

A discourse on the Christian union: the substance
of which was delivered before the Reverend
Convention of the Congregational Clergy in the
Colony of Rhode-Island; assembled at Bristol April
23, 1760. / By Ezra Stiles, A.M. Pastor of the
Second Congregational Church in Newport. ; [Five
lines of quotations]

Stiles, Ezra, 1727-1795.

A DISCOURSE ON THE CHRISTIAN UNION: The Substance of which was delivered BEFORE The Reverend CONVENTION OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CLERGY In the Colony OF RHODE-ISLAND; Asembled at BRISTOL April 23, 1760.

By EZRA STILES, A. M. PASTOR of the econd Congregational Church in NEWPORT.

Thy FATHERS went down into Egypt with three-core and ten Perons, and now the Lord thy GOD hath made thee as the Stars of Heaven for Multitude.

Deut. X. 22.

Four Thouand Britih Planters ettled NEW-ENGLAND, and in 120 Years their Poterity are increaed to five hundred thouand Souls.

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THE CHRISTIAN UNION.

PHILIPPIANS III. 16. Nevertheles, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the ame Rule, let us mind the ame Thing.

WHILE Paul continued at Rome the aints of Philippi raied a gratuity for his relief, and ent Epaphroditus to preent it to their offering apotle. Epaphroditus, after a dangerous icknes, returning home to Philippi, St. Paul ent by him this letter of thanks to that beneficent aembly of chritians, who had liberally contributed to his relief. Tho' this incident was the occaion of this epitle, yet the apotle takes this opportunity to impart ome good gifts to them of a piritual nature, in return for their affection and temporal relief. Beides ome elucidations and bright touches on the peculiar doctrines of the chritian faith, doctrines however common to the church univeral in all ages; and beides ome incidental reflexions on the then preent tates of the chritian caue; he interperes the whole with obervations adapted to the

peculiar state of things at Philippi. If we consider this, it will very much aid us in understanding several parts of this epistle. And indeed we shall find the apostle in all his letters has a general eye to the particular circumstances of the church or person to whom he writes and many sentences and allusions are retracted by these views. His most extensive design, in all his epistles, was to confirm the faithful: to which end he attentively inspected the state of the churches, and according to their different exigencies, he imparted his spiritual advice and apostolic exhortation.

The saints at Philippi were united in a good opinion of saint Paul, their spiritual father, and paid a high regard to his dictates and advice, whether given by inspiration, or his own private judgment. And he made use of this influence, not to aggrandize himself, but to serve the cause of the redeemer, by settling and reconciling differences and animosities, by cultivating that fellowship and union; which being enlarged to the comprehension of a numerous body of Christians, was appointed to succeed the miraculous powers in supporting and diffusing christianity through the world. God's ways are consummately wise. In the infancy of the gospel, the miraculous powers served two ends, the support and evidence, or verification, of christianity. And having, demonstrably attested the cause, and supernaturally upheld it against all opposition, till it had formed such an interest among men, as, being cemented by the noble principle of union and benevolence, it might support and propagate itself in a natural way, these powers were gradually withdrawn, when effectual care had been taken for the security of the gospel. The transmitting of it therefore in some measure devolved itself on its converts, under the all-controlling, over-ruling providence of heaven. Though God accomplishes his moral, as well as natural ends, by secondary causes and subordinate means; yet there is room for the concurrent agency of these causes and hence we are to work together with God. The apostles took early care, as the number of the faithful increased, to recommend this useful principle of union and benevolence, which, cementing the body of believers, should in due time form an impregnable spirit of the corps to succeed the supernatural effusions of the divine spirit, and co-operate with God in carrying on and supporting the same great design. Even in the infancy of the churches while being too small to form respectable unions; and consequently while yet they could not see and feel the immediate use which was afterwards to be made of the heavenly principles of love and forgiveness taught by their divine master: The apostles carefully watched this principle, took peculiar care to implant and cultivate it, and used apostolic authority in recommending it.

And as the church multiplied, they were very attentive to extinguish animosities and heal differences, in one part and another: which arose, not from the nature of the christian institution, but from partial understanding of it, and from early imbibed prejudices, not at once to be worn off, and which the apostles treated with the utmost tenderness and wisdom. Besides what were incidental to particular churches there were other mistakes of greater extent. The Jews were dispersed throughout the Roman empire, and settled in great numbers in Greece, Macedonia, and around the Archipelago. And though christianity never made any great impression on the body of that people, yet a few in almost every place became converts. These few nevertheless occasioned a very capital controversy, not easily settled by apostolic authority, which takes up some part of almost every book of the new-testament, except the evangelists: a controversy, which, being differently apprehended by christians of succeeding ages, has given birth to polemical divinity or controversy on the doctrines of faith. The

few Jewih converts did at first receive Jeus Chrit as the Meiah on the evidence of his reurrection chiefly and other miracles, and partly in fulfilment of prophecy: but did not imagine that either circumciion or the law was to be abolished, They therefore used their endeavours to bring the Gentile chritians to the law; and though they received Chrit, yet their great dependance was on the law: They accordingly trusted for acceptance and justification to the works of the law, of more importance with them than that righteounes which is through the faith of Chrit, the righteounes which is of God by faith. There were other Jewih converts, who tho' they did not lay the chief tres on the deeds of the law, yet thought the observance of it necessary, trusting nevertheless in the atonement of Chrit, and preferring the righteounes by faith. The former were dangerous, being really enemies to the cros of Chrit: the latter were tolerable, and might safely be received into the fellowship of the gospel; it was necessary to act in steady opposition to the one, with the utmost decency and humanity to the other.

The body of hebrew chritians from the beginning retained circumciion and the law, which St. Paul had declared to be right for them, though not for the gentile chritians. With difficulty the apostle kept them united in his day: but soon after his death the Hebrew converts broke off all charity and communion with the Gentile converts, because the latter would not observe circumciion and the law. They were long after distinguished and known by the name of Nazarene, or circumcied, chritians. The Copti chritians circumcie to this day. Joephus the historian is said to have at last joined himself to those believing Jews, who about his time broke off all communication with the believing Gentiles. Epiphanius was acquainted with them, A. D. 370, and called them heretics, "for no other reason that I can perceive, but that they together with their chritian faith, continued the use of circumciion and the jewih law; which is a thing St. Paul never blamed in a jewih chritian." He might have censured St. James and those thousands of the Jerusalem and Galilee chritians for hereticks, concerning whom St. James said to St. Paul, Acts 21.20. Thou see, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are, which BELIEVE, and they are ALL zealous of the LAW.

This controversy had affected the church at Philippi; and perhaps Euodias and Syntyche might be Jewih converts, and very much at the head of it; the apostle says, with respect to those who were the most crafty and indefatigable in proselyting the Gentile chritians to the ceremonial, pompous, burdensome institution of Moses, beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concion; which plainly hews they were in danger from the quarter of which I have been speaking. The apostle therefore exhorts them to beware, to take heed, to be on their guard with respect to those teachers who enjoin circumciion, the ceremonial rites, the observance of Jewih holy-days, new-moons, and other festivals, and place the essence of chritianity in these things. And he takes occasion to produce his own example in evidence by which it appeared that he had been in every respect a Hebrew, too complete in that righteounes which was of the law: but since his soul had been enlightened with the invaluable discoveries of the excellency of the knowledge of Chrit Jeus, he counted all his boasted attainments in judaism as a trifle, desiring henceforward to be found in Chrit, not having on his own righteounes, which was of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chrit. Having entirely broke off from judaism, being convinced that it was superseded by a more perfect and sublime and piritual institution he pressed forward to perfection in Chrit and being desirous to unite as many as possible with him, he was

willing to walk together with his brethren the Hebrew christians as far as they had attained, who incerely believed in Chrit, yet thought themselves obliged to oberve the law. If they placed their dependance on Chrit for acceptance, they might be indulged their peculiar affection for the obervance of their law, provided they would be content that the Gentile converts hould be at liberty on thee matters; it being far better for thoe that agreed in eentials, to live in harmony and fellowhip, than under the mot pecious pretexts to reolve themselves into fruitles, undeterminable controversy and alienation. And then the apotle introduces this general advice, equally applicable to all, whether Jewih or Gentile converts, o far as they had attained, to walk by the ame rule, and mind the ame thing. This harmony would cement them into a repectable body, and perfect them in that benevolence and chritian charity, without which they were nothing.

Having thus finihed the neceary illustration of the text; I proceed to what I had principally in view, the application of it to us, my brethren, of the congregational denomination, as well in New-England in general, as the particular ditrict of this colony. And in order to procede clearly, and perceive that the principle of union recommended in the text, may be applicable and take place among our churches, I hall

I. Enumerate ome of thoe fundamental principles of chritianity and eccleiatial polity, in which our churches are generally agreed.

II. I hall mention ome things on which we differ in opinion, or are uppoed to differ; and hew that this difference need not to obstruct the general harmony and unionand that thee uppoed differences might be greatly leened by benevolent and honorable conceions. And

III. Subjoin ome reasons, taken from the importance of the common caue, and the preent tate of our churches, to hew the widom and advantage of union and good fellowhip, both among the miniters and the churches.

I. I hall enumerate ome of the fundamental principles of revelation in which we are generally agreed. I hall not confine myself to thoe things which congregationalits particularly agree inbut hall have occaion to mention everal things in which we have the happines to agree with the protetant churches throughout the world; as well as others more peculiar to our own denomination.

1. We agree in the being and character of God. The author of the univere is himself underived and independent:a being of abolute excellence and dignity, eternally happy and glorious of himself:a being but imperfectly apprehended, known but in part by man: a being in himself poeed of all poible perfection in a degree incomprehenible by our limited apprehenions; having beides thoe, whoe illustrations we have the honor of perceiving, perhaps many perfections unknown to us. The diplays of Deity to our little world lead our contemplations to four ditinctions of perfection, which yet may be but one principle in the divine eence, I mean omnipotence, widom, goodnes, mercy. His widom implies omnicience and peronal rectitude with repect to himself:With regard to the production and government of a uppoed dependent creation, his infinite widom mut discern and project and execute the wiet and bet plan of a univere:wiet becaue infinite discernment mut perceive the only one, than which there is not another wier, and in which the mot complicated various and noble ends are accomplihed in the hortet manner, according to the fewet implet general laws:wiet becaue admitting all poible ubordinations and variety of action,

happines and ocial connexion; therefore latly, wiet and bet, becaue mot declarative of the divine glory, and eventually productive of the greatet quantity of the univeral happines. I ay, divine widom, of ytems poible, mut chue that bet one, which omnipotence prompted by infinite goodnes might give exitence to and perpetuate. We view the Deity at the head of the moral ytem as exerciing a uperintendant moral government, upreme dominion, all-controlling and everlating providence. And tho' the divine complacency be apportioned to the degrees of native or acquired excellence of every order and every individual; yet impartial equity takes place in the divine dipenations and conduct towards all the ubordinations of being from infinite to nothing. This uggets the idea of divine jutice, founded in and flowing from infinite widom, which, with repect to the unhappy beings who trangres the laws of eternal order, is exercied in connecting eventual punihment with unamending impenitence. The exercie of goodnes to a revolted world is mercy: which, as the univere mut be a production very generally virtuous and right, is exercied that we know of towards no part of the creation, but this unhappy region which we inhabit. This general idea of the Deity and his character I uppoe we are agreed in.

2. That notwithstanding God created this, as he did all other worlds, in order and rectitude, yet that we are now in a fallen and univerrally depraved tate. I truly take this principle to be very generally agreeable to the opinion of our churcheshowever individuals may differ as to the origin and deert of moral evil. Some may attribute it to vicious example, ome to the diorder of our external tate, or the animal part of man, ome to a principle of pollution born in us, and derived from Adam. But however we may vary in our opinions as to the caue of the preent reigning univeral depravity; yet two things I uppoe we agree in with repect to itone, that no blame is to be acribed to God as the author of it; the other, that it is fact. Obervation on the tate of the world for 6000 years, or the review of it in hitory, hew that in fact diorder and vicious principle are predominant and reign with great trength in human nature. The univerrality of the effect hews a tendency and proclivity in our nature at preent, howeever derived there; a proclivity which may be termed a characteritic or general principle of our preent nature, even on allowance of the uppoed exceptions, which in my opinion are not to be admitted, ince this vicious principle has not been in fact controlled by the philoophers or their wiet moral ytems, but has raged in the mot enlightened and improved nations, more than among the avages themelves. From which there is reason to upect that no one of the human race is detitute of it. Our ouls may come out of the hands of God pure and unpolluted, and the pollution take place upon our entering this tate. Nor is it the reult of peronal action alone: it may perhaps be impoible for an innocent and unexperienced mind, commencing its infant exitence in a polluted world, not to be very oon affected with the contagion. The great Mr. Locke has reembled the infant mind to a raa tabula, as he exprees it, a clean piece of paper, with no incriptions, tho' uceptible of them. This is equally true of internal propenities, as of acquitions in knowledge. Some indeed uppoe or peak, as if they uppoed that the pure and holy God infued into the oul at its firt creation, and on its entrance into the world, the impure and unholy propenities both of fleh and pirit, which we find to have uurped the governing poeion of us by the time we become capable of moral action; and conequently that our natures, as they come out of the hand of the benevolent creator, are corrupt, impure and unholy. But the learned preident EDWARDS has aerted, that the doctrine of original in, according

to the end and explication of the most orthodox divines, implies no such thing: but that, we coming pure out of the hands of God, our impurity and moral defilement is altogether consequential upon our entrance into this world. I beg leave to subjoin his own words. Dr. Taylor opposes, says he, the doctrine of original sin to imply that nature must be corrupted by some positive influence; something by some means or other infused into the human nature; some quality or other, not from the choice of our minds but like a taint, tincture or infection, altering the natural constitution, faculties & dispositions of our souls: that in and evil dispositions are implanted in the foetus in the womb. Whereas truly our doctrine, says Mr. Edwards, neither implies nor infers any such thing. In order to account for a total corruption of nature, yea a total native depravity of heart, there is not the least need of supposing any evil quality infused, implanted, or wrought into the nature of man, by any positive cause or influence whatsoever, either from God or the creature: or of supposing that man is conceived and born with a fountain of evil in his heart, such as is any thing properly positive. I think a little attention to the nature of things will be sufficient to satisfy any impartial, considerate inquirer, that the absence of positive good principles, and the withholding of a special divine influence to impart and maintain these good principles, leaving the common natural principle of self-love, natural appetite, &c. (which were in man in innocence) leaving these, I say, to themselves, without the government of superior, divine principles, will certainly be followed with the corruption, yea the total corruption of the heart, without occasion of any positive influence at all: and that it was thus indeed that corruption of nature came on Adam immediately on his fall, and comes on all his posterity, as inhering in him, and falling with him.¹ These observations appear to me to be very just. On which we may remark that this author asserts, that no "evil quality" is infused, implanted, or wrought into the nature of man by any positive cause or influence whatsoever, either from God or the creature: And that there is no need of supposing that man is conceived and born with a fountain of evil in his heart. Our souls were all created by God pure and without taint, (with less perfection indeed than had Adam successfully obtained the federal trial,) but entering a corrupted and disordered state destitute of a positive propensity to holiness, though with no positive propensity to ill, the latter immediately takes place in our natures, and by the time we arrive to the years of moral discretion, we find ourselves one and all to have fallen a sacrifice to pollution. Jehovah could have implanted in us a propensity or tendency to virtue of sufficient strength to overcome the corruption of this state but he has not done it. The supposed instinctive love of virtue, and the impulses of the moral sense, are evidently too weak for eventual security. Why God did not infuse a controlling propensity to holiness is to be resolved into his sovereignty and unfathomable councils; which might with great justice, and agreeable to the analogy of nature and daily experience, take occasion from Adam's offence, to withhold from his posterity a favor which he had granted to Adam himself, and most probably had perpetuated to his posterity on the obedience of their federal head. This is an intricate subject the reconciling the permission of moral and natural evil with the perfections of God let it be brought about in what manner soever, since he had power to have prevented it. If therefore we should differ in our manner of accounting for it, and even if we should misconceive the scripture account of its origin (in which I apprehend it is clearly

¹Edwards's An. to Taylor, p. 316

defined), and yet agree in the fact that disorder and moral depravity now reign in this part of God's universe, to a degree uncontrollable by man, perhaps we shall agree in the main thing.

3. I take it that we further agree that it is beyond the power of man to recover and save himself. Methinks a little attentive view of our state might convince us not only that there is no probability, but that there is an absolute impossibility of this world's emerging from its disorder, and recovering its original rectitude of itself. A spectator from yonder distant dominions of Jehovah might look down upon this world, and pronounce it utterly lost and undone beyond any possibility of self-recovery. He might see the principle of moral rectitude, even suppose it not quite extinct, yet so embarrassed as not possibly to regain its dominion. In this attempt the most enlightened and polished heathen nations, Greece and Rome, as well as the modern reformers in reasoning, have intirely failed. And as no general successful reformation, either of the moral principle or practice, is ever to be expected from mankind considered as a collective body, while in a state of nature unenlightened by a supernatural revelation; so there is but too much reason to believe the same thing holds true of individuals. And if we should be inclined to make an exception in favor of the pagan nations, we must have recourse to the effect of the dispensation of grace, thro' which, tho' unknown to them, the spirit might regenerate a principle of holiness in them.² But even this would show that nature alone is utterly impotent to this great change. With respect therefore to the recovery of the principle of holiness, as well as the extirpation of the principle of pollution, our nature left to itself is intirely impotent.

But towards our salvation, there is necessary another thing which I suppose we all agree is absolutely beyond human power, even in full perfection, I mean rendering atonement for sin. The sovereignty of the kingdom of grace, and the designation of the Son of God to the overignty of this world, the introduction of the offers of grace, the exhibition of an example of perfect virtuous practice under all its embarrassment, the opening and setting up this kingdom; infinite wisdom it seems now could not be effected without that humiliation of the Son of God, his mediatorial obedience and vicarious offerings, on which the dispensation of grace is meritoriously founded. This shows us that without the divine supernatural interposition, the world was absolutely lost and undone. The true nature of atonement is perhaps but imperfectly apprehended by us: but methinks we might all see that, in whatever it consists, it is a thing beyond human power to render. Is it not blasphemy for a depraved helpless being to say he can do aught of himself which shall merit pardon of an offended God? Could he be perfect for the future, nay perform an overplus of virtue of merit equal to the demerit of his offences, yet on the foot of justice he could have no demand on the sovereign mercy of God. Divine justice is not thus to be bought and sold. But even Adam in innocence could perform no works of supererogation, or more than his duty: and shall his impotent sons profanely boast that they can achieve a surplus of holiness for the satisfaction of divine justice? And consequently could we be supposed to have power to become holy the rest of our lives, there remains a load of past sins uncanceled, undischarged, whose penalties we are liable to.

It is beyond our power then to lay the foundation of our redemption, which Jesus Christ has laid in the propitiatory sacrifice of himself. Equally unable are we, without

²Patten's Apolo 16.

the divine aistance, to those terms and conditions appointed to be found in us, towards our receiving the atonement and becoming entitled to the blessings of this sacrifice. Otherwise the illuminations of the holy Ghost had not been by infinite wisdom judged necessary to accomplish on the human mind the great work of conviction, repentance, faith, and regeneration. As the atonement is the foundation of our discharge from the future penalties of moral evil; so faith is the appointed condition of limiting the atonement to us; and renovation of nature is necessary to the enjoyment of the future blessings. Had I time I might enlarge on the description of this divine principle, its formation and exercise, as it affects our spiritual powers and passions, which are directed, restricted to and placed upon new moral objects, new pursuits, new enjoyments.

4. We agree that JESUS CHRIST is the great redeemer, and that he is God as well as man in a word, we agree in the doctrines of the divinity and atonement of Jesus Christ. We agree in our idea of his person, offices and mediation. However we may differ in explaining the mysteries of the hypostatic union, yet we agree in the divinity of Christ to all practical purposes particularly in his omnipotence; and that religious honor and divine worship are to be ascribed to the Son, believing it to be the will of heaven that all men honor the Son, even as they do the Father. We believe him according to the scriptures to be the second person in the ever-adorable trinity, the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person: that he is the eternal Son of God, the only begotten of his Father, full of grace and truth; for in him dwelt the Godhead bodily: that he is the eternal Logos, who was in the beginning with God, and who was God, by whom all things were made, and without whom nothing was made that was made; that to him is committed all power in heaven and earth, who therefore is God over all bleed forever: that his subordination in order of trinity is consistent with perfect equality to the Father, that so he and the Father are one, partaking in and enjoying the same essential glories and perfections: that he dwelt in eternal glory with the Father before the world was; that though he laid aside the peculiar glories of divinity which he enjoyed in the bosom of the Father upon his condescending to appear in our nature; yet when he dwelt with us, he was God manifest in the flesh, the representative and true exemplification of Deity, particularly in his perfections of wisdom, infallibility and omnipotence. Whence it appears that he was all-sufficient to the great undertaking, the work of redemption.

On the foresight of the apostacy of man and his helpless ruin, the eternal Son is represented as saying to the Father, Lo! here am I, ready to do thy will, O God! ready on the part of mankind to perform that for their redemption, which is necessary to be rendered to thy divine justice, and which they are totally unable to render; ready to undertake, to offer, and execute all that the overignty of thy administration demands. both as to atoning for their revolt, and recovering them to obedience and filial submission to thy will. In consequence of this eternal covenant between the Father and the Son, Jesus the great Emanuel laid aside the glory he had with the Father, humbled himself to appear in our nature, and performed that scene of illustrious obedience and offering, which, in the councils of heaven, was stipulated the meritorious foundation of deriving the most inestimable blessings to the true believer. He rendered complete atonement for in in the sacrifice of himself brought in everlasting righteousness published the joyful tidings of pardon and reconciling grace gave a motive and heavenly intitution of morals brought life and immortality to light through his gospel appointed the baptismal and sacramental rites commiioned his disciples, and

then ascended to the Father's presence, where he now exercises the intercessorial part of his mediation, and will continue to exercise it till he shall return and take upon him the more open and immediate dominion of the virtuous.

5. We agree in the influences and operations of the spirit, the third person in the adorable trinity concerned in man's redemption, whose more immediate province is the application of this redemption to the soul. Jesus Christ having begun this good work, does not desert it. Had he forsaken it after his leaving the world, it had proved abortive. He sowed the good seed in one part of the great field of the world, and leaves it to propagate and spread as the spirit breaks up the fallow ground, and prepares one nation after another to receive it. The same thing is to be done for individuals as for nations: Tho' evangelical truth is of a regenerating influence when brought home to the soul, or as Lord Bacon expresses it, "to our souls;" yet the human mind is to be first prepared and softened to the genial impressions of truth, which would be inefficacious alone. By an access to, and operation on, the human intellect, which we cannot define, the spirit, as we are informed by revelation, dispels the mists which becloud and darken the understanding, and, being duly attended to, leads us to discern and feel the force of the truth as it is in Jesus. And thus he brings the soul, after a previous moral process, to two great principles, distinct in their nature and connexions, though inseparably conjoined in the soul of a Christian, I mean, saving faith and the principle of regeneration we have been speaking of. By the one I mean, not the lax indefinite faith of a superficial education, tho' this might be allowed to have had a good effect upon the world; not the curiety belief, or rather non-disbelief, of Jesus and his religion, with which debauchees and devils believe, tremble, and in awe; and least of all, not that deistical faith by which we are sent equally to the dictates of Jesus, of Plato, of Aristotle, of Mahomet, and Bolingbroke, and to neither as supernaturally authorized to instruct and govern man: but, besides the honest and sober belief of revelation in general, I mean the assent of the soul in Jesus Christ; that act of the human mind, by which, in consequence of our being intirely convinced that Jesus is appointed our redeemer and king, we humbly accept and submit to him as such that act by which the soul, from a sense of its lot and inability to save itself, full of the ravishing views of the all-sufficiency of Jesus, and the benevolent invitations of the gospel, humbly comes to Christ, repairs to him as the ark of safety, receives and embraces and lays hold on him as the only hope set before it, in virtue of whose propitiation and meritorious righteousness alone it trusts for acceptance with the father. The other principle I mentioned was regeneration, in which the soul in all its powers and affections is purified, refined and created anew in Christ Jesus: a love and complacency in virtue is generated, a strong prevalent and governing affection for holiness, a prevailing tendency to moral rectitude: in a word, a part of the divine nature is infused and lights up the principle of divine love and benevolence, that distinguishing part of the moral image of God in which he created man. These principles, faith and regeneration, are supported thro' the whole course of the religious life, by the same energies of the holy spirit that at first formed them. Again,

6. I suppose we are further agreed in the consequences and connexions of these two principles—the one in governing a holy life, and exemplifying or rather diversifying itself in all the graces and ornaments of the moral behavior: the other in our justification, or intitling us, not by way of merit, but according to the constitution of grace, to all the benefits of the mediatorial atonement.

