*, or any subordinate power under him in *Corinth*, should have either banished or put *Paul* to death having committed nothing against the civill State worthy of such a civill punishment: yea and Mr. *Cotton* himselfe seemeth to question the sandines of such a ground to warrant such proceedings, for thus he goes on.

CHAP. VI.

Mr. *Cotton*. And yet it may be they passed that sentence against you, not upon that ground: but for ought I know, for your other corrupt Doctrines, which tend to the disturbance which was sent to the Brethren of the Church of *Salem* and your selfe.⁴⁸

I answer, it is no wonder that so many having bin demanded the cause of my suffrings have answered, that they could not tell for what, since Mr. *Cotton* himselfe knows not distinctly what cause to assigne: but saith, it may be they passed not that sentence on that ground, &c. Oh, where was the waking care of so excellent & worthy a man, to see his brother and beloved in Christ so afflicted, he knows not distinctly for what.

He alleadgeth a Scripture, to prove the Sentence righteous, and yet concludeth it may be it was not for that, but for other corrupt Doctrines which he nameth not, nor any Scripture to prove them corrupt, or the sentence righteous for that cause. O that it may please the Father of lights to awaken both himself and other of my honoured Countreymen, to see how though their hearts wake (in respect of personall grace and life of Jesus) yet they sleep, insensible of much concerning the purity of the Lords worship, or the sorrows of such whom they stile Brethren, and beloved in Christ, afflicted by them.

But though he name not these corrupt Doctrines, a little before I have, as they were publikely summed up and charged upon me, and yet none of them tending to the breach of holy
or

⁴⁶ Spirituall of-| fences are only liable to a spiritual cen-| sure.

⁴⁷ Paul not to be banished or kild by Nero for not prea-| ching the Gospel.

⁴⁸ M. Cotton himselfe ig-| norant of the cause of my sufferings.

or civill peace,⁴⁹ of which I have ever desired to be unfaindly tender, acknowledging the Ordinance of Magistracie to be properly and adequatly fitted by God, to preserve the civill State in civill peace and order: as he hath also appointed a spirituall Government and Governours in matters pertaining to his worship and the consciences of men, both which Governments, Governours, Laws, Offences, Punishments, are Essentially distinct, and the confounding of them brings all the world into Combustion. He addes:

CHAP. VII.

Mr. *Cotton*. And to speak freely what I think, were my soule in your soules stead, I should think it a worke of mercy of God to Banish me from the civill societie of such a Commonweale, where I could not enjoy holy fellowship with any Church of God amongst them without sin: What should the daughter of *Sion* do in *Babel*, why should she not hasten to flee from thence?

Ans. Love bids me hope that Mr. *Cotton* here intended me a Cordiall, to revive me in my sorrows: yet if the ingredients be examined, there will appeare no lesse, then Dishonour to the name of God, Danger to every civill State, a miserable Comfort to my selfe, and contradiction within it selfe.

For the last first.⁵⁰ If he call the Land *Babel* mystically (which he must needs doe or els speak not to the point, how can it be *Babel*, and yet the Church of Christ also?

Secondly, it is a dangerous Doctrine to affirme it a misery to live in that State where a Christian cannot enjoy the fellowship of the publike Churches of God without sinne. Do we not know many famous states wherin is known no Church of Jesus Christ?⁵¹ Did not God command his people to pray for the peace of the materiall Citie of *Babel* (*Jer.* 27.) and to seek the peace of it though no Church of God in *Babel*, in the form and Order of it? Or did *Sodome*, *Ægypt*, *Babel*, signifie material *Sodome*, *Egypt*, *Babel*, *Rev.* 11. 8. & 18. 4?

There was a true Church of Jesus Christ in materiall *Babel*, (*1 Pet.* 5. 13.)⁵² Was it then a mercy for all the inhabitants of *Babel*, to have been banished, whom the Church of Jesus Christ durst not to have received to holy fellowship? Or was it a mercy for any person to have been banished the City, and driven to the miseries of a barbarous wildernes, him and

C 2

his

49 Civill peace and civil Magistracie blessed ordi-|nances of God,

50 A land cannot be *Babel*, and yet a Church of Christ.

51 Famous civill States where yet no sound of Jesus Christ.

52 A true church of Jesus Christ in materiall Babylon.

his, if some barre had layn upon his conscience, that he could not have enjoyed fellowship with the true Church of Christ?

Thirdly, for my selfe, I acknowledge it a blessed gift of God to be inabled to suffer,⁵³ and so to be banished for his Names sake: and yet I doubt not to affirm, that Mr. *Cotton* himselfe would have counted it a mercy, if he might have practised in Old England what now he doth in New, with the injoyment of the civill peace, safetie and protection of the State.

Or should he dissent from the New English Churches, and joyn in worship with some other (as some few yeares since he was upon the point to doe in a separation from the Churches there as legall) would he count it a mercy to be pluckt up by the roots,⁵⁴ him and his, and to endure the losses, distractions, miseries that doe attend such a condition. The truth is, both the mother and the Daughter Old and New England, for the Countries and Governments are Lands and Governments incomparable: And might it please God to perswade the mother to permit the inhabitants of New England her daughter to enjoy their conscience to God, after a particular Congregationall way, and to perswade the daughter to permit the inhabitants of the mother Old England to walke there after their conscience of a Parishionall way, (which yet neither mother nor daughter is perswaded to permit.) I conceive Mr. *Cotton* himselfe, were he seated in Old England againe, would not count it a mercy to be banished from the civil state.

And therefore (lastly) as he casts dishonour upon the name of God,⁵⁵ to make him the Author of such cruell mercy, so had his soule been in my soules case, exposed to the miseries, poverties, necessities, wants, debts, hardships of Sea and Land, in a banished condition; he would I presume, reach forth a more mercifull cordiall to the afflicted. But he that is despised and afflicted is like a lamp despised in the eyes of him that is at ease: *Iob*.

CHAP. VIII.

Mr. *Cotton*. Yea but he speaks not these things to adde affliction to the afflicted, but if it were the holy will of God to move me to a serious sight of my sinne, and of the justice of Gods hand against it: Against your corrupt Doctrines it pleased the Lord Jesus to fight against you with the sword of
his

⁵³ The mercy of a civill State distinct from mercies of a spirituall na-|ture.

⁵⁴ Old and New England for the Countries and civill go-|vernment in-|comparable.

⁵⁵ Mr. *Cotton* not having felt the mise-|ries of others, can bee no equall judge of them.

his mouth, as himselfe speaketh *Rev. 2.* in the mouthes and testimonies of the Churches & Brethren, against whom when you overhear your selfe in reasoning and disputing, against the light of his truth, it pleased him to stop your mouth by a sudden Disease, and to threaten to take breath from you: But you instead of recoiling (as even *Balaam* offered to doe in the like case) chose rather to persist in the way, and protest against all the Churches and brethren that stood in your way: and thus the good hand of Christ that should have humbled you to see and turn from the error of your way, hath rather hardened you therin, and quickned you only to see failings (yea intollerable errors) in all the Churches and brethren, rather then in your selfe.

Answer. In these lines, an humble and discerning spirit may espie: First a glorious justification and boasting of Himselfe and others concurring with him. Secondly, an unrighteous and uncharitable censure of the afflicted.

To the first I say no more,⁵⁶ but let the light of the holy lant-horne of the word of God discover and try with whom the sword of Gods mouth (that is the testimony of the holy Scripture, for Christ, against Antichrist) abideth. And whether my self and such poore Witnesses of Jesus Christ in Old and New *England*, Low-Countries, &c. desiring in meeknes and patience to testifie the truth of Jesus, against all false callings of Ministers,⁵⁷ &c. Or Mr. *Cotton* (however in his person holy and beloved) swimming with the stream of outward credit and profit, and smiting with the fist and sword of persecution such as dare not joyn in worship with him; I say, whether of either be the Witnesses of Christ Jesus, in whose mouth is the sword of his mouth, the sword of the Spirit, the holy word of God, and whether is most like to *Balaam*?

To the second: his censure. It is true, it pleased God by excessive labours on the Lords dayes,⁵⁸ and thrice a week at *Salem*, by labours day and night in my Field with my own hands, for the maintenance of my charge; by travells also by day and night to goe and return from their Court (and not by overheating in dispute, divers of themselves confessing publicly my moderation) it pleased God to bring me neare unto death, in which time (notwithstanding the mediating testimony of two skillfull in Physick) I was unmercifully driven from my

C 3

chamber

⁵⁶ The lant-horne of Gods word must alone try who fights with the sword of Gods mouth, the same word of God.

⁵⁷ Whether Mr. Cotton persecuting, or the answerer persecuted, bee likest to *Balaam*.

⁵⁸ The answerers profession concerning his sicknes, which Mr. Cotton upbraids to him.

chamber to a Winters flight. During my sicknes, I humbly appeale unto the Father of Spirits for witnes of the upright and constant diligent search my spirit made after him, in the examination of all passages, both my private disquisitions with all the chief of their Ministers, and publike agitations of points controverted: and what gracious fruit I reaped from that sicknes, I hope my soule shall never forget. However I mind not to number up a catalogue of the many censures upon Gods servants in the time of Gods chastisements and visitations on them,⁵⁹ both in Scripture, History and experience. Nor retort the many evils which it pleased God to bring upon some chief procurers of my sorrows, nor upon the whole State immediatly after them, which many of their own have observed and reported to me: but I commit my cause to him that judgeth Righteously, and yet resolve to pray against their Evils, *Psal.* 141.

CHAP. IX.

Mr. *Cotton*. In which course though you say you doe not remember an houre, wherein the countenance of the Lord was darkned to you; yet be not deceived, it is no new thing with Sathan to transform himselfe into an Angel of light, and to cheare the soule with false peace, and with flashes of counterfeit consolation: Sad and wofull is the memorie of Mr. *Smiths* strong consolation on his death-bed, which is set as a seale to his grosse and damnable Arminianisme, and Enthusiasme delivered in the confession of his Faith, prefixed to the Storie of his life and death. *The countenance of God is upon his people when they feare him*, not when they presume of their own strength, and his consolations are not found in the way of pride and error, but in the wayes of humilitie and truth.

Ans. To that part which concerns my self, the speech hath reference either to the matter of justification, or else matter of my affliction for Christ, of both which I remember I have had discourse.

For the first I have exprest in some conference (as Mr. *Cotton* himselfe hath also related concerning some,⁶⁰ with whom I am not worthy to be named) that after first manifestations of the countenance of God, reconciled in the blood of his Son unto my soule, my questions and trouble have not been concerning my reconciliation and peace with God, but concerning sanctification

⁵⁹ Scripture, hi-|story, experi-|ence can wit-|nes the cen-|sures upon Gods servants in their affli-|ctions.

