

THE
DETECTION DETECTED.

OR

Book

A VINDICATION of the
Rev^d. Mr. *DELAP*, and *New-Cast*.
PRESBYTERY, from the Charges of *injurious*
REASONINGS, and *false REPRESENTA-*
TIONS, exhibited against them by the Rev.
Messieurs *GELLATLY* and *ARNOT*.

By *ROBERT SMITH*, Minister of
the Gospel at *Pequea*.

To which is prefixed, a LETTER to
the Author on the same Subject, from the Rev.
SAMUEL FINLEY, A. M. Minister of the
Gospel at *West-Nottingham*.

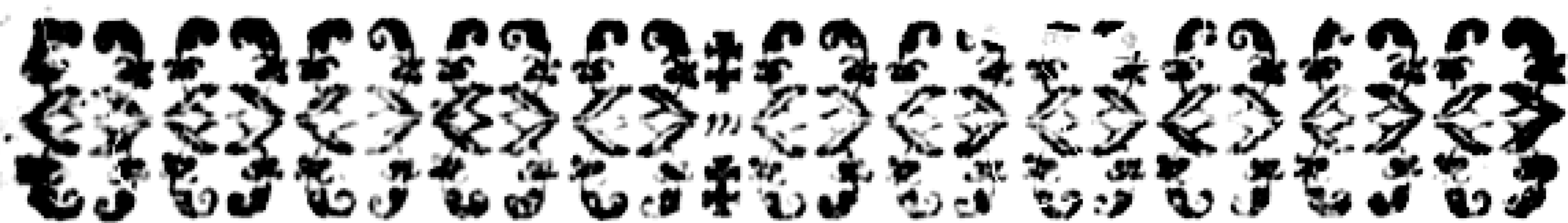
Psal. lvi. 5. Every Day they wrest my Words.

Gal. iv. 17. They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they
would exclude you, that you might affect them.

Rom. xiv. 20. For Meat destroy not the Work of God.

Isa. viii. 20. To the Law and to the Testimony; If they speak not
according to this Word, it is because there is no Light in them.

LANCASTER: Printed and Sold by W. DUNLAP,
at the *New-Printing-Office* in *Queen-Street*. 1757.



The P R E F A C E.

SOME Authors, thro' Modesty, apologize for their Performance, when no other Apology is needful than the Importance of their Subject, and their good Sense in managing it. Others, perhaps, take their Excuse, only that they may appear humble. But if to omit an Apology be a Crime in any, it wou'd, no Doubt, be particularly so in me; especially seeing I undertake the Vindication of a Revd. Presbytery, wherein are fundry of my Fathers and Brethren, who are much better qualified for the Purpose. Now, all I shall offer to vindicate my engaging in this Affair is, that as an Answer to the *Detection* was judged Necessary on Account of the Weak, who are liable to be impos'd upon; so our Presbytery were generally either embarrass'd by the Calamities of the present Year, or otherwise so engag'd, that they cou'd not attend to it; therefore the disagreeable Task devolv'd upon me.

Being in a weakly State of Health, and much enumber'd by the great Variety of my ordinary Labours and Avocations, with which my Hands are usually so full, that I have very little Leisure for any Thing of this Kind, I requested the Rev. Mr. *Finley's* Assistance in some Particulars, which he was pleas'd to grant in a Letter wrote to me, that I have prefix'd to the following Performance. And being led farther than his first Design, which was only a few occasional Remarks, he has considerably shorten'd my Labour, especially on the first Part of the *Detection*.

Mr. *Finley's* Character is already so well establish'd, that my Recommendation can add no Weight to his Letter

Letter: But it will sufficiently speak for itself. Tho' I'm persuaded what I have wrote is just, as to the Matter; yet I'm very sensible, there can't but be sundry Defects as to the Manner in which it is done: For as Nothing great is to be expected from its Author, so he wrote under peculiar Disadvantages, not having Composure to write over Half a Page at any Time, without considerable Interruptions.

I have endeavour'd to avoid railing Language, nor have I generally us'd as much Tartness as I really think the Occasion given wou'd justify; yet if any of my Readers think otherwise, let them pass over those Expressions that are not so pleasing to them, and attend to the Scope of the Argument.

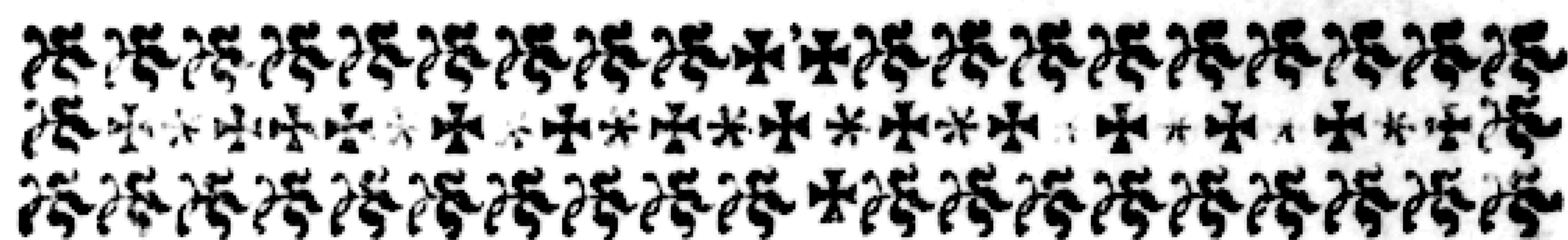
Neither I, nor any of my Brethren, have been so intent on this Business as some have wickedly reported of us, who noised abroad that we brib'd the Printer to detain the *Seceders* Piece till we had almost prepar'd an Answer to it: We despise the Thought! and their mean Conduct who are employ'd in such officious Lying! The *Detection* was printed off, and spread through the Country several Months, before one Word was written in Answer to it, except a few Remarks I made on only one Particular, meerly for my own Satisfaction: For I had no Design to publish an Answer, expecting some more able Hand wou'd undertake it. And since I began to write, I have been frequently much interrupted, not only by my ordinary Avocations and Weakness of Body, but also by many affecting Alarms from our suffering Brethren on the Frontiers, which sometimes entirely diverted my Thoughts from any Thing of this Nature. And, indeed, I esteem it a very great unhappiness to be engag'd in angry Controversy in such a melancholly Season; and a Part of the Judgments of God upon us for our Sins, not only to be watted by barbarous, deceitful Enemies from without, but also consum'd by intestine Broils and Divisions. Hence I wou'd have

entirely

entirely drop'd the Prosecution of this Affair for the present, did I not frequently hear, that some gloried in the *Detection* as unanswerable; and that our Authors industriously improv'd the present threatening Dispensations of Providence to foment their Schism, instead of exciting Professors to more Peace and Harmony.

It will be no Surprize to me to find myself loaded with Reproaches in Consequence of this Undertaking. For, such is the great Unhappiness of too many Readers, that, in passing Judgment upon Authors, they either cannot, or will not take up the Force of, or determine only by, Argument; but if their Sentiments are oppos'd, tho' with ever so much Reason, they quickly fly into a Flame, and lash at the Author with unbounded Fury. He only has Sense to manage a Point in their Judgment, who is on that Side of the Question they espouse; and if he abounds in hard Words, its no Matter whether he once touches the Argument, nay, tho' he industriously burys it out of View, he reasons powerfully and clearly. But, regardless of personal Reflections, I commit this Performance to God to do with it as he pleases; and if I shall be so happy as to serve the Interests of Religion by it in any Measure, my Design and Prayer will be both answer'd.

Robert Smith.

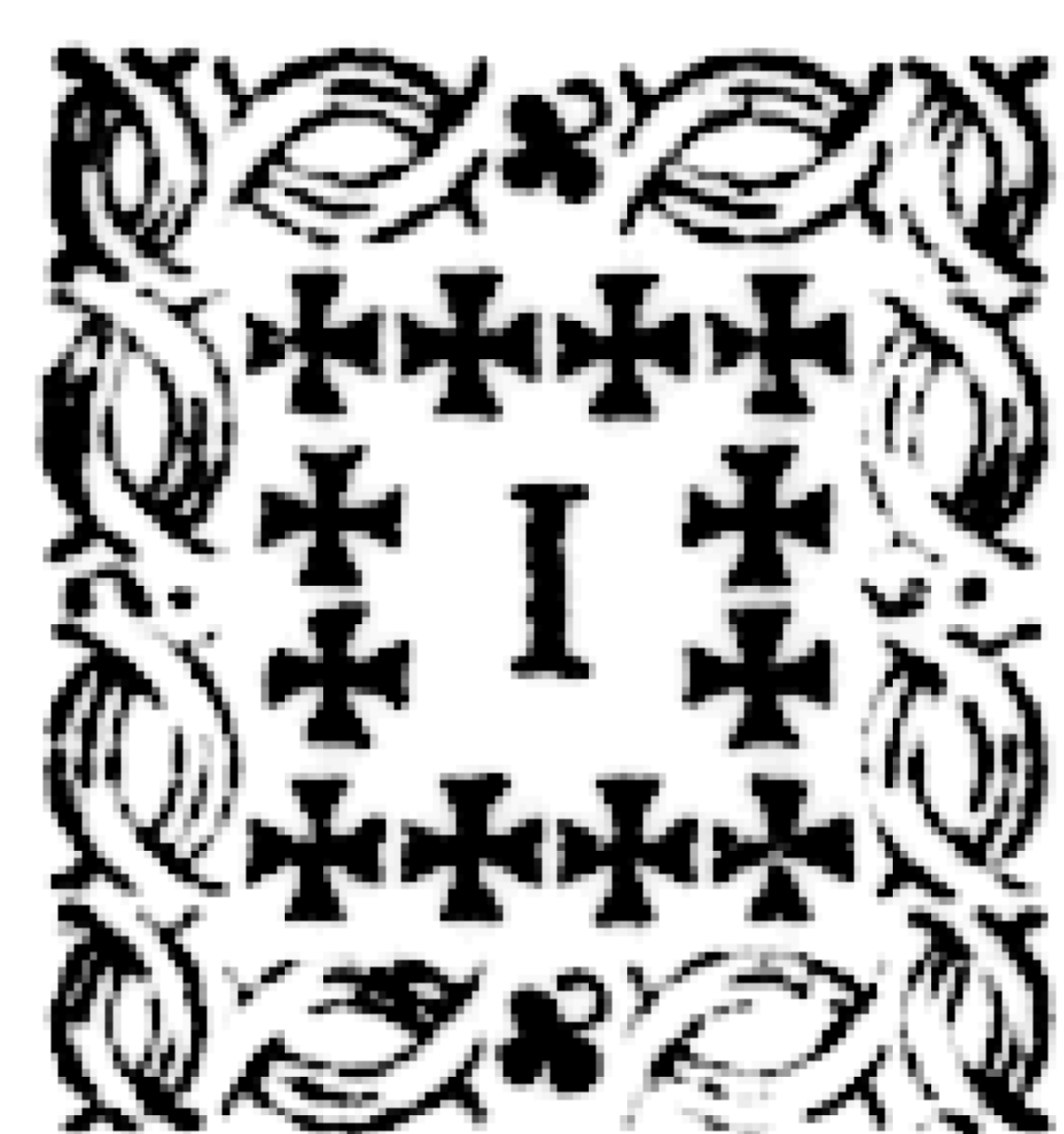


A

LETTER from the Reverend

Mr. *SAMUEL FINLEY*, &c.

Revd. and dear Brother,



RECEIVED your Letter some Time ago, and also the *Seceder's DETECTION &c.* as they call it, on which you desire me to write some Remarks. As writing is peculiarly oppressive to my Constitution, and my Time, as you know, engrossed with other Business, you cannot expect any large Discussion of the Points in Controversy from me. I have had such full Employ as not to have Leisure to read twenty Pages in the Book until just lately, and I know not whether I would now have spared any Time for that Purpose, had not several told me, that the *Seceders* triumphed in it, and that it was thought by some, the Presbytery would never be able to answer it. Upon this I laid aside some Part of my Business for the present, that I might get an Hour now and then in an Evening, to peruse, and remark upon it. I have read the first Part compleatly, and most of what the same Author has added to the End. I have yet but glanced upon some Passages in Mr. *Arnot's* Part, and know not whether I can take Time to peruse it at all. I own they are both masterly in their Way, and if there be such a Thing as *Bullying* in Religion, instead of *disputing*, they are the Men who are guilty of it.

IT would doubtless seem at first a Riddle and Paradox, to those who thought their Performance unanswerable, if I should say, they have not only not answered Mr. *Delap*, but have not so much as attempted to answer him, as to the Point in Question; no, not in one single Article. Yet this I presume, I shall be able to make as plain as any self-evident Truth: They will stand convicted of bearing false Witness against us, and that very often: And it will be evident, that they have no just Pretensions to strict Argument or true Criticism, and as little to Candor, and Impartiality. The truth is, if I may speak as I think in my Heart they appear to me incapable of fair Disputation: Whether through De-

fect of natural Parts, or ignorance of Logick, or inveterate Prejudice in favour of Party-principles, or the indefensibleness of their Cause, I shall not determine; but perhaps all concur.

IN Defence of these general Observations, I shall offer some Remarks on their Piece, which, tho' I will take Care they be just and true, I cannot take Time to polish, nor contrive any other Method, than following them in the Tract they have gone before me in.

IN *Preface* p. 4, Mr. Gellatly says, ' Mr. Whitefield's unsound Doctrine must be vindicated and maintained for sound.' But he has taken Care not to mention one single Instance of Mr. W's false Doctrine vindicated by us, either here, or in any other Place, that I can remember: Yet he is obliged to shew it, or else lye under the Charge of a *false Accuser*. Some of us, 'tis true, have vindicated Mr. W. from the Charge of unsound Doctrine, in some Particulars; but that is very different from vindicating unsound Doctrine.

HE asserts, ' that our Zeal has risen of Late, against the Doctrines and Practices stigmatized in our *Warning*.' But can any that have duly attended to us believe this, who must know that we have been still zealous against the same Things, in Proportion as the Danger of them threatned our People? unless they think there can be no Zeal without a Presbyterian *Warning*.

THEY talk like themselves, p. 5, when they answer our Arguments, and assert they have no Weight, only because we did not quote Texts of Scripture, nor appealed to the Confession of Faith, in our Remarks on them. But it would have been still more like themselves to have concluded from thence, that we are Deists, and Non-subscribers. They seem to believe, that we cannot use scriptural Arguments, unless we quote Chapter and Verse, and express the very Words. This is all that was wanting to silence them; and had we done it, People of their Turn would have thought we proved our Point well. Indeed I think such Talk deserves no Answer, were it not that some People are as weak as they, and fancy a Man has proven a Doctrine, if he has quoted many Texts. Such Persons are exposed to be carried away by popish Writers, who quote Texts as fast as the *Seceders*, and with as little Propriety or force of Argument. They would imagine that *Barclay* has proven all the *Quaker* Doctrines; for he quotes nothing but Texts of Scripture in his Catechisms; and the *Moravians* the same in theirs: The *Ana-baptists* too, are punctual in this, and alledge we cannot quote Scripture, because it don't favour us. But tho' for sake of Brevity, I should omit Quotations, cannot a gospelized People discern a scriptural Doctrine, tho' not quoted Word for Word, and Chapter and Verse referred to? The *Seceders* are either exceeding weak, or else design to impose on the Weakness of others, by this dishonest Shift: I call it dishonest in the present Case, because tho' we quoted but one Text in our Appendix, we referred them to what we wrote against Mr. *Cuthbertson*, where we quoted more; but this, it seems, they

they were willingly ignorant of, that they might say we quoted but one Text against the *Seceders*.

WHAT they intend by our bringing 'an *Old-England Doctrine*, 'a *New-England Psalm*, and a Revelation from *Pennsylvania*, I know not; and perhaps they would be puzzled to explain it. None of our People, who know our Sentiments and Conduct, will be able to apply these Things to us, in any proper Sense, without the *Seceders* Help: But this much it will prove, that they are sincerely spiteful against us, and would be greatly pleased to have Evil Things to lay to our Charge. If they mean that we would not excommunicate one for using a different Version of Psalms; and that we put this on a Level with Meats and Drinks, in Point of Christian Communion, they are in the Right; for so we do, provided the Version be not unsound. And will they prove that herein we err? Yes, they quote against us 1 *Cor.* xiv. 26. and say, 'the best Judge of Church Communion tells us, how inconsistent it is for Brethren when they come together, every one to have a Psalm, a Doctrine, and a Revelation; and rebukes the *Corinthians* for such a Practice.' Very true: But does he bid them separate themselves on this Account? Does he bid those, who were most in the Right, to become *Seceders*? Far from it: And if he does not, they have quoted this Text against themselves. If the Apostle is the best Judge of Church Communion, then we are sure he condemns the *Seceders*, who would have made these Things Terms of Communion, had they been there. But the Apostle Charges these same Christians, notwithstanding their differences, to make no Divisions, Chap. i. 10. It appears by his frequent and earnest urging of this Point, that some of them were so displeas'd with the Rest, as to think of being *Seceders*, which he endeavours to prevent. But Mr. G. quite perverts the Text, when he applies it to us; because he can find Nothing in us any way similar to what the Apostle censures: He does not reprove the *Corinthian* Teachers for having a Psalm, a Doctrine, &c. But for their irregularity in the Exercise of these spiritual Gifts, when they met together to worship: Some of them were too forward to be first heard and show their own Gifts; or, to display each one his own Talent in one Part of the Congregation, while others were exercising theirs in different Parts of it, whereby they confused the Assembly, prevented their Edification, and marred the Worship of God. Hence the Apostle directs them to a reasonable and orderly Use of their Gifts, each one keeping his own Place, and waiting his own Turn; so as the one should not interrupt the other, or these Gifts of less Importance supersede or prevent those of greater. Hence it appears, that Mr. G. is guilty of accusing us falsely, in quoting this Text against us. But this is their way of condemning others, and proving their Principles by Texts of Scripture: But they are much mistaken, with all their Discernment, when they insinuate that we are very desirous of their joining with us, Had we our Choice, we would desire Men better disposed for promoting

the Kingdom of Christ. Yet our not being for them, is not inconsistent with blaming their schismatical Conduct.

THEY inform me of several Terms of Communion we have made, and yet I never heard of them before. Nay, it is intimated that they are expressed in our Warning. If so, they have certainly discovered more than we ourselves knew, who wrote it. But it is their common Charity to lend us Principles of which we were destitute.