Faith is the appointed term in us which limits and appropriates the atonement. But it must be sincere, unfeigned, and attended with a holy life. He that believes shall be saved. It is through faith that we become united to the meritorious redeemer, as to receive and share in the benefits of his most illustrious virtue: which, besides a discharge from punishment, entitles to inestimable glories, privileges and happiness, over and above the peculiar rewards which God will graciously bestow on our personal virtue & holiness. These latter are entirely distinct from the high privileges and glorious beatifying dignity and advancement, which are derived to believers on account of their connexion with such an illustrious personage in the moral world, as the eternal Son of God. Thus they that receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ. To these glories justification opens the way. In the scriptures it is connected, not with the principle of regeneration, not with its subsequent holy life, but with faith only: not that faith is alone, but however attended with other good principles, it is faith only with which justification is connected. This is the appointed term, which, being found in us, effects our redemption, on our part compleats our title to all the benefits of the mediatorial obedience. There are indeed some different apprehensions among us on this subject. We all agree that Christ is the great propitiation: we do not place the propitiation in faith or good works. The only question then is, what is the condition and appointed term in us which entitles us to the benefits and fruits of Christ's righteousness? It is agreed on all hands, that whatever it is, it is not however meritorious; nor is the connexion between this term and receiving the atonement necessary as to preclude the sovereignty of grace. Now to this condition, whatever it is, as well as to the righteousness of Christ, and the grace of God. the scripture indifferently gives the appellation "justifying." The apostle Paul speaking of this conditional term in us, says, "being justified by faith:" St. James speaking of the conditional term says, "ye see then how by works a man is justified, and not by faith only:" the apostle speaking of the procuring cause and meritorious foundation of justification says, "being justified by his blood:" speaking of the source and origin of it in the sovereign and free mercy of God, he says, "being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ." It is to be observed, that the Hebrew Christians trusted for justification to the works of the law. In opposition to this, the apostles endeavoured to bring them off from this vain trust, to place their sole dependance on Christ's atonement and sacrifice once for all teaching them that faith was the only term of being entitled to the benefits of this atonement, without the deeds of the Mosaic law. Some Gentile converts seeing so much stress laid on faith, and neglect of the law, forgot the distinction between the temporary and already abrogated laws of Moses, and the perpetuity of the moral law, and so ran into the extreme of trusting to faith alone, and by itself. This is the error which James corrects, by shewing that faith being alone is dead; and that it is only such a living faith as influences to virtue, which is justifying. Not that faith is to be trusted to as meriting justification, any more than the good works it produces. To rectify still further this early abuse of faith, the apostle calls up the chief attention to a holy life or good works, not to the works of the law, but of evangelical obedience, and speaks of them as a condition of justification jointly with faith. It is evident indeed that a life of good acts is preferable in point of excellence and value, to the single good act of faith: but as real faith opens the virtuous life, and determines the future tendency of the character, infinite wisdom has seen fit to make it on our part the characteristic

condition or term of justification. These things do not bow to our reason, much less to our reveries. The proper and indeed only question is, what saith the scripture? What is the term and condition prescribed by God? If faith, or good works, separately or conjunctly we are to submit. By good works it is to be remembered we agree to understand a holy and godly life, a life governed by a real principle of grace; and whether this good and pious life, or the faith which is the basis of it, be the term of justification is the inquiry? And the doubt in this age arises from the misconception of a controversy in the apostolic age. We apply what the apostle saith of the ceremonial temporary law of Moses, to the eternal laws of moral virtue. It is granted when the apostle saith, "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified" that it is equally true in strictness both of the laws of Moses and the laws of Jesus but upon the temporary laws of the former only he had his eye. And when he is on the other hand saying that the gentiles who had never practiced the rites of Moses, might yet be justified as well as the Jews, he saith, "We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." The laws of Moses are exempt in both cases as it was but a matter of indifference, whether they were Jews or gentiles, whether they practiced the law or not they were all to be justified by faith, and not by the deeds of the law. In truth, I suppose faith alone is the condition of justification, as good works are of the rewards, but neither meritorious. The deeds of the law which St. Paul depreciates as of no value, not only in point of justification, but in every other sense; and which he counts as dross and dung, are evidently not that piety and moral virtue which he universally inculcates. And as it is impossible to ascertain the genuineness of faith but by revelation, or subsequent obedience, and revelations have now ceased; in effect, towards the moral comfort, a conscientious and virtuous life is to be attended to and treated very much as if it was the condition of pardon. And if any trust to good works for justification, in the same manner as others trust to faith for justification, as a condition only of receiving the atonement, it is not essentially erroneous, inasmuch as in either case the trust and dependence, with regard to the meritorious cause, is in the righteousness of Christ, and this only. Did our trusting to good works or to faith alone lead off our supreme dependence from the sacrifice and righteousness of Christ should we in our dependence substitute either faith or holiness in the stead of Christ's atonement; or in the same sense trust to the merit of faith or holiness for justification, as we all agree to trust to the merits of Christ; it would be as essential a departure from the Christian method of recovery, as to trust to Jewish sacrifices, and the righteousness which is of the law of Moses. But there are no such notions or sentiments prevailing in this land. Indeed we are a little puzzled about the term and condition in us of our being intitled to the atonement; but we universally depend on the atonement as the meritorious foundation of our acceptance and justification. Thus we have considered the consequences by the grace of God connected with faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The consequences connected with the principle of virtue, begotten in regeneration, are first, the subsequent life of virtue, and secondly its rewards. This principle resembles the moral perfection of the supreme intelligence, and is the basis of universal virtue and universal happiness throughout the moral world. All pure intelligences of every subordination partake of it in their measure, and are actuated by it. When prevalent in man, it as necessarily and naturally influences and impels to a life of holiness, as a polluted principle when prevalent impels to a life of vice. It naturally tends

to perpetuate itself; yet through the embarrassments of a corrupted world, it would decline and come to nothing, if it was not upheld by its divine author. Whence the perversance of aints is not to be ascribed to the indioluble perpetuity of the principle of grace, but to the promise and continually utaining power of God. A course of holy obedience and heavenly conduct is pleasurable and delightful, and evidential of the reality of grace in the heart, and the teadines of our faith: this is the present benefit of good works: but besides this, their most essential connections are the rewards. The good the gracious principle is not in any measure to be rewarded, like the good works it produces. Hence the book of the revelation represents that at the final adjustment, men are to be rewarded, not according to their faith (this has quite a different connexion, viz. justification), not according to the principle of grace, but according to the good works which flow from it: this not of merit, but of the free, rich and overeign grace of God. In God's administration, grace and reward are not incontinent. The final rewards of virtue are as much of grace, as the bestowment of justification on faith, or the giving both faith, repentance, and regeneration. But though these rewards are of grace, yet God has been pleased to inform us that the rule he prescribes to himself, is to apportion them to the degrees of sanctity. Thus the whole of our salvation is grace by grace are ye saved, through faith, that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Hence,

7. We agree in inculcating and recommending a life of practical religion, a life of piety, holiness and moral virtue.

We earnestly recommend private & public devotion, family religion, and pious education of children that the light of our good examples may shine around us, and excite others to glorify our heavenly father. We endeavour to cultivate a reverential and undiminished homage of the most high, together with unconfined, generous and diffusive benevolence, which shall render this life social and pleasant, and qualify us for the future association with the spirits of just men made perfect. And to animate us to this, we fail not to paint the glories of paradise and the charms of virtue, and to exhibit such sublime and exalted views of the moral government of God, as may charm and allure us to that conduct which is the supreme honor of our natures.

8. We further agree, that however impotent and helpless we are of ourselves, yet if any inner, even in an unregenerate state, will use the appointed means of recovery, he may be encouraged to hope for that further aid and success which will terminate in his final salvation. Not that the inner can regenerate himself: but instead of sitting down in sloth, as if he had nothing to do, no encouragement to labor for the meat that endureth to everlasting life, he ought to be up and doing, and work out his salvation with fear and trembling, knowing, that on his faithful improvement of the talents and advantages he enjoys, it is God that worketh in him both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. He should use the appointed means of religious contemplation on his state, and duly attend to the eternal consequences of moral action, whether virtuous or vicious: like a rational and immortal being, he should deliberate on the tendency, event and issue of his behaviour. He should consider that, by his almighty lawgiver and judge, he is placed on this theatre of action to sustain in the view of mortal and immortal beings a certain character, and that the part he acts has final connexions of the most important moment. He should read the scriptures to learn the way of life, the terms of acceptance. He should not neglect the duty of attending and hearing the word, and above all of humble prayer and application to the father of lights,

for the illuminations of his holy spirit, to enlighten his mind, that he may clearly discern those rich and attracting discoveries of redeeming love, which may beget faith and renovation of soul. He should labor for such just and affecting views of the folly of vice, and the excellency and wisdom of virtue, as may terminate in abhorrence of the one, and a complacency in the other. From the just humility and self-abasement which attends a thorough conviction of sin, there will be an easy and irrefragable transition to that joyful and unrestrained surrender of the soul to God, which on our part completes the title to blessedness.

Let no one then be discouraged and say, that he cannot pray to God acceptably, or ask in sincerity. For though the pure and sublime sincerity exercised by a soul under the full ravishing discoveries of the gospel, cannot be expected in the unregenerate; yet if ever their prayers are answered, their imperfect sincerity is accepted: and it is evident that they are, because with the last humble aspiration of the soul antecedent to conversion, is connected the imparting regenerating grace. In a word, God would not call upon us indiscriminately to ask mercy of him, if he did not indiscriminately grant it. The connexion between our petitions and the imparting of grace to the unregenerate, no more interferes with the sovereignty of God, than the connexions of blessing with the petitions of the godly. All that man receives is free, unmerited grace. And if the promises are a peculiar favor reserved for the saints; there are encouragements however to the unregenerate, to turn from their evil ways and seek God, who giveth grace to the humble. Jesus Christ came to call sinners to repentance; and with the gracious invitations he makes to them, he says, ask and ye shall receive and again, whosoever will let him come: the calling the vision and the prophecy was with an universal invitation to all freely to come and be happy in paradise, in that pathetic, earnest and affectionate address to mortals, I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things and the spirit and the bride say, COME. And let him that heareth say, COME. And let him that is athirst, COME. And whosoever will let him take the water of life freely. Come all mankind, whosoever will let him come. These invitations are not to the virtuous only, but to a whole wicked debauched world, whosoever will let him come to Jesus and be happy: let him come and make a humble surrender of himself to him whose right it is to reign, whose is the sovereignty and just dominion of man, and he shall be accepted. These invitations are conceived in language as strong as the promises. However at least there are encouragements to sinners and the encouragements of a God are as infallible and equally to be depended upon as his promises.

The use of means is necessary in our beginning the religious life, for our confirmation in faith, and for the subsequent culture in virtue.

9. To close our agreement in doctrinal principles we believe the resurrection of the dead, the future judgment, and final retribution. The spirits of men when separated from their bodies, will not drop into a state of inactivity, inactivity: separate souls will pass into the unseen world of unbodied spirits, and be subject to the laws and government, to the work and rewards of that world: they will during that state of separation be either united to the society of angels, and happy souls, or be joined with the degraded angels, and unhappy spirits of dead men: they will during this state of death, either tremble at the forethought of their re-union to their ancient bodies, or wait

and long in this state of expectancy for the redemption of their bodies.³ I must beg leave to proceed a little further, and add,

10. That we agree in the two positive institutions of Baptism and the Lord's-Supper. As to the communion, we do not prostitute it to the vicious and debauched, but restrict it to persons of sobriety, faith and virtue: and for the posture, according to the example of Christ and his apostles, we celebrate it sitting around the Lord's table. We agree not only in the baptism of adult believers, but of their infant seed. However incapable they are of instruction and faith, yet Jesus Christ in saying, of such is the kingdom of heaven, asserts that they are capable of enjoying the blessings of his spiritual kingdom capable of admission into it and of consequence capable of the initiatory rite by which all are to be received into his kingdom. They may be intitled to great blessings, tho' not by their own act, yet by the rite of initiation, by which they are embodied into that catholic community of the virtuous, which having the patronage of Jesus will in the issue appear to be not only the most honorable incorporation in this part of the moral world, but to imply interests and connexions of great moment. As for the mode of baptism we universally perform it by affusion or sprinkling but whether it be done thus, or by immersion, we do not hold it essential. And as the chief difference between the Baptists and us is respecting the subjects, viz. Infants, on which good and sensible learned men have judged variously; so there begins to be a good harmony and friendly correspondence between the catholic and charitable of both denominations, which I hope will continue and increase; and this benevolence is entirely consistent with our adhering to our respective denominations.

11. We agree in the belief of the inspiration of the scriptures we believe that they contain an authentic and the only infallible account of the whole system of revelation made from Time to Time to mankind and that they are a sufficient rule of faith and practice. Our churches, God be thanked, are not yet deeply tinged with deism may God preserve them pure! And as they yet retain the popular belief of revelation, which will abide the most severe scrutiny, so they accept the scriptures as an infallible rule. It is indeed a little unhappy, that, like others in the christian world, some of us are fond of substituting human interpretations given by authority of councils and learned men, exacting that the sacred scriptures be understood according to senses fitted and defined in human terms, which all acknowledge to be fallible. But it is to be hoped that we shall stand fast in the liberty wherewith the gospel has made us free. There ought to be no restrictions on the conscience of an honest and sober believer of revelation. The right of conscience and private judgment is unalienable; and it is truly the interest of all mankind to unite themselves into one body, for the liberty, free exercise and unmolested enjoyment of this right, especially in religion. Not all the difference of sentiment, not all the erroneous opinions that have yet been started, afford just umbrage for its extinction, abridgement or embarrassment. Have the protestant formularies subverted the defence of the truth as it is in Jesus? Rather have they not in event proved new sources of religious dispute and undeterminable controversy? The churches of Geneva have long since had the wisdom to drop their article of consensus, as the great disturbance of the christian harmony. And the clergy have found themselves obliged to interpret the Helvetic, and all other protestant confessions, in the scripture sense, with a *divinis veritatibus in hoc libro contentis subscribo*. I am satisfied we shall

³Pemberton's Elect. Sermon.

err les if we make the criptures the only rule of faith, than if we depart from this, and ubtitute another; or as many do, who ay they believe the criptures the only rule, and yet in all their judgments on cripture, meure that only rule by another rule. Nor do ubtituted rules anwer the purpoe of detecting heretics at all better than the primary rule, ince on experience it is found none more freely ubcribe and ware to human tets than deits, ceptics and the mot debauched. If God's incloure will not keep out the erroneus, can it be expected that ours will? The univeral pretext is a preervation againt herey. But it is to be remarked, that human tets make more heritics than the word of Godall that the one determines to be herey, is not herey by the criptures. A man may be a very great heretic according to the one, and an excellent chritian according to the other at the ame time. St. Paul was one of the greatet heretics, and even gloried in his herey, and yet was one of the bet of chritians. The Waldenes were heretics. The protetants are all heretics with the romanits, according to the council of Trent. All that can be advanced for public human tets among protetants, can and has been advanced with equal force for thoe of the romanits: for it is not o much the real truth or error contained in thee tets and formularies that is conteted, as the authority by which they are impoed, which is only human, and therefore not obligatory on concience. Though we have reapon to be thankful that all the protetant formularies⁴ are o agreeable to cripture as they are; yet they give deciions on ome things which the cripture has not determined, and on which not only the heterodox, but the mot orthodox and learned divines have different entiments and in other things they are too imperfect to be adopted by chritians as a tandard and criterion of chritian truth: and ever have been looked upon among the enible part of mankind, as having no more weight and authority in forming our religious opinion, our judgment on true religion, than any other human compoition, as ermons, bodies of divinity, treaties on the great doctrines of chritaityand as having no more claim than thee to infallibility. God be thanked we are not embarraed with ubscriptions and oaths to uninpired rules for defining truth, in this land of liberty, where the SCRIPTURES are profedly our ONLY RULE.

12. Again, We agree in the ufficiency and validity of prebyterian ordination. This was the ordination practied by the apotles, and among the primitive chritians of the firt and econd centuries. This is agreeable to cripture: was introduced into our churches at the beginning; and this has continued our practice ever ince. The apotolic order was appointed in virtue of a upernatural commiion and dipenation, which ceaed at the death of St. John. During thee upernatural communications of the holy Ghot, many were divinely, I mean upernaturally, called to the work of the ministry, beides the apotles; and were to this end endowed with the gift of tongues and other miraculous powers. As the converts multiplied and formed into religious aemblies or meetings, the holy Ghot appointed overeers and pators to intruct and feed the flock of God, to perform baptims and adminiter the communion. And thee were indifferently called prebyters or elders, teachers, bihops, pators. The elders of Epheus are tiled bihops, Acts 20.28. So the elders of Philippi are called bihops, Philip. 1.1. The elders are to take the oversight of the flock, epicopountes, doing the work of a bihop. It cannot be uppoed, that the city and church of Epheus

⁴Harmonia Confeionum.

within the first three years had undry diocean bishops; and yet the apostle calls the elders of that church bishops. These things convince us that scripture bishops, and elders or pastors, are of the same order and office. Dr. Hammond says, there were no presbyters of an inferior order instituted by the apostles. And the learned Dr. Stillingfleet made this noble conceivon that there were no bishops during the apostles life meaning no diocean bishops in the sense of the latin church. We are confirmed in this from considering what this office was in the synagogue, from whence it was adopted into the church. The head or president of the synagogues superintended the public reading and explications of the law and the prophets, and performed the public offices of devotion and preaching⁵. This officer in the hebrew synagogues was called Chazzan; and in the hellenitic synagogues Episcopos, a bishop; and sometimes Sheliach Tibbor, angel of the church, who never had the charge of more than one congregation, so that there was as many bishops as synagogues. In the first forming of a synagogue, the Chazzan was elected by the members, and ordained by the imposition of hands of the elders of the synagogue. Afterwards the succession obtained in the appointment of the Chuzan who ordained his successor by imposition of hands, an ancient rite of consecration to a religious office. It does not appear that the Chuzan was ever appointed by the Sanhedrin. Nor does it appear that the synagogues or their officers were of divine appointment: since the oracular responses of Urim and Thummim, and the other supernatural communications ceased before their institution. The ceremonies of anointing and imposition of hands originally implied an authoritative designation from heaven. The tribe of Levi was consecrated to the levitical office, and the family of Aaron to the priestly office by imposition of hands, implying an authoritative designation from heaven. Saul and David were designated to the regal office by the ceremony of anointing with Oil. Barnabas and Paul were separated to the apostolic office by prayer and the imposition of hands. These were supernatural designations, and clothed the respective officers with a proper divine authority. And these rites of initiation into the real and pastoral office were retained, and probably were set forth as examples, and intended by God to be retained in the kingdoms and churches of succeeding ages, when the authoritative designation was left to men. The apostles took early care to furnish examples for perpetual imitation in the churches, by leaving the designation of the pastors to the free election of the churches using the same rites in setting apart those appointed by the churches, as in consecrating those that were supernaturally called and appointed by heaven. There is a great difference between imitating the ancient divine appointments, and acting under a direct divine appointment. Samuel and the prophets anointed kings *jure divino*: but we do not now imagine that when a bishop anoints a king in these ages, that he does it *jure divino*, or confers any divine authority on the regal character. It is but imitative of the few instances of extraordinary regal appointment in the jewish monarchy. So the imposition of hands in the ordination of pastors, which is held indifferent in several reformed churches, implies no supernatural appointment to the pastoral office; and is in like manner imitative only of the ancient ceremonies of consecration, and the few instances of extraordinary appointment in the apostolic age, and at the first setting up of christianity. The period of extraordinary appointment to the regal office was at most from Samuel to the dissolution of the hebrew monarchies in their respective

⁵Lewis Antiq. Haeb. V. 2. p. 428 and Banage.

captivities. The period for like appointment of the pastors is limited to the few instances of the first century, or at most to the period of miraculous powers. Since these periods both have been imitative only.

The ceremony of pastoral investiture was from the beginning performed by co-ordinate presbyters or pastors; with whom the apostles left the conferring holy orders in all the succeeding ages of the church. Thus pure and uncorrupted antiquity is on the side of ordination by coequal presbyters. Clemens Romanus and Polycarp speak of bishops and elders as of the same order and office. Jerome and Hilary are on our side, by the consent of all who are acquainted with ecclesiastical antiquity. And in the church of Alexandria, presbyterian ordination only was practiced for two hundred years.

Indeed, in justice and candor to our protestant episcopal brethren, it must be acknowledged that the distinction between bishops and presbyters, both as to order and powers, began early in some parts of the christian church. And the antiquity and figure of diocesan episcopacy, which obtained for ages throughout the christian church, would have been an argument invincible, were it not for the total silence of SCRIPTURE, and the certainty that the scripture ordinations were performed by presbyters, and its making no difference between the offices and powers of bishops and elders.⁶ St. Paul refers Timothy to the gift he had received by the laying on the hands of the presbytery or elders, not to the power received from himself as an apostle acting in ordination as a superior officer. The elders who laboured in word and doctrine, aided in the ordination of pastors in other churches besides their own. The apostles, and Timothy and Titus, in ordaining elders in every city, acted as elders only, not in virtue of the supernatural communication of miraculous gifts though they were frequently imparted in the presbyterian ordinations of the apostolic age: This however did not constitute any part of that pastoral character which was to be of standing perpetuity in the church. The manner of the apostles and primitive presbyters was this; when in their travels, or the vicinity of their tated labors, there appeared a body of christians proelyted by themselves or the ancient evangelists; some of the brotherhood were chosen to the pastoral office and oversight or episcopacy of the congregation: these the apostles or any other presbyters consecrated in presbyterian ordinations as fellow labourers. Thus Titus was left to travel Crete, and as a presbyter himself to ordain presbyterian bishops, i. e. pastors in every city. Thus the original episcopacy was the pastorate of a single congregation. The hierarchy of the greek and latin churches after the apostolic age revolved the body of ecclesiastics into subordinations unknown to the apostles, who left but one order of instructors, that of elders, with power to perpetuate themselves in the election of the people to the second coming of Christ.

At the reformation it was generally conceded that presbyterian ordination was the original practice, that it had universally obtained but for the dignities and revenues. As much as this, on the part of England, is implied in the reasonings of Dr. MADDOX the late bishop of Worcester: upon whose reasonings a parliamentary establishment of presbytery, in the reign of Q. Elizabeth, had been as consonant to scripture and primitive antiquity, as that of prelacy, had it been as agreeable to three-fourths of the body of the clergy as it was to one fourth.

The judgment of the foreign churches of the reformed is evident from the harmony

⁶Bp. Downam on the Ministry, p 8.

of their confessions, which assert an equality in all gospel ministers. The sense of the protestant churches of the German empire may be well known from those articles called the Smalcaldic⁷; in which the equality of ordaining power by divine right is asserted to belong to presbyters; which was subscribed by three electors, forty-five noblemen, the consuls and senators of thirty-five cities, and a vast number of divines. At home in our nation the reformers asserted the same equality of power by divine right. We have Dr. Cranmer's judgment for it by Dr. Stillingfleet: and in the book called the erudition of the Christian man, which was drawn up by the body of the clergy, approved by both houses of parliament, and published by the King's command, it is asserted that priests and bishops by God's law are one and the same, and that the power of ordination belongs equally to both.⁸

And as to the present practice of the protestant world⁹; the Lutheran superintendents are confessedly but *primi inter pares*, and consequently their ordination is truly presbyterian. Lutheranism is the establishment of the two sovereignties of Sweden and Denmark, which include the kingdom of Norway. Two of the three religions, or rather forms of religion established in the German empire at the treaty of Westphalia, A. D. 1648, were Lutheranism and Calvinism. The superintendents were ordained by presbyters only. Luther and Melancton, who were only presbyters, ordained several. And in Denmark, Burgenhagius, who was the great instrument of the reformation in that kingdom, ordained even bishops or superintendents at one time; and yet he was only a presbyter. Calvin headed the reformation in France; but being obliged to flee persecution, he repaired to Geneva, and aided in completing the work begun by Zuinglius, among the Helvetic churches. The churches of France, Geneva, and the Swiss cantons all agreed in doctrine and the abolition of prelacy and ecclesiastical subordination and from the commencement of the reformation practiced ordination by presbyters. The Dutch and Walloon reformed of the united provinces, which in the year 1560 amounted to 2190 churches, all agree in presbyterian ordination; so do the 450 churches of the canton of Berne, as well as the rest of the Swiss protestants: and so do the 938 churches of Scotland. Our congregational brethren the dissenters in England, which at the revolution are said to have composed a body of about 2000 churches: These I say, and the large body of our brethren the presbyterian and congregational dissenters in the north of Ireland all agree in presbyterian ordination: add to these our protestant brethren the Baptists, in Britain and the United Provinces especially, with whom we have the happiness of agreeing as to ordination by presbyters or elders. I have not collected the numbers of the protestant churches in the world which practice ordination by presbyters: though it is certain they far exceed in numbers that respectable body in our own nation which retain and practice episcopal as distinguished from presbyterian ordination. Nay, exclusive of the Lutherans who seem to retain a species of episcopacy, the reformed presbyterian churches comprehend double the number of souls to those of the British episcopacy. Though strictly speaking, the whole protestant world, except the church of England, agree in the validity of presbyterian ordination. If therefore the matter was to be decided by numbers, it must resolve in our favor by a very ample majority: though truly not numbers, but the scriptures alone ought to decide

⁷Sliden.

⁸Pemberton.

⁹Dient. Gent. An. 84.

the truth. It however must be confessed no small satisfaction to find the larger body of protestants on our side, in imitating the apostolic practice in this as well as some other things, of which we are sometimes upbraided as particularly to mention but one more here, the omission or Liturgies and rendering our addresses to God in that most natural as well as christian and apostolic manner of free prayer and extemporaneous devotion. In these distinctions we initiate our posterity the rising generation, not with a view of interfering with any protestant sect, but upon the principles of conscience and self-defence. We desire to live in peace and harmony with all nor do we attempt to proscribe from any communion. We desire only equal protestant liberty. And even our episcopal brethren must confess that we treat them with much greater lenity, charity, and christian benevolence, than they treat our congregational brethren in England. And in general the declamations on the superior excellency and purity of the church established in south Britain, necessitate us to adduce the equal excellency and purity of that established for north Britain, with which we have the happiness so nearly to agree. And as the parliamentary establishments of neither of these extend to the british American provinces, so every sect have a right here to vindicate their peculiar forms. And though we judge that the congregational is equal at least in excellency and purity to the episcopal, presbyterian, clerical or any other forms, with all which we agree in essentials, yet we exercise this judgment and our defences upon it, with the most generous and perfect benevolence to all our protestant brethren, especially those who are evidently sincere and conscientious; knowing that they may be equally honest, and have equally the right of private judgment with ourselves.

13. We agree that every voluntary christian assembly have an inherent right, a power which ought neither to be surrendered nor controlled, of electing its own officers, such as pastors, or elders, and deacons. Happily different from most of the reformed churches, we are possessed of this most valuable privilege, which though they asserted, they could not retain.¹⁰ Ministers are not imposed upon our churches. It had been happy for all the christian world, had the filling up of pastoral vacancies remained, as the apostles settled it, and as our fathers wisely settled it for us, in the uncontrollable election of the church and congregation. Our fathers would not suffer a sister church, or body of sister churches, to lord it over one another, or hold a negative on one another's elections and pastoral investitures. In this they agreed with apostolic, uncorrupted antiquity. The first vacancy in the apostleship was filled up by the election of the twelve brethren, the brethren, appointed two; and they, the brethren, gave forth the heavenly lots. So the choice of deacons, as well as pastors, was in fraternal election: The twelve called the multitude unto them and said, brethren look ye out even men, whom we may appoint or ordain and the saying pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen¹¹. And in ordaining elders or titled pastors in every city, the universal custom was to consecrate those whom the brethren first elected. Nor do we ever find the apostles or neighbouring pastors ever negatived a popular election; but universally ordained such men to the ministry as by the choice of the congregation appeared to be men of good report. So the churches of New-England chose their own pastors, who are ordained or consecrated as Eusebius expresses it, "with the common consent of the bishops of the vicinity." And it is greatly to be desired that all newly

¹⁰Harmnia Confeionum pain.

¹¹Acts vi. 2.

introduced ministers be agreeable to the pastors of the vicinity, as a mutual harmony among fellow-labourers must greatly uberve the common cause.

