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THE
Western Inquisition:
OR, A
RELATION
OF THE
CONTROVERSY,

Which has been lately among the

DISSENTERS
IN THE
WEST of *ENGLAND*.

By JAMES PEIRCE.

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T H E

Western Inquisition, &c.



THINK my self very unhappy, in being forced to give the world an account of some matters lately transacted among the Dissenters in our parts, wherein I must say too so much concerning my self. For the honour of our holy religion I could have wish'd our differences might have been concealed from the world, that it might not have been wounded in the house of its friends: But the very false representations which have been made of my self, and several of my worthy friends, have render'd it necessary, that the whole case should be set in a true light; for we cannot be just to our selves, without clearing our reputation from the malicious slanders that have been industriously spread abroad concerning us. It shall be my care to recollect things with all the exactness I can, though I am sensible I shall be at a loss about some circumstances of time, having not kept a constant journal of transactions, which I thought could never have come to such an end as they are, or needed to be related to the world. I am sensible there are some, who will be offended with the account which they will find given of themselves; but since they have acted the part they have done, and been the au-

thors of so great confusion among us, and were so resolved upon pursuing their own counsels, though they were warned of the consequences, they must thank themselves only, that such displeasing truth is brought to light.

It cannot be thought strange, that the sentiments of all the *Dissenters* should not be exactly alike concerning the doctrine of the *Trinity*, about which there have been so many disputes in the world. They were not all of one mind, when the same doctrine was very much the subject of debate in the close of the last century. There were some then who fell in with the learned and great Mr. *Howe*, who wrote indeed like a person who was under an awful sense of the greatness of his subject, and was so modest as to assert nothing but the possibility of such an explication as he offer'd: and there were others who look'd upon his opinion not only as false, but even *heretical*. Thus *S. L.* a Dissenter, in his *Growth of Error*, falls foully upon the notion, p. 159. tho' he names not plainly the persons he condemns, and charges it with heresy. Nay he endeavours afterwards to prove, that *Socinianism* was brought in at first by advancing that notion, and gives broad hints as though he thought the same design was then again on foot. I must own, I cannot see how Mr. *Howe's* notion can be maintain'd against the charge of *Tritheism*, or that his supposed *nexus* will be sufficient to secure the unity of the godhead. But yet none of the Dissenters, that ever I heard of, were for breaking communion with him, or any of his opinion. And whatever might be the design of that warm writer, little notice, that I can remember, was taken of his performance; and no such consequences followed the difference of sentiments then, as we see do now. I am persuaded those who now make the loudest outcry against *heresy*, are not better agreed; but

but there are still some whose opinions are as chargeable with *Tritheism* on the one side, or *Sabellianism* on the other, as theirs were at that time. It has been generally agreed that both these are very gross errors, and the writers on both sides have severely charged each other; and yet they have both among Churchmen and Dissenters held communion with one another. And in my mind they acted herein very agreeably to the christian rule, not charging one another as holding the denied, though natural, consequences of their respective opinions; but bore with one another, as men sincerely searching after the truth, tho' liable to mistakes. And why those who make it their endeavours to avoid both those errors, should not be intitled to their charitable and good opinion, if they have nothing else to object against them, may deserve to be seriously consider'd.

My name has made so much noise in this controversy, and my reputation has been so peculiarly struck at, that I hope I may be born with in troubling the world with a more particular account of my conduct, with reference to the controversy, than could be otherwise excusable.

I was then bred up in a scheme, of which I can now make nothing else but *Sabellianism*; and a set of unscriptural expressions had been inculcated upon me from my youth, which I had a great veneration for. However having this principle as early, and as deeply fasten'd in my mind, That *the scriptures were the only rule of our faith*, I always paid the highest regard to them; and I find a satisfaction, in observing how careful I was in the main to use their language in my preaching. And though I cannot justify all I meet with in my old sermons, yet it pleases me to observe, that the older I grew, the more careful I became to express my self in these matters in the words of scripture. I look'd
upon

upon this doctrine as a *mystery*, which it was to little purpose to search into, and despairing of satisfaction, with reference to the difficulties I perceiv'd, I negligently contented my self with patching together some places of scripture, which I thought yielded the main assertions I held.

BUT while I studiously avoided the controversy, and read my *Bible* under the influence of a prejudice in favour of the common opinion, two things used very much to astonish me. One was, that I saw plainly the *antenicene* writers never came up to my notion, nay frequently spake very contrary thereto. I was at a loss how to reconcile the supposed necessity of my belief, with the charity which I thought to be due to them. But here I help'd my self with this fancy, that the doctrine was not then so well clear'd as it was afterwards; and therefore great allowances were to be made to those writers. The other thing, which sometimes surpriz'd me, was, that I observ'd the writers after the council of *Nice*, and particularly *St. Basil*, appear'd to have had very odd notions of the Trinity, as that the three persons had one common nature, just as three men have. This seem'd to me downright *Tritheism*; and I wonder'd how he came to be counted orthodox. But these things I reputed peculiarities, and thought I avoided them by the fewness of the assertions I would venture to advance. And observing how very differently men used to speak and think of this subject, I became more and more averse to the thinking or speaking of it, and avoided reading about it, except as it came in my way, when I was reading with quite another view.

WHEN the noise was first raised about Mr. *Whiston*, I was much troubled, having an high esteem of him as a learned and pious man, who had honour'd me with his acquaintance while I liv'd in
Cambridge,

Cambridge, and with a correspondence after I was removed. I took therefore the liberty to write him a letter, wherein in a friendly manner, I expostulated with him, and produc'd some arguments for my opinion, and against what was reported to be his. His answer waved all matter of argument, and refer'd me to his papers which he intended to print, as soon as they had been examin'd by some learned men, into whose hands he design'd to put them; and in the mean while he refer'd me to *Novatian de Trinitate*, to see his notions, and those of the ancient writers together. He was pleas'd likewise to desire me to examine his papers before they were printed; which made me apprehend I might be forced to look into a controversy I cared not to meddle with, and perhaps have my name mention'd in it, which I was very averse to; and so I never reply'd to his letter. I had before read *Novatian de Trinitate*, taking *Du Pin's* judgment along with me, as I used to do in such cases, and thought that in the main he might be orthodox, tho' some expressions look'd very strange; but I could make allowance for his writing before the *Nicene Council*. However upon my friend's recommendation, I read that treatise over again, being somewhat desirous to know what his notions were, with which his letter had not acquainted me. I now read it with more care, as to this controversy, than I had done before; and could not but be surpriz'd at some turns I met with in it, which appear'd new to me, and such as I could not tell what to say to. However I continued still in my former opinion, tho' I could not any longer abide by *Du Pin's* judgment of the orthodoxy of the writer. The reading of that author had this effect upon me, that it made me more despair of getting clear notions of the Trinity, and so render'd me more averse to the study of the controversy.

WHEN Mr. *Whiston* had publish'd five of his volumes, I had look'd into none of them, only I had read two little things publish'd by themselves, viz. his *Historical Preface*, and his short *Dissertation upon the Epistles of Ignatius*. Upon reading the latter, I took some pains to compare the two editions of several of the letters, that I might see which appear'd to be the more ancient; and the shorter edition appearing to me to be probably the more ancient, was some confirmation to me of the common opinion.

AT length Dr. *Clarke* publish'd his *Scripture-doctrine of the Trinity*, and I continuing as backward as ever to puzzle my self with the controversy, would not so much as read him. But the talk of these matters very much increasing, after men had read his book, I accidently met with a friend, who reproach'd me with my sloth, and my unfairness in not reading both sides of so important a controversy: and thereupon I bought the Doctor's book, and Mr. *Whiston's five volumes*, resolving to inquire as thoroughly as I could into the matter, and then to write somewhat in defence of my opinion, but with the utmost caution. This I believe might be near a twelvemonth after the Doctor's book was publish'd.

THEY who most dislike the Doctor's notion, must own the method he chose to treat of the subject was the best that could be thought of. I confess I was charm'd with it; and cannot but wonder, that the writers on the other side have not attempted to vindicate their notion the same way. I soon saw the controversy was too hard for me, and that I was eas'd of a design which would have put me to abundance of trouble. I could not fall in with the Doctor in every thing; but saw clearly, I must part with some beloved opinions, or else quit my notion of the authority of the holy scriptures.

THE reader will easily imagine, that this must have been a terrible shock to me, and that I must have had a great concern upon my mind, when I found my self at a loss about a doctrine of which I had been all along fond, to a great degree of uncharitableness. However, this caused me to read the *Bible* with more care, and make it more my prayer to God, that I might be led into the truth.

I was soon convinc'd the common opinion could not reasonably be esteem'd a fundamental article of the christian faith, as I had been too apt before to take it to be. And upon serious consideration the subject seem'd to me so abstruse and difficult, that I could not imagine God had made mens salvation to depend upon their entertaining exactly the same notion concerning it; especially seeing the scripture never insists upon the absolute necessity of one uniform belief about it. And I was much confirm'd in this apprehension, by considering how widely good men had differ'd from one another upon the subject.

WHILE I continued in suspence, being still upon the search, I consider'd with my self, how I ought to order my practice. And here I thought it most safe for me to keep close to the scripture, which is much clearer in delivering rules and examples for our practice, than in furnishing us with nice and intricate speculations. As to the christian virtues, I apprehended them not much concern'd in the controversy; and in conversation I had always avoided such intricate points, and might easily do so still. But my chief concern was about my preaching and praying. Concerning the former, I was resolv'd to keep more close to the scripture expression than ever, and venture to say very little in my own words, of a matter about which I was in so much doubt my self. As to the latter, I could not find

there was any occasion for my making much alteration, which ever notion should appear to be the truth; having always accusom'd my self, as all christians for the most part do, to pray to the Father, thro' the Son, by the Holy Spirit. In this therefore I resolv'd to go on. The only doubt I had, was about the expediency and agreeableness of the doxology I often us'd in the end of my prayers. I could not say it was unlawful; but I thought the safest way was to consider what sort of doxologies the scriptures set before us, and so recommend to our use. These I was sure must be safe, and the other might be doubtful. And it seem'd to me very reasonable, that he that prays with others, should make the worship as unexceptionable as possible to all christians, by avoiding to bring into it disputable, doubtful, and unnecessary things. For this reason I left off the doxologies I had been wont to use.

In the year 1713, I was, without the least seeking on my part, unanimously chosen by the three dissenting congregations in *Exon*, to succeed in the place of one of their ministers deceas'd, the three surviving ministers joining with the people to invite me hither, and the whole assembly that met there concurring in their desire that I would accept the invitation. The unusual circumstances of the providence inclin'd me to hearken to them, and leave as agreeable a people as a minister could live with. I was by this time throughly convinc'd that the common doctrine was not according to the scriptures, and was settled in my present opinion: and from my first coming I avoid'd the common doxology. I forbore to bring this, or any other nice point of speculation into the pulpit; and being always careful to speak of scripture doctrines in scripture words, no offence was taken; and my endeavours were, I hope, useful, as well as very acceptable.

[II]

able. And I must own, I had much comfort in my settlement in a good air, and with a very kind and agreeable people. And I can appeal to the most angry and displeas'd among them, whether my behaviour was not always peaceable, and inoffensive. As I always declin'd meddling, in the pulpit, with a subject that I thought requir'd more prudence than mine for the right managing of it; so they cannot charge me with ever beginning with any of the people about it in conversation; nay I have studiously put it by, when it has been begun by others.

THE common vogue of the people is, that there was nothing of this doctrine in the city before my coming into it; that I was the first who brought it among them; and abundance of reproaches and untoward wishes have been bestow'd upon me for this cause. But there is no truth in this report. Dr. *Clarke*, Mr. *Whiston*, and other writers, who differ from the common notion, had been read here before my coming; and some few of the people, tho' they kept it to themselves, had long before, by only reading their *Bibles*, been convinc'd that it was not agreeable to the scriptures.

AFTER I had been settled here some time, one of our ministers dying, another was to be chosen; and the choice fell upon Mr. *John Lavington*. And thus our number was filled up, as it continued during the whole controversy. Mr. *Joseph Hallet* chosen An. 1687. Mr. *John Withers*, well known by his excellent writings, An. 1705. My self An. 1713. And Mr. *John Lavington* An. 1715. Before I proceed to our differences, I think it necessary to give some account of the choice of this last Gentleman, that the reader may be the better able to judge of something which fell out afterward.

WHEN the last vacancy happen'd, he being a native of the city, his relations, which were many

and considerable, were desirous it should be filled up by the choice of him; and they generally appear'd zealous for him. He was himself at first utterly averse to it, being apprehensive that the work would be too hard for him, and he should not be able to make so many sermons as would be necessary, by reason of his being very much subject to the head-ach. And had it not been for me, I believe he never would have consented to be chosen. But I propos'd this expedient to render his work easy, in case he were chosen: That whereas in the ordinary course he would be oblig'd to study four sermons a month for the Lord's days, and one for the lecture; I would save him the studying one monthly, by changing with him, which I thought would be a pleasure to his relations in that congregation where I us'd to preach, and to several of my friends in the other, where he would be to preach most, they having desir'd before that I might take a stated turn among them. I promis'd him likewise any occasional assistance beside this, which he should desire. Upon this motion he became willing to be chosen. I avoid'd influencing any in the choice, or making any comparison between him and the worthy person, that was put up in competition with him. And all that I said to those who talk'd with me was, that I thought we might be very easy with either of them; but that I had the most personal knowledge of Mr. *Lavington*, and thought (as I then did) that he was a man of a good temper. Several who were against his choice, were ready to censure me as favouring it too much, but they had no reason; and 'tis well known that many, whom I was most likely to influence, voted against him; and there is not one of them that can say, I ever endeavour'd to persuade him to the contrary. There was a considerable number against him, many of whom thought him not fairly chosen; but I confess I was of another mind.

AFTER

AFTER he was chosen, we went on quietly and comfortably for some time, 'till about the latter end of the year 1716, as near as I can guess, when the first occasion of our contest appear'd. Mr. *Hubert Stogdon*, whose name has been much talk'd of in the present stirs, had then lately begun to preach, and preach'd sometimes with a great deal of warmth in favour of the common opinion. But about this time being puzzled with some discourse he had with a layman, who had been looking into these matters, he set himself to read upon the point, particularly Dr. *Clarke*, and such as had written against him. Hereupon he came to alter his notion quite, but however endeavour'd to conceal it from the world; which he had certainly done, had not his conversation with some intimate friends been accidentally overheard by one who work'd in the family where he lodg'd; by reason of which it came to Mr. *Lavington's* ears, that he was not in the common opinion. Mr. *Lavington* making a complaint concerning what he heard of him, and Mr. *Stogdon* hearing of it, he waited upon him, and assured him that some stories that had been brought to him concerning his discourse were not true. However they fell then upon the controversy, and talk'd very freely. Mr. *Lavington* was so civil hereupon as to publish what had pass'd, and the town presently rang of it; and some other ministers took occasion to discourse with Mr. *Stogdon* about it, as I shall have occasion to observe elsewhere. I doubt not he was sensible, when it was too late, that he had been imprudent in talking so freely, for his own information, with some Ministers, who understood not the rules of conversation. But allowance ought to be made for his youth, and not knowing the world. After this living in town, he might perhaps talk likewise with some of our people, who fell in with his notion in some measure. Whatever was then done, was with-

out

out mine, or any of my colleagues having any hand in it. The thing now became the subject of conversation sometimes, but was studiously avoided by me, as I doubt not it was by Mr. *Hallet* and Mr. *Withers*.

HITHERTO we were very peaceable. But being at *London* a good part of *April* and *May*, 1717, Mr. *Henry Atkins*, who resides in *Exon*, but preaches stately at *Puddington*, preach'd in my turn the *Wednesday's* lecture. What his design was, he knows best himself; but by all the accounts I have receiv'd of his sermon, it was very warm and furious, charging some among the Dissenters of *Exon* with *dammable heresies*, denying the Lord that bought them; tho' he own'd, after he had preach'd his sermon, that he had not studied the controversy. I could not find that his prudence was much applauded by any at first, especially considering that he was not preaching in his own pulpit: but afterwards when the controversy began to run higher, I perceiv'd he had work'd some persons into a more favourable opinion of him, than they had before.

WHEN I return'd home, I found our people in a great flame; and the next week after my return three considerable persons of the congregation, to which I mostly preach'd, apply'd to me, desiring me to preach upon the subject, in order to stop the contention. They urged, that the next Lord's day being the day in course for the administration of the sacrament, nothing could be more proper than a discourse upon the satisfaction of Christ, which they seem'd to think must be intirely overthrown, unless our Saviour were acknowledg'd to be the supreme God. I could not but let them see, that I did not concur in their notion: for when one of them urged somewhat to prove that Christ was not a creature, I told him, I did not like to hear men say he was. Upon which he infer'd, then he must be the
supreme

supreme God: I answer'd, perhaps that consequence might not be so certain, as he thought. Why, said he, is there any *medium* between the supreme God and a creature? I told him, there might for ought I knew. He ask'd then, what was that *medium*? and I answer'd, the *Son*. Our conversation was intirely friendly; tho' I did not upon the spot promise them to comply with their desire. However, upon considering the thing afterwards by my self, I resolv'd to do it. The *Account* says, this application was made to me, *May 30, 1717*; which I believe is true enough; for I find the sermon was preach'd *June* the second.

I think it necessary to give some account of that sermon, because it has been often and dolefully objected against me; and I am very apt to think the author of *Arius detected* had his eye to it, in what he says, *p. 11*.

I chose for my text *1 John 11. 2. He is the propitiation for our sins*. My discourse, without taking the least notice that there was any controversy among us, went upon these heads.

“ I. THE explaining the general meaning of a propitiation.

“ II. To shew how applicable this was to Christ, and that he was a propitiation for our sins.

UPON these I was very brief, leaving room for the last head, which contain'd every thing that has been since cavill'd at. It was this:

“ III. To consider, to what it was owing that the death and sacrifice of Christ is of so great virtue, that it is a propitiation for our sins, and is so effectual to render an offended God propitious and favourable to us.

“ AND here (said I) I think we are to lay the stress upon these three things: The appointment of God, the dignity of his person, and the holiness and purity of his oblation.

All that was objected against the sermon was, what I deliver'd concerning the two former of these. And to set the matter in a clear light, I beg the reader's patience, while I acquaint him from my notes what I said of them. I was large upon the first, for a reason that will be obvious from what I have already said.

Thus then I went on in my discourse concerning the first.

“ 1. THE appointment of God: Without this we
 “ could have no satisfaction concerning the efficacy
 “ and virtue of our Saviour's oblation. God who
 “ is the sovereign ruler and lord of all his creatures,
 “ has a right to insist upon their personal obedience
 “ and conformity to his law; and whenever they
 “ transgress it, they become immediately liable to
 “ the penalty, which he has threaten'd the breach of
 “ his law with; and whether he will accept of a
 “ satisfaction at the hands of another, if it be offer'd,
 “ must be at his pleasure. If he do's not, he can't
 “ be charg'd with injustice to his creatures, who
 “ suffer no other than their own deserts. What his
 “ infinite goodness might engage him to do, we are
 “ not able to say. His goodness is unquestionably
 “ infinite; but yet the exercise of it is directed by
 “ his infinite wisdom. And we see by a multitude
 “ of instances, that it do's not always exert it self
 “ to the utmost, that we are ready to conceive it
 “ might. How easy had it been for him, if he had
 “ pleased, to have prevented the sin and apostacy of
 “ the human race? And yet, notwithstanding the
 “ immensity of his goodness, he did not do it. We
 “ are well assur'd, that his not doing it must be per-
 “ fectly consistent with infinite goodness; but we
 “ are not able to dive into all the wise reasons he
 “ had for the contrary; so that we cannot say how
 “ far his goodness would oblige him. But if we
 “ consider rectoral justice, tho' that might admit of
 “ his accepting an equivalent, yet it did not oblige
 “ him

“ him to it. Consider God as a judge, and he can
 “ be under no obligation to favour a person, but ac-
 “ cording to the sense and intention of the law. And
 “ since the law gives not the least hint of a surety,
 “ and speaks not a word of a mediator or a sacrifice,
 “ the admitting one must be an act of goodness and
 “ soverain pleasure, and not what he is bound to
 “ in justice. So that we could have no found satis-
 “ faction and comfort in resting upon any sacrifice,
 “ unless we had an assurance of its being appointed
 “ by God himself. And certainly the scripture
 “ teaches us to lay a stress upon this, by a multitude
 “ of passages which we meet with in it.

Solio

AND having mention'd several to this purpose, I
 went on thus: “ And as we could not know, whe-
 “ ther Christ's sacrifice would avail, unless we knew
 “ it was appointed of God; so that appointment
 “ alone, if we were let into nothing farther, might
 “ assure us of the sufficiency and efficacy of it. By
 “ God's appointment we might be satisfied, it was
 “ suitable, and should be successful, whether we knew
 “ any thing particularly of his person, or the nature
 “ of his sacrifice. Thus it was doubtless under the
 “ old dispensation. God had let them know he
 “ would send the *Messiah* to them, who should re-
 “ deem *Israel*; very little knowledge can we sup-
 “ pose they could have, in comparison of what we
 “ now have by the gospel: and yet they were to
 “ be saved by him and his death, as well as we;
 “ and they that were saved by him, believ'd in him
 “ that was to come, according to God's promise.
 “ And must not their trust in him be very much
 “ grounded then upon the appointment and order
 “ of God, and an assurance that the person and me-
 “ thod he had fix'd upon were sufficient, and should
 “ be accepted?

“ WE have no doubt great reason to be thankful,
 “ that God has let us more into the knowledge of
 C “ our

“ our redeemer’s undertaking : and we may, by rea-
 “ son of that wisdom which shines forth to us, the
 “ more admire and adore our heavenly father, who
 “ has contrived and appointed such a way of salva-
 “ tion. But certainly it must have become us to
 “ have taken his word for the sufficiency of the me-
 “ thod appointed, if he had acquainted us with no
 “ more. ’Tis our part to believe the excellency of
 “ God’s appointments, when we dont understand
 “ the whole design and intent of them. And it
 “ could have been no excuse to the *Jews*, if they
 “ had refused to comply with the laws God gave
 “ them about various washings and sacrifices; and
 “ had then alleg’d, that they did not see of what
 “ use those things could be.

“ THE design of what I have now said is this :
 “ That since Christ is appointed by God to be a
 “ sacrifice and propitiation for our sins; we may
 “ with an absolute entire trust and confidence ven-
 “ ture our souls, and our everlasting concerns, up-
 “ on the virtue of his undertaking; and can have no
 “ reason to entertain the least doubt about the issue,
 “ if we do so. *God has set him forth to be a propi-*
 “ *tiation thro’ faith in his blood, to declare his righ-*
 “ *teousness for the remission of sins that are past;* and
 “ if we have *faith in his blood*, we shall never fail
 “ of the benefit of his propitiation, since God has
 “ *set him forth* for this end.

“ I care not now to enter into the dispute, whe-
 “ ther God might not have been reconcil’d to us
 “ without a satisfaction. This has been earnestly
 “ contended for by the *Socinians*, who have most
 “ strenuously oppos’d the satisfaction of Christ,
 “ and who have, to serve their own hypothesis,
 “ been some of the worst interpreters of scripture. I
 “ think ’tis sufficient for us, that God did not think
 “ fit to do it; and we may well conclude that the
 “ way he has taken is the best and most proper.

“ And

“ And indeed they seem to have widely mistaken the
 “ notion of those, who contend for the necessity of
 “ a satisfaction: their plea has been founded upon
 “ the justice of God. And here such as oppose the
 “ satisfaction of Christ have told them; that the
 “ pardoning of sinners is an act of goodness, and that
 “ it can be no injustice to sinners for God to pardon
 “ them; that justice indeed may vindicate him in
 “ punishing, but it do's not oblige and necessitate
 “ him to it. And 'tis most certainly true, that there
 “ is no injustice done the sinner, when God do's not
 “ punish him for his sins. But then here lies their
 “ mistake, that they dont consider justice in a due
 “ sense. The justice that allows him to punish, is
 “ justice to the sinner; but the justice that is sup-
 “ pos'd to oblige him to it, is justice to himself.
 “ And so far we may certainly say, that justice in
 “ this respect obliges him to secure his own honour
 “ and glory, and the reputation of his government;
 “ and that he should not give any of his subjects in-
 “ couragement to rebel against him, and break his
 “ laws; and that therefore, if he do's pardon the
 “ sinner, some way or other, it should be made
 “ appear that he hates, and is most displeas'd, and
 “ angry with sin. And I am sure, this is most ful-
 “ ly and clearly manifest'd in the course that God
 “ has now taken, in his giving his Son to be a
 “ propitiation for our sins, in order to his forgiv-
 “ ing them. So that if we consider the justice of
 “ God under this view, or if we judge of this mat-
 “ ter by the method which we see God has actu-
 “ ally taken, it should seem not so well to com-
 “ port, at least, with the perfections of God, the
 “ glory of his attributes, and the reputation of his
 “ government, for him to pass by sin without a va-
 “ luable consideration.

“ But then on the other hand, I fear, some who

“ have very honestly design’d to defend that doctrine,
 “ have unwarily exprest themselves about it: I mean
 “ in straining a metaphorical term, which we find in-
 “ deed more than once made use of in scripture,
 “ wherein our sins are compar’d to *debts*. They
 “ have represented sin as an *infinite evil*, and so our
 “ *debts* to be *infinite*, and that the *punishment* we
 “ deserve is *infinite*, and nothing less than an *infinite*
 “ *punishment* can be a satisfaction for it.

“ THE best writers against the *Socinians* have a-
 “ voided the arguing after this rate, and have con-
 “ sider’d that as *debt* is in this case a metaphorical
 “ term, it ought not to be strain’d. Our sins are com-
 “ par’d to *debts*, because a sinner, as a debtor, is lia-
 “ ble to be sued and cast into prison, and kept there
 “ ’till he makes satisfaction to that God against whom
 “ he has sinned. But if we will apply this farther
 “ than ’tis design’d, we shall only puzzle and con-
 “ found ourselves. Our obedience is indeed a *debt*
 “ we owe to God; but our sins cannot, as far as I
 “ see, be term’d debts upon any other account,
 “ than that which I just now mention’d. Nor can
 “ the punishment of sin be properly and strictly
 “ reckon’d a debt; for punishment is not what we
 “ owe to God, but rather what he owes to us:
 “ and to speak of sin, as they do, as an infinite
 “ evil, seems to put the doctrine of Christ’s satis-
 “ faction upon a wrong foot.

“ *INFINITY* properly carries the notion of *absolute*
 “ *perfection* in it: and it must be very wrong to call
 “ that *infinite*, that has no *perfection* at all in it, but
 “ is the worst evil. Or if by *infinite* be meant as
 “ *great as can be*; this applying the term *infinite* to
 “ sin, must make all sins to be equally evil, unless
 “ one infinite be allowed to be bigger than another:
 “ If it be said, ’tis an evil committed against an
 “ infinite God, I grant it; but that do’s not make
 “ the

“ the sin to be infinite, any more than any act of our
 “ obedience [being] perform'd to the same infinite
 “ God renders that obedience infinite.

“ AND so as to the punishment; it may well be
 “ doubted, whether there can properly be any *in-*
 “ *finite punishment*; for who can say, that any pu-
 “ nishment is as great as it can possibly be? Or
 “ that 'tis to such a degree, as not to be in the
 “ power of God to inflict more? A creature is not
 “ a subject capable of an infinity either of joy or
 “ sorrow, in a strict sense; and the infinite power
 “ of God is the reason why 'tis not so; because
 “ you cannot suppose his power in inflicting mise-
 “ ry ever to be so exhausted, as not to be able to
 “ inflict more: just as 'tis impossible for God to
 “ make an infinite world; because he can never
 “ make so much, but it must be still in his power
 “ to make more.

“ So that I think we shall have much clearer
 “ notions of this matter, if we put it into plain and
 “ easy terms. Sin is the most heinous evil, beyond
 “ our thoughts and expressions injurious to the per-
 “ fections and government of God; and consequent-
 “ ly exposes sinners to the righteous displeasure of
 “ God, and to all that punishment which he has
 “ threaten'd, and shall see fit to inflict. God would
 “ be injurious to his own perfections, to his wis-
 “ dom in making his law; to his holiness which
 “ shines forth in it, to the soverain authority which
 “ he has over his creatures, should he not resent
 “ the injury, or should he give any encouragement
 “ to his subjects to think lightly of it, and to imi-
 “ tate it: and therefore do's it seem requisite that
 “ he should some way or other testify his hatred
 “ against it, either in the destruction of the trans-
 “ gressor, or in some other way. The way that
 “ the gospel sets before us, his dealing as he has
 “ done with his own son, is what do's most fully
 “ and

“ and perfectly display the holiness of his nature,
 “ his hatred of sin, and shews how unreasonable
 “ ’tis for men to sin against him, with the hopes of
 “ impunity. He shews himself in his sufferings
 “ to be a righteous and sin-revenging God; and
 “ having thus secur’d his own honour, and been
 “ thus just to himself, he may without the least
 “ impeachment of his wisdom, holiness, or sove-
 “ rainty, be the *justifier of him that believes in*
 “ *Jesus.*

2. “ ANOTHER thing to which the virtue and effi-
 “ cacy of Christ’s propitiation is owing, is the dig-
 “ nity of his person. And altho’ the appointment
 “ of God might be sufficient to satisfy us of the
 “ sufficiency of his propitiation, if God had reveal-
 “ ed to us no more; yet we should be very much
 “ overseen, if we should not take notice of this,
 “ now the gospel has set it before us. And indeed
 “ this lets us greatly into the reason why God has
 “ appointed such a propitiation for us; and the
 “ wisdom and rich grace of God do most mar-
 “ velously shine forth in this exquisite contriv-
 “ ance of the way and method of our salvation:
 “ and without all doubt the more excellent and
 “ glorious the person is, the more meritorious we
 “ may suppose his propitiation in its own nature
 “ to be.

“ AND upon this we find the scripture lays a par-
 “ ticular stress. So *Heb. ix. 13, 14. For if the*
 “ *blood of bulls, and of goats, and the ashes of an*
 “ *heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the pu-*
 “ *rifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood*
 “ *of Christ, who thro’ the eternal Spirit offer’d him-*
 “ *self without spot to God, purge your conscience*
 “ *from dead works, to serve the living God? Where,*
 “ ’tis evident, the apostle is arguing the virtue of
 “ Christ’s sacrifice from the far superior excellency
 “ of Christ, to that of the sacrifices under the law.

“ If

“ If those legal sacrifices of *bulls* and *goats* were
 “ sufficient to purify from legal uncleanness; how
 “ much more shall such a sacrifice as this of Christ
 “ be [sufficient] to purge the conscience? Now
 “ observe upon what he lays the stress. ’Tis
 “ upon this, that he *thro’ the eternal Spirit offer’d*
 “ *himself without spot to God*. His offering him-
 “ self *without spot* falls under the next considera-
 “ tion. As to the other expression: *He offer’d him-*
 “ *self thro’ the eternal Spirit*: it do’s not seem to
 “ me to relate at all to the holy Spirit, but to his
 “ divine nature, to the *Logos*, that was united to
 “ the humane nature; and *that* was certainly the
 “ great thing that gave such a mighty virtue and
 “ efficacy to his propitiation.

“ AND so unspeakably great are our obligations
 “ to him, and so universally do our hopes and ex-
 “ pectations, if rightly order’d, center in him;
 “ that we ought to be exceeding careful that we
 “ do not depreciate him in our thoughts, or our
 “ expressions.

“ AND if we consult the scripture, we shall find
 “ that great and glorious things are spoken of him,
 “ and such as may well prevent our wondering that
 “ such virtue should be attributed to his sufferings.
 “ He is set forth to us as the *Son of God*, the *only*
 “ *begotten of the Father, full of grace and [truth.]*
 “ And here, beside the excellency of the person,
 “ the dearness which such a relation as this carries
 “ in it, shews how proper an expedient this is;
 “ which God has pitch’d upon. For in putting
 “ his beloved and only begotten Son to such grief
 “ and pain, and making his soul an offering for sin,
 “ he has more testified his hatred and abhorrence
 “ of the sins which for his sake he forgives, than
 “ he would have done in inflicting sufferings and
 “ sorrows upon the whole race of sinners. And
 “ therefore is there such a particular *emphasis* and
 “ stress

“ strefs laid upon this, *John* iii. 16. 1 *John* iv. 9, 10.
 “ NOTHING can be more forced and awkward, than
 “ the interpretations which the *Socinians* give of
 “ these places of scripture, which represent him
 “ as having no existence before his coming into the
 “ world; when we are so expressly assur’d that *he*
 “ *made all things, and without him was not anything*
 “ *made that was made;* and that *by him God made*
 “ *the world;* that *by him were all things created that*
 “ *are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and*
 “ *invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or*
 “ *principalities, or powers: all things were created by*
 “ *him, and for him; and he is before all things,*
 “ *Col. i. 16.* And we are assur’d by our Lord him-
 “ self, that he had a *glory* with the Father *before*
 “ *the world was:* *John* xvii. 5.

“ AND farther, we need not be shy in giving him
 “ the title, which we find the scripture gives him
 “ over and over; or in asserting that he was God.
 “ *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word*
 “ *was with God, and the Word was God.* *John* i.
 “ 1, 2. *But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O*
 “ *God, is for ever and ever.* *Heb. i. 8.* *For unto*
 “ *us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the*
 “ *government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name*
 “ *shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty*
 “ *God, the everlasting Father.* *If. ix. 6.*

“ ’Tis indeed certain that there is but one God;
 “ and therefore whatever we assert, must be under-
 “ stood to be consistent with that main and funda-
 “ mental principle both of natural and reveal’d re-
 “ ligion; and, be sure, there is not in revelation
 “ any thing inconsistent therewith. And whatever
 “ the difficulty may seem to be, yet since the Son
 “ is begotten of the Father, and derives all his per-
 “ fections from him, it can’t be unreasonable to re-
 “ solve the unity of the Godhead into the same
 “ principle the scripture do’s, and to represent the
 “ Father

“ Father as the fountain of the Godhead in the
 “ *Logos*, who is his only begotten Son.

“ BUT how hard will it be to speak of these ar-
 “ duous things without running from the scripture,
 “ our only sure guide in our notions and our ex-
 “ pressions concerning him? 'Tis safer here to say
 “ too little, and to acknowledge our own igno-
 “ rance and want of light, than to pry with too
 “ much curiosity into the things we do not under-
 “ stand. He that truly fears God, and studies to
 “ do his will, may depend upon God's preserving
 “ him from all damning mistakes: and upon God's
 “ goodness and faithfulness let every sincere and
 “ humble soul rely: God will certainly reveal unto
 “ all such whatever 'tis absolutely necessary for them
 “ to know. In the mean while we may all join in
 “ admiring the wise counsel of our heavenly Father,
 “ who has employ'd so glorious a Redeemer, and
 “ has laid our help upon one who is mighty to save,
 “ and assure our selves there is no want of virtue
 “ and merit in the propitiation he has made for
 “ our sins.

I have now given the reader a faithful account of all that pass in the sermon, which some men have made such a clamour against. I have transcribed it fairly from my own notes, leaving things in the expression, just as they were hastily penn'd in short-hand, for a popular sermon, which I never thought I should have had so much occasion to expose to the view of the world. I have not alter'd any thing, except it be the leaving out a particle in two places, which thro' inadvertence and haste in writing was repeated; or one or two words which I have included in brackets, which were by reason of the same cause omitted. I have chosen rather to let it go, as near as I can, as 'twas deliver'd, than to mend the expression, while I kept to the sense, in transcribing it.

BEFORE I leave the business of this sermon, I will take notice of some things relating to it, tho' perhaps I may by that means break in upon the order of time wherein things happen'd.

WHEN I had preach'd this sermon, much notice was taken of it, and two of the three who apply'd to me, as I was inform'd, were well enough satisfied with the account which I gave of the doctrine of the satisfaction of Christ. I think it appear'd, I studied to promote not only truth, but also peace; since I spoke what I apprehended to be the truth, in such a manner as seem'd least likely to raise any animosity or feud. Quickly after both sides were ready to plead what I said was in their favour, tho' I endeavour'd only to favour the truth; and had it not been for some indiscretion, I am apt to believe the sermon might have been more effectual for composing our differences than it was. However we became more quiet than we had been; and I had hopes we should have no more disturbance; nor did I hear of the objection of my third friend, 'till about at least, as I guess, half a year afterward. Then he took an occasion to raise an objection against what I said in that sermon, pretending that I endeavour'd to lessen the evil of sin, in order to lessen mens sense of the satisfaction of Christ. One of my colleagues, who was zealous for what they call'd orthodoxy, was yet candid upon this occasion. He had preach'd about the point of satisfaction, and laid a great deal of stress upon that notion, which I endeavour'd in the sermon to overthrow; but being to preach in his turn for me, he preach'd the same sermon, leaving out that part, that we might not seem to clash; which, as I had reason, I took very well; and had he always taken those measures, things would not have come to the pass they did. I had no design in the sermon to oppose any particular person; nor did I know what
his

his notion was; but being, as it were, obliged to preach upon the doctrine, I could not satisfy myself without refuting a notion, which, I thought, had neither truth nor sense in it, and tended exceedingly to obscure the scripture doctrine, which it was my business to clear.