⁶⁰ A soule at peace with God may yet endure great combats con-|cerning san-|ctification.

ctification and fellowship with the holines of God, in which respect I desire to cry (with Paul) in the bitternes of my spirit, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!*

Secondly, it may have reference to some conference concerning affliction for his Names sake, in which respect I desire to acknowledge the faithfullnes of his word and promise, *to be with his in 6 troubles and in 7, through fire and water*, making good 100 fold with persecution,⁶¹ to such of his servants as suffer ought for his names sake: and I have said and must say, and all Gods witnesses that have borne any paine or losse for Jesus, must say, that fellowship with the Lord Jesus in his sufferings is sweeter then all the fellowship with sinners, in all the profits, honours, and pleasures of this present evill world. And yet 2 things I desire to speak to all men and my selfe,⁶² *Let every man prove his worke*, Gal. 6. *and then shall he have rejoycing in himselfe, and not in another*. Secondly, if any man love God, that soule knows God, or rather is known of God (1 Cor. 8.) Selfe-love may burn the bodie, but happy only he whose love alone to Christ constrains him to be like unto him, and suffer with him.

To that which concerneth Mr. *Smith*,⁶³ although I knew him not, and have heard of many points, in which my conscience tells me, it pleased the Lord to leave him to himselfe; yet I have also heard by some (whose testimonie Mr. *Cotton* will not easilie refuse) that he was a man fearing God: and I am sure Mr. *Cotton* hath made some use of those principles and arguments on which Mr. *Smith* and others went, concerning the constitution of the Christian Church. The infinite compassions of God,⁶⁴ which lay no sin to *Davids* charge but the sin of *Vriiah*, 1 King. 15. have graciously comforted the soules of his on their death-bed, accepting and crowning their *uprightness* and *faithfullnes*, and passing by what otherwise is grievous and offensive to him. And indeed from the due consideration of that instance, it appeares that no sin is comparably so grievous in *Gods Davids*,⁶⁵ as a treacherous slaughter of the *faithfull*, whom we are forced to call *beloved in Christ*: That opinion in Mr. *Cotton* or any, is the most grievous to God or man, and not comparable to any that ever Mr. *Smith* could be charged with. It is true, the countenance and consolations of God are found
in

61 Affliction for Christ sweet.

62 Two cautions for any in persecution for conscience.

63 Mr. *Smith* godly, and a light to Mr. *Cotton* and o-|thers, though left to himself in some things.

64 Gods infinite compassions toward those whose hearts are upright with him

65 The opinion of putting V-|riah to death, the vilest of all opinions.

in the wayes of humilitie and truth,⁶⁶ and Sathan transformeth him like to an Angel of light in a counterfeit of both: In which respect I desire *to worke out salvation with feare and trembling*, and to doe nothing in the affaires of God and his Worship, but (like the weights of the Sanctuarie) with *double care, diligence and consideration*, above all the affaires of this vanishing life. And yet *Christs consolations* are so sweet, that the soule that tasteth them in truth, in suffering for any truth of his, will not easily part with them, though thousands are deceiv'd and deluded with counterfeits.

CHAP. X,

Mr. Cotton. Two stumbling blocks (I perceive) have turned you off from Fellowship with us. First the want of fit matter of our Church. Secondly, disrespect of the Separate Churches in *England* under affliction, our selves practising Separation in peace.

For the first, you acknowledge, as you say, with joy, that godly persons are the visible members of these *Churches*, but yet you see not that godly persons are matter fitted to constitute a *Church*, no more then Trees or Quarries are fit matter proportioned to the building. This exception seemeth to me to imply a contradiction to it selfe, for if the matter of the *Churches* be as you say godly persons, they are not then as Trees unfeld, and Stones unhewen: godlinesse cutteth men downe from the former root and heweth them out of the pit of corrupt nature, and fitteth them for fellowship with Christ, and with his people.

You object, first, *a necessity lying upon godly men before they can be fit matter for Church fellowship, to see, bewaile, repent, and come out of the false churches, worship, ministry, government, according to Scriptures Isa. 62. 11. 2 Cor. 6. 17. and this is to be done not by a locall removall or contrary practise, but by a deliverance of the soule, understanding, will, judgement and affection.*

Ans. First we grant that it is not locall removall from former pollution, nor contrary practise, that fitteth us for fellowship with Christ, and his Church, but thas it is necessary also that we repent of such former pollutions wherewith we have been defiled and intralld.

We grant further, that it is likewise necessary to Church-fellowship, we should see and discerne all such pollutions, as do
so

⁶⁶ As the weights of the sanctuary were double, so must there bee dou-|ble pondering in all the af-|fairs of Gods worship.

so farre intrhall us to Antichrist as to separate us from Christ: But this we professe unto you, that wherein we have reformed our practice, therein have we endeavoured unfeignedly to humble our soules for our former contrary walking: if any through hypocrisie are wanting herein, the hidden hypocrisie of some will not prejudice the sinceritie and faithfullnesse of others, nor the Church estate of all.

Answ. That which requireth Answer in this passage, is a charge of a seeming contradiction, to wit, *That persons may be godly, and yet not fitted for Church estate, but remaine as Trees and Quarries unfeld, &c.* Contrary to which it is affirmed, *that godly persons cannot be so intrhalld to Antichrist, as to separate them from Christ.*

For the clearing of which let the word of Truth be rightly divided, and a right distinction of things applyed, there will appeare nothing contradictorie, but cleare and satisfactorie to each mans conscience.

First then I distinguish of a godly person thus:⁶⁷ In some acts of sin which a godly person may fall into, during those acts, although before the all searching and tender eye of God, and also in the eyes of such as are godly, such a person remaineth still godly, yet to the eye of the world externally such a person seemeth ungodly, and a sinner. Thus *Noah* in his Drunkenesse; thus *Abraham, Lot, Samson, Job, David, Peter*, in their lying whoredomes, cursings, Murther, denying and forswearing of Christ Jesus, although they lost not their inward sap and root of life,⁶⁸ yet suffred they a decay and fall of leafe, and the shew of bad and evill Trees. In such a case Mr. *Cotton* will not deny that a godly person falling into drunkennes wheredome deliberate murther, denying and forswearing of Christ, the Church of Christ cannot receive such persons into Church-fellowship, before their sight of humble bewailing and confessing of such evills, notwithstanding that love may conceive there is a root of godlines within.⁶⁹

Secondly Gods children (*Cant. 5.*) notwithstanding a principle of spiriuall life in their soules, yet are lul'd into a long continued sleep in the matters of Gods worship: *I sleep, though my heart waketh.* The heart is awake in spirituall life and grace, as concerning personall union to the Lord Jesus, and conscionable endeavours to please him in what the heart is convinced:

67 The state of godly persons in grosse sins.

68 Godly persons falling into grosse sins, are to expresse repentance before they can be admitted to the church.

69 Gods children long asleep in respect of Gods worship, though alive in the grace of Christ.

ced: yet asleep in respect of abundant ignorance and negligence, and consequently grosse abominations and pollutions of Worship, in which the choisest servants of God, and most faithfull Witnesses of many truths have lived in more or lesse, yea in maine and fundamentall points, ever since the Apostacie.

Not to instance in all,⁷⁰ but in some particulars which Mr. Cotton hath in new *England* reformed. I earnestly beseech himself & all, wel to ponder how far he himself now professeth to see, and practice, that which so many thousands of godly persons of high note in all ages (since the Apostacie) saw not: As

First concerning the nature of a particular Church to consist only of holy and godly persons.

Secondly, of a true Ministrie called by that Church.

Thirdly, a true Worship free from Ceremonies, Common-Prayer, &c.

Fourthly a true Government in the hands only of such Governours and Elders, as are appointed by the Lord Jesus. Hence Gods people not seeing their Captivitie in these points, must first necessarily be inlightned and called out from such Captivitie, before they can be nextly fitted and prepared for the true Church, Worship, Ministrie &c.

CHAP. XI.

Secondly,⁷¹ this will be more cleare if wee consider Gods people and Church of old the Jewes, captivated in materiall Babel, they could not possibly build Gods Altar and Temple at Jerusalem, untill the yoke and bonds of their captivity were broke, and they set free to return with the vessels of the Lords house, to set up his worship in Jerusalem, as we see in the Bookes of *Ezra*, *Nehemia*, *Daniel*, *Haggai*, &c. Hence in the Antitype, Gods people the spiritual and mysticall Jewes cannot possibly erect the Altar of the Lords true worship, and build the Temple of his true Church,⁷² without a true sight of their spirituall bondage in respect of Gods worship, and a power and strength from Jesus Christ to bring them out, and carry them through all difficulties in so mighty a work. And as the being of Gods people in materiall Babel, and a necessity of their comming forth before they could build the Temple, did not in the least deny them to be Gods people: no more now doth Gods people being in mystical Babel (*Rev.* 18) nor

⁷⁰ Mr. Cotton now professes to practise what thou-|sands of Gods people for ma-|ny ages have not seen.

⁷¹ The Jewes of old in the type could not build the Al-|tar and Tem-|ple in Babel, but first they must come forth, & then build at Ieru-|salem.

⁷² Gods mystical Israel in the Antitype must also come forth of Babel before they can build the Temple at Ie-|rusalem.

nor the necessity of their coming forth, hinder or deny the godliness of their persons,⁷³ or spirituall life within them.

Thirdly, how many famous servants of God, and witnesses of Jesus lived and died and were burnt for other truths of Jesus, not seeing the evill of their Antichristian calling of Bishops, &c. How did famous *Luther* himself continue a Monk, set forth the German Masse, acknowledge the Pope, and held other grosse abominations concerning Gods worship, notwithstanding the life of Christ Jesus in him, and wrought in thousands by his means.

Fourthly,⁷⁴ Mr *Cotton* must be requested to remember his own practice (as before) how doth he refuse to receive persons eminent for personal grace and godliness, to the Lords Supper, & other priviledges of Christians (according to the profession of their Church-estate) until they be convinced of the necessity of making & entring into a Church covenant with them, with a confession of farth, &c. and if any cannot bee perswaded of such a covenant and confession (notwithstanding their godliness, yet) are they not admitted.

Lastly, how famous is that passage of that solemne question put to Mr. *Cotton* and the rest of the new English Elders,⁷⁵ by divers of the ministers of old England (eminent for personall godliness, as *Mr. Cotton* acknowledgeth) *viz.* Whether they might be permitted in new England to enjoy their consciences in a Church estate different from the New English: unto which Mr. *Cotton* and the New English Elders returne a plain negative, in effect thus much, with the acknowledgment of their worth and godlines above their owne and their hopes of agreement; Yet in conclusion if they agree not, (which they are not like to doe) and submit to that way of Church-fellowship and Worship which in New *England* is set up, they cannot only not enjoy Church-fellowship together but not permit them to live and breath in the same Aire and Commonweale together, which was my case; although it pleased Mr *Cotton* and others most incensed, to give my selfe a testimony of *godlines*, &c. And this is the reason, why although I confesse with joy the care of the New English Churches, that no person be received to Fellowship with them, in whom they cannot first discerne true Regeneration, and the life of Jesus: yet I said and still affirm, that godlie and regenerate persons

D 2

(accor-

⁷³ Luther and other famous witnesses very grosse concer-|ning Gods worship, though emi-|nent for per-|sonall grace.