THEY say, we make it a Term of Communion, p. 7, that 'they must give up their Covenant Oath of Allegiance to their highest Lord.' Is this true? if so, we do not deserve the Christian Name: But can any of our People believe the Truth of this, who know it has been our earnest Endeavour to bring them into Covenant with the Lord? And do we for all that, make it a Term of Communion, that they shall renounce it. This cannot but represent us as alien from the Common-wealth of *Israel*, and Strangers to the Covenants of Promise. And what can be their Ground for this high Charge? They will not even pretend more than that we deny the formal Obligation of the solemn League and Covenant. Well, this is, in their View, the same as denying our Allegiance to our highest Lord; or in other Words, the Covenant of Grace: And consequently, if they be consistent with themselves, they judge we cannot be in Covenant with the Lord, unless we swear the solemn League. Our baptismal Dedication, sacramental Engagements, publick and solemn avouching the Laws of God, and the Doctrines of his Word, as contained in our *Westminster* Confession and Catechisms, are no Covenant Engagement to our highest Lord at all. As this is a genuine Consequence from their Allegations both here, and else-where, their Doctrine is chargeable with bringing a *new Gospel* to us; and tends to encourage the Ignorants, who join them, to build their Hopes on a false Foundation. If they deny this, they must Word themselves anew, and lay their Charges lower.

ANOTHER of our Terms of Communion is, 'that they must reckon Oaths of Allegiance and Abjuration, respecting the Interests of civil Princes, set up in the Room, or on the Ruins thereof, to be meet Indifferences.' Now if these Oaths are set up in the Room of our Covenant Allegiance to God, we cannot possibly be real Christians, if we swear them: If they are set up on the Ruins of the Covenant, we are Enemies to all Religion, if we swear them. Hence it will follow, that to swear Allegiance to a rightful civil Prince, or to abjure a popish Pretender and Popery, is the same as renouncing Christianity. By this Means we cannot be good Christians and good Subjects at once. And if the solemn League be our covenant Oath, to our highest Lord, formally binding on us; and if Allegiance to our Prince is built on the Ruins of it, how can they who think so, avoid joining with Mr. *Cushbertson*? Certainly he is most consistent, if their Words are true. But they quite mistake us; for as we reckon, that an Oath of Allegiance to a rightful Prince, or Abjuration of a Pretender

Pretender, when duly required, may be taken without any Violation of our Christian Covenant; that we may give to *Cæsar* his own, without infringing on what belongs to God; in short, that we may be Subjects and Christians too; so consequently, that taking said Oaths, when lawfully called, is so far from being indifferent, that it is a plain Duty.

ANOTHER of our Terms is, that they ' must own that *Britain* and *Ireland* in their solemn League, made a Covenant with God for a Time, and not a perpetual Covenant.' This Term they have lent us: For where do we say, that whoever would join in Communion with us, must own that *Britain* and *Ireland* made a temporary Covenant with God? I know not upon what they found this, unless on our denying, that the solemn League and national Covenants, are formally binding on us, and consequently we are not guilty of Perjury, by not renewing them. This they construe just like themselves, into the above Assertion. I have taken the Trouble of looking into those Places of their Performance, where they undertake to answer our Arguments against the formal Obligation of the Covenants aforesaid, and find, that they neither attempted to refute our principal Arguments, which they kept out of the Reader's Sight in their Book, nor yet spoke to the Point as we had stated it, in speaking to those which they mention. What we deny is, that said Covenants are formally binding on us. In this they oppose us, p. 33. and 34. Part II. ' If the Matter sworn is Duty, they will acknowledge it only materially binding, (as they talk) which it would be whether engaged to or not.' Here they plainly shew, that they are for the formal Obligation of them, and that too on Supposition that the Things sworn were not in themselves Duty: For why else are we accused for saying, that they are only materially binding, if the Matter sworn is Duty. We queried thus, ' if these Covenants are binding on us, both as to their Matter and Form, by virtue of our Fore-fathers Engagement, how can they alter the Form from a publick and national, to a more private and synodical one? And why do they not bind Persons formally to the Covenants?' To the last Question they answer Nothing at all; and to the Former they think it enough to reply, that ' we might as properly have asked how could they ever have been broken, and burnt by the common Hangman?' I think Non-sense itself, could not have formed a more ridiculous Answer. Does this their Query shew us, how they can alter the Form from national to synodical, consistently with their Belief that they are formally binding? But could they have given a better Answer, no doubt they would have done it.

AFTER they have again and again accused us of denying the formal Obligation, Mr. G. at last comes to confess that he knows not what we mean by the Words *essential Form*, and supposes, p. 54. and 55. P. II. that it must either mean the *Mode of Expression*, or else the *Substance of the Covenants*. Now it was quite plain, from our Words quoted by himself, that we meant neither of these: We told
him

him, that the Covenants were in a national Form: That if they were altered so as not to be National, the essential Form is destroyed; and they are no longer those very Covenants, tho' the same Duties were expressed in them.'

THESE Words will prove, that Mr. G. might have understood us, if it had suited him, and that there was no room for his ridiculous Criticisms a'ore said. These Gentlemen now and then talk of Logick and Metaphysicks; if they had not forgot their Definitions, they would have known, that *the Form is that whereby a Thing is just what it is*: If the Form then, is altered, it is no longer the same Thing it was. But it is an hard Task to dispute with those who *do not* understand Words, and harder to dispute with those who *will not*; who are formed to cavil, not to Reason.

NOW, tho' these Gentlemen appear Sticklers for the formal Obligation of the Covenants, yet it is certain, and plain to the World, and owned by themselves, that they have altered the Form entirely from a publick and national, to a private and presbyterial, or synodical one; yet will insist on it, that they are formally binding on us: And when it is urged, that they do not take those Covenants formally themselves, they then come off by turning the Words, quibbling, and ignorance of our Meaning, or what the Word *Form* signifies.

THEIR main Force, which they often oppose to us, is this, if the Nation has violated the Covenants, and refuses to renew them, will that free us from all Obligation to perform our Duty? I answer No; we are as much obliged to act our Part, as tho' the whole World joined with us in it. But the Question still returns, What is our Duty in such a Case? Is it our Duty to assume the civil Government? To act the Part of both Church and State? And put on the Air and Character of a Nation? If not, then it is not our Duty to renew the Covenants in Form, and consequently they cannot be formally binding on us. I ask further, is it our Duty to use Means for the Preservation and Advancement of Religion, which are not expedient? No; and if it appear that renewing the solemn League is no proper Expedient, at this Day, for said Purposes, it will appear not to be our Duty to renew it: This we made manifest in our *Warning*, p. 33, 34, 35. Nor do I find they have any where so much as attempted to answer us: Let them take another View of the Arguments. We took it for granted, ' that our Fathers, when they entered into these Covenants, did what was their Duty to do: Yet it will not follow, that the very same Conduct is our Duty: For tho' it is always a Duty to use proper Means for the Defence and Promotion of Religion; yet the same Means are not always proper: A Mean is proper while it has a Tendency to answer the End in view; but when it ceases to have such a Tendency, it ceases to be a Mean altogether. Now, tho' it appeared to our Fathers, that entering into the Covenants, of which we speak, was the best Expedient in their Circumstances

stances, to promote and secure Religion; yet in as much as they are absolutely inexpedient in our Circumstances, it cannot be our Duty to enter into them; nor could our Fathers bind us to do so. Both Church and State were unanimously engaged in these Covenants, so that they had the Form of a civil and ecclesiastical Act at once: But it is plain, that the Church alone, tho' ever so unanimous, cannot give them a civil Form, nor a civil Sanction; and consequently it cannot give them the same Efficacy, nor make them answer the same End. Now these two Things are certain, 1st. That we ought not to do what is not expedient: For *whatever is not expedient is not lawful, so far as it is not expedient*, as Divines rightly gather from 1 Cor. vi. 12. 2^{dly}, That *when the End ceases, the Obligation ceases*: This is a received and plain Maxim: For if I entered into an Obligation for a certain End, when that End can no more be obtained, my Obligation, which was only for that End, ceases of course.

NOW the Covenants were expressly entered into, for the Promotion and Defence of Religion, in Scotland, England and Ireland, and for the Preservation of their civil Liberties, and were considered as Means for obtaining both these Ends: The Title of the solemn League shews it. The Ordinance of the Lords and Commons, February 2, 1643-4, calls it 'a Covenant for the Preservation and Reformation of Religion, the Maintenance and Defence of Laws and Liberties.' The Commission of the General Assembly, October 11, 1643, call it 'a powerful Mean, for the settling and preserving the true Protestant Religion, with perfect Peace in his Majesty's Dominions, and propagating the same to other Nations, and for establishing his Majesty's Throne.' The General Assembly expressed the same Words at Edinburgh, August 17, 1643, Sec. 14. And can any, whose Judgment is not debauched with party Prejudice, once imagine, that any Number of private Persons swearing it, can make it answer these Ends now? And must it still be a Mean, because it was once so? And if it be not expedient for us, nor will at all answer the valuable Ends proposed at first, how can it be our Duty to renew it? Could our Fathers bind us to do what answers no good End? To do what is not expedient? Then Reason and Scripture are given us in vain. Could I but take Time, I could easily shew, that the Church of Christ, has never been of the *Seceders* Sentiments, either under the Old Testament or New, in this Point: For she has still used different Expedients for the Security and Reformation of Religion, according as different Circumstances required.

WE said, our Fathers swore the Covenant *in an urgent State of Affairs*. They know not what we mean hereby, and say, 'What was it that threatened Scotland in 1638, but doubtful Things; as kneeling at the Supper, private Baptism, &c.' But hear what the Scotch Parliament say, Act. 5. Parl. 3. Charles I. July 15, 1644. In respect of the Danger imminent to the true Protestant Religion, his Majesty's

• Majesty's Honour, and Peace of their Kingdoms, by the Multitude
 • of Papists and their Adherents in Arms in *England* and *Ireland*; and
 • of many other publick and important Affairs, which could not admit
 • of Delay.' I think here is an urgent State of Affairs different from
 • Mr. G's. *doubtful Things*, as well as different from the present State
 • of Affairs in these Kingdoms, and consequently required different Ex-
 • pedients.

THE same is plain from the Preamble of the solemn League
 itself, where are these Words, ' Calling to Mind the treacherous and
 • *bloody Plots, Conspiracies, Attempts, and Practices* of the Enemies
 • of God against the true Religion, and Professors thereof in all
 • Places, especially in these three Kingdoms, *ever since the Reformati-*
 • *on of Religion*; and how much their Rage, Power and Persecution are
 • of late, and at this Time increased and exercised, whereof the de-
 • plorable State of the Church and *Kingdom of Ireland*, the distressed
 • Estate of the Church and *Kingdom of England*, and the dangerous
 • Estate of the Church and *Kingdom of Scotland*, are present and pub-
 • lick Testimonies.' Now are these the doubtful Things mentioned
 by Mr. G. I can make no better Apology for him, than to hope he
 had forgot this, tho' he had sworn the Covenant.

THE foregoing Arguments they cannot answer, but yet will insist
 on it, that we are for shunning all Obligations to Religion, because
 we deny the Covenants to be formally binding on us. Nay, they seem
 not to consider them as Expedients or Means for the Defence of Re-
 ligion; but that the swearing them is Religion itself. And hence say,
 p. 52, p. II. that we ' have proceeded to far as judicially to deny, that
 • the glorious Mediator hath any Interest in the Isles of the Sea, or
 • they in him, by virtue of former Engagements.' This compared
 with other Assertions, shews that they endeavour to represent us as de-
 aving our Allegiance to Christ, and renouncing a Covenant Relation to
 him, on the aforesaid Account; tho' we profess Practice, and con-
 tend for that very Religion which our Ancestors covenanted to pro-
 mote and defend, according to our Measure; yet we reject it, if we
 do not use the very same Mean they used, whether expedient or not,
 Tho' we are dedicated to the Lord in Baptism, *avouch him as our God,*
and his Ways to walk in them, by taking the Sacrament, Subscribe
 the Confession of Faith, which they will not deny to contain the
 very Religion of our Fathers; receive and adhere to the same Worship,
 Discipline and Government; yet all this will be no proper Obliga-
 tion on us to serve the Lord; we are not in Covenant by all this in
 these Men's View: Nothing will bind us, but swearing a national Co-
 venant, which was entered into, as much for the Defence of civil Li-
 berties, as the Promotion of Religion. There is no Action we can
 do, that has so much Holiness in it, or so much influence on Religion,
 as that of swearing the solemn League. We use all these Means, that
 appear to us best suited to promote and secure the same Religion;

yet no Means are used to the Purpose, if they are different ones: That is to say, tho' we do the same Things our Fathers did, yet we do them not, unless they be done in the same Mode. Now this is a Contradiction in Terms, and to this our Opponents are reduced, with all their Skill and Purity: We may therefore still say, ' this Point would never be disputed, viz. the formal Obligation of the Covenants, (as Mr. Cutbertson and the Seceders do,) it Ignorance and Sectarian Obstinacy did not prompt Persons to endeavour the Defence of an Absurdity.'

TO this, Mr. G. opposes all the States of *Scotland*, when they renewed the national Covenant in 1638, who say, that ' Posterity are bound to keep the national Oath and Subscription inviolable.' And also the Assembly's Letter to the Churches of *Helvetia*, in 1640, confessing the Breach of the aforesaid Covenant, and these were not prompted by Ignorance, &c. This is their Argument: I think here they themselves lay the Stress on good Men's Opinion, which they so much decry. I allow these were not Ignorant, nor Sectarians, but it will not follow that our Seceders are not so. In 1638, and 1640, the Covenants appeared proper Expedients; now the same appear to have no Expediency, in the Hand of private Persons. We own we are bound to do the same Things they aimed at in the Covenants; but not to do them in the same Form and Manner. If whatever was fit and proper in 1638. is also equally fit in 1756, their Argument will be good, or else they must mean, that our Fathers could bind us to what may be unfit, improper, and inexpedient, which is absurd, and which our Fathers never designed.

THEY once and again advance the Covenant made with the *Gibonites*, which appeared to be binding on Posterity, as *Joshua*, ix. 15. compared with *2 Sam.* xxi. 1. It would be perfectly to their Purpose, if they could prove that *Joshua's* Covenant is formally binding on the *Jews* to this Day: But if the formal Obligation of that Covenant has ceased, which I think Non-sense cannot deny, then that very Passage affords an invincible Argument against themselves. There was Nothing in *Saul's* Days that made it unfit or impracticable to keep that Covenant in its precise Form, and therefore the formal Obligation did not cease, tho' some hundred Years after it was made: But had *Israel* ceased to be in a national Capacity 50 Years after, it would then have ceased to be formally binding: The Application is easy, for it is plain the Seceders are as little in a national Capacity as the *Jews* now are, and we own our Fathers Covenants are materially binding on us, so far as they engage to what is Duty.

WHEN we deny the Covenants to be formally binding on us, they fancy they have fully refuted us, by proving that covenanting with the Lord is a Duty, and has been frequently practised by the Church; just as if this were the Matter in Dispute between us. whether it be our Duty to join ourselves to the Lord in an everlasting

Covenant: This we not only grant, but contend for. But what it makes against our denying the formal Obligation of the solemn League, &c. I see not, unless they can make it plain; that we cannot be in Covenant with the Lord otherwise than by swearing that particular Covenant. I call upon them to prove this, or else own the Folly and Deceitfulness of their Argument, so much insisted on in p. 28, 29, &c. P. II. Let them know, that we believe ourselves to be a covenanted People, and engaged to be the Lord's; to walk in his Ways, and keep his Commandments, as firmly as if we had sworn all the Covenants the Church of Scotland ever swore: Yet we do not believe ourselves guilty of Perjury by not renewing a national Covenant: Nor can we be guilty, unless it be our Duty to assume the civil Government, enforce Acts of Parliament, be both Church and State, both King and Kingdom at once.

BESIDES, if the Church cannot be in Covenant with the Lord, unless it be by such a particular Instrument in Form of an Oath, to be taken by all the Members after the Manner of the solemn League. It seems to me, the Church has seldom been in Covenant, and some Branches of it never: I call upon the *Seceders* to shew any such Covenant, either in the Age of the Apostles, or in the first three Centuries after them, which are reckoned the purest Ages: All the Knowledge I have of Antiquity, discovers to me no other Instrument used either by the Apostles or primitive Christians, but a short Creed containing the Foundation Doctrines of Religion. Now if they were in Covenant with the Lord as a Church, by such an Instrument, so are we while we subscribe the *Westminster Confession*, &c. which is a much larger System of Doctrine.

BUT if their Argument in the foresaid Pages be a just one, it will prove that the primitive apostolick Church was not in Covenant, and neglected a moral Duty, which was to bind themselves as a Body Politick, and their Posterity after them, by a formal Oath. suited to their present Case: For they profess to prove, that 'Covenants of Duty are appointed by God to be observed in his Church, and must be essayed in a Way and Manner adapted to the Period and Circumstances of the Church in which it is set about.' If they understand covenanting in such a Sense as we do, I am agreed with them, that God has appointed Covenants of Duty in his Church: Nay, that his Church is, strictly speaking, a covenanted People; But as they understand a publick Instrument, in Form of an Oath, they both accuse and exclude the primitive Churches as much as the present.

LET us suppose, that the Church in the Reign of *Constantine the Great*, had made a Covenant like the solemn League, and bound themselves and their Posterity to support the Laws which *Constantine* made in favour of Christianity: Afterwards, in the Reign of *Julian the Apostate*, these good Laws were abolished: What shall the Church now do? Must she assume the civil Authority, and give Force and Life to *Constantine's* Laws; or else lie under the Charge and Guilt of Per-

jury? The Case is plain, if Christ's Kingdom be not of this World, then the Church ought not to attempt the Exercise of civil Authority: And if she ought not, then she could not be chargeable with the Guilt of Perjury, in the present Case.

BY the bye, I cannot but think the Reign of *Julian*, and long after too, was an excellent Opportunity for Seceders to display their Zeal, and excommunicate all who would not own the formal Obligation of the Covenant made in *Constantine's* Time, nor join with them to renew it: The Case supposed, is quite parallel to our own, and easily applies itself.

IT is commonly said, that the three Kingdoms were covenanted: But would Time permit, I might shew from authentick History, that not a sixth Part of the Protestants in either *England* or *Ireland*, ever swore the solemn League, and many who were firm *Presbyterians*, refused it. For sake of Brevity, I pass over many Arguments which might be offered against our Opponents on this Head, having said what may suffice to shew the Reader, the Weakness of their Cause, and the unreasonableness of their bigoted attachment to it.