BUT the greatest unhappiness of all was, what I was not sensible of till afterwards, that my predecessor, for whom the people had an extraordinary veneration, and his piety, by all accounts, could not but procure him respect and esteem among them; he, I say, had been used to explain the doctrine of satisfaction, upon all occasions, in the manner which seem'd so disagreeable to me.

THERE were two of my neighbouring brethren who took occasion afterwards, in some discourse, to talk of this matter to me. With one of them, an aged and worthy person, I had a considerable time before these stirrings, or the preaching the sermon, talk'd freely upon this point; nor could I perceive that he differ'd a hair's breadth from me. And indeed all conversation then with him, made me apprehend him to be a man of a free and generous way of thinking; nor did he, at the conference I speak of, make any objection, that I remember, against my way of explaining the satisfaction of Christ. Nay, Mr. *Walrond*, who was with him, tho' he was much more strait laced, yet did not pretend to find fault with me; but appear'd then desirous of stopping the contention, and told me, that the people had been accusom'd to that scholastic notion of satisfaction, and therefore I should the rather bear with them. This advice I took well, tho' I knew I did not need it, having never been at all uneasy with any body for not falling in with my notion.

I avoided meddling with these matters in the pulpit, and went on in my former way of plain practical preaching, as tho' there had been no conten-

tion among us, and purposely kept off from what might give offence. I wish these two gentlemen had but held in their good temper, and not changed their note. I confess I could not but wonder to hear one of them afterwards, to my face, reflect upon mens endeavouring to lessen the evil of sin, and so the satisfaction of Christ, tho' he had express'd himself so candidly concerning my notion. I knew well enough he aim'd at me, however, he named no body; and I have good reason to think the other of them has talk'd after the same manner behind my back. But I kept my temper, and would not take notice of the reflection, because I was not directly charg'd; and I was willing to bear any thing for peace, and therefore did not remind the censurer of what he had formerly said himself.

BEFORE I go off from the sermon, I must take notice of what the *Account* sais of it, p. 4. namely, *That I did vouchsafe to mention some texts of scripture which did assert the Godhead of Christ.* And how could I do it without *vouchsafing* to do it? Did I pretend any wonderful *vouchsafement* in doing it? Why then should it be spoken of in such a manner? And what more proper course would he have had me take? Was I not speaking to christians, who made the *Bible* the rule of their Faith? Was any thing more likely to work upon, or convince them, than places of scripture? Do's he know of any better proof, which I did not vouchsafe to alledge? But he says, *I introduced them with these words:* "That we need not be shy in giving him
 " the title, which we find the scripture gives him
 " over and over, or in asserting that he was God." And I wish I knew what the fault was of my speaking in that manner, that I might know what I am to clear my self of. How comes he to take it so ill, that I should introduce the mention of texts of scripture, asserting the deity of Christ,
 with

with a tacit reflection upon the *Socinians*? I should little, have expected to fall under his censure for that.

BUT, he says, *I then proceeded to state the new notion of the unity of the Godhead, which was deliver'd too fast for the writers to follow, so as to be able to produce the intire paragraph. This gave great uneasiness.* I suppose this uneasiness was only given to the writers, who could have no more reason to be uneasy with me for speaking too fast, than I had to be so with them for writing too slow. The truth is, I resolv'd to finish the subject at once, and the sermon was very long, and I must have made them uneasy by being tedious, unless I had deliver'd the whole somewhat faster than I ordinarily do. But he has now the passage entire, as I find it in my notes, and as, I suppose, I deliver'd it: and if he pleases, he may call it a new notion; and I believe 'tis so to him: but I dare say, upon enquiry, it will be found as old as the new Testament, and to have continued the general opinion of christians in several ages after that was deliver'd to the world. But let the sermon be what it will, it makes nothing for the justice of the ejection, because nothing of it was then alleg'd against me.

THE *Monday* after I preach'd the sermon, the ministers of the city met according to custom, and Mr. *Hallet*, Mr. *Withers*, and I had some discourse by our selves afterwards, upon the conduct of Mr. *Atkins*, in preaching that sermon which had inflamed the People. I believe both sides at that time very much blamed him for what he had done; and it could be no wonder, if we did so at that conference. I am persuaded I made the motion, that we should none of us desire him to preach any more for any of us; and I thought my two brethren did agree to the motion. But it seems we did not fully understand one another; for they
could

could neither of them remember any formal agreement about it. The writer of the *Account* needed not to have mention'd my owning that I thought there was one, *in the presence of two ministers*, p. 4. for I never disown'd it, but have profess'd it in many companies. The reader must know, that after this agreement, which 'tis not unlikely I might speak of to some of both sides, was cast in the teeth of the three ministers, as a heinous crime. The other two ministers peremptorily denying it, my zealous brother, Mr. *Lavington*, several times would reproach me with it, and put it to me, whether there was not such an agreement, appearing, as it seem'd afterward, very fond of taking me in a falsehood. I, who thought there was such an Agreement, would never deny it; but the answer with which I put him off several times, was this, that he saw both my brethren denied there was any such agreement, and it could not be made without their concurrence. At last he told me, that I had own'd it to one of his own side: and then I told him plainly that I might well do so, because I thought we had so agreed, tho' they remember'd it not, and seem'd to think the contrary. I did not take this very well, considering I had never given any reason to suspect my veracity.

him ABOUT this time a reverend person, who was afterwards at the head of the seven worthies who advised our judges, took occasion to discourse with me upon the matter; telling me downright, that people charg'd all the business upon me; and I have heard he did the like before to Mr. *Withers*, when he talk'd with him. We talk'd calmly, and were still very good friends. I ask'd him how they could charge any thing upon me, since I had never in my life talk'd with Mr. *Stogdon*, concerning whom the noise then was, upon the point? And this was at that time exactly true. He told me the people said that

that Mr. *Stogdon* was influenc'd by Mr. *Joseph Hallet*, jun. and he by me. I desir'd him then to tell me, how this latter was influenc'd by me. He answer'd, that I lent him Dr. *Clarke's* and Mr. *Whiston's* books; to which I replied, that I never lent him any of their books in my life. I understand from others, that this way of advancing positive charges by way of pump, is not unusual with him. Being not of a suspicious temper, I did not then imagine any such thing, nor make those reflections which I have not been able to avoid since. I could not but afterwards reflect, how agreeable this way is to the practice of those, whose measures seem'd to be the copy that was follow'd. I could not but remember, how constantly the same course was taken by them who were for an inquisition to find out heretics, in order to their destruction. Articles, without regard to evidence, and upon bare suspicion, are advanc'd against men; and they, if they can't clear themselves, must turn their own accusers, that so the inquisitors may be cas'd of the trouble of proving any thing upon them.

I told this reverend person then, that I knew no person in the county, who had been influenc'd by me to alter his opinion about the Trinity; and that whatever my notion was, (which he was not ignorant of, having talk'd to him with some freedom about it, for my own information, a considerable time before these stirs) I believ'd he preach'd no more about the Trinity than I did. To this he assented; and declar'd he could be very easy with me, because he thought I did not meddle with the point, but preach'd practical religion.

Mr. *L.* the youngest minister of us all, was pleas'd to censure Mr. *Withers* and my self for conversing freely with some of the people, who were much talk'd of for their being in what they call the new notion, and for letting them come to our houses.

houses. I ask'd him, whether he had ever forbid them to come to his house; to which he answer'd, no. We both let him know we took them to be good men, and would not stick to converse with them. I found always, that what objections he was pleas'd to make, were presently in the mouths of his friends; and I did not see much reason to doubt, that the heat was very much owing to his management. I could not but resent his taking upon him sometimes to direct my private conversation; as I have related already; at other times to pry into it; as when he was pleas'd to examine me, whether I did not talk more freely upon these matters with another person, than with himself? and at other times, to tax me with neglecting in private conversation, what he was pleas'd to think was my duty; tho' he knew nothing of what I did, or did not say in conversation; but all this freedom was owing to the suspiciousness of his temper. I do not contest the superiority which he might think his abilities might give him over me; but I may well plead, they gave him none over Mr. *Withers*, whose worth is so well known in the world: and I think we might both plead, that our seniority might have made him at least abate somewhat of the ~~satisfaction~~ *submission* which he seem'd to expect from us.

THE *Account* tells us, p. 4. *Soon after there appear'd a great warmth in some of Mr. Peirce's intimate friends, for what they call the inferiority; meaning by it, That Christ was a being different from, and inferior to the Father.* 'Tis evident this advocate is greatly at a loss to patch up an accusation against me, or else he would never insinuate a charge against me from the conduct of my friends, rather than my own. He cannot accuse me of any behaviour that was unpeaceable; and why should I be more answerable for the warmth of my friends, than

than any other minister should be for the warmth of his side? For my part, I own, that I was for a *subordination*, or *inferiority*, of the Son to the Father; nor can I account for a multitude of places in the gospel upon any other foot. But, whatever my notion was, I made no disturbance with it, I urged it upon none, it created no strangeness in me towards those who were of a contrary mind. 'Tis possible some of my intimate friends might be not only warm, but indiscreet, in asserting this inferiority; and some of them might be as warm and indiscreet in asserting the contrary; for I had then intimate friends on both sides; and unless some mismanagement can be charged upon me, I think I am not to be tax'd with the ill conduct of either. The truth is, I was troubled at any ill conduct in my friends on either side; and where I had an opportunity, and hoped to be regarded, I endeavour'd to persuade people to avoid the giving provocation to one another, and failed not to censure as intimate friends as any I had, when I apprehended them guilty. The same, I am satisfied, was done by my two other brethren; and 'twas visible, that by our care we obtain'd a good degree of peace. I will not much blame him for the consequence which he draws from my friends opinion; that because they held Christ to be inferior to the Father, they must hold him likewise to have been a *being different* from him. I own it would sound very odd, if they had said the same being had been inferior to it self. But I wonder that writer did not see, that the notion of the equality of the Son to the Father was liable to have the same meaning put upon it; for it would be strange, if men should so warmly contend, that a being is equal to it self. If this be all the case, the dispute is, whether *Father* and *Son* are barely two different names for the same being: but if they are two different beings, and both

E supreme,

supreme, there's an odious consequence, which tho' I dont charge them to hold, yet I would be glad to see them clear themselves of; and that is, that there must be *two Gods* in the most famous sense of the word.

SOME time after this (as I guess) Mr. *Lavington* preach'd upon that disputed text, 1 *John* v. 7. Concerning this, the *plain and faithful Narrative* sais, p. 6. *An outcry was made against that text. One said to a neighbour of his, that he had preach'd on a place that was not scripture. A few days after this, a poor woman came to that minister and express'd great concern and sorrow, and said, she knew not how to come to the Lord's table; for they had told her, that Christ was not God, and that the text he preach'd upon was not in the Bible: and a minister said, That upon reading Dr. Clarke he had given it up.* This story is considerably alter'd, from what it was at Mr. *Lavington's* first telling it. He pretended then that the woman said, there were strange things told at a certain layman's house she named, *viz.* "That our Saviour was a good honest man, and the like." But the woman denies positively that she ever told him any such thing, or named any person's name; only in general she sais, she had heard, that there were some did say, that the text he had preach'd upon was not in the *Bible*; and she desir'd him to satisfy her. The person who was named, and one more, waited on Mr. *Lavington*, who divulged the discourse that pass'd between them, and is therefore, perhaps, the person to whom the *outcry*, that is here said to have followed, was most owing. For my own part, I heartily wish'd that no notice had been taken by any of his preaching upon that text, the passing by such little matters being certainly more adviseable for the sake of peace. It appear'd that this reflection, which perhaps had never made any noise, had it not been for his own conduct,

conduct, touch'd him very nearly, and was much resented by him. Hereupon he took occasion in his sermons to assert, that his notion, tho' he us'd to express it oddly enough (as, that God was some way one, and some way three, &c.) was a fundamental: but as he little aim'd at proving things, some bore with him, others smiled at his conduct; and the most that I could hear was said in his favour by those of his own mind was, that he was found and orthodox.

THIS contest about that text occasion'd much talk of another very deserving person, a young minister, who seven or eight years before, when he was only a student, and had never preached, had been carefully examining the *various lections* in Dr. Mill's Greek Testament, and had made several alterations with his pen in the Greek Testament he ordinarily us'd, where he found them warranted by many, and those the most valuable mss. Among the rest he examin'd this 1 *John* v. 7. and finding it to be in no ancient version, nor any Greek ms. known to be in the world, he blotted it out. This innocent and commendable diligence in searching the scriptures, was improved industriously against him to blast his reputation. There was another minister, who declared about this time, that he had long ago put this text out of his *Bible*, and was indeed the first person who shock'd one of our people, whom I could name: but no objection was made against him for this grievous crime, he having afterwards prudently aton'd for it, by being one of the seven advisers.

BEFORE I leave this affair, I will give an account of what I have thought, and said upon it. I was long satisfied, that this text was not sufficient to prove the three persons were one in *essence*, as it seem'd plainly to speak only of their being one in *testimony*; but yet I was very unwilling to part

with what had so long pass'd among protestants for scripture : and I remember I us'd to be displeas'd with Bp. *Burnet* for giving it up, as he do's in his *Letters*, and his *Exposition on the xxxix Articles*. Nor could I part with it, till Dr. *Clarke* wrested it from me; and the *Full Enquiry* soon after may well be thought to strengthen the conviction, that the text was not genuine. And the authors of the *Narrative* may, if they please, name me as the minister who gave up the text; for I very readily and chearfully own what they say to be true of me. But however I was satisfi'd that the text was not genuine, yet I had a dread of the consequences of peoples knowing how the scriptures had been abused by this interpolation, lest they should abate of their respect to them in general. Upon this account I avoided talking with any of them concerning it; till at last some of them, after I had several times declined to give them my judgment, put it close to me, whether I thought they were bound to take that for the word of God; and then I could not think it an indifferent thing, whether or no I should recommend that as a part of God's word, which I was well satisfi'd was not; and therefore I told them frankly, that I did not believe the text to be genuine. And can any one blame my conduct in this respect? This happen'd long after this controversy began; and tho' the *Narrative* has brought in what I own I have said here in this place, to put the better colour upon the advice sent from *London*, and the proceedings of our *September Assembly*; yet I am very much mistaken, if those words were not said by me at our first meeting of the thirteen the *November* after the *Assembly*: and I question very much, whether the authors of the *Narrative* have any originals that speak of this, which they received before the *September Assembly*: if they will plainly declare they have, I will believe them.

THE *Narrative* has here a great deal more of the like stories, which I shall therefore bring in here; only what is said of one particular person, I shall treat of last, because that will best suit with the order of this history.

THE *Narrative* then says, p. 6. *Many young candidates were found to come forth from their academical studies with this taint upon them; and others deceived those that ordain'd them, appearing to be of these notions soon after.* And should this be made a handle to give others trouble? If they said any thing disagreeable to the gospel, the charge ought to have been proved upon them: but the truth is, a most malicious spirit was then working, and great industry was used in raising and spreading slanderous reports to blast the reputation of young ministers. And till these charges are made out by good evidence, no regard should be paid to them.

CATECHISING had been left off for several years in some congregations: Concerning this I shall speak, when I come to our meeting the thirteen in November. and children had been taught to say, they would not for the world repeat the sixth answer about the Trinity: Mr. Lavington, I understand, made a complaint of this nature concerning the children of a particular family; and Mr. Withers thereupon went thither, and the children being immediately call'd in, and examin'd about the matter, it appear'd to be like many of his other stories, to have nothing of truth in it. But 'twas a fine business to appear in the *Narrative*, supposing it had been true: and many loose and unsteady persons had been secretly practis'd upon in several towns, as well as Exeter. I dont wonder at their emissaries crying it about the streets, that we are a loose people, when such insinuations are thought fit to appear in a *Narrative*. The authors may take notice, that the people he would insinuate are loose, are not a whit inferior

inferior to their neighbours for piety ; nor shall I retaliate, as 'tis well known I could. I rather pray God to forgive the wickedness of the design. And as to the *unsteadiness* he would suggest, it may not be amiss for these gentlemen to consider, that the steadiness of their friends was owing very much to a resolution against hearing what was said against the notions they had imbibed ; and if they were steady in the truth, it was purely accidental that they were so, as happening to be taught by others when they were children ; and very little room can there be for boasting of any steadiness upon an impartial inquiry, which indeed was much discouraged.

A minister complain'd, that in a town where he labours, two eminent members of his congregation were carried away to Arianism, and he fear'd one of them to Deism. What a loss are men at for matter of accusation against us, when they can run as far as *Bristol* to pick up a story, and insert it so, as that the reader shall imagine 'tis what happen'd here among us. If some fell into errors there, nay, tho' it had been here, what is that to us, unless some error can be charged upon us, against whom the storm was raised ?

THIS great and awful doctrine was become the common subject of discourse, and dispute in conversation : And to whom was that owing ? Or did it become less so by the steps which were taken by the Assembly ? Let the world judge. and some of the dissenters had been tax'd, even in the public market, by those of the establish'd way, with denying their church first, and their Saviour afterwards. No doubt the discourse of the market was worthy to be brought in here, by those who thought it not below them to trouble the world with the tattle of children. And what wonder that they would insult the Dissenters at this rate, when Mr. *Lavington* had set them an example ?

JUDGE

JUDGE Price had spent most of his charge at the Exeter assizes against those errors, and own'd they had their rise from some authors in the Church of England. And what is this to the purpose? Did he say any thing against the Dissenters? Could what he said be a sufficient reason for some Dissenters to fall upon their peaceable brethren, to whose charge they could lay nothing that was criminal?

AN archdeacon of Barnstaple openly charg'd one of the Exeter ministers with Arianism, in his speech to the clergy, and told them that most of that minister's congregation were turn'd Arians. I suppose the gentleman who gave this information, imagin'd he us'd abundance of caution in saying, *an archdeacon of Barnstaple*, and that if one archdeacon should question him about it, he might be able to say he did not mean him but some other. It should seem that he did not know there is but one archdeacon of *Barnstaple* at a time, and that the same person who is now in that post, was in it before our controversy began, so that it is really all one as tho' he had set down the Gentleman's name at length. I am persuaded the *Narrative* very much wrongs him; for he has the character of a Gentleman of too great moderation and prudence, to be guilty of any thing so unchristian and indiscreet, as to advance a positive charge which he was not able to maintain. But supposing he had actually done what the *Narrative* pretends, would it have deserv'd any regard? Are not both parts of the charge laid with equal assurance? And if the one is confessedly false, viz. *That most part of that minister's congregation were turn'd Arians*, can there be any reason to give the least credit to the other, concerning the *minister* himself, with whom he has no acquaintance? The truth is, such charges add nothing of weight, they being nothing but the eccho of the clamours of the Dissenters themselves; and therefore 'tis only to their own shame that they

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mention them: And much of a piece is the next that follows: *And the Exeter clergy warn'd their people from the pulpits to have nothing to do with the Dissenters, since they now came to deny the Lord that bought them, and made the press to sweat with their blasphemies.* I would only ask the gentleman from whose *original* this wise information is taken, whether the same persons did not use before this controversy to declaim as vehemently against the Dissenters? If they deserv'd then no regard, and the Dissenters were not so simple as presently upon their outcries to set about signing articles and making declarations, what reason could there be to do it now? But I must needs say, that we need not have recourse to the clergy, to find out persons who will advance ignorant and confident charges: 'tis apparent there are enough such among the Dissenters themselves. And 'tis well known, that the senseless clamour about *blasphemy*, and *denying the Lord that bought them*, began among the Dissenters themselves.

THE Baptists had dismiss'd their minister upon this account, at whose house some of the young men and candidates for the ministry us'd to assemble, as was suppos'd, to confer upon this subject. This is not true, as I am satisfied by good information. The minister who preach'd among them, tho' never settled as their pastor, was, as he deserv'd, well lov'd among them. Some few were uneasy, but the far greater part were very desirous of his settling with them; but his leaving them was wholly his own act; for as the congregation did not dismiss him, so neither do I understand that they had any twelve managers, or four proprietors, who took upon them arbitrarily to do it. Nor can I learn there was ever any meetings of the young men stately at his house. He being a person of very good sense and learning, as well as piety, his conversation was
agree-

agreeable to those who had any value for these things; nor were young or old to blame, who willingly convers'd with him. That some of the young people might once accidentally meet there, as at any other place, is not unlikely: and this, for ought I can hear, is the whole of what is improved by an impertinently jealous temper, with the help of a dreaming supposition, to make one rare article in this *Narrative*. A man that has such a delight as the informer seems to have in suppositions, ought not to be angry if others take their turn with him, and suppose, that one reason of his uneasiness and complaint on this account was, that he thought too little respect was paid to himself in the mean time, and that his own conversation was not as greedily coveted, as he might think it deserved.

ALL these things were related as true matters of fact, and were refer'd to several worthy brethren in the country, and the citizens of Exeter, for a confirmation of them. And yet they were several of them false, and others strangely impertinent: and nothing can be more unaccountable, than that the *Londoners* should take up with such a relation, without making the least enquiry of the persons charged: surely the time will come, when they will see reason to blush at such conduct.

I shall now take notice of what the *Narrative* says concerning Mr. *Stogdon*, tho' his name is not mentioned, p. 5. *Nay, some ministers did see fit no longer to conceal themselves. One was so bold as to say, That himself was an Arian, and hoped Arianism would be as extensive as the gospel. Another, That he never did, nor ever would believe our Trinity in unity.* Of the latter I never heard before, and not knowing how to trace it, I will suspend my belief, till I meet with some better vouchers for it. But as to the former, take this account from the person himself:

HE fais: " Being ask'd by a minister, whether I
 " was an *Arian*: I answer'd carelessly and inaccurately
 " enough, yes, 'twas so. I knew I was
 " what they would call an *Arian*; but I knew I
 " was not of *Arius's* opinion in several points, for
 " which he was condemn'd, and in doubt about
 " others. I was then in suspence, whether the
 " *Nicene* council was not in the right, in asserting
 " the Son to be *consubstantial* with the Father,
 " tho' I was satisfied they were not right in their
 " explication of it: but I thought them as differ-
 " ent, and indeed more different, from the *pre-*
 " *sent orthodox*, than they were from the *Arians*.
 " In a word, (sais he) I believe the Father to be
 " the only true God, and Jesus Christ (whether
 " consubstantial or not, eternal or not, points I
 " had not yet determin'd) to be his Son. This
 " was what I thought Mr. *N.* would call *Aria-*
 " *nism*; and therefore I (for I hate to quarrel a-
 " bout words) own'd I was so." That gentleman
 suggesting that he might be ashamed, or afraid to
 come into such notions; he answer'd: " No; I
 " am so far from it, that I glory and rejoice in it,
 " and bless God that I can read my *Bible* with
 " more rational satisfaction and understanding than
 " I could before, &c." He adds: " This, tho'
 " a private discourse in my own study, was next
 " day ringing about town; and I was very much
 " blamed for my imprudence in trusting Mr. *N.*
 " I did it in the simplicity of my heart, and
 " thought the *place* was admonition enough to a
 " prudent man, not to publish it on the house
 " top; however so it was."

THE reader may judge of the whole case by
 this; for 'tis evident that *Arianism* must be under-
 stood in the latter part of the sentence in the *Nar-*
rative, just in the same manner; and there can be
 no harm in a man's desiring what he apprehends is
 a truth, may become extensive. I

I shall now proceed to the business of his ordination. He had about this time an invitation to settle with a people in a place in *Devonshire*, where he had preach'd with good acceptance. He intended therefore to move his ordination at the next Assembly, which was to be held here in *Sept.* 1717. We were on both sides apprehensive, that this would raise a feud and contention among us, which we were willing to avoid. I talk'd with him therefore, and one of our people, his intimate friend, desiring them to forbear talking upon these matters; which they declar'd themselves ready to do, provided they were not attack'd by others. Mr. *Stogdon* own'd he had been imprudent in his management, but declared his design was only to preach *practical religion*; and that, should he remove any where else, he would apply himself wholly to that, without meddling with these points of speculation. All people were sensible of his abilities, and thought it pity they should not be employ'd for the good of the church; and therefore a project was form'd for the opening a way for his preaching in another county, where he might set out with a better guard; by which means also we should prevent any occasion of a contest in this county among ourselves. Mr. *Stogdon* insisted upon having an honourable testimonial, if he quitted this county; and that was thought only a reasonable demand: Our project succeeded, and then the testimonial was to be given. While this was in agitation, I met with Mr. *Walrond* of *Ottery*, to whom I communicated our design, telling him what a testimonial he insisted on, as to his conversation and behaviour. He told me, he thought we could not in justice do less than give him such an one. Since that, indeed, he pretends that he said he would have somewhat inserted concerning his opinions. But I am positive that he said no such thing in

my hearing; nay, he shew'd so much good temper then, that I made no doubt, if he had been in the way, after the testimonial was drawn up, he would have set his hand to it. But he was in a very different temper afterwards, when he pretended he did insist upon such a clause, which gave me a different opinion of him from what I used to have. And that Mr. *Walrond* was not always so narrow in his principles, as he has of late shew'd himself, and therefore might formerly speak a great deal more favourably of a person, whose notions differ'd from his, than he cares to do at present, will appear by a story which I believe may be depended on. Mr. *Stoddon*, a grave minister of *Sidbury*, the author of several treatises mention'd by Dr. *Calamy*, p. 613. who died before my coming into this country, had quitted the commonly received doctrine of the Trinity, and drawn up as different a scheme, as that which is now so much decryed, as I have been inform'd by Mr. *Gilling*, to whom Mr. *Walrond* lent his ms. He did not conceal his opinion in the least, that I can understand; but was eager to print it: and divers letters pass'd between him and Mr. *Walrond* upon the subject, which I have heard him speak of himself; and with much difficulty did Mr. *Walrond* prevail upon him not to print his scheme. I can't understand he ever return'd to the vulgar notion; and yet Mr. *Walrond* did not stick to preach his funeral sermon, wherein he gave him; as I am told, this character: "That he was a most laborious and exact preacher, and took the greatest care both of the souls and bodies of his hearers; and his affection to Christ was so great, that he could even have gone thro' hell to go to heaven." And for my part, I can't see why a man may not as honestly attest the honesty of a living, as of a dead heretic.

to him

THE author of the *Account* fais, p. 4. *Mr. Stogdon*, that was known to have own'd these notions, had a certificate from *Mr. Peirce* and *Mr. Hallet*, &c. upon the credit of which he was ordain'd in another county, without renouncing his errors, in which he was very bold. This is nothing to the business of the ejection, as it is was no part of the charge against us. Nor do I imagine *Mr. Withers*, who is the only person meant by the &c. ever testified his repentance for this, when his friends receiv'd him. I will present the reader with the testimonial, that he may judge of the crime laid to our charge.

“ WHEREAS *Mr. Hubert Stogdon* has been
 “ examin'd by order of the Assembly which
 “ meets in this place, and receiv'd a tes-
 “ timonial of their approving him as a
 “ candidate, and has now some design of
 “ leaving this country, and therefore desir'd
 “ us, whose names are subscribed, to give
 “ some account of him: We do hereby
 “ certify, that his conversation since, as
 “ well as before, his examination, has been,
 “ so far as we have ever heard, sober and
 “ christian; and that his preaching in these
 “ parts has met with good acceptance.

Exon, July 15.
 1717.

Joseph Hallet,
John Withers,
James Peirce.

I own I did not apprehend his notions to be of such a fatal nature, as to render him incapable of being serviceable, and therefore had no difficulty in signing the testimonial; nor am I so straitlaced, as to be unwilling to attest the sober and christian conversation of any man, who may differ from me,
 whea

when I have the same reason, I had in this case, to believe the thing to be true. But this is of a piece with the rest of this writer's conduct. All his accusations are negatives. He has nothing to charge me with doing amiss; all my crime here is, that I did not put in somewhat, which he fancies should have been added. But suppose I thought there was no need of mentioning what he would have added, and we differ'd in a matter of prudence; is that such a mighty crime? Or did I deserve to be forsaken and ejected upon that account? Besides, what reason had this gentleman to suppose, that the persons to whom the certificate was sent, and who were concern'd in Mr. *Stogdon's* ordination, did not know what his opinions were? Do's he think, if they had been ignorant before, they would not have perceived them plainly in their examining him before they ordain'd him? As to his qualifications, for knowledge and soundness in the faith, 'twas not our business to forestal their judgments; we left them to judge, as they saw fit upon trial; all we had to do was to testify what they would want evidence of, his christian conversation while in these parts. Our fourth minister had the certificate offered to him to sign, and refused it, for want of a clause concerning Mr. *Stogdon's* notions; which I mention not by way of ✕ reflection, but only to shew he was consistent with himself, which one of his eager brethren was not, as I have observ'd already. I did not much expect he would sign it, nor urge him to it; but I could not have been civil without asking him whether he would or not.

It may not be amiss here to take notice of one thing in the *Narrative* relating to this matter, wherein 'tis said, p. 6. *That he was ordained in Somerset, near Bath [oddly enough express'd] upon a testimonial from three ministers in Exon, who fear'd he could not have his ordination by consent of the*
 Assembly

Assembly *there*. This cannot, I suppose, be faithfully taken from the originals, but is an alteration made since. Mr. *Stogdon* receiv'd an information, that Mr. *Walrond* had complain'd to Mr. *T.* in *London*, that some persons ordain'd him *after he had been refus'd ordination in Devonshire*: upon which he wrote to him, complaining of the falshood of that account, and desiring to know whether he had sent it to *London*, or not. But his business being to spread reports, he would not return any answer; but he has, I suppose, prudently taken care that such a notorious falshood should not appear in print.

BY the means of Mr. *Stogdon's* removal, we prevented that affair's being brought into our Assembly in *September*, and things were quieter than they had been; the chief person objected against having left the county, and being settled elsewhere stop'd, for some time, a great deal of clamour; but afterwards, as the *Account* tells us, the heats reviv'd again; and 'tis very possible there might be faults on both sides among the people; but the ministers were not chargeable with having any hand, that I know of, in reviving the strife. They were cautious, not only in their sermons, but in their conversation, and took occasion to press the people to a mutual forbearance. My turn happening to preach the ~~next~~ lecture in the *Christmasts* week, I chose a text accordingly. It seems in setting forth the love of God, I drop'd some such expression as this: "That the
 " ever blessed God should send one so nearly ally'd
 " and related to himself into the world, to live and
 " die in it, was a surprizing instance of his love, &c." I cannot set down the expression, as it was deliver'd, because I find it not in my notes of that sermon, which were very short, tho' I doubt not of my speaking to that purpose. Who would have thought that this should have ever been cavill'd at, as yet it was? My learned brother, Mr. *Lavington*, according

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ing to the delicacy and fineness of his judgment, perceived somewhat of heresy in it, and reproach'd me with it. I told him, that it was like enough I might say so, tho' I did not particularly remember it. *Ay!* sais he, *as the heart thinks the mouth speaks.* I assur'd him I design'd no offence, and that the next time it would serve my purpose full as well to say, *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes, &c.* or, *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.* I heard this cavil was mention'd by others; and indeed Mr. *Larvington* did not arrogate to himself the honour of being the first author of it, but ingenuously own'd he had it from some body else. Let the world judge now how impossible it must have been for me to keep peace, who had a colleague that could be pleas'd sometimes in making, and at other times in picking up, and always in spreading such wise observations, in order to raise against me a suspicion of heresy. But I will go on with the relation the *Account* gives us of the next step, p. 4.

THESE disputes by this time increased much, and grew very warm; and the persons that adhered to the new opinions, began to boast of their numbers, and of their strength among the ministers, even desying the Assembly to take cognizance of it. And about January following, it was thought high time for the citizens to make a publick affair of it: accordingly the committee of thirteen, with several other citizens, met, and after consulting together, deputed four of their body to lay the state of the city before their ministers, and to desire them, to preach in defence of the eternal deity of Jesus Christ. *These* Gentlemen were coldly received by some of the ministers, and with some resentment; and in what manner the deity of Christ was defended in pursuance hereof, the citizens need not be told. IF

IF any were so imprudent in their boastings, I declare I knew nothing of it; nor did I ever hear it pretended, till some people afterwards wanted an excuse for their bringing it into the Assembly. I question very much the truth of what is said of this, which I believe is only a rumour and report, which did not much deserve regard in such a turbulent state of affairs as ours. But supposing this were ever so true, yet it is a poor plea for mens taking such violent measures as were afterwards pursued. I do not dispute the right of the people to consult and advise one with another, what was a proper course to be taken; only I may be allow'd to say, the ministers were neither so despicable, nor so scandalous, as that it would have been a grievous crime in the Gentlemen, if they had called them into that consultation.

I shall here take occasion to speak a little of this Committee of thirteen, that the reader may understand somewhat of our constitution. At the first liberty of conscience granted, if I am rightly informed, by King *James II.* it was thought necessary, that some persons should be appointed to take care of the building places of worship, and other temporal affairs of the Dissenters. The number of these, by I know not what accident, was then thirteen, and has continued so ever since. They fill up their number themselves, as any vacancy happens. This gave great uneasiness to some of the people, who thought it was regular they should be chosen by the whole body. They were never intrusted with any thing, that I can understand, but the care of our temporal affairs, tho' upon this occasion they thought fit to assume another kind of power, without any authority from the body. Just before my coming to this place, there was a meeting held, wherein it was agreed, that the whole body of the contributors should be summon'd to meet once every year, in the month of *June*, and the thirteen were to call

them together. I have always had a dread of breaking in upon settlements which had been long made, and of which I perceiv'd no evil consequences. The Gentlemen who made up this number at my coming, and ever since, were persons of figure and reputation, whom I much esteem'd; nor did I see that they did not manage affairs for the good of the whole. I therefore from my first coming discourag'd any attempts of an alteration, among several of my friends who were uneasy, dreading the consequences of their power. Had that committee, as the *Account* is pleas'd to call them, tho' I think very improperly, since they never, that I can hear, had any power from the body to fill up their number, and are hardly any of them of the number of those first chosen by the body; I say, had that committee been dissolved, I am apt to think our fatal breach had been prevented. I can only comfort my self, that as the constitution was not my contrivance, but settled here long before my coming, I am not properly chargeable with the mischief it produc'd; and if I was faulty in not encouraging the breaking of it, my fault is excusable, because 'tis manifest I herein acted from a regard to peace.

THE *Account* do's not truly relate the desire of the Gentlemen, as it was brought to me by the four who were deputed from them, and Mr. *Halzet* and Mr. *Withers* have assur'd me the same was brought to them. It was in these words: That the ministers should *assert the eternity of the Son of God*. I can be the more certain of the words, because I remember, soon after I had complied with their desire, a friend, who was very warm in this matter, told me, I had said nothing to the point in asserting his eternity, but that I should have said he was *self-existent*, and *self-originated*. Upon which I ask'd him, if he would have had me say likewise,
that

that he was *unbegotten*? To which he replied, that he knew I would catch him, and therefore he did not care to talk with me. I assur'd him then, that the message brought me was what I have related. And this was one of the Gentlemen, who had, as the *Account* sais, p. 11. *several times reason'd with me on these points, but could never have the least satisfaction*: and this was one of the times of his reasoning with me: and I leave the world to judge, whether I was to be blamed, that I could not give him satisfaction.