⁷⁴ Mr. Cotton refuseth godly persons except they bee con-|vinced of their Church Cove-|nant.

⁷⁵ Mr. Cotton & the English Elders refuse to permit e-|minent Mini-|sters & peo-|ple of Old en-|gland to live in New Eng-|land (not-|withstanding bee confesseth their godlines above his own) if they joynt not in his Church-fellowship.

(according to all the former instances and reasons) are not fitted to constitute the true Christian Church, untill it hath pleased God to convince their soules of the evill of the false Church,⁷⁶ Ministry, Worship, &c. And although I confesse that godly persons are not dead but living Trees, not dead, but living Stones, and need no new Regeneration (and so in that respect need no felling nor digging out) yet need they a mighty worke of Gods Spirit to humble and ashame them, and to cause them to loath themselves for their Abominations or stincks in Gods nostrils (as it pleaseth Gods Spirit to speak of false Worships:) Hence *Ezek.* 43. 11. Gods people are not fit for Gods House, untill holy shame be wrought in them, for what they have done. Hence God promiseth to cause them to *loath themselves*, because they have broken him with their whorish hearts, *Ezek.* 6. 9. And hence it is that I have known some precious godly hearts confesse,⁷⁷ that the plucking of their souls out from the Abominations of false worship, hath been a second kind of Regeneration. Hence was it that it pleased God to say concerning his peoples returne from their Materiall Captivitie (a figure of our Spirituall and mysticall) *that they should not say Jehovah liveth, who brought them from the land of Egypt* (a type of first conversion as is conceived) *but Jehovah liveth who brings them from the land of the North* (a type of Gods peoples return from spirituall bondage to confused and invented Worships.⁷⁸

CHAP. XII.

Now wheras Mr. *Cotton* addeth, That godly persons are not so intrall'd to Antichrist as to separate them from Christ, else they could not be godly persons.

I answer, this comes not neare our Question, which is not concerning personal godlines or grace of Christ but the godlines or Christianitie of Worship. Hence the Scripture holds forth Christ Jesus first personally, as that God Man, that One Mediatour between God and man,⁷⁹ the *Man* Christ Jesus, whom all Gods people by Faith receive, and in receiving become the Sons of God, *Iohn* 1. 12. although they yet see not the particular wayes of his Worship. Thus was it with the Centurion the Woman of *Canaan*, *Cornelius*, and most, at their first conversion.

Secondly, the Scripture holdeth forth Christ as Head of his
Church,

⁷⁶ Godly persons living trees & living stones, yet need much hewing and cutting to bring them from false to true worship.

⁷⁷ The coming forth of false worship a second kind (as it were) of regeneration to Gods people

⁷⁸ Return from the land of the North.

⁷⁹ Christ considered two wayes, first, personally, & so Gods people can never be separated from him.

Church⁸⁰ formed into a Body of worshippers, in which respect the Church is called *Christ*, 1 Cor 12. 12. and the description of *Christ* is admirably set forth in 10 severall parts of a mans bodie, fitting and suiting to the visible profession of Christ in the Church *Cant.* 5.

Now in the former respect Antichrist can never so intral Gods people as to separate them from Christ, that is, from the life and grace of Christ, although he intrall them into never so grosse Abominations concerning Worship: for God will not loose His in *Egypt, Sodome, Babel*, His Jewels are most precious to him though in a Babilonish dunghill, and his Lillie sweet and lovely in the Wildernes commixt with Briars.⁸¹ Yet in the second respect, as Christ is taken for the church, I conceive that Antichrist may separate Gods people from Christ, that is from Christs true visible Church and Worship. This Mr. *Cotton* himselfe will not deny if he remember how little a while it is since the falsehood of a Nationall, Provincial, Diocesan and Parishionall Church, &c. and the truth of a particular Congregation, consisting only of holy persons appeared unto him. The Papists Question to the Protestant *viz.*⁸² *Where was your*

Church before Luther? is thus well answered to wit, That since the Apostacie, Truth, and the *holy city* (according to the Prophecie *Revel.* 11 & 13.) have been troden under foot,⁸³ and the *whole earth* hath wondred after the Beast: yet God hath stir'd up Witnesses to Prophecie in Sackcloth against the Beast, during his 42 *moneths reigne*: yet those Witnesses have in their Times, more or lesse submitted to Antichrist, and his Church, Worship Ministrie, &c. and so consequently have been ignorant of the *true* Christ, that is, Christ taken for the Church in the true profession of that holy Way of Worship, which he himselfe at first appointed.

CHAP. XIII.

Mr. *Cotton*. Secondly, we deny that it is necessary to Church fellowship (that is so necessary that without it a Church cannot be) that the Members admitted thereunto should all of them see, and expresly bewaile all the Pollutions which they have been defiled with in the former Church-fellowship. Ministry, Worship, Government, &c. if they see and bewaile so much of their former pollutions, as did intrall them to Antichrist,

⁸⁰ Secondly, as head of his Church, and so he is often lost and absent from his Spouse.

⁸¹ Gods people cannot serve a false Christ and the true together.

⁸² The Church before Luther.

⁸³ *Revel.* 13.

tichrist, so as to separate them from Christ, and be readie in preparation of heart, as they shall see more Light, so to hate more and more every false way; we conceive it is as much as is necessarily required to separate them from Antichrist, and to fellowship with Christ and his Churches. The Church of Christ admitted many thousand Jewes that beleevd on the name of Christ, although they were still zealous of the Law, and saw not the beggarly emptines of *Moses* his ceremonies, *Acts* 21 20. and the Apostle *Paul* directeth the Romans to receive such unto them as are weake in the faith, and see not their libertie from the servile difference of Meats and Dayes, but still lie under the bondage of the Law; yea he wisheth them to receive such upon this ground, *because Christ hath received them, Rom.* 14. to the sixt.

Say not there is not the like danger of lying under bondage to *Moses* as to Antichrist, for even the bondage under *Moses* was such, as if continued in after instruction and conviction, would separate them from Christ, *Gal.* 5. 2. and bondage under Antichrist could doe no more.

Ans. Here I desire 3. things may be observed:

First Mr. *Cottons* own confession of that two-fold Church estate,⁸⁴ worship, &c. the former false, or else why to be so bewailed and forsaken; the second true, to be imbraced and submitted to.

Secondly, his own confession of that which a little before he would make so odious in me to hold,⁸⁵ *viz.* that Gods people may be so farre intralld to Antichrist, as to separate them from Christ: for saith he. If they see and bewaile so much of their former pollutions, as did intrall them to Antichrist, so as to separate them from Christ.

Thirdly I observe how easilie a soule may wander in his generalls,⁸⁶ for thus he writes, Though they see not *all the pollutions* wherewith they have been defiled in the former Church-fellowship. Again, if they see so much as did intrall them to Antichrist,⁸⁷ and separate them from Christ. And yet he expresseth nothing of that *all the pollutions*, nor what *so much* is as will separate them from Christ. Hence upon that former distinction that Christ in visible Worship is Christ: I demaund, Whether if a godly person remaine a member of a falsly constituted Church, and so consequently (in that respect)

84 Mr. Cotton confessing the true and false constitution of the church.

85 Mr. Cotton confessing to hold what hee censureth in the answerer.

86 Fallacie in Mr. Cottons generalls.

87 A godly per-|son remaining a member of a false Church, is therein a member of a false Christ.

spect) of a false Christ,⁸⁸ whether in visible worship he be not separate from the true Christ?

Secondly, I aske, Whether it be not absolutely necessary to his uniting with the true Church, that is, with Christ in true Christian Worship, that he see and bewaile, and absolutely come out from that former false Church or Christ, and his Ministrie, Worship, &c. before he can be united to the true Israel,⁸⁹ must come forth of Egypt before they can sacrifice to God in the Wildernes. The Jewes come out of *Babel* before they build the Temple in *Ierusalem*: The husband of a woman die, or she be legally divorced, before she can lawfully be married to another; the graft cut off from one, before it can be ingrafted into another stock: The Kingdome of Christ, (that is the Kingdome of the Saints, *Dan. 2. & 7.*) is cut out of the mountain of the Romane Monarchie. Thus the Corinthians *1 Cor. 6. 9, 10, 11.* uniting with, Christ Jesus, they were washed from their Idolatrie, as well as other sins: Thus the Thessalonians turned from their Idols before they could serve the living and true God, *1 Thess. 1. 9.* and as in Paganisme, so in Antichristianisme, which separates as certainly (though more subtilly) from Christ Jesu.

CHAP. XIV.

Yea but it is said, that Jewes weake in Christian liberties, and zealous for *Moses* Law they were to be received.⁹⁰

I answer, 2 things must here carefully be minded:

First although bondage to *Moses* would separate from Christ, yet the difference must be observed between those Ordinances of *Moses* which it pleased God himselfe to ordain and appoint, as his then only Worship in the world, though now in the comming of his Son, he was pleased to take away, yet with solemnitie; and on the other side the Institutions and Ordinances of Antichrist, which the Devill himselfe invented, were from first to last never to be received and submitted to one moment, nor with such solemnitie to be laid down, but to be abhor'd and abominated for ever.

The Nationall Church of the Jewes, with all the shadowish typical Ordinances of Kings,⁹¹ Priests, Prophets, Temple, Sacrifices were as a silver candlestick, on which the light of the Knowledge of God and of the Lord Jesus in the type and shadow was set up and shined. That Silver Candlestick it pleased

88 Separation from false Christ absolutely necessary before there can be union to the true.

89 A sequestration or separation of the soul from the world in the idolatrous and invented worships of it before it can be presented to Christ Jesus, as a chaste virgin into the chaste bed of his owne most holy institutions.

90 Difference between Gods owne holy institutions to the Jewes, and Satans Paganish or Antichristian institution to the Gentiles, as concerning the manner of comming forth of them.

91 A comparison between the Jewish and Christian ordinances.

sed the most holy and only wise to take away, and in stead therof to set up the Golden Candlesticks of particular Churches (*Revel. 1.*) by the hand of the Son of God himselfe: Now the first was *silver* (the pure will and mind of God, but intended only for a season:) the second of a more *precious lasting* nature, a *Kindome not to be shaken* (that is abolished as the former) *Heb. 12. 28.*

Therefore Secondly,⁹² observe the difference of Time (which Mr. *Cotton* himselfe confesseth) after Instruction and Conviction (saith he) *Moses* Law was deadly and would separate from Christ, therefore, there was a time when they were not deadly, and did not separate from Christ, to wit untill *Moses* was honourably fallen asleep, and lamented for (as I conceive) in the type and figure 30. dayes (*Deut. 34.*) Therefore at one season (not for *Timothies* weake conscience, but for the Jews sake) *Paul* circumcised *Timothy*: at another time when the Jews had sufficient instruction, and obstinately would be circumcised, and that necessarily to salvation, *Paul* seasonably cries out,⁹³ that *if they were circumcised Christ should profit them nothing*, *Gal. 5.* Hence the Christians at *Ephesus* conversed with the Jewish Synagogue, untill the Jews contradicted and blasphemed, and then were speedilie separate by *Paul*, *Acts 19.* But to apply *Paul* observed a Vow, and the ceremonies of it, circumcised *Timothy*, &c. may therefore a messenger of Christ now (as *Paul*) goe to *Masse*, pray to Saints, perform pennance, keep christmas and other Popish Feasts and Fasts, &c.