When it is said, Acts xiv. 23, they ordained them elders in every church, it is evident from the known custom of the Keirotonia, in the Athenian democracy, that it ought to be rendered to this effect, leading the people to the choice of elders in every church, by the lifting up of hands. The apostles, in the opinion of Dr. Cotton Mather, only presided, and the people under their inspection elected. This Keirotonia is the practice of our churches. The ceremony of consecration was the imposition of hands with prayer. This simple process completed the pastoral investiture, and made a minister of Jesus Christ.

The original custom established by the apostles, was not worn out in several centuries: Ignatius writing to the church in Philadelphia, tells them, that it belonged to them to choose their pastor. All antiquity confesses the part which the people had in the election of their pastors. The council of Chalcedon, speaking of the church of Ephesus, said, that such a bishop should be given them as should be elected by those whom he was to feed.¹² Constantine wrote to the people of Nicomedia, that it was in their power to make choice of what pastor they pleased. It is a celebrated saying of Cyprian, in explaining Acts i. 26. to confirm the power of the people in choosing and refusing their officers, "Plebs christiana maxime potestatem habet vel dignos sacerdotes eligendi, vel indignos recusandi" the highest power of electing worthy pastors, and rejecting the unworthy, is in the people. A council in the VIIth century makes the ordination of a bishop to be void, when he is not elected by the people. Even in Rome itself, the people elected their bishop till the XIIth century. And popular elections of ministers continued 'till Charlemagne. Before this time indeed the privilege was in a great measure deformed from some churches. For after the miraculous powers, the clergy encroached on this principle, especially as the benefices became opulent. But they did not complete the acquisition, 'till that immense wealth, which they intrigued into their hands in the ecclesiastical revenues, gave them a weight which could no longer be resisted. This sacerdotal ascendancy, and irresistible influence, commenced from small beginnings and gentle encroachments. From such small beginnings, as recommending the advice of neighbouring pastors in the choice of a minister; they proceeded, as this custom obtained, to claim and demand such application for advice, as a pastoral right; and from claiming it as a right, advanced to hold a negative on the elections of neighbouring churches; and afterwards in the light of councils, which have proved the grand sources of corruption and tyranny, they beheld it for the public good and conservation of the faith, that they should be vetoed with the sole disposal of pastoral vacancies. In the subsequent ages of the church, those who founded the revenues, whether tithes or private persons, affirmed a temporary right of nomination or presentation to benefices. But the clergy piously prevailed on the founders to designate this power to them in their last wills. Thus and by mortmaines which they devoutly procured in bequests and pious uses, subjected to the direction and disposal of the religious, they had intrigued two thirds of the property of southern and western Europe into their holy hands. Thus by the XIVth century the European churches not only lost the liberty of pastoral elections, but with it stupidly played away their property, and subjugated themselves, their souls, bodies, and estates, to

¹²Dupin's ecc. his. and Ratio disciplinae Nov' Angl. p 27.

a plausibly usurped, because spiritual dominion. Thus the churches at length lost the invaluable power of pastoral election, which they have never been able to recover. This shows how dangerous a thing it is to surrender liberty! In the reformation, the clergy themselves lost that power which they had piously intruded from the people in the four preceding centuries. For upon secularizing the ecclesiastical revenues, the protestant princes, nobility and opulent founders, making appropriations for the support of the clergy, deemed it wisdom to assume the presentations into secular hands. And the nomination is now not generally in patronages in all the protestant churches. Thus the power which the clergy in a long struggle caught from the people, is at length lodged not in the people, not in the clergy, but in secular patrons.

The brethren and congregation have lost their liberty, when the appointment or nomination of a pastor is retarded, 1. In the overignty, whether it reside in a prince or a state. Thus the states of Holland, and the kings of Sardinia and Sweden have the exclusive nomination to pastoral vacancies. 2. When it is in a presbytery, consistory or convocation. This was originally the case with the Lutheran and reformed churches in general, and continues so with respect to some of the churches of Scotland. 3. When it is shared between the overignty and consistory of the clergy, as in the duchy of Wurtemberg. In this duchy are 450,000 inhabitants and 620 ministers, inclusive of the dignified clergy. According to the old laws of the Wurtemberg dominions, the ecclesiastical employments were entirely in the disposal of the consistory, but many malevolences having for several years been observed to obtain under such a power, the best living being bestowed on the members of the consistorial council the duke thought fit to curtail this privilege of the consistory, so that now his highness alone appoints the superintendants, prelates and abbots; for the inferior parsonages, the consistory recommends three persons, of whom the privy council nominates one.¹³ 4. When it is in patronages, whether the patrons be princes, nobility, bishops and dignified clergy, pious benefactors, or provincial governors. One or other of these have the advantage of by far the greater part of episcopal livings in the British empire, and throughout the protestant world. The royal *congé de lire* so restricts the election of the British bishops, as that their appointment may be said to be in the crown. The episcopal livings in the province of Maryland are in the gift of the proprietary governor, who has the appointment and induction of all the clergy of the province. I am told that the collation to all episcopal benefices in the plantations, excepting the missions, is in the King's governors. In Denmark the power exclusive is in the prince, nobility and other patrons. Patronages are also numerous in the church of Scotland. All these are total deprivations of choice in the people: in some instances they may perhaps be consulted, but have no determining voice, and in point of power this is to have just nothing.

The powers of the brethren, on the case before us, are abridged and embarrassed, and their liberty but partial. 1. When in virtue of a public compact established among a body of churches, the churches of the vicinity have a negative on a pastoral choice of a destitute congregation. Or 2. When in virtue of such agreement the ministers of the vicinity are invited with such a negative. So that there being two voices in the election the vacant congregation have one, and the neighboring pastors another. I do not know that this is the case in any part of the world. No one can dispute but that

¹³Keyter's trav. Vol. 1. p. 103.

an ecclesiastical community or combination of churches can form such a resolve and enforce it, tho' not in virtue of any divine power: yet the wisdom of such a measure may be questioned. 3. When the advowson or choice is in a vestry and church wardens, or committee chosen by the congregation as in rectoris. This is a low species of liberty, and a restriction that almost amounts to deprivation. But in truth the lowest species of real genuine liberty is, when there is at least a negative in the congregation, as well as in a patron or presbytery, or those who have part of the liberty. If there is a negative only in the latter, even the indulgence of choice in the church is no real true liberty. Again, 4. When among a body of free apostolic churches, a number of neighbouring churches take upon themselves to be displeas'd with the acts and election of a sister church, and excommunicate or refuse christian fellowship with that church if this should not in the event control the election & introduce a negative on the church, yet it certainly has a tendency to it; and at least hews, that that combination of churches are desirous of spiritual dominion, and would if they had power introduce themselves to such a negative. All pretexts are foreign; the question is solely upon the point of power whether it is solely in the church? or whether it shall be shared with the churches of the vicinity? And such a practice is defensible only upon this principle, that it is bet for the whole body of churches to have this mutual reciprocal control upon one another. And this principle is a fundamental subversion of congregationalism. For if the transferring the whole power of electing a pastor to the churches of the vicinity, would be a total deprivation of power in the particular church; then the transferring half that power, would be a partial or semi-deprivation. And if upon such a surrender, in a vicinity of 20 associated churches, the consent of 10 besides the vacant church be necessary, that church retains but one tenth of her power, and has given up and lost nine tenths. Thus the introducing the association to a negative on pastoral elections; is an abridgment and embarrassment, nearly amounting to a total deprivation of power in particular churches and congregations: and is consequently a fundamental subversion of congregationalism, according to which every congregation is vested not with partial but plenary decisive power.

Churches can then alone be said to be perfectly free, when each congregation has an unlimited, absolute and self-determining power in the choice of their officers: such as british freemen enjoy and exercise uncontrollably in the choice of a representative or member of assembly. When no patron, no association, no association nor neighbouring churches have any negative or control on the pastoral choice; when the election originates and ends with the church and congregation, acting as a sovereignty in this as well as all other ecclesiastical matters. And when a body of churches, 500 for instance, unite in harmony and benevolence without infringing this fundamental principle of universal liberty, that body may be said to enjoy the most free constitution, the genuine apostolic police. It is further to be remarked, that the christian congregations have energy & ability enough to choose their own pastors, especially since the revival of learning among the laity and the vernacular translations of the scriptures have rendered common christians good judges of pastoral qualifications; besides that in many of our congregations are gentlemen of liberal education and learned acquisitions, equal and even superior to the generality of our clergy. And the present pious and learned body of ministers in this land, perhaps as well adapted to inculcate piety and virtue, and diffuse the knowledge of the great scheme of divine revelation, as any body of pastors in the protestant world, do honor to congregational elections: for it is questionable

hether any body of protetants, epecially the com people for whom the clergy are of principal ue, are o generally and thoroughly acquainted with their bibles, both the doctrinal and hitorical parts of cripture: they are faithfully and thoroughly intructed.

hall cloe this ead with mentioning ome of thoe ingular churches among the happy few in the chritian world, who have not had this inetimable privilege deforced from them, or if once deforced have yet reumed and retained it in oppoition to even the pious attempts on the public liberty. Baron Polnitz peaking of the republic of Venice, whoe churches are of the romih communion, ays the inhabitants of every parih, chooe their pators.¹⁴ Dr. Burnet ays of the Grions, in every league they have a ynod, and the people chooe their miniters:” and that the ynod was bound to receive them.¹⁵ The three leagues conit of 63 communities, the protetants are two thirds, the catholics one. And another author ys of them, as to the eccleiatial government, every protetant church has right of etablilhing its pators, and of deposing them too.¹⁶ Add to thee the remonstrants and other ectaries in Holland not of the etablilhment; our brethren the Dienters in England, and the baptit and congregational churches in America.

14. We agree that every individual church has the ole power of judging and determining its own controveries. Our churches to the purposes of dicipline are o many ditinct, eccleiatial, overeignties, in point of power and controul, as independent of one another, as the united provinces of Holland to purposes of civil government. So the thirteen provinces on this continent ubit independent of one another as to juridiction and controul over one another yet in harmony. And one church or congregation has no more power over another, than one province over another, and yet they may all ubit in union and love. Union and harmony don't necearily imply ceions of power, or ubjecting to mutual juridiction. And as the powers, liberties and juridiction of each province may be aved harmles in a general alliance or plan of confederacy, as in the united provinces or wis cantons; o the powers, liberties and juridictions of each congregational church may be aved harmles in a general union and confederacy of churches. And the ame principles may take place in confederating a multitude of leer bodies, as in confederating larger bodies, uch as provinces, cantons, kingdoms. But to return,

Our churches acknowledge no juridiction of iter churches over them; but hold themelves both capable, and to have power to determine all matters of difference that arie in a particular church. For in truth, in religion we ought all to be free; and conequently not the religious peculative opinions of a chritian, one that honetly believes revelation, ought to be deemed the ubject of eccleiatial animadverion in a church, and little ele beides his morals. And this every church is a complete judge of, and perhaps is eldom mitaken. And if we go beyond this, neither ingle churches, nor a body, nor oecumenical councils can determine: as is evident from an experiment thro' the long tract of time from the council of Nice to that of Trent. It mut be confeed indeed, that our churches have ometimes taken on them the deciion of matters, which all the power and widom on earth cannot determine till the econd

¹⁴Lett. 25.

¹⁵Travels Lett. 2.

¹⁶Syt. Geog.

coming of Christ. But whatever is within the capacity of mortals to determine, respecting the Christian discipline, the brethren are sufficient judges of. Or if they may sometimes be at a loss, they have recourse to the opinion and advice of such council as they think fit to consult, reserving to themselves a liberty to receive or refuse such advice when given. And with this assistance they can determine any thing and every thing that can be determined by mortals whether they confine themselves to what properly belongs to them; or whether they enlarge into things which God perhaps has not determined for us, and never intended mortals should determine for one another. And with regard to the late, the church, with the assistance of council, can resolve and decide just as wisely as the wisest body of men, and give to themselves the power of deciding the lesser and yet more momentous differences which are truly the subjects of their decision. Therefore though our churches, in forming their decisions in matters of discipline, make application to a council of the pastors and members of neighbouring churches; yet the congregational churches universally hold a negative on the result of that council rather the decision of such council is of no force till received and ratified by the inviting church: nor does it render that church obnoxious to the vicinity, if he recedes from the opinion of the council. So that congregational councils are advisory only. And in this manner have served valuable purposes, not so much by affording any new light, as by becoming peacemakers in their connexions, influence and persuasions. Thus our churches are absolutely free with respect to all foreign jurisdiction.

There was indeed in the year 1705, an attempt or proposal to subordinate the whole body of our churches to the jurisdiction of conocation, with final appeal to a general provincial conocation, in which all controversies were to take an ultimate issue and decision. But these proposals met with insuperable opposition, from the spirit of liberty. Dr. Cotton Mather speaking of them says, "there were some very considerable persons among the ministers, as well as brethren, who thought the liberties of particular churches to be in danger of being too much limited and infringed in them. And in deference to these good men, the proposals were never prosecuted."¹⁷ To these proposals of erecting spiritual judicatories, the reverend and learned Mr. JOHN WISE of Ipswich made a very spirited reply, in a treatise entitled "the churches quarrel exposed," in which he hews that the vesting of conocations with judiciary and decisive powers, would in the issue be the abolition of congregationalism. And there is no reason to think this gentleman was an enemy to our churches. It was early seen to be important, that our churches should be conocated; but whether for the purposes of harmony only, or dominion, was as early the question. For it was seen that whatever power was ceded to the standing council, just so much was taken away from particular churches; and this clashed with the principle, that every church had power to decide its own controversies. The contesting this claim, and opposing the transferring of spiritual dominion from the church to a standing council, is the true reason, as I apprehend, that all our congregational churches in Massachusetts and New-Hampshire, are not resolved into conocations; which though not *jure divino*, are however excellent things. But to hew that the congregational churches are under no foreign jurisdiction of other churches assembled in standing or occasional councils, we may recur to the answer given by our churches assembled in Synod, A. D. 1662, to the question on the expediency and manner

¹⁷Ratio disciplin. p. 184.

of conociations, propoed by the aembly of MaachuettsThis Synod agreed that every church or particular congregation has¹⁸ "full power and authority eccleiatial within itelf, regularly to adminiter all the ordinances of Chrit, and is not under any other eccleiatial juridiction whatsoever." Subordinate to this fundamental principle is all to be interpreted in that anwer relative the communion and conociation of churches. Thus we ee our churches are hitherto free. And the ue they make of councils, which they occaionally invite, is adviory only "when they have done all, the churches are at liberty to judge how far their advice is to be followed."¹⁹ Thus trictly peaking, congregational councils have no power at all: and upon this principle it is conceded that "eccleiatial councils, undoubtedly, have at least as large rights, and as extenive authority, in churches that are united in conociation, as in thoe that are not." And this I take to be the truth of the cae, that the confederacy was not meant to vet the conociated councils with any new powers, or indeed with any power at all, but leave them as congregational councils adviory only. As to what authority any councils have jure divino, or by divine right, I hall not enlarge upon in this age of liberty and light. Doubtles whatever power the councils have from this quarter, whether conociated, congregational or oecumenical, is to have irreitible dominion over all the churches.

15. Altho' our churches be ditinct, and therefore may not be confounded one with another, and equal and therefore have not dominion one over another,²⁰ yet they hold a chritian fellowship and communion. Our pators exchange labors with one another, and on occaion adminiter both acraments in one another's congregations. Our churches admit to occaional communion the members of other churches here; and alo thoe who have been ober communicants in Scotland, Holland, or any reforming churches in England or Ireland, or elewhere.²¹ The mot of our miniters are reolved into friendly aociations, in which they aemble twice a year for fellowship and harmony, but not for tyranny and dominion. The patorial interviews at the annual convention at Boton, and on the public commencements in our colleges, may uberve the purposes of union and benevolence. Provincial conventions are excellent things, o long as they continue only ocial interviews: but when they aume upon themelves the lordly uperintendence of the churches, as they did in the IVth & Vth centuries, they degenerate into a piritual dominion, unfriendly to liberty and truth.

As communion among kingdoms and commonwealths hindereth not the intirenes of juridiction in each kingdom and common-wealth, within itelf, in its proper concernments; o it is in the communion of churches. Therefore church communion mut be only in a way of brotherly aociationbut not in way of ubordination or ubjection of one church to the eccleiatial government, whether of another church, or of the elders of other churches aembled in claes or ynodsthe cripture no where approveth. Not of one church to another, for there is a parity among churches;nor of one church to a ynod made up of the elders of undry neighbour churches.²²

The equality and independence of every congregational apotolic church, is in

¹⁸Reult of 3d Synod. p. 88.

¹⁹Ratio dicpl. 173.

²⁰Platform c. 15.

²¹Ratio. dic. 136.

²²Davenport's power of congregational churches in anwer to Pages, p. 140.

part the essential basis of the general union and confederacy. The constitution of our churches, like those in the apostolic age, are independent, free and equal: and our platforms were received by the body of the churches only as plans of union and mutual fellowship; explicit agreements, in which, reserving to themselves individually their independence, equality and unaccountableness to one another, they united in general communion in ordinances, pastoral labors, advice and council: But quite on a different footing from the constitutions of the churches of Scotland or Holland, for both of which however they always have deservedly entertained a very high esteem. The jurisdictions of the presbyteries in the one, of the classes in the other, and of the provincial synods in both, even the compilers of our platforms had for some reasons of experience a disaffection to, and our churches much more. They were willing and desirous to walk together as equal sister churches, not in subordination and abjection, but in universal protestant liberty and communion.

Having thus exhibited a summary view of the doctrine and polity on which our churches have a very general agreement, I proceed

II. To mention some things on which there is among us some real or supposed difference of opinion, and to show that these differences need not obstruct the general harmony recommended in the text: and that these real and supposed differences may be leened by benevolent and honorable concessions.

1. One source of different sentiment, were the unhappy excess into which our churches have been transported in the late enthusiasm that prevailed since the year 1740. In the public mistaken zeal, religion was made to consist in extravagancies and indecencies, which were not according to the faith once delivered. Multitudes were eriously, openly and solemnly out of their wits. The scriptures were in danger of being neglected for the indistinguishable impulses of the spirit of God; sober reason gave way to enthusiasm; the terrors of eternal damnation, instead of serving rational and sober convictions, were improved to throw people into that confusion, frenzy and distraction, which unfitted them for the genial illuminations of the holy spirit. Besides this, the standing ministry were aspersed, and represented under abusive imputations of being unconverted, legalists, arminians. And as they were thus publicly and indecently vilified, so it was taught as a duty to forsake their ministrations, and form into separate assemblies. And as was natural to expect, our churches were hereby rent and torn and thrown into convulsions and confusions, to the great dishonor of the general cause. Much of this indeed was piously meant, and honestly intended and proceeded from a zeal for the cause of God. Thus there was no doubt an intermixture of good, and it is to be hoped many were avingly converted. Our churches have now in some measure cooled and recovered themselves, though the spirit of enthusiasm is not altogether extinguished as yet, but operates and influences under different pretexts, and in a different form. But it is to be remarked with gratitude to the over-ruling disposer of events, that amidst the religious convulsions which threatened the subversion of congregationalism, an augmentation of above 150 new churches has taken place in that period, founded not on the separations, but natural increase into new towns and parishes. These differences into which good and pious men were involved, have indeed made so deep an impression, as not to be easily effaced in the present generation, notwithstanding it is so much our interest to unite in love and harmony; nor can we so easily, heartily and sincerely unite as if nothing of this nature had happened to disturb the common benevolence. But it is to be hoped that the spirit of alienation will more and more subside, and not be

transmitted to succeeding generations. On all sides there have doubtless been errors and indiscretions, let us put on concordance and charity; and nobly forgive one another.

2. Another source of differences is that of Calvinism and Arminianism. Many great and pious men are alarmed at a supposed prevalence of Arminian principles through the churches of New-England: and others suppose Calvinism greatly erroneous. Under these banners they respectively enlist, combat, conquer, and are conquered. The pretext of these names serves to legitimate mutual animosities which neither party deserve. To me it appears that these jealousies are founded almost entirely on mistake: nor am I aware of any very essential or general alteration of the public sentiment on what we all agree to be the fundamental principles of revelation. From some considerable acquaintance with the ministers of New-England, I cannot perceive any very essential real difference in their opinions respecting the fundamental principles of religion. I may be mistaken but their different manner and phraseology in explaining the same principles appears to me to be their chief difference. We are apt indeed to attribute to one another consequences of our peculiar explanations which no means adopt. Thus those who are called Arminians say of those called Calvinists, that their doctrine of original sin makes God the author of moral evil of election implies, that we are to sit still and do nothing towards our salvation of justification by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, that it precludes the necessity of faith, regeneration, inherent righteousness and good works, and so far resolves this great affair into a matter of strict justice, as to preclude the rich free grace and sovereign mercy of the Father of irreproachable grace as destructive of and inconsistent with the moral liberty and free agency of man. And so on for the rest of the controverted points. And yet none that I ever conversed with who are called Calvinists, by any means admit these consequences from their principles. Again, those reputed Calvinists say of those reputed Arminians, that their doctrine of moral freedom implies a natural power to become good and do all that heaven requires or man without the supernatural influence and power of the divine spirit imparted to the soul that their interpretations of original sin implies a denial of the universal depravity of human nature, universal impotency and debilitation of the moral powers, and perversion of affection, with loss of the image and communion of God that with them election is founded on foreseen meritorious conditions in man that their idea of Christ's atonement is destructive of the true nature of satisfaction and atonement for in the propitiation of the obedience and death of Jesus that they trust to the works of the law for justification that they substitute our obedience instead of the obedience of Christ, for the basis and meritorious foundation of justification in a word, that their notions and sentiments imply that man is not totally depraved, and though fallen, yet by Christ recovered to even a better state at present than Adam in innocency was in; and that there is no need of atonement, renovation of nature, or of the spirit's operation. But all reputed Arminians I have conversed with strenuously deny these consequences. And I find both reputed Calvinists and Arminians, especially of the clergy, agree in admitting the depravity of human nature in all its powers and affections the absolute inability to faith and holiness, without the special influences, aids and operations of the spirit on the human mind, over and above the elucidated and inspired discoveries of revelation, I do not mean to reveal new truths, but to enable us to an efficacious apprehension and discernment of those already revealed that to his enlightening energies is to be attributed the principle of regeneration that we are justified in the sight of God, not for good works, but alone for the sake of Christ and his atonement: though they

may differ in defining the nature of atonement, yet all agree in making it the ole foundation of jutificationthat the benefits of Chrit's righteounes are appropriated to believers by faith, as the condition of our receiving the atonement.

Some perhaps entertain entiments really different on thee important subjects. Their conviction however is not to be laboured by the coercion of civil or eccleiatial punihment, but by the gentle force of peruaion and truthnot by appeals to the tenets of parties and great men; not by an appeal to the poitions of Arminius or Calvin; but by an appeal to the inspired writings. And I am persuaded if all would freely and candidly compare their entiments to this rule, they would be very oon found not very variant. They would find themelves to agree in the peculiar doctrines of chritianity ²³uch as the apotacy of human nature, the guilt and condemnation into which all men have fallen; the peron and offices of the redeemer; our pardon and jutification thro' his obedience and acrifice; the conditions of the covenant of grace; the nature and extent of that holines without which no man hall ee the Lord; and the neceity of the influences of the holy pirit to form us to it.

On finding this great agreement, amenes and real harmony of entiment, among gentlemen reputed eentially to differ, I have often wondered whence could arie uch different reputations. And without charging it to the account of art and policy to apere one another's characters, I have been charitably obliged to conceive this uppoititious difference very like to that which aroe on the covenant of works and the covenant of grace, and produced a memorable convulsion in our churches in their infancy about 123 years ago: of which Dr. Cotton Mather has given us an account in his magnalia; where may be een how the great Mr. COTTON was apered and encompaed with the public jealousy.²⁴ Jealouies were raied between the bet of divines and the bet of chritians. It is remarkable how eentially they tho't themelves to differ, and thought the difference even damnable too. Mutual eccleiatial anathemas were denounced, civil dicord enued, till a dihonorable perecution atiated the public pirit, and prepared the churches for the cool retropect of 50 years, when they found the whole was urmie, uppoition and mitake. Dr. Cotton Mather freely declares it his opinion, that the miniters of that day all very nearly agreed in entiment with Mr. Cotton at the ame time, repecting thoe very points on which they unhappily tho't themelves to differand that their jealouies all proceded from mutual concern for the welfare of the churches, which led them to upect and be alarmed at every thing that had the apect of tendency to their hurt. Poterity may make the ame judgment concerning us.

Thee things are unaccountable in human naturebut have been facts in pat ages—may be o in the preent. The only way is to examine our entiments by cripture; then candidly and benevolently inquire how far we are agreed in reality; to walk together by the ame amiable rule o far as we have attained to think alike; and to forbear real differences in love, where there appears a incere love of truth, candor and piety. Remembering we all have the unalienable right of private judgment in religion; and that liberty of thinking and chuing our religion, liberty of concience was the great errand of our pious forefathers into America. And as to real differences, I believe we might amicably adjut them by honorable and benevolent conceions, by tudyng

²³Cooper.

²⁴Mr. Cotton's An. to Mr. Williams, p. 50.

and comparing the written word which we all agree to be a sufficient rule, instead of human systems on which we all justly differ. In the search after truth it should be our perpetual motto, "nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri." For after all, the question ought not to be what is Calvinism, or what Arminianism? what was the opinion of Calvin, or what the opinion of Arminius? but what is real Christianity? what is the truth as Jesus and his inspired apostles delivered it?

3. There are some differences of opinion among us respecting the nature and authority of ecclesiastical councils, and the powers of particular churches. If I enter somewhat minutely into this subject, it may not only assist us to discern the true source of these differences; which I principally aim at, may assist us in perceiving more accurately the nature and rationale of our ecclesiastical polity.