THEY give us another Term of Communion, viz. that 'they must own it an indifferent Thing, whether or not a Land who had engaged to keep up the royal Headship of Christ, in and over his Church, do submit to the usurped Headship over the same by the Kings of the Earth; as was done in the Indulgence.' Does this Talk more deserve Pity or Contempt? It was done in the Indulgence!-----And what does that make against us? Will they pretend to say that we are indulged after the same Form? Or are they themselves so? Where have we called it indifferent, whether Christ, or the Kings of the Earth, be Head of the Church? Where have we made it a Term of Communion, to own it an indifference? They are bound to shew where, or be counted the false *accusers of the Brethren*. If any of our People believe them, I must say, they are criminally heedless both of our Doctrine and Conduct.

THESE Gentlemen are mighty zealous for the moral Obligation of their new Covenant, but seem often to forget the moral Obligation of the ninth Commandment. And while they zealously testify against ancient Errors, they overlook both ill-nature, and false Accusation, in themselves: However, they design to shew by all this, how much more zealous they are for the Purity of the Church than others. But still they might go farther, and make it a Term of Communion to confess the Errors of the old *Gnosticks*, *Basildians*, and *Montanists*, &c. and if they raised up these Hereticks and Heresies out of their Graves, set up their Ghosts before the People, and preached against them, they might seem both more learned, and more pure than we.

ANOTHER of our Terms is, that they 'must reckon it indifferent whether Presbyterians thank the popish Duke of *York*, for his Toleration.' By all these it appears, that we are not fond of their joining

Joining with us, when we insist on so very different Terms of Communion with them, from what we do with any besides. However, I hope the Duke of York will never engross so much of our Religion, as to make a Term of Communion of what he did, or what Presbyterians said to him, or did not say. Concerning all these Terms of Communion, let our People be applied unto: Let them not spare, but declare plain, whether we imposed these Terms on them: All of them will testify for us, that the *Seceders* grossly abuse us. And shall Slanderers pass for Reformers? Or shall that be accounted the Cause of Truth, which needs the Support of Falshood? Let it never be said!

THEIR Comparison between *British* Subjects deliveting up the King's Territories to the *French*, because they are not essential to the *British* Throne; and professed Christians giving up all but Essentials in Religion, is Nothing to the Purpose, unless we had said, that we ought to give up some Truths or Duties, which we never did. Our not making every one a Term of Communion, is not a giving it up, either in Profession or Practice.

TO as little Purpose they quote *Wellwood*, as tho' it made against us, because he censures those who are *indifferent* and *lukewarm* in the *smallest Things of Christ*. They quote some other Divines, in other Places speaking the same Things; and seem to forget that they are only quoting good Men, and neither Scripture, nor Confession of Faith. But I allow what *Wellwood* says is in Substance just; and I demand of them to shew, wherein that, or any such like Quotation, makes against us. Have they proven that we are indifferent about any Things of Christ? Or can they prove that such is our Principle? Do they imagine it a good Argument, that if we do not make the *smallest Things of Christ* Terms of Communion, we must needs be indifferent about them? If this be true, they will prove that *St. Paul* himself was indifferent and lukewarm about the Things of Christ, for he plainly orders the Church of *Corinth*, to meet in Church Communion, 1 *Cor.* xi. 18, 20, 33, and xvi. 2. If any one looks into these Texts, he will see it taken for granted in all of them, that this Church should meet together, and hold Communion in publick Worship, and at the same Time it will be evident that there was ill Conduct among them, and Errors too, and Discipline not duly exercised: There was doubtless Truth on one Side, in the Disputes that subsisted in the Church of *Rome*; yet the Apostle orders them to keep Communion with each other, notwithstanding their Differences. *Rom.* xiv. 19. and xv. 5, 6, 7. And it is implied in his Exhortation, Chap. xv. 7. that some were inclinable to be *Seceders* and not receive their Brethren who differed from them. I might multiply Scripture Instances to shew, that the Apostle was not of seceding Principles, but let these suffice.

IF I could believe the Truth of the *Seceders* Argument, I would certainly think them purer than *Paul*, and much more zealous about
the

the Things of Christ than he: For it was his Way to shew a comparative Neglect of smaller Things, when they were urged so as to interfere with greater; and were made Terms of Communion. So *Rom.* xiv, and xv. Chapters, and *Philip.* iii. Chap. &c. The judaizing Teachers were Seceders from the Apostles, and were for setting up a purer Church: They counted their Things the Things of Christ, and persuaded many that they were so, and if Christians would be compleat and pure, they must join with them: They urged the Necessity of Circumcision in order to Salvation: Our *Seceders* urge the Necessity of swearing their new Covenant, in order to our being in Covenant with God. In a Word, the Church of Christ, and the tender Consciences of weak Christians have ever been troubled with such Parties, who *with their Means, destroy the Work of God*, turning the Exercises of Christians into a false Channel, by their preposterous Zeal for Circumstances. This is a truly pharisaic Zeal, which Christ often reproves and condemns; and is the Zeal of those who have cold Hearts to Christ, to his People, and to the greatest Things of Christ. I durst not allow myself to be careless of the least known Truth or Duty, but Christ himself would not have me lay an equal Stress on *all*. I would be glad that all Christians were agreed with me; but if they cannot see all to be Truth which I esteem such, respecting the appendages of Doctrine or Government, I dare not on such Difference, deliver them to Satan, and cast them out of the Inheritance of the Lord: The *Seceders* may call this *Indifference* about the Things of Christ, but while I have his own, and his Apostles Approbation, I shall be indifferent about their Censure.

T H E R E is certainly a Medium between giving up Truth and Duty, and making all of them Terms of Communion: But the *Seceders* seem as if they knew Nothing but Extremes. If they look on the Communion of Saints as one of the Things of Christ, and believe that he has fixed the Terms, I would ask them, how they dare assume to alter them? If he and his Apostles have not made every Truth a Term of Communion, how do they venture to do so? Whoever gives a Weight and Importance to any Duty which Christ has not given, usurps his Prerogative royal, and assumes the Province of Law-giver in his Church, as really as if he made that a Duty which is none. I have observed all Sectarians to be antichristian, in Part, contradicting the Laws of Christ about the Communion of Saints, whilst they set themselves to rectify them: They oppose Religion under Colour of advancing it, and under Pretence of Purity, Corrupt the Church.

N O W, if the *Seceders* are faulty, on Supposition they were only for making some small Things, which are really Things of Christ, Terms of Communion, how much more Guilty, if the Dispute is about their own Things, and not those of Christ: Their calling them *his*, will not make them so, and for my Part, I think they belong to themselves; at least a Number of them.

THEY think it a good Argument against us, that 'we take up the same Arguments against their Covenants which the *New-light* in *Ireland* take up against the Confession of Faith.' What then will it follow, that they are not conclusive Arguments against their Covenants, because they are not against the Confession of Faith? Will it follow, that an Argument is not sufficient to prove *Mahomet's Alcoran* false, because it will not be conclusive against the Scripture? I would use the same Arguments against making the *Surplice* and *Cross* in Baptism, Terms of Communion, which the *New-light* in *Ireland* use against the Confession of Faith: And will it follow that they do not conclude against the *Surplice*, &c. Cannot the *New-light* in *Ireland* argue justly against false Terms of Communion, because they will take subscribing the Confession to be a false one? I wonder how Men of Logick can satisfy themselves with such barefaced Sophisms; Yet Mr. G. thinks he very logically 'despairs of seeing their Covenants excluded by any Arguments worth Notice, but such as at the same Time exclude the Confession of Faith.' I shall have Occasion to mention this Point again, and therefore dismiss it now.

HOW ingeniously and candidly they will Dispute against Mr. *Delap*, begins to appear at the first Off-set; where Mr. G. thinks he has proven him to have 'neither Truth nor Love,' only because he terms the *Seceders Strangers from Scotland*: 'Very hard and very odd.' How could Mr. D. be so cruel and so paradoxical, at once! He little thought, that these three Words, *Strangers from Scotland*, would have proven so much against him: Nor how fatally he discovered himself to have neither *Truth* nor *Love*: Well, it may learn him to be more guarded, when he has to deal with *Logicians* and *Criticks*. *Seceders*, it seems, do not argue like the common Race of Men: They are above treading in a beaten Path: They can infer their Conclusion from Premises, in which no others could discern it to be contained: By this Means it will be impossible for us to escape their Censure, or guard our Words properly.

MR. D. observes, that 'the Covenant intended in the Act of the Associate Presbytery, ought rather to be called the *Seceders* new Covenant, than a Renovation of the national and solemn League.' Mr. G. owns this 'would be a greater Reproach to them, if true,' than even calling them *Strangers from Scotland*. He says, Mr. D's. Observation is 'a bare and blunt Assertion,' that is, an Assertion without giving any Reason for it: Yet he owns, that Mr. D. gives 'three Reasons to prove his Point.' And surely three are more than none at all. The first is taken from the Title of their Act, where they say, 'agreeable to our present Situation and Circumstances.' Now if our Circumstances be quite different, and the Covenant be suited to them, it cannot be the same formal Covenant, by their own Confession; therefore it is a new one. His second Reason is, That they have omitted the civil Magistrates just Power: And if it wants a material

Article.

Article, it cannot be asserted to be the very same. The third is, That their Covenant has added to it a large new Confession of Sins. Now if their Covenant is suited to different Circumstances; if it wants some of the Matter of the former, and has new Matter added, I think I durst not swear it is the same, but rather a new one.

BUT notwithstanding these Reasons, they propose to prove, that it is not the *Seceders* new Covenant; and to our Surprize, they use Arguments to prove, that they do right in making a Covenant agreeable to their present Circumstances; and own that their Circumstances are widely different: That is, they offer Reasons to shew, that they ought to make a new Covenant, and yet say Mr. D. speaks falsely, when he calls it new. He neither blames, nor commends their making a new one; but their asserting the perpetual formal Obligation of the Covenants, and yet altering them both as to Matter and Form; and still calling them the same as they were.

HE also calls Mr. D's second Reason a bare Assertion; and yet owns it to be true, and if true, it was quite to the Purpose, as it shews the Covenant to be the *Seceders* new one.

THE Answer to his third Reason is an invidious Tergiversation: They have a new Confession of Sins added to their Covenant. They cannot understand what he means by *New*: But lest he might happen to mean, that it is a new Thing to confess Sins in renewing Covenants, they prove the Contrary. Yet they might have easily known, that he meant it was a Confession of new Sins, that were not in the former Covenanters Confession: And as they have made new Sins, and new Duties, it cannot be the same old Covenant: This the whole Strain of his Reasoning shews to have been his Meaning; but it did not suit their Cause to understand him.

MR. G. argues as if Mr. D. built his Faith on the Judgment of pious and learned Men: And has *laid aside* both Scripture and Confession of Faith: Against following the Judgment of Men, and laying aside Scripture, in Matters of Religion, he quotes both Scripture, and Confession of Faith. This is the Man, who has 'not started aside from the Point in Question.' Why then has he proven what none of us deny, *viz.* that Scripture is to determine religious Controversies: Is there not deceitful Art in it, that he may insinuate, by his Pains to prove it, that his Opponents maintain the Contrary? Mr. D. has quoted the Judgment of learned and pious Men, therefore he has set them up instead of the Scripture: He has not quoted Scripture Texts, therefore he has renounced it as a Decider of the Controversy. This is to Reason like *Seceders*.

MR. D. has reasoned all along on scriptural Principles; but these Gentlemen will not believe it, unless he quote Chapter and Verse. I would know whether they need to have Self-evident Principles proven to them, by Quotations from Scripture. In particular, do they need Scripture Texts, or Confession of Faith, to prove, 'that no Man should confess

• confess any Thing as Sin, but what he believes to be Sin; nor profess
 • any Thing as Duty, but what he believes to be so.' If they don't
 believe these are scriptural Principles, upon their telling me so, I will
 quote plenty of Texts to prove them. If they do believe them, why
 do they cavil for want of Quotations? Are they not apprehensive
 that some may look on such Conduct, as weak and low, and even per-
 verte? It is plain, that we should have clear Evidence that the Matter is
 Sin which we confess to God as Sin; and the utmost Certainty before
 we swear it is Sin, and exclude the People of God from Communion
 on account of it. We must also have equal Certainty, that a Matter
 is Duty, before we swear it is; and must know, that it is an impor-
 tant one, in order to make it a Term of Communion, and swear that
 it ought to be a Term.

NOW, on these scriptural Principles, all Mr. D's Reasonings are
 built: His whole Business is to shew, that there is not sufficient Cer-
 tainty to swear that all those Matters are really Sins and Duties which
 they call so: Or to swear that they are so important as to be Terms
 of Communion. If they are doubtful to the Learned and Pious who
 agree in all important Articles respecting Doctrine, Worship, Disci-
 pline and Government, then they are not so certain, and so great, as
 to be Terms of Communion, and sworn as before said, by Christians
 in general. To shew that they are doubtful among such, he had not
 the least Occasion to quote Scripture, nor yet to tell his own Judg-
 ment, but only the Judgment of learned and pious Presbyterian Di-
 vines, who did not exclude each other, and yet were on opposite
 Sides in the Debate. If the *Seceders* did but know what it is to argue
 to the Point in hand, they would have known, that Mr. D's Argu-
 ment required no more than what he has done. He has accomplished
 what he undertook; and since they have not taken up the Force or
 Scope of his Argument at all, it is easy to gather, that they have not
 offered a Word against him.

MR. D. will shew, in the Course of his Argument, that the *Seceders*
 Terms would have excluded from Communion, the generality of the
 best Divines in the three Kingdoms: They would have excommuni-
 cated Mr. *Durham* for he could not determine with Certainty be-
 tween the Protestors, and publick Resolutioners: They would have
 excluded the Resolutioners in the Lump, without Hesitation: And
 what may seem odd, they would have excluded Mr. *Rutherford*, Mr.
Gillespy, and Mr. *Guthrey*, tho' they were Protestors, because they
 could not Swear that the Difference ought to be a Term of Commu-
 nion. Thus they would have excluded the Church of *Scotland* in ge-
 neral, as they do at this Day: They would also have excluded the Fa-
 mous Mr. *Welsh*, who was at *Bothwell*, because he could not con-
 fess the Sin of the Indulgence, tho' it was in his own Day. For my
 Part, I could with a clearer Conscience burn at a Stake for rejecting
 their new Covenant, and Terms of Communion, than enjoy Life and
 Honour on Condition of swearing them.

MR. D. owns, ' it is their Privilege to testify against all the Particulars they call Sins in their new Covenant, if they did so for their own Exoneration.' Mr. G. catches at these Words, as if they ' granted all the Liberty the *Seceders* want.' Can you believe him sincere in this Assertion? Is this all they do? Is testifying against these Things for their own Exoneration the same with making them Terms of Ministerial and Christian Communion? Is it the same with swearing, and making a Party for them? No; it is widely different; yet he accuses Mr. D. of inconsistency, in allowing them all they request, and at the same Time striving to deprive them of it; as if he allow'd and denied them the same Thing: However, hereby Mr. G. prov's one of these, *viz.* either that he is quite too Ignorant of the Argument to be a Disputant, or is Self-condemned, and chuses to deceive. But the Truth is, I can hardly think him quite so ignorant of Church Affairs, as not to know that *they who testify against any Matter, only for their own Exoneration, do it on Purpose that they may continue in Communion with the Church, without being partakers in what they think sinful.* This is the Privilege of Members, whether the Matters testified against were sinful, or not: For they should have Liberty to clear their own Conscience, be it weak or strong. But the *Seceders* testify against these Matters so as to separate from the Church; consequently not only for their own Exoneration.

MR. D. does not quote the very Words of the *Seceders*, but says he has ' digested some Articles of their Covenant Confession of Sins, ' into the form of a Creed, that the Reader may see they are the *Genuine Sentiments* of the *Seceders.*' tho' not their Words; And the End of every Quotation is, ' we profess that this Confession and Oath ' should be made a Term of Ministerial and Christian Communion.'

MR. G. roundly denies, that the *Seceders*, either Ministers or People, ever swore this Clause: Calls the asserting it a *plain rashness*, and an *unaccountable Imposition.* For why? That ' Act was not made ' till the Year after the Covenant was sworn.' But can they deny, that the Bond of their Covenant has a reduplicating Clause, which refers to all the Particulars in their Confession of Sins? And if they understand the Word *Reduplication*, can they say, that Mr. D. has done one Tittle more, than put their Reduplication into Words? Now, if there be such a Clause referring to all the Particulars in the Confession; and if Mr. D. has only connected it with each Particular; I challenge them to shew, wherein he has misrepresented them in the least. It is plain from said Clause, they swore that all those Particulars are Sins, and that they will contend and testify against them; and by the Act, they are bound to make them Terms of Communion. What tho' the Act was not made at first, will it therefore be esteem'd by them as not binding after it is made? Was it not made when Mr. D. wrote? How then could he do otherwise than take Matters as he found them? I would be glad to know, whether they will ven-

not to deny the Fact with which he charges them. Is it true, or is it false, that they really make all those Particulars Terms of Ministerial and Christian Communion, save that in the first Instance they waive it thro' Policy? If it is false, they have ground of Accusation against him; if it is true, they only contend about Words, not Things, and manifest so great Disingenuity, so little Sense and Candor, and so much low Art and Cunning, as is sufficient to raise the Detestation and Contempt of all sincere Christians, and judicious Men. When the exact grammatical Construction gives that very Sense of their Covenant Confession which Mr. D. has given; and when they prove this to be the very Sense in which they themselves take it, by their avowed Conduct, is not Admiration itself non-plused to hear Mr. G. 'crave that the World may look upon the above Clause as a Slander.' To crave this, is to mock the World. I may more justly crave that the World would look upon them as Self-condemned, and Imposers of Deceit.

Mr. G. proceeds, p. 38, to prove all the Particulars in their Confession to be Sins. And 1st. the publick Resolutioners are held Guilty, tho' he pretends not to answer Mr. D's Reasoning on the Head. He denies that the Protestors were desirous to continue in Communion with the Resolutioners, and thinks the Contrary is proven, from the Protestors 'disowning that general Assembly's Authority, which approved the Resolutions; declining a Conference with the Resolutioners; and disregarding their Summons to be censured.' But all this is far from proving that the Protestors were not willing to continue in Communion with them: Besides, the above History is partial, as it leaves the Reader to conclude, that the Protestors would not at all confer with the Resolutioners; whereas it is certain, they both joined in Synod at *Glasgow*, and had a Conference at *St. Andrews*. Mr. *Durham's* Judgment is well known, viz, 'that Division was by far worse than either of the Sides.' And he was greatly regarded by both. But Mr. G still like himself, says, 'Mr. D. would make the World believe, that the *Seceders* have no Precedent for their Conduct in not holding Communion with the present Judicatures in *Scotland*; and therefore gives out, that the Protestors desired to continue with the Resolutioners in Church Communion: But how far that is Fact, I leave the Reader to judge, from what has been advanced to the Contrary.' And that is just Nothing at all. I will put the Matter on this short Issue: Let the *Seceders* shew us, that the reverend Messieurs *Rutherford, Gushy, Gillespy* seceded, and made a Party of Separatists in the Church of *Scotland*, as they now do, and then let them urge the Precedent in their own Favour: And if they cannot do this, and yet insinuate so much as to make ignorant People believe those Divines were *Seceders*, I would ask them, is this acting like honest and true Men? But Mr. G. has not once pretended to prove, either from Scripture or the Confession of Faith, that this should be a Term of Communion, which is the only Point in Question.