Againe, is there such a time allowed to any man, uniting or adding himselfe to the true Church now, to observe the unholy holy dayes of Feasting and Fasting invented by Antichrist? yea and (as *Paul* did circumcission) to practise the Popish Sacraments?⁹⁴ I doubt not, but if any member of a true Church or assembly of Worshippers, shall fall to any Paganish or Popish practise, he must be instructed and convinced, before Excommunication: but the Question is, Whether still observing and so practising, a person may be received to the true Christian Church, as the Jewes were, although they yet practised *Moses* ceremonies.

These things duly pondred (in the feare and presence of God) it will appeare how vain the allegation is, from that tender and honourable respect to Gods Ordinances now vanishing

92 Moses ordi-|nances at one time pretious and holy, at another time beggarly and deadly.

93 The first Christians communicated in the Iewish Synagogues until the Iews contradicted & spoke evill, &c. then they separated.

94 A member of a true Church falling into a-|ny idelatrous practice, not presently to be excommuni-|cated.

shing from the Jewes,⁹⁵ and their weake consciences about the same, to prove the same tendernes to Sathans inventions, and the consciences of men in the renouncing of Paganicall, Turkish, Antichristian; yea and I adde Judaical Worships now, when once the time of their full vanishing was come.

To conclude, although I prescribe not such a measure of sight of, or sorrow for Antichristian Abominations (I speake in respect of degrees, which it pleaseth the *Father of Lights* to dispence variously to one more, to another lesse) yet I beleieve it absolutely necessary to see and bewaile so much as may amount to cut off the soule from the false Church (whether National, Parishional or any other fasly constituted Church) Ministrie, Worship and Government of it.

CHAP. XV.

Mr. *Cotton*. Ans. 3. To places of Scripture which you object, *Isa.* 52. 11. 2 *Cor.* 6. 17. *Revel.* 18. 4. We answere, two of them makes nothing to your purpose: for that of *Isaiah*, and the other of the *Revelation*, speak of locall separation, which your selfe know we have made, and yet you say, you doe not apprehend that to be sufficient. As for that place of the *Corinths*, it only requireth comming out from Idolaters in the Fellowship of their Idolatry. No mariages were they to make with them, no Feasts were they to hold with them in the Idolls Temple; no intimate familiaritie were they to maintaine with them, nor any Fellowship were they to keep with them in the unfruitfull works of darknes, and this is all which that place requireth. But what makes all this to prove, that we may not receive such persons to Church fellowship, as your selfe confesse to be godly, and who doe professedly renounce and bewail all known sin and would renounce m[[?????]]e if they knew more, although it may be they do not see the utmost skirts of all that pollution they have somtimes been defiled with; as the Patriarchs saw not the pollution of their Poligamie: But that you may plainly see this place is wrested beside the Apostles scope, when you argue from it, that such persons are not fit matter for Church fellowship, as are defiled with any remnants of Antichristian pollution, nor such Churches any more to be accounted Churches, as do receive such amongst them. Consider I pray you, were there not at that time in the Church of Corinth, such as partook with the

E

Idolaters

⁹⁵ Not one de-|gree of sight of, or sorrow for Antichri-|stian abomi-|nations, yet a necessity of cutting off from the false, before union to the true Church, Mi-|nistery, wor-|ship, &c.

Idolaters in the Idolls temple? And was not this the touching of an uncleane thing? And did this sin reject these members from Church fellowship before conviction? Or did it evacuate their Church estate for not casting out such members?

Ans. The Scriptures or *writings of truth* are those heavenly righteous *scales*, wherin all our contraversies must be tried, and that blessed Starre that leads all those *soules* to Jesus that seek him. But saith Mr. *Cotton* two of those Scriptures alledged by me (*Isa.* 52. 11. *Revel.* 18. 4. which I brought to prove a necessitie of leaving the false, before a joyning to the true Church, they speake of *locall separation*, which (saith he) your selfe know we have made.

For that *locall* and typicall separation from *Babylon*,⁹⁶ *Isa.* 52. I could not well have beleevved that Mr. *Cotton* or any would make that comming forth of *Babel* in the antitype, *Rev.* 18 4. to be *locall* and *materiall* also. What civill State, Nation or Countrey in the world, in the antitype must now be called *Babel*? certainly, if any, then *Babel* it selfe properly so called: but there we find (as before) at true Church of Jesus Christ, 1 *Pet.* 5.

Secondly,⁹⁷ if *Babel* be *locall* now, whence Gods people are called, then must there be a *locall Iudea*, a Land of *Canaan* also, into which they are called; and where shall both that *Babel* and *Canaan* be found in all the commings forth that have been made from the Church of *Rome* in these last times? But Mr. *Cotton* having made a *locall* departure from Old *England* in Europe, to New *England* in *America*, can he satisfie his owne soule, or the soules of other men, that he hath obeyed that voice,⁹⁸ *come out of Babel my people, partake not of her sins, &c.* Doth he count the very Land of *England* literally *Babel*, and so consequently *Ægypt* and *Sodome*, *Revel.* 11. 8. and the Land of new *England* *Judea*, *Canaan*? &c.

The Lord Jesus (*John* 4.) clearly breaks down all difference of *places*, and *Acts* 10 all difference of *persons*; and for my selfe, I acknowledge the Land of *England*, the civill Laws, Government and people of *England*,⁹⁹ not to be inferiour to any under heaven. Only 2 things I shall humbly suggest unto my deare Countrymen (whether more *high* and *honourable* at the helme of Government, or more inferiour, who *labour* and *saile* in this famous Ship of *Englands* Common Wealth) as the greatest
causes,

96 Mr. Cotton cannot make both comings forth of Ba-|bel both in the Type and an-|titype to bee locall.

97 If a locall Ba-|bel, then also now a locall Iudea and Temple, &c. Come out of Babel not materiall, but mysticall.

98 The Lord Ie-|sus hath bro-|ken down the difference of places and persons.

99 2 Chiefest causes of Gods indignation against Eng-|land.

causes,¹⁰⁰ *fourtaines* and *top roots* of all the Indignation of the most High, against the State and Countrey: First that the whole Nation and Generations of Men have been forced (though unregenerate and unrepentant) to pretend and assume the name of Christ Jesus, which only belongs, according to the Institution of the Lord Jesus, to truly regenerate and repenting soules. Secondly, that all others *dissenting* from them, whether Jewes or Gentiles, their Countrymen especially (for strangers have a Libertie) have not been permitted *civill cohabitation* in this world with them, but have been *distressed* and *persecuted* by them.

But to returne, the summe of my Contraversie with Mr. Cotton is,¹⁰¹ Whether or no that false Worshipping of the *true God*, be not only a *spirituall guilt* liable to Gods sentence and plagues, but also an *habit*, frequently compared in the Prophets, and Rev. 17. to a spirit and disposition of spiritual drunkennesse and whoredome, a soule sleep and a soule sicknesse: So that as by the change of a chaire, chamber or bed, a sick or sleepee man, whore or drunkard are not changed, but they remaine the same still, untill that disposition of sicknes, sleepinesse, drunkennes, whoredome be put off, and a new habit of spirituall health, watchfullnes, sobrietie, chastitie be put on.

CHAP. XVI.

Now concerning that Scripture, 2 *Cor.* 6. Mr. Cotton here confesseth it holdeth forth 5. things: That the repenting Corinthians were called out in from the unrepenting:

First, in the Fellowship of their Idolatrie.

2. From making Mariages with them.

3. From Feasting in their Idols temples.

4. From intimate Familiaritie with them.

5. From all Fellowship in the *unfruitfull works of darknes*.¹⁰²

Ans. If regenerate and truly repenting English thus come forth from the unregenerate and unrepenting, how would the name of the Lord Jesus be sanctified, the jealousy of the Lord pacified, their own soules cleansed, judgements prevented, yea and one good meanes practised toward the convincing and saving of the soules of such, from whom in these particulars they depart, and dare not have Fellowship with: especially when in all civill things they walke unblameably, in quiet and helpfull cohabitation, righteous and faithfull dealing, and

E 2

chearfull

100 These two particulars I should be humbly re-a-|dy to make proof of.

101 The souls cap-|tivity to false worship is not locall, but a guilt, and not only so, but an habit or disposition of spiritual sleep, whoredome, drunkennesse, &c.

102 The benefites of the repen-|ting English, their coming forth from the impenitent English in those former 5 particulars mentioned by Mr. Cotton.

chearfull submission to civill Lawes, Orders, Levies, Customes, &c.

Yea but Mr. *Cotton* demands, What makes all this to prove that godly persons who professedly renounce all *known* sinne, may not be received to Church fellowship, although they see not the utmost skirts of their Pollution, as the Patriarchs saw not the pollution of their Poligamie.¹⁰³

Ans. I repeat the former distinction of godly persons, who possibly may live in ungodly practices (especially of false worship) and then according to Mr. *Cottons* own interpretation of this place to the *Corinthians*, they come not forth. And I adde, if there be any voice of Christ in the mouthes of his Witnesses against these sinnes, they are not then of Ignorance, but of Negligence, and *spirituall hardnes*, against the wayes of Gods feare, against *Isa.* 63. &c.

Moreover, our question is not of the *utmost skirts* of Pollution, but the substance of a true or false Bed of Worship Cant. 1. 16. in respect of comming out of the false, before the entrance into the *true*. And yet I beleeve that Mr. *Cotton* being to receive a person to Church fellowship,¹⁰⁴ who formerly hath been infamous for corporall Whoredome, he would not give his consent to receive such an one,¹⁰⁵ without sound Repentance for the filthines of her skirts (*Lament.* 1.) not only in actuall whoredomes, but also in whorish Speeches, Gestures, Appearances, Provocation. And why should there be a greater strictnes for the skirts of common whoredom, then of *spiritual* & *soul* Whoredome, against the chastitie of Gods Worship? And therefore to that instance of the Fathers Poligamie, I answer: First by observing what great sins godly persons may possibly live and long continue in, notwithstanding godlinesse in the root. Secondly I aske if any person, of whose godlines Mr. *Cot.* hath had long perswasion, should beleeve and maintaine (as questionles the Fathers had grounds satisfying their consciences for what they did:) that he ought to have many Wives, and accordingly so practised;¹⁰⁶ I say, I aske whether Mr. *Cotton* would receive such a godly person to Church fellowship? yea I aske, whether the Church of the Jewes (had they seen this evill) would have received such a Proselite from the Gentiles, and when it was seen, whether any persons so practising would have been suffred amongst them: But lastly, what was
this

¹⁰³ The sins of Gods people are sometimes reputed to be of ignorance, when they are of negligence, and yet igno-|rance excuseth not wholly.

¹⁰⁴ A case put to Mr. Cotton.

¹⁰⁵ No cause of more shame fr|om whore-|dome against an husbands bed, then a-|gainst the bed of Gods wor-|ship.