In the first settlement of this country our churches were free, independent and unobedient to one another. But though it was an agreed point that each church had of itself plenary power in deciding all its controversies, and ruling all matters of discipline: yet they also agreed in consulting and advising with the churches of the vicinity, represented and assembled in council on application of the consulting church. The advisory results of which councils had, as they justly ought to have, considerable weight in healing differences. In time it became the opinion of many of the clergy, that it was best for the conservation of the faith and public order, that the advisory influence of councils should be extended into juridical authority. There have been formed two platforms for church discipline and policy: one in 1647, before the notions of increasing or indeed of giving any authority at all to councils began; the other not 'till 1708, when they run high. The first was made at a general synod assembled at Cambridge, consisting of the pastors and members of several churches. The latter at a synod consisting of the pastors and members assembled at Saybrook, previously elected and delegated from the four county conventions of the churches of Connecticut. After these platforms were made, they were transmitted to the churches for their approbation. Those of Connecticut, except perhaps 14 or 15 churches, have acceded at length to the Saybrook agreement: in what sense, with respect to the authority of councils, we shall afterwards inquire. The rest of the congregational churches in New-England generally regulate themselves on this point, according to the congregational platform, which is commonly called the congregational platform, or rather on the purely scriptural model. Now the difference of sentiments respecting the authority of councils, is almost entirely founded on some very strong expressions in both platforms, respecting the powers and independency of distinct unobedient churches; and other strong expressions, especially in the Saybrook platform, importing the subjugation of our churches to the final jurisdiction and authority of councils. It may facilitate our understanding this matter, as well as the ecclesiastical polity of our churches in general, to consider the sentiments of the compilers of these platforms, the public spirit of liberty at the times of their respective formation, and the sense in which they were received by the small body of churches at first, and lately the sense in which they are received and adopted by the present large body of churches; most of which have been gathered since these regulations and agreements of our ancestors. But before I proceed, let me just observe that our ecclesiastical polity, at least so far as relates to councils, whatever it is, like the polities and social confederacies of all other Protestant churches, takes origin and is founded in human wisdom, human agreement and confederacy, having no claim to divine authority. It is only a wise measure which the churches accede to

for harmony, fellowship and union. Antecedent to which agreement and confederacy the churches were in full life, in full possession of all ecclesiastical power: and if they have imparted or delegated all or part of this power to councils, the councils received just so much as the churches covenanted to impart and no more: which the succeeding acts of the churches may resume, limit or continue.

In order to enter into the spirit of the congregational platform which we are first to consider, it may be observed what is well known, that the first ministers and churches were partly presbyterian, partly congregational both independent. There seem to have been three opinions among the ministers. Three or four were for having the whole rule transferred and ceded from the fraternity to a standing elderhip; the authoritative act and concurrence of the brethren to be taken in no cases but the choice of elders, and in ratifying the sentence of excommunication. But of this opinion the churches could never be persuaded. Most of the ministers were for an elderhip elected by the fraternity, with a negative on the church; and of all church acts to proceed on the concurrence of the elderhip and brethren in a mixed administration. Some few churches acceded to this: and this is the highest one in which presbyterianism ever obtained among our churches. Others of the patrons agreed with the almost universal one of the brethren in the true and proper unmixed idea of a congregational church, viz. that all disciplinary power vested in the fraternity. All agreed in receiving the scriptures as their only rule in religion: all very much agreed in their interpretation of the doctrinal parts of scripture: differing in their notions of discipline in little more than this, viz. that power of the keys, which the presbyterians would have vested in the elderhip, the congregationalists would have to vest and reside in the body of the fraternity. Both agreed in the independency of each church. Nor were the presbyterians inclined to the mode of the Scottish or Holland clerical presbytery. While they were for the exclusive power of elders in admissions to communion and disciplinary acts, that is for the authority of presbytery in a particular church; they agreed in disclaiming the authority of a presbytery out of the church, that is the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical presbyteries of the vicinity. The congregationalists retained all the power in the hands of the brethren conjunctly. Both agreed that the power of the keys was in the church, whether exercised by the elders alone, or by the whole church. This is a fundamental principle from which the churches never departed themselves to have departed. On these general principles the plan of union or confederacy was conceived by the synod, A. D. 1646. assembled on the recommendation of the legislature of Massachusetts. The synod thereupon appointed two gentlemen of the Massachusetts, and one of the colony of Plymouth, to draught each of them a model of discipline and polity for the choice of the succeeding session. The compilers were the reverend messieurs John Cotton of Boston, Richard Mather of Dorchester, and Ralph Partridge of Duxbury. Mr. Mather's model is said to have been chosen. Mr. Norton revised it, and with such further amendments as the synod thought proper, it was finished. Now the sentiments of these gentlemen are well known to have been presbyterian in the second sense above defined. I imagine they were nearly in the same sentiments: unless perhaps Mr. Cotton's notions of the authority and jurisdiction of councils might be lower than the others, as that pious and learned man had uttered an implied or oblique animadversion in the synod of 1637. So far as I can learn, their notions of ecclesiastical polity were thus, that every church should be furnished with a presbytery consisting of a pastor, teacher and one or more ruling elders, all elected by the church,

in whose hands should be the discipline and governing, as well as instruction of the congregation. That in matters of difficulty this presbytery might advise with a council consisting of such a number of the triumvirate elderships in the vicinity or elsewhere, as they should invite to assemble. That the churches properly congregational, and which had no triumvirate, should instead of an eldership appear in council by their pastors and members, as they had done in the synods of 1637 and 1646. That the pastors, elders and members assemble in council in the capacity of delegates from the churches and as peers or equals in council: not that an occasional council or oecumenical synod should consist of two estates, the clergy for one, and the lay-delegates for another; and so have distinct acts, as in the upper and lower houses of convocation. That as an oecumenical council might assemble at the invitation of the legislature; so an occasional council might be assembled on the invitation of the church when a difficulty subsisted, not authoritatively to decide and determine the difficulty, but to advise the church how to decide and determine it. That they should be assembled only on such occasions as the particular church thought proper, and consider such matters only as the church laid before them, & would be advised in. That the assemblies of provincial synods and of ordinary councils, be neither of them tated, but both pro re nata occasional.

It is well known, as I have said, that however fond our fathers in the ministry were of the power of presbyteries in churches, and of the advice of councils, they were however very opposite to the powers of councils, classes or synods out of the church. In opposition to this extraneous foreign jurisdiction, many of them wrote largely, particularly the reverend Mr. Cotton: so also the rev. Mr. Davenport in his answer to the rev. Mr. Paget of Holland: so also the rev. Mr. Richard Mather, one of the compilers of the platform wrote against Mr. Herle in 1644. in confutation of Mr. Herle's four arguments for the government of synods over particular congregations. Hence these gentlemen were intirely against the decisive authority of councils and synods when assembled: or that they should be vested with power to enforce their decrees with a penalty of non-communication to be declared by themselves authoritatively as a council or synod. They would have them advisory only, to give their opinion and advise on difficult cases, as readers of divinity in the university, or men learned in the usages and customs of the churches. They were to the churches, if I may borrow an illustration from high example, what the privy council are to the king. On the matters laid before them they draw up their judgment and result, which is remitted to the church, if the church received it, it had force; not through the authority of the council or of the churches represented in council, but of the church which receives and confirms it, and which has a plenary power of governing itself, and deciding all its controversies. In like manner the result of an oecumenical council or synod being remitted to the churches, by the reception of the voting receiving churches to have authority, and among these to have force over those only that explicitly receive it. Nor was any church to be hereticated for not approving or receiving the result of a synod or council. On the singular case of censuring a church as a church (whether any thing of this nature be content with the fundamental independency and unubordinate equality of churches, or not) it was the opinion of the fathers that a synod as such, much less an ordinary occasional council consisting of a few churches, had no authority, and ought not to be vested with any, to excommunicate that offending sister church. But that the synod or oecumenical council consisting of a representation of the whole body of the churches, recommending non-communication in their result, excommunication should proceed on

the acts of particular churches, and be performed, not by the *ynod jure ynodali*, but by the churches themselves to whom the excommunicatory reult hould be remitted, or by o many as hould ee caue for the reaons aigned in the reult to withdraw communion: that no church or churches were obliged to vote this reult on the penalty of non-communication²⁵: that o far as this entence of non-communication proceeded in the churches, the particular offending church hould be and remain excommunicate till it hould render ubmiion to the acceptance of each church revering the entence: that if the act of non-communication paed in all the churches, aid church was abolutely and intirely excommunicate; if in 20 only, it was excommunicate with repect to thoe 20 only and no more, and remained in order and regular tanding with thoe churches from which it was not cut off by an expres act. Thus in the opinion of thee gentlemen, the hihet act of eccleiatial cenure, viz. excommunication, was to be guarded.

This I take to be a jut ummary of the opinion of the fathers on eccleiatial polity in general, and the contitution of councils in particularas may be collected from their writings, epecially Mr. Cotton's book of the keys, and Mr. Norton's anwer in the name of all the New-England pators, to the quetions on church polity ent over by ome of the London miniters from Appollonius, a dutch divine, in the name of the Zeland pators in 1644. This anwer was wrote the year before the *ynod*, which aembled firt in 1646, again 1647, and latly in October 1648, when they preented the platform to the legilature to be by them recommended to the churches. Mr. Cotton in his elegant preface to Mr. Norton's anwer. comparing the eccleiatial juridictions in the Holland and New-England churches, ums up his opinion on this ubject thus, *Synodos nos un vobicum, cum opus fuerit, & ucipimus & veneramuractus regiminis quos vos ynodis peragi velletis, eos ynodis porrigi eccleis et ab eccleis ex ynodali diorthoei peragi peteremus. Petimus et illud etiam ut regimen omne eccleiatium adminitratur presbyteris cujuque eccleiae in eccleiae facie; nec incia nec invita eccleia. Vos aliud quiddam vendicatis. Annon atis tuto cautum fuerit nequid eccleiae detrimenti capiat, i omnia a presbyteris eccleiae, eccleia concia & conentiente peragantur, modo nihil arduumnii ex conilio vicinorum compresbyterorum tranigatur?* We may remark that *ex ynodis porrigi eccleis, et ab eccleis peragi* gives the intire idea of the power of councils and the power of churches: the councils are to advie what is to be done, the churches are to do what is to be done. Agreeable to this was the opinion of Mr. Hooker, Preident Chauncy, Mr. Davenport, Preident Oakes. Mr. Hooker who died 1647, while the platform was compoing, peaking of *ynods* ays, they have no power of inflicting cenures or of impoing their concluions and determinations upon others under pain of cenure. And again they et down their determinations and o return them to the particular churches whence they came, and their determinations take place, not becaue they concluded o, but becaue the churches approved of what they have determined.²⁶ Preident Oakes was a great advocate for the ballancing power of elders in mixt congregationalim, and for councils and *ynods*, and the deciive power thereof, as it hath been tated by the leaders of the congregational way both in Old and New-England. Though he had no notion that the rule and authority of the elders hould be rendered an insignificant thingas in the way of the Brownits; yet he was as careful that the liberties of the people may not be overlaid and oppreed, as in the

²⁵Non tamen ub paeca cenurae eccleiatiae. Norton ad Apollon. p. 110.

²⁶Survey, part. 4. p. 47.

claiical way. If presbyterianism in the rigor of it should obtain among us, there will be an oppression of the liberties of the people. Comparing the forms of the several protestant churches, he says, Great blindness had happened unto the world for many ages &c. The reformation in King Edward's days was then a bleed work; and the reformation of Geneva and Scotland was a larger step; and for my part I fully believe that the congregational way far exceeds both, and for the substance of it is the very way that was established and practiced in the primitive times, according to the institution of Jesus Christ. And indeed it hath been my persuasion from what I have read and observed, that those that would forsake the congregational, and pass over to the presbyterian way, because of some differences of notion among our congregational divines, or difficulties in the practice and way of the congregational churches, shall find that they make but a bad exchange; and that there are as many or more differences, difficulties and entanglements in the presbyterian principles and practice. And I must needs say, that I should look upon it as a great degeneracy if we should leave the good old way so far as to turn councils and synods into classes and provincial assemblies. And elders should manage all themselves in an autocratical absolute way, to the utter subversion or overthrow of the liberty and privilege of the brethren. ²⁷

The spirit of liberty at this time in the churches was such, that they were on the subject of disciplinary power generally congregational, and in no wise fond of the lower restrictions of the eldership: and with respect to admissions to communion, they were so universally congregational, that I suppose there had not been an instance of church admission *in fratrum suffragis*, without the votes of the brethren. This part of presbyterianism, viz. the elders admitting to communion, without the explicit concurrence of the church, never obtained among the first churches. Several churches in compliance with the sentiments of their pastors, had the ruling and teaching elders at first, as well as the pastor: yet they at length divided the ruling elder; and the teaching elder as distinct from pastor is now dropped. The authority of this triumvirate never rose high; some few of our pious fathers early put in high claims for it, that it should be vested with supreme rule and sole dominion. But the spirit of the churches would not bear this. The generality of the clergy, not merely from condescension, and being overpowered by the prevailing spirit of liberty, but I believe from honest persuasion that it was the scripture model, were for dividing all acts of rule and discipline between the eldership and fraternity, and rendering the concurrence of both necessary. And here the churches closed, only being at liberty to have, or not to have an eldership besides the pastor. Though the churches would not bear an actual negative of the eldership, whether in a single person or more. Nothing of moment was carried from the beginning, without the explicit consent of the fraternity. Nor had they the least notion of surrendering this privilege, much less of suffering their churches either distinctly or conjunctly to have any jurisdiction over them. So far from this, and so full were they of the ideas of plenary congregational power, that it was held a general principle, that individual churches had not only the uncontrolled power of pastoral elections, but of the pastoral investiture ordination or appointment; which even the first worthy ministers, as well as churches, held to be the lesser act.

Having taken this survey, we are prepared to judge on the platform itself, the one in which it was conceived, the amended one in which it passed the synod of 1648,

²⁷President OAKES' Election Sermon, A. D. 1673.

and the one in which it was, through the recommendation of the general assembly, received by the churches, and lastly the one in which, by act of legislature, it in effect became the ecclesiastical provincial establishment of Massachusetts and New-Hampshire and Connecticut. For by acts of legislature in these provinces parochial contracts for the support of the congregational clergy are enforceable at law. And these acts having received the royal sanction constitute congregationalism a legal establishment. As to the platform itself, it is evident that it leaves the scriptures to be the sole rule of faith, ordinances and discipline. As to what relates to authority and polity, though the compilers hoped to have introduced a triumvirate presbytery in each congregation to the reception of the churches, yet the authority of such presbytery was confined to such churches as received it, all being at liberty to use it or disuse it. That while the discipline and rule should at least in part vest in the elderhip of the presbyteriated churches, the whole should vest in the fraternity of the congregational ones. And that no power should be ceded to councils as such. Accordingly the platform leaves each church with plenary unceded power, making the councils and synods advisory only and pro remota or occasional: not excepting the extraordinary case of excommunicating a whole church, for this is not to be done by the council, but to obtain only upon the acts of particular churches. In the third way of communion, the judgment of the synod or council for declaring non-communication against an offending church is of no efficacy, but by particular churches approving and accepting the judgment of the synod²⁸, and respectively declaring the sentence of non-communication in each church. Thus at length with a multitude of interpositions securing the independency and uncontrollable power of the churches, it was passed and received as the plan of public confederacy, which united the presbyterians and independents under the one common title of congregationalists, before agreeing in doctrine, mode of worship, ordinances, and the self-government of churches. This union did not introduce either to a jurisdiction over one another, but left them the full possession of their unceded peculiarities. They agreed that admissions should be by the voice of the brotherhood differing in this, that the rule and government should be divided between the elders and brethren in the one, and vest wholly in the brotherhood of the other: and that the ceremonies of pastoral investiture might be performed by the elders of the one, and by delegated brethren of the other. The enjoyment of both these peculiarities was covenanted to remain to both respectively, without breach of charity or the union. It was a fundamental principle of the union, that every voluntary assembly of christians had power to form, organize and govern themselves, and in imitation of the apostolic churches to gather and incorporate themselves by a public covenant, and to elect and ordain all their public officers. They held communion with all protestant churches; yet held a peculiar fellowship with the churches of their peculiar way and order: and thence the matters of principal moment, such as the gathering of churches and ordinations of pastors, they transacted in the presence of the delegates of other churches, whom they invited and called in as witnesses of their faith and order. The sentence of pastoral ordination they held to consist in the election and public covenant between the pastor and the church. The ceremony of pastoral institution they held to be the lesser act, which yet ought to be performed as the gathering of a church with fasting and prayer. The conducting of which religious ceremony was left to the elders in the presbyterian

²⁸Platform.

churches in churches where there was no elder, the platform recommended the calling in and employing of the neighboring pastors to aid in ordination; yet with an explicit conceivon that even this might be performed by brethren orderly chosen out of the church for this purpose. This inertion with others hews the popular sense of liberty in our churches at that time: and the subsequent practice suggests the true idea of ordination councils, as used in these churches.

The sense in which the platform was received may be further collected from the effect with which it has obtained. The popular sense was too strong for the plan conceived by the clergy. The churches were really congregational from the beginning, and never fond of a presbytery for rule and government, nor were they ever pleased with the idea of a mixed congregationalism devised by our wise fore-fathers, in which the power was divided between the elders and the brethren. Nor did the distinction of presbyterian and independent, and differences thereon weigh so much among the churches, as between the churches and the ministers the ministers were for presbytery, the churches for congregationalism unmixed. It was natural then for them, being left at liberty, to use it. Hence the distinctions have long since been lost in the one common name of congregationalists. The lay-elder (if this be not a solecism) is almost entirely dropped²⁹; and the teaching elder as distinct from pastor has long since been disused. Truly neither of these ever obtained in many of our churches after the first generation. Two officers of the triumvirate ceasing, the disciplinary authority of consequence vests in the fraternity: unless perhaps in the few churches originally mixed (for I know of none, or not more than one of the first churches purely presbyterian) where the pastor may continue to retain a negative on the church, or in the language of our ancestors, where the power of rule is in the elder, and the power of privilege only in the brethren. And under the umbrage of those clauses securing this power to the elders of presbyterian churches, the pastors of some churches purely congregational have claimed and assumed this power. But according to the true principles of congregationalism, the pastor, besides being moderator of church meetings, or president of the christian fraternity, has but the authority of a private brother in the rule and government of the church. The platform happily succeeded in preventing lay-ordinations. And as to councils, they stand just as the platform provided at the invitation and election of the particular church, and in their decisions advisory only. This is the polity on which the body of the New England churches now stand, except a few who have formed themselves on the true presbyterian model according to Scotland, conitng chiefly of accessions of the present century, and a number of the Connecticut churches.

Having considered the nature of congregational councils. I proceed to hew the origin and nature of associated councils, which obtain in Connecticut. So early as 1662 there were proposals in the synod at Boston drawn up by Mr. Shepard, for resolving the whole body of the churches into associations, that is, that each district of neighboring churches should by their pastors and members assemble annually in a standing council to hear and give judgement on ecclesiastical controversies. But this proposal dropt, not being acceded to by the churches, but strongly opposed by them, as they judged themselves possessed of sufficient power to govern themselves. A few years after this, the ministers of several vicinities had formed themselves into associations or

²⁹Some few churches have two ruling elders, and some twelve.

patoral meetings for prayer on occasion of the indian wars³⁰: these associations having continued about 30 years, began to be desirous of assuming the conociated form which might easily be done if the churches could be prevailed on to delegate some of the brethren to accompany the ministers and sit with them in their patoral meeting, and withal prevail on the churches to refer their difficulties to this annual or biannual assembly. Several of the ministers had urged all the precious arguments, but without success. The early anticipated danger of introducing what might finally terminate in foreign jurisdiction, prevented the churches from acceding to the proposals of 1662. In 1700 these proposals were ripened into a formal plan for erecting the associations into conociations or standing councils with the most absolute power and jurisdiction over the churches; admitting appeals only to a general conociation composed of delegates from the several particular conociations, and vetted with a definitive binding sentence. This plan began to pass the associations in 1705, as a previous step to its being recommended and adopted by the churches. But the opposition it met with from most of the associations, and the yet unassociated pastors again prevented its being recommended to the churches, where it would have met with still greater opposition through the spirit of liberty. Though it failed in the Massachusetts, yet two years after, it was resumed and carried into execution among the churches of Connecticut, which at this time were, as I take it, universally congregationalists, though several of the principal ministers were inclined to the presbyterian rule and government of churches. There were at this time about 40 churches in that colony. On the recommendation of the provincial legislature, which had been previously procured,³¹ the pastors and members of the churches in the four counties assembled in four separate conventions, and draughted or prepared four prepared models of church discipline, as nearly resembling that of 1705 as the spirit of the churches and pastors would admit, for several of the principal pastors were truly congregational. These separate conventions delegated each perhaps two or more pastors with their respective members, to meet in a general convention, and compose out of the several remitted models a plan of discipline for public establishment. These delegates from the county conventions assembled at Saybrook in 1708, to the number of perhaps 10 or 12 pastors, and perhaps twice as many members. This synod adopted the Savoy confession³² with the heads of agreement, which happily united the presbyterian and congregational brethren in England. Had they stopped here, the liberty of the churches had been secure. They also from the public bene collected as above, composed articles for the administration of church discipline. I have been told that the model from New Haven county, said to have been draughted principally by the reverend Mr. James Pierpont, was that which with some amendments passed the synod. The synod having thus combined together the confession, heads of agreement, and articles for discipline, as an ecclesiastical constitution; it was recommended by the general assembly of the colony, and received by most of the churches. A subsequent act of the general assembly has declared such churches as accede to this constitution, to have a legal establishment in that colony, not however exclusive of congregationalism, which has equally a legal establishment. Thus there are three forms of religion established

³⁰THE ASSOCIATIONS begun about A. D. 1670: the first CONSOCIATIONS A. D. 1709.

³¹Very much through the influences of the honorable Gordon Saltontall, Esq Governor of the colony, a learned divine, who had been formerly one of the pastors.

³²Formed and agreed to by 120 congregational churches in England, assembled by their members in the Savoy London 1658.

in the german empire. In virtue of this agreement and contitution, the acceding churches were reolved into four conociations, which are now increaed to nine. Thee conociations conit of two etates, the miniters, and meengers, in effect eparate in their acts; for though they it, deliberate and vote together in council, yet their acts are of eparate import; for being two ditinct bodies in point of cognizance & juridiction, they are o veted with a negative on each other, that the concurrence of both in a certain new manner is neceary to complete an act of council³³. There at preent ubits a difference of entiment among worthy and pious men, who are real friends to the churches, repecting the powers of churches, and the powers of conociations, which hall ubordinate when in competition. This difference of entiment I take to be very little among the churches, nor between the pators and churches in general, but chiefly among the venerable clergy. The churches is I take it make no quetion with repect to their own plenary and uncontrollable power. The preent difference among the pators might be healed by charity and amicable condecensions, with the retention of their repective judgments as was done the lat century upon the differences between the presbyterian and congregational pators as to church power. The litigation of patoral controveries unepoued by the churches, epecially on the object of the patoral powers, excepting thoe with which they are evidently inveted by the great head of the church, is peculiarly unhappy in the preent rapid increae of our churches, when it is our true interet for both pators and churches to be cemented by benevolence and union. The pretext on one ide is herey: but herey is to be encountered in this age by reaoning and appeals to the acred oracles, not by the deciions of uninpired councils. If councils were by the explicit voluntary act of the churches veted with ten times more authority than is claimed for them by their warmet advocates, they could never decide the point. The criptures are the only rule of protetants.

But whatever be the pretexts on either ides, the powers of the conociations being not known in the criptures, are to be determined by an appeal to the platform that contitutes them. And in order to judge of this we mut enter into the ene and deign with which it was conceived, and that in which it was adopted by the churchesthat

³³This platform by implication vets a miniter with a negative on his church in all her acts. And in council it has thrown a very great balance of power into the hands of the miniters, even to more than a negative on the meengers. For a majority of the pators with o many of the meengers as make a majority of the council make a vote: but not a majority of the meengers and o many of the pators as make a majority of council. On the preent footing, the churches have not an equal active representation in council: they may indeed end as many meengers as they pleae, and this is the only way left them to retrieve the balance of power they lot in 1708. Thus in a council of 20 pators and 20 churches, if the 20 churches end but one meenger each, then 15 pators and 6 meengers may make an act contrary to the ene of 14 churches. This agreement then poibly subjects three quarters of the churches to the deciion of the pators and one quarter of the churches. To retore the balance it is neceary to end three meengers at leat from each church. On the object of power we are to conider all the poible chances. Now though the churches have right to end three or more, yet it was eaily foreeen that there was no probability of their ending more than two, and generally but one. Now on the whole two quetions occur, whether the pators are veted with this particular degree of power and influence in the rule of the churches by our Lord Jeus Chrit? and whether this particular plan of dicipline and contitution of councils is precribed in the criptures? If not, the whole is a human agreement and confederacy, not at all partaking of the nature of a divine intitution: and though it may uberve valuable purposes, is not to be conceived as an ordinance of God.

we may reconcile those parts of it which interfere with, if they do not contradict, one another. Taken literally, it in the first place stipulates the absolute unubordinate power of particular churches. It afterwards vests the associated council with authoritative final decision on all matters of discipline submitted to it by the churches of the circuit. It at length vests the council with general and original jurisdiction on "all occasions ecclesiastical." It should seem also by some expressions, that it is vested with the power of the keys, the power of declaring non-communication on a particular church, Now the question is, whether this amounts to transferring the power out of the churches into the council, in which they are thus represented? If it does, then there is a contradiction. And the next question is, upon a competition, which shall lose their power, the particular churches, or the association? The decisive power when assembled, and the power to assemble uncalled upon "all occasions ecclesiastical," if bona fide ceded by the churches, amounts in my opinion to an entire and absolute surrender of all power and liberty from the churches, and may in time be claimed and demanded. For with such power the associations may interdict any ecclesiastical process in the churches on any ecclesiastical matter, and with such prohibition remove it out of the hands of a particular church into the council. There remains then but one way in which the liberties of the churches are by this constitution secured, and if this be closed, their power and privilege is a cypher, viz. that the standing council have no power but when called, and on the matters only submitted by the churches even this would be a surrender of more power than is ceded to congregational councils, which are advisory only in their results; whereas the associated councils are decisive in matters submitted by the churches. Whatever was the sense of the churches in adopting it, it is pretty evident that the platform itself is interlined with a clause vesting the association, not only with the decision when called by the inviting church, but with original jurisdiction upon "all matters ecclesiastical," unless the phrase "all occasions ecclesiastical" be limited to discipline, or interpreted in subordination to the fundamental principle of the union, the uncontrollable power of particular churches.

Let us then consider the sense in which it was received by the churches. And here we are to remark that the platform itself provides and stipulates that none of our particular churches shall be subordinate to one another, each being endowed with equality of power from Jesus Christ: and that none of the said particular churches, their officers or officers shall exercise power or have any superiority over any other church or their officers. This was the basis of the union securing this they agreed to unite in social confederacy and fellowship. If any subsequent expressions intermixed in the articles of agreement should seem to interfere with and contradict this principle, so as to transfer eventually the power out of the particular church in its individual capacity is it to be supposed the churches ratified them? rather is it not to be supposed they interpreted them in a sense subordinate to the first principle?