HE as warily neglects the labouring Point under the second Head, viz. the Indulgence. All he attempts is to prove it was sinful, while he should have proven that confessing the Sin of it ought to be a Term of Communion, if he had done any Thing to his Purpose. He passes over the famous Mr. *Wright*, who was at *Bothwell*, who yet had not Freedom to mention the Indulgence as a Cause of Fasting. He denies that Mr. *Blair* accepted the indulgence, and asserts he drop't it instantly: Whereas it is plain from the History, that he accepted the Indulgence, and only rejected the Instructions. He calls the Paper delivered to Mr. *Blair* by the Clerg, the Indulgence, and seems as if he would have his Reader take it for granted, that was the first Time the Indulgence was tendered to him: Whereas he had accepted the Indulgence three or four Years before; and the Paper he then let drop, was not the Indulgence, but certain Instructions tender'd besides: See *Crooksb. Hist. Vol. 1. p. 263. and 301.* which is a further Confirmation of Mr. *D's* Remark, p. 16. That the Indulged did not accept the Limitations, and Instructions, as Conditions of the Indulgence: But Mr. *G.* seems afraid that the Case should appear in this its proper Light.

IT is owned, that many pious and learned Divines accepted the Indulgence; and others who did not, yet justified those who did. Now if the Sinfulness of it was denied by some, and doubted by others, who were wise and faithful, and that in the very Time when the Church was most affected by it, there appears no Reason why confessing the Sin of it should be made a Term of Communion to the Church now, when it is, as Mr. *D.* calls it, an *old Subject*.

MR. *G.* highly resents the calling it an *old Subject*; and fancies he has proven it ought to be a *new* one, from the Covenant of *Neb. ix. Chap.* where the Sin of the golden Calf was confessed; tho' a good Man *Aaron*, was at the Head of it, which he reckons quite parallel with good Men accepting the Indulgence. Also, he thinks *Joshua's* Covenant with the *Gibeonites* might as well have been called an *old Subject* in *Saul's* Time; The Blood of *Abel* and *Zacharias* in the Days of Christ; and the Crucifixion of Christ to the *Jews* now. Was ever a Man more unhappily mistaken! It is impossible to find a Parallel in these, until he shew that they were controverted Points among the Pious and Learned. I ask them, what pious Men denied the Sin of *Aaron's* Calf? And as the *Gibeonites* had a civil Right to their Lives, by virtue of said Covenant, to kill them was Murder; and what pious Persons ever denied the Sinfulness of it? The same Observation may be made respecting the other Particulars: The Facts mentioned are plainly sinful. Well, Mr. *G.* doubts not to prove the accepting the Indulgence as plainly sinful, if Scripture Consequences be allowed as sufficient Proof. Yes, we all readily allow them, if they are necessary Consequences, and not the *Seceders* forced ones: But he should consider, it will not be enough to prove the Point to the Satisfaction
of

of Seceders, if he design to convince others. In his own Way he can prove any Thing; refute every Opponent, in every Article; and shew every Punctilio of his Religion to be infinitely important by Consequence, as well as infallibly true; and his, and his Brethrens Conscience, must be *Conscience general*, to all Mankind; else all are wrong: His Ability to draw Consequences, we have seen in various Instances, and may see it in many more.

BUT to the Point. I will let it be taken for granted that the Indulgence was sinful; and agree with him, 'that the Sins of former Generations, when not confessed and forsaken by after Generations, are Matter of a standing Quarrel between God and them.' And then query, what it makes against us? Will he say, that we receive the old Indulgence? Are we limited and restricted in the Exercise of our Ministry? Do we submit to such Instructions as were given at that Time? Do we own the Supremacy? If not, can he say we tread in those evil Ways? Or, tho' we do not, are we guilty of the Sins of the Indulged? If he says we are, he plainly makes it a new Original Sin. I am fully satisfied the *Seceders* have a *standing Quarrel* with us, in Matters for which our God has none. They will not say, that Children are guilty of their Parents Iniquity, when they forsake it. Well, if neither the Indulgence, nor any Things belonging to it, do at all infest the Church at this Day, where is the Danger from that Quarter? A Watchman should give Warning when he sees a Sword coming; but if he cry *a Sword!* when there is none, and is continually teasing the City with false Alarms, he will be deservedly broken. Suppose some zealous *Briton* should cry out 'we are in great Danger from the *Spanish Fleet*.' And upon being queried as to the Reasons of his Assertion, would answer, 'the invincible *Armado*, came against us in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, therefore stand on your Guard.' Who would not hiss at the senseless Zealot: But such false Alarms are not only ridiculous but hurtful, as they tend to make People careless of true Alarms; and in Religion, they take off their Minds from real Evils, and turn their Concern into a wrong Channel.

THE third Article respects the Toleration given by the Duke of *York*. Mr. G. endeavours to prove by Consequence, that accepting this Toleration was sinful: And asserts, that 'Mr. D. and his *American* Friends, quarrel the *Seceders* for declaring it to be Sin.' But his Assertion is false: For the Quarrel is not their declaring it to be Sin, but making that Declaration a Term of Ministerial and Christian Communion. This is the labouring Point, and this Point is still artfully evaded.'

MR. D. says, 'in their Opinion, who accepted the Toleration no sinful Condition was required.' Mr. G. sternly replies, 'Is the Opinion of Men, without Scripture and Reason to support it, to be rested on?' This is another Proof that he knows not how to argue to the Purpose, or else knowingly deceives: For is it at all Mr. D's Business to prove, that either Opinion was right? Is this what he undertakes

dertakes? No, he only shews the Point was controverted by the Wise and Good; and their Opinion only could shew this. Neither Scripture nor Reason could be advanced on this Head, by any one who has Sense enough to know what is pertinent: Therefore to demand Scripture to prove a modern Fact, *viz.* that such a Point was controverted, proves the Demander either to be nonsensical, or unworthy the Name of a Disputant; or to have Nothing to say for his Cause, and yet to be obstinate and refuse Conviction.

MR. D. said, 'there is a Time for all Things, and an evil Time, wherein the Prudent keep silence.' Mr. G. peremptorily asserts, that 'according to Mr. D's. Reasoning, no Time can be fit for bearing Testimony &c. neit'er Past nor Future, nor yet the Present; for it is an evil Time.' Because Mr. D. hints, that that particular Time might be an evil Time, therefore he argues, that every present Time is evil. This is drawing Consequences like-----Mr. G. But he never thought that his Argument would as easily conclude against *Solomon*, as against Mr. D.

AGAIN, when Mr. D. says, whoever would join in Communion with them, *must swear*: It seems to Mr. G. he can intend Nothing else, but that the 'Seceders are brought and kept together in Church Communion by Violence.' He means Force in Opposition to Willingness; for says he, 'Are there any that join more willingly than with them?' And does Mr. G. think in his Heart, that the Word *must*, can signify Nothing but external Force? Is it possible for one pretending to be a Logician and a Critick, to talk in such a Manner? Well, let us try the Matter: If they make swearing their Articles a Term of Communion, is it not perfectly true, that whoever are *willing* to join in Communion with them, must swear them? If he says there is no Obligation, no *must* in the Case, then he denies that they make Swearing them Terms of Communion, which is false in Fact. No Words can be contrived more soft than Mr. D's. if he speak the Thing at all; yet Mr. G. calls them *invenomed and bitter*. This only proves him impatient of Contradiction and angry that the Truth should be told of them. All Things look yellow to an Eye that has the Jaundice. They who are so bitter as to say all manner of Evil falsely, would persecute if they had Power.

UPON Mr. D's. saying, 'the Nature of Toleration, as far as I understand it.' Mr. G. ridiculously, and I cannot but think, spitefully gloses thus, 'as to our Author's Intellectuals, or how he understands it, I am indifferent.' Just as if his Author was talking of his Intellectuals, when he speaks the Sense in which he conceives a Subject. Mr. G. more obscurely and antiquely distinguishes Toleration into *Negative* and *Positive*; and says, 'the Worship of the Church of *England* was positively warranted by the Act of Toleration.' And pray what more does this mean, than that they had a Toleration to worship God in their own Way in *Scotland*, without being expos-

ed on that Account to Fines, Imprisonment, Banishment, Fire or Faggot, or any other Molestation? This is all the Toleration they can mean: And seeing they complain of this, I would be glad they would shew, where they would stop short of Fire and Faggot, and yet refuse such Toleration. Their Opinion seems plainly to be this, that the Magistrate, if he would do his Duty, ought to establish them, and tolerate none else.

MR. D. allows, that 'the Magistrate should make penal Laws against such Principles as are dangerous to lawful civil Government.' Mr. G. says, 'there is too little of God in this,' and consequently, it will never be enough, until penal Laws are made against all who are not *Seceders*: Nor will it be enough to be barely *Seceders*: they must be *Antiburghers* too, who would escape the Penalty; for they judge, that the seceding Burghers as well as we, are involved in Errors intolerable, and they only are pure: Hence they will lift up Testimony upon Testimony against the Magistrates tolerating us, and against us for accepting Toleration, and for not swearing that we ought not to be tolerated: For this we deserve to be excommunicated; and had they Power they would depose us all, and shut us out from the Inheritance of the Lord, and would oblige the Magistrate to exercise some *wholsome Severities* upon us, to bring us to our Senses: For while we cannot with a safe Conscience come into their Measures, we are intolerable as well as the Church of *England*. I do not aggravate the Matter in the least to my Knowledge. It appears to be the true and genuine Result of what they say; and I defy them to vindicate themselves against this View of the Case. To confirm it, Mr. G. thinks Mr. D. inconsistent in saying 'that Prayers, Arguments and Censures, are the Churches Arms,' and yet arguing for Toleration. And p. 63, queries, 'can the Church Censure for these Principles which the civil Powers positively tolerate, and at the same Time not testify against that Act of Toleration?' This, he says in the next Page, is impossible. His Opinion then is plainly this, That the Magistrate ought not to tolerate any Error which the Church should Censure: Now, as the *Antiburghers* think all the Christians in the *British* Dominions worthy of Excommunication, themselves excepted; of Course they judge none of us can be tolerated without great Impiety in the civil Powers. Woe to all of us, if the civil Powers were *Seceders*. But let us consider this Point a little.

IF the Magistrate may tolerate no Error, which the Church should censure, none can be a lawful Magistrate unless he be orthodox to the last Punctilio, and that too: Consequently Dominion must be founded in Orthodoxy; and that will tolerably justify the enthusiastick Mad-men of *Munster*, in *Germany*, who said it was founded in Grace.

FURTHER, if the Magistrate must not tolerate what the Church should Censure, he must either Act implicitly, which can never be justified but on the Popish Principle, that the Church is infallible in all her

Censures; or must know all that the whole Church knows; or else he must follow his own Judgment, and tolerate Nothing which he thinks an Error; and so he is invested with an Erastian Supremacy: In this Case, I see not what Need we have for Church Censure at all: If an Error is broached, tell the Magistrate, who is obliged to keep the Church pure. Wherefore, to avoid Absurdities, I conclude that the Magistrate may tolerate what the Church should censure: And tho' this seems impossible to Seceders, it is possible and practicable to me, who consider the civil and ecclesiastick Powers as acting in different Spheres; and that the Kingdom of Christ subsists quite independant on the Kingdom of this World, and distinct from them: The Church may desire their Countenance, and Protection; but never needs their Force: I hate the very Thought, that the *Weapons of our Warfare should be Carnal*, 2 Cor. x. 4.

MR. G. exclaims that Mr. D. would prejudice People against them 'as if they were for Fire and Faggot, against any Man's Person.' Now far be such Cruelty from them: They would only testify against the civil Magistrate if he did not take the Matter in Hand; and surely they will acknowledge it is Men's Persons he deals with. I am told that the Inquisitors, when they have condemned any one for Heresy &c. They deliver him to the civil Power; and not only will not destroy him themselves, but entreat the Magistrate not to hurt him in the least: Yee it the Magistrate does not put him to a cruel Death, the Vengeance of these Fathers will certainly fall on himself. Yet they themselves meddle with no Man's Person: They only seek to root out Heresy.

WHAT an out-cry against Mr. D. for calling the Church of *England Fellow-protestants!* and saying 'they worship God after their own Way.' Mr. G. calls this 'a smoothing of Matters.' Yet says, 'it is a proper Definition of Will-worship, condemned by the Apostles.' Consequently it cannot be a very smooth way of speaking: For he says, 'it gains little to the Cause Mr. D. pleads for.' He should have said, *Nothing*. Yet after this, he again calls it a '*smoothing of Matters*; and seems to defy Mr. D. and his *American* Friends, to make his saying the above Words consistent with holding fast that Part of his Testimony that relates to Purity of Worship.' Let even a dull Reader judge how impossible it is that these contradictory Things can be all truly asserted of the same Words: And also how impossible it is, that any Words can be innocent with this Disputant, who can find Heresy in these. I can hardly say less, than that whoever condemns Mr. G. for being a good Critick, or Logician, does him greater Injustice, than I could allow myself to be guilty of.

BUT he has cautiously avoided offering one Word to prove, that the Confessing the Sin of the Toleration ought to be a Term of Communion. Mr. D. determines it ought not; tho' his Antagonist often falsely asserts he determines *Nothing*.

THE next Article is, that we must confess the general Assembly of the Church of *Scotland* persecuted the *Seceders*, and thereby virtually deposed and condemned all such as should testify against the present Course of Defection. 'They received Ill-treatment from that particular Assembly;' and returned them no better than they received, as far as I know of the Matter. But no Mention is made of the faithful Endeavours of the very next Assembly to rectify what was amiss, and remove Grievances: Tho' it was a reforming Assembly, yet the *Seceders* persisted in their Separation, and would not return. They had made a Party, and their Spirits were soured by party Zeal, before the Assembly sat; and so were obstinate to all the Entreaties of their Brethren. I think it is undutiful, nay rebellious Conduct, if Children fly in their Mother's Face, even tho' she treats them too hardly by a Time. But to make the Confession of this Matter a Term of Ministerial and Christian Communion, is as great a stretch of Church Authority, and perhaps much greater, than what the Assembly assumed, of which they complain; and if I was to make Confession, I would first confess the Sinfulness of making their Confession a Term of Communion: And I remark, that Mr. G. has neither advanced Scripture, nor Reason, nor the Confession of Faith, to prove that it ought to be a Term.

THE 6th Article respects the Union between *Scotland* and *England*, which we are to confess Sinful, on pain of Excommunication. They say 'the whole Nation thereby approved the Hierarchy and Worship of the Church of *England*.' Mr. D. scruples the Extensiveness of the Expression, seeing 'the Commission of the Kirk addressed the Parliament against the Union, and the general Assembly approved what the Commission did.' Consequently, if there was Guilt in the Union, the whole Nation was not involved.

MR. G. bluntly asserts, that 'this is no Reason, but only a Shift to wave all Reasoning.' I cease to wonder that Mr. G. calls the most clear and undeniable Argument a Shift, and no Reason; for so doing, he is of a Piece with himself. Let us now hear what he would call Reasoning, and no Shift. This then is the Thing itself, *viz.* The whole Nation are guilty of approving the Union, and the Assembly too, because 'they approved of the Commissions proceedings only *in Bulk* and *common Form*, and did not single out their Adverts to Parliament, and approve it particularly.' This is remarkable, extraordinary Reasoning. The Assembly approved what the Commission did against the Union, yet they did not approve it, unless they had approved it by itself. Nay they disapproved it, because they approved it among other Things in the Lump; and they approved the Union itself, because they approved of the Commissions Attempts to prevent it, in the general. Consequently they approved the Worship of the Church of *England*, tho' I can see no Reason of this Consequence.

ANOTHER Argument of equal Force is this, that the Assembly approved the Union, because they did not make it a Cause of National Fasting

Fasting. I think it's almost as good to have no Conscience, as to have one that can satisfy itself with such Reasonings, and reject clear Light with Obstinacy. Who that is not intoxicated with party Biggotry and sectarian Zeal, could swear that the Assembly did not approve what the Commission did; or that they approved the Union? It is not denied that the Commission acted against the Union; and who can be so hardy as to swear, that the whole Nation approved it, and also the Hierarchy and Worship of the Church of *England*? And who durst make this false Oath and Confession a Term of Ministerial and Christian Communion? It is evidently false, if the Commission, and general Assembly belong to the Nation. Yet upon the Force of such Reasonings, Mr. G. supposes, that Strangers would 'scarcely look on Mr. D. as a Presbyterian.' But the main Point is not touched, which was to shew, that swearing this Article ought to be a Term of Communion.

I N p. 70, because Mr. D. argues, that the Oath of Allegiance is not sinful, Mr. G. scruples not to charge him with discarding Allegiance to the King of Zion. And because he is not clear to swear their new Covenant, therefore he is careless, and talks dubiously of the Interests of Christ. This is just telling us, that none can bear true Allegiance to Christ, or be zealous for him, but such as swear their Covenant.

H E fancies he can shew, that the Oath of Abjuration is as doubtful as their Confession of the Sin of it. For Instance, he thinks it hard to know 'how far the King's Dignity extends, which the Jurant is to defend; and what the Law may reckon traiterous Conspiracies; what are all his other Dominions; and what Title he has to them.' I would have a common Reader to judge, whether these are hard to be understood when I answer, if I swear to defend the King's true Dignity, I only swear what I ought to do: And were it asked whether I allow him the Dignity of Headship over the Church, I readily answer *no*: but that he is Head over Church-men in civil Things: Nor does the Law require me to confess more: I can be undet no Doubt about discovering what appears to me to be traiterous Conspiracies; and of *what appears not, and what is not* I am to make *the same Judgment*: I do not swear that I will know all the Laws. I can as little scruple to swear *his Title to all his other Dominions*; for if they are *his*, he has a Title to them; but if they are *not* his, my Oath is not a Swearing that they are. On the whole, I not only find no Doubts 'as hard to solve as in their Confession of Sins,' but no reasonable Doubts at all.