¹⁰⁶ The case of Poligamy, or many wives of the Fathers.

this personall sinne of these godly persons? was it any matter of Gods worship, any joyning with a false Church, Ministry, Worship, Government, from whence they were to come, before they could constitute his true Church, and enjoy his Worship, Ministry, Government, &c.

Mr. *Cotton* concludeth this passage thus, The Church of *Corinth* had such as partook with Idolaters in their Idolls temple, and was not this (saith he) *touching of an uncleane thing*, and did this reject these members from Church fellowship before conviction; and did it evacuate their Church estate, for not casting out of such members?

Ans. This was an uncleane thing indeed, from which God calls his people in this place, with glorious promises of receiving them: and Mr. *Cotton* confesseth that after conviction, any member obstinate in these unclean touches, ought to be rejected, for, saith he, did this sin reject these members from Church fellowship before conviction?

And upon the same ground that one obstinate person ought to be rejected out of Church estate,¹⁰⁷ upon the same ground, if a greater company or Church were obstinate in such unclean touches, and so consequently in a rebellion against Christ, ought every sound Christian Church to reject them, and every sound member to withdraw from them.

And hence further it is cleare, that if such unclean touches obstinately maintained (as Mr. *Cotton* confesseth and practiseth) be a ground of rejection of a person in the Church,¹⁰⁸ questionlesse it is a ground of rejection when such persons are to joyne unto the Church. And if obstinacie in the whole Church after conviction be a ground for such a Churches rejection, questionlesse such a Church or number of persons obstinate in such evills, cannot congregate nor become a true constituted Church of Jesus Christ.

The greatest question here would be,¹⁰⁹ Whether the *Corinthians* in their first constitution were separate or no, from such Idoll Temples? and this Mr. *Cotton* neither doth nor can deny; a Church estate being a state of mariage unto Jesus Christ, and so Paul professedly saith, he had *espoused them as a chaste virgin to Christ Jesus*, 2 Cor. 11.

CHAP. XVII.

Mr. *Cotton* proceeds to answer some other allegations which

E 3

I

¹⁰⁷ It lesseneth not a rebelli-|on that it is in a multitude: hence a Citie in Israel ido-|latrous was to be destroyed.

¹⁰⁸ Obstinate that casteth out, will keep out from communion with the Lord Iesus in his Church.

¹⁰⁹ The Church of Corinth, & every true Church sepa-|rate from I-|dols as a chaste virgin to Christ.

I produced from the confession of sinne made by *Iohns* Disciples, and the Proselite Gentiles before they were admitted into Church fellowship, *Mat.* 3. 6. *Acts* 19. 18. Unto which he returneth a 3 fold answe: The first is grounded upon his apparent mistake of my words in a grant of mine, *viz.* Such a confession and renunciation is not absolutely necessary, if the substance of true repentance be discerned. Whence (saith he) according to your own confession, such persons as have the substance of true Repentance may be a true Church.

I answe, it is cleare in the progresse of the whole contraversion,¹¹⁰ that I ever intend by the substance of true Repentance, not that generall grace of Repentance, which all Gods people have (as *Luther* a Monk, and going to, yea publishing the German Masse, and those famous Bishops burnt for Christ in *Qu. Maries* dayes) but that substance of Repentance for those false wayes of Worship, Church, Ministry, &c. in which Gods people have lived, although the confessing and renouncing of them be not so particularly exprest, and with such godly sorrow and indignation as some expresse, and may well become: And indeed the whole scope of that caution was for Christian moderation,¹¹¹ and gentlenes toward the severall sorts of Gods people, professing particular repentance for their spirituall captivity and bondage, during which captivitie also I readily acknowledge the substance of repentance, and of all the graces of Christ in generall.

In his second Answe Mr. *Cotton* saith,¹¹² I grant with the one hand, and take away with the other, for he denies it necessary to the admission of members, that every one should be convinced of the sinfullnes of every sipping of the Whores cup, for (saith he) every sipping of a drunkards cup is not sinfull.¹¹³

Ans. First he doth not rightly aledge my words, for a little before he confesseth, my words to be that Antichristian drunkenesse and whoredome is to be confest of all such as have drunk of the Whores cup, or but sipt of it. In which words I plainly distinguish between such as have drunk deeper of her cup, as Papists, Popish Priests, &c. and such as in comparison have but sipt, as Gods own people, who yet by such sipping have been so intoxicated, as to practise spirituall whoredome against Christ in submitting to false Churches, Ministrie, Worship, &c.

Secondly,

110 The substance of true gene-|rall repen-|tance in all Gods chil-|dren, though living in ma-|ny grosse abo-|minations of false worship, Ministry, &c.

111 Not the same measure and degrees of re-|pentance in all.

112 Mr. Cotton.

113 Some have drunk deep of the Whores cup; and some but sipt, yet intoxicated.

Secondly, whereas he saith every sipping of a drunkards cup is not sinfull.

I answere: neither the least sipping, nor constant drinking out of the cup which a drunkard useth to drinke in, is sinfull: but every drunken sip (which is our question) is questionlesse sinfull, and so consequently to be avoyded by the sober, whether the cup of corporall or spirituall drunkenness.

CHAP. XVIII.

Mr. *Cotton*.¹¹⁴ Yea but (saith he) the 3000. Jewes were admitted when they repented of their murdering of Christ, although they never saw all the superstitious leavenings wherewith the Pharises had bewitched them: and so no doubt may godly persons now, although they be not yet convinced of every passage of Antichristian superstition, &c. and that upon this ground, that spirituall whoredome and drunkennesse is not so soon discerned as corporall.

I answer, it is not indeed so easily discerned, and yet not the lesse sinfull, but infinitely transcendent, as much as spirituall sobriety exceeds corporall, and the bed of the most high God, exceeds the beds of men, who are but dust and ashes.

Secondly,¹¹⁵ I answere the converted Jews although they saw not all the leavenings of the Pharises, yet they mourned for killing of Christ, and embraced him in his Worship Ministry, Government, and were added to his Church: and O that the least beames of light and sparkles of heat were in mine owne, and others soules, which were kindled by the holy Spirit of God in those famous converts at the preaching of *Peter*, *Acts* 2. The true Christ now in his Worship, Ministrie, &c. being discerned and repentance for persecuting and killing of him,¹¹⁶ being exprest, there necessarily follows a withdrawing from the Church, Ministry and Worship of the false Christ, and submission unto the true: and this is the summe and substance of our contraversie.

Concerning the confession of sinnes unto *Iohn*,¹¹⁷ he grants the Disciples of *Iohn* confest their sins, the Publicans theirs, the Souldiers theirs the people theirs, but saith he, it appears not that they confest their Pharisaiicall pollution.

And concerning the confession *Acts* 19. 18. he saith it is not exprest that they confest all their deeds.

Ans. If both these confest their notorious sins, (as Mr. *Cotton*

¹¹⁴ Mr. Cotton.

¹¹⁵ The first Christians the best pattern for all Chri-|stians now.

¹¹⁶ The power of true repen-|tance for kil-|ling of Christ.

¹¹⁷ Mr. Cotton.

ton expresseth) why not as well their notorious sinnes against God, their Idolatries, Superstitious Worships, &c. Surely throughout the whole Scripture, the matters of God, and his Worship are first and most tenderly handled; his people are ever described by the title of his Worshippers, and his enemies by the title of Worshippers of false gods, and worshipping the *true* after a false manner; and to prove this were to bring forth a candle to the bright shining of the Sun at noon day.

CHAP. XIX.

His third answer is:¹¹⁸ But to satisfie you more fully (and the Lord make you willing in true meeknesse of Spirit to receive satisfaction) the body of the members doe in generall professe, that the reason of their coming over to us was, that they might be freed from the bondage of humane Inventions and Ordinances, as their soules groaned under, for which al so they professe their hearty sorrow, so farre as through ignorance or infirmitie they have bin defiled. Beside, in our daily meetings, and specially in the times of our solemne Humiliations, we generally all of us bewaile all our former pollutions, where-with we have defiled our selves and the holy things of God, in our former administrations and communions: but we rather choose to doe it then talke of it; and we can but wonder how you can so boldly and resolutely renounce all the Churches of God, for neglect of that which you know not whether they have neglected or no, and before you have admonished us of our sinfullnes in such neglect, if it be found amongst us.

I answer (with humble desires to the Father of Lights,¹¹⁹ for the true meeknes and wisdome of his Spirit) here is mention of humane Inventions and Ordinances, and defiling themselves and holy things of God in former Administrations, and Communions,¹²⁰ and yet no mention what such Inventions and Ordinances, what such Administrations and Communions were: We rather choose to doe it (saith he) then to talke of it, which makes me call to mind, an expression of an eminent and worthy person amongst them in a solemne conference, viz. *What need we speake of Antichrist, can we not enjoy our liberties without inveighing against Antichrist? &c.*

The truth is, I acknowledge their witnes against Ceremonies and Bishops, but that yet they see not the evill of a Nationall Church (notwithstanding they constitute only particular

¹¹⁸ Mr. Cotton.

¹¹⁹ Answer.

¹²⁰ How can a soule truly oppose Anti-|christ, that endures not to have his name questio-|ned.

cular and independant) let their constant practice speake, in still joyning with such Churches and Ministers in the Ordinances of the Word and Prayer, and their Persecuting of my selfe for my humble and faithfull,¹²¹ and constant admonishing of them, of such unclean walking between a particular Church (which they only professe to be Christs) and a Nationall, which Mr. *Cotton* professeth to separate from.

But how could I possibly be ignorant, (as he seemeth to charge me) of their state, when being from first to last in fellowship with them, an Officer amongst them, had private and publike agitations concerning their state and condition,¹²² with all or most of their Ministers, and at last suffred for such admonitions to them, the miserie of a Winters Banishment amongst the Barbarians: and yet saith he, You know not what we have done, neither have you admonished us of our sinfullnes.

CHAP. XX.

Mr. *Cotton*.¹²³ A third Scripture which I produced was *Hagai* 2. 13, 14, 15. desiring that the place might be throughly weighed, and that the Lord might please to hold the scales himselfe, the Prophet there telling the Church of the Jewes, *that if a person unclean by a dead body touch holy things, those holy things become uncleane unto them*; and so saith he is this Nation, and so is every work of their hands and that which they offer is uncleane: whence I infer'd, that even Church Covenants made, and Ordinances practiced by persons polluted through spirituall deadnes, and filthines of Communion, such Covenants and Ordinances become uncleane unto them, and are prophaned by them.

Mr. *Cotton* answers, Your purpose was to prove that Churches cannot be constituted by such persons as are unclean by Antichristian pollutions, or if they be so constituted they are not to be communicated with, but separated from: But the Prophet acknowledgeth the whole Church of the Jewes to be unclean, and yet neither denies them to be a Church truly constituted, nor stirs up himselfe or others to separate from them.

Ans. I acknowledge the true constitution of the Church of the Jewes, and affirm that this their true constitution was the reason why they were not to be separated from: for being

F

a

¹²¹ Mr. Cotton witnessing a-|gainst a nati-|onall Church, and yet hold-|ing fellowship with it.