BUT to return to the four Gentlemen, who came to us. He sais: *They were coldly receiv'd by some of the ministers, and with some resentment*. I suppose I am particularly design'd in this expression, and therefore will answer for my self, making no doubt that my other brethren are no more chargeable than my self. If he means by *coldly*, uncivilly, I dont think the Gentlemen will be his vouchers; for I scorn any thing of that nature, and especially in my own house, toward persons who deserv'd so much respect as they all did. If he means only, that I did not highly applaud and commend the step they were taking; I confess I was not hypocrite enough to do it, in my own house, or any where else. I thought my self as capable of choosing proper subjects, as they were of choosing for me. Nor can I think I herein paid a greater disrespect to them, than they expected I should when they chose me; or than they had all along, one time only excepted, been easy with. I remember I took occasion, in discoursing with them, to let them know, that I would not venture to assert any thing of the tremendous God, which I did not perceive he had asserted of himself; that I did not see to what purpose my preaching on that head would be, since when I asserted the same thing in a former discourse, at the desire of one of those

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Gentlemen,

Gentlemen, and two others who were absent, I was told by Mr. *Lavington*, I might as well have let it alone. I let them know, that I had had no hand in turning any one person in the county from the common notion. There was one thing here laid to my charge by them, which shews whether the *resentment* was most on my side or theirs. It was like all the rest of the charges advanced against me, a mere negative. This controversy had been often brought into mix'd company, in the coffee-house, which I was much against, as tending to promote heats and divisions: and being one day at the coffee-house my self, there was mention made of a Gentleman who asserted, that a Dissenter, who was named, told him that three of the ministers denied the divinity of Christ. It was presently added, that that Dissenter had been ask'd about it, and utterly denied he ever said any such thing. I seeing my self clear'd of the reproach said nothing, and so the discourse, as I wish'd, dropt. This was my crime, that I did not go to clear my self there, from an idle charge that appear'd to a be downright falshood, without my saying one word. What has happen'd since at such places, very much confirms me in my opinion, that silence was then most prudent and adviseable. They however were of a different opinion. I did not promise them upon the spot that I would comply with their desire; but thought it more adviseable to consider of it by my self, when I should have finish'd my *Reflections upon Dean Sherlock*, which I was then writing. Accordingly I did so before the Lord's day came; and then comply'd with their motion.

THE author of the *Account* sais: *In what manner the deity of Christ was defended in pursuance hereof, the citizens need not be told.* But he ought to have consider'd, that he was writing for the world, and not for the citizens of *Exon* only. And as his design

sign was to shew the cause of our ejection, he ought to have specified some fault in what we did, or else to have said nothing of the matter. There is no viler way of calumniating our neighbour, than by these *innuendo's*: "Such an one has done an ill thing; but I will not tell what it is." I am sorry the citizens of *Exon* are not able to procure an advocate, who can use a little more conscience in pleading their cause. If he had the spirit of a man, or a christian, he would have scorn'd such a mean, pitiful, and disingenuous way of writing. Whatever it was that I, or any of my brethren said on that occasion, it could not justify the ejection, because it was never pretended to be grounded upon it. Nothing was then alleg'd from our discourses on this occasion against us.

Nor is the *Narrative* less mean and disingenuous. It says, p. 8. *What was done by some of them [the Exeter ministers] in answer hereto [the request of the Gentlemen] was so far from being satisfactory, that it increased their suspicions; for instead of a clear, open, and strenuous opposition, they were so slight in their discourses upon these points, and deliver'd themselves in such ambiguous terms, as gave ground to apprehend they were friends, and not enemies, to the errors that were complain'd of.* This is false: the generality of the people were satisfied with what we did, only a few, who were for carrying things to an extremity, would not be satisfy'd. I remember soon after, when I told Mr. *Ball* what argument I used on that occasion, he answer'd, he could not see what the people could desire more. And tho' I always endeavour to speak in the pulpit as inoffensively as I can, yet ambiguous phrases no one will charge me with; nor was there more reason for their charging my two brethren in like manner. But if we were slight in our discourses, what was Mr. *Lavington*? who, I believe, did not presently
upon

upon their request preach at all upon the point. I am much mistaken if he did not tell me so himself. I am sure I never heard him either preach, or talk upon the point but slightly; and if I may guess by the reception others met with, the only thing wanting in our discourses was not argument, but a confident threatning men with damnation, if they receded from the common opinion. But God forbid, that I should ever make any such *clear, open, or strenuous opposition* as that is. I have not so learn'd Christ from my *Bible*, and I am not very fond of so learning him from any other instruction.

BUT since such reflections are made upon what I said, and I have already given a full account of my discourse once before on the controversy, and this is the only other time, wherein I treated of it, I will transcribe what I said on that occasion.

I went on preaching as tho' I had receiv'd no message, without changing the subject I had been upon, *the parable of the prodigal*; and took occasion, at the end of my sermon, to bring in what I intended thus :

“ AND here let me take notice, *for a particular*
 “ *reason*, of the inestimable value of one of those
 “ blessings which God bestows, and that is his own
 “ Son. 'Tis a common thing for the scripture to
 “ set forth the love of God with a great *emphasis*,
 “ when it speaks of this, *John iii. 16. God so lov-*
 “ *ed the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.*
 “ *1 John iv. 9. In this was manifested the love of God*
 “ *toward us, because that God sent his only begotten*
 “ *Son into the world, that we might live thro' him.*
 “ Which, in my mind, bespeaks him to be his Son
 “ antecedently to his coming into the world, and
 “ shews that he was not his Son merely upon the ac-
 “ count of the manner of his incarnation. And his
 “ being his *only begotten Son* inhances the value of the
 “ blessing. The apostle goes on in the same strain :

“ *Herein*

“ Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that
 “ he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation
 “ for our sins. This is he of whom the evange-
 “ list saith: *In the beginning was the Word, and the*
 “ *Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

“ AND this nature, I told you some time ago, I
 “ thought the apostle call'd the *eternal Spirit*,
 “ Heb. ix. 14. *How much more shall the blood of*
 “ *Christ, who through the eternal Spirit, offer'd him-*
 “ *self without spot to God, purge your conscience from*
 “ *dead works, to serve the living God?* And you
 “ may remember, I then told you, that the apostle
 “ seem'd to me to ascribe the virtue of our Lord's
 “ sacrifice to two things; to the purity of his offer-
 “ ing; and the excellency and dignity of his na-
 “ ture, as the *eternal Spirit*. I shall then a little
 “ descant upon this term *eternal*; which I think,
 “ according to the best observation which I am
 “ able to make of the stile of the holy scriptures,
 “ is always used to greaten our idea of the thing
 “ spoken of, and to distinguish it from other
 “ things. Thus *eternal life* is used to distinguish
 “ the happiness of the saints in the other world,
 “ from that life which they live in this, which is short
 “ and has an end. So the *punishment* of the wick-
 “ ed is call'd *eternal*, to distinguish it from all other
 “ punishments which are not so. And 'tis evident,
 “ that the adding this word serves exceedingly to
 “ inlarge and greaten our thoughts of a thing. And
 “ thus when God is called the *eternal God*, this
 “ title is given him to raise our apprehensions of
 “ him, and to distinguish him from those beings
 “ whose existence had a beginning, as well as is
 “ capable of having an end. And I think 'tis ve-
 “ ry reasonable, when the apostle here speaks of
 “ the *eternal Spirit*, to understand him as design-
 “ ing to greaten our notion and idea of that *Spirit*
 “ he speaks of, and to distinguish him from some
 other

“ other spirits. But if we suppose the *eternity* of
 “ this Spirit to be only such a duration, as shall
 “ have no end, tho’ it had a beginning; this do’s
 “ not distinguish him from other spirits, from *an-*
 “ *gels*, and the *souls* of men, which in this sense are
 “ *eternal spirits*. I therefore can’t but think, that
 “ this title, as here given by the apostle to the Spi-
 “ rit, must import a different sort of *eternity* from
 “ that which is common to all other reasonable
 “ spirits: and consequently, as it seems to me, that
 “ it must signify such an eternity as excludes a be-
 “ ginning. And ’tis evident such an eternity do’s
 “ tend to enlarge our apprehensions of that Spirit
 “ here spoken of, whoever he be. Where do you
 “ read any expression like this in any ordinary case?
 “ * So that the expression seems plainly to denote
 “ such an eternity as excludes a beginning as well
 as

* It was necessary that I should here fairly represent
 my argument, as I then used it, against which I did not per-
 ceive that objection which I have since taken notice of, which
 I must confess may seem to weaken the strength of it very
 much, which I the rather mention, that such as were pleased
 with my argument, as well as my self, may consider it, and
 help me to a good solution. The objection is only ground-
 ed upon the use of the word *αἰώνι*, in these places of the
 New Testament, *Rom.* xvi. 25. *2 Tim.* i. 9. *Tit.* i. 2. and
 upon these in the Old, omitting some that are doubtful,
Prov. xxii. 28. xxiii. 10. *Is.* lviii. 12. lxi. 4. lxiii. 11. *Jer.* vi.
 16. *Ezek.* xxxv. 5. xxxvi. 2. Nor do I see that any difference
 is made between the words *αἰδι* and *αἰώνι*, tho’ I find
 some think the contrary. However, the former being never
 apply’d to our Saviour, there can be no stress laid upon it;
 and if it were, yet ’tis certainly used concerning things that
 had a beginning, *Jude* 6. Upon the whole, as I will not
 warrant the saying the Son is *coeternal* with the Father, that
 is, the supposing him *eternal absolutely* in the same sense with
 the Father, from whom he is deriv’d; so I think it safest to
 say with Dr. Clarke, *Script. Doctr.* p. 279. “ That the scrip-
 “ ture, in declaring the Son’s derivation from the Father,
 “ never makes mention of any limitation of time, but at-
 “ ways

“ as an ending. And if this expression be applied,
 “ as I then applied it, 'tis certainly very pertinent
 “ to the apostle's argument, to set forth the virtue
 “ of our Saviour's sacrifice, and will have a like
 “ force with those, wherein a stress is laid upon
 “ his being the *Son*, and the *only begotten* Son of
 “ God. The only question then is, whether this
 “ be meant of the Son; or whether, if it be not,
 “ it will not equally serve our purpose? 'Tis plain
 “ 'tis not meant of the Father; for 'tis to him
 “ thro' this eternal Spirit that the offering was
 “ made. The eternal Spirit must then either re-
 “ late to the Son, or else to the holy Spirit. Nor
 “ was there, I believe, ever any commentator, an-
 “ cient or modern, that thought it could be in-
 “ terpreted concerning any other than one of these
 “ two. In doubtful cases it becomes men, who
 “ would speak soberly and modestly (as all men
 “ ought to do of the things of God) not to be
 “ too positive. And I must own, there are many
 “ who interpret this of the holy Spirit, by whom
 “ our Lord is said to have cast out devils; and they
 “ understand the apostle as here declaring, that the
 “ same holy Spirit that wrought the miracles, pu-
 “ rified his offering. I will not contend with
 “ those who thus expound the apostle; but then
 “ what earnings can be made of this? Will not
 “ what I have already said be sufficient to persuade
 “ any reasonable man, that the holy Spirit is, in
 “ that sense which I have already given, called the
 “ *eternal Spirit*? And, I believe, there will not be

“ ways supposes and affirms him to have existed with the
 “ Father from the beginning, and before all worlds.” But
 let my opinion be now what it will as to this difficulty, 'tis
 plain the Gentlemen had nothing to object against me for
 what I said on that occasion, according to their own prin-
 ciples.

“ found one single person in the world, that will
 “ make the least doubt, that the Son of God must
 “ have been eternal, provided it appears that the
 “ holy Spirit is so.

“ Now such kind of expressions of his doing
 “ things by the Spirit, and by the eternal Spirit, are
 “ to be explain'd from the divine œconomy, with
 “ which they must be understood to be perfectly
 “ consistent, whether we are able to give a good
 “ account of them or not. For in that we do not
 “ build upon little quirks, criticisms, or fanciful
 “ conjectures; but upon the uniform and constant
 “ declarations that run thro' the whole New Te-
 “ stament, that the Father works by the Son, and
 “ the Son by the Holy Ghost; that the Holy
 “ Ghost acts in the name of the Son, and the Son
 “ in the name of the Father.

“ BUT the chief thing I would aim at is yet be-
 “ hind, and that is, to do what lies in my power
 “ to quench the present flame, and to put a stop
 “ to that eager contention, which I should be the
 “ last man that should mention in the pulpit, were
 “ it not too notorious to be hid and concealed.

“ THE subject matter of the contest is one of the
 “ most abstruse and difficult points in the christian
 “ religion: and for my part, I must sincerely pro-
 “ fess, that I do not believe that God has made
 “ any one exactly uniform belief about it to be ne-
 “ cessary to salvation; and the rather, because I
 “ see most plainly, that there are very few that
 “ have exactly the same notion and belief concern-
 “ ing it.

“ THE design of religion is practice, to make
 “ men good both in heart and life, zealous and
 “ fervent, consciencious and persevering in the ex-
 “ ercise of all virtues, and the discharge of all du-
 “ ties, both toward God and man: and *he that in*
 “ *these things serves Christ, is approved of God, and*
 “ *accepted*

“ *accepted of men.* God will never impute to
 “ men to their condemnation, the involuntary mi-
 “ stakes they are guilty of in matters of specu-
 “ lation, when they have no bad influence up-
 “ on their practice. I must profess, I have of-
 “ ten been ready to envy the happiness of those
 “ private christians, who not troubling them-
 “ selves about matters of speculation, and not know-
 “ ing the difficulties there are in them, go on easi-
 “ ly and comfortably in the discharge of their
 “ whole duty, according to that light God has
 “ given them.

“ BUT here I lay the blame, when men will quar-
 “ rel and censure one another about matters, which
 “ perhaps none can pretend thoroughly to under-
 “ stand: and especially I think those men are
 “ blame-worthy, who made it their business to ir-
 “ ritate and inflame such as are disposed to quiet-
 “ ness and peace. My brethren, let me tell you,
 “ in the fear of God, these things are too sacred
 “ and important to be made a matter of jest and
 “ banter, and of every trifling and impertinent dis-
 “ course. For God’s sake, when we talk of God,
 “ let us do it seriously, and like men who consider
 “ that God sees, and knows what they say of him;
 “ and that as he is particularly concern’d, he will call
 “ men to an account for what they say of him. I
 “ must confess, that as far as I can judge, they who
 “ are most confident of no difficulties in such
 “ things, are generally such as know least of them:
 “ and such knowledge, as the apostle says, puffs
 “ up; whereas a little charity, mixt with know-
 “ ledge, would make it more edifying. Where
 “ we see mens lives answerable to the christian
 “ rule, let us learn not to judge one another; we
 “ are all the servants of Christ, and to him as our
 “ master we must each of us either stand or fall.
 “ Judge therefore nothing before the time; let no

“ persons arrogantly assume to themselves the privilege of being a standard to others, or of making his opinion or expression a test to try others by.

“ **THERE** is one thing which I can't but think it just for men to insist on; that as the holy scriptures are the only rule in such matters, so men should not pretend to impose their notions upon others. 'Tis perhaps unavoidable to talk of these things, without sometimes using other than the express words of scripture; but then let us not impose such our expressions, or our interpretations upon others. Thus for instance, I think the term *person* is very justly and properly used concerning either the Father, the Son, or the Holy Ghost: what then, shall I require another, who it may be doubts of this, that he shall make use of the same? God forbid. Let him express himself as he thinks is most agreeable to the stile, or sense of the scripture; only let him leave me the same liberty.

“ **AND** this liberty let others tamely give up as they please; I do, and will, insist upon it for my self, as a reasonable creature, a christian, a protestant, and a Dissenter. As I pretend not to impose on others, so nor will I in this case be imposed upon by others. No king, no parliament, no church, no council, no synod, no minister, or body of ministers, no man, or body of men, shall be acknowledged by me to have any such power, or rightful authority over me. They may deprive me of my civil liberty, of my estate, or of my life; but this liberty, by the grace of God, they never shall deprive me of, to think and speak of the matters of God and religion, only in that manner in which I apprehend they are spoken of in the holy scriptures by God himself. Tell me not
“ what

“ what *Athanasius*, or *Arius*; what the council of
 “ *Nice*, or *Rimini* have said; but what *Christ*, and
 “ *Peter*, and *Paul*, and *James*, and *John*, and *Jude*
 “ have said. I call no man master upon earth.
 “ Give me leave however to say this; that where-
 “ as my name has been often made use of, I profess
 “ I never did believe, or any ways countenance the
 “ distinctive opinion of *Arius*: no one has from
 “ any suggestion, or persuasion of mine, left the
 “ common opinion. I have avoided, and will avoid
 “ speaking of such things, as I find too hard and
 “ difficult for me throughly to understand. And
 “ whereas my private conversation has been ar-
 “ raigned upon mere suspicion (which used to be
 “ thought a very unchristian thing on all other oc-
 “ casions) I will declare, that I believe I never
 “ spake my mind more fully and plainly, than I
 “ have done openly in this Assembly; and how
 “ innocent that was, you are all my witnesses. I
 “ resent it as an injury, when men will set my
 “ name to any of their opinions, without having
 “ some assurance of the matter from my self. And
 “ if in such arduous matters I hardly know what
 “ it is my self in some respects, I beg that others
 “ would have that equity, as to forbear telling
 “ what it is for me.

“ BUT why do I talk thus much of my self?
 “ You will bear *with me in my folly*; you have
 “ *constrained me*. I declare the concern I have is
 “ for a greater matter. The interest of religion,
 “ your welfare, peace, and comfort are far greater
 “ things to me, than the good or evil report I go
 “ through. If he that was not *behind the very*
 “ *chiefest apostles*, yet had his share of *evil report*,
 “ I think I need not much complain. My com-
 “ fort is a clear conscience, that I have not had any
 “ hand in kindling this fire, and blowing up this
 “ flame.

“ AN ill part they do, that instead of endeavouring to quench it, pour oil into it. *Where there is strife and contention, there is confusion and every evil work:* the success of ordinances is hinder'd, and bitterness and uncharitableness are promoted. And therefore let every one put to his helping hand, and watch that he do's not by any imprudence and indiscretion, or by any passion, rash censure, or backbiting, add fuel to the flame. *Hast thou a faith, a persuasion one way or another? If it be not in a matter upon which mens eternal salvation depends, and men pretend not to impose upon thee, have it to thy self, break not the peace of the church for the sake of it.*

“ LET me then say to you, as the apostle do's to the *Philippians*, Phil. iii. 15. *Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.* There is no perfect, that is sincere christian, but he may depend upon God, that he will make him know whatever is necessary for him to know in order to salvation. A man may value himself upon the goodness of his faith: but there is yet a greater thing than that, even *charity*; and that christians have much need of in such quarrels; for as it will cover a multitude of sins, so there is commonly then a multitude that need covering.

“ LET me then beseech you for God's sake, and for Christ's sake; let me intreat you by the mercies of God, and the gentleness of Christ, as you have a regard to the peace of the church, to the reputation of religion, to the success of the gospel, that you will put on as the elect of God, *holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, gentleness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; that you will avoid strife and contention, all whif-*
“ pering,

“ pering, reviling, and backbiting, that you will
 “ *forbear one another in love.* Let your conversation
 “ run more upon things which all christians agree
 “ in, and which will be most for your mutual edi-
 “ fication, and beg of God to pour down a spirit
 “ of light, and love, and peace upon us all, that
 “ we may *grow up in him who is the head, in all*
 “ *things.* Let every man abhor the making parties
 “ in the church. Let no one take up, much more
 “ let him not devise an evil report against his neigh-
 “ bour. This I have always judg’d the way to heal
 “ such breaches; whereas wrangling and disputing
 “ feeds a pragmatistical humour, and widens the dif-
 “ ference. This course I have taken my self, and
 “ can’t yet see cause to repent of it; and in the in-
 “ tegrity of my heart I recommend it to you all.
 “ And now, whether you will hear, or whether
 “ you will forbear, I take God, and now also I take
 “ your consciences to record, I have honestly and
 “ faithfully deliver’d my own soul.

AFTER I had this second time complied with the
 Gentlemens request, and declar’d my mind freely,
 and testified the earnest desire I had for peace, and
 made some complaint of the treatment I met with,
 there was a considerable concern in the congrega-
 tion, and many were troubled upon my account;
 and from that time, upon mine and my two bre-
 threns discourses upon the subject, things considera-
 bly mended among us. But there were some few
 zealous and angry men among us, who afterwards
 shew’d themselves unwilling the strife should end in
 such quietness.

A little after this I receiv’d a *Letter* from a friend
 in *London*, informing me of the complaints, which
 had been sent thither by some of our people, of the
 growth of *Arianism*: my friend likewise acquainted
 me with his, and some other persons earnest desire,
 that I would set my self to maintain the common
 opinion:

opinion: he told me, he was inform'd, that two of the *Exeter* ministers had preach'd upon these matters, but were so far from satisfying the people, that they were by some despis'd for it. Mr. *Withers* and I having spoken of this in the pulpit the very same day, and Mr. *Hallet* not having had an opportunity to do it time enough for a *Letter* to be sent to *London* about what he said, before the *Letter* I had from thence was written; I concluded that Mr. *Withers* and I were the two who were meant in the *Letter*; and as I took him to be concern'd in the account I receiv'd, I communicated the *Letter* to him, who understood it just as I did. We both of us resent'd it; and in my *Answer* to my friend I let him know as much, telling him, that the next time I gratified them in their desire, that I would preach upon that subject, they should not despise me for it. But I soon found I was mistaken, for by the next return of the post, my friend let me know, the two ministers who were despis'd for their preaching, were Mr. *Larkham*, and Mr. *Lavington*; and they being thought unfit to manage the controversy, it was earnestly desir'd by the friends of the common opinion, that I would undertake to preach in defence of it.

By this the reader may plainly perceive the reason of the anger and indignation of some people against me: they were vex'd, that I and others would not undertake the doing the work they thought necessary to be done, and which they found themselves not able to do. And it plainly appear'd, that as their attempts were despis'd by those whom they oppos'd, so the contrary side could not much commend them, which I do not much wonder at, if the accounts I have had of them are true.

BETWEEN the receipt of the two *Letters* from *London*, I have just now mention'd, Mr. *Ball* and Mr. *Walrond* were so kind as to make me a visit, to whom

whom I complain'd of the contempt I thought had been exprest. Our conversation was very friendly; and I believe they did me then no ill offices, but rather the contrary, among the discontented. And indeed things grew very cool and calm. When the Assembly met in *May*, no mention was made of the controversy; but all things were carried peaceably and quietly; insomuch that I, as well as many others, concluded that the storm was over. And I may safely say, or at least I know nothing to the contrary, that from the time of our preaching at the Gentlemens desire; there was no disturbance 'till just before the *September* Assembly. Both sides were still, there were no endeavours to make proselytes; nor do I believe our angry brethren can name so much as one made in that time. I may appeal to Mr. *Withers* for the truth of this, who I dare say will not now deny the truth of what I have several times heard him assert. This shews the more plainly at whose door our divisions are to be laid.

THERE was one thing happen'd at this Assembly, or rather after it, which I think proper to take notice of. Our Assembly is always held on the *Tuesday*, and *Wednesday*, and we having a constant weekly lecture on the *Thursday* morning at six a clock, 'tis usual to get some of the ministers who come to the Assembly from the country, to preach on that occasion. But at this time the persons who were to provide, desired me that I would preach, which accordingly I did, taking that text, *Matth. xxviii. 20. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.* The drift of my sermon was to shew, that as the authority of ministers is only to teach men, so the things which they are to teach are only whatsoever Christ has commanded.

IN shewing how the ministers of Christ were to teach, I took notice of what was peculiar to his first ministers, who were to deliver a revelation of his will to the world. And here I had this passage :

“ THIS is the ground upon which we build,
 “ that the sacred penmen of the scriptures were so
 “ directed and guided by the spirit of Christ, as
 “ that they could not deliver any thing, in the rule
 “ they have left us of truth, that was disagreeable
 “ to it. And indeed such assistance was necessary
 “ for them, who have delivered to us those dis-
 “ courses of our Lord, which they themselves heard
 “ out of his own mouth. They were not taken
 “ by them in writing, as he deliver’d them ; nor
 “ were they presently penn’d by those who have
 “ deliver’d them to us ; but several of them at the
 “ distance of a great many years, as particularly
 “ the discourses recorded in *St. John’s Gospel* are
 “ generally acknowledged to have been. Now
 “ whose memory is naturally strong enough to re-
 “ tain such long discourses, as some of them are,
 “ with a sufficient exactness? Or supposing persons
 “ to have a great strength of memory ; yet how
 “ hard would it be for others to depend upon that,
 “ in so nice a matter as the standard of truth? A
 “ small variation in^a circumstance, or a single word,
 “ which a man may be guilty of, who repeats ano-
 “ ther’s discourse long before deliver’d, and espe-
 “ cially when he repeats it in a different language
 “ from that in which it was at first spoken ; such
 “ a small variation, I say, may make the sense con-
 “ vey’d to us vastly different from the speaker’s.
 “ And if we could depend upon the memory of
 “ the reporter, yet that would hardly in this case
 “ be sufficient. For we must likewise suppose, that
 “ he certainly took the speaker right, and did not
 “ mistake his meaning ; otherwise his memory will
 “ only help him in this case to acquaint us with
 “ his

“ his own mistake: and this he must certainly do,
 “ without leaving us any remedy for our information,
 “ when he expresses a discourse, not in the origi-
 “ nal words and syllables of the speaker, but in
 “ those of another language, which he must be
 “ supposed to chuse, as they appear to him most
 “ proper to express his mistaken apprehension. We
 “ could not therefore have an entire satisfaction in
 “ the accounts they have left us in their writings,
 “ had we not reason to believe they were guided
 “ themselves by the Spirit in what they wrote.

AFTER I had preach'd this sermon, one of my
 brethren came and acquainted me with a mighty ob-
 jection made against this passage, which he had
 been defending. He let me know that one of my
 brethren, being appealed to, had very silyly given
 his judgment to this purpose, that what I said was
 indeed true; but yet it might be understood to car-
 ry such a meaning in it as was objected. The rea-
 der will be surpriz'd when I tell him that this
 meaning was, that St. *John's* Gospel was of uncer-
 tain authority, and not much to be depended on.
 My friend desir'd me to give him the passage at
 length, and I presently put my notes into his hands,
 they being in long hand, and he himself transcrib'd
 it. The reason why I relate this is, that the rea-
 der may be sensible what a difficult part I have had
 to act, while I have been beset with men so unrea-
 sonably desirous of finding out some matter of ac-
 cusation against me. I hope this will be an evi-
 dence that I have been watchful, when a number
 of such detractors have not been able to produce
 any charge against me.

IN the beginning of *July* I had occasion to take
 a journey to *London*; and, I think, it was but the
 week before I set out, that Mr. *Lavington* came to
 my house with a complaint, that I should have re-
 ported, that he had said, this affair would be brought

into the Assembly in *September*; which he utterly denied, assuring me he was against it; that we were now quiet, and for his part he was resolv'd to meddle no more. I own'd to him that such a story had been brought to me, and told him whence I had it, that he might trace it. His discourse pleas'd me well; and I had the more ease in my journey, being confident that I left all quiet behind me, and that there could be no such design and he not acquainted with it.

DURING my absence, which was six Lord's days, I heard nothing of the affair; but at my return found all things in a quite different posture from that in which I left them. I was sure I could not possibly have any hand in this new stir, nor could I hear the least thing that my brethren had done, when I was abroad, to provoke this mighty wrath. The Gentlemen who were in the secret are, I suppose, best able to give an account how this violent fit of zeal seiz'd them. Mr. *Lavington* was quite changed, and Mr. *Ball*, and Mr. *Walrond* were become exceeding warm. These and some others were the ministers who, I suppose, are meant in the *Narrative*, p. 9. who *were very loth to step forth in a public manner against them* [these dangerous evils or errors] ----- *but found themselves under the unhappy necessity of breaking silence, and obliged in conscience to appear openly against them.* And to their honour be it spoken, it was in a way of clamour, and not of argument. But I may defy them to tell, what new thing had then happen'd to provoke them to these proceedings. I soon after my return receiv'd a *Letter* from *London*, acquainting me with one which Mr. *Walrond* had sent to a minister there, (with which Mr. *Ball* agreed) making the most dismal complaints of our case, and desiring advice. That minister gather'd a number of ministers, and communicated the *Let-*
ter,

ter to them. And 'tis certain, very tragical outcries were contain'd in it, concerning blasphemous expressions with relation to the Trinity. He that writ my *Letter* understood these to be charg'd only upon young ministers; but it seems that is denied; and 'tis pretended they were charged only upon some of the people. If this were the case (for the thing is a mystery, as will appear hereafter) there was somewhat unaccountable in the *Western* conduct, that instead of proceeding against the people who were supposed in fault, they should fall upon the ministers who were not charged. But there were really some ministers named, and others invidiously enough described. By this *Letter* I was assur'd that a violent assault would be made upon us in our Assembly in *September*. This *Letter* I communicated before the Assembly to Mr. *Hallet* and Mr. *Withers*. About the same time there was great riding about, and writing of circular letters to form a party in the Assembly, and to appoint a cabal previous to it on the *Monday* at *Exon*. These things we were well assur'd of.

SOME time before the Assembly, Mr. *Lavington* was telling Mr. *Withers*, that in the Assembly they would assert the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were the one God. Mr. *Withers* ask'd him, whether they would assert they were three *persons*? He answer'd they would have nothing to say about *persons*. This was very agreeable to the other proceedings of the man and his party: they might arbitrarily insist upon men's declaring in what sense they were one, and as arbitrarily refuse to declare to those who desir'd to know, in what sense they were three.

Mr. *Ball*, in my absence, had desir'd that Mr. *Withers* and I would give him and Mr. *Walrond* a meeting, before the Assembly. We accordingly met them at Mr. *Walrond's* house at *Ottery*, where
we

we had a long discourse upon the methods proper to be taken in the next Assembly. We found they were much set upon making a declaration of their faith concerning the *Trinity*. The pretence was to justify our selves to the world that we were not *Arians*, as the world was ready to think us. We could see well enough thro' this subtle fetch of men who could raise a suspicion of their brethren, and then pretend a concern for their reputation, and make that a handle for the setting up an *Inquisition*. We declar'd heartily against this method; propos'd to them, that it should be left to such as regarded such reports, to take what occasion they thought fit to clear themselves; and pleaded that the bringing it into the Assembly was the way to divide us, and that the division might be of ill consequence elsewhere, and might besides spread the notion. The answer to this was, they thought it their duty, and they would trust God with the consequences. Most solemn assurances were pretendedly given, that there was no design against any already in the ministry; but only to guard against such for the future. Mr. *Walron*d profess'd then, as he had done at other times, that he had a very tender regard to my reputation in particular, that the usefulness of my writings might not be hinder'd; wherein I was then apt to believe him, not being of a suspicious temper. Mention was then made of proposing in the Assembly, that we should subscribe the *first Article* of the *Church of England*, but I oppos'd it; and when it was urg'd that we had done it when requir'd by law, I told them that I look'd upon that law as a great hardship, and therefore was against shewing such an approbation of it.

I objected to them the methods they were using in forming a cabal, and appointing those only whom they judg'd to be of their side to meet them the

Monday

Monday before the Assembly at *Exon*. The term *cabal* was disrelish'd, nor did they much care to hear of their writing circular letters: however Mr. *Ball* own'd he had written, I think, two letters which he mention'd, and then we minded him of another which he own'd. He at last said, that the design'd meeting was not to be a *cabal*; that any one might be there that pleas'd, asking me if I would be there; which being the very thing I aim'd at in taxing them with it, I answer'd, I would be there with all my heart. He then ask'd Mr. *Withers* if he would be there? Who said, Yes, if he were desired.

THERE was one thing much insisted on by Mr. *Ball* at this meeting, to shew the necessity of their proceeding in the manner they propos'd, and to justify them in their sending about their circular letters, and that was, that there was a club of young men in *Exeter*, who met together to propagate these notions. Mr. *Withers* desir'd to know who these young men were, and who was his author for this report; and declar'd that he had already inquir'd into it, but could not find that there was any foundation for it. He added, that he thought it very reasonable and just, that Mr. *Ball* should speak plainly in the case, that so we might break the club, if it appear'd there was any such; or that if there were not, the author of such false stories might be made ashamed. Let any man of sense and conscience judge whether this was not a fair and just demand, and whether Mr. *Ball* could honestly refuse to name persons on this occasion? But whatever Mr. *Withers* could say, he would not name any; thinking it, as I suppose the world will judge, much more proper to take a handle from this false story, to alarm *Exeter* and the country round about, than to give the ministers of *Exeter* an opportunity of searching into an affair, in which
they

they were most nearly concern'd. The truth is; the story had not the least foundation that ever I could hear of. There was indeed a club of young men who met together, but one article they had agreed upon was, that nothing should be brought into discourse by any of them upon this subject. Mr. *Lavington's* suspicious temper had caused him to give out reports of them to the contrary; but this is the Truth. However to appease his jealousy this club was at my desire laid down: but nothing could satisfy.

WE thought we should have parted without coming to any kind of agreement; but just before we took leave, Mr. *Withers* took occasion to mention the horrid and blasphemous expressions which some of the people on the other side had let fall; as particularly that it had been said, That Christ was the Father, that the Father was incarnate and died, &c. Hereupon we at last agreed, that upon complaint of divers bad opinions that had been vented concerning the Trinity, the Assembly should resolve, that henceforth they will be more careful in their examining on that head all persons whom they allow'd to preach as candidates, or whom they ordain'd. I confess I was against having any thing at all mention'd in the Assembly; but this seem'd tolerable, and they agreed to it, and so we parted, hoping our labour was not lost, and that peace might still be preserv'd. Mr. *Withers* and I agreed to keep this last resolution private, lest if it were divulg'd, the angry men who had less judgment, might by their clamour prevent its taking effect. I was, I remember, so easy in my mind, that whereas I had before this meeting begun a set speech against the method I apprehended would be taken, when I came home I laid it aside, concluding there could be no occasion for it.

THE next week was the time of the Assembly; and I expected on the *Monday* to be invited, according to what had pass'd at *Ottery*, to the previous meeting. They had more than one on the *Monday*, and on *Tuesday* morning. But there was not the least intimation given me of it; which I took to be *perfidious*. Mr. *Withers* was invited, and met them. They propos'd their scheme to him, which he oppos'd. They told him, they wonder'd at his opposition, for they expected he would have join'd with them. To this he answer'd, That they knew how unanimously I was invited hither, not only by the people, but by the Assembly; and that for his part he could never concur in such dishonourable measures, as they were taking, to turn me out. By this may be seen, what the *honesty* and *sincerity* was of the professions of a particular respect and regard to me, made but the week before, as well as at other times.

I can't but mention another story which happen'd on this very day, and shews the sincerity of the men we had to do with. A great confidant of our prime managers being in company was pleas'd to say, they would in the Assembly make a declaration of their faith concerning the Trinity. Well, said another, And what if some will not declare as you do? Then, said the minister, we will set a mark upon them. And being ask'd what they would do afterwards, he reply'd, We will leave them to the people, who know what they are to do with them. Which I take to be a farther evidence of *perfidiousness*.

ON *Tuesday* in the afternoon the Assembly met, half an hour sooner than ordinary. The time according to order, I think, is two a clock, but they seldom us'd to be together till three. But upon this occasion the high party design'd to be there half an hour sooner, of which we having some in-

timation, would not be behind hand with them, and so, tho' they struggled hard, we carried it against the men they propos'd for *moderator* and *scribe*. Nothing was done that afternoon relating to this controversy, only there being two candidates to be examin'd, they then appointed four to examine them. I happen'd to be appointed for one, and was join'd with three zealous brethren in the work. Since I am now upon this, I will finish it before I go any farther. The examination was not till the next day after the hot work was over. My brethren then put it upon me to propose questions to them; I did not much care for the office, but being apprehensive their zeal might lead them to sift the young men unmercifully, if I declin'd it, I yielded to them. They interposed now and then, and ask'd what they pleas'd, and particularly about the Trinity. However when all was over they declar'd themselves satisfied, and the senior of the four examiners made a report to the Assembly of the satisfaction they had given us, and that we hoped they might be very useful in the ministry. And so exercises were appointed for each of them, which if they perform'd to satisfaction, nothing more, according to custom, could be requir'd of them. And yet afterwards those men before whom they were to perform their exercises, by their own arbitrary authority, and without any direction from the Assembly, would have insisted upon their signing the doctrine of the Trinity in the words of the *Assembly's Catechism*, or some such form. And that very minister who made the report from the examiners, and then declar'd himself so well satisfied, did afterwards allege, as the ground of his suspicion of one of the candidates, the answers he gave at his examination. But these things were after the Assembly. I now go on with that.

THE ministers not thinking fit to admit me to their cabals, to put some colour upon their conduct, appointed a meeting at a Gentleman's house in the city on the *Tuesday* evening. The greater part of those that compose the Assembly were there.