If the council has jurisdiction on all matters, whether submitted or not; then the churches in their individual and separate capacities may possibly have none at all, because the council may possibly take cognizance of all. But if the council can take cognizance of one matter without the consent of the church; then in that one case the church has no power. If it was first agreed that each in their separate and individual capacities should take cognizance and determine all matters within the church: and afterwards it was restricted to their representation in council, would not this subvert the first principle? Was the thing so apprehended by the churches? Or can it be contended

that the churches power and conociations do not interfere, when the latter without the consent of the former take a matter out of her hands and determine it? If the church puts it into the conociation, her power is given up she has no decision of her own, but must submit to the decision of the council, unless he applied to the council for advice only, and not for a judicial decree. This is a great surrender. But to vet a foreign body with power to come and take a matter regularly depending and iuable in the church, and determine upon it contrary to the sense of the church, is a still greater, even an entire surrender of all power, or at least submitting to hold it of the conociation. And was this the sense of the churches of the 30 that first received it and of the perhaps 100 new ones that have adopted it since? Is not this effectually to subordinate particular churches to one another? and enabling a number of churches and their officers to exercise power and have superiority over another church and her officers? Or was it meant that truly one church should not exercise dominion over another, unless he could gain a number of her side, and then indeed he might? And was it indeed the design of the churches to subordinate a particular church to the body? Would not each embodied church thus derive an accession of power in her united capacity, and thus become vested with an unavoidable superiority? And does not this mutual accession of power destroy the individual equality of churches, and effectually subordinate them to one another as well as to the body? If A B and C equal and unsubordinate, yet one another with a controlling power, so that A cannot act without the consent of B or C, and so for all this is a mutual transferring of power; in which transferred or modeled power A B and C equally partake, and thus become equal in power. But does not this equality of accession and interchangeable power destroy the first equality? and is not this peculiarly modelled equality a mutual subordination of the whole? It is not certainly. If so, the first or last must be given up. Liberty may infer equality of power; all equalities of power do not infer liberty. But if A B and C covenant that they will not act without the advice of one another, with reservation of power to act contrary to advice, liberty and equality are saved. If they covenant that when they submit a matter to one another it shall be final, and retain the power of submitting, the liberty and equality are preserved. It is the last sense only in which the stipulated equality and liberty of the churches can be retained upon the Saybrook platform. In all other senses, equality may be retained, but the liberty is lost. Equality of power to be obedient and wait in invading others, remains when the power of self-government is lost. But it is better to lose our liberty into domestic than foreign hands. There are degrees in vassalage or subjection as well as of liberty. The fathers stipulated for the churches the most perfect liberty. It is possible in time there may be one or more provincial confederacies or generalities here, and an audience or common council of state for civil administration standing on free provincial elections, Even the consulate and senate of the roman empire subsisted a long time on elections, and these not septennial or triennial but annual. There would be an essential difference between subordinating the provinces to the resolutions of the supreme council of state, tho' of their own electing; between this I say, and their reserving to themselves a power to ratify or annul those resolutions. Even the first is preferable to foreign appointments, and in a sense may be said to be a valuable liberty and privilege: but true genuine liberty consists only with the last. The united provinces of Holland have found they can submit in this manner: and after all that has been said, this form of polity is not more liable to convulsions and revolutions than any other. But however

it may be in other respects, it is certain that with respect to LIBERTY, the provinces will prefer that plan of confederacy which reserves to them in their separate capacities the approbation or disapprobation of the plans or political measures conceived and remitted to them from the supreme common council. And upposing the fundamental basis of such a union, was the equality, uncontrollable power of self government in each province, and that no province or provinces, or their officers, shall have any power over any other province or its officers; And upposing while defining the business of the common council, as how that it is to take cognizance of "all matters political" in any or all the provinces, with power to assemble on "all occasions political," there should also be intermixed some strong general expressions respecting the power of the council amounting in their literal sense and perhaps in the intended sense of those who inserted them, to an absolute power and irrevocable dominion: And after the council was introduced to the reception of the provinces, chiefly thro' the stipulated security of liberty; the council should undertake de novo to enforce some of their resolutions by the unnoticed and liquidated clauses of the constitution: I say upposing all this, would not the provinces feel their liberty touched? And would it not be wisdom for them all to unite in opposition, unless the council dropt their claims? Would not this be the event, unless the spirit of liberty was extinguished or embarrassed by management? If this council of state be by constitution vested with the judicial decision of all matters of difficulty submitted to it by any of the provinces of the union, it will nearly resemble the consociations. If the council of state only deliberate for the public good and remit such deliberations to the provinces, and on application of a province upon difficult emergencies give their definitive sentence, i. e. the result of their opinion and advice, it will nearly resemble the congregational councils. If the council have absolute power over "all matters political" in all the provinces, and in virtue of this can interdict all lower proceedings, and remove all causes before it, without the consent of the province, and even contrary to it take a matter out of its hands and judicially determine it, and enforce this judicial decision on the province, on penalty of ejecting it from the union; it will nearly resemble the consociations in the sense of some of the worthy patrons.

The churches felt the importance of reserving to themselves the submission of causes to the consociation. They at once perceived, that if the consociation could of their own motion assemble upon a church and authoritatively take out of her hands the judicial decision of causes, their liberty was gone. Accordingly, when April 13, 1709 the churches of New Haven county, by their pastors and members first formed themselves into a consociation, in consequence of the Saybrook agreement, they acceded to the agreement upon certain restricting explanations, which shew as well the public spirit of liberty, as the sense in which they adopted the platform. In these explanations it was stipulated that a majority, both of members and patrons was necessary to an act that the sentence of non communion was not definitive, nor to be declared till it had passed the approbation of particular churches that churches may call a council before they proceed to censure, but without their allowance no particular person shall have a council before excommunication: Essentially agreeable to that fundamental principle of their union, "that none of our particular churches shall be subordinate to one another, nor exercise power, or have any superiority over any other church, or their officers," No subsequent expressions to be taken in a sense subversive of this, because in themselves null and void.

On the whole, it seems to appear that however the power and subordinate equality

of churches is secured in the beginning of the platform, yet there are afterwards such inertions, which, if taken literally, would subvert the first indispensable principle. In consequence and under the umbrage of which it is demanded as a right that each association, charged with the inspection of its churches, have power to arraign and depose a pastor without, and even contrary to, the consent of his church, take "all causes ecclesiastical" out of the hands of the church, and judicially decide them and if the church denies this power and jurisdiction, to arraign the whole church, deceitfully judge upon her, and enforce their decree with the sentence of non-communication. In this sense it would seem that the constitution has established two powers inconsistent in exercise, the uncontrolled power of particular churches, and the controlling power of the associations. And if the spirit of liberty did not prevent, it may become a rule for the associations in virtue of the clause, all occasions ecclesiastical,³⁴ to issue prohibitions to the churches (which has been tried in one instance) to remove such causes as they the association think proper, out of the hands of the churches, by a certiorari into the supreme ecclesiastical tribunal. But this was not the sense of the churches, when they received the platform. The principal alteration which they deemed was this, that whereas the congregational councils were elected promiscuously from the churches, the churches were now limited to the associated council as a standing council on matters of discipline, which they vetoed with a decisive power on matters which they submitted to them and which they might on all other matters repair to, advise with and consult as congregational councils. A history of the associations from the beginning to this time, and the use which the churches have made of the associations, would abundantly evince this. It is further to be remembered, that they never once thought of any alterations respecting ordination councils, and least of all, that the association exclusive should have the power of ordination in the circuit, as appears from the uninterrupted usage of the churches for the first 40 years after the platform, in which I suppose there was not a single instance of associated ordinations. All these claims are of modern date, and defensible only upon those novel interpretations which are subversive of the first grand fundamental principle of the union. The Connecticut churches remain at liberty to choose what ministers they please, to ordain their pastors elect, and what churches they please for a fraternal witness of the solemnity, and from whom also to ask and receive the right hand of fellowship. For the right hand of fellowship may either upon the principles of christianity, or the platform, be as regularly received from the congregational churches, as the associated ones, even by the associated churches themselves, as has been repeatedly the fact. The fellowship and communion is indiscriminately held among both. The pastors alone with the consent of the electing church, ordain the pastor elect; and in the name of themselves and the churches, give the right hand of fellowship, to denote their willingness to walk together in pastoral and church communion.

As the platforms are supposed to receive great efficacy from their becoming provincial establishments, it is necessary to consider this also. Antecedent to the platforms, the three colonies of Plymouth, Massachusetts and Connecticut, made and continued to make parishes by acts of their respective assemblies, and vetoed them with power to

³⁴The extensive jurisdiction of the High Commission vested on a like comprehensive clause, "all affairs ecclesiastical." The force and application of which was felt by the holy and venerable Cotton, Norton, Hooker. See Hume's History of Britain, Vol. i. p. 37.

tax themselves for the support of church pastors and teachers as they should elect. The same thing was continued after the platforms were adopted by the respective acts of legislature as provincial establishments, and especially after the present charters. Which acts in the provinces of Massachusetts and New-Hampshire, receiving the Royal sanction after the revolution, as fully establish congregationalism in those two provinces, as the acts of parliament and the union establish episcopacy in South Britain, and presbytery in North Britain. And the assembly of Connecticut being vetted by royal charter with plenary legislative power, the religious establishment of that colony is complete, as all her other legislative acts are, without the royal sanction: especially as it is an establishment of the same thing which has received the royal approbation in the neighbouring province, which gives a declared construction of that particular law or act, as not being contrary to the acts of parliament; especially this is consistent to that part of the act of union which establishes a similar religious institution for Scotland. Now all the force which a particular form of religion receives from a civil establishment, whether national or provincial, is from the temporalities and civil immunities annexed by the legislature. With regard to immunities and public secular offices, all religious, protestant sects are equally privileged in New-England. But the legal power to tax a society for the maintenance of ministers, and other parochial charges, belongs to but one general denomination, the congregationalists, under their somewhat different forms, excepting that the episcopalians in Connecticut, under certain limitations, have power to tax themselves. And legally those churches or assemblies that are independent presbyterians, or Scotch presbyterians, or congregationalists truly such, or lately congregationalists on the Saybrook model, are congregational only in law. The law considers them, not as churches purely,³⁵ but as parochial congregations, allowed in their religious form to model themselves as they please, as they judge not agreeable to the scriptures. The legal efficacy of their acts results, not from the religious form, but from the parochial powers with which they are endowed. The parishes are to certain purposes incorporate, bodies known in the law; the efficacy of parochial contracts all issue from the parochial powers; and the contracts with pastors depend not at all for their validity in law upon any of the forms of ordination, whether performed by elders in a church and pastors out of the church, or whether indeed there be no ordination at all. For I suppose if a parish in their parochial corporate capacity should contract with an unordained preacher at an annual stipend for life, upon condition of his performing divine service every Lord's-day, that it would be equally valid in law as if he was ordained, or equally valid as if made with a school-master for life or during good behavior. And this seems still more evident, not only from the nature of parochial powers, but from hence, that the parochial contract of legal validity antecedes ordination in all cases. Unless the parochial call and acceptance be deemed only preparatory to the public enacting and ratification of the contract; yet even here, the transaction which induces legal obligation is only that part of ordination in which the call and acceptance is publicly ratified and yet as this is a covenant only between the pastor and church, and not explicitly between the pastor and congregation, which is only ecclesiastical, it should seem that that which has

³⁵The churches, as distinct from the congregation, are bodies corporate to the purpose of receiving and improving benefactions, and holding estates ad pios usus; but not for taxing themselves for the support of the ministry.

legal efficacy on the inhabitants of the parish or congregation as such, is the antecedent contract. But upponing it depends on ordination, and that the legal covenant is not perfected till the solemnities of the investiture: yet by the universal practice of our churches, the ordination may be performed by whomsoever the church desire to do it. And in installments in particular, it is indifferent whether this antecedent ordination has been performed by congregational pastors, or by those who have had ordination according to the church of Scotland. All pastors have the power of ordination, and can confer holy orders on whomsoever they judge qualified, and at the desire of a particular church can give him the pastoral charge of that church when such pastor is ordained, and such church organized with a pastor to all purposes civil as well as ecclesiastical. And though it is always desirable that there should be a harmony among the churches, and though perhaps it would not be prudent for the church to desire it, or the pastors to perform it upon the mere prospect of disunion, yet when it is done, whether agreeable or disagreeable to sister churches and congregations, the parochial immunities are unhurt, and the procedure valid both ecclesiastically and legally, so far as the law takes any notice of it. This was early and all along the practice of our churches, and the platforms have induced no alterations in it.

The whole religious establishment of New England is congregationalism, except in the colony of Rhode Island, where the legislative establishment is universal protestant liberty, but without annexing parochial privileges to any sect. Here no religious congregations or societies are bodies known in the law, and all benefactions, regularly ought to be made to officers in trust. In the three other New England governments, all parochial congregations are bodies corporate. The legislature of Connecticut in particular have enacted, that the inhabitants of any town or society or parish constituted by this assembly who are present at a town or society meeting legally warned, shall have power by the major vote of those who meet to call and settle a minister or ministers among them and that the minister so called and settled shall be the minister of such town or society and all agreements made by the major part of the inhabitants with such minister or ministers respecting his or their settlement, &c. shall be binding and obligatory on all the inhabitants of such town or society and their successors. And again, all such towns and societies or parishes by their proper votes or acts shall annually grant a tax for the purpose aforesaid, to be levied on their inhabitants according to their respective lists. From hence it appears, that all which induces legal obligations is to be done by the inhabitants or members of the congregation the act of the church in pastoral election as distinct from the congregation is not necessary, though I suppose universally practiced, except in one instance. The churches as such are legal bodies for receiving and holding estates, but not for regulating the settlement of pastors. In this the laws universally consider the parochial inhabitants in a congregational capacity, whether the church in the parish be congregational, associated, presbyterian or scriptural.

If a parish church on the congregational platform should for reasons renounce it for the Saybrook, or lately should renounce both for the purely scriptural model; the parish is the same parish, amidst all the mutations of its church, enjoying the same civil and legal immunities and powers, and is treated by the legislature as all other parishes of the congregational platform. And however the churches may have confederated among themselves and may be affected by the decisions of council; yet the parish congregation, or the churches considered as part of the parochial congregation are

unaffected if in its ecclesiastical capacity it is affected, in its congregational it is not: its spiritualities may be touched, but not its temporalities. Whenever they shall be connected the affecting the one will inevitably affect the other. But as the case now stands, if the association assume even the decision with which by the platform it is vetoed (much more, should it happen to assume an unrendered constitutional jurisdiction) and decree contrary to the sense of the congregation and the parish church; the first is not touched and one vote which they have power to make among themselves withdraws the latter from this jurisdiction, without the least detriment to her temporalities or ecclesiastical liberty: as has been repeatedly done: nay, if even excommunicated by the whole body of churches, yet has he the same legal privileges as all the others. When a church and congregation have become large, they often on differences divide: the minor or withdrawing part form by spontaneous voluntary act into a congregation, and gather a church, and elect a pastor, whom they request some of the neighbouring pastors to ordain and confer holy orders upon. All this is done or may be done, for it has been often done from the beginning, antecedent to the assembly's forming them into a parish. Now whenever it has received parish powers, it is in all respects secure as to its temporalities, whether the church be in fellowship with the body of churches or not. A new parish may be erected in the old parochial bounds on the application of aggrieved brethren: but the standing party remain and continue a parish, and even the first parish and church as they hold under the first, and not a subsequent appointment. And in all instances in Connecticut but one, the two parishes formed within the same parochial bounds are of different forms as to their churches. And the act of assembly incorporating a new parish into a body known in the law, does not destroy the first parish, nor affect its antecedent acts and agreements "made by the major vote of the inhabitants." This whether the first parish church be associated, congregational, or presbyterian; whether this year the one, or by vote of itself the next year another.

This being the state of the religious establishments in New-England, and in Connecticut in particular, it appears that all claims of councils or associations, with respect to jurisdictions and decisions in opposition to the sense of particular churches and parochial congregations, may be fruitless and to little purpose, besides a temporary embroiling of the churches. Besides, that through some unhappy principles respecting the terms of communion and the qualification of communicants, by which multitudes of sober, pious and virtuous christians are deterred from the ordinances, our churches are often but a small part of the parochial congregations. And it is the congregation in its parochial congregational capacity that the law considers: And this as such does not enough partake of an ecclesiastical nature to be subject to ecclesiastical jurisdictions; or to have the validity of any of its acts dependent on the decisions of an ecclesiastical council. And even as to the influence of these decisions on the churches as such. they perhaps had better be left as those of the congregational councils advisory only, according to the sense in which it is probable that the Connecticut churches received their platform. All that is beyond this, till the public spirit be subdued, must endanger contentions and oppositions, in which the public benevolence and liberty may suffer. And it is to be remarked, that even associated churches have often called in congregational councils to advise on difficulties; which shews that they did not understand themselves restricted to the associated councils. And it is further to be remarked, that the churches of the apostolic age knew nothing of associated or congregational councils, nor their powers; but united in the full enjoyment of

unembarraed liberty. No apotolic church had authority over another, either in an individual or aggregate capacity. The claims of authority in conociated councils over the churches, are not only contrary to the primitive pattern, but probably will not prevail in New-England, unles the legilatures enact that no congregational churches hall have benefit of the laws. It is aid that there are everal churches in Connecticut which have not acceded to the platform, mot of which are congregational; and yet have the ame immunities and privileges with the others. And any may renounce the platform when they pleae, as has been done in ome intances, and yet are in full charity and communion with the conociated churches. It might be happy if they could all walk together on the conociated form, as they probably would do in time, if the conociation ubited for fellowship only, and not for dominion, which eentially interferes with the tipulated equality of churches. Nor can the conociations regularly, I mean conitently, declare non-communion with one of thee congregational churches, unles they do with all. If the caue or crime be only their denial of their jurisdiction, becaue they well know that all congregational churches agree in denying this jurisdiction. Nor was it originally deigned by the Saybrook council, or the Connecticut Aembly, or latly by the receiving churches, that all or any of the un-complying congregational churches, hould for this be hereticated, or held under the entence of non-communion. Nor that every church acceding to the union hould be obliged to end delegates to the conociation in all caues: as to this, they were at their liberty. And the churches have frequently omitted this, as I am told. Nor can a conociation regularly by the platform declare non-communion *jure ynodali*, for this, or a real crime in the church uppoed offending, epecially in New-Haven county, becaue the churches of that circuit, at their firt forming into a conociation in 1709, exprely covenanted that the entence of non-communion hould be referred back to the particular churches of the circuit, and obtain on their particular acts. Hence half a dozen churches may for preent reacons decline ending their elders and meengers to a conociation for uch time as they pleae, and yet continue members of the union, and remain upon the platform, and may afterwards reume their rights, till uch time as they voluntarily renounce the union, or are excommunicated by the acts of the particular churches of the circuit. In which lat cae, and even before if they pleae, they may meet by their delegates and form a new conociation, and become a true conociation of a new circuit, and regular upon the platformnot ubject to the conociation of another circuitunles in ome future pregres of alteration in the policy, all the conociation hould be ubjugated to the controll of a general conociation. In which cae the new conociation might ubit a overeignty of itelf, denying the jurisdiction of all foreign powers. New-Haven conociation, when firt formed, conited of but five churches.

The eential laws of eccleiatial fellowship and the Saybrook platform require that, in excommunications, whether of perons or churches, this meaire is not to be gone into without giving opportunity to the perons or churches to be hereticated to make their defence, and hew their reacons to the church or churches of the vicinity, that they may act on their own knowledge and judgment, and not the report of others. If then they utain excommunication, they revert to the tate of congregational churches; out of union indeed with the conociated churches of the circuit, but holding all the privileges of the legal etabliment, and remaining in union and fellowship with only the greatet body of churches in New-England, I mean thoe on the Cambridge

platform, if not perhaps with those of the other associated circuits, that is, they will or may possibly be in unity, with about 400 churches, and out of unity with 100. perhaps not above 50. All this is said upon supposition that the ejected church or churches be the same as to doctrine and manner of worship with the generality of the churches, and that the denial of foreign ecclesiastical jurisdiction be the only reason of non-communication. As was the case in the only instance of hereticating a church in New-England.

This is the case as matters now stand. We have seen what efficacy the platforms have received from the legislative regulations about religion. And that in effect they have not entered into any of the distinctions, but consider all only as different pieces of congregationalism. All that is done is only to incorporate the congregational congregations model themselves as they please. No temporalities or immunities are annexed to any unions or combined clusters of churches, or to any public resolutions issuing from such combination. Perhaps it would be well if all our churches were resolved into friendly associations for mutual aid and fellowship. All unions indeed forming an aggregate of powers, are liable, and too apt to terminate in jurisdictions. Not that these coalitions are absolutely necessary. The apostolic churches subsisted without either as I have said they knew not either associations or classes or their powers and whenever they take place they must obtain on other precepts than those particularly specified by the apostles, or our common Lord. But though the cantoning a body of churches into generalities and circuits, be not absolutely necessary, and in no wise scriptural, yet it may serve valuable purposes. Many of these things, not entering into the essence of religion, are left to human discretion. The late reverend Dr. COLMAN was a friend to associations of churches, but not in a sense subversive of congregationalism, for he looked upon them not the destruction, but the "very soul and life of the congregational scheme" Now they would prove the death of the congregational scheme if the churches be subordinated to their jurisdictions, for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage³⁶, and this even while they promise themselves liberty. Fellowship and benevolence, not dominion, was the great characteristic of this venerable divine, whose praise is in all the churches. He patronized the most congregational act which was ever practiced in these churches, in an instance which posterity may see the wisdom of imitating. And he was too well acquainted with antiquity not to be sensible that the grand defection of the latin church took origin in those artfully deformed ceremonies which subverted the liberty, independence and plenary power of churches So long as the power continued in the hands of the churches, undelegated to representation by perpetual decree or binding constitution, they were as safe as the apostles planted and left them: but this ceded and given up, they passed into an intestine oppression, more barbarous than the pagan persecutions.

The churches are at present above 500, and increasing again. They might form 20 associations besides those of Connecticut. And if formed without jurisdiction, they would nobly serve the purpose of cementing us together into a respectable body. But the moment jurisdiction enters, like the creating a perpetual DICTATOR, the beginning of the absolute loss of liberty commences.³⁷ Let the associations be

³⁶2 Pet. ii. 19.

³⁷The procedure is gradual from artfully deformed surrenders of power to abridgments first, and afterwards an entire abolition of liberty. The roman and athenian enacts were originally formed to deliberate and recommend the best measures of public action. The senate conceived and prepared

advisory only to the churches, as the privy council to his majesty, the assembly of the states to the united provinces; even general provincial associations of the same import advisory only, might have a friendly influence alva Libertate & Jure Ecclesiarum universalium. An influence which one would think should content the ecclesiastical councils. But even this, let it be remembered, would be but a human device of polity, neither prescribed or suggested by Christ or his apostles; and having nothing of divine in it, not being so much as an ordinance of God, but a voluntary agreement only of men. And consequently the decisions and results of councils ought not to be put off upon the churches as an ordinance of the most high, who is never to be brought in to patronize the fallible decrees of mortals uninspired, which are sometimes delivered to the churches in the name of God, with strong expressions importing that the contempt and disobedience of them is contempt and disobedience of the most high. *Nec Deus interit nisi dignus vindice nodus.* There needs the utmost caution lest the opinions and canons of councils be conceived in this light For however in the commencement and infancy of a policy, they are taken but advisory, they may be drawn into prescription and precedent by subsequent generations and ages. Ancient customs become deemed to be established constitutional powers and rights; and so the influence and ascendancy of a well constituted council or union of councils degenerate into tyranny. And future priests may, through weakness and ignorance of history and the love of dominion, imagine themselves, as members of an established council, to hold those powers and influence *jure divino*, or by divine right, which a constitution or policy by imperceptible steps and inevitable transitions acquires through a tract of time. In faithfulness therefore to posterity and the truth, every present generation should teach their rising offspring the essential difference between what arises from human policy, and the institutes of heaven: and that as the most high has not vouchsafed any order of men since the apostolic age, with divine infallible authority, so none of their decisions on or about religion partake in the least degree of infallibility not even the churches themselves in their particular or aggregate capacity: that ecclesiastical councils have no authority unless imparted by the churches, and this though ecclesiastical yet not divine: and that if ever this be ceded or given up to the degree of controlling particular churches in a perpetual constitution, posterity will again date the death of liberty from that unhappy era till future vigorous struggles and united combined exertions of the public spirit shall resume it into those hands where God and nature placed it. The exigencies of the christian church can never be such as to legitimate, much less render it wise, to erect any body of men into a standing judicatory over the churches. If on some extraordinary occasions it may be necessary to cede up the united power into an extraordinary commission: yet when the public work designed is accomplished, let the commission end, the power revert and rest in the bosom of the churches. Never suffer the united force and power of the churches to be at the call, especially at the command of a standing body of men, even if partly vested on constitutional delegates

plans for the public ratification of the people, with whom was the supreme aggregate power. This origination in the senate was called *autoritus*, denoting till for 300 years no proper power. In time the senate shared half the power, the plebeians under different names the other. At length the entire imperial power was gained into representation; and when this was settled into a perpetual constitution, it was finally in effect subjected to the control of a perpetual dictatorship in one person; when liberty was lost, then and even before this authority and power became anonymous. So Results of councils and power may import the same thing after proper stages.

from the churches. The ends of civil and ecclesiastical polity are so widely different, that however this may be expedient in the one, it is by no means so in the other. If the united force of the churches can be constitutionally collected and directed to such objects and ends as a standing council (liable to corruption and undue influence) shall command, without and contrary to the consent of individual churches, whether the policy be a monarchy, or an oligarchy, it is indifferent liberty is gone, tyranny and intestine oppression may be the fate of succeeding generations. Our churches have not as yet given up their powers and liberty into foreign hands, at least the main body have not, and it is questionable whether any have deignedly and bona fide done it. Let them be taught to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free. Heaven is giving us an opportunity to plant a noble body of free churches in America, and has charged us with a part to act for posterity. The love of dominion which reigns in every breast, and thus becomes a general principle, is almost too mighty for that other general principle the love of liberty, which it is deigned to balance. Take either away out of human nature, and confusion arises. There is no danger of cultivating the former, it is inextinguishable: but there is great need of cultivating the latter, especially in religion. Liberty and dominion are in opposite balances on the scale of human nature both necessary: the latter is dangerous unless well guarded; the former generally safe excepting when collecting for one public hurt on tyranny. They are deigned by God to counterpoise and balance one another. There is no danger but the wanton licentiousness of the one will be corrected by the artifice and force of the other. Neither let liberty be extinguished nor dominion; both have their proper spheres; when the one degenerates into tyranny and unnecessary restraints, and when the other becomes anarchy, they are both equally pernicious to society. The principles of both and their balance ought to be well understood, settled and defined, and the fines quos ultra itaque nequit be fixed on the public sense, and their rationale publicly taught and explained thro' the community.