¹²² Impossible for the answerer to be ignorant of their Church estate, as Mr. Cotton pretendeth.

¹²³ Mr. Cotton.

a Nationall Church,¹²⁴ ceremoniall and typicall their Excommunication was either putting to death in, or captivitie out of that ceremoniall *Canaan*. Hence *Salmanassars* carrying the 10. Tribes captive out of this Land is said to be the casting of them out of Gods sight, 2 *Kings* 17. which was their Excommunication.

Accordingly in the particular Christian Churches, Christ Jesus cuts off by spirituall death, which is Excommunication, or for want of due execution of Justice by that Ordinance in his Kingdome, he sells the Church into spirituall captivitie, to confused (Babylonish) Lords, and Worshipps, and so drives them out of his sight.

Now from the consequent of this place in *Haggai* mine argument stands good; and Mr. *Cotton* here acknowledgeth it, that *holy things* may be all uncleane to Gods people, when they lie in their uncleannes,¹²⁵ as this people did. Those Scriptures, *Levit.* 16. & *Numbers* 19. which discourse of typicall and Ceremoniall uncleannesse, he acknowledgeth to type out in the Gospel the Morall uncleannes either of *dead works*, *Ephes.* 5. 11. or *dead persons*, 2 *Cor.* 6. 14. or *dead world*, *Gal.* 6. 14. and in this place of *Haggai*, he acknowledgeth that Gods people, Prince and people, were defiled by worldlines, in which condition (saith he) their oblations, their bodily labours, were all uncleane, and found neither acceptance nor blessing from the Lord.

Therefore saith he afterward: In the Church godly Christians themselves, while they attend to the world more then to the things of God, are uncleane in the sight of God: therefore the Church cannot be constituted of such; or if it be constitute of such, the people of God must separate from them. And lastly, he saith, the Church of Christ and members thereof must separate themselves from their hypocrisie, and worldlines, els they and their duties will be unclean in the sight of God, notwithstanding their Church estate.

Ans. What have I more spoken then Mr. *Cotton* himselfe hath uttered in this his explication and application of this Scripture? As

First, that godly persons may become defiled and unclean by hypocrisie and worldlines.

Secondly, while they lie in such a condition of uncleannes,
all

¹²⁴ The Church of the Iewes a Nationall Church truly constituted, therefore not to bee separated from, Death and captivity in the nationall church typed out spiritual death & captivity in the particular.

¹²⁵ Ceremoniall uncleannesse in the nationall Church typed out moral uncleanesse in the particular.

all their offerings,¹²⁶ persons, labours are unclean in the sight of God, and have neither acceptance nor blessing from him: but they and their duties are unclean in his sight notwithstanding their Church estate.

Thirdly, the Church of Christ cannot be constituted of such godly persons, when defiled with such worldlinesse.

Fourthly, the Church consisting of such worldly persons (though otherwise godly and Christian) the people of God must separate from them.

These are Mr. *Cottons* owne expresse words which justifie:¹²⁷

First my former distinction of godly persons in their personall respect, between God and themselves; and yet becoming ungodly in their outward defilements.

Secondly, they justifie my assertion of a necessitie of cleansing from Antichristian filthines and communions with dead works, dead worships dead persons in Gods worship, if the touches of the dead world, or immoderate love of it doe so defile, as Mr. *Cotton* here affirmeth.

Thirdly, if (as he saith) the Church cannot be constituted of such godly persons as are defiled by immoderate love of the world, much lesse can it be constituted of godly persons defiled with the dead Inventions, Worships, Communions of *unregenerate* and ungodly persons.

Fourthly he justifies a separation from such Churches, if so constituted, or so constituting, because though worldlines be Adulterie against God *James* 4. yet not comparable to spirituall Adultery of a false bed of Worship, Ministrie, &c.

CHAP. XXI.

Mr. *Cotton* proceedeth. The second stumbling block or offence which you have taken at the way of these Churches, is that you conceive us to walk between Christ and Antichrist. First in practising separation here, and not repenting of our preaching and Printing against it in our own Countrie. Secondly, in reproaching your selfe at *Salem*, and others for separation. Thirdly in particular, that my selfe have conceived and spoken, that separation is a way that God hath not prospered: yet say you the truth of the Churches way depends not upon the countenance of men, or upon outward peace and liberty.

Unto this he answers, that they halt not, but walke in the
F 2
mid'st

¹²⁶ Mr. Cottons own confessi-|on concerning unclean wor-|ships even of godly persons.

¹²⁷ Inferences from Master Cottons grant.

mid'st of 2 extreames, the one of being defiled with the pollution of other Churches, the other of renouncing the Churches for the remnant of Pollutions.

This moderation he (with ingenuous moderation) professeth he sees no cause to repent of, &c.

Ans. With the Lords gracious assistance we shall prove this middle walking to be no lesse then halting, for which we shall shew cause of repentance, beseeching him that is a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance unto his *Israel*, *Acts* 5. 3.

First Mr. *Cotton* himselfe confesseth, that no Nationall, Provinciall, Diocesan, or Parish Church (wherin some truly godly are not) are true Churches. Secondly, he practiseth no Church estate, but such as is constituted only of godly persons, nor admitteth any unregenerate or ungodly person. Thirdly, he confesseth a Church of Christ cannot be constituted of such godly persons, who are in bondage to the inordinate love of the world. Fourthly, if a Church consist of such, Gods people ought to separate from them.

Upon these his owne confessions,¹²⁸ I earnestly beseech Mr. *Cotton* and all that feare God to ponder how he can say he walks with an even foot between 2 extreames, when according to his own confession, Nationall Churches, Parish Churches, yea a Church constituted of godly persons given to inordinate love of the world are false and to be separated from: and yet he will not have the Parish Church to be separated from, for the remnant of pollution (I conceive he meaneth ceremonies & Bishops) notwithstanding that he also acknowledgeth, that the generality of every Parish in *England* consisteth of unregenerate persons, and of thousands inbondaged, not only to worldlines, but also ignorance, superstition, scoffing swearing, cursing, whoredome drunkennesse, theft, lying. What are 2. or 3. or more of regenerate and godly persons in such communions,¹²⁹ but as 2 or 3 Roses or Lillies in a wilderness? a few grains of good corne in a heap of chaffe? a few sheep among heards of Wolves or Swine, or (if more civill) flocks of Goats? a little good dough swallowed up with a whole bushell of leaven? or a little precious gold confounded and mingled with a whole heap of drosse? The Searcher of all Hearts knowes I write not this to reproach any, knowing that my selfe am by nature *a child of wrath*, and that the *father of mercies* shews mercy
to

¹²⁸ Mr. Cotton extenuates & minceth the root, masse and substance of the matter of national churches, which he acknowledged to be un-regenerate, not yet born again, by naming onely a remnant of pollutions.

¹²⁹ The estate of the godly mingled with the ungodly in worships.

to *whom* and *when* he will:¹³⁰ but for the Name of Christ Jesus, in *loving faithfullnes* to my Countrymens soules, and *defence of truth*, I remember my worthy adversary of that state and condition, from which his confessions say he must separate, his practise in gathering of Churches seemes to say he doth separate; and yet he professteth there are but some remnants of pollution amongst them for which he dares not separate.

CHAP. XXII.

Mr. *Cotton*. Secondly (saith he) I know no man that reproacheth *Salem* for their separation, nor doe I beleeve that they doe separate, howsoever if any do reproach them for it, I think it a sin meet to be censured, but not with so deep a censure as to Excommunicate all the *Churches*, or to separate from them before it do appeare that they doe tollerate their members in such their causeles reproachings: We confesse the errors of men are to be contended against, not with reproaches, but the Sword of the Spirit: but on the other side, the saylings of the Churches are not forthwith to be healed by separation. It is not chyrurgery but butcherie to heale every sore in a member with no other but abscision from the body.

Ans. The Church of *Salem* was known to profes separation, and was generally and publikely reproached (and I could mention a case wherin she was punished) for it implicitly.

Mr. Cotton here confesseth these 2 things, which (I leave to himselfe to reconcile,¹³¹ with his former profession here and elsewhere against separation. First (saith he) if any reproach them for separation it is a sin meet to be censured. Secondly, the Churches themselves may be separated from, who tollerate their members in such causeles reproachings. In these later passages he seems (as in other his confessions and practises mentioned) to be for it, sensible of shame, disgrace or reproach to be cast on it.

I grant with him the failings of Churches are not forthwith to be healed by separation,¹³² yet himself within a few lines confesseth there is a lawfull separation from Churches, that doe but tollerate their members in causeles reproaches.

I confesse also that it is not chyrurgerie but butcherie, to heale every sore with no other medicine but with abscision from the body: yet himselfe confesseth before, that even Churches of godly persons must be separated from, for im-

E 3

moderate

¹³⁰ The state of men must be faithfully discovered unto them.

¹³¹ Mr. Cotton seemes to bee both for and yet against separation.

¹³² Mr. Cottons own confessi-|ons are suffi-|cient answers to himselfe.

worldlines:¹³³ And again here he confesseth they may be separated from, when they tolerate their members in such their causeles reproachings. Beside, it is not every sore of infirmitie or ignorance, but an Ulcer or Gangrene of Obstinacy, for which I maintained that a person ought to be cut off, or a Church separated from. But if he call that butcherie conscienciously and peaceably to separate from a spirituall communion of a Church or societie,¹³⁴ what shall it be called by the second *Adam* the Lord Jesus (who gives names to all creatures and all actions) to cut off persons, them and theirs, branch and root, from any civill being in their territories; and consequent-ly from the whole world (were their territories so large) because their consciences dare not bow down to any worship, but what they beleeve the Lord Jesus appointed and being also otherwise subject to the civill state and Laws therof.

CHAP. XXIII.

Thirdly, wheras I urged a speech of his own, *viz.* that God had not prospered the way of separation, and conceives that I understood him of outward prosperitie. He affirms the Puritans to have been worse used in *England* then the Separatist, & thus writes: The meeting of the Separatists may be known to the Officers in Court and winked at, when the Conventicles of the Puritans (as they call them) shall be hunted out with all diligence, and pursued with more violence then any Law can justifie,

Ans. Doubtles the contraversie of God hath bin great with this Land,¹³⁵ that either of both have been so violently pursued and persecuted: I beleeve they are both the Witnesses of severall truths of Jesus Christ, against an impenitent and unchristian profession of the name of the Lord Jesus.

Now for their sufferings:¹³⁶ As the Puritans have not comparably suffred (as but seldome congregating in separate assemblies from the common) so have not any of them suffred unto death for the way of Non-conformitie to Ceremonies, &c. Indeed the worthy witnes Mr. *Vdall* was neere unto death for his witnes against Bishops and Ceremonies:¹³⁷ but Mr. *Penry*, Mr. *Barrow*,¹³⁸ Mr. *Greenwood* followed the Lord Jesus with their Gibbets on their shoulders and were hanged with him and for him in the way of separation: many more have been condemned to die, banished and choaked in prisons, I could produce upon occasion.