H E endeavours, in his own Way, to prove, that the Oath of Abjuration obliges us to support the Church of *England*; for no other Reason that I see, but because it obliges us to bear Allegiance to the House of *Hanover* being Protestant, and abjure Allegiance to the Pretender. Now I think he might, by a little longer Train of the same kind of Consequences, have as easily proven, that said Oath obliges us to sup-

port the Devil's Kingdom. It may run thus; we bear Allegiance to King George; he supports the Church of England, therefore we support it too: He is in Alliance with the Emperor of Germany, and the Emperor supports the Pope; and by Consequence we are obliged to support Popery: But the Pope supports the Interests of Satan, therefore to do we.

THUS you see, we are reduced to the Necessity, either of renouncing our Allegiance to the King, or supporting the Kingdom of Satan. When an Argument proves too much, it proves Nothing at all, but only that it is absurd. Let this suffice to expose the present one, which could prove an hundred Things, which Mr. G. did not intend.

M R. D. mentions the Reasons the *Seceders* give for their making the Abjuration Oath a national Sin: Mr. G. calls his repeating them, his *owning* them as just; and upon this Fiction, charges him with Inconsistency: Yet Mr. D. argues against their Reasons as not just. They say the Oath obliges to support the Church of England; he denies this, and shews the Contrary from the Oath itself. * Upon this
Mr.

* Bishop Burnet says, (as Mr. D. observes) ' There was a Clause added at first to the Abjuration Oath, to maintain the Church of England, but it was laid aside by the Parliament.' And Mr. Wilson in a Testimony to the Wretlings, &c. of the Church of Scotland, wrote by him, and subscribed by sundry worthy Ministers of that Church, informs us of the same thing; and of the changing, and at last quite removing out of the Oath, one Word that gave Offence to some Dissenters, who viewed it in a Light different from some of their Brethren, as may appear from the following Extract, taken from Pages 38. and 39, where we are informed, that to the other Distresses of the Church of Scotland, ' the Oath of Abjuration was also imposed on the Ministers thereof, in the Year 1712. This occasion'd a great Question among them, and much writing upon it, whether the Conditions and Qualifications required of the Successor to the Crown, in the Acts of Parliament settling the Succession, of which this is one, that he must join in Communion with the Church of England, be understood as any Part of the Oath, or not? These who are not clear to take it, apprehended these Conditions might be reckoned a Part of the Oath, because in it they were to swear to maintain the Succession AS entailed by such Acts of Parliament, in which these Conditions were contained. Others again, understood these Conditions as no Part of the Oath, seeing when the Oath was first framed in the English Parliament, in the Year 1701, and a Clause was offered to be added to it for maintaining the Church of England, it was rejected because the Dissenters could not take it: And at the Union, the Parliament had expressly exempted those of this Church from all Oaths inconsistent with their Principles; and consequently, that the
AS

M R. G. finds him inconsistent with himself, only because he is inconsistent with them. Let any one Compare Mr. D's Remarks, p. 27, with Mr. G's p. 72, 73, and he will find this the true State of the Case I have given. And is not this doing Business with a Witness? Are such Men fit to be reasoned with? What will they not do behind our Backs, who attempt to cheat us before our Faces? Does the Cause of Truth require, and need the Support of Falshood?-----Of Artifice?-----Of Imposition on the Ignorant?----Away with such kind of Truth and Piety! After all, it is amazing Effrontery and Hardiness, that Mr. G. should 'leave with the Re-publishers of M. D's. Book to reconcile these Things.' Just as if he was evidently inconsistent with himself. But Mr. G. may think himself excused from answering, because I neither advance Scripture nor Confession of Faith, to prove that he has abused Mr. D's. Words: And he has quoted neither to prove that this Article should be a Term of Communion: And has also wilyly avoided saying any Thing to what Mr. D. observed, that some of the *Seceders* themselves had

had

AS, in the Oath, was not reduplicative upon the Qualifications of the Successor, but meerly indicative, as only pointing out the Acts wherein the Succession was settled, and the illustrious Family and Persons on whom it was entailed, sailing the Heirs of King William, Queen Anne, and her Heirs, &c. and therefore they understood that the Oath brought them under no Obligation, but to Allegiance to the Sovereign, and to Engagement against a Popish Pretender, and to the Succession in the Protestant Line: And to prevent Mistakes and Misapprehensions, they might be liable to in this Matter, they resolved to give in written Declarations to this Purpose upon Instrument, which generally they did. At this Time the Commission addressed the Queen (as also did the Assembly) in Favour of those who still scrupled at the Oath, as if the as in it did some Way refer to the Conditions required of the Successor, that such might be favourably dealt with, as her loyal Subjects. As also they petitioned her, that their Declarations of Loyalty to the Queen, their renouncing the Pretender, and Engagements to support the Crown in the Protestant Line in the Family of Hanover, as contained in their Address, might be accepted by her as their Sense of said Oath, without Respect to the Conditions scrupled at. In Answer hereto, the Queen in her Letter to the Assembly, declared that the Address of the Commission did so much manifest their Loyalty to her, and their true Concern for the Succession in the Protestant Line by Law established, that it could not but be acceptable. This Answer did very much confirm those who judged that the AS in the Oath, did not reduplicate upon the Qualifications of the Successor, and gave Freedom to many to take it.

AFTER King George the 1st. came to the Throne, and understood our Difficulties by the Representations of Assembly 1715, and for-

had once Freedom to take the Oath of Abjuration. And had this Article then been made a Term of Communion, what would have become of even *Seceders*.

PAGE 76, on Article the 8th, concerning Kissing the Book, Mr. G. roundly asserts, that the 'main Enquiry here is, whether that Way of swearing be justifiable or not.' This may be his *main Enquiry* if he please; but then he should not pretend to dispute with Mr. D. whose *main Enquiry* is, whether it should be a Term of Communion: And he determines it should not, on Supposition the *Seceders* Opinion, concerning the Nature of it, were right: For tho' it were right, yet the Point is too obscure, to require the Assent of all Christians to it, on Pain of Excommunication. But Mr. G. seems always willingly ignorant of the *main Enquiry*, and has not yet touched it in one single Article.

IN p. 77, he finds Mr. D. inconsistent, because he does not deny Swearing by kissing the Book to be Superstitious, and yet reckons it a Matter of doubtful Disputation.' Now these are so far from being inconsistent, that the Latter could not be said if the Former was asserted. If he had said, it is not Superstitious, he could not consistently have said it was doubtful. Was ever Disputant more unhappy in his Remarks?

AS ridiculously he says, 'we may easily infer from such Premises, that Superstition is so sanctified by the Patrocinny of good Men, as to be disputable whether it should be contended against.' Just as if Mr. D. had owned it to be Superstition, and also said it should not be contended against: Whereas he has laid neither the one nor the other

• *mer* Addresses, he interposed for the Relief of those who scrupled at
 • the Oath, and got the Parliament to turn the AS into WHICH,
 • as also to declare, that the Oath was not meant to oblige his Majesty's
 • Subjects in Scotland to any Thing inconsistent with their Church Estab-
 • lishment according to Law. This removed the Scruples of many
 • but nevertheless there were not a few worthy Ministers who remained
 • uneasy and scrupulous upon Account there was still mention made in
 • the Oath of the Act of Parliament that required the Conditions of
 • the Successor, and therefore wanted it taken wholly out of the Oath.
 • Which upon Application the King was so good as to grant, by an Act
 • of Parliament in the 5th Year of his Reign. Thus did the Lord in
 • his Mercy settle the great Commotions that were in the Church, by
 • Reason of that Oath, and extricate Her out of some of Her Difficul-
 • ties: Yea, so far, that the most strift and zealous Ministers in Scot-
 • land were brought to declare both from the Pulpit and Press, that the
 • embracing or refusing the Oath of Abjuration did not afford the least
 • Ground for Separation.' Hence we see how groundless the *Seceder*
 • Assertion is, that the Oath of Abjuration obliges the Juror to support
 • the Church of England.

other; but that as it is disputable, it should not be made a Term of Communion.

BUT it is far from being disputable with the *Seceders*, to swear by kissing the Book, they are sure, is *Will-worship*: Nay, that it is no Oath at all: For Mr. G. says, 'the Words at the End of the Oath, *So help me God*, are no appeal to him: So that unless kissing the Book be an Appeal, there is none at all in it; and if that be an Appeal, then it is of an ordained mystical Signification, and so is superstitious.' I admire at the Pains some take to bewilder themselves. Words cannot be more wrested than those at the End of the Oath are. Their plain Sense is this, 'according as I tell the Truth or not, in what I am called to witness, so let me obtaine saving Help from God or not.' This striking Appeal he calls 'a Prayer, which may be used in setting about any lawful Work.' And on this false Foundation his Arguments are built. He will have kissing the Book to be the Oath; whereas it is no Part of it, but only a Sign, as lifting up the Hand is. And if *Kissing*, in the one Case, be the Oath; so, by a Parity of Reason, *lifting up the Hand*, must be the Oath, in the other Case. in p. 82, he will have kissing the Book to be no less than worshipping it, for he observes; 'that bowing the Knee in Matters of Religion denotes Worship, and that kissing is equivalent to it.' Now, if *lifting up the Hand* be the Oath, we may argue with equal Force, that we swear by the up listed Hand; and consequently Worship either the *Hand*, or the *Act* of lifting it: But if he deny, that lifting up the Hand is the Oath, he must also, for the Sake of Consistency, own that kissing the Book is not the Oath, but only the Sign of it: And then the whole Question is, whether it be a proper Sign. Now kissing is used in Scripture, particularly in *Psal. ii.* to denote, that Worship we owe to God, and therefore is not certainly an improper Sign of it.

THE Objection supposed, that 'the Compliers with this Form have no ill Intention,' he easily solves, by observing, that Papists, Heathens, Deists, can urge in Favour of their evil Practices, that they have no bad, but good Intentions, which yet cannot justify them. This Argument would do Execution, if he had but first proven the kissing of the Book to be an Action in itself Sinful; or that it so much as implies Idolatry. But this not proven, his Answer is Nothing, because the Cases are no way parallel. He should have known, that *an Action in itself indifferent, is good or bad, according to the Actors Intention.*

HE insists very much on it, that kissing the Book is a Popish Invention; but has not proven it. And if he had, yet he could never make appear, that it is the same in us as in them; because our Views and Intentions are quite different from theirs: If they perform an indifferent Action superstitiously, it will not follow, that we are Superstitious in doing the same Thing. Does Mr. G. mean, that we should

Should avoid every Action which they abuse even to Idolatry? Then we ought not to use Bread or Wine in the Sacrament, because they adore the Elements. And many other Instances might be given.

MR. G. also asserts, that 'kissing the Book is introduced instead of Swearing by God.' But this is asserted on the false Suppositions, that kissing the Book is the Oath, and that there is no Appeal to God in the appointed Form. He gives several Instances of Swearing by lifting up the Hand, and thence concludes, that 'we have equal Reason to look on those Scripture Instances as having the Force of a Precept, in the present Case, as to esteem the Apostles meeting and breaking Bread on the first Day of the Week to point out that Day for the Sabbath. This Argument would be conclusive, if *that Form of Swearing* by lifting up the Hand, and none but *only that*, had been exemplified in Scripture. But as this is not so, the Cases are not parallel.

IT is plain, that the Scriptures mention different Forms of Swearing: As, lifting up the Hand, and *putting it under the Thigh*: On this last Mr. G. makes some strained Remarks. He will have it to be no less than a Swearing by the Messiah, who was to descend from *Abraham*: This Gloss he can never prove to be a true one. Nor is there any Necessity to account for it after such a Manner: For putting the Hand under the Thigh, was not the Oath itself, but only the Sign of it. But if it was the Oath, and if Swearing by *Abraham's Thigh*, was 'upon the Matter, a Swearing by God to be incarnate.' because *Abraham* was one of his remote Progenitors; he may as easily explain Swearing by the Bible, to be a Swearing by God who is the Author of it, if his own Notion were true, that kissing it is swearing by it. But I reject the Explanation in both Cases, as strained and awkward: And I presume the Testimony of *Josephus*, is of much greater Force, who says *this Mode of Swearing* (by putting the Hand under the Thigh) *was COMMONLY received*. And *Vatablus* assures us, *it is used in the East to this Day*. The pious and eminent *Mr. Henry*, on *Gen. xxiv. 2*. makes this judicious Remark, 'Swearing being an Ordinance, not peculiar to the Church, but common to mankind, is to be performed by such Signs, as are the Appointments, and common Usages of our Country, for ascertaining the Person sworn.' *Pareus* says, *they swear in the Palatinate, by holding up three Fingers of their right Hand*. Now as the Scriptures approve of different Forms of Swearing, and do not limit to any one particular Form, they plainly leave it indifferent, provided it be innocent in it's own Nature.

TO this Mr. G. replies, then 'God has left his Worship to be formed as Men please.' I answer, this by no means follows, for Swearing is not an Ordinance peculiar to the Church; nor is it an Ordinance of stated Worship: And to call it an Ordinance of Worship, and put it on a level with those which God has appointed for the Edification

fication of the Church, and which are peculiar to it, is to give a false view of the Matter, and does not explain but confuse it. I own it an Ordinance, and that therein we worship God; but it ought to be distinguished from those that are ordinary and stated. Marriage is an Ordinance of God too, and in our Form, contains an Oath; and will the *Seceders* say that the Form of Marriage they use, is of divine Appointment, or any particular Form at all? If they say it is, let them shew it: If not, then here is an Ordinance of God, the Form and Mode of which, is not determined in Scripture, but left indifferent, provided still that it be innocent. And the Reason is the same, *viz.* It is not an Ordinance peculiar to the Church, but common to Mankind.

BUT Mr. G. and the *Seceders* still urge that this Mode is Superstitious. And what is Superstition? It is an *erronious Fear of God*: It is thinking something is *pleasing or displeasing to him which is not, but is the Conceit of a mistaken Mind.* Now to say, that God is displeas'd with using this Mode of Swearing, when it cannot be proven that he is so, is properly Superstition: Hence it is plain, that the *Seceders* are more liable to the Charge of Superstition than we, and are introducing it under Pretence of avoiding it. To *add to God's Law* is Wickedness, as well as to *diminish from it.* They are not the persons who make most Sins, but who avoid the Sins that God has forbidden: Nor are they holiest who make the greatest Number of Duties, but who perform those commanded by God.

I Have been more particular on this Head, because I have known some conscientious Persons puzzled by the Objections offer'd against kissing the Book. The first Time I was called to take an Oath, I refused to take it in this Mode, and only lifted up my Hand; not because I was perswaded it was wrong, but I had not examined the Point, and knew not but that upon Trial, I might judge it to be wrong. But after the best Search I can make, I am convinced it is not Sinful: And whether my Reasons are sufficient, I leave to be judged from what I have offer'd.

THE Sum of the Matter is, That God has appointed Swearing an Oath, when there is an Occasion that requires it, and all Christians, and civilized Nations, are agreed in using it: All do likewise agree to use some external Sign in taking it; but as God has not limited them to one certain Mode, they use various ones, none of which, when innocent, are displeasing to him. Therefore to swear by kissing the Book is not Sinful, for it is not forbidden by God, and I cannot be afraid to use it, because Mr. G. forbids it: It is not used superstitiously, unless we say it is the only Mode that is pleasing to God; but this we do not say, nor do we place any Holiness in it. Upon the whole, if I should be excommunicated, I could not swear that this Mode is Sin, nor that the confessing it as such should be made a Term of Communion: And Mr. G. has not offer'd a Word to prove that it should, tho' that was the very Point in Question.

THE 9th. Article Respects Professor *Simson's* Censure. Here Mr G. exclaims, and asks of Mr. D. ' where is his Truth and Love? For why, ' the Word, *great Scandal*, which the Presb'tery applies to ' Mr. *Simson*, Mr. D. gives out, that they have applied it to the Judicatures of the Church of *Scotland*.' and pray where is the great Error? Is it not true, that the *Seceders* impute it as a great Scandal, to said Judicatures, and consider it as a National Sin, that Professor *Simson* was not excommunicated? Do they not count it a great Scandal indeed, when they think it pollutes the Judicatures so greatly, that they cannot have Fellowship with them on account of it? Can Words tell what Spirit they are of, who cry out of Wrong, of *Violence and Spoil*, when they are told what they not only do, but earnestly contend for? Mr. D. can have neither Truth nor Love, if he speaks Truth of the *Seceders* ever so softly: But he might have had both, in their view, had he bitterly exclaimed against their Opponents, and accused them of an hundred Evils of which they were clear.

PAGE 95, Mr. G. most unmercifully accuses Mr. D. of ' forgetting a very material Part of the Word of Christ's Patience, viz. defending his true Deity. And he and his *American* Friends are challenged, and defied, to reconcile his Conduct with *contending earnestly for the Faith*.' One would think, from all this, we had commenced *Arians*, and shewn Disregard to true Christianity. But what is the Matter? Has Mr. D. defended Mr. *Simson's* Errors? Has he said, they ought not to be censured? Or has he said, that the Professor ought not to have been excommunicated? He said none of these Things. But that the Assembly's only deposing him, when he renounced his Errors, was not so certainly Sinful, as to make it a Term of Communion to confess it. If he had not retracted his Errors, nor professed Sorrow for them, Excommunication would have been absolutely requisite: But when ' he did not continue obstinate, but made a satisfying and orthodox Declaration of his Faith,' it quite alters the Case, in my View.

BUT let it be supposed, that the general Assembly were really defective in Point of Discipline, it would not warrant the *Seceders* to separate from the Church. If they say it would, it must be on this Principle, that *Deficiency in the Degree of Censure will warrant a Separation from that Church which is so Defective*. And if this be true, *Paul* himself was wrong who commanded the *Corinthians* to continue in Church Communion, while the Church Officers not only failed in the Degree of Censure, but, for what we know, quite neglected it, and yet in Case of a grievous Scandal, no less than Incest, 1 Cor. v. 2. Also the Churches of *Pergamos* and *Thyatira*, are reproved by Jesus Christ, for gross Deficiency in Discipline, yet no Burden of Separation laid on the Members of these Churches; but an Approbation given of their continuing in Communion; As the Excellent Mr. *Durham* invincibly proves in his Exposition of the *Revelations*, p. 160, and 161, *Glasgow* Edit. 1739. which I would think

think worthy of transcribing, had I Time. But I will not enlarge on this Point, until I see whether the *Seceders* will venture to assert the aforesaid anti-scriptural Principle: Now, if the supposed Deficiency of the Assembly in censuring Professor *Simson*, ought not to be made a Term of Communion, how is it possible that confessing the Assemblies Sin in it, ought to be a Term? I think no judicious, well instructed and unprejudiced Christian, could ever, with a clear Conscience, swear that it should.