The body of the clergy in New-England might easily adopt a system of ecclesiastical management, which in a century or two, with moderation and attention to the public spirit, would gently gain the submission of the churches, and inevitably steal away their liberty. But I rejoice to believe they are not inclined to it. Yet let me say that measures may be honestly, and with pious intent, gone into, which effect this as surely as if with the design and forethought of a Machiavel, a Richelieu, or a Mazarine. The system adopted deignedly or undeignedly, however looks with undeviating operation to the same end. Any thing of this nature may be wisely opposed. Let us remain true and firm to our first principles, the unrendered power of the churches. And indeed there is need of the exercise of but little power here; for christianity is not a system of human power and dominion, but of liberty and benevolence.

To sum up the whole, it appears from above, 1. That our churches were originally free and independent of one another. 2. That any plan of confederacy is just what it was agreed, explicitly received and understood to be by the confederating churches. 3. That such confederacy, whatever be its form, is not *jure divin*, but entirely human and prudential: and was never deigned to interfere with the independence and prerogative powers of particular churches. 4. Least of all was it deigned to regulate articles of faith, it being one of the fundamental and explicit declarations of the churches, and even of the platforms, that the SCRIPTURES alone are the ONLY

RULE of FAITH. ³⁸ And 5. That such are the circumstances of our churches, so intermixt with sects of various communion, that it is impolitic to use extreme and coercive measures; since the universal liberty permits the oppressed to form into voluntary coalitions for religious worship. 6. That strong union being one main thing during the infancy of the churches, uniformity in lesser matters is not to be rigorously exacted; but healing and uniting measures being a first point in view, many other things are to be subordinated to this. 7. That the spirit of disunion is attended with more fatal prejudices in the swift growth of a body of churches, than when they are arrived to maturity. To which we may add, 8. That many considerable errors, if let alone, will correct themselves in time on free inquiry, deliberate and unheated disquisitions.

But if different usages and customs in ecclesiastical polity are finally settled in different churches, agreeing in the essentials of christian doctrine and worship: this need not disturb the general harmony. Men build their houses differently, cultivate their lands differently, pursue the same employments in different methods, and in different methods study the sciences; yet if they attain the end, it matters little as to the different means. An empire consists of a multitude of cities, burroughs, towns and provinces, differently constituted by accident, according to the course of events, or according to the different genius of the people conjoined. And yet in these different ways arrive at individual and public felicity. The plan that happily cements and unites all in one general confederacy and public union, reserving to each part its power, liberty and proportionate influence in the mighty whole, is the wiser and better. Coercive uniformity is neither necessary in politics nor religion ³⁹. All the kingdoms of the earth are differently governed, and yet all in their several ways obey the public design of the supreme king. Churches have subsisted well under all the limitations of liberty; all have their constitutional diseases. All protestant churches have different models under the general profession, and yet we have charity for all. We are in full charity with churches which have lost all their liberty, yet are ornaments to the christian profession. And among ourselves, let it not break our communion if any of our churches give up all their liberty, or retain it all in their own hands. If the great end is answered of making men virtuous and good, let us rejoice, though the means are diversified. Particularly let us of the congregational communion in New-England, under the different forms of our churches, cultivate a venerable regard for one another; rejoice that we are so well agreed in purity of doctrine and worship, and walk together by the same rule, so far as we are agreed: and for the rest, let us endeavour to hope and think and speak the best of one another, in all our differences, putting on forbearance, charity and a condescending benevolence.

III. I come now at length to consider the expediency of harmony and union, especially among the congregational churches in New-England. And,

1. The first argument may be taken from the importance of the cause in itself considered, its purity, its friendly aspect on the public religious liberty, and its utility to the state. I am persuaded from a very thorough disquisition and search, that there is no body of churches in the protestant world more nearly recovered to the simplicity and purity of the apostolic age. We need indeed some further purifications

³⁸The founders of our churches always professed to make the sacred scriptures the only rule in matters of discipline and worship, as well as in articles of faith. Hobart's Address. p. 36.

³⁹I have no opinion of an exacted uniformity in religious administrations. Dr. COLMAN.

and amendments; which will doubtless take place in process of time on free inquiry and universal liberty, to the prevailing of which it is already impossible to put a top. But in general our churches appear to me to be nearly on the same footing with the primitive churches, as left by the apostles, who doubtless left them completely instituted. Most other protestant churches are under embarrassments from which we are free. If there be more liberty for free inquiry at present in one of them, it does not flow from the nature of their policy, but from the laudable moderation of their clergy, or other less honorable motives. And besides, the avenues to this liberty are embarrassed with dishonorable compliances and submissions. Any embarrassments in our churches proceed not from the nature of their policy, but from the spirit of the times, which must and will alter. If there be any true way of worshipping the deity, the supreme Lord of nature, it may be in our manner: even deists must confess that our way is or may be natural and rational. And being possessed of the precious jewel of religious liberty, a jewel of inestimable worth, let us prize it highly, and esteem it too dear to be parted with on any terms; let us not be again entangled with that yoke of bondage⁴⁰ which our fathers could not, would not. and God grant we may never submit to bear. The lesser differences among ourselves, which will at times unavoidably spring up in this imperfect militant state, and afford a temporary disturbance to the best constituted churches, will again subside, and finally terminate in defining the limits of power, and in more accurately ascertaining the terms of communion and universal benevolence. Providence has planted the British America with a variety of sects, which will unavoidably become a mutual balance upon one another. Their temporary collisions, like the action of acids and alkalies after a short ebullition, will subside in harmony and union, not by the destruction of either, but in the friendly cohabitation of all. An antecedent fermentation may take place, as it has done in the philosophic world, but generous inquiry and liberal disquisition will issue all in this. Repellent and all-prevailing TRUTH will terminate the whole in universal harmony. All unrepentant efforts and attempts on the public liberty will unavoidably excite the public vigilance of the sects, till the terms of general communion be defined and honorably adjusted. The notion of erecting the polity of either sect into universal dominion to the destruction of the rest, is but an airy vision may serve to inflame a temporary enthusiasm but can never succeed all the present sects will subsist & increase into distinct respectable bodies, continuing their distinctions for a long time yet to come in full life and vigor. Indeed mutual oppression will more and more subside from their mutual balance of one another. Union may subsist on these distinctions, coalesce only on the amenities of public sentiment, which can again be effected in the Christian world only by the gentle, but almighty power of truth. It has been effected in past ages, but can never be effected again on the former measures so great an alteration is made among mankind by science and letters. The sects cannot destroy one another: all attempts this way will be fruitless they may affect a temporary disturbance, but cannot produce a dissolution each one preserves the mutual security of all. The advantages taken by any one sect over the security and indolence, or intestine broils of another, will soon awaken its enmity or moderation, and excite the spirit of self-defence and so for the whole. Such is human nature, especially enlightened with the pure light of revelation and sciences. Nothing however will content us but actual experiment this experiment

⁴⁰STAR-CHAMBER and HIGH COMMISSION.

will be made in one century, and then perhaps we shall be satisfied. But to return from this digression.

In order to perceive what particular sect is most friendly to the public liberty, we need only take a survey of the religious establishments in the several British provinces on this continent. That civil establishment is friendly to liberty, which either vests all sects with equal immunities, or secures each sect from being obliged directly or indirectly to contribute to the public support of others besides themselves. Where all sects are equally established there is properly no toleration, all partaking in the benefit of the establishment. Where one sect is invested with power to enforce taxes on themselves for the support of their clergy, and all others exempted from such tax, there is a true and proper toleration, but perfectly easy as such dissenters are exempted from ministerial taxes. Where the established clergy are supported by a branch of provincial revenues appropriated, and dissenters are not exempted from contributing, and yet have no part of such appropriation, such dissenters are tolerated in the lowest sense, viz. on condition of their payment to the established clergy. And it may so happen that the same sects may be established, or dissenters in different provinces. So a cots presbyterian is a dissenter in England, and an episcopalian a dissenter in Scotland. Let us now take a view of the provincial establishments. In Nova Scotia it is episcopacy, though the public believe it to be equal protestant liberty. In New-Hampshire, Massachusetts and Connecticut, made under the influence of congregationalists, it is congregationalism but all other sects are exempted from taxes for the support of the congregational clergy. The ministerial taxes of this sect are enforceable at law this is the principal advantage they enjoy above the dissenters in those provinces. In Rhode-Island it is universal equal protestant liberty, no sect being enabled to enforce their ministerial contracts at law. In New-York episcopacy is established for the four first counties, where all dissenters, ministers and people are obliged to pay to the established clergy, except so far as the Dutch churches in virtue of an original stipulation gained an exemption and establishment. For the other counties of that province it is universal liberty. The religious establishment of the Jerseys and Pennsylvania is universal liberty as in Rhode-Island. In Maryland and Virginia it is episcopacy, with appropriations of large revenue from tobacco for the established clergy only. And though a very considerable part of those two provinces, according to Dr. Douglas and others, are presbyterian and other dissenters, who contribute proportionably to this ecclesiastical revenue, yet they are not allowed to have the least part of its appropriation. As to the three southern provinces, their climate notwithstanding European constitutions, they will not figure as to numbers for perhaps yet a century or more, until the present race is hardened and get the better of a noxious region. Episcopacy however is in effect their establishment, or perhaps will be in time: But with this only difference at present, that the episcopalians in South Carolina have gained of the legislature an appropriation of certain duties on leather and skins. Excepting their proportion in this, the other protestant sects are not yet obliged to contribute to the support of the episcopal clergy in those three provinces.

From this view it appears, that in virtue of the religious establishment in the three provinces of Pennsylvania, the Jerseys and Rhode-Island, there are no dissenters, but all enjoy the same common immunities; excepting that some few Dutch and perhaps other churches in the Jerseys are created bodies corporate by patents obtained from the governors. But the happy policy of establishing one sect without infringing the essential rights of others is peculiar to the three New England provinces, where

congregationalism is the establishment,⁴¹ with respect to two of which it is said to be confirmed by the royal agent. Now though our churches and congregations are endowed with parochial immunities, yet all not of our denomination, and particularly the episcopalian, are exempted from parochial taxes to the established clergy for what is collected of episcopalians in parochial assessments is paid to the episcopal incumbents in favor which our numerous brethren the dissenters at home have never gained. Nor is any such favor granted to our brethren the presbyterians in Maryland and Virginia, whose religious establishment was made under episcopal influence. But where we have power we grant liberty so abundantly, that even in those parts of New England where congregationalism is the legal establishment, other sects scarcely know that they are tolerated dissenters, so happy and mild in our dominion. When by the establishment all the members of a community are by law obliged to contribute to the support of the clergy of one sect, whether in parochial taxes or appropriated revenues, all the other sects suffer in their essential liberties. When every sect is free of one another, or proportionably share the public revenues and offices, their essential liberties are entire. Congregationalism being endowed with parochial powers over its own members only, does not in the least interfere with the essential liberties of the other sects. And further it is to be observed, that the peculiar tenets of any religious protestant sect is not made a religious test of holding civil or military offices in Pennsylvania, the Jerseys and New England.

Hence it appears, that congregationalism is friendly, I will not say more so, but as friendly as any other sect to the public liberty civil and religious; and does not in the least interfere with the liberty and essential rights of other sect. And besides, our peculiar forms do not prevent our distinguished loyalty to our sovereign for we may boldly say his majesty has not a body of more loyal and well affected subjects in his dominions. All the New England sects are loyal; but the principles of loyalty to the illustrious house of Hanover are inculcated on the people by the congregational clergy with peculiar sincerity, faithfulness and constancy.

Again, our churches are well calculated for the good of a christian state. There are two ends of churches in a state, instruction in christianity, and the public offices of religion. Both these, and especially the former, are as well performed in New England as in any part of the protestant world. And perhaps the numerous body of our denomination may be justly distinguished for the popular acquaintance with the sacred writings, & knowledge both of the histories and great doctrines of revelation. Our clergy are not expensive, nor are our people burdened with tithes, nor have we intruded the ecclesiastical appropriation of enormous impoverishing revenues. The landed estate in England is computed at 20 millions per annum: of which 14 millions per annum were dependent on the clergy at the reformation. In the time of Louis XIV. the ecclesiastical revenues of France were 26 millions sterling, when at the same time the civil revenue did not exceed 13 millions. The less expensive the clergy, if a people be well instructed and the public offices of religion faithfully and decently performed, the better for a state, because the richer the people: and it is easier to raise a sum for public exigencies on an opulent people, than on an opulent hierarchy. Besides, ecclesiastical opulence gives the clergy a weight, which is apt to affect the civil administration.

⁴¹CONGREGATIONALISTS are not DISSENTERS in New England.

It gives me peculiar pleasure that notwithstanding their many imperfections, our churches afford such an agreeable review with respect to purity, liberty, and utility. For the first, we are nearly recovered to the purity of the primitive apostolic churches; for the second, we possess no other effect for the last, the popular knowledge of revelation, the decency and solemnity of our public offices of religion witness for us. And our imperfections admit amendment on our present polity. We have reason to bless God, that when the church was entirely corrupted in the papacy, he raised up and spirited the reformation. But to me it appears, that he has reserved the honor of a most purified reformation for our churches in New-England. It is truly important that this vine, which God hath planted with a mighty hand in this American wilderness, should be cultivated into confirmed maturity. You are very sensible, that there is a formal attempt on the charity and order of our churches, which is vigilantly to be guarded against, at present, till our churches grow into one cemented, large, pure, defensible body. It is incumbent upon us to watch and guard their infancy with a paternal godlike fidelity. God has entrusted us with a part to act for posterity and the public; let us not unwisely desert it, but act it well, consecrate and transmit the purity of religion to generations yet unborn. It is evident nothing tends more to enervate and moulder down our cause, than differences and animosities: nothing tends to strengthen and fortify it to defensible maturity like union and benevolence. If we have any public benevolence, any bowels of compassion, any tender affection for pure and undefiled religion by the tender mercies of Jehovah! by the love of Jesus! let us bury and lay aside our trifling differences, and harmoniously unite in carrying on and perfecting the one same great and noble work.

2. The second argument for union may be taken from the present state of our churches. There is no body of Christians on earth in such a rapid increase, and in so flourishing a state, as the congregationalists of New-England. The present state of our denomination as to numbers, for the year 1760, is nearly this: in Massachusetts are above 300 congregational churches; in Connecticut 170; in New-Hampshire 43; which, with those in this colony, form a body of about 530 churches. In 1650 there were about 36 churches already founded, several of which were small beginnings, requiring many years to fill up. In 1696 there were but 130 congregational churches in all New-England. And being A. D. 1760 increased to 530. the proportion of doubling is once in 30 years. A. D. 1613 there had arrived is 298 transports, about 4200 planters with their families, making about 21,200 people for all New-England ⁴². Since that time more have gone from us to Europe, than have arrived from thence hither. The present inhabitants therefore of New-England, are justly to be estimated a natural increase by the blessing of heaven on the first 21,000 that arrived by the year 1643.

In new settled countries the transplanted colonies, by an established course of nature, in a good climate, do increase to a certain patriarchal maturity, when they begin to decline. At the beginning of this increase the period of doubling is very short, and the augmentation rapid; afterward the period of doubling is extended till it gradually ceases, and is succeeded with a diminution, slow at first, but rapid at last. The period of patriarchal maturity, as well as of patriarchal doubling doubtless in some measure corresponds to the nature of the climate: the former in our climate may have been about 1000 or 1200 years; the latter 20 or 25 years. The period of rapid patriarchal doubling in 25 years

⁴²Sion's Saviour in N. E. p. 31.

may reach its akme in one third of the requiite to the final Akme of increae. The ratio of patrial doubling continues equable for 3 or 400 years, when in conequnce of another law of nature, this ratio begins at once to be greatly extended. Poterity alone can more accurately ascertain thee things. If we look into hitory we may perhaps be inclined to judge the period of patrial maturity about 800 or 1000 years, perhaps more than les. It is probable that the colonies tranplanted from Shinar into Egyptand from Egypt afterwards into Greece, came to the maturity of their litet ages about this period. The ame obervation may hold of the Tyrian colonies at Carthage. Rather more certainly we know that the fugitives from Troy peopled Italy at this period. The few trojan exiles, who were tranported in even mall hips, arrived into Italy, according to Livy about 430 years before the foundation of Rome. And it is probable the Romans had their akme of natural increae before U. C. 650, that is within about 1100 years after their firt plantation in Italy. But not certainly of all, we know that the 70 ouls, which prang from JACOB's loins, when tranplanted into Egypt grew and multiplid in about 215 years to 603,550 enible men of 20 years and upwards, excluive of the levites: which, considering the young men under 20 years, may imply above 3 million ouls, an increae on 70 ouls only in 215 years. It is true, this public cenus was made above a year after the exodus, but we are given to undertand that there was no increae in the wildernes. This is an unparralleled increae! the period of doubling being about 14 years.

Joeph was 17 years old when he was old into Egypt. He was 30 at his advancement: 8 years after this Jacob came into Egypt with his family; after which Joeph lived 72 years and died at the age of 110. Irael came out of Egypt 143 years after Joeph's death and 215 after Jacob's coming into Egypt. Moes was born 63 or 64 years after Joeph's death, pent 40 years at Pharaoh's court and 40 years in exile in Midian; and at his return mut have found Irael increaed in 40 years from about 400,000 to about 3 millions. Upon the view of the hots of Irael after his return from exile thy fathers went down into Egypt with three core and ten perons; and now the Lord thy God hath made thee as the tars of heaven for multitude. All the ouls that came out of Jacob's loins, excluive of his on's wives, were 70 at his arrival and ettlement in Egypt. If the period of doubling continued equable during the whole term of 215 years, the numbers of increae may be thus exhibited,

Souls decended of Jacob	70		at his ettling in
	140	14	years period of doubling.
	280	28	17.5. Jacob's h.
	560	43	
	1,120	56	
	2,240	70	72. Joeph's Death.
	4,480	84	
	8,960	98	
	17,920	112	
	35,840	120	135. Moes born.
	71,680	140	
	143,360	154	
	280,720	108	175. Moes exiled in Miias.
	573,440	182	

1,146,880	196	
2,293,760	210	215. Exodus at about 3 Million.
4,587,520	222	

If we assume the period of doubling 14 years and 4 months, the 15th revolution would terminate at 215 years; but the number of souls at the 15th doubling would be too small for 600,000 fertile men. So that 14 years is more probably the mean term. I say the mean term or period; for I suppose the periods of doubling themselves varied, being longer at first and shorter at last.⁴³ And if we consider that the fertile men were not reckoned from 16 aet. and upwards, but from 20 aet. the total at the Exodus must be above three million of souls; which will shorten the mean period of doubling to 13 years. Had this rapid increase continued 40 years longer, 20 millions of souls might have entered Canaan. Infinite wisdom however saw fit to take occasion from the sins of the wilderness, to put a stop to it, perhaps at the time they had arrived at the acme of rapid doubling: so that but about the number of the Exodus entered on the possession of the promised land three million of people perishing in the wilderness. A flagrant instance this of the public chastisement of the Most High! which, with the fatal effects of the subsequent divisions among the chosen people of God, ought to influence us to public virtue and union.

Israel not increasing in the wilderness for 40 years, about the same number entered Canaan that went out of Egypt. About 430 years after the entrance into Canaan, Joab by order of David numbered the people. And tho' the amount of the census which he returned and reported to David was but 1,300,000 fertile men, 800,000

⁴³The rapidity and greatness of the Hebrew increase in 215 years renders not altogether incredible what is related of the "Isle of Pines" in an account published in London, A. D. 1668. which, like many accidental discoveries, from incredulity and contempt, passed into neglect and oblivion. In this account it was said that certain English persons in the days of Q. Elizabeth making a voyage to the East-India, were cast away and wrecked upon the island near the coast of Terra Australia Incognita, and all drowned, excepting one man and four women, whereof one was a negro. And now lately, A. D. 1667. a Dutch ship driven by foul weather there by chance, have found their posterity (peaking good English) to amount to ten or twelve thousand persons, as they suppose. Q. Elizabeth was crowned A. D. 1558, whence the period of this increase could be but, 109 years by A. D. 1667, and probably not so much. This implies their period of doubling 13 years, which we have seen is possible in the Hebrew posterity. One man and four women may be equal to four families for the basis of increase. The Arabian females are

Families	4	Years
	16	13
	32	26
	64	39
	128	52
	256	65
	512	78
	1024	91
	248	104

aid to have children at 8 Aet. The ratio of increase which will augment them, from the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign to A. D. 1667, to 2000 families, will augment them by A. D. 1760. to above 500,000 families, or two millions and an half of souls, the posterity of five persons in two hundred years. But half, nay one quarter of this number, would be a great discovery. There are many reasons to believe there is a southern continent. 2000 Families imply 10,000 Souls.

for Israel and 500,000 for Judah: yet the true amount was for the former 1,100,000. for the laer 470,000. But even in this account the tribes of Benjamin and Levi were not included. The total of Joab's census of fencible men of 20 aet. and upwards being 1,50,000, ⁴⁴ implies 7,850,000 ouls excluive of Benjamin and Levi. Tho' the memorable barbarity of the Benjamites cot them the los of 25,100 men, and almot the extinction of the tribe; yet we find that in about 60 years after David they had recovered and increaed to 280,000 fighting men implying 1,400,000 ouls for that tribe; which if not reckoned by Joab may augment the above numbers to 9,250,000 ouls. The males of the tribe of Levi were 22,000 at the exodus, and o the whole tribe about 40,000 (the males of 30 aet. were 38,000 in David's time)which if augmented with the common national increae, and added to the preceding numbers, may give 9 millions and an half for the total of ouls of the Hebrews about the times of David and Solomon. And perhaps they never exeeded this. Though their numbers might continue much the ame till beyond Jehoaphat's times, and epecially during Solomon's reign when the nation was at its ummit of glory, both for numbers, riches, policy and union: yet it is probable they had reached the akme or height of patrial increae even before David. Hence we ee that they doubled not twice after the exodus; and that the period of doubling was extended from 14 to 2 or 300 years. The even nations of Palaetine were aid to be "greater and mightier" than Israel on their arrival thither. They were o numerous and powerful as to ubjugate Israel 40 years, o long after their entrance into Canaan as the times of Sampon. But tho' the Philitines might be 3 million at firt, yet by exile and conquest they were o diminihed, that when Solomon numbered all the trangers that were in the land of Iraelthey were found 153,600 only: which however implies three quarters of a million of ouls even in his time. Yet thee with the children of Israel to the total amount of 10 million of ouls were ubited in affluence upon a territory, according to Dr. Pockocke, not larger than the three governments of Maachuetts, Connecticut and Rhode-Iland.

In more things than one, that of exile, our New England churches may reemble God's antient choen people. I apprehend God has great things in deign for this vine which his irritable arm has planted: and that he purpoees to make of us a great people and a pure and glorious church. To be ure he has already wonderfully bleed the emigration of our fore-fathers into this wildernes, and caued it to multiply abundantly. The Spanih and French emigrations into America, for a well known reason, do not much increae upon the firt ettlers, perhaps diminih:the etimated total of the Spaniards in South America, according to Don Ulla, not exceeding ome of the britih provinces. The Dutch in Batavia have, it is aid, from mall beginnings increaed to two millions: unhappy for them and their happily reformed churches, if heaven hould take occaion from their late public perfidy to blat their poterity, and et them forth a public example in conjunction with antient Israel for our admonition. Happy

⁴⁴In the year 1533. Queen Elizabeth caued to be made a review of all the men in England capable of bearing arms, when they were found to amount to 1,172,000 men according to Raleigh. See Hue's Hit. of Brit. Vol. 1. p. 119. According to Dr. Brkenbridge, it hould eem that the total of inhabitants in England for the middle of the preent century, does not exceed FIVE MILLIONS AND AN HALF, and thoe of Scotland and Ireland TWO MILLIONS AND AN HALF. So the total of inhabitants in the iland of Great Briain and Ireland amount to EIGHT MILLIONS. He etimates the total of France at FOURTEEN MILLIONS. Accurate earches hew that former general etimates have been greatly too large

for us if the admonitions of providence in antient and modern example, should secure our attachment and publick obedience to Jehovah

New England has advanced 120 years in rapid increase, the term of doubling being 20, or according to Dr. FRANKLIN 25 years. ⁴⁵ As this is much lower than the increase of Israel, the period of rapid increase, as distinguished from the ultimate period of patriarchal increase, may be longer in the proportion of 14 to 25, or a ratio formed of these numbers. If Israel reached the first in 215 years, we may reach it in 384; of which, as I said, 120 are already elapsed. Above 160 years of rapid increase yet remain, by which time thro' the blessing of heaven we may become many Millions. After this we may continue to increase in extended periods of doubling for 7 or 800 years, till we shall have reached the Summit of the patriarchal increase in 11 or 1200 years from the first settlement of America: which, as it may have then advanced us into the millennial times, preceding examples of the rise and decline of empire may not be further applicable. And here I cannot but remark that the maxim holds good of communities as of individuals "quo emel et imbuta recens erubuit odorem teta diu" that they receive their turn, their genius, their manners, their political constitution, very much from their infant education, the discipline and maxims infused in the infancy of the state: which ought therefore to be carefully attended to. This is especially true of public bodies of Mankind that grow up fat and in such quick successions, as not easily to permit the ingrafting of capitally new customs. The Greeks, Carthaginians and Romans retained the manners of Egypt, Tyre and Troy: and Israel retained the religion and polity which they received in Egypt and the wilderness. But to return.

⁴⁵This is verified by reference to the census for the colony of Rhode-Island, by the King's order to 1730 and 1755.

Census for 1730		15,302	Whites.
Ditto for 1755	35,939		
Deduct for 5 Towns annexed since 1730	4,910	31,029	Ditto.
	31,029	15,727	Increase in 25 Years.

According to the reverend and ingenious Mr Callender (Hist. Dicourse p. 9) there were fewer than 200 families in the whole colony, about the year 1658. The increase of the maritime towns is not equal to that of the inland ones. Tho' the period of doubling for the whole colony is 25 years, now that the maritime towns make so great a proportion of the inhabitants, yet the period is different for different parts of the colony. While on the sea-coast it is above 25 years, yet within land it is 20 and 15. The five towns of Gloucester, Situate, Coventry, West-Greenwich and Exeter were 5033 A. D. 1748, and 6986, A. D. 1755, which implies a period of doubling 15 years only. And the two inland counties of Providence and Kent, double on a mean in 20 years. And this I believe is the full period for the inland towns of New-England in general; which might be ascertained by calculations on their census in 1730 and 1755. The Ratio of increase for different parts of this colony thus appears

	A. D. 1730.	A. D. 1755.	Per. doubling.
Island of Rhode Island,	4486	7372	35 years
Portsmouth alone,	643	1172	28 years
Co. King's-County,	4460	9250	22 years
Co Kent.	2177	5000	20 years
Co. Providence,	3843	9820	18 years
	10,480	24,160	20 years.

Hence the mean period of doubling is 20 years for that part of the Colony, which lies on the west side of the Narraganett-Bay.