Again,

¹³³ Not for a sore of infir-|mity, but a le-|prosie or gan-|grene of ob-|stinacie ought a person to be cut off.

¹³⁴ Mr. Cotton deeply guilty of cruelty both against con-|sciencies and bodies in per-|secuting of them yet cries out against the appearance of due severi-|tie in the Church of Christ.

¹³⁵ Gods contro-|versie for per-|secution.

¹³⁶ The sufferings of the Separa-|tists and Pu-|ritants in England com-|pared.

¹³⁷ Mr. Vdal.

¹³⁸ Mr. Penry, Mr. Barrow, Mr. Green-|wood.

Again,¹³⁹ I beleieve that there hardly hath ever been a conscientious Seperatist, who was not first a Puritan: for (as Mr. *Can* hath unanswerably proved) the grounds and principles of the Puritans against Bishops and Ceremonies, and prophanes of people professing Christ,¹⁴⁰ and the necessitie of Christs flock and discipline, must necessarily, if truely followed, lead on to, and inforce a separation from such wayes, worships, and Worshippers, to seek out the true way of Gods worship according to Christ Jesus.

But what should be the reason, (since the separatist witnesseth against the root of the Church constitution it selfe, that yet he should find (as Mr. *Cotton* saith) more favour then the Puritan or Non-conformist?

Doubtles the reasons are evident:¹⁴¹ First most of Gods servants who out of sight of the ignorance, unbeliefe and prophanes of the body of the Nationall Church, have separated and durst not have longer fellowship with it; I say most of them have been poore and low,¹⁴² and not such gainfull customers to the Bishops, their Courts and Officers.

That worthy instrument of Christs praise Mr. *Ainsworth*, during some time (and some time of his great labours in *Holland*) lived upon 9. d. *per* week with roots boiled,¹⁴³ &c. Whereas on the other side such of Gods servants as have been Non-conformists have had faire estates been great persons, have had rich livings and benefices, of which the Bishops and theirs (like greedie Wolves) have made the more desirable prey.¹⁴⁴

Secondly, it is a principle in nature to preferre a professedemie, before a pretended friend. Such as have separated, have been lookt at by the Bishops and theirs, as known and professed enemies: whereas the Puritans profest subjection, and have submitted to the Bishops, their Courts, their Officers, their Common Prayer and Worships, and yet (as the Bishops have well known) with no greater affection, then the Israelites bare their Egyptian cruel Taskmasters.

He saith,¹⁴⁵ God hath not prospered the way of Separation with peace amongst themselves, and growth of Grace.

Ans. The want of peace may befall the truest Churches of the Lord Jesus at *Antioch*, *Corinth*, *Galatia*, who were exercised with great distractions. Secondly, it is a common character of a false Church, maintained by the Smiths and Cutlers Shop,

to

139 Few conscientious Separatists but first were Puritans.

140 The Non-conformists grounds in-force separation.

141 Most of the separation of the lower sort of people.

142 The poverty of Mr. Ainsworth.

143 The Nonconformists have been a faire booty for the Bishops,

144 The Separatists have been professed enemies, but the Puritans in many things professed friends & subjects to the Bishops.

145 Mr. Cotton.

to enjoy a quiet calme and peaceable tranquility,¹⁴⁶ none daring for feare of civill punishment, to question, object, or differ from the common roade and custome. Thus sings that great Whore the Antichristian Church, *Revel. 18, I sit as a Queen, am no Widow, see no sorrow*, while Christs dearest complaines, *she is forsaken, sits weeping as a Widow, Lam. 1*. Thirdly, Gods people in that way, have somtimes long enjoyed sweet peace and soul contentment in *England, Holland, New England*, and other places, and would not have exchanged a day of such an holy and peaceable harmonie for thousands in the Courts of Princes, seeing no other,¹⁴⁷ and in sinceritie seeking after the Lord Jesus. And yet I humbly conceive, that as *David* with the Princes and 30 thousand Israelites, carrying the Ark on the shoulders of the Oxen, leaped and danced with great rejoycing, untill God smote *Vzzah* for his Error and Disorder, and made a breach, and a teaching Monument of *Perez Vzzah*, the breach of *Vzzah*: So in like manner all those celebrations of the spirituall Arke or Ordinances,¹⁴⁸ which yet I have know, although for the present accompanied with great rejoycing and tryumphing; yet, as they have not been after the Due Order, so have they all met with and still must a *Perez Vzzah*, breaches and Divisions, untill the Lord Jesus discover, direct and encourage his servants in his own *due holy Order* and appointment. And for growth in Grace, notwithstanding that amongst all sorts of Gods Witnesses, some false brethren creep in as cheaters and spies, and Judasses, dishonouring the name of Christ Jesus,¹⁴⁹ and betraying his Witnesses: yet Sathan himselfe the accuser of the Saints, cannot but confesse that multitudes of Gods Witnesses (reproached with the names of Brownists, and Anabaptists) have kept themselves from the error of the wicked, and grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus, endeavouring to clense *themselves from all filthines both of flesh and spirit*,¹⁵⁰ and to finish holines in the feare of God. I will not make odious and envious comparisons, but desire that all that *name the name of the Lord Iesus may depart wholly and for ever from iniquity*.

CHAP. XXIII.

Lastly he addeth,¹⁵¹ That such as erring through simplicities and tendernes have grown in grace, have grown also to discern their lawfull liberty in the hearing of the Word from English preachers. I

¹⁴⁶ A false church may enforce a present grea-|ter (though false grace) then the true Spouse of Christ Iesus.

¹⁴⁷ Gods people have found infinit sweet-|nes and peace in some times of their holy communion.

¹⁴⁸ Breaches have been and must be among all Gods people to make them celebrate the Lords holy ordinances according to due order.

¹⁴⁹ Many grace-|lesse Iudasses amongst Gods people.

¹⁵⁰ Multitudes of gracions and holy persons that have professed Se-|paration

¹⁵¹ M. Cotton,

Ans. I will not question the uprightnes of some,¹⁵² who have gone back from many truths of God which they have professed: yet mine own experience of 4 sorts who have back-sliden, I shall report, for a warning to all into whose hands these may come to be like *Antipas* (*Revel. 2.*) a *faithfull witness* to the death, to any of the truths of the Lord Jesus, which he shall please to be trust them with:

First I have known no small number of such torn to absolute Familisme,¹⁵³ and under their pretences of great raptures of Love deny all obedience to, or seeking after the pure Ordinances and appointments of the Lord Jesus.

Secondly,¹⁵⁴ others have laid the raines upon the necks of their consciences, and like the Dog lickt up their vomit of former loosnes and prophanes of lip and life; and have been so farre from growing in grace, that they have turned the grace of God into wantonnes.

Thirdly,¹⁵⁵ others backsliding have lost the beautie and shining of a tender conscience toward God, and of a mercifull compassion toward men, becomming most fierce persecutors of their own formerly fellow witnesses, and of any other who have differd in conscience from them.

Lastly,¹⁵⁶ others although preserved from Familisme, prophanes and persecuting of others, yet the leafe of their Christian course hath withered, the later beautie and savour of their holines hath not been like their former; and they have confest & do, their sin, their weaknes, their bondage, and wish they were at liberty in their former freedom: and some have gone with little peace, but sorrow to their graves, confessing to my selfe and others, *that God never prospered them in soule or body, since they sold away his truth*, which once they had bought and made profession of it never to sell it.

CHAP. XXV.

Yea but (saith he) they have grown to discern their lawfull libertie,¹⁵⁷ to return to the hearing of the Word from English preachers.

Ans. Here I might ingage my selfe in a contraversie, which neither this Treatise will permit;¹⁵⁸ nor is there need, since it hath pleased the Father of lights to stirre up the spirit of a faithfull Witnes of his truth in this particular, Mr. *Gann*, to make a large and faithfull reply to a Book, Printed in Mr.

G

Robinsons

¹⁵² foure sorts of back-sliders from Separation far from growth in grace.

¹⁵³ Some back-sliding turn to Familisme.

¹⁵⁴ Some to prophanesse.

¹⁵⁵ Some to persecuting of others.

¹⁵⁶ Some to languishing in sorrow and sadnesse, &c.

¹⁵⁷ Mr. Cotton.

¹⁵⁸ Mr. Cans answer to Mr. Robinsons Liberty of hearing.

Robinsons name, tending to prove such a lawfull Liberty.

For such excellent and worthy persons whom Mr. *Cotton* here intends by the name of English preachers, I acknowledge my selfe unworthy to hold the candle to them:¹⁵⁹ yet I shall humbly present what Mr. Cotton himselfe professeth in 3 particulars:

First concerning this title English preachers.

Secondly, hearing the Word from such English preachers.

Thirdly, the lawfull calling of such to the Ministry or service, according to Christ Jesus.

For the first he acknowledgeth,¹⁶⁰ that the ordinarie Ministers of the Gospel are Pastors, Teachers, Bishops, Overseers, Elders, and that their proper worke is to feed and govern, a truly converted holy and godly people, gathered into a flock or Church estate, and not properly preachers to convert, beget, make Disciples,¹⁶¹ which the Apostles and Evangelists professedly were. Now then that man that professeth himselfe a Minister,¹⁶² and professeth to feed a Flock or Church, with the Ordinances of Word and Prayer, he must needs acknowledge that his proper worke is not to preach for conversion,¹⁶³ which is most preposterous amongst a converted Christian people, fed up with Ordinances in Church estate: So that according to Mr. *Cottons* confession English preachers are, not Pastors, Teachers, Bishops, Elders, but preachers of glad news (Evangelists) men sent to convert and gather Churches (Apostles) ambassadors, trumpeters with Proclamation from the King of Kings, to convert, subdue bring in rebellious unconverted, unbelieving, unchristian soules to the obedience and subjection of the Lord Jesus.

I readily confesse that at the Pastors (or Shepheards) feeding of his flock,¹⁶⁴ and the Prophets prohecyng in the Church, an unbeliever coming in is convinced, falls on his face and acknowledgeth God to be there: yet this is accidentall that any unbeliever should come in;¹⁶⁵ and the Pastors worke is to feed his Flock, *Acts* 20. and prophecie is not for unbeevers, but for them that beleeve to edefie, exhort and comfort the Church, *1 Cor.* 14. 22.

I also readily acknowledge that it hath pleased God to work a personall repentance in the hearts of thousands in *Germanie, England, Low Countries, France, Scotland, Ireland, &c.* Yea and
who

159 Mr Cottons confession concerning the ministry.

160 [[GREEK]].

161 Matth. 28.

162 [[GREEK]].

163 Preachers and Pastor farre different.

164 Conversion in a Church ac-|cidentall.

165 Personall re-|pentance wrought in thousands be godly persons in Popish mi-|nistries.

who knows but in *Italy, Spain, Rome*, not only by such men, who decline the name of Bishops, Priests Deacons (the constituted Ministry of *England* hitherto) but also by such as have owned them, as Luther remaining a Monke, and famous holy men remaining and burning Lord Bishops.¹⁶⁶ But all this hath been under the notion of Ministers feeding their flocks, not of preachers sent to convert the unconverted and unbelieving.