AT this meeting a complaint was made of the growth of *Arianism*, and it was proposed as very necessary, that we should purge our selves, and clear our reputation to the world. I then saw they were gone off from our agreement, and perceived which way they were steering. I told them, that every one who regarded such tittle tattle, was at liberty to clear himself when he would; but that there was no need to bring this matter into the Assembly; and 'twas wrong to charge any one, unless they had proof; that for my part I insisted upon my right, that no *accusation* should be receiv'd against me, but under two or three witnesses, and that I challeng'd them all to produce any; that if they design'd a test, I would submit to none beside express scripture. I was answer'd by a nice distinction of scripture and the sense of scripture; and one learnedly objected, that after my way of talking, nothing was to be subscribed but the original; which I very freely granted. One wonder'd the *Exeter* ministers should be so backward. But I told them in answer, That I could not speak without some concern, seeing I apprehended they were about to sap the foundation I stood upon as a christian, a protestant, and a Dissenter. I called for a text, where the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were called the one God; and they replied to me with consequences. Very much did they insist upon it, that Christ must be the supreme God, because he is to be worship'd, and yet the command is, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*. I told them all the worship we are to give

to Christ, do's terminate upon the Father; and I ask'd them, if God commanded them to worship a creature, whether they would not do it? To this one of them answer'd with a great deal of assurance; No, he would not. Sometime after he recollected himself, and said, God could not so command. Hereupon I offer'd to prove to them, that they actually did worship a creature, according to their own notion, if they gave to Christ all the worship which was due to him. I told them if they worship'd Christ only as essential God, they gave him not all the worship that was due to him, because *that* according to their notion must have been always due to him; whereas there was a worship due to him as the result of the Father's gift. John v. 22, 23. *The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.* Philip. ii. 9, 10. *God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and in earth, &c.* Several undertook to answer, but left out the pinch of the argument; and one of their own side did afterwards very frankly acknowledge to me, that no sufficient reply was made to it. He then endeavour'd to mend the matter, but seem'd to miss the mark, as much as any of them had done at the conference.

I told them, the way they propos'd of clearing our selves, seem'd to me a very improper one. I thought the vote of the Assembly would not reach far; the properest course was for the Assembly to appoint some one to write upon the subject, and when he had done so, it might be publish'd with the approbation of the Assembly. To this it was answer'd by Mr. *Lavington*, that they would do both, and that he would write himself, if no body else would.

I may

I may here observe to the reader, that Mr. *Withers* had long before this offer'd to draw up his scheme, if any of the other side would draw up theirs, and then mutually give in their objections and answers, and leave all to the judgment of any ministers, or of the Assembly, or of the whole world. But he could not be heard. And if I mistake not, he renew'd this offer at this conference.

At this time I charged a minister present, who was forward to answer me, with the absurdity of his prayers, telling him how I had heard him begin them himself. "O Lord God, Jehovah, we know thou art Father, Son, and Spirit----- we thank thee for giving us thy Son----- and we pray thee give us thy Spirit:" all which was within the compass of the six first sentences. * He would have denied it, and given it a different turn; but another minister presently attested that he had heard the same, and offer'd to bring six more witnesses to prove it. I have at other times complain'd of this to some of my brethren, to whom I must be so just as to own they disliked it, and particularly Mr. *Walrond* has answer'd me to this purpose, that he had heard that minister used to do so, but he thought no one would imitate him therein. But Mr. *Lavington* used to vindicate this. I resolv'd to take notice of this passage here, because I was apprehensive it was upon a small mistake of it, that the *Account* tells us, p. 7. *That while I my self for-*

* By the way I cannot but remark here, that the people who belong'd to this minister, and had been accusom'd to such kind of strange language, were several of them among the most industrious in abusing and belying us in the city and the country round about, while they went about venting their blasphemies, that the Son was the Father, and the Father the Son, &c.

bore to give glory to the Holy Ghost, I tax'd another minister for doing it. The same minister used to conclude his prayers with a doxology, "To the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one Lord God Jehovah:" and I imagin'd the writer might have forgot that I spoke then of the beginning, and not of the ending of his prayers. But upon farther recollection, I suppose he may aim at another story, which I shall here relate, tho' out of its proper place. A minister between whom and my self there had been much freedom, tax'd another of our acquaintance in talking to me of him, with never ascribing glory to the Spirit. I would not take notice of what I thought plain enough, that his design was handsomly to rebuke me. But I defended our friend, without seeming to take any thing home to my self. The next time we met, he did not reprove me so indirectly, but downright censur'd my practice. I put it then to him, as I used to do, whether he had any scripture example for giving glory to the Holy Ghost in the many doxologies there extant. His answer was, that he did not suppose that he was left out in those doxologies, as tho' the apostles scrupled the giving glory to him; and that certainly we might as well give glory to him, as baptize in his name. I told him, I supposed the apostles might understand how to draw such a consequence, as well as we; and since we do not find they ever did draw it, I thought there could be no necessity for it; and that my practice of giving glory to the Father, thro' the Son, or of giving glory to the Son, was scriptural and unexceptionable. That he granted. I then said to him pleasantly: Well, Sir, you find fault with my doxologies, pray will you give me a reason for your own? You preach'd to day, and in the conclusion of one of your prayers ascribed to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the kingdom,
power,

power, and glory; what warrant have you for this? or where do you find in the scripture the Holy Ghost is said to have a kingdom? There was nothing, I believe, taken ill on either side; and if friends may not use such an innocent freedom with one another, but must have it imputed to them as a crime, there's an end of all free conversation.

BUT I return to our grand conference. Mr. *Withers*, who by meeting the chief managers understood what they would propose, prepar'd a *Speech*, which he deliver'd at this meeting; and I shall take the liberty of presenting the reader with it, as it well deserves to be carefully read and preserved. Several copies of it have gone abroad, and from one of them I now take it.

REASONS offered at a CONFERENCE with many ministers, by J. W. why this following DECLARATION should not be brought into the Assembly: I believe the Father, Word, and Spirit to be the one God.

“ I DESIRE I may be heard with patience, whilst
 “ I offer a few reasons against bringing any
 “ test at all into our *Assembly*; and then some a-
 “ gainst this in particular.

“ I take all words, that are not the words of
 “ the Holy Ghost, to be the words of men, and
 “ by consequence a humane explication; and, in
 “ the case before us, of a very abstruse point.

1. “ I conceive, with submission to better judg-
 “ ments, that the bringing in such a test is contra-
 “ ry to the good old rule, allowed by all divines
 “ and lawyers, *That no man is bound to accuse him-*
 “ self.

“ *self*. The *Declaration* resolved upon, is no other
 “ than a discriminating *test*. Marks of infamy will
 “ be set upon such as do dislike it. If this be de-
 “ nied to be the design, yet every person sees this
 “ must be the event. I know no obligation any
 “ man is under to accuse himself of *errors in judg-*
 “ *ment*, any more than of *crimes in practice*. If
 “ any brother hath taught or preach’d contrary to
 “ the form of sound words, or his own subscripti-
 “ ons, let him first be convicted, and then censur’d
 “ as he deserves. But for the method now pro-
 “ posed, I can look on it no otherwise than an in-
 “ fringement of the common liberties of mankind.

2. “ I apprehend such a management will con-
 “ demn the Puritans for refusing, and justify their
 “ adversaries in imposing the oath *ex officio*. With
 “ what face can we practise that our selves, which
 “ we blame in others; who tho’ they had *no rea-*
 “ *son*, had *more authority* for what they did? I
 “ can look on the intended project as no other
 “ than an *Inquisition* into mens consciences, a ran-
 “ sacking of their minds, and a piece of *ecclesiasti-*
 “ *cal tyranny*.

3. “ I doubt this may be introductory to other
 “ innovations, if we should give way now. We
 “ have one test this year, perhaps we shall have
 “ another next; and every man that can get to be
 “ *head of a party*, will be for making a new
 “ *Creed*, and we shall never know where to stop.
 “ And therefore what *Juvenal* [rather *Persius*]
 “ said of the natural, may be very well applied to
 “ an ecclesiastical body,

“ *Venienti occurrere morbo.*

“ As these are my reasons against bringing in any
 “ test at all; so I have some to offer against that
 “ before you in particular.

1. “ I

1. " I observe that this expression is not to be
 " found in the most ancient Creeds, even such as
 " were drawn up against the *Arians* themselves.
 " Nay, some of the most eminent defenders of the
 " *Nicene* faith have cautiously avoided it. I shall
 " mention two, St. *Hilary* and St. *Austin*. The first
 " thus writes, *De Trinitate*, lib. viii. *Uterque* [*sc.*
 " *Pater & Filius*] *potius unum confitendus est esse,*
 " *quam unus.* Again: *Patrem & Filium* singula-
 " rem Deum *prædicare sacrilegum est* *.

" So also St. *Austin*, Tom. vi. p. 842. *Non ergo*
 " *unus & idem est Pater & Filius, sed unum sunt*
 " *Pater & Filius.* They own'd the Father and
 " Son to be *one in nature*, but declined calling
 " them *one God*, that they might give no occasion
 " to the *Sabellians* to conclude they were but *one*
 " *person*. And the same reason prevails with me
 " at this time.

2. " THE words I object against, are the words of
 " one of the most notorious heretics that ever distur-
 " bed the church, I mean *Paulus Samosatenus*, Patri-
 " arch of *Antioch*, who lived in the middle of the
 " third century, and was condemn'd by the most nu-
 " merous council the church ever saw, before that of
 " *Nice*. His heresy is thus described by *Epiphanius*,
 " *Hær. 65.* *This man affirms, that God the*
 " *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one God: that*
 " *the Word and Spirit were from all eternity in*
 " *God, as a man's reason is in his own heart; but*
 " *the Son had no proper personal subsistence of his*
 " *own.* Now a man may make the *Declaration* con-
 " tended for, and yet be as much a heretic as *Samo-*
 " *satenus* himself ever was. He own'd the Son to
 " be *the eternal God*, and *one* with the Father; but

* This second citation from *Hilary* hath been inserted since the conference.

“ denying him to be an *hypostasis*, or a *distinct* real
 “ *person*, he was adjudg’d an heretic by the suffra-
 “ ges of the whole christian church. And I would
 “ recommend it to your serious consideration, whe-
 “ ther it would be for the honour of our Assem-
 “ bly, to make any of the words of an exploded
 “ heretic an article of faith, or test of orthodoxy.

“ OF the same mind was *Michael Servetus*, burnt
 “ at *Geneva* by the influence of Mr. *Calvin* him-
 “ self. Mr. *Turretine*, late professor there, having
 “ told us in his discourse on the Trinity (*Institut.*
 “ *Theolog. Elenct.* Part. 1. Loc. 3. Quæst. xxiii. §.
 “ 7. p. 282. Et Quæst. xxv. §. 3. p. 293. Et
 “ Quæst. xxvii. §. 9. p. 307.) that by *person* he
 “ means *suppositum intellectuale*, affirms of this *Ser-*
 “ *vetus*, that he renewed the pestilent heresy of
 “ *Sabellius*, declaring that there was but *one person* ;
 “ who, upon the account of his various effects and
 “ operations, is named sometimes the *Father*, some-
 “ times the *Son*, and sometimes the *Holy Ghost*.
 “ He denied not the Son to be God, but allow’d
 “ only a *Trinity* of *names*, or *modes*. I am loth to
 “ give into a scheme which looks so much like
 “ his.

3. “ I am persuaded a declaration in these words
 “ will give countenance to many in this city, who
 “ embrace the wild *Sabellian* notions. We have
 “ here some zealous mechanics, who fill town and
 “ country with fearful outcries against the *Arians*,
 “ and run into the contrary extreme, affirming
 “ that the Father is the Son, the Son the Father ;
 “ that God the Father took flesh, &c. I have
 “ this account, I assure you, from ear-witnesses.
 “ But there is no need of producing names, since
 “ we have a *Pamphlet* publish’d by one *Cary*, a
 “ tailor, after it had been view’d and approv’d of
 “ by many of his orthodox brethren. Among
 “ other things, they make their remarks upon this
 “ following

following expression, which they call the second
 article in Mr. S----n's creed: *I believe that God*
the Son is as truly God, as God the Father. I
 must observe to you, that these are the very
 words of the *Nicene creed*, in which our blessed
 Lord is declared to be *very God of very God*; or, as
 it is, you know, in the original *Greek*, *true God of*
the true God. And tho' this be the very language
 of the establish'd church in her communion Of-
 fice, yet Mr. *Cary* and his brethren charge it
 with downright blasphemy, and making two
 Gods. Now this gross conceit of theirs can only
 spring from an apprehension, that the *Father* and
 the *Son* are but two distinct *modes*, or *names* of
 one and the same person. Wherefore I desire
 to be excus'd in not voting for a *declaration*,
 which the greatest heretics may subscribe to,
 and by which many illiterate people in this city
 have been harden'd in those notions, which tear
 in pieces the whole scheme of christianity.

THIS noble *Speech* was deliver'd with much dif-
 ficulty, thro' the intemperate zeal of some, who
 were continually interrupting the speaker, and
 among the rest Mr. *Lavington* was very remarkable
 for this conduct.

ON *Wednesday* morning the Assembly met; and
 after prayer Mr. *John Ball* of *Honiton* spoke to this
 effect:

"MR. Moderator, I desire to know whether we
 shall declare against the errors of those, who de-
 ny the divinity of our Saviour. 'Tis thought
 necessary by several ministers here present, that
 we declare against the errors and heresies relating
 to the divinity of the *Logos* and the Holy
 Ghost.

THIS motion was seconded by many who spake
 together, by reason of which for some time no mi-
 nutes could be taken.

A considerable number of ministers thought it neither necessary, nor expedient, that such a Declaration should be made in the Assembly: and as soon as they could be heard, they desired that the expediency of it might be calmly and fairly debated, they having several reasons to offer against it. At their desire the Moderator put this question:

“WHETHER this Assembly doth think it proper that this (Mr. *Ball's*) question be proposed (or debated) here?”

THE Scribe wrote down the question, read it, and was about to call over the names, in order to take the votes; but was hinder'd by those who were resolved to have a Declaration.

'T WAS moved, that the particular errors and heresies might be mention'd, that the brethren might know what they were to declare against. But this was not granted.

I propos'd this question: “Whether we should declare against the errors relating to the *person* of the Father, as well as the Son, and Holy Ghost? Because some, as I said, held dangerous errors, and utter'd blasphemous expressions concerning the Father.”

SEVERAL who were against *impositions*, and determining matters by *mere authority*, without so much as hearing what might be offer'd on the other side, struggled hard to have the *expediency* of making any declaration fairly debated; urging that it was reasonable in it self, and agreeable to the method of our proceeding in all our former Assemblies, to hear what reasons could be offer'd *pro* and *con*, before we came to a resolution. But they were born down by the noise of the majority, who had with great industry, and by various methods, been secured and got together on this occasion. They could not by all their importunity obtain liberty to offer their reasons; their proposals were slighted, and their

their voices drowned. Some of them were rudely interrupted; others reflected on, and menaced. Nor could the Moderator himself escape, tho' a very deserving person in the judgment of all. He observ'd one of the brethren, who was pretty near him, shew'd himself very forward to interrupt any that mov'd for a fair debate, and that he appear'd very warm, and spake in such a manner as seem'd to be contrary to the method of speaking in the Assembly; and therefore according to his office he reprov'd him for breaking the order of the Assembly. The Gentleman relented this as an high affront, and presently, with a peculiar air, demanded satisfaction. To which the Moderator modestly reply'd: "I'll give it you whenever you will have it." 'Tis said also that he should add, "That he did not consult his reputation, or interest, and that he would take a time to inquire into his opinion." 'Tis observable, that none censur'd the Moderator's conduct in this matter. And when he ask'd that brother before the Assembly parted that morning, whether he would then have satisfaction made him, he did not insist on it. They who found they could not get liberty so much as to propose their reasons against making a Declaration, remonstrated against these violent, arbitrary, and irregular proceedings; and the cabals and intrigues which some had us'd to obtain a majority, and to compass their ends. 'Twas in vain to hope that reason should prevail with them, who trusted to, and, before the Assembly, boasted of their numbers. And 'tis not unworthy of observation, that not one reason against a fair debate was offer'd, only one brother insinuated, that this was a fetch to protract the time. And the Scribe was requir'd to put this question to the vote:

"WHETHER we shall make any Declaration in
 " this Assembly, concerning the errors relating
 " to the doctrine of the holy Trinity? WHICH

WHICH was resolv'd in the affirmative.

THEN Mr. *John Walrond* of *Ottery* moved, that he might read a *Letter* he had receiv'd from Mr. *William Tong*, and Mr. *Benjamin Robinson*, two *London* ministers. I then told them that I should astonish the Assembly, by giving an account what sort of a *Letter* was writ by Mr. *Walrond*, to procure the *Answer* he was about to read: and indeed I thought it hard that the Assembly would suffer that *Letter* to be read at all, unless he had obliged himself to read his own *Letter* also. 'Tis the easiest thing in the world for some men to give a disingenuous, not to say a false representation of a case; and whoever gives a judgment upon such a representation, deserves not much to be regarded. They at *London* were not capable of judging, whether Mr. *Walrond's* account was a just and fair one; but if it had been laid, as it ought, before the Assembly, they could have judg'd of the sincerity and truth of it, and the *Letter* in answer would have had its weight accordingly. And indeed the ministers in *London* did not take the proper course to know the full state of the case, about which they took upon them to give their advice. And they were the more inexcusable, because it was suggested to them, when met upon this affair. There was then present a minister of great prudence and equity, who moved, that before any answer was return'd, I should be writ to, that so they might hear on both sides. But this prudent motion was put off with such an answer as this: *That this would imply a suspicion of Mr. Walrond's veracity and ability.*

I cannot therefore help thinking that the Assembly ought to have insisted upon his producing his own *Letter*, and that they too readily gave him leave to read the *London Letter*, on his promise that the Scribe should take a copy of it. I shall here present the reader with it. *London,*

London, Aug. 26. 1718.

Reverend and Honour'd Sir,

“ **W**HEN I had seriously weighed the contents
 “ of your *Letter*, with which I am fa-
 “ vour'd, they appear'd to me to be of that nature
 “ and importance, as to deserve and even require
 “ the perusal of our brethren here. Several of them
 “ have favour'd me with their company more than
 “ once: and I am allowed by them to assure you,
 “ that we are very sensibly affected with the ac-
 “ count you give us of the receiving and spreading
 “ of such dangerous errors in your parts of *Eng-*
 “ *land*, which have been in a very distinguishing
 “ manner favour'd with so many eminently learned
 “ and godly ministers, and so many exemplary chri-
 “ stians, that have been not only strict professors of
 “ pure christianity, but strenuous confessors for it.
 “ We cannot say that we have no apprehensions
 “ of the breaking forth of the like erroneous opi-
 “ nions here: but hitherto we know of none a-
 “ mong us that have expressly own'd and avow'd
 “ them, and very few that have declared them-
 “ selves to be in doubt and suspense about them.
 “ We do not think our selves capable of advising
 “ so numerous and so learned an Assembly, as yours
 “ is known to be: especially since we must take it
 “ for granted, the methods proper to be observed
 “ by you will naturally arise from facts and circum-
 “ stances, which can only appear to you, who are
 “ upon the spot. But the general rules by which
 “ we think we shall be obliged to govern our selves,
 “ if ever we be called to that ungrateful work, are
 “ such as these:

I. “ Not to suspect any among us to be infected
 “ with these errors, unless we have good ground
 “ for

“ for it: *1 Cor. xiii. 5. Charity thinketh no evil---
hopeth all things.*

II. “ NOT to be harsh and hasty with those that
“ are doubtful and wavering; but to give them
“ time, and what assistance we can for their better
“ information and establishment. *2 Tim. ii. 25.
Gentle to all men, apt to teach, patient, in meek-
ness instructing, &c.*

III. “ BUT yet to represent to them faithfully
“ and seriously the great danger of denying the
“ proper godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of
“ the Holy Ghost; and the malignant influence it
“ must have into the very vitals of our christian
“ state, and gospel worship. Surely this, if any
“ error, will *eat as doth a canker. 2 Tim. ii. 17.*

IV. “ AND to let them plainly know, that ’twill
“ be impossible for us, without sinning against our
“ own consciences, to recommend any to the office
“ of the ministry by ordination, or other acts of
“ ours, that maintain so great an error. *1 Tim. v.
22. Lay hands suddenly on no man; neither be par-
taker of other mens sins: keep thy self pure.*

V. “ THAT if any already in the ministry shall fall
“ into that pernicious error, and persist in it, and
“ teach men so, it will become our indispensable
“ duty, as we have opportunity, to warn the peo-
“ ple of them. *Prov. xix. 27.*

“ IF these rules shall meet with your approbati-
“ on, we shall rejoice in it, and hope our harmo-
“ ny herein will be of good service to the interest
“ of truth and peace. If in any thing they appear
“ to be either defective or redundant, we shall
“ gladly receive your observations upon them: and
“ in the mean time we earnestly pray that the all-
“ wise God will graciously meet your venerable As-
“ sembly, and direct all your consultations to his
“ own glory.

“ AND

“ AND NOW, Reverend Sir, that what is above
 “ written had the approbation and direction of the
 “ brethren, that met together on this occasion,
 “ will sufficiently appear by attestation of the Re-
 “ verend Mr. *Robinson*, who was in the chair.
 “ What remains on my part, is to acknowledge the
 “ honour that you, and worthy Mr. *Ball* have
 “ done me, in communicating your solicitous, se-
 “ rious thoughts in a cause that deserves the great-
 “ est application. If the method I have taken be
 “ acceptable to you, it will yield great satisfacti-
 “ on to,

SIR,

*Your unworthy but affectionate
 Brother and Servant,*

W. TONG.

Worthy Dear Sir,

“ IT was with great reluctancy that I went into
 “ the chair upon so weighty an occasion: but
 “ I did, with a great deal of pleasure, receive the
 “ direction of the brethren, to assure you, that the
 “ *Letter* our worthy brother hath wrote you above,
 “ was communicated to us, and doth now come
 “ to you as our unanimous and agreed sense. In
 “ the midst of all our fears, I can’t but look upon
 “ this as a happy presage, that so many brethren
 “ as were together on this occasion, broke up with
 “ so cool, so christian, and truly catholic a tem-
 “ per; as did appear among us. The good God
 “ direct both you and us at once into the way of
 “ truth, and the way that may effectually preserve
 “ the peace of his church in our day. I am,

Reverend and dear Sir,

Your affectionate Servant and Brother,

B. ROBINSON.

M

THIS

THIS is the copy of those two *Letters*, which the Scribe took from the originals, and well deserves to be compared with that which is printed in *The plain and faithful Narrative*, p. 10. The former of these two *Letters* differs very much from that which is there printed, as the reader will easily perceive; and particularly the last *paragraph*, which I have here set down, is there wholly left out. This I the rather mention, that it may be seen what care the publishers of that *Narrative* have taken, as they say, p. 4. "to lay before the world a just and faithful account of these matters; as carefully taken from originals." Little credit is to be given to that *Narrative*; if they have used no more exactness about other originals, than about this, which do's not seem improbable.

AFTER these *Letters* were read in the Assembly, I moved that I might read the account I had receiv'd of Mr. *Walrond's* Letter, to which these were answers: but that was not permitted; because my *Letter* had not any name subscrib'd; and I would not tell who wrote it; tho' certainly all the world will judge there was as much reason for the reading an anonymous *Letter*, as an *Answer* to a *Letter* of which we were to know nothing but the name of the writer. I however mention'd somewhat of the complaint that my friend inform'd me was in Mr. *Walrond's* Letter; as particularly, that several ministers of this county were charged with blasphemy against the Trinity. This was then roundly denied; but afterwards out of the Assembly it was own'd mention was made in the *Letter* of blasphemous expressions concerning the Trinity; but 'twas pretended these expressions were charged upon the people, and not upon ministers. Honest Mr. *R. Beadon*, who was present with several other ministers, when Mr. *Walrond* made this acknowledgment,

ment, thought himself obliged to acquaint me with it; and that probably procured, or at least hasten'd his ejection, which happen'd not long after.

Mr. *Walrond's* Letter is like always to continue a mystery; for he would not produce a copy of it, pretending he had none. I can't help thinking the reason why he took no copy of a *Letter* of such moment, written too, as appears by the answer, in concert with Mr. *Ball*, to desire advice how to proceed in our Assembly; I say I can't help thinking the reason could hardly be any other, than because he had no mind to produce it, if he should be call'd upon to do it. And in this conjecture I am since very much confirm'd: for the same Gentleman pretends, that he has endeavour'd to procure his own *Letter* from the person to whom he sent it, but that is unhappily lost, and cannot be recover'd: so that before the *Narrative* appear'd, the purport of the *Letter* could be only guess'd at by the *Answer*, and the reports of such as saw or heard it. But now it seems, tho' the original was lost when Mr. *Walrond* pretended to want it, 'tis found again when the *Narrative* was to publish an account of our matters *from originals*. Let any reader peruse that *Pamphlet*, and observe how artfully Letters are jumbled together in the account given of them, and then let him judge, whether there do's not appear a plain design to keep the world in the dark, as to what was particularly contain'd in that *Letter*, which seems to have been as mischievous and malicious, as any ever penn'd by the writer; and whether the whole of that *Narrative* is not to be look'd upon as a mere collusion and juggle, since it deals so very unfairly in this leading fact.

WHETHER my friend mistook what was said of the people, as tho' it had been said of ministers, I know not. This I take to be certain, that a great

complaint was made of the young ministers of these parts, and that one of them was named in the *Letter*; and even the *Narrative* mentions an insinuation concerning some of the *Exeter* ministers, p. 4. And whoever reads the *Answer* with care, will violently suspect the chief complaint was concerning ministers, as the directions given relate wholly to them, and nothing is said of the people. As to the anonymous *Letter* to me, I think I have a right to conceal the writer, 'till Mr. *Walrond* produces a faithful copy of his own *Letter*, which indeed from the first I did not expect the honour ever to see. I know very well who wrote to me; nor have I the least reason to suspect him of a design'd misrepresentation of any thing. Many have been pleas'd to guess who he was; but I do assure the world no one, that I know of, has yet guess'd right; and I believe I have heard of all those who have with the least probability been named. And indeed by some of my friends who pretended to know the hand, I was my self at first led into a mistake concerning the writer.

I will take some brief notice here of the two *paragraphs* in the *Narrative*, p. 4, 5. which seem to give all the account we are ever like to have of the contents of Mr. *Walrond's* *Letter*.

IN the month of August, 1718. Letters were receiv'd from some eminent ministers near Exeter [Mr. *Ball* and Mr. *Walrond*, as appears by the *Answer* I have before set down] complaining and lamenting in the most moving terms of the revival and growth of the Arian notions, and lamenting the defection of some of the younger ministers into those errors. So much as this, it seems, was not thought fit to be own'd in the Assembly at that time, tho' now the party is form'd, no danger is apprehended from the publishing it. 'Tis certain too, that as the *Narrative* seems to suppose this *Letter* was the first thing

thing in the case of *Exeter*, that affected *London*, it must be very unreasonable to lay the blame of their quarrels upon *Exeter*; it being well known that the ministers in *London* had sounded an alarm, and had many of them been earnestly preaching upon the point several months before *August*, 1718. And whatever the consequences of our differences have been at *London*, they are manifestly to be charged on those only who first drew the *Londoners* to meddle with them. The terms of the *Letter* were no doubt *most moving*, or else they would never have prevailed upon men of reputation to engage so rashly in an affair of this consequence, upon a bare complaint exhibited, without hearing first what the other side had to say for themselves. I have some reason to think, that the complaint did not proceed from any very distinct notion the writer had of what principles were properly *Arian*. He seems to have meant no more, than that the persons he was displeas'd with, fell not in with the notions of either the *Sabellians*; or *Tritheists*. The name of *Arian* was hateful, and therefore thought proper to be given to those, against whom he was willing to stir up all the wrath he could: the cause would be effectually served by such a noble stratagem, whereas the proving upon persons the charge of holding any of the peculiar opinions of *Arius* would be tedious and difficult. And to say the truth, they seem to have plaid their game as artfully, in this respect, as ever the heathen persecuters did against the primitive Christians; they have stir'd up all the rage they possibly could against us, so that we are insulted openly in the streets; and unless the legislature shall, in their great wisdom, see fit to lay some restraint upon the senseless agents in their cause, our persons can't long be free from danger. I am persuaded that in a little time there will appear to be as great a necessity for some law of
this

this kind, as there was at the Reformation. But this we leave to the consideration of our governors, who we doubt not will not be wanting in their care to protect good and faithful subjects.

THE *Narrative* goes on: *It was signify'd, that after they had read several late books, according to the new scheme, they promoted their errors first in private for some time: Why were not these errors proved upon them? Was it fair to send such a report, before they had heard what the persons charged had to say for themselves? that they had been too much countenanc'd by others more considerable (who 'twas hoped were not come into that scheme themselves) and particularly by some of the Exeter ministers. Mr. Walrond is now desir'd to produce the evidences he had for this charge, it being certain that the Exeter ministers were then strictly upon their guard, and avoided meddling with these matters. that at a meeting of ministers it was consider'd what measures were fit to be taken to put a stop to those errors: What meeting of ministers there was upon this occasion, Mr. Walrond is, I suppose, able to inform the world: I remember none, except he will call his own and Mr. Ball's talking with me privately in my own house, and their going in like manner to any other minister's house, a meeting of ministers. They were pleas'd to apply to us without our seeking, and we treated them with respect, as long as they acted the part of persons who would advise and consult with us, and did not openly assume an authority over us, and that then they agreed to be silent and patient, hoping that by private and tender persuasion, those that were gone out of the way of truth might be reduc'd; but they found that candour and tendernefs had been greatly abused, and that these men took encouragement from it, to go about the country to propagate their notions with great zeal and confidence: I hope the*
reader

reader will take notice of the authority here assumed, and how these Gentlemen talk, as tho' they were, what many thought they affected to be, the rulers of the whole county. It seems we were wonderfully obliged to them for their *candour and tendernefs*, that they did not at the very first blow us up, and set the mob upon us. And what was the offence we gave them? Was the agreement mutual to be silent and patient? We defy them to give the least instance of our not keeping to that agreement: they who apply'd first to us, and in compliance with whom the agreement was made, were the first breakers of it: all things were quiet and easy, as I shew'd before, 'till these men purposely imbroil'd us. And I may well say of many of the under agents of their party, that they made it their business to propagate the vilest slanders far and near concerning us, and my self in a very particular manner. *telling the people that the ministers were of their mind*: This I believe is a downright falshood, unless it be understood perhaps of a particular point, as that one should say he thought (for he pretended not to assert it) that three of the *Exeter* ministers were for a subordination: *nobody opposed them*: If they meant that no body opposed them with arguments, what they said was, for ought I could hear, true enough; but that no body opposed them by an assumed authority, was so notoriously known to be false, that I believe none of them could be senseless enough to assert it. The truth is, the ministers had been earnestly urged by my self to oppose these notions, that is, to write against them; but they seem'd to expect to carry all by the sway they bore in the county. *This age was more refined; this scheme carried in it generous and noble principles: as if 'twould be the glory of Nonconformity to end in Arianism.* Well might the writer be unwilling to produce a copy of a
Letter,

Letter, that was filled with such pick'd up scraps of the conversation of the people, to which he gives what invidious turn he pleases. A worthy business, to call together a body of ministers, to consider the contents of such a *Letter*! Where is the hurt of saying *this age is refined*, supposing his information to be true? Can any one doubt of its being so? Has not my Lord of *Bangor*, and those who have written on his side, set many things in a better light than they were before? Did not many applaud his management for some time, who now want courage, or somewhat else, to own his generous principles? I will own, I take these to be indeed *generous principles*, that the scriptures are the only rule of our faith; that nothing can be requir'd as necessary to be believ'd in order to salvation, that is not plainly revealed in them; and that no man has a right to impose upon another's conscience, or persecute him for differing from him. And I am heartily sorry that there should be any men in the world, and especially any Dissenters, who should embrace a scheme that is a stranger to such truly generous principles. I have been inform'd that that tragical expression, *As if 'twou'd be the glory of Nonconformity to end in Arianism*, wrought wonders; tho' with considering persons one would think it should weigh very little: for what signifies the giving a hard name to a thing, unless it be substantially proved to be in it self bad. Why should not the complaint be as doleful, if *Sabellianism*, or *Tritheism*, were here put in the room of *Arianism*? Is it not below a man of sense, that has reason and argument for the opinions he maintains, to attempt to carry his point by calling names? That Gentleman may take notice, 'tis the glory of any cause in the world to end in the discovery of *truth*, even tho' it should happen to be hated, reproached, and vilify'd under the most malicious names.

names. Just in the same moving way might the Papists have complain'd at the Reformation: *As if 'twould be the glory of Christianity to end in Lollardism, or Lutheranism.*

BUT to go on with the *Narrative*, p. 5. *They gave it out that a great, if not the greater part of the London ministers had given into the same opinion, and would in a little time declare themselves.* Considering that for a man to assert the sufficiency of the scripture, and to speak against the making any thing but the *Bible* a test of a man's faith, was esteem'd by many a certain evidence of his being an *Arian*; it is no great wonder, if some might speak of many *London* ministers as agreeing with them in this opinion; or it may be in the notion of a subordination. Blessed be God, that what they said in the first respect appears since to be no mistake; and I am persuaded that much the greater part, if they do not contend for a subordination, yet esteem not those to be heretics that do.

*IT was farther signify'd, with the utmost concern, that by these means some of the younger, and meaner of the people, had taken the liberty to treat some parts of the holy scriptures very irreverently: This was maliciously enough express'd, if hereby no more is meant, than that they declared their opinion, that that text, 1 John v. 7. was not genuine; or that they express'd their dislike of the interpretation which this writer, or his friends would have them receive of some other texts of scripture. Sure I am, that I always observ'd that sort of people, he complains of, express'd the greatest veneration for the scriptures; but I have heard some, not of the youngest and meanest of the party, speak contemptibly enough of the scriptures, when they have, according to the popish dialect, call'd them *A Nose of wax*; nor do I wonder at this, considering from whom they first learnt it.*

there was a very visible decay of serious and practical religion: No wonder, when thro' the artful management of some, who plac'd religion in speculation more than in practice, people were greatly prejudic'd against those who made it their whole business to preach practical religion. I believe the greatest want of practical religion was to be found in some of those, who shewed themselves the most eager zealots for what they accounted orthodoxy. And had not there been indeed a decay of practical religion, I can't think we should have ever seen such instances of injustice, falshood, and vile slandering as afterwards appear'd, to the great service of a cause that needed such assistance. *and it was found that the Arian error had spread farther than was imagin'd.* Why did not this writer then, as he was earnestly requested, publish somewhat to convince people of it? Would not that have been much more honourable, than these private backbitings, and an endeavour to bear down mens reason and understanding by a mere human authority?

LAYMEN now talk'd and disputed about it in many odious and blasphemous phrases, several of which are too shocking and scandalous to be mention'd. When the writer of the *Letter* found that his cause was not like to stand by its own strength and evidence, he seems to have been very fond of picking up little stories, and taking up reports against his neighbours, upon very insufficient grounds; and he seems to have had a mean agent, that too well liked the employment of helping him to such. I remember I have heard him my self allege, that a person should use an indecent expression of the Trinity, which I suppose may be one of those not fit to be inserted; and upon inquiry into the story, I found there was not any foundation for it. And when so many lies and slanders are handed about, a man of honour and conscience should be very careful of
his

his evidence, when he helps to spread reports. People that would invent the most groundless and malicious lies concerning me, would not stick to do the same concerning others; and from such fountains have proceeded, without doubt, many of the fine tales which are here refer'd to. And if Mr. *John Lavington* was the person who help'd him to these rare stories, as is very probable, I think little stress is to be laid upon them; for he appears to have been a man, that would with the utmost assurance and positiveness assert a thing, even upon a mere suspicion. Thus he fill'd the city with a report of a person's carrying a long scroll of texts to another, to make him change his opinion; and when the story came to be inquir'd into, it appear'd to be no more than this; that his friend deliver'd to him a piece of stuff wrapt up in paper: and when he was convinc'd of his mistake, there was no convincing him that he had done that person any wrong by the report. But I will consider the two expressions which, *p. 30.* are brought to illustrate what is here said. *One was heard to say, That Christ was a God, and so was King George.* Take this as it was, very probably, deliver'd, and there is no reason for such an outcry. It is common for these men to argue that Christ is the supreme God, because he is called *God*; and if when this argument was urged, any one alleg'd that Magistrates were called *Gods*, and so *King George* might be a *God*, and that therefore this title barely would not prove Christ the *supreme God*; this was really a truth, and the calling it blasphemy, is but a very injudicious confutation of it. *Another, that the Holy Ghost was no God at all.* This I have answer'd in my *Defence*, *p. 32.* 'Tis probable enough that a person might say, the Holy Ghost is never call'd God in scripture; and the improvement of such an innocent, and true expression, was very easy to be

made by a sort of men, who stuck not much at such things: besides that the person charged with this, denies that he ever said what he is tax'd with.