In order to form an idea of the future growth of New England, it will be necessary to take a retrospect on the past. For the first 15 years from A D 1628 to 1643 "the number of ships that transported passengers in this space of time is computed at 298" Men, women and children passing over this wide ocean as near as at present can be gathered, is also supposed to be 21,200 or thereabouts."⁴⁶ From thence to the beginning of the present century, there came not so many from Europe as returned. Indeed at the restoration, on the ejection of 2000 ministers at the memorable black Bartholomew A. D. 1662, some few families with 14 ministers repaired hither; not enough however to balance the returns from hence. It was computed in the year 1670 that of 94 ministers which came over, 31 were then living, 36 had died in the country, and 27 returned to Europe. And in this term went back many others, besides ministers. The principal foreign augmentation since was by a body of protestants from the north of Ireland about A D 1730 and onwards. This might be an accession of a few families.⁴⁷ It is to be remembered that part of the first planters settled on Long Island, and that considerable numbers since 1731 have removed out of New England to the confines of New York: a number of families also removed into New Jersey about A D 1695. So that on the whole the amount of the public census A D 1755, taken by order from the lords commissioners for trade and plantations, may be estimated not to exceed the natural increase of the original planters in the reign of Charles the first.

Dr. Cotton Mather says, that A D 1696, in all New England were 100,000 Souls. It is said there were A D 1691 about 16,000 militia which may imply 100,000; according to the implication of a like account by governor Shute, who A D 1722 reported to the board of trade, that in the province of the Massachusetts were 94,000 people, whereof 15,000 were in the training lit. The able bodied, containing the fencible men, may be estimated at a third more. A. D. 1708, Mr, Thomas Brattle estimated for all New-England 100 or 120,000 souls, and 20 or 25,000 fighting men. In 1735 the provincial valuation for Massachusetts was 35,427 polls, whites of 16 aet. and upwards. In 1742 the valuation of whites was 41,000 polls. The same year the rateable polls of the province of New-Hampshire were 6000. In the census of 1755, the colony of Connecticut amounted to 133,000 souls, whites. In the census of 1730, the census of the colony of Rhode-Island and Providence plantations amounted to 15,302 whites. The census within the same limits in 1755 amounted to 31,029; and for the whole colony, inclusive of the annexed towns, 35,939 souls whites, the militia being about a seventh part. Not having the census of 1755 for Massachusetts and New-Hampshire, I can only estimate them. I have been told that Massachusetts then amounted to between 234 and 240,000. The provincial numbers A. D. 1755 may have been nearly thus;

Massachusetts	234,000
Connecticut	133,000
Rhode-Island	35,939
New-Hampshire	34,000
	436,939 Souls.
Increase in 5 Years	64,970

⁴⁶Wonder-working Providence of Sion's Savior in N. E. p. 31. London Edit. A. D. 1658.

⁴⁷Dr. FRANKLIN says, "in fact there has not gone from Britain to our colonies three 20 years past to settle there, so many as 10 families a year."

Total of Souls in New-England 501,909 A. D. 1760. The omission in the census of 1755 of those at sea and others, and the increase on those omissions will more than balance the extraordinary loss of the war the last five years.⁴⁸ We shall not be mistaken then if we assume the number of inhabitants at half a million in the year 1760. We now commence an increase of 14,000 a year, which in 25 years will be augmented to 28,000 a year: and if providence continues our increase for 50 years, we shall have arrived to an annual increase of about 56,000.

It will be more difficult to estimate the proportion of the sects. Let it suffice that I estimate all but the congregationalists to their full amount. There may be about 70 souls of Jews in all New-England, and as many Moravians. From the most accurate account that I can collect the episcopalians do not exceed 2100 families, or 12,600 souls, in all New-England. There are 27 missions, inclusive of two itinerancies: the 27 missionaries, with three other ministers, officiate in 47 churches and places of divine service. Six or even of these congregations are large; and 30 that are not equal to half of a common presbyterian congregation a-piece: and several that do not exceed 15 and 20 families each. Not exceeding in the whole 30 common presbyterian congregations, which I estimate at 80 and 100 families, and yet at a mean they contain 140 families each. Though we have some under 50 and 60, yet we have many above 200 to 250, and some above 300. From several estimates procured from the friends. I take their denomination to be about 16,000 souls in the four governments: though I am assured by a very ingenious and observant friend that this estimate is too large. From like estimates procured of the baptists I take their denomination to be about 22,000 souls in the four governments. These estimates cannot be supposed perfectly accurate, but I believe they are nearly the truth. Besides these are to be reckoned about 10 000 reducible to no class. The total amount of 60,000 subtracted from half a million, the present total of inhabitants in New England, leaves 440,000 souls for the denomination of congregationalists.⁴⁹ This being nearly the true state of the sects as to numbers for the year 1760, let us see what may be their respective increase in a century from this time, supposing them to double once in 25 years only.

Epicopalians.	Friends.	Baptists.	Congregationalists.	A. D.
12,600	16 000	22,000	440,000	1760
23,200	32,000	44,000	880,000	1785
46,400	64,000	88,000	1,760,000	1810
92,800	128,000	176,000	3,520,000	1835
185,600	256,000	352,000	7 MILLIONS	1800

⁴⁸At the end of the campaign 1760, it was computed that about 21,000 had perished in the war on this continent, from General Braddock's defeat in 1755 to 1760 inclusive. Of which perhaps 7000 were New England provincials.

⁴⁹Of 175 whites in the town of Newport that died A. D. 1760, 41 were infants of the year, and inclusive of these 51 under 2 years old. The total of whites in town A. D. 1755, was 5519 which might be increased to about 6000 at present. The maritime do not increase so fast as the inland towns. The total of deaths A. D. 1700, if proportionate through New-England, was about 14 500, added to 13 500 the increase of the year, gives 28,000 the number of children born in New England in the year 1760: of which about 3000 died within the year, and 25 000 survived. But I am inclined to believe the proportion of deaths to be less in the country, though probably there were 25,000 children at least born in the year. Nineveh contained 120,000 infants.

Hence it appears that without considering the augmentation of future accessions from Europe, each of the four principal sects in New England may greatly increase into large and respectable bodies, even with the most sanguine allowances for procreating. The natural increase on the present stock will in half a century give 46,400 for the episcopalians, 64,000 for the friends, 88,000 for the baptists, and one million and three quarters for the congregationalists. And in a century 185,600 for the first, 256,000 for the second, 352,000 for the third, and even millions for the last. I shall not enter into the variations which may arise on these numbers in this period from procreating and lifting communions, though we have sufficient data to form pretty certain anticipations on this head.

The difficulty of breaking the ancestral religion, unless the public enthusiasm be excited, appears not only from the small impression made on the sects here, where the amount of changes may not perhaps exceed 5000 among all the sects: but also from the small impressions made on the sects in Germany and other parts of the protestant world with regard to their general forms and particularly on the Irish catholics, when the result of the labors of a much longer period is said not to have gained 200,000 protestants, excepting the north of Ireland Scots presbyterians. The authors of the system of geography say, it is computed that about 8 parts in 10 are papists, and that the dissenters are double the members of the establishment. It is to be hoped that the next capital change will be to a still greater purity both in doctrine and worship. Our final dependence for the security and protection of truth is in the irresistible dominion of Jesus Christ, who will eventually subdue all things to himself.

At present the congregationalists have about 515 churches already gathered, which double in less than 30 years.⁵⁰ So that 60 years hence we may consist of 2000 churches; a remarkable increase, which some of the present generation may live to see. The aged ministers now living, have in their day seen 130 churches increase to 530. In a century from this time we may have 5000 churches, even with allowances for emigrations to new provinces. But in order to this the love of liberty, and a zeal for pure and undefiled religion must be diffused and propagated with unremitting fidelity and vigilance. Should our intestine dissensions unhinge the minds of the rising generations, and disengage or render them indifferent to the cause, it might be attended with unhappy consequences. Union and diffusive harmony are truly important, during this infancy of the churches, and this period of rapid increase. The error of Balaam in the snare he laid for Israel, effectually wrought a confusion, from which omnipotence alone could recover them. Let us not be caught by any similar error. If we adhere to our principles, even the undefiled, the uncorrupted principles of revelation, with the utmost charity and benevolence to others, and without encroaching upon, or interfering with, the peculiarities of our protestant brethren of the other sects, if we are and continue united in faith and fellowship providence is advancing us in a swift progress to full and defensible maturity. The present increasing state of our churches, and the dependence of their future glory on harmonious union in their increasing infancy, appear to me a very powerful recommendation to walk together by the same rules, in love and harmony, so far as we have attained and attentively to mind the same thing; that is, ourselves to respect, and to teach our children to mind the same

⁵⁰According to Dr. Douglas the Number of our Churches A. D. 1759, was 407. Summary Hist. V. I. 542.

great interest of the same common cause never to defect it, but faithfully pursue it: that the public spirit be animated, guided and governed by the same public principles which are our common interest. It ought particularly to be inculcated upon our friends going from us to the settlement of new towns or provinces, to carry religion with them, to settle early in church order, and furnish themselves with a ministry of the word and ordinances, for the benefit of themselves and their children. Great encouragement should be given to our colleges and nurseries of literature, which grow more and more important every day. We should often relate to our posterity the history of the wonderful providences of God in the settlement of this country; and remark the growth of our churches, and engage them by all the honorable motives of christianity to steadfastness in the faith once delivered to the saints, and in the liberty wherewith the gospel has made us free. Let our children be often taught to read the sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth verses of the twenty-sixth chapter of Deuteronomy with parallel application to the history of our ancestors. Let the great errand into America never be forgotten.⁵¹ Let them be made well acquainted among other

⁵¹The plantation of Plymouth colony consisted of 300 souls A. D. 1629; when the principal draught of our fathers from the mother country commenced the settlement of the Massachusetts. And in the 10 following years there were 21 churches gathered. About 16 churches planted by the time of the first synod 1637, at which were present 25 ministers. I have observed that there were arrived by A. D. 1643 about 2000 planters, besides 200 gentlemen of fortune, merchants and ministers: which have been judged to imply 21,200 souls. The first Plymouth settlement, A. D. 1620. consisted of 41 planters and but 101 souls, of which there were only 18 wives: and I suppose in all the future account, there was a large proportion of adventurers single men without families. The Lt. Treasurer's order, April 16, 1629. was for 60 adult females, 26 children and 300 men. A. D. 1644 the militia of the Massachusetts consisted of 26 bands, or perhaps 2600 soldiers, which if but a seventh part, imply but about 16 000 souls: but probably the militia bore a greater proportion, if the males exceeded the females. The restoration of the balance of the sexes might require that the first 15 or 20 years increase, should consist chiefly of female children. From several computations of this nature I have been inclined to believe, that the first 4000 planters did not imply above 15,000 souls to have arrived by A. D. 1643; which were contained in 34 churches by A. D. 1645. increased to about 40 churches by A. D. 1650 when they contained 7750 communicants. Perhaps there may now be 60 or 70 thousand communicants. There were 130 churches A. D. 1696, of which 35 in Connecticut: there are A. D. 170. 530 churches, of which 170 in Connecticut. Hence the period of doubling for the churches is 30 years at farthest. In 115 years we have increased 500 churches upon 34. This is the LORD's doings, and it is marvellous in our eyes! Perhaps the multiplication of the primitive churches did not exceed this in the first 130 years from the crucifixion And it is to be remembered, that of the first planters two churches are not reckoned, which were settled on Long-Island. The numbers of the planters might be accurately ascertained by having recourse to the records of the first 30 or 40 towns. I have observed, that as we are above 500 churches at present, so we may by the blessing of heaven become above 1000 in 30. and 2000 in 60 years The renowned church of Scotland consists of 938 churches those of the Dutch and Walloon, A. D. 1560. consisted of 2190 churches: to either of which we may be equal in 60 or 70 years. And while we are anticipating the Growth and Multiplication of our churches in New England we may with pleasure extend the Prospect to our brethren the presbyterian churches in the other provinces. The wise and happy junction of the two synods of Philadelphia and New-York, A. D. 1758. formed a coalition of above 100 Pastors with their churches under the rapid augmentation of the late natural increase with ours. In the province of Pennsylvania, inclusive of the three Delaware counties, are 66 congregations, of which 41 are destitute of Pastors. Our brethren are still more numerous in proportion in the province of New-Jersey, and I think also in that of New-York. And there is a very considerable body of them in the frontiers of Maryland and Virginia, where they have already a presbytery formed. Also in New-York and Jersey are two classes of our protestant brethren the Dutch reformed, consisting of 20 ministers: also two churches of French protestants; and 3 congregational churches. All these are peculiarly interesting churches, with whom we

parts of sacred history, with the history of the Hebrew nation; in which they will see examples of public reward and public chastisement of providence in a very striking light. From the ancient example let our churches be warned, very carefully to avoid the two capital errors which proved the ruin of the Hebrew republic, and which will never fail eventually to subvert the best constituted empire I mean CORRUPTION in RELIGION and the public VIRTUE; & DISUNIONS. These two things operated with full strength among God's ancient people, on the revolt of Jeroboam and introduction of idolatry, upon which in a very little time there were not found above 7 or 8000 men out of above a million who had not bowed the knee to Baal. The pure religion becoming thus corrupted, Israel was ripe for that extirpation, which was effected upon their calling in the foreign aid of Damascus and Assyria. See this in 2 Kings 17. And before this the immediate effect of national apostasy was the loss of half a million of men, being near half the kingdom of Israel which fell in one day, the greatest battle that history records. Even Judah forsook the law of the Lord; and within five years after the death of Solomon, the corruption he introduced in compliance to foreign wives, had overpread the empire fatal is the ill example of princes. Judah also "built them high places and images, and graves, on every high hill and under every green tree:" on which Shihak, with the Egyptian and Ethiopian army, penetrated even to Jerusalem, and carried off the treasures of the temple and the king's house, the opulence amassed by Solomon. What prosperity attended God's people when they turned to the Lord and united in his ways? The whole treatment of divine providence towards that people from Moses to this day, has been exactly according to the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy. And excepting in one thing, there may be an analogy between the divine treatment of this and all other states, especially his conduct towards that kingdom wherein dwelleth righteousnes. We may then reap great advantage in consulting and duly applying that history, which may be in some measure typical of our own. In a word, we have in the sacred and common histories of providence assistance to become assured in what point of view the PUBLIC VIRTUE and UNDEFILED RELIGION appear to the overruling mind. If we conform ourselves to these notices and upernal assurances, we may depend with absolute certainty on the

have an entire harmony and fellowship. Dr. Douglas says, "the three frontier counties in Virginia of Frederic, Augusta and Lunenburg, are prodigiously large, and generally settled by north of Ireland Scots presbyterians, as is also Amelia and Albemarle counties." Tho' there are many vacant churches, which the colleges are supplying apace, yet the eight presbyteries, at the union of the synods in May 1758 consisted of 100 ministers. There have been some transpositions since; but then they were nearly thus:

Presbyteries.	Ministers.
Hanover	14
Donnegall	11
Lewistown	6
New-Castle	11
Philadelphia	12
New-Brunswick	11
New-York	22
Suffolk	13

miles and defence of Jeus our omnipotent patron.

I have observed that our churches, in a ditinguihed ene from almot all the protetant world, are founded on the bible. Our worthy and venerable ancetors (be their memories dear to poterity) did not like other protetant patrons, form a ytem of what they thought and judged to be the true ene of revelation, and etablilh this for the truth: noit was eno' for them that the bible was the inpired rule, and this they made the only rule. And hence, if on examination we hould find any of the received doctrines or uages among the churches dionant to the acred oracles, if we only judge oif this on deliberation be our opinion we may freely enjoy and profes our judgments, and oppoe uch doctrines or cutoms by alledging from the SCRIPTURES ONLY; without appealing to human tets of ine truth, or encountering the civil & eccleiatial hotilities with which they have been too generally enforced. And as our churches were thus planted in very great purity, o we ee they are in a very flourishing tate conidering their infancy. The computations with repect to their future growth depend, by the leave of providence, in ome meaire, on the uppotion that we have room to extend our ettlements. Agriculture and the rural life are peculiarly friendly to increae. Ten thouand families (not of an old, but even of a new race, which makes a great difference) with means of affluent ubitence, dwelling together in a populous herd, kept from vices but employed in handycraft indutry; will by no means equal the increae, which the ame number of families would afford if turned forth and dipered in the wide world and employed in agriculture in a new climate: there is a difference from the employments, but the chief difference is from change of climate, diipation and the rural air. Farmers find it neceary to change their eed-corn, and hift their herds and tocks. Hillocks of corn planted near together yield not half the increae, as when planted at proper ditances on the ame ground. The preent bounds of New England (the greater part of which is yet a wildernes) permit an increae of even millions. If providence hould complete the reduction of Canada and an honorable peace annex it to the britih crown, we may extend our ettlements into new provinces, or to the wetern part of thoe provinces which by the charters cros the continent to the pacific ocean. With pleasure we anticipate the rapid ettlement of new towns and provinces around us, and filling them up with millions of inhabitants. ⁵² We tranport ourelves to the ditance of 100 years forward, look over this wide pread wildernes, ee it bloom like the roe, and behold it planted with churches and temples conecrate to the pure worhip of the mot Highwhen our preent plain edifices for public worhip hall be uceded with a nobler pecies of building: not indeed with temples whoe colonades are deckt with the gilt buits of angels winged;

⁵²Table of increae upon half a million inhabitants in the four New England governments for the preent period of doubling. By inpecting which may be een the number of inhabitants in New England for each year.

A. D.	A. D.	A. D.	A. D.				
1760	500000	1767	607,090	1774	737 13	1781	895025
1761	514 050	1768	624,170	1775	757 857	1782	920185
1762	523 510	1769	641,710	1776	779 105	1783	946 060
1763	543,320	1770	659,760	1777	801,070	1784	972 655
1764	538 650	1771	678,305	1778	823,59	1785	1,000000
1765	574 350	1772	697,370	1779	846,745	181	2,000,000
1766	590,500	1773	716,971	1780	870,550	1835	4 000 000

but temples adorned with all the decent ornaments of the most sublime and august architecture when divinely replendent truth shall triumph, and our brethren of the congregational communion may form a body of SEVEN MILLIONS! A glorious and respectable body this, for TRUTH and LIBERTY! Well might our fathers die with pleasure, and sacrifice their lives with joy to lay the foundation of such a name, of such a peculiar people whose numbers soon increase like the sand of the sea, or the tarsi of heaven, and what is more, whose GOD is the LORD.

A draught of 4000 families from the beginning of this period for congregation and the settlement of new provinces, will put off the increase to a million but three years. Above 2075 souls removed from hence to Nova Scotia in the year 1760: 4000 families will 80 townships with 50 families a piece, which is enough. There may probably remove into New Hampshire and out of New England in 50 years time 8 or 9000 families, enough to settle 160 townships or about double the number of new townships that have been settled the last 50 years. This involving their increase may afford 100 or 70000 souls which number at the end of the period will be replaced in less than two years increase. The main body of the people may tarry behind, especially as the greater part of our present possessions are uncultivated. And only the provinces of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island will admit an increase to 6 or 8 millions. The Athenian Lacedaemonian and other territories of Greece were not much affected with the colonization of Asia and the Asiatic coasts. Though there was an extended inland territory in the latter Asia, the love of their country retained the main body in Greece, where they accumulated to prodigious numbers. Our present territory bids fair for the place of accumulated population for the first ages. One thing which in 20 or 30 years time will be found to give a sensible check to New England emigrations, will be the quitrents on new provinces. Germans have been accustomed to them, but we have not. Free and absolute tenure of land and unburdened property, as well as liberty in religion, are necessary to tempt us. The new townships after 15 or 20 years settlement are scarce able to bear a small part in the provincial taxes, besides the support of the ministry, building meeting houses, &c. They would yet be able to bear a quitrent over and above this in many years. A township 6 miles square is charged with annual rent of . 23 sterling. A province of 100 miles square admitting 280 such townships will be settled with 15 000 families, implying 80 000 souls. The tax on this province would be . 6440 sterling 20 a thousand acres, or 23 a township. The annual public charges of Connecticut before the war are said to have been " 4000 to . 5000 currency, or . 500 sterling only, when they were above 100 000 souls, and were possessed of old and well cultivated plantations. It is for the interest of the crown of the British merchants and manufacturers that the common people be rich, towards the greater consumption of merchandize, as well as encreasing industry. The quitrent, though a forming trial, will at least procure the fruit of colonization, and for a long time be an inopportune which will be felt not only by the planners, but as immediately in commerce. For the circulation of that cash which pays this same trial will absorb the most that the farmer will be able to spare for necessities for a long time. A reciprocation of interest as well as affection to an exiled and long deprived offspring, has doubtless engaged the mother country in our defence. The importations from thence to the continental provinces only, are already arrived to two millions sterling per annum; this is as much as the present numbers will consume. This importation may increase with the inhabitants, if effectual encouragement be given to the fishery, to the foreign trade, and the several provincial staples in which remittances can be made. From 1744 to 1754 the importation deduced: from 1748 to 1758 it more than doubled. But if instead of 10 years we suppose it next to double only in 25 years, or with the natural increase of the people, the amount will be 34 millions sterling for the first period, and proportionably greater for the next. The sum of which to the British merchants and manufacturers, that is to say, to the mother country, will soon repay to her the expences of the American war, even if estimated at Four Millions per annum. Burdens on agriculture or the American commerce will unavoidably affect the national interest, and more than ballance the trial revenue to the crown from grants on a few provinces, especially if we consider that a greater extent of territory would be settled under a free than under an embarrassed one. The experiment in New England, especially when compared with several other provinces, under proper distinctions, appears to be a good precedent. Plantation may be made with encouragements but cannot successfully be forced. Free policy free religion, free property, and matrimony, will soon populate a fertile country in a good climate. There have been the basis of our increase.

Thus I have considered the second argument for union taken from the state and circumstances of the churches. I might have enlarged upon the unhappy consequences of contentions and division, by showing more particularly how they hurt, or might terminate in the utter subversion of the congregational interest; which might show in another strong light the wisdom of coalition and harmony. To sum up this argument if we love the cause; if it gives us pleasure to be embarked in a cause which has Jesus Christ for its head and omnipotent patron, and which under him we can foresee is rising into distinction; ought we not with sincere affection to unite and harmonize, since this union is the basis of its rising into a respectable figure?

3. And lastly. I just add a last reason for union, which more immediately affects every one in his individual capacity, that it will afford a field for the exercise of angelic benevolence and complacency. We can look upon the cause, upon the state of the churches, with a complacency, which cannot be felt in surveying intestine confusion. How good & pleasant a thing is it for brethren to dwell together in unity. Living in peace and harmony tends irresistibly to humanize and soften the mind to the most generous and god-like feelings, delights unknown to sectarian contention or intestine variance. It is a very happy circumstance to be situated among a friendly social people, we are inevitably caught of the benevolence which union and peace diffuses. The public love and harmony will enable us with serenity and more sacred satisfaction to celebrate the offices of piety and devotion. Our religious addresses and joyful homage undisturbed, unpolluted with the reluctant feelings of variance, shall ascend as incense holy and acceptable to the Most High. And in common life, instead of broken friendships, and family alienations, we should become united brethren in the highest sense, harmoniously travelling along together, and meeting the trials of life with the animating complacency of social virtue. Religious contentions are apt to sour the temper, which is greatly unhappy in a state preparatory to the communion of angels and glorious beings above. The complacency and love for virtuous minds, like all other moral affections are formed, at least strengthened by previous discipline. If we have lived in serenity and associated with the good here, we shall have acquired the principle of spiritual delight in good beings, which qualifies the soul to be gathered up to the heights, and to be associated with the purified and refined spirits of the upper world. We have unavoidable afflictions enough without coining new ones. It is greatly desirable towards our own felicity, to see the churches in peace, to dwell together in love

Our churches afford a most agreeable review. We have lived to "see the inking church arise."⁵³ We may cast our eyes around us in a wide extended and still extending prospect, and feast them with beautiful clusters of churches on this flourishing vine which God almighty hath planted. Let us accustom ourselves to take an annual view, and carefully attend to the public exigencies of the churches in the progress of increase or decline. Let us often tell these things to our children, that with their own eyes they may see and admire the wonder-working providence of God. That when they are convinced from an inspection of the ways of God, that the cause they are embarked in flourishes and is secure, and appears evidently emerging superior to all opposition, they may give glory to God and take courage, never desert the cause, but adhere firm and unmoved. I am in no doubt, as I have before said, but that the constitution and general form of our churches is very nearly apostolical. And tho'

⁵³Watts.

there are imperfections remaining yet they are much more easily amended than in any other protestant church, as amendments would not be encountered with the like opposition of authorities and unwieldy temporalities. If we oppress any, it is ourselves only; our churches, and the secular power too much at their command, formerly adopted those oppressive measures, which are always recollected with regret, and disapprobation⁵⁴. But even the lower secular oppressions of other sects have long since been at an end. And as by our principles we are not led to persecute others, so let us entertain a manly charity for our protestant brethren of all denominations, rejoicing that they are to a very great degree reformed: and as we believe they respectively judge themselves, each more than others reformed to the scripture rule; so extensive charity and comprehensive benevolence, in no way inconsistent with our given preference to congregationalism. We rejoice that men may become good and holy in all communions: it will be admitted that in different communions there may be different advantages for virtue and piety; and though we think that our churches have the preference in this, as well as in being reformed to primitive scripture model as to the ordinances and forms of worship yet we doubt not the pious dying from every communion will be received to glory. We are not so bigotted as to think that the tender mercies of the Lord are limited to us, and that none can be saved out of our churches. We rejoice to see men of virtue and true goodness; and it gives us pleasure to view those persons as ornaments of the communions to which they belong, though different from ours. Instead of wishing the extirpation of any sect, we wish them all well and to abound in the knowledge and practice of christianity, and to abide on truth and honor. We stand firm and fast to the constitution of liberty in our churches and as we do not oppress others, so we hope not to be oppressed by others. On the footing of equality and universal liberty we are friends to all, but submit not to be subordinate to any. Having secured and fortified our own cause, we may sit down full of a joyful self-complacency, and look around on our christian brethren of the other sects, not with a view of owing the seeds of discord, not to avail ourselves of their differences, least of all to persecute and oppress them; but to exercise good-will and sincere christian love to them, to let off the emanations of benevolence towards all that fear God and work righteousness.