M R. G. exposes himself to just Censure for false Accusation, and that against his own Knowledge; for he asserts, that Mr. D. 'owns the Professor ought to have been cut off from the Church.' But he knew that Mr. D. in the place refer'd to, put this Qualification, 'who continues Obstinate.' Can any be so exceeding Charitable to Mr. G. as to think he was too dull to discern so plain a Difference? Is it the same Thing, to say *he should be cut off who continues Obstinate*; and *he should be cut off who continues not Obstinate*? i. e. are contradictories one and the same Thing? If they are plainly different, so that they cannot be mistaken for the same, then Mr. G. must have accused Mr. D. contrary to his own Conscience: The Accusation is, That Mr. D. is inconsistent, in owning the Professor ought to have been cut off, and yet saying, 'the *Seceders* are worthy of Reprehension for testifying that Suspension was not a Censure adequate to the Offence.' But when the above Qualification is added, the very Shaddow of Inconsistency vanishes: Besides, it is false that the *Seceders* are reprehended for testifying against the Censure; 'tis only for making that Testification a Term of Communion.

IN the like deceitful Manner, he knowingly transposes Mr. D's Word's in p. 98 that he might find him inconsistent: 'This is strange, says Mr. G. he [the Professor] declared his Sorrow for the Offence given, and yet all the Effects of this his Sorrow was only (according to Mr. D.) subtile evasive Distinctions, and Words proving himself contradictory.' Now Mr. G. could not but know, that according to Mr. D. these evasive Distinctions were used before he confessed his Sorrow, and not at the same Time, much less after it: I think his followers might be ashamed, if he himself cannot, of such evidently unconscionable Conduct.

BUT he takes care to make no Remark on Mr. D's Demand, viz. 'why they did not also bear Testimony against the general Assembly of 1640, for annexing a civil Penalty to their Act.' This proves, that they are partial in their Testimony; and that they fixed on such Points as were most popular, and best calculated for making a Party; on which they could harangue more plausibly, because of the Prejudices of the common People as to those Heads. They waved the Assembly's civil Penalty in their Act of 1640, tho' it was acting quite out of Character, and so was a thousand Times worse, and more Dishonourable to Jesus Christ, as it made his Kingdom seem to be of this World, than any

Deficiency in the Degree of Censure can possibly be: For to act *out of Character* is unspeakably worse, than acting defectively *in Character*. But I suppose it did not suit the *Seceders* to insinuate any Prejudice against the actings of 1640, when they reckon Reformation was carried to it's height, because they would have us believe they are pursuing the same Model; and so are unwilling to have it thought, that a reforming Assembly were chargeable with any such Extravagance.

ON the 10th Article, which relates to the Affair of Captain *Porteous*, I shall only observe, that the *Seceders* do not pretend it is a National Sin, nor the Sin of any collective Body, but only of a Number of Individuals: And I see not why they might not, on the same Principle, make it a Term of Communion to confess the Sins of any private Person, who has been in Church Communion with them; or of any particular Minister of the Church: For when many Particular ones do not act as a collective Body, or in a judicial Capacity, their Actions are only Personal, and cannot be ascribed to the Publick: The greatness or smallness of the Number, does not alter the Nature of the Thing. Now, to make such Things the Ground of separating from the Church, is an high Extravagance; and cannot be justified but on this Principle, that *we ought to separate from a Church, when any Number of Ministers and Members act wrong*. I hope they do not need Quotations from Scripture, and the Confession of Faith, to prove that this Principle is a false one, when the Church is sound, and well constituted.

THE 11th Article, which respects the *Seceders* Testimony against the late blessed revival of Religion, Mr. G. waves in this Place, proposing to treat it else-where, and so gave me Occasion to read his Piece added to Mr. *Arnot's*: He seems to boggle at, and mince this Article, more than the others; gives us a little here, and a little there; makes some Concessions, that some might possibly be converted by and bye insinuates as if the whole was a Delusion: I suppose he was apprehensive, that to be very plain might be impolitick, as it would prejudice our People against them, and lessen their Hope of making a larger Party: Hence it seemed a dangerous Article, and was to be touched very gingerly.

HIS Arguments to prove, that the aforesaid religious Appearances were from a Spirit of Delusion, p. 68, Part II. are, 1st. that 'Mr. *Whitefield* met with a kind Reception from many Ministers and People; and that he propagated latitudinarian Tenets, recommending a general Union of Saints of all Denominations, in a certain Letter and Extract, addressed to the religious Societies in *Scotland*.' Neither of these have I seen, and so can only judge of them by what Extracts Mr. G. is pleased to give me. I do not suppose, as the Extract unguardedly seems to intimate, that a *Papist*, as such; and while really such, can have the Piety of an Apostle: Or that a true Protestant can have Communion with him; yet I presume, all that is intended in the Ex-

tract, is, what I suppose Mr. G. himself will not deny, *viz.* that it is possible for one to have true Piety, who goes under the general Denomination of a Papist, but has not had sufficient Information of all the vile Superstitions of that Religion, or all the Truths to be believed and Duties to be practised, according to the true Christian Plan; hence such a one, upon communicating Views with the pious Protestant, would find, that they were in Substance of one Religion, so far as he had obtained; consequently he is not supposed to be a *real* but *nominal* Papist only: And in the same Manner may the other Extract be explained, of which there are some Instances in our Saviour's and the Apostles Day. It can scarcely be supposed that Mr. W. was destitute of so much Policy as well as honesty, as to attempt to teach the World, that some out of each of these he mentions, can be true Christians, uniting with Protestants in one Christian Society, and yet hold the detestable Absurdities of that Religion they were respectively taught. But let it be granted, that Mr. W. was too lax as to Church Communion; what will it prove against what we count the Work of God? The Force of the Argument can be no more than this, *viz.* Mr. W. was *one eminent Instrument in promoting that Work; but he was mistaken, and too lax, as to the Terms of Church Communion; therefore the Work promoted by him, and others too, was a Delusion*: That is, he who is wrong in one Thing, is wrong in every Thing: And the Argument will equally bear this Conclusion, *therefore the true Gospel preached by Mr. W. was a Delusion*. If the Argument be good, it will prove, that there never was a real revival of Religion: For it will ever be found, that some who were Instruments were greatly mistaken in some Doctrine of Religion: It will prove, that the whole Reformation from Popery was a Delusion; for *Luther*, who was an eminent Instrument in it, held Consubstantiation, and several other Errors: And yet thought himself illuminated by the Spirit at the same Time.

BUT he proposes to prove, that we too are Latitudinarians, and are in the Scheme for uniting all Denominations: For why, he says we 'always complained, that our being secluded from the Synod, was an Act of Violence and Injustice, tho' we counted the Excluders Enemies to the Work of God.' This will only prove that we were not of seceding Principles; that we did not design to rend the Church into as many little Pieces as possible, but rather to endeavour the Reformation of what we thought amiss.

THE *second* Argument is the *awful Work*, as they call it, *on the Bodies and Spirits of Men*. All his Proof of the first is, that Mr. W. said he believed the *bodily Convulsions were from the Devil*. But this Argument will have no Force against me, if I differ in Judgment from Mr. W. I see no Reason any one has to believe them to be from the Devil: Nor did I ever esteem or call them the *Work of God*. All that Reason will say is, that they are probable Indications of strong Com-

Comotions of the Passions: either Fear, Sorrow, or Joy: And the Nature and Kind of these Passions is to be judged of, by discovering the Cause that excites them, their genuine Tendency and Effects, compared with Scripture: Hence whoever will say that such Convulsions are inconsistent with the **Operations** of the Holy Spirit, says what neither Reason nor Scripture will prove, but what is contrary to both, as might be invincibly manifested, had I Time, or were it necessary to add more.

AS to the *awful Work on the Spirits of Men*, which he reckons in p. 124, consisted 'in forming Representations of Christ in the Imagination, and is contrary to *Larger Cat.* Q. 109, where is forbidden 'making any Representation of God, of all, or any of the three Persons, either inwardly in our Mind, &c.' But how does he, or any other know, that Images and Representations of God, were formed in our Minds? This he must prove, or lie under the Scandal of being a false Accuser, and rash judger of others Hearts; and must prove it not to have been a single, but common Case, in order to prove the Work a Delusion. Well, he quotes Mr. *Robe* querrying thus, 'can you, or any Man else, think upon Christ really as he is God-man, without an imaginary Idea of his true Body? Can you think of him scourged, crowned with Thorns, and crucified, without any imaginary Idea of him?' And does this indeed prove the Point, and fall under the Censure of the Catechism? If so, it will also prove that Christ's human Nature is God, or one of the three divine Persons: For what the Catechism says is forbidden, is making Representations of God; Mr. *Robe* speaks of an Idea of Christ's true Body; and Mr. *G.* says this is contrary to the Catechism, consequently Christ's true Body, in Mr. *G.*'s View, must be God. And I think this not only borders upon, but is blasphemy.

HE does not pretend to answer Mr. *Robe*'s Queries, nor can he: for Nothing can be more certain, than that if Christ be really Man, and if it is lawful to think of his human Body, it is impossible to think of it, without an imaginary Idea of it; as impossible as to think of any other Man without such an Idea. Yet with him, this is 'delusive, dishonouring to Christ, and destructive to Souls; leading from Christ in the Word to fanciful Notions.' If so, it will certainly follow, that all who ever believed, or thought that Christ had a real human Body, have been deluded, and their Souls destroyed: None have escaped that I know of, save only some of the primitive *Hereticks*, who denied that Christ had such a Body. Let Mr. *G.* free himself from this horrible Consequence if he can: But perhaps he will not answer, because I do not quote Scripture or Confession, to prove that he has argued so, and that such is the necessary Consequence.

AS to Mr. *Erskine*'s *Fancy no Faith*, to which he refers us, I have read some of it, and can only take Time to say; it is so absolutely

unphilosophical, as well as unscriptural, that it either deserves no Animadversion, or such a one as I have neither Leisure nor Inclination to give: It only shewed me to what a pitch of Extravagance, a good and learned Man might go, when filled with a narrow, party Spirit, and that Spirit whetted and fired with party Zeal.

MR. G. in p. 73. Part II. quotes Mr. *Shepherd* against us, just as if Mr. *Robe* or we, had ever said that an Image of Christ's Body in the Mind, was saving Faith: This he does not assert; but why that Quotation, if he did not design to insinuate so much? And this is another Instance of false Accutation, strong Prejudice, and trifling Argument. So poorly will they come off who go about to defame the Operations of the holy Spirit; and so poorly let them come off. Upon the whole, we see how weak the Grounds are upon which the *Seceders* oppose the late revival of Religion: It is an hazardous and desperate undertaking: What Person of a tender Conscience would run the Risk of fighting against God? And certainly to oppose the Work we contend for, upon such insufficient and false Reasonings, is the same as to oppose it at a Venture. They will find it a *Burthensome Stone*, whoever burden themselves with it. *No Weapon formed against the Cause of God will Prosper*: And I am persuaded theirs will not prosper in this Case, tho' none of us ever appeared against them: I securely trust the Event with God; who can manage those who daringly attempt to misrepresent his gracious Works among us; and that from Pretence of Zeal for his Glory: Dare any of our People swear that the Revival they were Witnesses of, is a Delusion? Or dare they swear that this Oath and Confession ought to be a Term of Ministerial and Christian Communion? I apprehend very few can do it, from Mr. G's saying, that he knows no People more implicitly led than those who are under our Presbytery. I find by that he cannot prevail with them implicitly to follow him; and I esteem it as an Argument that they have better sense about Religion, and greater Tenderness of Conscience, than those who can swallow their shocking Oaths, and Terms of Communion, without Demure. On Supposition that I knew the aforesaid Work to have been salutary to me, I must either belie and blaspheme the Spirit of Grace, or be excommunicated: Nothing can be more certain, than that it is not of God to give me so hard a Choice: Therefore to make their Oath against this Work, and Confession of the Sinfulness of it, a Term of Communion, is against the Mind of God, and most daringly impious. If there was Nothing besides exceptionable in the *Seceders*, this alone is sufficient to deter all tender Christians from their Society. *O my Soul! enter not into their Secrets; unto their Assembly, mine Honour be not thou united?*

BUT Mr. G. thinks we must be inconsistent, if we make this an Argument against joining with the *Seceders*, and yet would have kept Communion with the Synod of *Philadelphia*, whom we reckon *Op-*

posers of that Work as well as them: I answer, the Cases are as different as East and West: It is one Thing to oppose, and quite another to make that Opposition a Term of Communion: I can safely continue in Church Communion with one who differs from me; but if he make that very Difference a Term of Communion, I must then either counteract my Conscience, or be excluded.

IN p. 74, Part II. Mr. G. argues, that 'some of our Fraternity acquitted the Protest of *Philadelphia*, from any Opposition to that Work.' This might be of some Force with that *some*, but what will it do against us, whom he does not pretend to have acquitted it? And why this should be done, says he, and the aforesaid Clause in the Confession of Sins viewed as opposite to it, I cannot conceive; unless faint Hopes of Union with the Synod of *Philadelphia*, while Matters this way seems desperate as to the *Seceders*, may turn the Scale.' I think any one may see Mr. G's Truth and Candor in this, who knows that there was no Apprehensions of *Seceders*, nor one seceding Minister among us, when the Union was first proposed, and that certain *some* acquitted the Protest: How then was it possible, that Matters *this way*, could be desperate as to the *Seceders*? And how could our Despair turn the Scale? Or how does he know that we look on Matters as desperate even now? Let him satisfy his own Conscience with an Answer to these Queries if he can: For I apprehend he can satisfy none besides.

I Have already shewn, that the Clause in their Confession of Sins is false in Fact, and an injurious Misrepresentation, not of us only, but of those very spiritual Influences whereby the Work of God was carried on. They consider the whole as a *prevailing Delusion*, and catch at every seemingly exceptionable Circumstance, and make an Handle of it to oppose the Whole, consequently are opposers of the Whole, notwithstanding their extorted Concessions: It would be loss of Time to insist in exposing every ill-natured and trifling Remark on this Head: Let it suffice to have exposed them all in Substance.

I Proceed to Mr. G's extraordinary Answer to Mr. D's Arguments against the false Terms of Communion which the *Seceders* have established. He thinks it a sufficient Refutation of them, that the New-light in *Ireland* use the same against making the Confession of Faith a Term of Communion. To what is said on this Point in p. 13, I here add, The greatest Hereticks on Earth can defend themselves against their Opponents, if this be a Defence.

IF we opposed the Popish Terms of Communion, and argued as Mr. D. p. 7, that 'such Terms of Communion are an Usurpation on Christ's Prerogative, and Encroachment on the Charter of the Gospel, and right of many sincere Christians to sealing Ordinances.' They can answer, why, 'the Non-subscribers in *Ireland*, use the same Arguments against making Subscription of your own Confession of Faith a Term of Communion: And we despair of ever see-

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ing our Terms excluded by any Arguments worth Notice, but such as at the same Time exclude your own Confession of Faith: And it is an Evidence, that ye have gone out in an unadvised Hurry against the *Papists*, when you have so forgot yourselves in pursuing them.' I would now ask, whether the *Papists* would not defend themselves as fully as the *Seceders* do, and lash us on as good Ground? Let Mr. G. himself answer, whether the Argument is not as favourable to *Papists* as *Seceders*? And should he not think, that he has gone out in an unadvised Hurry against us himself, when he has forgotten so many Things in pursuing us?

IN p. 108, he insists, that making Confessions of Faith Terms of Communion, is a Matter of as doubtful Disputation, as the *Seceders* Terms: This shews as much Ignorance of Fact, as the Former of Argument. It has been no Matter of Dispute with the Protestant Churches, whether Confessions of Faith were necessary, tho' there has been Dispute as to particular Articles: Let Mr. G. shew, where is that Church that has not had, and still has, a Confession of Faith. He may find some erroneous Latitudinarians, like the New-light in *Ireland*, whom he does not put on a Level with the Pious and Learned, unless he is inconsistent who have none. Upon Considering these Things, he will find Mr. D. is extricated out of his imaginary Labyrinth, without any new Rule added to our old Systems of Logick.

HE grants, p. 117 that 'Communion in Ordinances with the Ministers of *Scotland* was Warrantable, when Mr. *Shields* joined them.' But denies it is so now. Yet does not Mr. G. certainly know, that Mr. *Shields* might have insisted on the Sin of the *Indulgence, publick Resolutions, Oath of Allegiance, not renewing the Covenants &c.* as Bars in the Way of his Communion with the Church, if he had been of the *Seceders* Mind? It is indeed Artful, but very Dishonest to insinuate, that Mr. *Shields* was of Seceding Principles: He was a truly great and eminent Minister, and one of the most accurate and guarded Writers of that Day in *Scotland*: Nor will I desire better Authors, than himself on *Church Communion*, and Mr. *Durham* on *Scandal*, to convict the *Seceders* of schismatical, sectarian Principles. Would Mr. *Shields* have ever joined in Communion with the Ministers of *Scotland*, if he had made the *publick Resolutions, Indulgence &c.* Terms of Communion? No, Mr. G. knows he would not: And yet is so conscientious as to insinuate, that he was in effect a *Seceder*: How few are the Articles the *Seceders* can add to what Mr. *Shields* could have urged in his Day, had he been agreed with them in Sentiment about Church Communion? The Case is plain; that they have very few, and those few evidently insufficient to break Communion.