BUT to go on with the *Letter* in the *Narrative*, p. 5. *It was observ'd that they had all the arguments put into their mouths, as must necessarily come from men of learning.* Suppose they had; was there any harm in that? Was not that a sign that they studied the matter diligently? Where would have been the hurt, if the other side had been furnish'd in like manner? Nay, and did not this writer's friends disperse books for that purpose? Why should men distrust the evidence of truth, when people are examining and comparing one with another, what is said on both sides? Sure this was the way to find out truth, which should be no offence to any man, who desires that should prevail.

A dying person, that was a member of the Church of England, sent for one of the dissenting ministers of Exon in horror, having been misled into these notions. 'Tis very possible that men may take up true, as well as false notions, upon slight and insufficient grounds; and a dying hour may very well be supposed to awaken men to consider upon what grounds they have gone in religion, and make them reflect with horror upon their carelessness in taking any thing upon trust without evidence. Nay, many men, when with horror they look back upon a vicious conversation, are very fond of laying the blame upon others, and particularly upon such as they have hearken'd to in altering their opinions; and they easily charge that upon their opinions, which they ought more justly to charge upon the wickedness of their hearts. Whether these were the circumstances of this case, I know not, nor do I inquire; it being certain that no point of doctrine is to be tried by such a standard, as the opinion

nion of dying men. These sorry pleas are arguments with me, that they who use them, apprehend they need them instead of better.

I am not certain the *Letter* reaches any farther in the *Narrative*, and therefore have only one thing more to add with reference to it, and that is, that these pitiful things, which furnish out the lamentable complaint, were what happen'd long before the writing of the *Letter*, we being, at the time when this Gentleman and his friends thought it expedient to stir up the strife, in much quiet on both sides; and there being no stir made by either the ministers, or the laity, of that side which he is so much displeas'd with. I hope the reader will excuse this long, but necessary digression.

I go on now with the Assembly. When many were eager for declaring, they who were against it desir'd to be resolv'd, *Whether the holy scriptures are a sufficient rule of faith, without human additions and interpretations.* The following question also was set down by the Scribe: and the Moderator, with several others, many times desir'd it might be put to the vote.

“ Shall a declaration in words of scripture be
“ accepted as orthodox?

BUT this could by no means be obtain'd. On the contrary, one of the brethren said: “ The
“ words of scripture are not sufficient [to try mens
“ orthodoxy]. For the *Papists, Arians, and Soci-*
“ *nians* receive the scripture revelation, and own
“ the words of scripture. And there is no con-
“ fession, or test, we can draw up in the words of
“ scripture, sufficient to discover them.” The
Scribe was here forbidden to write, because, as he supposed, some were unwilling to have what was spoken against the sufficiency of scripture expos'd to the world. And so at another time, when he

was pening a nice Declaration, made by one of the brethren, he was again forbidden to write.

WHEN I saw they were likely to hold on wrangling about this, I propos'd that every one should declare either in his own, or in scripture words, as he thought fit, and that whoever disliked any ones Declaration might be at liberty to object against it.

THE Scribe was now forbidden to write; for what reason, they who forbad him know best.

THE Scribe desired the great sticklers for declaring, to let their brethren know, *What use they intended to make of such Declarations as might not please them.* But that was a *secret* not fit to be communicated.

SOME moved, that seeing the time was come for the Lecture to begin, and the people were waiting at the door of the meeting-house, where the Assembly was held, they should adjourn till the afternoon. But this was refused, and a crowd was kept in an humble expectation of admittance in the streets, 'till the Assembly had finish'd.

Mr. *Carkeet*, who argued for the sufficiency of scripture, desir'd it might be put to the vote: "Whether a minister who declares in scripture phrases, and says the highest things the scripture doth concerning each person, shall be under no suspicion of heterodoxy." Upon that condition he profess'd a readiness to declare. But he prevail'd not, but receiv'd a reprimand from one of the brethren, who desir'd of the Moderator also, that *without more ado*, we might proceed to declaring.

THEN Mr. *John Lavington* of *Exon*, one of the younger ministers, ordain'd not three years before, who had a very large share in the discourse that morning, and the night before, and whose business it seem'd to be then, as well as at other times, to
interrupt

interrupt any that spoke, and were not of his side, tho' his speeches were such as few thought worth remembring; he, I say, propos'd, that he might begin to declare his opinion. When that was re-jected with some scorn, he then propos'd that his father in law Mr. *Ball*, who first mov'd the thing in the Assembly, might be first in making his declaration. He was answer'd, that this was contrary to the rules and custom of the Assembly, in which the *senior* or *junior* minister by *ordination* always began: whereas he had five *junior*, and Mr. *Ball* fourteen *senior* ordain'd ministers present. To this he pertly reply'd, That *our rules were not as the laws of the Medes and Persians, which alter not;* and therefore he gave it as his opinion, *they might be broke upon this occasion.* But few, if any, second-ed this proposal: so it was dropt, and the senior ministers were order'd to declare first. Accordingly Mr. *Joseph Hallet* sen. of *Exon* began, and read the following declaration.

“ SINCE divines generally hold, that the doctrine
 “ of the sacred Trinity is a mystery sublime and
 “ ineffable, I humbly conceive that it can't be bet-
 “ ter express'd than in the words of God him-
 “ self.

“ THEREFORE I declare, That the *Father* is the
 “ most high God. *Luke* 1. 32. vi. 35.

“ I also declare, That *in the beginning was the*
 “ *Word, and the Word was with God, and the*
 “ *Word was God.* *John* 1. 1. That *Christ*, the
 “ only begotten Son of God, *is over all, God bles-*
 “ *sed for ever.* *Rom.* ix. 5.

“ I farther declare, That when *Ananias* and *Sap-*
 “ *phira* did lie to the *Holy Ghost*, they did not lie
 “ unto men, but unto God. *Act.* v. 3, 4. And the
 “ bodies of believers being the *temples of the Holy*
 “ *Ghost.* *1 Cor.* vi. 19. are the *temples of God.*

“ *1 Cor.*

“ 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. and yet, *To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things,*
 “ 1 Cor. viii. 6.

“ I difown the distinguishing doctrines of the
 “ *Arians, Sabellians, and Socinians.*

“ I conclude with the words of excellent Mr.
 “ *Baxter, in his preface to the second part of The Saints everlasting rest; where speaking against those, who are eager to tie all men to their expofitions of scripture, and to censure all for heretical, who differ from them herein, he adds :*

“ Two things have fet the church on fire, and
 “ been the plagues of it above a thousand years.
 “ 1. Inlarging our *Creed*, and making more *fundamentals* than God ever made. 2. Composing
 “ (and fo imposing) *our creeds and confessions*, in
 “ *our own words and phrases.* When men have
 “ learned more *manners and humility*, than to ac-
 “ cuse God’s language as too general and obscure
 “ (as if they could mend it) and have more dread
 “ of God, and compaffion on themselves, than to
 “ make those *fundamentals, or certainties*, which
 “ God never made fo, and when they reduce their
 “ *confessions to their due extent, and to scripture*
 “ *phrase* (that Dissenters may not scruple subscrib-
 “ ing) then, and (I think) never till then, shall the
 “ church have peace about doctrinals.

Mr. *John Withers of Exeter*, when it came to his turn, made the following declaration.

“ THE heresy of *Arius* consisted in these three
 “ things. 1. In affirming that the Son of God
 “ was but a creature. 2. That there was a time
 “ when he had no existence. 3. That his super-
 “ angelical nature animated his body instead of a
 “ reasonable soul. These were the peculiar distin-
 “ guishing opinions of that man; all which I sin-
 “ cerely disclaim.

“ As for a positive declaration, I believe that
 “ the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are three di-
 “ vine persons: That these three are one in Deity,
 “ nature, essence, substance, or which ever you
 “ please to call them, so far as is possibly consistent
 “ with that distinction of persons, which the New
 “ Testament, and the most primitive christian writ-
 “ ters hold forth unto us. But I decline making a
 “ declaration in the terms made use of by some of
 “ my brethren, because there is no mention made
 “ in it of the three divine persons; and some of
 “ the most zealous contenders for it have explain’d
 “ to me the doctrine of the Trinity only by three
 “ *somewhats*, or that God is some way *one*, and
 “ some way *three*.

WHEN my turn came, the declaration I made,
 as near as I can remember, having never pen’d it,
 was thus:

“ I am not of the opinion of *Sabellius*, *Arius*,
 “ *Socinus*, or *Sherlock*. I believe there is but
 “ one God, and can be no more. I believe the
 “ Son and Holy Ghost to be divine persons, but
 “ subordinate to the Father: and the unity of
 “ God is, I think, to be resolv’d into the Father’s
 “ being the fountain of the divinity of the Son and
 “ Spirit.

THERE were some, who instead of making any
 declaration of their own, express’d their agreement
 with Mr. *Hallet*. The rest that made any express
 themselves, some in the words of the *Assembly’s*
Catechism; some said that the Father, Son, and
 Spirit were the one God; others that the Father,
 Word, and Spirit were the one God, and the ob-
 ject of Christians worship; others used the word
persons; others explain’d it by *modes*, *distinctions*,
 or some such way. And I think all the declarati-
 ons that were made, beside those mention’d, were
 esteem’d orthodox enough, excepting one, which

was made by Mr. *John Parr*, which he read out of *Eph. iv. 4, 5, 6.*

THERE was no objection made against any one's Declaration, while we were in the Assembly; but afterwards an outcry was made against mine, which I shall endeavour to account for, when I have gone thro' what the Assembly did that morning before they broke up.

Mr. *Matthew Huddy*, Mr. *Samuel Carkeet*, and one more, refus'd to make any declaration at all. When the anonymous person was called upon to declare, he spake to this effect: "I disown any authority that any man, or body of men, or this Assembly hath to demand my opinion; and therefore refuse to make any declaration." And when he had said this and was going away, Mr. *Ball* said, *What! hath he a mind to ruin himself?* Upon which a friend took him by the sleeve, and desir'd him to come back: but he replied, *he would not submit to their authority;* adding some other words to Mr. *Ball*, which I will not repeat.

AFTER all that would had declared, a zealous and leading brother is reported to have said: "It now appears there was too much reason to suspect that *Arianism* is spreading:" tho' this was expressly disclaim'd in the Declarations I have set down.

NEXT a motion was made, that an account should be taken what was the opinion of the majority. The Moderator said, "He thought it requisite to have the declarations repeated and written, that it might the better appear in what expressions the majority agreed." This being rejected, he said, "That a great many of the ministers were gone out of the Assembly, who ought to be sent for, before this affair was carry'd on." To this one reply'd, "That they had designedly withdrawn themselves." The Moderator said, "That was
" more

“ more than he knew.” And farther observing that the Scribe was absent, as well as many other ministers, whom no body, as he thought, went to call, he added, “ That he question’d whether it “ was a proper Assembly at that time.” *How!* said one; *Not an Assembly?* He reply’d, “ Since “ so many are absent; and among them the Scribe, “ who was chosen as well as the Moderator, I “ doubt whether it is a proper Assembly.” One at a distance from the table moved to have him *voted out of the chair*, for opposing this motion.

THE Scribe, who a little before was forbid to write, and had put up his papers, being now return’d to the table, was requir’d to write the following words, which were dictated to him by Mr. *Lavington*.

“ ’Tis the general Sense of this Assembly, *That*
 “ *there is but one living and true God; and*
 “ *that the Father; Son, and Holy Ghost are*
 “ *the one God.*”

THIS general sense appear’d to be the sense of about two to one, or perhaps rather more.

SOME thought that they who would have this to be the general sense of the Assembly, a little forgot themselves, because some of the most zealous for a declaration several times gave it as their opinion, That our Lord Jesus Christ is called the Son, only with respect to his incarnation, &c. and Mr. *Ball* used the word *Logos*, and not *Son*. However that be, Mr. *Lavington* express’d his great satisfaction in what was done; having now, as he said, *bound, or tied down the two counties*. This he denied afterwards, but there were three who attested it.

THERE is a remark made upon these transactions of the Assembly in the *Narrative*, p. 16. which it may not be amiss to take some brief notice of: *It was observed, that all the elder ministers to a very few, were zealous in their votes and speeches for the*

common faith; so that the weight, as well as number, went that way. And if the number of voters; or the number of their years, could add weight to any controversy about a matter of truth, there can be no farther dispute in our county. But truth, if I mistake not, is to be tried quite another way; and if honest *Luther* and *Calvin* had judg'd of the weight of their cause by this rule, they must never have taken the course they did.

THE Assembly being broke up, the lecture soon began, when Mr. *Matthew Huddy* preach'd a most excellent sermon; as I believe all impartial judges, who have since read it in print, will easily allow. I need not desire the reader should have a worse impression of the behaviour of the majority of the Assembly, than what he may receive from the treatment which he met with for his sermon.

IN the afternoon, according to custom, a motion was made to thank the minister that prayed, and him that preach'd. The former was carry'd without opposition; the latter was violently oppos'd, and refus'd by a majority, tho' to this day the fault of the sermon is a secret. There was one who voted against giving the preacher thanks, who afterwards made a motion that the Assembly would desire Mr. *Huddy* to print his sermon; which so exceedingly pleas'd my fancy, that I seconded the motion, and endeavour'd to have it put to the vote. But it was waved; and then the Gentleman gave his reason why he made that motion, viz. "That he had the vanity, if it were printed, to undertake, with the Assembly's leave, to answer it." It did not appear that the Assembly had any inclination to indulge his vanity; but Mr. *Huddy* was constrain'd to print his sermon, that he might shew how unreasonable the clamours rais'd against him were.

A fearful outcry there was against it every where, among the party which was zealous for impositions: and there was one disingenuous report which ran among the people, but in all probability had its rise from some in the Assembly: I am much deceived if some of them did not give broad hints, easy to be understood, to that purpose. 'Twas said the sermon was not the preacher's own, and it being the fashion to charge me with every thing that displeases, a great honour was done me in pretending the sermon was composed by me. But all that know the brave spirit and good sense of the preacher, know that he needed no help; and it would have been reckon'd disingenuous in any other party to have attempted to disparage a minister by such sly and mean insinuations. The world will believe, they had not much judgment in stile, who could pretend to guess after this rate, from the stile of that sermon; it being as different from mine, as one stile can well be from another. For my own part I declare, I never saw or heard a line of the sermon before it was preach'd; nor had I ever the least suspicion that it was not his own.

HOWEVER severe the invectives were against the sermon, I have reason to think it was of good service at that time, and that its greatest fault was, that it was a seasonable truth, and prevented the managers going on in the afternoon as they had begun in the morning; for the thanks of the Assembly being refus'd, we had nothing more done that related to this affair, but the Assembly ended in the evening.

THE next day there was a sermon as usual, at six in the morning. Nor did Mr. *Gilling* the preacher give much less offence than Mr. *Huddy*. His sermon was against *rash judging*; and a noble one it was: but they who most needed it, were exasperated, instead of being profited by it. He likewise

was

was forced; for his own vindication, to print his sermon; which 'tis hoped may be of great use now, when discourses of that nature are so much wanted. This Gentleman was the worthy *Scribe* in that Assembly, whose papers I have made much use of in giving an account of it.

THE *Narrative* says, p. 16. That upon preaching these two sermons follow'd a great ferment in the city. And it might have been as learnedly observed, that this ferment follow'd upon the sun's rising; unless it can be shewn that there is any thing amiss in either of these sermons. Let the printed sermons be examin'd carefully, and it will appear that they were well calculated for the preventing, or checking a ferment; and 'tis a sign of those mens being in a very bad temper before, that would be put into a ferment by such useful and excellent discourses. The unaccountable conduct of the ministers, who manag'd this affair against their brethren both before, and in the Assembly, is the true cause of that ferment there was in the city.

HAVING now gone thro' the affair of the Assembly, I shall take occasion to justify what I said in it. The author of the *Account of the Reasons*, p. 17. hath this reflection: *And 'tis very remarkable, that when Mr. Peirce made his confession in the Assembly (which was unsatisfactory to most that heard it) we are assured he had not one scripture phrase in it. And he himself, in a sermon preach'd since the difference arose, hath declared, "that 'tis perhaps "unavoidable to talk of these things without using "other words than those of scripture."*

I am sorry the Gentlemen could not procure one to write that *Account*, who was able to see, that what he here cites from my sermon, is nothing to his purpose. I never objected against any mens expressing their own sense of these matters in their own words; all that I plead against is, the imposing

[III]

posing upon others, as a test, words that are not scripture. 'Tis no offence to me to hear men tell what they apprehend to be the meaning of the scripture, as my constant practice shews: but I abhor the thoughts of having my words made a rule to other men. And there is not the least shadow of an inconsistency between what I have ever said on this head, and what I did in the Assembly. I was to tell what my apprehensions were; and this I did frankly in my own words, without expecting that any one should agree to use the same, or being displeas'd with any one who thought fit to take the same course himself.

I confess this is the only step I look back upon with any regret. I do not think what I did was unlawful in it self; and what much sway'd me to declare at all, was that my two brethren, Mr. *Hallet* and Mr. *Withers* had both made their declarations before me; and I was willing to stand upon the same foot with them, that I might avoid the clamour which the acting a different part from them both might have brought upon me. But upon a farther review of the matter, and considering how manifestly the Assembly set up an *Inquisition*, I think they acted the truly noble part who absolutely disown'd their authority, and refused to make any declaration at all; and were the thing to be done again, I would certainly take part with them, whom I cannot but highly applaud for their brave withstanding such incroachments upon our christian liberty.

BUT the chief thing I have here to do, is to give satisfaction, if possible, to those that heard my declaration, and to whom it proved *unsatisfactory*. I hope it was not unsatisfactory that I declared, I was not of the opinion of *Sabellius*, *Arius*, *Socinus*, or *Sherlock*; or that I declar'd I believ'd there is *but one God*, which by the way is a *scripture phrase*,

phrase, if I am not mistaken; or that I said *the Son and Holy Ghost were divine persons*. The only things therefore which were *unsatisfactory*, must be, that I said, I believed these *two persons to be subordinate to the Father*. And so this is one thing complain'd of, that at another time I declared for the *subordination of the Son*. Account, p. 8. And to the same purpose do the Gentlemen speak in their *Letter*, which I have had occasion to take notice of elsewhere. The other thing which, now I have publish'd my Declaration, they will be apt to complain of is, the account I give of the unity of God. There were none of the complainers that I could hear of, that could give an account of that part. I know the editor of Mr. *Trosse's Catechism* aim'd at me, in what he said in his *Postscript*; but since he did not deliver what I said, I was not concern'd to take notice of it. But I found, by talking with Mr. *Lawington*, that what was there set down, was given out as a representation of my words. The writer of the *Postscript* having cited Dr. *Owen*, Mr. *How*, and Dr. *Sherlock*, adds: "By which it appears, that however Dr. *Owen*, Mr. *How*, and Dr. *Sherlock* differ'd in their explications of the doctrine of the *Trinity*; yet they all agreed in this, that there was but *one God*, and that the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, was that *one God*; and not one of them ever resolv'd the unity of the godhead into God the Father." How easily can this writer bear with a man that holds *three infinite Minds*, or *Spirits*, without pursuing the consequences, which one would think were natural enough, and should have been as offensive, as another person's resolving the unity of the godhead into the Father? But as this was design'd for a representation of my declaration, he ought to have been very exact in relating it; because there is really a great deal of nicety in the very wording such things. And I assure

assure that writer, whoever he is, I had a particular reason why I express'd my self as I did ; and tho' he may think he does not vary the matter as to the substance, yet by the alteration he deprives me of an advantage, which I intended to save to my self by my expression. I consider'd, that if I had spoken only as he does, I must have had recourse to *St. Paul's* authority, whose words any *Arian, Socinian*, or other heretic would make use of and assent to, and so could do me little service, in comparison of the expression I chose, which has been not only born with, but applauded as orthodox, in the writings of ancient fathers, and modern divines.

I will not be so vain as to pretend to give a large account of the sayings of the ancient fathers upon this head. This has been largely and learnedly done by others, whose writings the reader may consult. I shall take notice of the judgment which those who are well skill'd in their writings have given of them ; and the rather, because I find some are very confident in boasting of their having the primitive church on their side. There may be here and there an obscure passage in the ancient writers that may seem favourable to them, and may perhaps be more so than it was originally, by reason of the hands which their writings pass'd thro'. But I really believe whoever has look'd into the ancient writers without prejudice, must see they all of them write in the contrary strain, and that there are ten passages again the common opinion, for one that is favourable to it. This has been in a great measure acknowledg'd, even by those who have not seem'd pleas'd with it.

DR. *Whitby* tells us, in his excellent *Preface* to his *Dissertation De S. Scripturarum interpretatione*, p. 30. " That whoever says that the fathers unan-
 " nimously acknowledg'd a Trinity of the *same*
 " *substance*, of equal honour and glory, without
 P " any

“ any difference or inequality, or Christ to be the
 “ God over all, or the supreme God of the universe,
 “ he apparently opposes the judgment of the most
 “ learned papists, and the fathers themselves, and
 “ the plain truth. *Huetius* is deservedly reckon’d
 “ to excel among the learned doctors of the Ro-
 “ man church; and these are his words: *The most*
 “ *favourable plea for Origen is, that which may be*
 “ *fetch’d from the like expressions of other fathers*
 “ *upon the same subject; for many of the christian*
 “ *writers, who lived before the council of Nice,*
 “ *spake unadvisedly of the mystery of the Trinity.*
 “ *The doctrine of Tatian, and of Justin, who was*
 “ *older than he, was corrupt concerning the Trinity.*
 “ *The spurious Clemens, and Theophilus of Anti-*
 “ *och are liable to the same charge; but the expressi-*
 “ *ons of Tertullian and Lactantius, and of these three*
 “ *of Alexandria, Clemens, Dionysius, and Pierius,*
 “ *and many others, are vile and intolerable. Where-*
 “ *fore when Bellarmine defends Origen by this ar-*
 “ *gument, that the opinion of his master Clemens,*
 “ *and of his own scholars, Dionysius of Alexandria*
 “ *and Gregorius Thaumaturgus, was sound and or-*
 “ *thodox about the Trinity, and ’tis probable that the*
 “ *doctrine he had received from Clemens, he after-*
 “ *wards carefully deliver’d to his scholars; he could*
 “ *not have hit upon an argument that could do more*
 “ *disservice to the cause of Origen; for there is not*
 “ *one of these three who believed rightly concerning the*
 “ *Trinity. For Clemens makes the substance of the*
 “ *Son to be so different from, as to be inferior to the*
 “ *substance of the Father. But Dionysius makes the*
 “ *Son to be ποιημα, the workmanship of the Father,*
 “ *and unlike to him; and used, as St. Basil says,*
 “ *Epist. 41. unbecoming expressions concerning the*
 “ *Holy Ghost. The same Basil finds fault also with*
 “ *Gregorius Thaumaturgus, for saying plainly that*
 “ *Christ was created. In fine, ’tis certain that the*
 “ catholics

“ catholics durst not even in Basil’s time, and later
 “ than that too, openly profess the divinity of the
 “ Holy Ghost, for fear of the insults of the Pneuma-
 “ tomachi.” By the *Pneumatomachi*, I suppose,
 he hardly means the heretics, to whom that name
 was afterwards given; but in general those, who
 deny’d the supreme Deity of the Holy Ghost.

HE next takes notice of *Cotelerius’s* words, who
 says, “ That learned men have observed, that some
 “ of the ancient fathers, before *Arius*, have not
 “ scrupled the expressions of *γέννημα, πείημα, κτίσμα,*
 “ an *offspring, workmanship, creature,* and the like
 “ concerning the Son.

NEXT he brings in the learned *Petavius* acknow-
 ledging, “ That many of the ancients, before the
 “ council of *Nice*, held there were more *principles*
 “ of things than one, and that they differ’d in *na-*
 “ *ture, substance, and dignity,* so that one was
 “ greater than the other; and that long before *A-*
 “ *pollinaris*, they held the Son was greater than
 “ the *Spirit*, and the *Father* than the *Son*.

THE use that I would make of this is, that since
 the papists are the most zealous asserters of the
 common doctrine, and ambitious above all men to
 prove, that the ancient fathers held the same doc-
 trine with themselves; we need not doubt that the
antenicene fathers were not favourable to it, since
 the most learned men of the *Roman* communion are
 forced to acknowledge as much. I would not have
 any one suppose, that I approve of all the expres-
 sions which are here charged upon the ancients:
 ’tis enough for me, that it appears they must have
 look’d upon the *Father* as *supreme*, and the *Son*,
 and *Spirit* as *subordinate*.

THE learned *Photius* is known to have had an
 extraordinary zeal for this doctrine; and yet, as
 Dr. *Whitby* observes, *ibid.* p. 32. he carps at *Cle-*
mens Rom. for his manner of speaking of Christ,

and bitterly inveighs against *Clemens Alexand.* *Pierius*, and *Eusebius*.

THE DOCTOR gives his own judgment, *ibid.* p. 17.
 “ That the *antenicene* fathers, *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*,
 “ *Novatian*, *Origen*, *Methodius*, and *Eusebius*, ex-
 “ pressly asserted that the *Father* was *greater* than
 “ the *Son*, as to his *divine* nature ; but many of
 “ the *postnicene* fathers said, he was so only as to his
 “ *human* nature.” And again : “ That many of
 “ the *antenicene* fathers held that God the *Father*
 “ was alone the *supreme* God, above whom there
 “ was no other God ; but the contrary was, ac-
 “ cording to *Origen*, only the opinion of some a-
 “ mong the multitude of believers.” The passage
 in *Origen* is very remarkable, and is accordingly ta-
 ken notice of by all who write upon this subject.

I shall translate it with the Doctor's remarks, p.
 33. “ *Celsus* had objected that the christians did
 “ not much honour God, but extravagantly ho-
 “ nour'd him they call'd his Son. To this *Origen*
 “ answers: *We do very much honour God, and know*
 “ *that his Son is exceedingly honour'd by his Father.*
 “ *But let it be supposed, that among the multitude*
 “ *of believers, there are some, who differing from*
 “ *others, rashly affirm our Saviour is the God over*
 “ *all ; yet we do not acknowledge him as such ; for*
 “ *we believe what he says himself, My Father which*
 “ *sent me is greater than I.* Where, says the Doc-
 “ tor, he expressly affirms, 1. Not only that they
 “ who held our Saviour was *the God over all* were
 “ but few ; but likewise that they did it *rashly* :
 “ and yet all the *postnicene* fathers not only ac-
 “ knowledg'd him to be the God over all, but
 “ proved it from *St. Paul's* words, *Rom.* ix. 5.
 “ 2. He declares that the other christians of his
 “ time did not acknowledge Christ to be such an
 “ one. 3. He assigns this as the reason why they
 “ denied it, that they believed Christ, who said,
 “ *My*

“ *My Father, who sent me, is greater than I:*
 “ which words almost all the *antenicene* fathers
 “ made to refer to the *superior* nature of Christ.

THERE is much more to be met with in the Doctor's excellent *Preface*, which well deserves the serious perusal of those, who speak with such assurance of their agreeing with the primitive writers, or are for making any thing else but the scriptures a standard.

THERE is nothing more common in the ancient writers, than to speak of Christ in such terms, as the moderns would count blasphemous. How often do they speak of him as God's *minister*, and making the world at his *command*? as the *Angel* of God, who appear'd under the old dispensation to the patriarchs, deeming it absurd to suppose the *God* of the *universe* should be call'd an *Angel*, or make such appearances? Nay, and nothing is more common, than for them to speak of the Father as the *fountain*, the *author*, and *cause* of the *Son* and *Spirit*. 'Tis notorious that the ancients accounted for the unity of God by this consideration, and that not only before the council of *Nice*, but after it too. *Hilary, Athanasius, Basil, Nazianzen*, and others are taken notice of to this purpose.

I shall add here, that if we may judge of the sense of the ancients in this matter by their *Creeds*, 'tis manifest they always accounted for the *unity* of God in the same way that I did. I will here transcribe the words of the learned author of the *Critical History of the Apostles Creed*, p. 54. “ 'Tis
 “ the observation of *Rufinus*, that in all the Eastern
 “ *Creeds, it is; I believe in one God, the Father:*
 “ where, if by the *Eastern* he means the *Nicene*,
 “ or *Constantinopolitan*, it is certainly true; or if
 “ he means the ancient *Creeds* used before either of
 “ those, it is true not only of the *Eastern*, but of the
 “ *Western* also: for in all the most primitive *Creeds*,
 “ whether

“ whether *Latin* or *Greek*, this article runs, *I be-*
 “ *lieve in one God*, or, *in the only God* ; as in the
 “ two creeds of *Ireneus*, and three of *Origen's*,
 “ *ἕνα Θεόν*, *one God* ; and in three of *Tertullian's*,
 “ *unum*, or, *unicum Deum*, *one*, or, *the only God*.”
 To which I may add, that the same is true of that
Creed which is pick'd out of *Cyril of Jerusalem*,
 which *Bishop Bull* seems to think to have been the
 most ancient *Creed* of that church. See his *Judic.*
Eccles. Cathol. p. 128 & seq. Moreover, if the
 four first general Councils agree in thus expressing
 the unity of God, and in styling Christ *God of God* ;
 and if according to the Church of *England* no-
 thing is to be deem'd heresy, that is agreeable to the
 four first general Councils ; is it not very hard that
 heresy should be charg'd upon any one who says
 no more than they do?

THE next author I shall here bring to vouch for
 me in whatever I have said, that my adversaries can
 pretend to lay to my charge, and particularly as to
 my Declaration in the Assembly, is *Bishop Bull* ;
 who, I believe, will be easily allow'd by all compe-
 tent judges, to have been incomparably the most
 learned of all the modern writers, who have set them-
 selves to confute the *Arians*. His *Defensio fidei*
Nic. was printed at the cost of the learned *Bishop*
Fell ; when printed, *Oxford* made him a Doctor,
 the Archbishop an Archdeacon, *K. William* a Jus-
 tice, and the whole Assembly of the *French* Clergy
 return'd him their thanks by the *Bishop of Meaux*.
 No one can therefore reasonably suspect either his
 ability, or his orthodoxy ; and yet he has a long
 section, of above seventy pages in *quarto*, to prove
 the Son is subordinate to the Father, the very great
 heresy that has been laid to my charge. And *Mr.*
Nelson, in his *Life of Bishop Bull*, p. 333. affirms,
 that *Dr. Edwards* of *Cambridge* by finding fault
 with *Bishop Bull*, and not being able to receive
 the

the doctrine of the *subordination* of the *Son* to the *Father*, in the sense of the ancient writers, even *Athanasius* himself, thereby condemns, together with him, many of the ancients, as well as the moderns; and such of them both, as generally have been accounted most orthodox in the doctrine of the *Trinity*. Nor can *Mr. Nelson* be suspected to judge partially in this case, since he has himself written against *Dr. Clarke*.

THE passages which I shall cite from *Bishop Bull* are taken notice of by the very learned *Dr. Clarke*, in his *Scripture doctrine of the Trinity*; who has, as far as I have compar'd his citations with the *Bishop*, fairly set down his words, and translated them; and therefore because his book is in more hands than the *Bishop's*, I shall refer to the *Doctor's* book (of the first edition) in my citing them.

THE *Bishop* then asserts, "That the *one principle* is the *Father*, from whom the *Son* and *Holy Spirit* derive their *original*, p. 458. He says, "The *Father* is rightly stiled the *Whole*, as being the *fountain* of the *divinity*. For the *divinity* which is in the *Son*, and in the *Holy Spirit*, is the *Father's* *divinity*, being *derived* from him, p. 311. He allows a *superiority* of the *Father* over the *Son*, even in that respect whercin he is most *properly* the *Son* of *God*." *Ib.* He owns, "That the *Son*, as *deriving* his goodness, and the rest of his divine attributes, and his very divine nature it self, from the fountain of the *Father*, might rightly, even in this sense, yield the *pre-eminence* to the *Father*, p. 49. He says, "That *God* commanded his *Word* to make the world, p. 329. "That in all divine operations, the *Son* is the *minister* of the *Father*: for as much as he derives his operating power from *God* the *Father* (who is the *fountain* and *original*, as of the essence, so also of all divine operations) and the *Father* operates

rates by him, p. 320. That 'tis the *peculiar* pro-
 perty of the Father to exist and operate of him-
 self: but the Son receives from the Father, as
 from his *original*, both his being, and power of
 acting, *Ib.* He undertakes to shew, that the
 doctrine, that the Son as God (that is, God of
 God) is less than the Father, is very *catholic*,
 and maintain'd even by the fathers after the
 council of *Nice*, who most strongly oppos'd the
Arian heresy, p. 161. He says, 'Tis certain,
 that the doctrine, that the Father of Jesus Christ
 is alone the true God, if it be understood of that
preeminence of the Father, by which he *alone* is
 of himself the true God, continued in the church
 not only *till* the council of *Nice*, or a little af-
 ter, but *always*, p. 257. That the *subordi-*
nation of the Son to the Father is expres'd by
 the *Nicene* fathers two ways: first in their cal-
 ling the *Father* the *one God*; and then in their
 stiling the *Son*, *God of God*, *Light of Light*,
 p. 258. He readily grants, That the Father *a-*
lone is in some respect the *supreme* God: name-
 ly, because, as *Athanasius* speaks, he is the *foun-*
tain of divinity; that is, he *alone* is of himself
 God, from whom the Son, and Holy Spirit de-
 rive their divinity, *Ib.* And that we may see
 with what judgment some are pleas'd to charge
 their neighbours with *Arianism*, let this passage be
 taken notice of: "That the Father, as the chief
 author giving his commands, created all things
 by his Son, executing the *will* and *command* of
 the Father: this doctrine is so far from being *A-*
rian, that even those catholic writers, who liv'd
 after the council of *Nice*, and were the most ear-
 nest opposers of the *Arian* heresy, made no scrup-
 ple to affirm it generally in their writings, p. 329.
 And remarkable is what he says elsewhere: "If he
 who affirms that the Father, as Father, is the
 " *primary*

“ *primary* maker of the world, as having made all
 “ things by his Son, must be esteem’d an *Arian*:
 “ it will follow, that *St. Paul* himself will scarce
 “ be clear of *Arianism*; who *1 Cor. viii. 6.* treat-
 “ ing of the distinct parts (if we may so say) which
 “ the Father and Son bear in the creation and re-
 “ novation of things, thus speaks: *To us there is*
 “ *one God; the Father, of whom are all things, and*
 “ *we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ; by whom*
 “ *are all things, and we by him:* for ’tis manifest
 “ that those words, *Of whom*, do denote the *pri-*
 “ *mary cause*: p. 320. Nay he says; That their
 “ opinion; who contend that the Son can proper-
 “ ly be stiled *God of himself*, is contrary to the ca-
 “ tholic doctrine. p. 271. and to their *hypotheses*
 “ who maintain it. p. 311. He earnestly exhorts all
 “ pious and studious young men; to take heed of
 “ such a spirit, from whence such things as these
 “ do proceed [viz. *ridiculing the distinction between*
 “ *God self existing, and God of God*] p. 271:
 He thus argues the necessity of a subordination:
 “ According to the opinion of the ancients, to
 “ which also common sense agreeth; if there were
 “ in the divinity two *unbegotten*, or two *independ-*
 “ *ent principles*, it would follow, not only that
 “ the Father would be deprived of that preemi-
 “ nence, by which he hath his divinity of himself;
 “ that is, from no other; but also, that we must
 “ needs make two Gods. But now on the con-
 “ trary, if we allow that *subordination*; by which
 “ the Father alone is God of himself, and the Son
 “ is God from God the Father; then those ancient
 “ writers thought; that both the *preeminence* of
 “ the Father; and the *monarchy* of the universe
 “ would be preserved entire. p. 347. An admir-
 “ ble illustration he gives us of this from one of the
 “ ancients. “ *Athenagoras*, says he, writing to the
 “ Emperors *Marcus Aurelius Antoninus*, and his son

Q

“ *Lucius*

“ *Lucius Aurelius Commodus*, whom he had taken
 “ into a share of the empire with him ; and apo-
 “ logizing for the christians, who professed the
 “ worship of *one God*, and at the same time adored
 “ the Word or Son together with the supreme
 “ Father of all things ; alleges, that in their earth-
 “ ly empire there was some resemblance of the
 “ heavenly kingdom : for that whilst the govern-
 “ ment of the whole empire was monarchical, yet
 “ there were two distinct persons reigning therein ;
 “ of whom since the one received his authority
 “ from the other, and both of them govern’d the
 “ empire jointly and unanimously, the monarchy
 “ was therefore nevertheless preserved entire. *p.*
 “ 346.

I hope by this the Gentlemen I have had to do
 with will be sensible, there is no heresy in asserting
 a *subordination* ; and that if they understand this mat-
 ter aright, the learned Bishop *Bull* must certainly pass
 for a man that knew nothing of it. I defy any of
 my adversaries to allege any one thing I have said,
 that runs higher than some passages I have alleg’d
 from him.