We see my brethren, the arguments are strong for the congregational union in every point of view. There are some peculiar reasons why the congregational brethren and churches in this colony should be united. Our cause is one, and a cause not in decline, not in disrepute, but in honor and a most flourishing prosperity. Let us be cemented together by forbearance, fellowship, union. Let us, my reverend FATHERS in the ministry give faithful attention to the pastoral labors, and feed the flock of God, the churches over which the holy Ghost hath made us overseers. Let us teach for doctrines not the inventions of men, but the pure word of God, that our congregations may grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It will be our wisdom to be united ourselves, and to that end to avoid every thing by which we may unnecessarily offend one another. Pastoral alienations are too often accompanied with alienations among the churches. Our pastoral conventions⁵⁵ tend to harmony, and show that we are agreed in the principal matters, and willing to walk together. Let the spirit of

⁵⁴Such were the measures of 1637, 1656, 1692.

⁵⁵First formed in this Colony August 25, 1756.

harmony extend to our churches and congregations, among whom let us be careful to cultivate the principles of harmony and goodwill to all: that our denomination may be distinguished by an unbigotted, generous and diffusive charity to others. Let us animate them with annual accounts of the state of the churches, and with this view let us keep our eyes on the public state. We shall thus act the part assigned us by providence under the general dominion of the mediator. We should account ourselves happy in being charged with the ministry of reconciliation under the prince of peace. Let us make full proof of our ministry: be the glory of God in the reconciliation of men the great object of our attention. Let our personal sanctity and public utility be animated by considering that the more we have been inured in cultivating piety and love among men, the better shall we be prepared to join the extensive plans of order and happiness on high. And having in this manner been long employed in doing good, and become useful in promoting peace and virtue on earth; we may not only reflect on our past lives with serenity and triumph, but adopt with a constant hope and confidence those divine promises made from the great Lord of the universe the head of the church, in which our future reward is represented under the idea of receiving a kingdom, being appointed to a heavenly ministration, being invested with a larger sphere of action and power, and honored with more talents, more opportunities of doing good; in a word, of being assigned to affairs of more extended benevolence. Be our fidelity then inspired by the realizing anticipation of the future honors, when they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that TURN MANY TO RIGHTEOUSNESS, as the stars forever and ever.

AMEN.

APPENDIX, Containing a LIST of the NEW-ENGLAND CHURCHES, A. D. 1760.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES IN MASSACHUSETTS	306
CONNECTICUT	170
NEW-HAMPSHIRE	43
RHODE-ISLAND	11
	530

A LIST of the Ministers, Churches and religious Assemblies, especially of the four Denominations of Congregationalists, Baptists, Friends, and Episcopalians, as they lie interpered in the four New-England Governments, taken for the Beginning of the Year 1760.

In some few of these Congregations the Churches are not yet formed or gathered. I have endeavored to make the Catalogue as accurate and perfect as I could. Some Churches may have been omitted and there may be some Transpositions. Any Mistakes of this Nature will be forgiven by a candid Mind. It may suffice that I have inserted all that have come to my Knowledge: and that the Number of the congregational Churches are not augmented beyond the Truth.

E. Episcopalian. B. Baptist. P. Presbyterians, according to the Church of Scotland. The numeral Figures denote the Number of congregational Churches in each

Town; the Total of which in New-England appears to be about 530, inclusive of the presbyterian Churches.

Province of the MASSACHUSETTS.

- REV Dr Joeph Sewall 12 BOSTON
- rev Dr Charles Chauncy
- rev Dr Jonathan Mayhew
- rev Thomas Foxcroft
- rev Samuel Checcy
- rev John Moorhead P.
- rev Ebenezer Pemberton
- rev Mather Byles
- rev Samuel Mather
- rev Andrew Crowell
- rev Andrew Eliot
- rev Samuel Cooper
- rev Samuel Checkley, jon.
- rev Jeremiah Condy B.
- rev Ephraim Bawns B. Friends
- rev Dr Timothy Cutler E.
- rev James Greaton E.
- rev Henry Caner E.
- rev John Troutback E.
- rev William Hooper E.
- rev Ebenezer Gay 3 Hingham
- rev John Brown
- rev Daniel Shute
- rev William Smith a Weymouth
- rev James Bayley

- rev Samuel Niles P. 3 Brantree
- rev Anthony Wibert
- rev Moes Taft
- rev Dr Miller E.
- rev Samuel Venzy 1 Hall
- rev Nathaniel Robbins 1 Milton
- rev Nathaniel Bowman 1 Dorchester
- rev Samuel Dunbar 3 Stoughton
- E.
- rev Jedidiah Adams
- rev Philip Curtis
- rev Joeph Bean a Wrentham
- vacant
- rev Mr Barnum
- rev Nathan Bucknam 2 Medway
- rev David Thurton
- rev Jonathan Townend 1 Medfield
- rev Phillips Payon 1 Walpole
- rev Thomas Balch 4 Dedham
- rev Andrew Tyler
- rev Jaon Haven
- vacant
- E.
- rev Nathaniel Walter 2 Roxbury
- rev Amos Adams
- rev Jonathan Townend 1 Needham
- rev Elnathan White 1 Bellingham
- H.

- rev Philip Payon 1 Chelea
- rev Joeph Jackon 1 Brookline
- rev John Phillips 1 Catle William
- Rev Peter Clark 5 Salem
- rev James Dimon
- rev Elias Smith
- rev Dudley Leavit
- rev Nathan Holt
- rev Thomas Barnard
- rev William M'Gilchrit E.
- Friends
- B
- rev Nathaniel Henschman 3 Lynn
- rev Joeph Roby
- rev Benjamin Adams
- Friends
- rev John Barnard 2 Marblehead
- rev Simon Bradtreet
- rev Peter Boors E.
- rev Joeph Swain 1 Wenham
- rev John Chipman 2 Beverly
- rev Joeph Champney
- rev Sam'l Wiggleworth 7 Ipswich
- rev John Walley
- rev Nehemiah Porter
- rev Lely
- rev Nathaniel Rogers
- rev Alexander M'Dowall

- rev John Cleveland
- rev Jedidiah Jewet 2 Rowley
- rev James handler
- rev John Emeron 1 Topsfield
- rev John Lowel 6 Newbury
- rev Jonathan Parons P.
- rev Edward Bas E.
- rev John Tucker
- rev Moes Parons
- rev William Johnon
- rev Moes Hale
- Friends
- rev Samuel Webter 2 Salibury
- rev Edmund Noyes
- rev Samuel Philips 2 Andover
- rev William Symms
- rev William Balch 2 Bradford
- rev Joeph Parons
- rev Bailey 2 Methuen
- rev Chritopher Sargeant
- rev Edward Barnard 6 Haverhill
- rev James Cuhing
- rev Benjamin Parker
- rev Samuel Bachelor
- vacant
- vacant
- rev John Cuhing 2 Boxford
- rev Elizur Holyoe

- rev Thomas Hibbard 2 Ambury
- rev Payn Wingat
- Friends
- * rev Johua White Glouceter
- rev Samuel Chandler Glouceter
- rev John Rogers
- rev Ebenezer Cleveland
- rev Jaquih
- rev Bradreet
- rev Benj Toppan 1 Mancheter.
- Rev Nath'l Appleton 3 Cambridge
- rev Samuel Cook
- rev Eilis Aphthorp E.
- vacant
- rev Hull Abbot Charlestown 1
- rev Thomas Pretice Charlestown 1
- rev Seth Storer 1 Watertown
- rev Daniel Blis 1 Concord
- rev Joiah Sherman 2 Woburn
- rev Thomas Jones
- rev William Hobby 2 Reading
- vacant
- rev Irael Loving 2 Sudbury
- rev William Cook
- rev Aaron Smith 1 Marlborough
- rev Jonas Clark 1 Lexington
- rev Jonas Miriam 1 Newtown
- rev Joeph Emeron 2 Malden

- rev Eliakiam Willis
- rev Ebenezer Bridge 1 Chelmsford
- rev John Chandler 1 Billerica
- rev Samuel Lock 1 Sherburn
- rev Johua Prentice 1 Holliton
- rev Caleb Trowbridge 3 Groton
- rev Joeph Emeron
- vacant
- rev Matthew Bridge 1 Framingham
- rev Ebenezer Tureli 1 Medford
- rev Henry Gardnet 1 Stow
- rev Joiah Goodliuc 2 Duntable
- vacant
- rev Thomas Parker 1 Dracut
- rev John Searl 1 Stoneham
- rev Daniel Rogers 1 Littleton
- rev Samuel Barrett P. 1 Hopkinton
- E.
- rev Nathaniel Sherman 1 Bedford
- rev Willard Hall 1 Wesford
- rev Iaac Morrell 1 Wilmington
- rev Sampon Spauldin 1 Tewkoury
- rev John Swift 1 Acton
- rev Jacob uhing 1 Waltham
- * rev Phin. Hemingway 1 Townend
- rev Stephen Badger 2 Natick
- vacant
- rev William Lawrence 1 Lincoln

- Rev Thad. Maccarty 1 Worcester
- rev Iaac Jones 1 Weteren
- rev Eli Forbes 3 Brookfield
- rev Joeph Parsons
- rev Nathan Fik
- rev Joeph Roberts 1 Leiceter
- rev Johua Eaton 1 Spencer
- rev Thomas Green B.
- Friends
- rev Job Cuhing 2 Shrewbury
- rev Ebenezer More
- rev Ebenezer Parkman 2 Wetboro'
- rev John Martyn
- rev Nathan Stone 1 Southborough
- rev Charles Gleaon 1 Dudley
- rev John Campbel 1 Oxford
- vacant 1 Chlton
- vacant 1 Sturbridge
- rev Mr Fth B.
- rev David Hall 2 Sutton
- rev James Welman
- rev Mr Marh B.
- rev Aaron Hutchinon 1 Grafton
- rev Nathan Webb 1 Uxbridge
- Friends
- rev Eliha Fih
- rev Joeph Dorr 2 Mendon
- Friends.

- rev Amariah Frot
- B.
- rev William Phipps 1 Douglas
- rev David White 1 Hardwick
- rev Benj. Ruggles 1 New Brantree
- rev James Humphries 1 Perquiage
- rev Aaron Whitney 1 Peterham
- rev Thomas Frink 2 Rutland
- rev Joeph Buckminter
- vacant 1 Princetown
- rev Joeph Davis 1 Holden
- vacant 1 Narraganet No. 6.
- vacan 1 Wetminter
- rev Tim. Harrington 2 Lancater
- rev John Mellen
- rev John Rogers 1 Leominter
- rev Thomas Gos 1 Bolton
- rev Joeph Wheeler 1 Harvard
- * rev David Stearns 1 Lunenburgh
- rev Jonathan Wincheter 1 Dorchester-Canada
- vacant 1 Ipwich-Canada
- rev Lemuel Hedge 1 Roxbury-Canada
- Rev Jonathan hley 1 Deerfield
- * rev Mr Billings 1 Greenfield
- rev Joeph Ahly 1 Sunderland
- rev Judah Nah 1 Montague
- rev Samuel Hopkins 1 Hadley
- rev John Woodbridge 1 So Hadley

- rev Mr Parsons 1 mhart
- rev Tim Woodbridge 1 Hatfield
- rev John Hooker 2 Northampton
- rev Mr Judd
- rev Mr Cutler 1 Quobbin
- rev Stephen Williams 6 Springfield
- rev Robert Breck
- rev Noah Merick
- rev John M'Kintry
- rev Elijah Lothrop
- vacant
- B.
- Rev John Ballantine 1 Wetfield
- rev Mr Bridgham 2 Brimfield
- vacant
- vacant B.
- rev Jedidiah Smith Granville
- rev Mr Morton 1 Blanford
- rev Mr ng 1 New-Marlboro'
- rev Mr Jones 1 No. 3.
- rev Ebenezer Martin 1 No. 4.
- rev Stephen Wet 1 Stockbridge
- vacant 1 Falltown
- rev Jonathan Hubbard 2 Sheffield
- rev Samuel Hopkins
- rev Jee Clark 1 Spencer
- vacant 1 Egremont
- rev Jutus Forward 1 Coldpring

- rev Abraham Hill 1 Rhodetown
- rev Mr M'Dole 1 Colerane
- rev Ezra Thayer 1 Ware River
- rev Adonijah Bidwel 1 No. 1.
- rev Mr Abercrombie 1 Pelham
- vacant 1 Wethouck
- vacant 1 Pontoac
- vacant 1 Palmer
- rev John Hubbard 1 Northfield
- Rev Jacob Bacon 3 Plymouth
- rev Chandler Robbins
- vacant
- rev William Rand 1 Kington
- rev Charles Turner 1 Duxbury
- rev Atherton Wales 2 Marhfield
- rev Thomas Brown
- E.
- rev Sherjahub Bourn 2 Scituate
- rev David Barns
- rev Mr Thompon E.
- rev Samuel Baldwin 1 Hanover
- rev Gad Hitchcock
- rev Thomas Smith 1 Pembroke
- Friends
- rev Mr Dodge 1 Abington
- rev Daniel Perkins 5 Bridgwater
- rev John Angier
- rev John Shaw

- rev John Porter
- rev Solomon Read
- rev Jonathan Parker 2 Plymtoo
- rev John Howland
- rev Sylvanus Conant 2 Middleboro'
- vacant
- rev Ebenezer Hinds B.
- rev Iaac Backus B.
- rev Roland Thatcher 1 Wareham
- rev Timothy Ruggles 3 Rocheter
- rev Ivory Hovey
- rev Thomas Wet
- rev Mr Patten 1 Halifax
- Rev Joiah Crocker 1 Taunton
- E.
- Friends
- * rev Mr White 3 Norton
- rev Joeph Palmer
- rev Mr Carpenter
- vacant 2 Eaton
- vacant
- vacant 1 Dartmouth
- Friends 4 meetings
- rev Silas Brett 1 Freetown
- Friends
- rev Samuel Toby 1 Berkley
- rev Nathan Fiher 1 Dighton
- rev John Wales 1 Raynham

- rev Mr Wood B. Swanzy
- rev Job Maon B.
- rev Ruel Maon B.
- Friends
- rev Abijah Weldr 2 Attleborough
- Rev Peter Tcher
- rev Mr Carnes 3 Rehoboth
- rev Mr Rogeron
- rev Mr Peck
- rev Daniel Martin B.
- rev Nathan Pierce B.
- rev Mr Rounds B.
- Rev Caleb Upham 1 Truro
- B.
- rev Iaiah Lewis 3 Eatham
- rev Edward Cheever
- rev Joeph Crocker
- rev Stephen Emery 1 Chatham
- rev Joiah Dennis 2 Yarmouth
- rev Grindal Rawon
- rev Iaiah Duntar 2 Harwich
- rev John Dennis
- vacant
- rev Mr Chae B.
- rev Joeph Green 2 Barntable
- rev Mr Shaw
- rev Abraham Williams 1 Sandwich
- Friends

- rev Gideon Hawley Mahpec 1
- rev Sol. Bryant. Ind. Mahpec 1
- rev Samuel Palmer 1 Falmouth
- Friends
- Rev Andrew Boardman 1 Chilmark
- vacant Tibury
- vacant 1 Edgarton
- Indian Church 1 Gayhead
- rev Zech. Mayhew 1 Chritiantown
- Friends Nantucket
- vacant 1
- Rev Iaac Lyman 2 York
- rev Samuel Lanckton
- rev Benjamin Svrens 3 Kintery
- rev John Rogers
- rev Joiah Chae
- rev Jacob Foter 2 Berwick
- rev John Mors
- Friends
- rev Mr Heing ay 2 Wells
- rev Mr Little
- rev John Hovey 1 Arundel
- rev Moes Morrel 1 Biddeford
- Rev Thomas Smith 3 Falmouth
- rev John Wiwall
- rev Ephraim Clark
- Friends
- rev Nicholas Loring 2 Yarmouth

- rev Eliha Eaton
- Friends
- rev Richard Elvin 2 Scarborough
- vacant
- rev Mr Dunlap 1 Brunwick
- 1 Gorhamtown.
- Rev Mr Bailey E. Pownalborough
- vacant 1 Georgetown
- vacant 1 Woolwic
- vacant 1 Newcatle.
- Total of congregational churches in province of Maachuetts. 306.
- In year 1749 they were 250.

Summary hit.
V. 1. P. 542.

COLONY of CONNECTICUT.

- Rev Joeph Noyes 8 New-Haven
- rev Chauncy Whitteley New-Haven
- * Iaac Stiles
- E.
- rev Ebenezer Sunderon E.
- rev Benjamin Woodbridge
- rev Samuel Bird
- rev Naphtali Dagget
- Nicholas Street
- rev Noah Williton
- E.
- vacant
- rev Samuel Whitteley 2 Milford
- rev Job Prudden P.
- rev Thomas Ruggles 5 Guilford

- rev Amos Fowler 5 Guilford
- rev Jonathan Todd
- rev James Sprout
- rev John Richards
- rev Richard Ely
- E.
- rev Jonathan Merick 3 Branford
- rev Philemon Robbins
- rev Warham Williams
- rev Samuel Hall 4 Walingford
- rev Theophilus Hall
- rev James Dana
- vacant
- E.
- B.
- rev Elizur Goodrich 1 Durham
- rev Daniel Humphry 2 Darby
- rev Jonathan Lyman
- rev Richard Mansfield E.
- rev Samuel Todd 3 Waterbury
- E.
- rev Mark Leavenworth
- rev James Scovel E.
- rev John Trumble
- Rev Elnathan Whitman 4 Hartford
- rev Edward Dorr
- rev Eliphalet Williams
- rev Nathaniel Hooker

- rev Daniel Ruel 3 Weathersfield
- rev James Lockwood
- rev Johua Belding
- rev Hezekiah Biel 7 Windor
- rev William Ruel, jun.
- rev Thomas Potwine
- rev Joeph Perry
- rev Seth Norton
- vacant
- vacant
- rev William Ruel 6 Middleton
- rev Moes Bartlin
- rev Edward Eells
- rev Benjamin Bowers
- rev John Norton
- rev Ichabod Camp E.
- vacant
- rev Samuel Newel 7 Farmington
- E.
- rev Timothy Pitkin
- rev Ebenezer Booge
- rev Samuel Clark
- rev Benjamin Chapman
- rev John Smalley
- vacant
- rev William Gibbs E. Symbury
- rev Joeph Strong 3
- rev Jee Roots

- vacant
- rev Eleazar May 1 Haddam
- rev Grindal Rawon 3 E. Haddam
- rev Hobart Eatabrook
- rev Joeph Fowler
- rev Ephraim Little 4 Colcheter
- rev Thomas Skinner
- Rev Elijah Maon
- vacant
- rev Benjamin Poroy 3 Hebron
- rev Samuel Lockwood
- rev Elijah Lothrop
- rev Samuel Peters E
- rev Iaac Chalker 2 Glaenbury
- rev John Ecla
- rev Peter Raynolds 1 Enfield
- rev Ebenezer Gay 2 Suffield
- rev John Graham jun.
- rev Freegrace Leavitt 1 Somers
- rev Thomas White 1 Bolton
- rev Mr Willard 1 Stafford
- rev Gideon Noble 1 Willington
- rev Nathan Williams 1 Tolland
- Rev John Beach E Fairfield
- rev Noah Hobrt 5
- rev Joeph Lacon E
- rev Daniel Buckingham
- rev Nathaniel Br

- rev Samuel Sherwood
- rev Seth Pomrey
- rev Jedidiah Hills 4 Stratford
- rev Chritopher Newman E
- rev James Beebee
- rev Izrahiah Wetmore
- rev Edward Winlow E
- rev Robert Ros
- E
- rev Moes Dikenon 3 Norwalk
- rev Jeremiah Leaming E
- rev William Gaylord
- rev Robert Silliman
- rev Ebenezer Dibble E Stanford
- rev Benjamin Strong 3
- rev Moes Mather
- rev Noah Welles
- rev Abraham Todd 2 Greenwich
- vacant
- rev Ebenezer White 1 Danbury
- rev David Judon 2 Newtown
- rev Thomas Brooks
- rev Jonathan Ingeroll 1 Ridgfield
- rev Eliha Kent 3 Newfairfield
- rev Elijah Sill
- rev James Taylor
- Rev Math Greaves E. N London
- rev David Jewit 2

- rev Mather Byles
- E
- rev Benjamin Lord 6 Norwick
- E
- rev Jabez Wight
- rev Benjamin Thraop
- rev Peter Powers
- rev John Ellis
- vacant
- rev Jared Elliott 2 Killingworth
- rev William Seward
- rev William Hart 4 Saybrook
- rev Stephen Holmes
- rev John Devotion
- rev Simeon Stoddard
- rev George Griwold 3 Lye
- rev George Becith
- rev Stephen Johnon
- rev Jacob Johnon Gro
- E
- rev Mr Barber
- rev Valentine Wightman B
- rev Eben Roeter 3 Stonington
- rev Nathaniel ells
- rev Joeph Fih
- rev Hezekiah Lord 2 Preton
- rev Aher Roer
- Rev Samuel Moely 3 Windham

- rev Ebenezer Devotion
- rev Stephen White
- rev Solomon Williams 3 Lebanon
- rev Jacob Eliot
- rev Eleazer wheelock
- rev David Rowland 1 Plainfield
- rev James Cogwell 1 Canterbury
- rev Richard Salter 2 Mansfield
- rev Daniel Welch
- rev Nathan Strong 2 Coventry
- rev Oliver Noble
- rev Abel Stiles 3 Woodtock
- rev Stephen Williams, jun.
- vacant
- rev David Ripley 2 Pomfret
- rev Aaron Potnam
- rev Aaron Brown 3 Killingly
- rev Noadiah Ruel
- rev Eden Burroughs
- rev Timothy Allen 1 Ahford
- rev Samuel Durance P. 1 Volentown
- rev Mr Horton 1 Union
- rev Joiah Whitney 1 Mortlake.
- Rev Judah Champion 1 Litchfield
- rev Solomon Palmer E.
- * rev. Anthony Stoddard 4 Woodbury
- rev John Graham
- rev Thomas Canfield

- rev Daniel Brinmade
- rev Nathaniel Taylor 2 New-Milford
- E.
- vacant
- Friends
- rev Andrew Bartholomew 1 Harwinton
- rev Jonathan Marh 1 New Hartford
- rev Jee Ives 1 Norfolk
- rev Daniel Farrand 1 Canaan
- rev Jonathan Lee 1 Salibury
- rev Noah Wadham 4 Kent
- rev Joel Bardwell
- rev Mr Oborn
- rev Mr Tredwel
- rev Cotton Mather Smith 1 Sharon
- rev Hezekiah Gould a Cornwall
- rev Abel Newel 1 Gohen
- rev Natha. Roberts 1 Torrington

Total of congregational churches in the colony of Connect.

170

A. D. 1749 aid to be about

120

But more probably

135

In the year 1760 died 10 of the pators; 18 ordained, including one intalment; and 6 new churches gathered, whoe parihes are included in this lit. At the end of the year, I think there are 15 of thee parochial congregations whoe churches are not formed, viz. 10 for Maachuetts, and 5 for Connecticut. So that while the total of parochial congregations is 530, the total of churches is 515 for the end of the year 1760. If the total of churches in 1749 was but 407, as Dr. Douglas aerts, we have multiplied 108 churches in 12 years.

PROVINCE of NEW-HAMPSHIRE.

- REV. Arthur Brown E. Portsmouth.
- rev Samuel Langdon 2
- rev Samuel Haven
- rev Marmeduke Brown E
- rev Woodbridge Odlin 2 Exeter
- rev Daniel Rogers
- rev Ward Cotton 4 Hampton
- rev Joiah Baily
- rev Jeremiah Fog
- rev Nathaniel Gookin
- Friends
- * rev William Allen 1 Greenland
- rev Samuel M 'Clintoc 1 Greenland
- rev Stephen Chae 1 Newcatle
- rev Samuel Paron 1 Rye
- rev Joeph Adams 1 Newington
- rev Joeph Adams 1 Stratham
- * rev Joeph Secomb 2 Kington
- rev Peter Coffin
- rev Wm. Parons 1 Southampton
- rev Joiah Cotton 1 Sandown
- rev Ebenezer Flagg 2 Cheter
- rev Mr Wilon P
- rev David M'Gregore P 2 Londonderry.
- rev Mr Davion P
- rev Timothy Walker 1 Rumford
- rev Daniel Wilkins P 1 Sonhegan

- rev Daniel Emeron 1 Hollia.
- rev Mr. Merrill 1 Nottingham
- rev Mr. Stearns 1 Eppen
- rev Nathaniel Trak 1 Brentwood
- rev Jonathan Cuhing 1 Dover
- Friends
- rev John Tuck 1 Goport
- rev Mr Pike 1 Somerworth
- Friends
- rev Ezra Carpenter 1 Ahwelot
- rev John Moody 1 Newmarket
- rev John Adams 1 Durham
- rev Mr Prince 1 Madbury
- rev Jonathan Eams 2 Newton
- rev Benjamin Butler
- rev Mr Hobbe 1 Pelham
- rev Mr Bailey 1 Salem
- rev Mr Hughton P. 1 Merrimack
- rev Mr M'Dowal 1 Goffs-Town
- rev Mr Scales 1 Hopkinton
- rev Mr Whittemore 1 Suncook
- rev Mr Kingaid P
- rev Mr Hill 1 Rocheter
- A. D. 1749 about 30

COLONY of RHODE-ISLAND and PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS.

- Friends NEWPORT
- rev Thomas Pollen E.
- rev Edward Upham B.
- rev John Maxon B. Sabb.
- rev William Vinel 1
- rev Ezra Stiles 1
- rev Gardner Thurton B.
- Moravien
- Synagogue
- rev Samuel Windor B. PROVIDENCE
- rev Mr Greaves E.
- rev Joeph Snow 1
- vacant 1
- Friends
- Friends Portsmouth
- rev Charles Holden B. Warwick
- rev Benjamin Pierce B.
- Friends
- E.
- rev Joeph Park 1 Weterly
- Friends
- rev Samuel Aldborough B. North-Kington
- Friends South-Kington
- rev Joeph Torrey 1
- rev Samuel Fayerweather F.
- rev James Rogers B.

- vacant B.
- vacant 1 New-Shoreham
- rev John Gorton B. Eat-Greenwich
- Friends
- Friends Jametown
- rev John Windor B. Smithfield
- Friends
- vacant B. Scituate
- rev David Mitchel B. Glouceter
- Friends Charletown
- rev Benjamin Gardner B. Wet-Greenwich
- rev Peter Worden B. Coventry
- vacant B. Exeter.
- rev John Uher E. Britol
- rev John Burt 1
- rev Othniel Campbell 1 Tiverton
- rev David Rounds B.
- Friends
- rev Jona. Ellis 1 little-Compton
- rev Timothy Brown 1
- Friends
- rev Mr Townend 1 Warren
- rev Mr Maxwell
- rev Mr Cook B. Cumberland
- Friends Richmond
- rev Tho. Burlingham B. Cranton
- Friends
- rev Thomas Hicox B. Sabb. Hopkinton
- rev Thomas Clark B. Sabb. Hopkinton
- Friends.