IN p. 118, M. G. lays, we give our Opinion of the Terms of Church Communion, in *Warning*, p. 31, where there are only a few general Sentences dropt just occasionally. These he compares with Mr. D. and Mr. *Kirkpatrick*, of *Belfast*; and concludes we all agree, He might

also have quoted again the Confession of Faith, *Chap. xxvi. Art. 2.* where it is said, 'Saints by Profession, should maintain holy Communion in the Worship of God, with all who, in every Place, call on the Name of the Lord Jesus.' And from hence might have concluded, that Mr. D. Mr. Kirkpatrick, the Confession of Faith, and our Warning, are all alike in the Point. Mr. D. quoted the above Article of the Confession against the *Seceders*. Mr. G. thinks it a good Reply, that the New-light in *Ireland*, quote the same Passage in their Defence, against the general Synod. It seems then, this Article of the Confession must be laid aside, only because the New-light have quoted it to a wrong Purpose. That Quotation has quite profaned it; and it can never again be urged against any Sectarians; for all of them can answer it the same Way, that is, by saying the New-light quote it. Mr. Cuthbertson can answer it with equal Force when opposed to him. Mr. G. catches the Words *holy Communion*, just as if the *Westminster* Assembly had intended, that holy Communion could be maintain'd only with *Seceders*, and none else. The Confession declares those to be Saints, 'that are united to Jesus Christ their Head by his Spirit, and by Faith have Fellowship with him in his Graces, Sufferings, Death, Resurrection, and Glory.' And that these Saints by Profession, 'are bound to maintain an holy Fellowship and Communion in the Worship of God, &c. That this Communion, as God offereth Opportunity, is to be extended to all those who in every Place call upon the Name of the Lord Jesus.' Now, let Mr. G. say, are none united to Christ by his Spirit, and have none Fellowship with him by Faith, but *Seceders*? Are all who have such Union to, and Fellowship with Christ, bound to keep Communion in the Worship of God only with *Seceders*? Do all those professing Saints in the *British* Dominions, who have Communion with Christ, deserve Excommunication if they will not join the *Seceders*? Is it very hateful and offensive to Jesus Christ, that his Saints should maintain Communion in divine Worship with any others besides the *Seceders*? Is it because they can have holy Communion with no others? Do none but *Seceders* call on the Name of the Lord Jesus *out of a pure Heart*? And is it the Intent of the Confession to answer all these Queries in Favour of the *Seceders* alone? If he dares not say, that the Confession intends this, (which I think he dares not) he must necessarily submit to the grating Acknowledgment, that the Confession of Faith Condemns the *Seceders* Terms of Communion: For if he say, it approves them, he thereby says, it is the Intent of it to answer said Queries in their Favour, exclusive of all other Saints who call on the Name of the Lord Jesus.

HE argues p. 127, against the Forbearance we plead for, not at all supposing that we plead for the same that *Paul* recommends: Nay, he takes for granted, that the Apostle would only have Forbearance exercised 'in some particular Points, which have never been a Part of Testimony or adopted in the Acts and Constitutions of that Church.' I hope he will allow, that apostolick Determinations are of as great Authority

thority as the Testimony, Confession, or Acts of any Church, and he must also grant, that the Apostle in his Epistles to the *Romans* and *Corinthians*, &c. recommends Forbearance even as to Matters which he determines, and that after he has determin'd them: When he ventures so deny this, I may then take the Trouble of making it plain: If he own it, he ruins his limited Explanation of the Forbearance *Paul* pleads for.

H E seems to know no Middle between making a Truth a Term of Communion, and dropping it merely to satisfy Mens Humours, if we forbear those who err in any Matter which the Church has determined; that is, if we do not excommunicate them, we unhinge the Protestant Reformation. He condemns the Distinction of Truths into *Essential* and *not Essential*, as 'unjust and unprecedented in the Churches of Christ.' p. 97, P. II. and denies that 'Moses knew any Thing of Truths not essential, which might be drops for Peace.' Not making them Terms of Communion, is with him the same as dropping them. We had asserted that Essentials belonging to Doctrine, Worship, Discipline, and Government, are to be Terms of Communion. He according to his usual Candor and Truth, asserts that we would have 'Nothing mentioned, but these Truths without which there can be no Salvation.' I query, Whether he did not knowingly speak a Falshood in this? Unless he judges that there can be no Salvation without Orthodoxy in Government and Discipline: However, upon this false Assertion, he runs the Parallel between breaking the carved Work of an House, because not essential to it, and out making Essentials Terms of Communion; tho' there is not really the Shadow of a Parallel in the Case, but only on Supposition that we regarded Nothing but what is absolutely necessary to Salvation; which he knows to be only his own Fiction.

HIS Quotations from Mr. *Durham*, *Fox*, &c. when levelled against us, are all a Fancy; because he goes on the Supposition, that we drop and give up, in Profession and Practice, every Point that we do not make a Term of Communion: Yet I call himself as a Witness to prove the Contrary: For does he not find, that we will not give up some Points to the *Seceders*, nor in the least drop them, tho' we do not make those very Points Terms of Communion? And I hope we would, thro' Grace, be as far from yielding them up to Persecutors as to Sectarians.

HIS denying the Distinction between Essentials and Extra-essentials, and saying it is unprecedented in the Churches of Christ, is so contrary to Fact and common Sense, as well as Scripture, that it deserves not an Answer. Does not Christ himself distinguish between the greater and lesser Things of the Law? Does he not shew, that when a lesser Duty interferes with a greater, the lesser is to be omitted? He will have *Mercy* and not *Sacrifice*; brotherly Love and Reconciliation, rather than offering Gifts, *Mat. v.* And I think it is high
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Time

Time that Mr. G. should go and learn what this Distinction meaneth. He has as much need of the Doctrines it suggests, as the *Pharisees* had. I could multiply Instances; but whoever will read *Darham* and *Shields* before mentioned, will find abundance to the Purpose: And in Mr. *Rutherford's* Plea.

IN p. 109, we have a most extraordinary Exposition of *Rom. xiv. 1.* He restricts the *doubtful Disputations* there mentioned, to the Dispute between *Jews* and *Gentiles*, respecting Meats and Days: And according to him, these can have no Place since the Destruction of the second Temple, and Dispersion of the *Jews*. Ever since all doubtful Disputations have ceased, it is now impossible, that any doubtful Points can be made Terms of Communion: This is a very ingenious Method to escape the Edge of that Text, which bears so threatening an Aspect on their Scheme: But unhappily it will acquit all Sectarians in the World as well as themselves. The *Quakers* allude the Force of many Texts by a like restricted Exposition; alledging they were only spoken to the *Corinthians, Galatians, &c.* I hope I need say no more on this Head.

AS Mr. G. seems certain, that he is still in the Right, and has Nothing doubtful among his Principles; why should he refrain from making this Exposition of *Rom. xiv. 1.* a Term of Ministerial and Christian Communion? If he exercises Forbearance, he unhinges that Degree of Reformation to which he has attained: He drops and gives up the Truth. It is very plain from the Whole, that his Arguments are entirely dependant on this Principle, that *every Truth, and every Duty, ought to be a Term of Communion.* But this is a Principle, which the orthodox and purer Part of the Church of Christ never held, in any Age or Place known to me. It has been peculiar to schismatical Parties, who have risen and succeeded with the Simple, by their Pretences of greater Purity: So the fiery *Donatists* of old, the *Papists, Anabaptists, &c.* have excluded all others from the Church. The Act of Uniformity, that made such Havock among Dissenters, was formed on this Principle. The *Seceders* are desirous of such an Act, only they would be the makers of it themselves; and instead of some Ceremonials, would enact other Particulars equally foreign to Religion.

HE looks upon our holding occasional Communion with Mr. *Whitefield*, as inconsistent with Presbyterian Church Government, and very sinful, p. 123, *Part I.* and p. 51, *Part II.* I cannot take Time to expose his partial Narrative, and begging the Question in these Places: I shall only briefly prove, that we can have occasional Communion with Mr. *W.* without Sin: For why, there is no sinful Term imposed by him; therefore in holding Communion with him we are not partakers in any Thing wherein he is wrong. But the *Seceders* make false Terms of Communion, and we would necessarily be partakers with them in their Sin, if we held Communion with them.

A G A I N, whatever Errors Mr. W. may be supposed to hold, yet it is certain he is far from endeavouring to propagate, or make a Party for any Error; he is not of schismatical sectarian Principles or Conduct; but makes it his main Business to advance the *Common Faith*, in which we can all agree with him: Therefore our holding Communion with him, does not so much as interpretatively or consequentially, encourage or countenance any Error: But the *Seceders* hold schismatical Principles, and make a Party for the Errors they have embraced; and if we give them a kind Reception, and join in Communion with them, we interpretatively encourage their Errors.

W E are not obliged to go a Step out of our Way to hold Communion occasionally with Mr. W. for we do not go to him, he comes to us, *i. e.* when we receive him, we receive none of the Peculiarities of the Church of *England* with him, nor does he either attempt or desire to introduce them among us: So that we are in no Sense less Presbyterians by entertaining him: But we must go far out of our Way, *i. e.* the Way of our Duty, to hold Communion with the *Seceders*, who attempt to draw us aside into Peculiarities that are foreign to Religion and Presbyterianism too; and would impose Terms of Communion never imposed by the Presbyterian Churches.

M R. W. helps us in promoting the great Interests of Religion: He preaches the *Truth as it is in Jesus*, and God evidently blesses his Labours, to the awakening of secure Sinners to a just Sense of Religion. It is therefore advantageous to obtain his Assistance; and it is our Duty to honour him whom God honours. But the *Seceders* greatly hinder us, interrupting us in our Endeavours to promote the Redeemer's Kingdom: They try to weaken, not to strengthen our Hands; and do their utmost to prevent the Success of our Attempts to save Sinners, and Edify the Church: For they will not quietly suffer us to urge the Duties commanded by God, unless we urge what they Command; nor let us declaim against the Sins which he has forbidden, unless we call every Thing Sin which is forbidden as such by their Authority: They will not allow us to make Mention of God's Covenant, if we will not preach the Necessity and Obligation of their new Covenant: This is no Aggravation of Matters, but the plain Result of all their Endeavours against us: They would *forbid us to Cast out Devils in the Name of Christ, because we follow not with them*; and would have us forbid Mr. W. for the same Reason: But while we have ground sufficient to conclude, that Christ himself says *forbid him not, for he that is not against us is on our Side*, we know whom we ought to obey. It is well known, that the *Seceders* would have gladly employed Mr. W's Labours, even tho' he was 'a Priest of the Superstitious Church of *England*,' if he had consented to preach only among them, and refused Invitations from the established Church of *Scotland*: But when he could not be brought to promote their Party, they broke out in vehement Exclamations against him.

IN general, these Gentlemen seem devoted to the Interest of their own Party, come of the Interests of Religion what will: They receive into their Communion, with all readiness, those who were under Censure with us for immoral Conduct; let them be guilty of Drunkenness, Slander or Lying, yet if they become *Seceders*, they are purer than us; are mighty zealous for the declarative Glory of Christ, and worthy Members of the purest Church. If such Conduct will not prove them of a sectarian Spirit, let me know what will: If they can devise any Thing that will prejudice People against us, they freely intinate, if they dare not assert it, however false it be: They scatter Scandals with a liberal Hand, so that Calumny seems to be their darling Practice, and distinguishing Characteristick. According to them, there are none who have Knowledge of Truth, and Honesty to appear for it, or any Care for the Glory of Christ, and his Headship over the Church, but those of their Party: All his other Servants have forsaken him and fled, and bowed the Knee to *Baal*, and are become so blind that they cannot see the Force of an Argument: If God bless the Ministry of those whom they reject, with Success, they stop not to censure those divine Influences, and call them delusive: Thus they limit the holy One of *Israel*, as if his gracious Operations were irregular, unless they themselves be made the Instruments: By the same Kind of fatal Biggottry, the *Jews* were led to reject Christ himself, and his glorious Gospel; because he did not come in the Way which they had planed for him, agreeable to their View of the Scriptures; nor employed those as his Ambassadors, who thought themselves best qualified for the Office, he could not be the *Messias*. All biggoted Sectarians are in Danger of the same Condemnation, as they are ordinarily guilty of the same Conduct. Mr. *Morgan*, the *Anabaptist* excludes all from the Church but those of his narrow Party; and when I accuse him of unchurching the Body of God's People, he answers as pertly as the *Seceders*, that he has the Truth, and if the Truth unchurch them, no Matter how soon: And neither he nor they consider, that it cannot be Truth which unchurches the Body of true Believers in Christ. By the Way, I can hardly avoid thinking, that it would be mutually mortifying to Mr. *Morgan*, Mr. *Gellatly*, and Mr. *Arnot*, to see each others Performances, if they could possibly be so impartial as would enable them to see, how deeply they have drank of the same Spirit; how like their ill-natured Turns of Expression are; how artfully they miss the true State of the Question, and Reason so much alike, as if they had been taught the same Systems of Logick, tho' they would widely differ in Sentiment.

IS it not enough to raise both Compassion and Disgust, to see what Numbers of biggoted Parties make Enclosures for themselves; and then consider themselves some as the only *true*, others as the only *pure*, Church of Christ?----The Interest of their Party is the Interest of Christ; and as it goes well or ill with them, they conclude it is well or ill with the Church: And all the declarative Glory of the Redeemer depends on them
alone

alone. Others are either not conscientious, or too ignorant of Truth, and so unworthy of Membership in the Church, untill they come to know and own the Truth and Importance of those distinguishing Tenets they have made their Enclosure. Under such a View, they think they do God Service, when they kill his Servants that follow not with them, either in their Persons, Reputations, or both. The *Seceders* Enclosure I have been briefly surveying; by which they have shut us out, so far as is in their Power, from the Inheritance of the Lord: They cannot do it in Fact, but they do it doctrinally. Mr. *Cuthbertson*, would exclude both them and us, as quite unclean, because we will not rebel against the civil Authority: The Church of *England*, reject us all on Account of their Hierarchy, and decent Ceremonies, which they have thought fit to devise and decree, to make up the Defects of apostolick Institutions: The *Independants*, reckon all these are wretchedly mistaken in Point of Church Government, in that we do not allow all, to be equal to Prophets and Apostles, Pastors and Teachers, in the Management of Discipline &c. The *Anabaptists*, without the least Hesitation, exclude from the Church, *Presbyterians*, *Seceders*, *Cameronians*, Church of *England*, and *Independants* too, because we judge that God's Covenant with *Abraham* stands good to us, and our Seed after us; and that we should dedicate our Infants to God; and because we have not been overwhelmed in *Jordan*, or some such Place. But the *Quakers*, overtop all in Purity, and Spirituality: They consider themselves as the Flock of Christ, and all us as the People of this World; because, tosooth, we regard the external Ordinances of Worship, which God has appointed; and do not comply with their external Ordinances, respecting the flopping of our Hats; keeping them on our Heads; preserving the Posture of our Bodies erect, when we salute Superiors; refusing Titles of Honour to those to whom Honour is due; saying *thee* and *thou*, for most Part ungramatically, for the Sake of Propriety, and many Ordinances of like Importance might be mentioned, *which they have received to hold*. The *Papists*, in their superlative Biggotry, damn all these Denominations in the Lump, for rejecting Opinions and Practices, as absurd and abominable, as ever the civilized Heathens were chargeable with: O! what an haggard Prospect does *Christendom* afford! What Havock have the professed Followers of Christ made of Religion! What Piles of Stumbling-blocks are heaped up! *Wo to the World because of Offences*: Every little biggoted Party awkwardly stand in their own Light, and instead of helping, mutually embarrass and hinder each other: Such Numbers of contradictory dogmatical Sects, greatly darken the Evidence of Truth, acting as tho' it were their main Purpose to raise Dust, that it might not appear: By this Means, they obstruct the access of *Jews* and *Gentiles* to the Church; give Occasion to Infidelity to appear more plausible than otherwise it could; perplex serious Enquirers; and weaken even the Pious in the Exercise of Religion: It cannot be denied, but that the *Seceders* are industrious to contribute their full Share to encrease the Confusion

They not only help to make Religion in general dubious, but particularly disgrace the Presbyterian Name, which they usurp: The Rev. *Thomas Clark*, a seceding Minister of Note in *Ireland*, who joined in Sentiment with the Rev. *Erskines*, about the Burgets-Oath, in a Letter to me concerning the seceding Ministers, who I told him were arrived here, observes thus, ' The two Teachers from *Scotland*, have
 ' seceded from the very Constitution of that famous Church of *Scotland*,
 ' as well as from the corrupt Party therein.' And after giving me an Account of the said Oath, says, ' Some of them got it
 ' brought into the Synod, where it was debated about two Years, and
 ' at last a Vote was passed for condemning it, against which Vote or
 ' Act, the said *Erskines* protested, and averred it was a good Oath;
 ' in some Sort, an Abridgment of the national and solemn League, a
 ' noble Barrier against *Popery*, &c. For which Protest. and voting
 ' that it should not be held a Term of Communion, those now called
 ' Anti-burgessees, left the Synod, and erected themselves; then suspended,
 ' ed, deposed and excommunicated the *Erskines*, &c. which I still
 ' reckoned an horrid Profanation of God's holy Name, and of all the
 ' Censures of his Church, thus to apply them against his Servants, so
 ' very Useful in their Day. This their Guilt, in my View, is dread-
 ' fully heinous: And I am sorry so many People are imposed upon
 ' by them, in your Province.' I have taken the Liberty to publish this Paragraph, as the Matter of it is no Secret. Mr. *Clark's* Remarks respecting the Guilt of their Procedure, carry sufficient Evidence in them; and the whole Narrative tends to confirm the Observations I have frequently made, concerning these Gentlemen.

AS to the Usefulness of graceless Ministers, Mr. G. manages like himself. First he accuses us, and seems to deny our Charge, and then confesses it with some Variation, p. 44, PART II. and wishes ' that
 ' there were more Word of the Grace that is in Christ Jesus, and less
 ' Word of the Grace that is in Ministers; for what of Success is as-
 ' cribed to the Latter, is detracted from the Former.' By this it would seem, that we should carefully avoid seeking a gracious Minister, lest by our accounting him Gracious, we should ascribe the Success to him: And we shall be most safe from the Danger of such Ascription, if we take Care to choose such as are evidently Graceless; for then we cannot have a Word of the Grace that is in such Ministers, but only of the Grace that is in Christ Jesus. Behold! how these sworn, covenanted Gentlemen, differs from a very important Article in our Directory, to examine the Candidate ' touching the Grace of God in
 ' him.'

BUT when shall I have done? I see no End to such Remarks: Could I take Time, I might fill several Volumes in exposing their Absurdities. I presume I have manifested that Mr. G. is a shameless Disputant, who pretended to answer Mr. D. and yet never attempted it in one single Instance. It is true, he has poured out a Torrent of hard

Words, but has not offered one Argument against the Point in Debate; Nay, so far from it, that he has not, as I remember, so much as once contradicted Mr. D's Determinations against them. Whoever can believe that Mr. G. missed the Matter through Weakness, may have Charity respecting his Honesty in the Main: But in some Instances he so artfully misses it, that I am not able, for my Part, to stretch my Charity so far, as to overcome all Suspicion of his missing it knowingly and willingly: He may perhaps fancy that the Goodness of his Cause will warrant him to use a little *pious fraud*, when he is not able to carry the Point by Argument: But I judge it would be more honourable in such a Case, to say *Nothing*, than to speak *Nonsense*, or discover *low Cunning*.