I hope none will think me obliged to hold every
 thing else asserted by the Bishop. ’Tis enough for
 me, that my assertions are acquitted by him as *ca-*
tholic : and ’tis my desire, that no one who allows
 this, should insist upon my acknowledging any o-
 ther assertions of the Bishop, unless he himself clear-
 ly perceives how they can be reconciled with those
 I have now made use of.

BISHOP *Pearson*’s judgment is frequently boasted
 of in this controversy, nor is it strange that our
 brethren should be desirous of having a person of
 his eminent learning on their side. But if his au-
 thority is to be regarded, I have been rashly cen-
 sured, as these places following, collected by Dr.
Clarke, will shew.

BISHOP

BISHOP *Pearson* in his *Exposition on the Creed*,
 p. 34. “ Some of the ancients have not stuck to
 “ interpret those words, *The Father is greater than*
 “ *I*, of Christ as the Son of God, as the second
 “ person in the blessed Trinity; but still with re-
 “ ference not unto his essence, but his generation,
 “ by which he is understood to *have his being from*
 “ *the Father, who only hath it of himself, and is*
 “ *the original of all power and essence in the Son.*
 “ *I can of my own self do nothing*, saith our Savi-
 “ our, *because he is not of himself*; and whosoever
 “ receives his being, must receive his power from
 “ another.----*The Son can do nothing of himself, but*
 “ *what he seeth the Father do*; because he hath no
 “ *power of himself*, but what the Father gave.

P. 35. “ THE Father’s *prebeminence* undeniably
 “ consisteth in this, that he is God not of any o-
 “ ther, but of himself; and that there is no other
 “ person who is God, but is God of him. ’Tis
 “ no *diminution* to the Son, to say he is of another;
 “ for his very name speaks as much: but it were a
 “ *diminution* to the Father, to speak so of him:
 “ and there must be some *prebeminence*, where there
 “ is place for *derogation*. What the Father is, he
 “ is from none; what the Son is, he is from him:
 “ what the first is, he giveth; what the second is,
 “ he receiveth. The first is a Father indeed by
 “ reason of his Son, but he is not God by reason
 “ of him; whereas the Son is not so only in regard
 “ of the Father, but also *God by reason of the*
 “ *same*.

“ UPON this *prebeminence* (as I conceive) may
 “ safely be grounded the congruity of the divine
 “ mission. We often read that Christ was sent,----
 “ the Holy Ghost is also said to be sent, sometimes
 “ by the Father, sometimes by the Son: but we
 “ never read that the Father was sent at all, there

“ being an *authority* in that name which seems in-
 “ consistent with mission.

P. 37. “ THE Son must necessarily be *second* un-
 “ to the Father, from whom he receiveth his *ori-*
 “ *gination*, and the Holy Ghost unto the Son.
 “ Neither can we be thought to want a sufficient
 “ foundation for this priority of the first person
 “ of the Trinity, if we look upon the numerous
 “ testimonies of the ancient doctors of the Church,
 “ who have not stuck to call the Father the *origin*,
 “ the *cause*, the *author*, the *root*, the *fountain*, and
 “ the *head* of the *Son*, or the *whole divinity*.

P. 40. “ ’Tis most reasonable to assert, that there
 “ is but one person who is from none; and the ve-
 “ ry generation of the Son, and procession of the
 “ Holy Ghost undeniably prove, that neither of
 “ these two can be the person. For whosoever is
 “ generated, is from him which is the genitor;
 “ and whosoever proceedeth, is from him from
 “ whom he proceedeth, whatsoever the nature of
 “ the generation, or procession be. It followeth
 “ therefore, *that this person is the Father, which*
 “ *name speaks nothing* of dependance; nor suppo-
 “ seth any kind of priority in another.

“ ---HE is stiled *one God, the true God, the only*
 “ *true God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus*
 “ *Christ*.

“ WHICH, as ’tis most true, and so fit to be be-
 “ liev’d, is also a most *necessary truth*, and there-
 “ fore to be acknowledg’d; for the *avoiding a mul-*
 “ *tiplication and plurality of Gods*. For if there were
 “ *more than one* which were from none, it could
 “ not be denied, but there were *more Gods than one*.
 [Let them look to it then, who urge us with this
 learned Bishop’s authority, and yet pretend that the
Son and Holy Ghost are self-existent. In his judg-
 ment they must be understood to hold three Gods.]

“ Wherefore

“ Wherefore this *origination in the divine paternity,*
 “ hath anciently been look’d upon as the *assertion*
 “ *of the unity.*

SEE more to this purpose p. 134.

BISHOP *Usher* is likewise gloried in; but I hardly think they who value his authority when they think it is against us, will be pleas’d with the following passages taken out of his *Body of Divinity.*

P. 88. “ *WHAT* things are proper to each
 “ of them [the persons] in regard of themselves?

“ *FIRST*, in manner and order of being: the
 “ *Father* is the *first* person, having his *being* from
 “ *himself alone*, and is the *fountain* of *being* to the
 “ other persons; the *Son* is the *second*, having his
 “ *being* from the *Father alone* (and in that respect
 “ is called the *Light*, the *Wisdom*, the *Word*, and
 “ the *Image* of the *Father*) the *Holy Ghost* is the
 “ *third*, having his *being* from *them both*; and in
 “ that respect is called the *Spirit of God*, of the
 “ *Father*, and of *Christ*. *Secondly*, in their inward
 “ actions and properties: the *Father alone* begeth
 “ (and so in relation to the second person is
 “ called the *Father*) the *Son* is of the *Father* alone
 “ begotten; the *Holy Ghost* doth proceed
 “ both from the *Father* and the *Son*.

“ *WHAT* is proper to each of them in regard of
 “ the creatures?

“ *FIRST*, The *original* of the action is ascribed
 “ to the *Father*, *John* v. 17, 19. the *wisdom* and
 “ manner of working to the *Son*, *John* i. 3. *Heb.*
 “ i. 2. the *efficacy* of operation to the *Holy Ghost*,
 “ *Gen.* i. 2. *1 Cor.* xii. ¶. *Secondly*, The *Father*
 “ worketh all things of himself, in the *Son*, by the
 “ *Holy Ghost*; the *Son* worketh from the *Father*,
 “ by the *Holy Ghost*; the *Holy Ghost* worketh
 “ from the *Father* and the *Son*. See also p. 85.

I confess this learned Bishop has a curious *Latin*
 marginal note, p. 80. “ *Essentia Filii est a seipsa;*

“ *Et hac ratione dici potest αὐτόθεος. Essentia ta-*
 “ *men Filii non est a seipso; ideoque non potest hac*
 “ *ratione dici αὐτόθεος. Persona enim ejus genita est*
 “ *a Patre, accipiendo ab eo essentiam ingenitam.*
 “ The essence of the Son is *of it self*; and in that
 “ respect he may be called *God of himself*: but the
 “ essence of the Son is not *of himself*; and in
 “ that respect he cannot be called *God of himself*;
 “ for his person is begotten of the Father, by his
 “ receiving from him an unbegotten essence.

I can't think this most pious and learned Bishop
 here kept to the rule he lays down himself. *p. 76.*
 “ That we should not dare to speak any thing in
 “ it [*this mystery*] farther than we have warrant
 “ out of God's word: yea, we must tie our selves
 “ almost to the very words of the scripture, lest in
 “ searching we exceed and go too far.” I can't
 think these are *almost*, or indeed at all like, the
 words of scripture.

BISHOP Browning says, *Fol. vol. 1. p. 241.* “ His
 “ [the Spirit's] *being* and his *sending* cometh both
 “ from the *Father*. The reason is good: the *Fa-*
 “ *ther* is the *fountain* and *original* of the *deity*: he
 “ communicates it to the Son and Spirit.

Vol. 2. p. 23. “ The scripture still ascribes the
 “ sending of Christ unto God the Father. ----- The
 “ Father hath his being of himself, so hath he his
 “ working. We never read that the Father was
 “ sent by the Son, or by the Holy Ghost. He is
 “ *fons deitatis*, the fountain and original of the *dei-*
 “ *ty*. He is of himself, and works of himself; but
 “ the Son hath his being of the Father by eternal
 “ generation, and all his operations and actions flow
 “ from the Father, *John v. 19.*

Ib. p. 25. “ God sent his Son to redeem us: 'tis
 “ *actus auctoritatis*: it carries with it strength of
 “ full warrant and *authority* ----- *The Father that*
 “ *sent me gave me commandment*, *John xii. 49. Vid.*
p. 202, 203, 204.

Dr.

Dr. *Towerfon* on the *Creed*, *Fol.* 1678. *p.* 63. shews
 “ that if three persons be independent on each o-
 “ ther for their divinity, it will necessarily infer a
 “ plurality of Gods. And *p.* 65. he says, Though
 “ the whole three persons are fountains and princi-
 “ ples in respect of us, and of all those mercies we
 “ enjoy; yet as he who is the *fountain* of the *divi-*
 “ *nity*, must be so in a *more eminent* manner in re-
 “ spect of us, so we are accordingly to conceive
 “ of him as the *πρωτοπρωτη πηγη*, or *former first*,
 “ *fountain* of created things; as of the Son, that he
 “ receives his being a fountain from the *Father*,
 “ and the Holy Ghost from both. *P.* 64. There is
 “ a *prebeminence* on the part of the Father, because
 “ communicating the divine nature which the Son
 “ hath to him. ----- From that paternity, and
 “ that preeminency that it involves ----- it is not
 “ at all incongruous for the Father to send this his
 “ Son upon any errand, that may be worthy of
 “ him; and but meet for the Son, when sent, to
 “ go: because tho’ they both partake of the divine
 “ nature, yet the latter only by communication
 “ from the former, and to whom therefore he must
 “ so far forth be supposed to be *inferior*. ---- So sen-
 “ sible was this Son himself of the congruity of
 “ complying with him, from whom he received
 “ his divinity. ---- *Lo I come to do thy will*. ---- It be-
 “ ing not to be imagin’d, there should be any
 “ thing like willing on the one side, and compli-
 “ ance on the other, where there is not something
 “ of *imparity* in the subjects of it. *P.* 66. *St. Paul*,
 “ where he attributes the work of creation both to
 “ the Father and the Son, he tells us concerning
 “ the former, *1 Cor.* viii. 6. that *of him are all*
 “ *things, and we in him*; but of the latter, that *by*
 “ *him were all things, and we by him*; intimating,
 “ that tho’ the Son had an interest in that omni-
 “ potent work of the creation, yet it was *from* and
 “ *under*

“ *under* him of whom all things are there said to
 “ be. And *Heb.* i. 2. God the Father is said to
 “ to have made the worlds by him. *P.* 67. The
 “ unity of the godhead is not in any tolerable mea-
 “ sure to be salved, unless it be resolved into *one*
 “ *certain principle*, from whom those others that
 “ pretend to it, may be supposed to have derived
 “ it. *P.* 129. He is so the Son of God, as to be
 “ God of God also.----As the attributing to him an
 “ *incommunicated* deity would infer a *multiplicity* of
 “ Gods; so it cannot appear how the Father should
 “ send him upon his errands, if he did not receive
 “ his godhead from him. *P.* 134. He proves that
 Christ received his godhead from the Father, “from
 “ his affirming, that though he had *life in himself*;
 “ *John* v. 26. yet it was the Father that gave him
 “ that special privilege; and that he was from him
 “ and sent by him, *John* vii. 29. Which two pas-
 “ sages, he says, prove the derivation of his divine
 “ being from him: there appearing no otherwise
 “ any ground of the Father’s imploying him in that
 “ work, or of the Son’s complying with him in it.
 “ ----Suppose him not to have derived this divine
 “ nature from the Father, and you will not only
 “ destroy the *distinction* between the persons, but
 “ introduce a *multiplicity* of Gods; there appearing
 “ not any means how one and the same divine na-
 “ ture should be common to the three persons, un-
 “ less one of them should communicate it to the
 “ other.

LET me add one passage more for the sake of a
 friend, who uses to talk wildly upon these matters: ’tis in his treatise on the *Lord’s prayer*, p. 62. “ *Our*
 “ *Father*: The Father here spoken of is no other
 “ than the *first* person in the Trinity. He is his
 “ [Christ’s] Father as to his *divine* nature, yea the
 “ only one. So we find the Son himself to own,
 “ that he had *prepared him a body*, *Heb.* x. 5. and
 “ conse-

“ consequently was the Father of the human one.
 “ The Holy Ghost also had an interest in this latter birth, and in this paternity: but he acted therein as the *power of the highest*, Luke i. 35. and so that paternity is much more properly ascribed to him, whose power and spirit he was. However, it is no where affirm’d that *our Saviour was the Father of himself*, either as to his *divine* or *human* nature; which yet must be affirm’d here, if we make that Father which is in heaven to be the whole undivided Trinity.

ARCHBISHOP *Tillotson*, whose sermons upon the divinity of our Saviour have been handed about to convince people of the common opinion, when he asserts, that “ the most incommunicable properties and perfections of the deity are in scripture frequently ascribed to the Son and the Holy Ghost, yet excepts one in these words: “ one properly only excepted, which is peculiar to the Father, as he is the *principle* and *fountain* of the deity, that he is *of himself*, and of no other; which is not, nor can be said of the Son and Holy Ghost.

Serm 2.

DR. *Scot* is a celebrated author, and has had the good fortune to be reputed orthodox; and yet he tells us, *Christ. Life, Part II. vol. 2. p. 26.* “ It was very requisite that he who was authorized to mediate for God with men, which is the highest office under God the Father, should be a person of the highest rank and dignity, next to God the Father himself, and consequently that he should be God the Son.

AGAIN, p. 464. “ The law against which all men had sinned, and by which they were obliged to eternal punishment, was strictly and properly the law of God the Father, who being the *first* and *supreme* person in the *godhead*, was consequently

R

“ always

“ always the *first* and *supreme* in the *divine dominion*,
 “ Now the *divine dominion* consisting----of a legis-
 “ lative and executive power, the Father must be
 “ *supreme in both*.

HENCE speaking of the Father's granting an universal act of pardon in consideration of Christ's sacrifice, and upon condition of repentance, he says, p. 473. “ And this is the *ground-work* and *foundation* of all remission of sins, without which our
 “ *Saviour* himself hath *no right* to pardon and forgive us; for since the law against which we
 “ have all sinned was *peculiarly* from God the *Father*, as he is the *fountain* of *divinity*, and consequently the *head* of the *divine dominion*; it
 “ was he *peculiarly* that was the party *offended*,
 “ and consequently it was he to whom our obligation to punishment was due, and by whom *alone* it can be *released* and *remitted*, &c.

AGAIN, p. 562. “ Between the sacred three there
 “ is an *internal necessary subordination*, that can never be alter'd or inverted; and therefore there is
 “ no doubt but that as they will always be *subordinate*, so they will always act *subordinately*. The
 “ *Father* as the *first*, the *begetter*, and the *fountain* of *divinity*, will be always *first* and *supreme* in
 “ the *divine monarchy*; the *Son* as *begotten* by him, will still reign in *subordination* to him; and the
 “ *Holy Ghost*, as *proceeding* from both, will continue to reign in *subordination* to both.

DR. *Whitby* upon *Heb. i. 9. God, even thy God*:
 “ for *Christ* is *God of God*, according to the *Nicene symbol*. Hence do the primitive fathers
 “ thus distinguish betwixt him and the *Father*.
 “ That *God the Father* is that *God*, above whom
 “ there is no other *God*: whereas *Christ* is *God of God*, and as to that, *inferior* to *God the Father*.
 “ So *Justin Martyr* and *Irenæus*.

DR.

DR. *Bradford*, the present worthy Bishop of *Carlisle*, in a *Letter* printed in Mr. *Whiston's Historical Preface*, p. 67. says: " I always did, and freely do
 " assent to Bishop *Bull's Thesis*, concerning the sub-
 " ordination of the Son to the Father.

MR. *Stevens*, in a *Sermon* preach'd before the University, licens'd by the Vice-chancellor of *Oxford*, and dedicated to the present Bishop, Dean, and Canons of *Exeter*, proves " that the Holy
 " Ghost is a real person, and not merely the power
 " of the Father, because some actions are attribut-
 " ed to him, which can in no wise be reconciled
 " to the person of the Father: such are his being
 " sent by the Son, his receiving his power from
 " the Son, &c. but that the person of the Father
 " should be sent by the Son, that he should re-
 " ceive power from the Son (all these manifestly
 " implying a *subordination* to the Son) is not con-
 " sistent with his being sovereignly independent,
 " the sole origin of all power and authority, and
 " the author and principle of whatever is done by
 " the Son or the Spirit, which *on all hands* he is
 " confess'd to be. *Of the personal. and divin. of the H. Ghost*, p. 6, 7.

AND certainly if the Spirit's being sent by the Son proves a manifest subordination, so likewise must the Son's being sent by the Father.

THERE is a book printed this very year by Mr. *Bingham*, a person of eminent learning, and lately prefer'd by the Bishop of *Winchester*, wherein he declares for a subordination. " In saying Christ
 " was a Son, deriving his original from the Father,
 " and not another independent being, he [*Origen*]
 " maintains the unity of principle, and reserves to
 " the Father the privilege of being the fountain of
 " the deity, and consequently opposes the heresy
 " of the *Tritheites*, who maintain three coordinate
 " and independent principles, and destroy the mo-
 " narchy,

“ narchy, and make three creators instead of one,
 “ by destroying the *due subordination* and relation
 “ of the Son to the Father. *Antiq. of the Christ.*
Church, p. 49, 50.

LET me add another author, because he is so commonly in the hands of those who are most apt to censure, I mean here the pious Mr. *Burkit*, who on *1 Cor.* viii. 6. says: “ The application of
 “ the word *God* here unto the Father doth not
 “ exclude the Son from being God, but only from
 “ being the *fountain* of the *deity*, as the *Father* is.
 Again, on *John* xiv. 28. “ The *Father* may be
 “ said to be *greater* than *Christ*, in regard to his *pa-*
 “ *ternity*, as being the *fountain* of the *deity*. The
 “ *Father* is of *himself*, but the *Son* is *begotten* of the
 “ *Father*.

HITHERTO I have only cited the writers of the establish'd church; 'tis very possible, that the addition of some famous Dissenters may have more influence upon those with whom I have had to do.

DR. *Owen* says, *Vindiciæ Evangelicæ*; p. 187.
 “ There is an order, yea a *subordination* in the per-
 “ sons of the Trinity themselves; whereby the *Son*
 “ as to his personality may be said to *depend* on the
 “ *Father*, being begotten of him. And p. 273.
 “ 'Tis said that *God made the world by him*, denot-
 “ ing the *subordination* of the *Son* to the *Father*.

AND in his *Treatise Of the Spirit*, p. 67. “ The
 “ *Father* is the *fountain* of all, as in *being* and *ex-*
 “ *istence*, so in *operation*.

AGAIN: “ The *command* of *God* is the ground
 “ and reason of all religious worship. The angels
 “ are to worship the Lord *Christ* the mediator;
 “ and the ground of their doing so is *God's* com-
 “ mand. *Id.* on *Heb.* i. 6. p. 98.

AGAIN on *Heb.* i. 3. p. 57. “ As the *Father* is
 “ the *original* and *fountain* of the *whole Trinity* as
 “ to *subsistence*, so as to *operation* he works not
 “ but

“ but by the Son. And p. 58. Thus he becomes
 “ the *brightness of his Father's glory, and the ex-*
 “ *press image of his person; namely by the receiving*
 “ *his glorious nature from him, the whole and all*
 “ *of it, and expressing him in his works of nature*
 “ *and grace unto his creatures.*

AGAIN, on y. 8, 9. p. 109. “ God is said to be
 “ the *God of the Son,* in respect of his *divine na-*
 “ *ture; as he is his Father, so his God; whence he*
 “ *is said to be God of God, as having his nature*
 “ *communicated unto him by virtue of his eternal*
 “ *generation.*

REMARKABLE is the passage he has p. 53. “ The
 “ boldness and curiosity of the schoolmen, and *some*
 “ *others,* in expressing the way and manner of the
 “ generation of the Son, by similitudes of our un-
 “ derstanding and its acts, declaring how he is the
 “ *image of the Father* in their terms, are intolerable,
 “ and full of offence. Nor are the *rigid im-*
 “ *positions* of those *words and terms* in this matter,
 “ which they, or others have found out to express
 “ it by, of any better nature.

NEXT let us hear Dr. Manton on *John xvii. 3,*
 p. 24. “ Some say the *Father* is not to be taken
 “ *strictly and personally* for the *first person,* but *es-*
 “ *entially* for the whole godhead. But this seem-
 “ eth not so plausible an answer, for then Christ
 “ must pray to himself. He prayeth here as *God-*
 “ *man,* and all along to the *Father.*-----In order of
 “ redemption the *Father* is the *principal party,* re-
 “ presenting the *whole deity;* because he is the *ori-*
 “ *ginal and fountain* of it. So *1 Cor. viii. 6. One*
 “ *God the Father---and one Lord Jesus Christ.* God
 “ the *Father* is to be conceived as the *supreme per-*
 “ *son, or ultimate object of worship,* and the *Son* as
 “ *Lord, and mediator.* And p. 41. “ In the oeco-
 “ nomy of salvation, the *original authority* is made
 “ to reside in God the *Father.* And p. 263. The
 “ *Father,*

“ Father being first in the order of persons, is to
 “ be look’d upon as the offended party, and as the
 “ *highest judge*. All sin is against God, and it *chief-*
 “ *ly* reflects upon the *first person*, to whom we
 “ direct our prayers; and who is the maker of
 “ the law, and therefore requires an account of the
 “ breach of it: It *chiefly* reflects upon the *first*
 “ person, to whom Christ tender’d the satisfaction.
 “ Sin is a grieving of the Spirit, it is a crucifying
 “ of Christ. There is a wrong done to all the per-
 “ sons of the godhead; but in the *last result of all*, it
 “ is an offence to God the Father, and an affront
 “ to his authority; for all that is done to the o-
 “ ther persons redounds to him.

DR. *Jacomb* on *Rom.* viii. 3. p. 292. “ This send-
 “ ing of Christ consists in the Father’s *authorita-*
 “ *tive willing* him to take man’s nature upon him,
 “ &c.----- Sending is an *authoritative act* among
 “ men: ’twas so in God towards Christ. The
 “ Father did not proceed with him in a way of
 “ mere *offer*, or bare *proposal*, or *intreaty*, but in a
 “ way of *authority*. And p. 293. Christ was un-
 “ der a *command* with reference to his incarna-
 “ tion.

THUS likewise Mr. *Henry* on *Joh.* xv. 26. speak-
 ing of Christ’s sending the Spirit *from the Father*;
 expresses himself thus: “ According to my Father’s
 “ *will* and *appointment*, and with his concurring
 “ *power* and *authority*.” Now I would fain know
 how the Father can have such an authority over
 the Son and Spirit, without their being subordi-
 nate to him.

THE continuator of Mr. *Pool’s* Annotations on
 1 *Cor.* viii. 6. “ *The Father*, who is the fountain
 “ of the deity, communicating his divine nature to
 “ the two other persons, and of *whom* are all
 “ things. It is a term which signifieth the *prima-*
 “ *ry cause* and *author* of all things.-----It is the ob-
 “ servation

“ servation of a learned author, That tho’ the name
 “ of *God* be often given to *Christ*, yet no where
 “ by *Paul* where he maketh mention of *God* the
 “ *Father*; from whence he concludes, that the
 “ term *Lord*, given to *Christ*, signifieth his *prehe-*
 “ *minence* above all things (the *Father* excepted.)

AND ON *Philip*. ii. 6. “ *Christ* is said to be in
 “ *subordination* as the *Son* to the *Father*.

AND ON *John* xiv. 28. “ *My Father* is greater
 “ than *I*. Greater either, 1. As to the order among
 “ the *divine persons*, because the *Father* *begat*, the
 “ *Son* is *begotten*. The *Father* is he from whom
 “ the *Son* proceedeth by eternal generation: in
 “ which sense divers of the ancients, amongst whom
 “ *Athanasius*, *Cyril*, *Augustine*, and some modern
 “ interpreters understand it, &c.

LET me also add a few passages from Mr. *Char-*
nock. He says, *Vol. II. p. 252*. “ *God* the *Father*
 “ must needs be the *principal* in this business [of
 “ *reconciliation*]. The order of the *Trinity* requires
 “ it. There is an *order* in the *operation*, as well as
 “ *subsistence* of the three persons. As the *Son* is
 “ from the *Father* in order of *subsistence*, so the
 “ *actions* of the *Son* are from the *Father* in order
 “ of *motion* and *direction*. The *Son* is *sent* by the
 “ *Father*, not only as *man*, but as *God*; for the
 “ *Spirit*, that hath only a *divine nature*, is said to
 “ be *sent* by the *Father* and the *Son*.-----The *Fa-*
 “ *ther*, as he is the *fountain* of the *deity*, is the
 “ *fountain* of all *divine operations*.---- All things are
 “ of the *Father* by the *Son*. *He created all things*
 “ *by Jesus Christ*, he reconciled us unto himself by
 “ *Christ*: all things of the *Father* as the *fountain*,
 “ by the *Son* as the *medium*. There is a *priority*
 “ of order in the *divine paternity*, upon the ac-
 “ count of *generation*; and this order is observed in
 “ the *divine institution*: *Baptism* is *first* in the name
 “ of the *Father*, then of the *Son*, then of the *Holy*
 “ *Ghost*,

“ *Ghost*. Now it is most congruous, that as the
 “ *Father* was the *original* of our Saviour’s *person*,
 “ so he should be of his office; as he was God
 “ of his substance, so he should be mediator of
 “ his will; the *Father* first sets the copy, after
 “ which the *Son* writes. *The Son can do no-*
 “ *thing of himself, but what he sees the Fa-*
 “ *ther do; for what things soever he doth, these*
 “ *also doth the Son likewise.* All operations begin
 “ first from the *Father*: this place the ancient *Fa-*
 “ *thers* understood of *Christ* as the *second person*,
 “ not as *mediator*.----- As the *supreme governour* too
 “ he [*the Father*] could only transfer the punish-
 “ ment, &c.----- Since creation is *appropriated*
 “ to the *Father*, and sin enter’d upon the world
 “ immediately after the creation, it was God as a
 “ creator was principally injur’d. The first sin
 “ struck more immediately at the *Father*, as *crea-*
 “ *tor*. P. 260. *Christ* was the *means* whereby
 “ God created all things. P. 493. *Christ* is the
 “ *medium* of the first discovery of God in the crea-
 “ tion.-----*Christ* was the voice of God, whereby
 “ he exerted his power to bring things from
 “ nothing into being. *The Lord said, Let there be*
 “ *light*, Gen. i. 3. and oftentimes, *God said, v. 6,*
 “ 9, 11, 14, 20, &c. which was not an external
 “ sound or voice, but the essential word of God,
 “ whereby he communicated his goodness to the
 “ world in the creation. A mere voice, or out-
 “ ward sound of words, could not be an *instrument*
 “ of it self to frame the world to such a beauty.

THERE are three *Dissenters* now alive, who
 have writ in this controversy, and have declared
 for a *subordination*, as well as my self, and yet re-
 tain the character of orthodox, however I am
 upon that account frequently condemn’d.

“ The *Father* (says one) is *above* our Lord Je-
 “ sus *Christ* in three respects,-----2. With respect
 “ to

“ to the eternal generation of his divine person. . . . ”
 “ The Father is sometimes call’d in scripture God
 “ by way of *eminence*, and propos’d as the *ultimate*
 “ *object of religious worship.*” *Boyle* against *Emlyn*,
 3d. *Ed.* p. 24, 25. “ In these respects our Lord is
 “ *inferior* to the Father, p. 38.

ANOTHER says: “ Christ is set out as *inferior* to
 “ the Father; which is not to be wonder’d at,
 “ considering that this is true of him as the second
 “ person in the Trinity, as well as in other respects.
Hughes’s Essay, part 2. p. 82.

THE last, speaking of those passages of scripture,
 wherein the Father is said to be greater than the
 Son, adds: “ And that he is so in a true and pro-
 “ per sense who doubts? Those who adhere to the
 “ common faith do acknowledge that the Son of
 “ God, consider’d relatively, is *inferior*, and *subor-*
 “ *dinate* to the Father. *Moore’s Calm Def.* p. 44.
 And truly if I have not expressly said that I con-
 sider the Son of God *relatively*, when I say he is
subordinate; yet I think every one might well have
 understood me so; for I always look upon the word
Son to be a *relative* term, and never think of any
subordination among things that are *not related*.

Now if these my three worthy friends may in-
 nocently declare for a *subordination* and *inferiority*,
 why should I be so severely censured for using the
 former term? Nay if I had used the latter too, as
 my enemies tell the world I did, where had been
 the hurt of it? I have not indeed scrupled it as
 thinking it improper; but I have studiously avoid-
 ed it, apprehending the other term tho’ equivalent,
 yet less offensive. If I have done the people there-
 by any wrong, I hope they will *forgive me that*
wrong.

I have omitted the testimonies which might be
 brought from *Calvin*, *Zancky*, *Turretin*, and other
 foreign Divines, which might have made this di-
 gression

gression much more tedious than it is. If these will not satisfy any more than the scriptures, I must be content to pass for what my enemies please.

AFTER I had in a manner finish'd these papers, my worthy colleague, Mr. *Hallet*, publish'd a little *Pamphlet*, shewing by many testimonies, that a *subordination* had been held by divines, whose orthodoxy was never call'd in question. I had some design thereupon of leaving out intirely this part. But considering that his *Pamphlet* was printed, and is like only to spread much, here, and that I have set down some testimonies not taken notice of by him, I have judg'd it more advisable to let this part stand as it was before his collection appear'd; and the rather, because just after him came out a *Pamphlet* on the other side, with this mean and disingenuous title, according to the true spirit of the party: *A Caution against Deceivers with respect to the Subordination of the Son of God*. The best use that can be made of this piece is, that we may learn by it, that the authors did not understand what they wrote about it, as Mr. *Hallet* has shewn in a short *Letter* which he publish'd the same week in answer to them. The design of the testimonies which are alleg'd by me and others, for a subordination of the Son to the Father, is to let the reader see, that the most famous writers, who have held that the Father, Son, and Spirit were but one and the same being, and so were most obliged by this their chief tenet to deny any subordination at all, have yet been forced to acknowledge that there is a subordination among these persons. This acknowledgement, being so evidently inconsistent with their grand principle, must appear to be extorted from them by the clear evidence there is in the scripture for a subordination; and therefore may well be used as an argument *ad hominem* against their darling opinion. The scripture do's not deli-

ver inconsistent doctrines, however fallible men may fancy they can gather them from thence. That the Father and Son are the very same being, and yet that the Son is subordinate to the Father, are utterly inconsistent; if then the latter is own'd to be a truth, the former must be given up. Besides, these famous men are set up, instead of the scriptures, for the standard of truth and orthodoxy; their authority is most vehemently urged upon us: and is it not then reasonable that we should take any advantage they give us? Let their authority be supposed ever so great, upon the account of their judgment, piety, or number; is it not as great in behalf of one opinion as another? Let them be supposed the standard, why should I be more censured for holding one of their opinions, without declaring for the other, than others are for using their own liberty in like manner, tho' they make a different choice? They who deny all manner of subordination, asserting three persons to be one and the same being, differ from them in one material point, as they esteem'd it, of orthodoxy; I who hold the subordination, without holding the three persons to be one being, differ from them in another: surely then we may compound the matter, and allow one another to be orthodox enough for christian communion, or else both of us quit all pretence to orthodoxy, according to such a rule and measure of it.

THE writers of the *Caution* desire to know, p. 4. Whether *Mr. Hallet* thinks in his conscience, these divines believ'd the subordination of the Son of God in the same sense with my self? I hope they will give me leave to ask in my turn, Whether they think in their consciences, they believe the subordination of the Son of God in the same sense with those divines? These Gentlemen will many of them allow him to be subordinate only as to his human

nature, or as mediator; but these divines evidently held him to be subordinate as to his divine nature, as the second person in the Trinity; and I defy any one to prove that I ever carried the subordination farther than that. All the difference I can perceive between my self and those divines is this, that I hold a subordination consistently, as they do not, while they grant it at one time, and overthrow it at another: and why should they be angry with me upon this account?

BUT it seems I must hold a different subordination from those divines, because I *make the Father to be the one God*, p. 14. And if that be true, 'tis a sign I hold no other subordination than the apostle Paul did, *1 Cor. viii. 6. But to us there is but one God, the Father: or than Christ did, John xvii. 3. who stiles his Father, in contradistinction to himself, the only true God.* And I hope these Gentlemen will not call *their* orthodoxy into question, in order to their most decent disparaging mine. I hope 'twill be no offence to them, that I tell them in this case, as in another, that if Christ and his apostles made the Father to be the one God, *I can't help it*; and if they are displeas'd with me for this, let them tell me how I shall help it. Such plain declarations of scripture fully satisfy me; and whenever they can produce as plain declarations for any doctrine, which they desire me to assent to, they shall not find me backward: and 'till they do *that*, I regard not such empty and idle complaints as they make concerning Mr. Hallet, my self, and others, p. 16. But I shall say no more of this exquisite performance, because Mr. Hallet has undertaken it.

I return now from this long digression to what the *Account*, p. 6. says, concerning the proceedings of the Assembly: *This hath been cried out upon as a test, imposition, inquisition, &c. when there was no test offer'd, but every one solemnly professed his*
own

own faith in what words he pleased; so that all that clamour was perfectly groundless. And does this author think he has proved what he says? Suppose he has proved there was no *test*; yet that do's not prove there was no *imposition*. It certainly was an *imposition* to compel men to declare their opinion, tho' they apprehended there was no just occasion for it: and I cannot esteem it any other than a sort of compulsion, when it appears so plainly, that the intended consequence of men's declaring was to render them odious and useless. And that this was an *inquisition* was notorious, according to every one's sense of the word. For what was the intent of it, but to search out mens secret sense of a matter, by that means to make them offenders, though they had given no occasion at all of offence? But the truth is, this writer seems to have join'd the word *test* with imposition and inquisition, because he thought he could say somewhat against that, and so might excuse himself from saying any thing of the other two. However he is mistaken, if he thinks he has clear'd the Assembly; for the charge was not, that there was a test put upon the ministers in the Assembly; but that the Assembly really form'd one, by what they voted to be their *general sense*, to be put upon ministers afterwards. And if this author is disposed to prove that *that* vote was not made a test afterwards, he may try his skill.

HE goes on: *And there is no duty in the world can be clearer than this, that when some ministers depart from the faith, the rest should agree in the faith they thought it their duty to the utmost of their power to defend.* This is a spiteful suggestion; for there was no minister who could be charged with having *departed from the faith*. And whatever they may think of it, the christian rule gives no encouragement to men to insinuate a charge against men, and especially against ministers, whose usefulness depends

depends so much upon their reputation, without good proof; which if the managers had been furnish'd with, they would never have had recourse to such a method of proceeding by an inquisition. The reader may easily see how naturally they fall into the language of inquisitors, who espouse their practices. Nor do their next words less fit the mouths of popish inquisitors: *If this proved an occasion of making some men suspected, it was a consequence of their own error, not of the other's duty.* The papists as much think it their *duty* to set up an inquisition; and if by that means some come to be not only *suspected*, but *found guilty*, because they don't clear themselves to satisfaction, must not this evidently be the consequence of their own error?

THE whole of our *Western* proceedings seem to have a tendency to advance a popish power; which is a strong reason with me, why I should earnestly oppose them: and I am persuaded if they will take one hint from me, 'twill be of great service to restrain some violence, and to prevent the writers of that side from exposing themselves. What I mean is, That they would, in forming their resolutions, and in wording their pleas and defences of their proceedings, only consider with themselves, whether the papists do not act in the same manner, and how they can be able satisfactorily to answer or oppose them, without condemning themselves.