This passage I present for 2 Reasons: First because so many excellent and worthy persons mainly preach for conversion, as conceiving (and that truly) the body of the people of *England* to be in a naturall and unregenerate estate: and yet account they themselves fixed and constant Officers and Ministers to particular Parishes or congregations unto whom they also administer the holy things of God, though sometimes few, and sometimes none regenerate or new borne have been found amongst them: which is a matter of high concernment touching the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ,¹⁶⁷ and the soules of men. Secondly that in these great Earthquakes, wherein it pleaseth God to shake foundations civill and spirituall, such a Ministry of Christ Jesus may be sought after, whose proper worke is preaching, for converting and gathering of true penitents to the fellowship of the Son of God.

CHAP. XXVI.

The second thing which Mr. *Cotton* himselfe hath profest concerning English preachers is,¹⁶⁸ that although the Word, yet not the Seales may be received from them: because (saith he) there is no communion in hearing, and the Word is to be preached to All, but the seales he conceives (and that rightly) are prophaned in being dispensed to the ungodly, &c.

Ans. Mr. *Cotton* himselfe maintaineth,¹⁶⁹ that the dispensing of the Word in a Church estate, is Christs feeding of his flock *Cant.* 1. 8. Christs kissing of his Spouse or Wife, *Cant.* 1. 2. Christs embracing of his Spouse in the mariage bed, *Cant.* 1. 16. Christs nursing of his children at his wives brest, *Cant.* 4. and is there no communion between the Shepheard and his Sheep? the Husband and his Wife in chaste kisses and embraces and the Mother and her Child at the brest?

Beside he confesseth, that that Fellowship in the Gospel, *Phil.* 1. 3. is a fellowship or communion in the Apostles doctrine, communitie, breaking of bread, and prayer, in which

G 2

the

¹⁶⁶ To preach mainly for conversion of that people, to whom a man stands Shepheard as to a converted people and Flock of Christ, a dangerous disorder.

¹⁶⁷ Gods people must seeke after a ministry sent by Christ to convert.

¹⁶⁸ Mr. *Cotton*.

¹⁶⁹ The communi-|on or fellow-|ship of the word taught in a Church estate.

the first Church continued, *Acts* 2. 46. All which overthrowes that Doctrine of a lawfull participation of the Word and Prayer in a Church estate, where it is not lawfull to communicate in the breaking of bread or seales.

CHAP. XXVII.

Thirdly concerning the lawfull Commission or calling of English preachers.

Mr. *Cotton* himselfe and others most eminent in *New England* have freely confest,¹⁷⁰ that notwithstanding their former profession of Ministry in *Old England*, yet in *New England* (untill they received a calling from a particular Church, that they were but private Christians.

Secondly, that Christ Jesus hath appointed no other calling to the Ministrie, but such as they practice in *New England*, and therefore consequently that all other which is not from a particular Congregation of godly persons, is none of Christs.

As first a calling or commission received from the Bishops.¹⁷¹

Secondly from a Parish of naturall and *unregenerate* persons.

Thirdly, from some few godly persons, yet remaining in Church fellowship after the Parish way.

Lastly, the eminent gifts and abilities are but Qualifications fitting and preparing for a call or Office according to *1 Tim.* 3. *Tit.* 1. All which premises duly considered, I humbly desire of the Father of Lights, that Mr. *Cotton*, and all that feare God may try what will abide the firie triall in this *particular*, when the Lord Jesus shall be *revealed in flaming fire, &c.*

CHAP. XXVIII.

The close of his Letter is an Answer to a passage of mine,¹⁷² which he repeateth in an Objection thus: But this you feare is to condemn the witnesses of Jesus (the Separate Churches in *London*, and elsewhere) and our jealous God will visit us for such arrarages: yea the curse of the Angel to *Meros* will fall upon us, *because we come not forth to help Jehovah against the mighty*: we pray not for them, we come not at them (but at Parishes frequently) yea we reproach and censure them.

To which he answereth, that neither Christ nor his Apostles after him, nor Prophets before him ever delivered that way. That they feare not the Angels curse, because it is not to help *Iehovah* but Sathan, to withdraw people from the Parishes

¹⁷⁰ Eminent Mi-nisters so ac-counted in old England, pro-fesse them-seves private Christians in new England.

¹⁷¹ False callings or commissi-ions for the Ministry.

¹⁷² M. Cotton.

where they have found more presence of Christ, and evidence of his Spirit then in separated Churches: That they pray not for them because they cannot pray in faith for a blessing upon their Separation: and that it is little comfort to heare of separated Churches, as being the inventions of men, and blames them that being desirous of Reformation, they stumble not only at the Inventions of men, but for their sakes at the Ordinances of the Lord, because they separate not only from the Parishes, but from the Church at *Plimmouth*, and of that wherof Mr. *Lathrop* was Pastor, who (as he saith) not only refuse all the Inventions of men, but choose to serve the Lord in his own Ordinances. Only, lastly he professeth his inward sorrow that my self helpe erring, though zealous soules against the mighty Ordinances of the Lord, which whosoever stumble at shall be broken,¹⁷³ because whosoever will not kisse the Sonne (that is, will not heare and embrace the words of his mouth) shall perish in their way.

Ans. However Mr. *Cotton* beleeves and writes of this point, yet hath he not duly considered these following particulars: First the faithfull labours of many Witnesses of *Jesus Christ*, extant to the world, abundantly proving, that the Church of the Jews under the Old Testament in the type, and the *Church* of the Christians under the New Testament in the Antitype, were both separate from the world;¹⁷⁴ and that when they have opened a gap in the hedge or wall of Separation between the Garden of the Church and the Wildernes of the world, God hath ever broke down the wall it selfe, removed the Candlestick, &c. and made his Garden a Wildernesse, as at this day. And that therefore if he will ever please to restore his Garden and Paradice again, it must of necessitie be walled in peculiarly unto himselfe from the world, and that all that shall be saved out of the world are to be transplanted out of the Wildernes of the world,¹⁷⁵ and added unto his Church or Garden.

Secondly, that all the grounds and principles leading to oppose Bishops, Ceremonies, Common Prayer, prostitution of the Ordinances of Christ to the ungodly and to the true practise of Christs own Ordinances, doe necessarily (as before I intimated, and Mr. [?????]) hath fully proved) conclude a separation of holy from unholy, penitent from impenitent, godly from ungodly, &c. and that to frame any other building upon

G 3

such

173 The garden of the chur-|ches of both old and new Testament, planted with an hedge or wall of sepa-|ration from the world.

174 When Gods people neglect to maintain that hedge or wall, God hath turned his garden into a wil-|dernesse.

175 The Non-|conformists grounds ne-|cessarily in-|force a sepa-|ration of the Church from the unclean in clean and holy things.

such grounds and foundations, is no other then to raise the form of a square house upon the Keele of a Ship, which will never prove a soul saving true Arke or Church of Christ Jesus, according to the Patterne.

Thirdly the multitudes of holy and faithfull men and women, who since Q. Maries dayes have witnessed this truth by writing disputing and in suffring losse of *goods* and *friends*,¹⁷⁶ in *impresonment*, *banishments*, *death*, &c. I confesse the Nonconformists have suffred also: but they that have suffred for this cause, have farre exceeded, in not only witnessing to those grounds of the Non-conformists but to those Truths also, the unavoidable conclusions of the Non-conformists principles.

Fourthly, what is that which Mr. Cotton and so many hundredths fearing God in New England walk in but a way of separation?¹⁷⁷ Of what matter doe they professe to constitute their Churches, but of true godly persons? In what form doe they cast this matter, but by a *voluntary uniting*, or *adding* of such godly persons, whom they carefully examine, and cause to make a *publike confession* of *sinne*, and profession of their *knowledge*, and *grace* in Christ? Nay when other English have attempted to set up a Congregation after the Parishionall way, have they not been supprest? Yea have they not professedly and lately answered many worthy persons, whom they account godly Ministers and people that they could not permit them to live in the same Common-wealth together with them, if they set up any other Church and Worship then what themselvs practise?¹⁷⁸ Let their own soules, and the soules of others seriously ponder in the feare of God, what should be the Reason why themselves so practising, should persecute others for not leaving open a gap of Liberty to escape *persecution* and the Crosse of Christ, by frequenting the Parishes in Old England, which Parishes themselves *persecute* in New England, and will not permit them to breath in the common aire amongst them.

Fifthly in the Parishes (which Mr. Cotton holds but inventions of men) however they would have liberty to frequent the Worship of the Word,¹⁷⁹ yet they separate from the Sacraments: and yet according to Mr. Cottons own principles (as before) there is as true Communion in the Ministration of the word in a Church estate as in the seales: What mystery should be in this, but that here also the Crosse or Gibbet of Christ may

176 The great suffering for this cause.

177 Mr. Cottons and others zealous pra-|ctice of sepa-|ration in New England.

178 Mr. Cotton allowing li-|bertie to fre-|quent those parishes in Old England: which parishes be himselfe persecutes in New England

179 A great my-|stery in the e-|scaping of the crosse of Christ.

be avoyded in a great measure, if persons come to Church, &c.

Lastly, however he saith, *he hath not found such presence of Christ, and evidence of his Spirit in such Churches, as in the Parishes:* What should be the reason of their great rejoycings and boastings of their own Separations in New England,¹⁸⁰ insomuch that some of the most eminent amongst them have affirmed, That even the Apostles Churches were not so pure? Surely if the same New English Churches were in Old England, they could not meet without Persecution, which therfore in Old England they avoid by frequenting the way of Church-worship (which in New England they Persecute) the Parishes.

Upon these considerations how can Mr. *Cotton* be offended that I should help (as he calls them) any zealous soules, not against the mighty Ordinances of the Lord Jesus, but to seek after the Lord Jesus without halting?¹⁸¹ Yea why should Mr. *Cotton*, or any desirous to practice Reformation, kindle a fire of Persecution against such zealous soules, especially considering that themselves, had they so inveighed against Bishops, Common Prayer, &c. in Edward the 6. his dayes had been accounted as great Hereticks, in those Reforming times as any now can be in these: yet would it have been then, and since hath it been great oppression and Tyranny to persecute their consciences, and still will it be for them to persecute the consciences of others in Old or New England.

How can I better end then Mr. *Cotton* doth, by warning, that all that will not kisse the Son (that is, heare and embrace the words of his mouth) shall perish in their way,¹⁸² Psal. 2. 12. And I desire Mr. *Cotton* and every soule to whom these lines may come, seriously to consider, in this Contraversie, if the Lord Jesus were himselve in person in Old or New England, what Church, what Ministry, what Worship, what Government he would set up, and what persecution he would practice toward them that would not receive Him?

FINIS.

180 The New English Chur-|ches [?????] by some to [?????] purer then the first establish-|ed by the A-|postles.

181 The reforma-|tion desired now had been accounted He-|resie in Ed. [?????] his daye[?????]

182 [?????] unjust [?????] wheresoe-|ver.