THE *Account* next to this places the publishing some *Pamphlets*, that so he may put the better colour upon the proceedings of the thirteen, when they met in *November*; whereas in truth there was but one of those *Pamphlets* he mentions publish'd, 'till after their meeting. To give a little account of this matter: Before the Assembly there were two *Pamphlets* publish'd by some laymen, very zealously condemning some people they were pleas'd to call *Arians*. Those that read them, which
I confess

I confess I never did, thought they abounded with hot fire and thick darknels. After the Assembly some lay hand, as 'twas thought, on the other side, printed a little *Pamphlet*, intitled, *The Innocent vindicated*; wherein he shewed the unreasonableness of men's condemning persons at the rate that was then common. This was mightily censured, by those who called themselves orthodox. Soon after some body publish'd, by way of antidote, I suppose, Mr. *Trosses's Catechism*, wherein was contain'd some very severe censures of those who differ'd from him. It was thought they did no great service to his memory, who put forth that scrap of a posthumous work; and which those that pretended to know said was not a fair publication, because he elsewhere in his *Catechism* declared for a *subordination*, which was a word much displeas'd at this time. The design of this publication seem'd to be more to inflame, by the hard names publish'd with his authority, than to inform the judgment. The publisher added a *Postscript*, wherein he brought in Mr. *Howe* as orthodox; but the chief design of it was to introduce a reflection upon the Declaration I made in the Assembly, which yet he was not able to relate. Some time after, *viz.* in *December* came down together, *An Answer to Mr. Trosse*, and *A Letter to a Dissenter in Exon*. These two *Pamphlets*, together with the *The Innocent vindicated*, were fearfully condemn'd, as they are by the writer of the *Account*, who calls them *blasphemous Pamphlets*, and *horrible Pamphlets*, p. 17. And he has pick'd out what he would pretend is blasphemous; tho' if he understands books no better than he quotes them, I will never take his word for an author's writing blasphemy; and indeed the scribes and pharisees are a warning to me not too easily to believe, that every one is guilty of *blasphemy*,

my, whom passionate men are pleased to charge with it.

HOWEVER this was a brave handle for some people, who finding these three *Pamphlets* were all charged with blasphemy, were pleased to make me the author of them all. For this reason I shall not give my judgment of any of them, being resolved not to submit any more to an inquisition of this nature. I could not but smile to think what matters of stile they must be themselves, or at least what a matter they must think me to be, who could imagine that four such different stiles, as are those three *Pamphlets* and Mr. *Huddy's* Sermon, should all come from me. Of *The Innocent vindicated* I was not indeed supposed to be the sole author, that was too great an honour; but one of my brethren was pleased to insinuate that I must have a hand in it, because I used twice or thrice to meet a club of five who wrote it. These five he was pleased to name, by which may be judg'd what credit his reports deserve; for one of the five I had never spoke to in my life, nor did I ever see him 'till very lately. Whatever I have said in time past, my resolution is never to gratify their inquisitory humour more, and they may charge what they please upon me; I hope the world will be so just as not to regard their reports, now they are appris'd of their temper.

THE writers of the *Narrative* have likewise taken notice of these three *Pamphlets*, and pick'd some passages out of each, p. 16, 17, 18. If they shall see fit to allege any thing of argument against them, 'tis possible the respective writers may return them an answer: at present I don't perceive that any is needful. There is one mistake, for ought I can hear, concerning *The Innocent vindicated*, when 'tis said it was thrust under shop doors in the night; for upon inquiry I have reason to believe

believe

a week

lieve this was never done. Farther, there could be no greater hurt in spreading this *Pamphlet* about the county, than there was in spreading before another, which Mr. *Withers* reflected upon in his *Speech*. The *Narrative* brings in a reflection upon me, p. 18. for saying, "That 'twill be time enough for Mr. *Eveleigh* to suppose the writer of the *Answer to Mr. Trosie* had *no reputation to lose*, when he shall have proved himself capable of writing as good sense, as that *Answer* contains." And can any man of sense compare that answer with any of Mr. *Eveleigh's* writings, and be displeas'd with me? I am willing to stand to the judgment of any one, who understands close reasoning; but I do not mean, that he whom I guess, to be the original author of this poor remark, is to be taken for such an one. If he will please to favour the world with his name and performances, I suppose he may merit the return of this complement and another, p. 32. which seems to be owing to the same hand, from that worthy Gentleman.

I come now to our meeting the Thirteen, of which this account is given by that writer, p. 8. *In November, 1718. the Committee of thirteen, seeing some of their ministers would not make what stand they ought against the spreading of those pernicious errors, thought it necessary to come closer, and to desire of their ministers, To know what they did believe of these matters, &c.* We did not understand that these Gentlemen had any more authority to proceed as they did, than any of the rest of the people: however for the sake of peace, and the respect we bore to them, we readily attended them. When we came, a complaint was made of the *new notions*, as they called them, and we were desired to clear our selves. I remember no such desire, as is here express'd, *to know what we did believe of these matters.* If they had request'd that only,

I suppose we were not such children, but that we could have told them what we believed, without their putting words into our mouths, which were, 'tis thought, put first into their own by a neighbouring minister, who *loves to have the preeminence through the county*; as indeed appear'd very probable, from what one of the thirteen, who propos'd the test, did afterwards drop in conversation. A great complaint was then made of Mr. *Hallet*, that he had spread these notions among his Academics; much like what is said of him *p. 4*. He denied that he ever taught any of his pupils the principles they pretended, or that he knew of their being among the students. I remember upon the mentioning of a charge against him before my coming to the city, I took occasion to say: If this charge lies against Mr. *Hallet*, there can be no room for any one's pretending that I brought this first into this country, or that I was the cause of this diversity of sentiments. But tho' that was then freely acknowledg'd, yet the report goes still as current as ever with the common people concerning me; and all the blame is laid upon me, who have never had the least hand in their quarrel, but as I have been drag'd into it.

To go on: Mr. *Lavington* complain'd of *The Innocent vindicated*, that it was blasphemous, in saying, that *three persons and one God was a contradiction*. I told him I would not meddle with that *Pamphlet*, which I had never read; but I thought *three persons and one person* was a contradiction. He own'd it, but pretended no body said so. I told him he spake of God now as *three persons*, and yet in a sermon but a little before he spake of God as *one person*, and called him *a person* no less than three times. He said, he then meant by a *person* a *being*, and that every one would so understand him, that was not disposed to carp. But had I talk'd af-
ter

ter so loose a rate, I should not perhaps have escaped so easily*.

THE ACCOUNT says, The Committee *intreated us to give them satisfaction one of these three ways, either in the words of the first Article of the Church of England, or in the words of the sixth Answer in the Assembly's Catechism, or as our own Assembly had agreed September before.* I wonder why they should not have added a fourth way, and that is, or any other words, wherein we should rather choose to express our selves. I remember I chose to reply to these proposals, being willing enough that the resentment of the answer should light wholly upon me, and my two brethren should go free. I told them, that as to the first, what was urged by some present was very true, that the law required us to subscribe the *Articles* of the Church of *England*, but it requir'd this of us but once, namely when we begin to preach; that this was as to my self above twenty years ago, and that I hoped I

* Much like this is the account which one gives of the matter, who says, *Vindicat. p. 38.* "We are told of *three that bear record in heaven*, and these three are *unum, one thing.*" And who now would expect that the same person should represent these three to be not *one thing*, but *three things*? And yet this he does, if I understand him right in these words, *Ibid. p. 7.* "If thou askest God himself to tell thee what he is further by his revelations, the scripture tells thee thou must believe *something* in him that is best express'd by the word *Father*; *something* in him that is best stiled the *Wisdom, Word, or Son* of the *Father*; and next that there is *something* else in God, which may be well stiled the *Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit*, both of the *Father* and the *Son.*" Now he that makes each of these three to be a *something*, certainly makes each of them to be a *thing*, and so the three to be *three things*, as well as *three somethings*, unless *something* can be not a *thing*. And is it not a contradiction to assert that these three are *three things*, and yet but *one thing*?

had not lived above twenty years to so little purpose in the world, as not to understand things better now than I did so long ago; but that I would be frank with them, and declare that if the law requir'd me now to sign the *Articles*, I would not do it upon any account whatever. As to the *Catechism*, I told them I would not sign that answer, because I thought the Assembly had therein asserted more than they could warrant by the word of God. And lastly as to the vote of our *September* Assembly I had nothing to do with it.

WHILE we were talking, I remember I said, you would be apt to think a man a heretic should he say, *There is to us but one God, the Father*; and yet he would have *St. Paul* in his company. To this *Mr. Lavington* replied, That he understood the *Father* to be there spoken of essentially. I answer'd, that I did also. Ay but, says he, by the *Father* I mean the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*. I told him that I did not so understand it, nor did I know any one place in the scripture where the *Father* had such a signification. He pretended he did; and that that interpretation would solve many difficulties. Upon my demanding a place, he produced one, which is a difficulty with a witness. 1 Cor. xv. 24. *Then cometh the end, when he shall have deliver'd up the kingdom to God, even the Father.* Which difficulty is not lessen'd by the 28. verse. *And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also be subject unto him, that did put all things under him, that God may be all in all.* But it seems, for I don't so distinctly remember it, that *Mr. Lavington* should here say: *That either the divine nature of Christ must be here included under the word Father, or I must make such a God of Christ, as after the day of judgment must have no rule, authority, or power.* And to this 'tis said I answer'd: *That I could not help it, if the scrip-
ture*

ture made him so. I do not think it improbable that I might make this answer. I wish we had been favour'd with Mr. *Lavington's* reply to it. But I believe he might here be relieved by his friend, who told him they did not send for us here to dispute, and that he was no match for three. For my own part, I can see no absurdity at all in supposing, that a derived authority may be surrender'd, or that the Father should then be all in all. I confess there is somewhat very odd in the interpretations these men give of the scriptures, and a scheme they have formed, which quite spoils the beauty of divine revelation. They suppose the dominion which Christ exercises as mediator is a proof of his being equal with the Father; for they pretend no less a person is capable of exercising such a power; and yet they suppose this power to be given him as mediator, that is, as he is God-man. Now what can be the meaning of this? Can it be given to him as man, when as man he is supposed not capable of it? Can it be given to him as God, when as such 'tis supposed essentially to belong to him, and consequently he must be thought incapable of receiving it as a gift? And how could it be given him particularly at the resurrection? Must it not according to their notion necessarily belong to him as much before, from the natural result of the union of the two natures? What account can be given of his delivering up this power? Could his human nature give it up, which they say never was capable of it? Or could his divine nature give it up, which according to their own notion was not capable of being divested of it? And are they who lead us into such labyrinths, the men whose interpretations are to be humbly received as oracles?

THE *Narrative* likewise takes notice of this affair, p. 18. and says, There was a *warm dispute*. But I am very sure, there was no appearance of any

any warmth on one side; for the three ministers kept their temper throughout. *I own'd the subordination of the Son to the Father*, and declare I can't see how I could disown it without disowning my *Bible*. It says, *I vehemently urged against the doxologies used*. I spoke nothing with *vehemence* at this conference; but I suppose by *vehemently* is meant *strongly*. 'Tis like enough I might *ask where they found in scripture, that the Holy Ghost was call'd God, or glory ascribed to him?* And I now ask the same again of the publishers of the *Narrative*; for I have a great desire to know where we are to find these things, and don't take it kindly of them that they don't inform me.

I suppose the writers of the *Narrative* are not insensible of the truth of what Mr. *Hallet* said, that *not all the London Ministers sentiments differ'd much from ours*: the mentioning it now is not so much design'd against us, as against other persons. But let that be as it will, we were not to be determin'd by the sentiments of the *London* ministers, but by the scriptures; and 'tis great pity the appeal had not then, and at all other times, been made to them.

MR. *Withers*, to the best of my remembrance, offer'd here, what he had frequently done on other occasions, that if Mr. *Lavington*, or any one of that side would agree to it, he would draw up his own explication of the doctrine, and his reasons for it, as the other should in like manner draw up his; and when they had offer'd on both sides their objections and defences, the whole should be laid before the Assembly here, or before the *London* ministers, or the whole world. But this could not be complied with. And I think it was at this time that Mr. *Lavington* put it off, by saying, *What explication should we give of a thing that is a mystery and inexplicable?*

I told

I told them now, that I could not satisfy my conscience to lay down my ministry my self; if they would venture to lay me aside, and that would make them easy, I should be satisfied, and give them no trouble.

MR. *Withers* and I were both reflected on here for not writing against these notions, and we were twitted for our writing upon other occasions, since we would not on this. I suppose he might, as I am sure I did, take this amiss. Mr. *Withers* particularly was ask'd, why he did not answer *The Innocent vindicated*. To which he replied, *Because he thought it below him*. Was it not very partial, that we should be reproach'd for not writing, and nothing should be said to Mr. *Lawington* who was present, tho' he had writ no more, that we knew of, in the controversy than either of us? For my own part, I thought then with my self, that as no person or people should dictate to me what to write about, so I would not in hast give them any occasion again to twit me with my writing in the defence of the Dissenters. I could here see how changeable the sentiments and affections of men are; for I had not always had the same treatment.

As to this meeting, I can say in general, that the three ministers bore many insults, and the talkative and busy temper of their colleague, with a great deal of patience and meekness; they discover'd no heat on their part at all: and I must do the generality of the Gentlemen the justice as to own the same to be true of them, as I wish it had been of all.

THERE is one thing more which the writer of the *Account* takes notice of, as mention'd at this meeting, p. 9. which I shall therefore here relate.

HE says: *And whereas it had been long the custom of our congregations, frequently at the close of the Psalm*

Psalm or Hymn to give glory to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as one God; about this time Mr. Peirce directs the clerk what Psalms he should sing, and gives positive orders, That they sing these without any additions. Before my coming hither Mr. Trosse and Mr. Hallet always directed the clerk what he should sing; and Mr. Trosse, I am told, was against singing any thing but translations of scripture. The doxologies formerly sung were usually, at least, scripture; and so they were during the continuance of the clerk, who had the place in Mr. Trosse's time. When a new clerk was chosen, he desir'd me always to choose the *Psalm*. I cared not for the trouble, and therefore only desired him to take care to sing nothing but scripture, with which I said I should be easy. He promis'd me; but either he did not understand his promise as I did, or he afterwards broke it, bringing in doxologies I did not like. I told him of it, but still he did not follow my direction. I observ'd moreover, that many times to suit the sermon, he chose out of *Barton's Hymns* the translations of such parts of scripture as I did not think to be so well adapted to the design of singing; tho' I had told him, I thought there was no necessity of suiting the *Psalm* to the sermon. About the same time it was reported, that one of the clerks used to boast how he would fit some people with doxologies; and that he was observed to be very dextrous in picking them up, and that he himself stuck not to alter them, if he did at the composing them, to render them the more offensive. This noble part of worship began likewise to be very much disturbed; and when the doxology came, people were gazing about to make their observations who sang, and who were silent, that they might know who were, and who were not, in the new notions, as they called them. I had some reason to apprehend this might occasion
a farther

a farther disturbance (tho' I endeavour'd to prevent it) by the resentment of some people, who did not think the clerks kept to the duty of their station by such their behaviour. These reasons, together with the oddness of some of the doxologies they sang, made me often think of taking the direction of proper *Psalms* into my own hands. I thought when I officiated the direction of the worship belong'd to me; and I never pretended to direct them when I did not preach. At last the clerk used a doxology which seem'd so absurd to me, that I was determin'd upon the course I always afterwards took, to give them a note of the *Psalms* they should sing. The conclusion of his doxology was thus:

*Eternal honour let be done
From first to last for evermore.*

ABOUT the same time I told the clerk no scripture doxology would offend me; and accordingly we sing such still, now we are parted. I leave it to the world to judge, whether I had not reason for what I did; and whether the people had more reason to be offended with me, than with Mr. Trosse? Our author proceeds: *which when complain'd of to Mr. Pierce, what he offer'd was to this purpose: as if this doxology was not scriptural. As if it were not agreeable to the scripture to give glory to God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to whose service and glory we are by our baptism solemnly dedicated.* I hope it will be no offence, that I suppose the apostles understood the proper consequences of the baptismal form, as well as this writer; and if there is no sign of their drawing such a consequence, and they have not left us one example of such a doxology, among the many to be met with in their writings; I may with much more safety say, 'Tis agreeable to the scripture to forbear such doxologies. He

adds: *And 'tis as much scriptural now, as it hath been these five years, during which time he permitted it to be sung.* True, 'tis as much scriptural now as then; but as it was never sung by my direction; so it was very rarely, if ever at all, sung where I most preach'd, 'till a new clerk was chosen, and our animosities were risen to a great height. And if the course I took to discourage it before proved ineffectual, 'twas time for me to put a stop to it as I did, when I saw it made an engine of strife and contention; because I have an apostolical canon to warrant what I did: *Let nothing be done through strife,* Philip. ii. 3.

NEXT follows a reflection upon me, which Mr. *Lavington* in the Assembly, in *May 1719.* repeated in much the same words, seeming to think it had some sense in it, as appear'd by the Gentleman's behaviour, which must be own'd to have been extraordinary thro' this whole affair. But the answer I then gave, will, I hope, satisfy others, as well as it did the Moderator.

LET us hear the reflection first. *And tho' he pretends to be so much for liberty and peace, yet would he not yield to this, though told by a Gentleman of the Committee, at their meeting in November last, That his complying with this, together with the teaching the Assembly's Catechism, would go a great way to the peace of the city. We suppose, none will reckon this a test, though Mr. Peirce would not comply with it.* I grant this was told me, as is here asserted; but I was well assur'd in my own mind that what he said was not true: and I think it was but reasonable, that I should be directed by my own sense of these things, rather than by the judgment of another man, whom I took to be mistaken. The Moderator assented to me herein. Let me ask this writer, or Mr. *Lavington*, whether he can allege any one step I have taken, that has not agreed perfectly

perfectly with my *pretences* of being for *liberty and peace*? Would to God some had so much as *pretended* to be for either; things could not have come to the pass they are, if many had not been for war, when we spake for peace. And why was I bound to take that Gentleman's word? Do's Mr. *Lavington* resolve to be always under the direction of any single person among the thirteen?

BUT I do not wonder that Mr. *Lavington*, whose reflection this very probably is, should make so light of peace. I saw long before that he was an enemy to it. I remember when he once came to me, and we were discoursing upon our affairs, I offer'd if the people would lay me aside, and continue in communion with one another, I would be very easy to forbear preaching: to which he answer'd, 'What need of that? Why can't you preach to those that are for hearing you, and I to those that are for hearing me?' I told him I had a dread of divisions, and was determin'd to have no hand in making them, and that I resolv'd against being concern'd in any separation, provided the people would but bear with one another. But from this time I was satisfied that his aim was to form a division; and therefore 'tis not strange at all to me, that he should think fit to insult me as being for peace.

'Tis the same Gentleman, I make no question, who furnish'd the *Narrative* with the like reflection upon me, p. 8. *And when he preach'd, had not for several months suffer'd the people to sing (as was usual in the close of the Psalm) to the glory of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; but though such a strenuous assertor of the rights of the people, yet himself debar'd them the liberty of giving glory to that person in the godhead, whom they thought they were oblig'd by their baptism to give glory to; and this he did by direction given in writing to the clerk, in the face of the congregation.*

IF this Gentleman dislikes what I have said in asserting the rights of the people, and he thinks he can talk consistently upon that head, let him give the world a tast of his great skill: but 'tis a very ordinary one they can have by what he here says. How, good Sir, did I debar them their liberty? If any of them thought they were obliged to use such a doxology, they were at their liberty to do it at home, I hinder'd them not. If they thought they ought to do it in the congregation, their opinion was no rule to the rest who were against it. And since the congregation never signified their desire in a body to me, I can't see but that I was at an intire liberty to choose the forms of singing, nor could any one have the least cause of complaint, so long as I chose nothing they could object against. What confusion must it be, if every one of the people shall pretend to direct what shall be sung, or how a minister shall pray? Are not the people always understood to lodge the ordering these things in the minister they choose? And as long as he chooses nothing improper, have they any cause for complaint? Suppose they, who thought not themselves obliged in Mr. *Trosse's* time to sing in this manner, chang'd their minds after my coming; yet how should they think themselves obliged to it just when I preach'd? They did not think they were obliged to it every assembly, as is plain from their behaviour since; why then was not their liberty safe by their using it at these times, when I did not preach, and interposed not to hinder them? There is nothing more troublesom, than when a man is forced to spend many words in answering such egregious impertinence. And if Mr. *Laxington* can give one clear and certain example, from *Genesis* to the *Revelations*, of any saint who ascribed glory to the Holy Ghost, I will acknowledge I have been mistaken in discouraging that form of singing,

singing, and in not giving glory to him in my doxologies in the conclusion of my prayers: 'till he do's, I am far from being asham'd to own in the face of the whole world, what I did *in the face of the congregation*. There is one thing farther, that deserves to be here observed, concerning the faithfulness of the *Narrative*, and that is; that this is brought in as a thing that the ministers were inform'd of before the *September* Assembly, and that moved them to send that *Letter*; whereas my forbidding the clerk to sing the doxologies was not 'till some time after that Assembly.

FARTHER, I think this is not very pertinently alleg'd, as a reason for our ejection; for, beside that it was not alleg'd against us at the time, it is an accusation wherein I alone am concern'd, Mr. *Hallet* and Mr. *Withers* having been never charg'd with forbidding these doxologies in singing; and both of them used to ascribe glory to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

As in this part of the accusation I alone am concern'd, so I am not at all in the other *about teaching the Assembly's Catechism*. This was not desir'd, or expected of me. Mr. *Hallet* desir'd it at my first coming, and I intended to have taken my part in it, 'till I saw the method they had been accusom'd to was very different from mine. Then I was apprehensive it might not be easy to me to alter my method, nor to the people to have a new one introduced; and since that which they were accusom'd to might be more useful to them, I thought it was better that one of us only should take that part of the work. I propos'd therefore, as an equivalent, that I would take another part, which I thought was wanting, and yet might be as useful as any, and that was expounding the scriptures. The work was in the same manner divided in another congregation between Mr. *Hooper* and
Mr. *Wi-*

Mr. *Withers*, and from that time I began my part, and have never intermitted it. I may say this gave satisfaction; and, I believe, none desir'd that I should leave expounding the scriptures, and take part in catechising: at least this was never moved to me. Mr. *Hallet* only was tax'd for leaving this off; for which he gave these two reasons: 1. That he found it difficult to procure children to answer in the meeting. 2. That his sight declining, he could not so well see in the book which had been constantly used among them. He offer'd, if they would procure another more legible edition of the book, he would readily begin again.

THIS is a true account of this affair; by which may be seen how base and unworthy the representation of the *Narrative* is, which says, p. 18. *Mr. Peirce being ask'd about the Assembly's Catechism, he waved teaching it to the children.* He do's not say, I was ask'd to teach it, or that I refused, as neither of these is true; but 'tis manifest he design'd the reader should imagine both these were true; and the guard here used shews the meanness of his spirit.

A little after this the congregation at *Budley*, ten miles from *Exeter*, ejected Mr. *Roger Beadon*, who had been ten years settled among them, and in a manner raised their meeting, and had been singularly useful by his preaching and visiting; as has been acknowledg'd by those very ministers, who rejoiced in his ejection. There was nothing laid to his charge, as to his life and conversation; but he was accused of denying the genuineness of 1 *John* v. 7. and refusing to teach the *Assembly's Catechism*, and saying, that the Son was not in all respects equal to the Father. His ejection was not like ours; for it was done by the votes of the people, who, together with those who instigated them to it, must answer for the church of God's being

being deprived of his useful labours, and his being forc'd to take himself to a secular imployment.

THE *Narrative*, p. 19. says, *He was now obstinate in his error.* But the truth is, there was no doctrinal error charged upon him, but that he held the Son was not equal with the Father in all respects: nor was he chargeable with obstinacy about this; for he did not assert it, but upon their earnest urging him to speak his mind, and their declaring that he should be turn'd out, if he did not. The *Narrative* adds, *That he was very unanimously discharged by his congregation.* This Mr. *Beadon* assures me is not true, as he intends to make appear, when he shall publish his case.

HE look'd for this usage, upon the account of his having disoblige'd Mr. *Walrond* in the manner I related before; for he knew his temper, and how much he expected that his neighbours should be subject to him, and depend upon him. He had a satisfactory proof of this some years before. The people among whom Mr. *Beadon* preach'd, were not able to maintain him; and therefore he apply'd to the Assembly at *Exeter*, and desir'd them to recommend his case to the fund at *London*; at their suit he had an allowance for some time from them. This was afterwards stop'd of a sudden, nor could Mr. *Beadon* guess what the reason was, 'till a friend of his privately inform'd him, that this was the effect of Mr. *Walrond's* management, who was disgusted, because when application was made to the Assembly, it was not made to himself in particular. Mr. *Beadon's* friend likewise let him know, that if he would apply to Mr. *Walrond*, he might, in all probability, thro' his means, obtain the same assistance again from the fund. He did accordingly, and succeeded. I do not wonder that matters were carried to such an extremity against either him, or us here in *Exeter*, when people would be
influenced

influenced by a man of such a spirit. I chose rather to depend upon my innocence, than the favour of such a great man; and saw no reason for my crouching to him, that by his interest I might continue in my post. I had much rather sink with honour, than inflave my self perpetually to an arbitrary temper. I cannot but here reflect upon what happen'd at our ejection. Mr. *Withers*, as is well known, was ejected at first with us, but afterwards made his peace with the people: and the only account that was for a good while given of this was, that Mr. *Withers* had satisfied Mr. *Walrond* by assenting to the *first Article*; and his satisfaction was enough for the people, for ought that appear'd to the contrary. May that good man's yoke always fit easy upon him. I cannot yet repent that I did not submit to the same.

I cannot but here relate to the reader the account I saw in a *Letter*, from a man who has the reputation of being orthodox, and gave proof enough of it by his endeavours to do me a disservice. He assur'd his friend, that one of the Seven told a relation of his a little before Mr. *Beadon* was ejected, that he might soon expect it, and in a little time after somewhat more surprizing; by which he was supposed to mean the ejecting my two colleagues and my self. This I mention, that the reader may perceive the contrivance was laid here; and the sending to the ministers of *London*, and then advising with the seven in the country, was only a colour, that the odium might not wholly rest upon one or two. I shall not name my author, because I design him no injury, whatever he has at any time done me.

THE *Narrative* presents us, p. 20. with an original, a *Letter* sent to some *London* ministers from twelve of our managers, whose names are subscrib'd at length, tho' not in the way, I dare say, in which they

they themselves subscribed them, prefixing *Mr.* to each of them; for I would not have the blunder of the publisher imputed to them.

As to the *Letter* it self, the main substance of it has been already consider'd; I shall therefore only make a few brief remarks upon it.

I cannot much wonder at the reproaches and vile abuses we have been treated with in the streets, when I see so much zeal in our twelve managers to fix upon us the charge of *Arian* notions. I easily perceive from what quarter all the malignity against us has come. They had, in my mind, not shew'd themselves the worse christians, if they had forborn this treatment.

In the next place, I can't but wonder how they could have *great hopes that the Declaration of the Assembly in September*, which they call *prudent and seasonable* (with what reason I consider not) *would have put a stop to the growth of these notions.* How do they imagine the people came to entertain those notions? Had it been indeed from the deference they paid to any human authority, there might have been ground to hope that one authority might have balanced another: but since this was owing to the conviction wrought by scripture, reason, and argument, what could the authority of an Assembly, which condescended not to use any, signify toward the undeceiving them?

I am sorry they should reckon the doctrine they insist on *so great and necessary a point of faith*, when they have not been able to produce any one place of scripture that plainly asserts it; and 'tis only built upon such consequences, as appear not clear and certain to others, whatever they may do to them.

If the Gentlemen had but continued to *desire to carry it to us, with*, I will not say *the utmost*, but a tolerable *respect and deference*, they could not have parted with us in such an uncivil way as they did.

It appears by what follows in the *Narrative*, that the Gentlemen of *Exeter* repeated their request, and press'd earnestly for an answer; and that one of the *London* ministers signify'd to a worthy minister in our neighbourhood, that it would be extremely difficult for them to intermeddle in this affair. And very remarkable are the reasons which are given of that difficulty, p. 23. *We could not, say they, be thought to be competent judges of the grounds of the people's dissatisfaction.* Was it not then a considerable degree of rashness, for them to give judgment, as they had in a great measure before, in a case wherein they were not competent judges?

If they were only negative, not positive, it would look very hard. By consequence our case must be very hard, since the only grounds are negative; for the only reason why we were ejected was, that we would not assent to human tests. And is it not a fine business for persons to act in such an affair? *We could not speak from our own knowledge.* And certainly it was very hard to speak only from the knowledge and report of one side in a quarrel. *We could not expect the ministers concern'd should admit of our arbitration, or would give us any account of their sentiments.* Hence 'tis evident, they look'd upon themselves to be refer'd to as *arbitrators*, and that their advice must be esteem'd an *arbitration*; and the same was the case afterwards of the seven country advisers: so that my using the term of *arbitrators*, however it has been cavil'd at, was proper enough in the judgment of the *London* advisers. They had indeed good reason not to expect we should admit of *arbitrators* so unrighteously chosen. Never, I believe, was it heard of from the beginning of the world, that one side in a quarrel should take upon them to name all the arbitrators, without once consulting with the other side. And as tho' the case must have nothing in it that is not extraordinary,

extraordinary, the Gentlemen declare, *they could not think it reasonable, that such as declined to declare their own faith*, [that is, such as did not by subscribing such human forms as we refused, declare themselves to be against us] *could be supposed competent advisers for them.* See their *Letter* in the *True Relation of some Proceedings, &c.* p. 22. The Gentlemen, I dare say, would not like to be serv'd thus themselves, in an arbitration in money affairs. But inconsistency is a regardless trifle, when a party cause is to be serv'd. Thus they slighted the advices expected from *London*, when they ejected us, because there were other ministers join'd with the Presbyterians in giving them: but this was no objection at all, when they would concur in advices that were according to their hearts desire; for then they could, as they do in that very *Letter*, return them thanks.

ANOTHER plea they suggest for not meddling in this affair is: *Surely this would lie before the Assembly at its next meeting in these parts.* I do not wonder these ministers were backward to be concern'd in an affair that was like to end in such an odious manner. They seem to have agreed with their friends in the country, that we must be ejected, unless we would submit to their impositions; but they saw there was no fair colour for doing it, and therefore were willing to have no hand in it; wherein I think their policy is not much to be blamed. So shameful has been the conclusion of this affair, that however some have wanted the honesty openly to condemn it, yet not one man of sense has dared to speak plainly in the justification of it.

LET us go on with the *Narrative* to the *Return* made to these excuses from those in the country. They were *not a little concern'd to find the Londoners were loth to interpose in this affair, and that they seem'd to refer them to their next Assembly.* No

doubt this was true enough; they wanted to draw in some to defend their cause, tho' at other times they could talk big, as tho' they were the men who were set for the defence of the gospel: but this is when their gospel is to be defended by a number of votes, and not by strength of argument. And who would expect from such champions the tragical complaint that follows? *But, alas! they were in danger of being broken and undone before that day came.* From whom, I beseech them, were they in this danger? From those few despised people, whom they were able to crush by their authority without argument, and whom they could blast with one such doleful canting sentence as there follows? *And Arius got ground there every day.* What a poor defender, think we, of the gospel must *this* writer be, if all men were able to distinguish between good sense and idle tragical malicious expressions? Let all men judge whether it had not been more for the peace of the church, for the advancement of true piety, nay, and for the interest of the common opinion, if these men had been quiet, since the ministers they oppos'd were so, and meddled not with the point in controversy. These men were acted by a vain fear, and seem to have stood upon a *punctilio of honour*, when they could plead as follows: *That it was feared, that if they should bush this matter up in silence, it would give very great encouragement to this growing sect; and if nothing were done, the other side would be much discouraged, who are an excellent set of people.* So partial were they in their regards, and by such little motives were they acted. I say nothing against the people whom he commends, who I doubt not would have merited more commendation, had they not been led into the most unrighteous methods by such over officious and busy troublers of this our *Israel*. I pray God give to both a true repentance.

THERE

THERE is but one passage that I shall take notice of in the *London ministers Letter*, p. 25. *It has always been thought fit, that where there are misunderstandings between ministers and people, neighbouring ministers should have the first hearing of the case, and use their utmost endeavours to bring it to the most desirable issue.*

I only ask, whether the most desirable issue is not the adjusting such differences, and the restoring peace? Was this ever aim'd at in their proceedings with us? Do the neighbouring ministers use to be chosen by only one side? And do they use to give their judgment only upon hearing one side? Let the Gentlemen concern'd in the *Narrative* speak out plainly; and 'till they do, I shall think such *Narratives* of very little consequence, unless it be to impose upon weak and credulous people.

I spake before of the complaint the *Account* has brought in, p. 14. of my *taxing another minister for giving glory to the Holy Ghost*. I am very sure the story must be misplaced here, as to the order of time; because it must either refer to what I said in the grand conference, in the time of the Assembly; or if it refers to the other story, it must have been some months before that Assembly; for I remember that conversation pass'd in my own house, where I did not see that minister for some months before, and never once since the Assembly.

ABOUT this time another thing happen'd, which the *Account* takes notice of, p. 14. in these words: *Mr. Peirce particularly called it an insulting him in his own pulpit, when an elder neighbouring minister took occasion, at the close of his sermon, to offer some proofs of Christ's deity, with great meekness and modesty, without the least reflection on any man.* The case was this: Mr. *Lawington* used once a month to preach in my turn for me, as I did likewise in his for him, for the reason I gave before.

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He appear'd himself to have but little to say in behalf of the doctrine he stickled so much for, excepting that he would positively assert it some times, and declare it to be a fundamental. When it came to his turn to preach for me, he procur'd his father in law, Mr. *Ball*, to preach in his room for me in the morning, and for him in the afternoon at another meeting. The city was then in a great flame, and I am sure he put it into a far greater. His text was: *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.* And a good sermon he preach'd, while he kept to his text. There were two or three flings in it before he came to the close, where he purposely set himself to prove the supremacy of the Son. The argument he us'd may be seen in a little *Pamphlet* call'd, *Arius detected and confuted*, p. 9, 10. and was such, as was not much calculated to work a rational conviction; as some of his own side then apprehended, wishing he had rather let it alone. He knew very well, that every one would understand what he said was design'd against me and my two brethren; and the less his subject led him to talk of this matter, the more plainly it appear'd that his design was to blow the coals, which burnt vehemently enough before. And will any one question whether my expression concerning this was proper, when I called this an *insulting me in my own pulpit*? Would not he have counted it so, if I had by any stratagem got into his pulpit, and us'd him in like manner? 'Twas visible the congregation was very much inflamed in hearing the sermon, after which the *Psalm* was concluded with a doxology very much to his satisfaction; and then he began his last prayer with giving thanks to God for the liberty we had to give glory to God in that manner (the particular expression I can't now repeat) which every one must have understood to be intended as a reflection upon
me,

me, who was present, for not suffering the clerk to sing those doxologies when I preach'd. I think I might well call this an *insulting* me; and I could not but the more resent it, upon the account of the friendship and freedom there had been before between us. In the afternoon he preach'd at the other meeting, upon these words, *Who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us*, and closed his sermon with the same argument he used in the morning.

SOON after I complain'd to Mr. *Lavington* of this treatment, which I tax'd with ingratitude; and told him I would not be insulted in my own pulpit. I therefore desir'd that whenever he had occasion to be absent, and it happen'd to be his turn to help me; he would give me timely notice of it, and I would preach my self rather than be so dealt with. He then said if that was my mind, he was for changing no more. I told him he might do as he pleas'd, but that was not my notion: I apprehended what use would be made of this, as it accordingly came to pass; for the report immediately went current, that I forbad Mr. *Lavington* my pulpit.

AFTER this alarm was sounded, I believe there were none that entertain'd the least hopes or expectations of peace. I would not be provoked by this to bring the controversy into the pulpit, and therefore took no public notice of it. By this means I think I appear to be the more clear of having any hand in our quarrel; and the world must see on which side the blame of our heats and divisions lies. This step was a good introduction to the proceedings which soon follow'd, and which will next be related.

The *Account* says, p. 9. *And now the citizens thought it high time to shift for themselves, and accordingly sent to some eminent ministers of London for advice, whose counsel was, To call in some neigh-*

neighbouring ministers, who could best judge of these matters upon the place. *The citizens follow'd their advice, and called in seven of their neighbouring ministers; which Mr. Peirce is pleas'd to name, as men pick'd out for the purpose.* Let the world judge whether that side pursu'd any counsels of peace. The ministers advis'd with at *London*, as well as those sent for in the country, were in all probability men wholly set against us, and all designs of healing our breach. I cannot but think it would have been more reputable for their cause, had they first tried whether it was not possible to adjust our difference, by advising with some of the other side; whereas in truth these were all party-men, and *pick'd out*, as I had good reason to say, *as men fit for the purpose.*

I have before, in the short *Case*, publish'd the names of these Gentlemen; being very desirous they may be always remember'd, as the troublers of our *Israel*; and for that reason I will take the liberty, to give a list of them again in this place, which can be no offence to them who glory in their exploit. They were Mr. *John Ball* of *Honiton*, Mr. *William Horsbam* of *Topsham*, Mr. *Samuel Hall* and Mr. *John Moore* of *Tiverton*, Mr. *John Walrond* of *Ottery*, Mr. *Josiah Eveleigh* of *Crediton*, and Mr. *Joseph Manston* of *Lymson*.

THESE seven ministers met at *Exeter*, *January 19*. The next day some of them visited Mr. *Hallet*, some Mr. *Withers*, and some me. There were three of them that visited me, *viz.* Mr. *Horsbam*, Mr. *Moore*, and Mr. *Eveleigh*. When two of them came in first, and told me they came to pay me a friendly visit, and I had return'd the complement, one of them, as I apprehended, said, *They did not come without sending.* Then Gentlemen, said I, pray what is your errand? They let me know I mistook, and that they said they did not come to
TOWN

town without being sent for. I then ask'd them, Who sent for them? They answer'd, The Thirteen. I ask'd, For what they sent for them? And they said, To give them their advice. Pray then, said I, what advice have you given them? They answer'd, None at all. What then, said I, have you done? They answer'd, They had taken time to consider. I ask'd them how much time they had taken? To which they would give no answer.

I desir'd them to inform me, Whether the Gentlemen had any one thing to allege against me? They told me, all that they could perceive they had against me was, that I would not write, or preach against these new notions. I told them I thought it was very hard to make such an objection. I had deliver'd my mind freely twice in the pulpit, and that I did this at their desire, it being disagreeable to me to bring such speculative points into the pulpit; that I had taken the same course with reference to the controversy between the *Calvinists* and *Arminians*, tho' I apprehended my opinion would not have been displeasing to the body of the people. And as to writing, I said I thought no man had a right to dictate to another about it; that every man knew his own strength best, and what he was able to undertake; that it was very possible for a man to incline to an opinion, which he would not venture upon publicly defending. I told them, I found it thus my self in another case; for though I was what they call a moderate *Calvinist*, yet I saw the difficulties to be so exceeding great, that no man should engage me to undertake the defence of that scheme. They were pleas'd here to pass a complement upon me, and tell me that none doubted my ability to write in this cause. To which I reply'd, that I thought it belong'd to me to judge for my self in that case; and that no

man whatever should prescribe to me about it. And though I can't say I told them so; yet I might well think, I had no occasion to put my self to the trouble of writing, to gratify the desires of such as would perhaps again insult me for it, unless I would write as often as they should please to direct.

I took occasion here to tell them, that as they were called to give their advice, I insisted upon it as a piece of justice due to me, that they should give no advice against me, without first hearing what I had to say in my own defence. Let the world judge, whether this was not just and reasonable, however they were pleased to take no notice of it.

THERE were some of the Seven who waited, as I said, upon Mr. *Withers*, who either at this time, or the next, for I will not be positive about it, talked freely with them; and they being very high in their notion, that Christ was *self existent*, he desired them to name him so much as one author during the first thousand years after Christ, who ever asserted that Christ was *self existent*; adding, that he would engage to produce a thousand that said the contrary. But such proposals were lost upon the men, who were resolv'd that their own faith should pass for the faith of the christian church in all ages, whether they had, or had not, any authors to produce as attestors of it.

THE Seven left the town, without giving us the least hint what they had done; but in about three weeks after, I procured a copy of one of their circular Letters, which gave me the first light into it. This is the copy of it.

“ WE, together with Mr. *B.* &c. being invited by the thirteen managers for the three meetings in *Exon*, to give them our advice in their distressed circumstances, agreed on the following things:

I. “ THAT

1. " THAT there are some errors in doctrine,
 " that are a sufficient foundation for the people to
 " withdraw from the communion of their ministers
 " holding such errors.

2. " THAT the denying the true and proper di-
 " vinity of the Son of God, viz. that he is one
 " God with the Father, is an error of that nature,
 " contrary to the holy scriptures, and the common
 " faith of the reformed churches.

3. " THAT when so dangerous an error is indu-
 " striously propagated, to the overthrowing the
 " faith of many, we think it the indispensable du-
 " ty of ministers (who are set for the defence of
 " the gospel) earnestly to withstand it, and to give
 " reasonable satisfaction to the people of their found-
 " nefs in the faith. And we likewise judge it to
 " be the duty of the people to hold fast the truth
 " in love, avoiding anger, and clamour, and evil
 " speaking, and to behave themselves with all cha-
 " rity and meekness, as becometh christians.

" Now we jointly agreed before we communi-
 " cated this to the above named thirteen Gentle-
 " men, to propound the same to others of our
 " brethren in this county, and desire their con-
 " currence. We hope we shall have yours.

THE *Account* informs us, that they did not con-
 tent themselves with consulting ministers *in this*
county; but that they consulted *many ministers in se-*
veral counties on what they had drawn up, and receiv'd
the approbation of a great number of ministers both in
London and the country. And how easy a matter
 is it to procure the approbation of a great number,
 when their minds are known before they are applied
 to? I dare say, I could, if I thought it worth while
 to try, procure as many ministers hands to the
 condemning of the proceedings against us. How-
 ever I think the reader may observe the caution
 with which this is express'd. 'Tis not said, they

received the approbation of all the ministers whom they thought fit to consult, but only of a great many. I am inform'd that several ministers in the country, who were sent to, gave advice of a different nature. And 'tis notorious, that if numbers signify much, a great number of ministers at *London* utterly disliked these proceedings. But numbers signified nothing either with the Gentlemen of *Exeter*, or the seven Ministers, unless they approved of the counsels they were pursuing. This appear'd evidently at this time.

THE second meeting of the Seven was appointed here, *Febr. 9.* of which I had the first information by a *Letter* I receiv'd that day from *London*. There was another *Letter* sent at the same time to one of the other side, to desire them to stop proceedings, there being a plan for peace proposed by some considerable Gentlemen at *London* to the Committee of the three Denominations. The meeting of the Seven upon this was put off. I need not relate what was done on this occasion at *London*. All that I am concern'd to remark is this: That when they had staid some time, and saw by the course of their proceedings, that they were not likely to approve of their advice, they resolv'd not to wait 'till they had gone through with what they were upon. The *London* Advices were finish'd *March 10.* but our Seven were called together to determine our affair, *March 4.* I could not prevail with the Gentlemen, when we met the day after, to wait for these Advices, they pretended not to regard them, because they were not the *Advices of the Presbyterian ministers*; though I think it seems very plain, that the majority had appear'd vastly greater, than it was on our side, had the contest been only between the Presbyterian Ministers. I would farther remark, that this paper was not well calculated as to me, because they could not prove that I held the

the error they spoke of; and they might have known by what I declared in the pulpit, that I had not the same apprehensions of the dangerousness of mens opinion one way or t'other. And if they had worded their *second Article* to condemn those, who did not hold that notion to be such a dangerous error, as they pretend, they might have proceeded against me with more credit; because then they might have avoided the practice of setting up an Inquisition. Whatever is in the *Narrative* upon this head has had a full answer, and therefore I take no notice of it.

THUS I have brought down my account as far as where the short *Case* I publish'd some time ago begins, and shall not transcribe what is there related; but refer the reader to *that*, and the *Defence* I have been obliged to publish of it.

I have likewise omitted the business of the conferences which Mr. *Eveleigh* offer'd, because I have already given an account why I declined conferring with him; and I suppose there will be no difficulty in perceiving, from what I have related, the reason I had to decline conferring with the other ministers. I shall only add here, that I am very willing the world should judge by the piece the *Narrative* mentions, p. 32. whether I have done any injury to the abilities of Mr. *Eveleigh*, by what I have said of him.

I cannot but reflect upon the scruple with which they of *Exeter* close their *Account*; wherein they say, *They can't join in communion with those who declare, 'tis no sin to say, Christ is a creature, or deny the deity of the Holy Ghost.* And for this wise reason many of them went away from me, when I administer'd the Lord's supper, tho' they pretend not to charge me with either of these sayings, and went and join'd with Mr. *Laxington*, where the persons they charge with these sayings were

were actually in communion, having never been suspended.

THERE is one thing which it may not be amiss to give some account of; and that is, what happen'd since the *Case* was printed, at the Assembly, *May 5, 6, 7, 1719*. I shall not speak of any thing but what relates to the case of *Exon*, having already made some *Remarks* upon the printed *Account* of their proceedings.

AFTER a Moderator and a Scribe were chosen, and the Moderator had pray'd, the minutes of the last Assembly were read; which making mention of Mr. *Walrond's* famous and mysterious *Letter*, occasion'd some words between him and me. He pretended now he could not produce a copy of it, and that he design'd it only as a private *Letter* to a friend, and not that it should be made so public as it was. I then let him know, he ought not to have made the *Answer* an handle against us, by reading it in the Assembly, unless he had taken care to let us have a copy of his *Letter*, that we might see how the *Answer* was procur'd. He appeal'd to one of the city, who, he said, saw the *Letter* before it was sent. I told him that was nothing to me. And certainly it was very little to the purpose for him to appeal to one of his own side, whether his *Letter* was honestly written or not, it being now apparent, that the person he appeals to has been concern'd in the like practices with himself. I desir'd that the Assembly might see with their own eyes, and so give judgment in the case. Mr. *Walrond* pretended then, that he said nothing of the ministers in the city. I answer'd, There was a minister in the city named in his *Letter*, and that I thought it very odd, that if the people were charg'd with using blasphemous expressions, the ministers should have a test put upon them, since they could be charg'd with no such thing. And
it

it now appears by the *Narrative*, p. 4. that *some of the Exeter ministers* are charg'd to have countenanc'd others in spreading the *Arian* notions; for it seems plain that must belong to this *Letter*. Mr. *Walrond* ask'd me, Whether I kept copies of all the private Letters I wrote? I told him, no: but I wrote none that were read in such public Assemblies, of which I did not keep copies. This is what I insist on, that he ought not to have read the *Answer*, unless he had been able to produce his own *Letter*. And let the world judge of the defence he makes, and whether this whole affair do's not look like a mere juggle, and is not of a piece with the rest of the proceedings of that side.

UPON this occasion, I told him he had not written fair at other times, and particularly in a *Letter* which I was inform'd he sent to *London*, and was read in their Assembly, wherein he reflected upon me, as I believ'd he was generally understood; for he desir'd that no credit might be given to the accounts of any that corresponded with our side. His answer was, That he would write as he pleas'd to his friends. I replied, So he might, but he ought to do it with conscience. This he told me was good advice for my self; and doubtless it is so for every man: but he pretended not to allege any instance to the contrary. Some of the forward brethren call'd upon me to know what falshood he had written. I had much ado to get room to answer, by reason of the noisy and empty din that was made as usually by one who was near me; but at last I told them, I did not pretend I was expressly named, and yet I thought conscience was concern'd in not spreading insinuations that a person was not to be credited, when there was no reason for it. Hereupon Mr. *Walrond* said, That he did not in what he wrote intend to reflect upon my veracity. I told him then, I was satisfied.

AFTER

AFTER this one of the brethren desir'd, that he might have the liberty of signing the *first Article* of the *Church of England*, in order to clear himself of *Arianism*; tho', good man, he knew well enough, there was no one suspected him of it. Upon this I made that motion I mention in my *Remarks*, p. 9. "Mr. Moderator, tho' I am against
 " subscribing to any tests that are not scripture,
 " yet I beg leave to move one thing in the behalf
 " of others, who may not be of my mind. The
 " great objection against scripture tests is, that the
 " words of scripture are ambiguous: I move, that
 " when an unscriptural test is propos'd, the same
 " objection may be guarded against; and particu-
 " larly, as the *first Article* of the *Church of Eng-*
 " land is now propos'd to be subscribed, I desire
 " it may be clear'd from all ambiguity, by explain-
 " ing the word *Persons* us'd in it; for I profess I
 " do not understand what is there the meaning of
 " it." The Assembly would not condescend so far to the weakness of their brethren as to explain this, tho' I believe all the world will judge there was nothing unreasonable in the motion: by which I think it appears plainly, the aim of all could not be so much to secure truth, as an assumed authority.

THE reason why I appear'd among them this first day of their Assembly was, because 'twas given out, that the case of *Exeter* would be then brought before them. I resolv'd not to move it my self, not thinking it proper to seek redress of those, who by their foregoing Assembly had set us all in a flame. But I thought I might make an offer toward peace, which I did to this purpose:

" MR. Moderator, I can truly say I have always
 " been desirous of the peace of the church, and
 " dreaded divisions; and had it been in my power
 " to have prevented it, that which has now hap-
 " pen'd

“ pen’d should have never been. There is nothing
 “ troubles me more than this, tho’ I have had no
 “ hand in it ; nor is there any personal inconveni-
 “ ence I would not willingly submit to for the
 “ healing of it. I have only one motion to make
 “ to you, if it may be agreed to ; and that is, that
 “ we may have a fast appointed, wherein both sides
 “ may lay aside their animosities so far as to join
 “ together, earnestly praying to God that he
 “ would lead us into the truth, and discover to us
 “ wherein we are on either side mistaken ; and
 “ that it be agreed before hand, that no one that
 “ officiates either in preaching or praying shall
 “ drop the least reflection upon one side or t’other ;
 “ and that in some convenient time afterwards, a
 “ number of persons may be appointed on each
 “ side, and that a disputation may be held public-
 “ ly upon these two points that are now contro-
 “ verted. 1. Whether it is lawful for any men to
 “ insist upon our assenting to unscriptural tests ?
 “ 2. Whether Christ is the supreme God ? The
 “ people, who are now disquieted and distracted,
 “ will by this means have an opportunity of judg-
 “ ing on which side the truth lies.

I was ask’d by the Moderator, whether I was
 for having such a fast kept in the country ? I told
 him, No ; only in the city where the division was
 already form’d. He seem’d not to me to disapprove
 of it ; but Mr. *Lavington*, after his usual manner,
 opposed this vehemently. He said, We could not
 join together in a fast, because we had not the same
 object of worship ; and that such a disputation was
 the way to unsettle the minds of people that were
 now well settled. The motion of a public dispu-
 tation being rejected, there were some that propo-
 sed a dispute immediately in the Assembly ; which
 I knew would signify nothing, except it were to

give them a handle to triumph in a sure vote of the Assembly, as soon as the dispute was ended.

I then told the Moderator, I should not have appear'd there, had it not been that I expected the case of *Exeter* would have been brought before them; and that I made it my request, that nothing might be said with relation to it, without my being sent for and heard. He promis'd there should not, and then I withdrew.

THERE was afterwards a motion made that related to it; but he put them in mind of his promise, and declar'd, unless I was sent for he would leave the chair, if they proceeded upon it, which was acting a truly honourable part. And I must do Mr. *Harding* the justice to own, that I never saw the chair better filled. However, there was another time a motion made, that the Assembly should advise Mr. *Bartlet* to accept the invitation the people of *Exeter* had sent him to come and settle among them. There was one who suggested there was a previous question necessary to be consider'd, viz. *Whether there be a regular vacancy?* But this they cared not to meddle with, and put it off thus: That a vacancy there plainly was; but whether it were regular, or not, they were not to consider. And so they put this question: Whether it was the opinion of the Assembly, that Mr. *Bartlet's* filling the vacancy would be for the glory of God? I think Mr. Moderator ought to have insisted here, as he did before, that I should have been sent for.

I am apt to think my proposing *that*, prevented the Gentlemen of *Exeter* from bringing their case into the Assembly. For I know there were several of the other side in the Assembly, who utterly disapproved of the manner in which we were ejected; and it was said by some of that
side,

side, that the Assembly was obliged to me for not bringing it in, and forcing them to speak their minds of that matter. But whatever pleasure they might take in this part of my conduct, I am not so vain as to pretend, that I design'd to lay them under any obligation by it.

ON the *Wednesday*, as usual, there was a sermon preach'd before the Assembly; wherein the preacher, according to the account of them that heard it, behav'd himself in an extraordinary manner, very much for stirring the passions, tho' but little for informing the judgment of the hearers. Some passages of his sermon were shocking to several of his own side; insomuch that the orthodox brother, who propos'd in the Assembly the signing the *first Article* of the *Church of England*, boggled at thanking the preacher; but I don't find, that the Assembly urg'd him to sign any article to clear himself of the suspicion of *Antinomianism*, which I take to be a worse heresy than proper *Arianism*.

ON the *Thursday* morning at the young mens lecture was preach'd a sermon by Mr. *Samuel Carkeet*, which was too honest not to give offence to the pretendedly orthodox party. The sermon is since printed, and the reader is refer'd to it, as well as to other writings of the same side, that he may see the difference between the spirit of that side and their adversaries.

As to the other transactions of the Assembly, I refer to their own *Account*, together with my *Remarks* thereon, and what Mr. *Jacomb* has said concerning his own particular case.

THE ministers did many of them return home from the Assembly very warm and furious, and preach'd against their brethren with much bitterness. They several of them read the Assembly's account (and some of them the subscribers names

at length, as I am told) in the public congregations; tho', I believe, hardly ever was any thing more mean publish'd with so many hands to it, than the *Letter* they printed.

As to *Exeter*, they continued to have supplics from abroad to fill our pulpit, some of which behaved themselves with moderation and temper; others were furious in railing at us, some in their sermons, some in their wrathful prayers, and some in both. And the profound Mr. *Lavington* has taken occasion to say, we have not been persecuted or imposed on; that they are themselves the people who suffer those things, and makes it his business in conversation to fright poor people with his confident denouncing damnation against such as differ from him.

THE ministers who glory in their orthodoxy, have not contented themselves with acting in their own congregations; but they have been laborious to imbroil the congregations of their neighbours, and have for that end every where been employing their emissaries, who have very faithfully acted their parts as incendiaries, and have raised the utmost confusion, and disturbance in several congregations; and nothing appears sufficient to satisfy these Gentlemen, 'till they have intirely secured to themselves the character of the woman in the *Proverbs*, chap. xiv. 1. that *plucketh down her house with her own hands*. There is hardly a man of those, whose names are subscribed to the *Paper* I publish'd in my *Remarks*, p. 38. who has not tasted of their christian temper. Most lamentable divisions and animosities have they raised round the country, by their bitter zeal and wrath: and God only knows when their fury will end. As for our parts here in *Exeter*, we are daily insulted and abused by their means: and common civility,

as

as well as truth and justice are in a fair way to perish out of the country, if they can but compass their ends.

I shall here take the liberty to publish an account of the usage some ministers have met with. And the first shall be Mr. *John Cox* of *Kingsbridge*, a man whose character has been so unblemish'd, and his conversation so exemplary, that his most malignant adversaries have been forced to speak well of him.

I shall transcribe it from his own paper.

“ THE 3d of *June*, 1719. I asked such of my hearers as met me about their dissatisfaction with my ministry, what terms they expected I should comply with, e're they own'd my ministry? It was answer'd to this effect; That the Assembly at *Exeter* had declared what they were. I then propos'd to each person concern'd in voting, whether he expected that I should subscribe the *first Article* of the *Church of England*, or the *fifth* and *sixth Answers* of the *Assembly's Catechism*? The majority answer'd, Yes.

“ BEFORE I declared my mind with respect to the terms with which I must comply, e're they would any longer own me to be their minister, I told them that I was no *Arian*; and then mention'd what I believ'd concerning the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in the words of the sacred scripture, which I thought were most proper to express the true sense of a doctrine that intirely depended on a divine revelation, especially since this doctrine was own'd to be ineffable and incomprehensible. I also observ'd, that human composures might be variously understood, as well as the expressions of the scripture, as appear'd by the differing senses, put on the latter part of the *first Article* of the
“ *Church*

“ *Church of England*, which might be found in
 “ the late Bishop of *Salisbury's Exposition* : so
 “ that I might subscribe a creed, or article of
 “ human composition or form, and yet be very
 “ erroneous; except an agreement in bare sounds
 “ and words will make a harmony of faith, where
 “ there is a real difference in the understanding
 “ and sense of the words at the same time.

“ WHEN I had spoken as much as I thought
 “ proper concerning these things, I told them
 “ that I utterly refused to comply with the pro-
 “ posed terms, or to subscribe either of these
 “ two compositions, in order to be own'd as
 “ their minister. This I said I did, because I
 “ would not countenance men claiming an au-
 “ thority to make new terms of communion,
 “ which do's not belong to them; because I
 “ would not act against the principles own'd by
 “ Dissenters, and pleaded by them to justify
 “ their not joining with the establish'd church;
 “ and because I would not do any thing which
 “ might derogate from, or disagree with the
 “ sufficiency of the holy scripture, and that re-
 “ gard which is due to the authority of Christ,
 “ as head of the church. Nothing was laid to
 “ my charge at this meeting, and this was the
 “ only meeting we had to compose the breach
 “ between us. So that I was ejected, because I
 “ would not comply with the terms which they
 “ propos'd, in order to their owning me as their
 “ minister.

“ THAT I have been thus ejected, is asserted
 “ by me, *John Cox*.

Mr. *Isaac Gilling* of *Newton Abbot* hath had his
 share of troubles and sufferings also. “ He, accord-
 “ ing to his own account, became obnoxious to
 “ the managers by some private discourse about
 “ the *subordination*, in his own house, with his
 “ kinsman

“ kinsman Mr. *Aaron Pitts*, minister of *Chard*,
 “ who betray’d the conversation, and represent-
 “ ed him under an ill character. Their resent-
 “ ment against him discover’d it self by their
 “ forming a party at the Assembly in *September*,
 “ 1718. to chooſe another ſcribe, and lay him
 “ aſide. However he was choſe by a great ma-
 “ jority. A certain brother in that Assembly
 “ tax’d him with an unfair representation of the
 “ minutes of the Assembly in *May*; but the Af-
 “ ſembly were ſoon convinc’d that the accusati-
 “ on was groundleſs.

“ AFTER Mr. *Ball* had brought the buſineſs
 “ of the Trinity into the Assembly, his plead-
 “ ing for the ſufficiency of ſcripture, and his
 “ oppoſing thoſe that were for making a decla-
 “ ration, gave ſo great offence, that he was for-
 “ bid twice to write, though ’tis the office of
 “ the ſcribe to take minutes of all that paſſes.
 “ The ſermon he preach’d the *Thursday* morn-
 “ ing againſt *rash judging*, and an *implicit faith*,
 “ which he afterward printed, gave great offence
 “ to the guilty.

“ SOON after the Assembly, reports were ſpread
 “ among his hearers, that he was an *Arian*, and
 “ oppoſed the Assembly, by which ſome of his
 “ people were prejudiced againſt him. Theſe
 “ prejudices were kept up, and increaſed, by
 “ *Letters* from ſome of the miniſters, and by
 “ the artful inſinuations of ſome of the *Exon* Gen-
 “ tlemen, upon whom ſome of his hearers had a de-
 “ pendance, as to their trade.

“ AFTER the Assembly in *May*, 1719. when
 “ his name appear’d the ſecond on the paper
 “ ſign’d by twenty hands to vindicate themſelves
 “ from falſe accusations, the breaking his meet-
 “ ing was reſolved upon: and neighbouring mi-
 “ niſters were very buſy to inflame and ſeducer
 “ his

“ his hearers. His signing that paper [*publish'd*
 “ *in my Remarks*] not submitting to the autho-
 “ rity of the Assembly, and not coming into
 “ their measures of imposing human forms as tests
 “ of orthodoxy, and his assisting in the ordina-
 “ tion of Mr. *George Jacomb*, were such hei-
 “ nous crimes, that he must be made an exam-
 “ ple to deter others. A minister who was no
 “ stranger to their designs, intimated in a Let-
 “ ter to his friend in *London*, wrote before Mr.
 “ *Gilling's* people had rejected and disown'd him,
 “ that he must expect in some time to be in
 “ Mr. *Pierce's* case. Some of his hearers, who
 “ never were in full communion, bestir'd them-
 “ selves to draw off his people. He was call'd
 “ upon in the presence of two communicants,
 “ and two others of his congregation, to sign
 “ the *sixth Answer* of the *Assembly's Catechism*,
 “ or the *first Article* of the *Church of England*,
 “ and upon his not complying deserted, and dis-
 “ own'd by them. A separate meeting was set
 “ up in the town, supply'd by ministers pro-
 “ cur'd by Mr. *Lavington*, and Mr. *Edgley, &c.*
 “ And to draw off more of his friends, and
 “ countenance the separatists, a fast was held a-
 “ mong the latter, which was graced with the
 “ presence of Mr. *Horsbam*, Mr. *Evans*, Mr.
 “ *Edgley*, Mr. *Eveleigh*, Mr. *Hughes*, Mr. *Bond*,
 “ and Mr. *Colton*: at which Mr. *Bond* by his
 “ prayers, and Mr. *Eveleigh* by the application
 “ of his sermon, contributed not a little to widen
 “ the breach, and incense the people against their
 “ minister.

“ HE yet continues to preach to a part of his
 “ people, who will not by all attempts hitherto
 “ made, be prevail'd upon to desert him; but
 “ is expos'd to the contempt and hatred of the
 “ mob, and labours under a load of malicious
 “ and

“ and groundless calumnies. All which unjust
 “ and severe usage he prays God, to forgive
 “ the authors, instruments, and abettors. *July 30,*
 “ 1719.

I shall next give some account of the work-
 ings of the same spirit against Mr. *John Force*,
 minister at *Bovey*. Endeavours were used to create
 a feud in the congregation presently after our ejection
 here. A *Letter* was sent to them by a minister
 to this purpose, which had little or no effect;
 and they continued pretty quiet 'till the *Assembly*
 in *May*, 1719. “ Then (as he informs me) see-
 “ ing his name to our paper, they began to grum-
 “ ble about his faith, though none came to him
 “ for satisfaction. But after he had waited some
 “ short time, he went to them, and some de-
 “ clared themselves well satisfied, and others not;
 “ and some without any more ado went to the
 “ establish'd church, and some to other meetings.
 “ At length observing the absence and dissatisfac-
 “ tion of many, he publicly in the meeting house
 “ desir'd all to appear on a certain day, assuring
 “ them he would do all he could, with a good
 “ conscience, to preserve the peace and welfare of
 “ the church. Accordingly they had a meeting
 “ soon after, when he gave them a scripture ac-
 “ count of his faith [too large to be here in-
 “ serted]. This did not give satisfaction, but the
 “ malecontents insisted on his saying, as in the
 “ *Assembly's Catechism*, That the Father, Son,
 “ and Holy Ghost are the *same in substance, and*
 “ *equal in power and glory*. He told them he
 “ would be brought to no human forms, and
 “ could not go any farther than the scriptures.
 “ After they had press'd him again and again,
 “ and he had as often refused, he took the li-
 “ berty to ask them a few plain questions. As,

Q. 1. " WHETHER the scripture be a sufficient,
 " and the only rule of christians? Which was
 " immediately answer'd in the negative.

Q. 2. " WHETHER the Father be the Son,
 " and the Son the Father? Answer'd in the af-
 " firmative.

Q. 3. " WHETHER, if so, the Father himself
 " did not assume human nature, suffer, and die,
 " and become our redeemer? Answer'd in the
 " affirmative.

" THIS made him lament their ignorant zeal,
 " and beg them for their own sakes to talk no
 " more of the matter, 'till they had thought and
 " read more: and his saying that gave great of-
 " fence. He ask'd them whether they could charge
 " him with any thing amiss, either in his preach-
 " ing or practice? But tho' they were forced to
 " own they could not; yet they told him they sus-
 " pected his faith, because he did not fall in with
 " the forty five subscribers in the Assembly; and
 " they declared they could not make peace with
 " him, unless he did first make his peace with the
 " Assembly; assuring him at the same time that
 " not one of them would have appear'd against
 " him, had it not been for the last Assembly.
 " At this meeting it was moved, that two mi-
 " nisters should be chosen on each side to de-
 " bate the matter, to which he readily consent-
 " ed, and they promis'd to let him know the
 " time and persons, but he has heard nothing
 " of it since; and some who agreed to this
 " proposal went away the next Lord's day, and
 " have not been at the meeting ever since.

" THE minister who wrote the *Letter* I men-
 " tion'd before, desired one of the malecontents
 " (as he himself told Mr. *Force*) to write to him
 " constantly how the matter went on against
 " him,

“ him, and soon after the conference went to
 “ *Bovey* to stir up the people against him. By
 “ these, and such like methods, about one half
 “ of the people have been brought to leave
 “ him; and some of them shew a great hatred
 “ of him, declaring they can’t endure to see him
 “ walk the streets.

ANOTHER instance is the case of Mr. *Nathanael Cock* of *Biddiford*, who had been very unanimously invited to settle with a people there, about three years before, and had preach’d among them with good acceptance, ’till these disturbances arose. When the Seven advisers sent about their circular Letter in *February* last, among other places it came to *Biddiford*, and upon his refusing to approve of their proceedings, it was immediately noised abroad that he was an *Arian*. Hereupon the next Lord’s day he took occasion in his sermon, to profess his belief that Christ was the Son of God, over all God blessed for ever; and that he took the sacred scriptures to be a sufficient rule of life and manners, in which all things necessary to salvation are clearly revealed, to which rule alone he declared he would subscribe. What he then said of this nature, together with his censure of the reproaches which were cast upon him, made a good impression on the auditory, and things grew quiet, ’till some were so base as to give out that he baptized a child, *April* 26. only in the name of the Father, which the whole congregation could witness to be false. In the *May* Assembly he refused to subscribe with the majority, but subscribed with the other part: and this immediately was made a handle for charging him again with *Arianism*; and some of his people, without applying to him, thereupon left him. He then took occasion again to speak his mind, asserting the divinity and eternity of Christ, and modestly owning that to declare his essence or generation was above

his capacity, appealing to their consciences whether he had ever delivered any other doctrine than that of the scriptures, &c. But all that he could say, avail'd little with some of them. He had subscribed with me, and must therefore necessarily be in my notions, which were very dangerous; and hard names and plentiful reproaches were upon this occasion bestowed on me, by those who had no knowledge of me. Hereupon he invited his communicants to his own house, and gave them a large account of his faith; to which they had nothing to object, and the generality declared themselves satisfied, tho' some few kept at a distance.

WHILE these things were transacting, some of his brethren were very busy in exasperating his people against him, insinuating to those that were satisfied with his declarations, that he had secret reserves, and that it was necessary to sift him, and urging that communion was not to be held with such; and one zealous brother in the town used to declaim very furiously against the non-subscribers as Christ-despisers, betrayers, and deniers of the Lord that bought them, and eternally damn'd; and that it was better to go into a pesthouse than to go to hear such preach. It was propos'd to him, that he should go to the Assembly in *September*, and join with the orthodox, and retract his subscription among the notorious *Arians*; nothing less than this would satisfy. He took occasion therefore in a sermon the Lord's day before the Assembly, to let the people know he would comply with no such terms. One of his people came and discoursed with him, and went away declaring himself satisfied, which declaration when he was gone he repeated to a friend; tho' afterwards he gave out the directly contrary account. Another took just the same course, declaring himself satisfied this week, and the next withdrawing from the Assembly. Two others

others insisted upon his subscribing an acknowledgment that the Father was the Son, and the Son the Father, owning this to be their faith, and being surpriz'd when he endeavour'd to convince them that 'twas a great error. Another express'd great resentments against him, for speaking of the Son as sent by the Father; and for such wise reasons would not believe he was sound in the Faith, and told him, he did not preach faith and repentance, but false doctrine, with other things of the like nature, not worth repeating. By the management that has been used a considerable number have left him, wherein they have been publicly applauded by some, and whether they will be able to proceed any farther, time must shew.

CONCERNING the ministers upon whom all this storm has fallen, I beg leave to make this remark, That there is not one of them, against whom the least charge of immorality was advanced. Their brethren pretend not to accuse them of fraud, intemperance, lasciviousness, or any other such vice; but their only crime is, that they will acknowledge no other master than Christ, and take the liberty to believe him rather than some who would thrust themselves into his room. In this heinous wickedness (if it be one) I think we are all agreed; though it is not unlikely we may differ as to our sentiments about the meaning of some texts, and may not have all exactly the same apprehensions of the doctrine of the Trinity; wherein we can easily bear with one another, as we are also willing to do with our angry brethren; hoping and believing that if any sincere inquirer after truth is in a dangerous mistake, God will reveal this to him; and being earnestly desirous in the mean while, that we may *walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing*, wherein we are
 sure

sure all the sincere followers of Christ must be agreed. And whatever the slanderous reports are, which have been industriously spread abroad concerning us, we hope to acquit our selves as hearty lovers of all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

UPON the whole, we leave the world to judge, notwithstanding what the *Narrative* says, p. 30. whether the ministers in the country have not acted a *rash part in this affair*; nay, I will add, whether the ministers in the country, and the Gentlemen in *Exeter* have not both acted a very unrighteous and unjust part; and whether the ministers in *London*, of the contrary side, have not made it appear, by what they have publish'd already to the world, that they have *animated and exasperated* our brethren here; and that they are not able honestly, and without blushing, to answer that close question put to them, *Reply to the subscribing Ministers Reasons*, Part 1. p. 10. which because the *Narrative* so slightly passes over, I think it proper here to transcribe. "Have
 " none of them raised and promoted uneasinesses
 " on purpose, to drive us [*the non-subscribers at*
 " London] into methods which they had under-
 " taken for, to that side at *Exeter*, with which
 " they are plainly found to have corresponded,
 " and with that only?" I am very sorry that men I have a value for, should not be able roundly to deny such a matter of fact, as they can't but be ashamed to own.

GIVE me leave now to look back, and to present the reader with one short view of our sad difference. The first rise of it was, that some persons, the ministers of *Exeter* knowing nothing of it, took the liberty to read some books, which had been publish'd against the more common doctrine of the Trinity, and to differ from it. Their
 talk

talk being accidentally overheard, was carried to Mr. *Lavington*, who was so indiscreet as to publish it thro' the city, without which in all probability no noise had been made, nor any uneasiness arisen among christians. A person who was not a minister in the city, and had not studied the controversy, took an opportunity, when friendly desired to preach a lecture, to sound an alarm in our pulpit. While three of the *Exeter* ministers contrived all they could to keep peace, Mr. *Lavington* preaches up the common opinion as a fundamental; but not being able to maintain his point to the satisfaction of either those that agreed with him, or differ'd from him, his brethren are solicited to undertake it; they being sensible of their inability, are so prudent as to assert no more than they brought scripture evidence for: hereupon he, with the help of two or three of the people, who had more zeal than knowledge, kindles a flame against his brethren, and puts the people into a rage; but finding himself still unable to compass his ends, his neighbours are engaged to contribute their good assistance toward so worthy and glorious a work; and that his brethren might be run down by authority instead of argument, the *London* ministers and the *Devonshire* Assembly are set upon them: an inquisition is set up by their help, and the encouragement of seven famous advisers, to find out some pretence against them; and by the arbitrary proceedings of some few of the people, contrary to the rules of common justice, the ministers are shut out of their pulpits, which they had as much right to as their houses. In the mean while finding it necessary that the reputation of such as they oppos'd should be blasted; and thinking a stranger in the country might be most easily and succesfully attack'd in this manner,

the

the party have fallen upon me with the most impudent and vile slanders; some of which I have been constrain'd already to confute. And that the world may judge who have been at the bottom of such proceedings, I will now acquaint them with what I have reason to believe, having had it from several hands, *viz.* That one of the seven, and the prime manager of all, had been first secretly whispering about a report, which he has since spoken of more freely, that I did once err in a fundamental doctrine of the christian religion; by this means insinuating, that it was possible I might do so at this time in the matter of the Trinity. He pretends, that I once denied the doctrine of the resurrection; which I declare is as vile a calumny, and as utterly false and groundless a slander as any man, himself not excepted, ever utter'd: and I defy him, or any of his agents, to make out what he has reported. I pray God to open the eyes of all honest christians, to see what a cause that must be, that needs such vile arts to support it.

P. S. I have, p. 94. spoken of the *Exeter* Ministers as charged by Mr. *Walrond* with *countenancing errors*. He has, since my papers were sent to the press, let me know, that he said nothing of the *Exeter* Ministers in the Letter he wrote. I have therefore been willing the world should be inform'd of what he says, that the blame of the mistake may rest, where it ought, upon the carelessness or disingenuity of the writer of the *Narrative*, who unavoidably led me into it, by putting in that clause in the midst of the account he gives of Mr. *Walrond's* letter.

F I N I S.

Page 17. line 8. for *found* read *solid*. p. 30. l. 25. r. *given him*. p. 32. l. 26. f. *satisfaction* r. *submission*. p. 41. l. 19. r. *and we were*. p. 44. l. 21. r. *his M. S.* p. *ibid.* l. 37. r. *to heaven to him*. p. 46. l. 27. dele *a*. p. 47. l. 27. dele *next*. p. 66. l. 26. r. *a circumstance*. p. 137. l. 4. r. *Boysse*. p. 140. l. 15. f. *here* r. *there*. p. 144. l. 18. r. *thrice a week*.

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