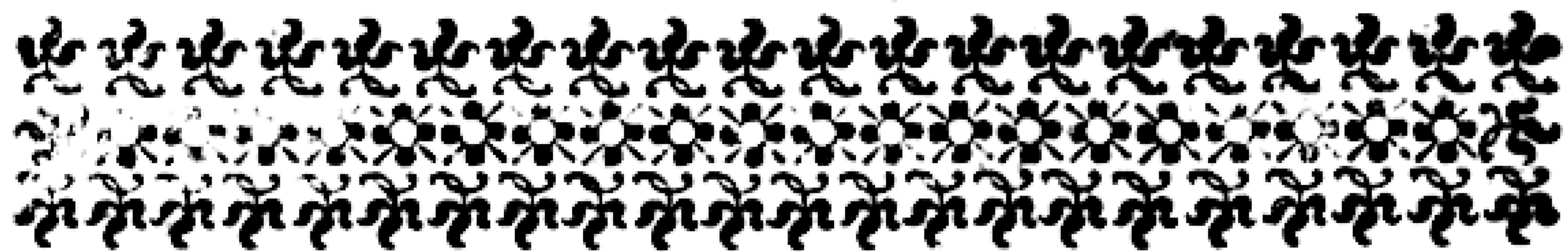
IT is my real Judgment, that I have not read either *Anabaptist*, or *Quaker*, or *Popish* Disputant, who more fallaciously evades the Point in Question; offers more trifling Arguments; shews a more bitter Spirit; manifests less Candor and Modesty; more abuses Scripture Texts, and Quotations from Authors; or deals more disingenuously with Opponents, than these Gentlemen. If Professors *will* be deceived, God in righteous Judgment may say, *let them be deceived*. Those Persons who are decoyed by the *Seceders* Pretensions, would as easily be decoyed by the *Anabaptists*, if the Temptation were but suitably timed.

I have been insensibly led far beyond my first Design; and yet have suppressed a great Number of Observations that offered themselves, for the sake of Brevity: But I hope I have said enough, not only to prove the Weakness of the *Seceders* Cause; but also, that these Gentlemen are not worthy to be reasoned with as Disputants. In the Way they proceed, they can answer all the Divines in the World, whatever Side of a Question they take; they can always find Something to say, and when they have said some ill-natured Things against their Opponents, and reasoned against Something that is foreign to the Debate, it will easily pass for an Answer to their Arguments, with all such as are seized by a party Spirit: But who can spare Time to examine and refute their Reveries? For my part, I know not whether I shall take any farther Notice of them, in this Manner, as I look on what is done sufficient to give Satisfaction to such as are impartial, and willing to be satisfied.

I am with sincere Affection,

Yours, &c.

S. Finley.



A VINDICATION, &c.

THE Charges exhibited against the *Seceders* by *New-Castle* Presbytery, in the *Appendix* to their *Warning*, principally relate to their Terms of Communion, their Sentiments respecting some of the Doctrines of Grace, and some Instances of their Conduct. The Rev. Mr. *Finley*, in the preceding Letter, has chiefly spoken to the first of these: It would be entirely superfluous for me to add any Thing upon the Point, after so much has been so pertinently wrote already, did not the Weakness of some People, for whose Advantage we write, render it necessary, which I expect will be a sufficient Apology for my descending so minutely on some Particulars, and following our Authors thro' so many. Their Articles of Confession, are so fully spoken to, that I need add Nothing further upon them, only produce a brief Testimony of those that were more particularly acquainted with the *Seceders* than we, to confirm what has already been offered: But I shall make Remarks upon some other Things they have spoken relative to the same Point; which Mr. *Finley* had not Time to consider particularly. And as their Judgment respecting the Obligation of the Covenants, *solemn League* and *national*, seems to be their (*proton Pseudos*) Foundation Mistake, I shall begin with that.

THERE is a diversity of Sentiments on this Point: Some suppose, that the godly Example of our Fore-fathers, is a good Motive to excite us zealously to perform all the Duties God enjoins on us in our Day. Others suppose, that their Oath binds us to the Performance of all Duties, as a super-added Tie, but not to renew these same Covenants, seeing a small Part of the Nation, cannot do a *national Act*. Others again judge, that our Fore-fathers Oath obliges us, not only to the Performance of Duty in general, but to renew these Covenants in particular: Yet these are divided on the Head. Mr. *Cuthbertson*, and those who join him, think that the very Words of the Oath, or the Covenants as at first framed, are binding; otherwise they lose their Form as national Covenants, and if the Form be taken away, Nothing remains of the Oath, *as an Oath*.

THE *Seceders* maintain, that they are binding both as to Matter and Form, by Virtue of our Fore-fathers Oath; and that upon every Individual of their Posterity, to the latest Generation, and tho' they may

may be removed to the remotest Ends of the Earth: And yet they assert, that both Matter and Form are to be altered and suited to the Churches Circumstances, in the various Ages and Places of the World.

NOW the Question in Debate between the *Seceders* and us, is not whether the Covenants were lawful and good Expedients to promote Religion, and the civil Liberties of the Nation, when they were first composed and sworn; neither is it whether King *Charles* the II. and those who joined him in burning and breaking the Covenants, were guilty of Perjury and very great Heaven-daring Wickedness? Both these we grant. Nor do we Dispute whether we are, and ought to be under the most solemn Covenant Engagements to promote Reformation Principles, in the purest and strictest Manner? Our contesting this Point with them, does not flow from any unwillingness to be under the strictest Bonds to what our Fore-fathers engaged to in the Covenants, and purest Times of Reformation; or to reserve to ourselves a greater Liberty: We do declare, we profess and maintain the same Cause of God they did, and acknowledge ourselves under the deepest Obligations thereto. Nor would we esteem it Liberty to be free from the strictest purity of Doctrine and Holiness of Life the Word of God requires. The *Seceders*, to add the greater Weight to their Sentiments, seem to use the Terms *Covenants* and *covenanted Cause*, as signifying the very same Thing: Hence they accuse us roundly of going off from Reformation Principles; and insist that our Opposition to them, must spring from our laxness and Dis-inclination to maintain the same Religion our Fore-fathers did, which is a very great Mistake. The covenanted Cause, or Reformation Principles, and the Covenants, are quite distinct Things. These were Expedients used by our Ancestors to bind to those: Now those Principles are contained in our *Westminster* Confession of Faith and Catechisms, and Directory for Worship and Government; to profess, practise and maintain which, we are under the most solemn Ties, both as Christians and Ministers: And is this no swearing to maintain Reformation Principles? No, not in their View, at least it is not sufficient, except we profess the binding Obligation of the Covenants as they do; swear their new Covenant, and make it a Term of Communion; which we cannot do, not because we fear too strict Obligations, but because we cannot see this to be our Duty; and we cannot with Sincerity profess and swear what we cannot find Argument to support.

BUT the true State of the Question between us is, whether or no the Covenants *solemn League* and *national*, are binding upon us both as to Matter and Form, by virtue of our Fore-father's Engagements, so that it is an indispensable moral Duty for us to renew them, and our great Sin if we do not, yea, so great, as to deserve Excommunication from the Inheritance of the Lord? Here the *Seceders* affirm, and we deny. In speaking to this Question, I shall

briefly

briefly expose the Absurdity of their Position; shew that they ¹ contradict themselves, and refute their Arguments. A few Hints may serve to discover the Falacy of our Author's Position, without entering into a prolix Detail upon the Subject.

THAT which is properly of moral Obligation, is what is founded upon Reasons of perpetual Duration, whether arising from the immutable Nature and Reason of Things, or the positive Institution of God. The Form of a Thing is that whereby it is what it is, and distinguishes it from every other Thing: Hence then, the Form of the Covenant, or in other Words the Manner of the Oath, is that which gives them their Being as Covenants, and distinguishes them from all other Covenants: It is a particular Tenor or Language or Mode of Expression, which being removed the Covenants are no longer the same they were, even tho' the Matter be the same. I grant that a Covenant is essentially the same it was, tho' some Expressions be taken away, if others of like Extent and Import be introduced in their Stead; as, *every one of us, for we all,* only makes an accidental Difference; but *I myself, or some of us, for we all,* makes an essential One.

NOW the Mode or Form of these Covenants is *national*: The Rulers, with the Ministers and common People, united in them: This Conjunction makes it differ from other Covenants of a more private Nature, and is essential to a *national* Covenant. Their Rulers as well as Priests and People, joined in all the national Covenants we read of in Scripture. Seeing then, these Covenants are *national*, if they bind us formally to renew them, they bind us to do it in a *national* Capacity. To say otherwise, is perfect Nonsense; for the only proper Notion we can form of a Covenant's binding Persons to renew it *as* a Covenant, is it's binding them to do it in that Mode in which it was at first sworn. It is plain they are of a mixed Kind, partly *civil*, partly *religious*; for they were not only designed as a Mean to engage the Covenanters in Defence of the true Religion; to make a stand against *Popery* and *Prelacy*, but also to prevent arbitrary Government in the State, and secure the Rights of the Parliament. Now these Ends, in a complex View, cannot be answered by a few private Persons, nor can they renew this Covenant in Form, except they could enforce their Acts by a civil Sanction, and it be the Duty of the minor Part of the Nation to assume the Province of the major, which is absurd.

THE godly Example of Ancestors, is, no doubt, an additional Motive to Duty; and therefore encreases our Obligations to run with Patience the Race that is set before us, *Heb. xii. 1.* Faithfully performing all the Duties we owe, either to God or our Fellow Creatures: But their Oath can make Nothing a Duty to us, that is not such in itself: To say otherwise, would be in Effect to assert, that God's Prerogative, whose Right alone it is by his Authority, to make any Thing a Sin or Duty to his Creatures, was committed to them.

NOW, it being repugnant to the very Nature and Reason of Things, that a small Part of the Nation should be obliged to do a *rational Deed*; and the Covenants being only Expedients, that may be used or not, according to the Churches Circumstances, and as the State of Affairs requires, and not Ordinances of positive Institution, to be used by the Church, in all Ages and Places of the World where it is erected; it evidently appears, that to renew them, is not a moral Duty indispensibly binding upon us, by virtue of our Fore-fathers Oath; one having as good a Right as another, and better, to judge for himself of the Expediency or Inexpediency of any Thing, none can determine for, or bind another, whose own voluntary Consent is necessary to an Obligation of this Kind. Moreover, if Fore-fathers may, by their Oath, bind Posterity to a Matter of meer Expediency, they may bind them to Sin; for what may be expedient for Ancestors in their Circumstances, may be very inexpedient for Offspring in theirs; But to do what is inexpedient, so far as it is inexpedient, is a Sin.

IN Answer to this Argument, *viz.* the Absurdity of a few attempting to renew a national Covenant, Mr. G. makes the following Query, *Part II. p. 56.* 'Because the Reformers in *Ezra's* and *Nehemiah's* Day, could not build such a Temple as *Solomon* did, should they build none?' This Query is a meer (*ignoratio Elenchi*) Mistake of the Question: It supposes, we are not for building the House of the Lord; which is false: We only dispute the Propriety of the Mean, by which the *Seceders* would have us build it. The Temple, which it was the Duty of the People in *Nehemiah's* Day to build, tho' few in Number, was an Emblem of the Gospel Church. Now, this Church we have been, and still are, thro' Grace a building, notwithstanding any Attempts that are made to weaken our Hands: We endeavour to have Sinners brought out of the rough Quarry of Nature; united to Christ, and perfected in Holiness; that they may be, *as lively Stones, built up a Spiritual House, of which Christ is the Foundation and chief Corner Stone, 1 Pet. ii. 5, 6. 1 Ja. xxviii. 16.* But the *Seceders* hinder us in our Business, and mar the Building: For *they destroy the Work of God by their Meat, Rom. xiv. 21. Zealously affect the People, but not well; yea, they exclude others, that they themselves may be affected, Gal. iv. 17.*

OUR Author immediately adds, in the forecited Page, 'Will a greater Part of the Nation omitting their Duty, be an Excuse for the lesser to omit theirs? This would be strange Divinity.' It is *strange Folly* for him to talk at this Rate: His Query is only a (*positio Principii*) begging of the Question. The Question is, What is Duty in this Case? Is the minor Part of the Nation obliged by their Fore-fathers Oath, to renew a national Covenant, tho' the Major refuse to join them? Must we determine in the Affirmative upon Pain of Excommunication, and act accordingly? Now these, we think, are

impre-

improper Means for building the House of the Lord, because of the forementioned Absurdities, and others that may hereafter be observed.

IN like Manner they speak, when they accuse us with breaking down the Churches Hedge, only because we cannot acknowledge it is our Duty to renew these Covenants. But if the *national* and *solemn League* be the Churches Hedge, I query, Where was her Hedge before they were formed? Was she without one in the apostolick Age, and in all the primitive Ages of Christianity? But our Authors hedge her with a Witness, when they set one about her, that will keep out the greatest Number of Gods Children, who have a Right to the Privileges of his House, which in the mean While has Breaches enough to let others creep in, who have no Right to them.

BUT the *Seceders* virtually reject the Obligation of the Covenants, and so contradict their own Profession, notwithstanding all the Bustle they make about the Affair: This is as evident as Noon-day: For the Frame of their Covenant is only synodical, they have introduced a great Number of new Particulars into it, and wholly rejected the civil Part of the Covenants; by which theirs appears to be essentially different from the *solemn League* and *national Covenants*, both in Matter and Form.

AND tho' Mr. G. peremptorily asserts, *Part II. p. 51.* ' That these Covenants are binding upon Posterity, not only because the Things therein contained are agreeable to, and founded upon the Word of God, but also by the super-added Tie of our Fore-fathers Oath.' yet I think, he plainly yields the Cause, when he tells us, *p. 54. and 55,* ' The Associate Presbytery own, that Covenants do not bind in their precise Form of Expression, nor to the Duties therein mentioned, any other way than what might suit the Circumstances which God in his Providence might place Posterity in.' If the Covenants do not bind in their precise Form, nor to the Duties therein contained, any other Way than might suit our Circumstances; and if our Circumstances will by no Means admit of our renewing these same Covenants, or entering into one equivalent, then, in such Case, they do not bind us to renew them at all, their formal Obligation entirely ceases. Moreover, a solemn Engagement to Duties in a certain Tenor of Language or Mode of Expression, is essentially contained in a Covenant: So that if the Form be taken away, tho' the Matter be the same it was, and of itself obligatory, yet it is not a Covenant, nor has it the Efficacy of one. I do not see that our Authors convey any Idea of the Obligation of these Covenants upon Posterity, wherein it consists, or how our Fore-fathers Oath and Engagements lay a Tie upon us: It does not consist in the Matter being agreeable to the Word of God; for that derives its Authority from his Word, and was obligatory as well before the Covenants were framed, as afterwards: Nor does it consist in the Form or Matter so modified; for Mr. G. says, ' Covenants do not bind in their precise Mode

• **Mode of Expression.** Wherein then do they bind as **Covenants** at all? Or what remains of the Oath, *as an Oath*, when the Form of Expression is taken away? So that 'the super-added Tie of our Fore-fathers Oath,' seems to be a meer Sound of Words, without any real Meaning.

OUR Authors agree about the Necessity of altering the Covenants to suit the Times: For Mr. *Arnot*, told me, that 'the same Bond would not do for this Country and *Scotland*; for the Covenants ought to be altered according to the Time, Place and Circumstances of the Church:' And if so, they are not of indispensable moral Obligation *as Covenants*; but are only Expedients that may be used or not, added to, or detracted from, according as the Circumstances of the Church will admit, and as may appear to have a hopeful Aspect on promoting the good intended by them: And yet, to add the greater Force to their Covenant, the *Seceders* call the swearing of it *an important moral Duty*, and a *Renovation* of the *solemn League and national Covenants*, to which we are under indispensable Obligations by our Fore-fathers Oath: And this brings me to contradict briefly their Arguments to prove this Point.

MR. G. to invalidate our Argument, and consequently to support his own Hypothesis, supposes we would 'grant that baptismal Vows were binding on Children, by Virtue of their Parents Engagements in their Name.' *Part II. p. 53.* We grant that by Virtue of the Lord's Authority, it is Parents Privilege as well as Duty, to dedicate their infant Offspring to him in Baptism, which Privilege Children have a Right to, by Virtue of their Parents Church Membership: and herein Parents, not only renew Covenant with the Lord themselves, but are taken engaged to the Performance of all the Duties incumbent on them with respect to the Education of their Children, in the conscientious Performance of which, they will act the Part that godly *Abraham* and *Joshua* did; and their Children are brought under Engagements to take the Lord for their God, profess and practise the pure Christian Religion, of which their Parents then make so solemn Profession: But then, their Obligations result immediately from the Ordinance of Baptism itself, which the Lord has annexed as a Seal to the Covenant of Grace. Parents Engagement in Baptism, and the Ordinance itself, are distinct Things: And tho' we did not point out the Distinction, it will not follow, as Mr. A. observes, *Part II. p. 32.* that we (in a confused Jargon) confound them together. To say all that might be said on every Thing that falls in the Way, is not necessary; what answers the End is sufficient. We observed in general, that the Obligations resulting from so solemn an Ordinance as a Seal of the Covenant of Grace, which by the Lord's Appointment is of indispensable Necessity, and perpetual Obligation, will not infer, that Posterity are bound by a meer Expedient, tho' good, and well adapted to the Circumstances of their Ancestors: We did

not imagine that our Authors reason'd from Parents Engagements abstractly, but from the Ordinance itself, in which thro' their Parents Means, Children are dedicated to the Lord, and come under the Oath of his Covenant: But now we find that the Inference is drawn, only from Parents Engagements: Tho' our Authors do not shew us how they will make their Argument conclude, except what Mr. A. seems indirectly to hint, p. 32, where he says, that we have not discovered the Disproportion betwixt the Force of Parents Engagements at the Baptism of their Children, and that of our Ancestors in their Covenanting.' Why? Because 'covenanting is one Thing, and the Engagements to Duties, and against Sins, as the Circumstances and Situation of Affairs particularly require, is another.' Here it is to be observed, that the Medium by which our Author tries to prove his Point, is the Distinction between Vows and the Obligations resulting from them: Hence his Argument if thoroughly scaned, would make a very odd Figure: In Form it will run thus, There is a Distinction between a Vow or Covenant, and the Obligations to Duty resulting from it; therefore there is not a Disproportion between the Obligations we are under by Virtue of our baptismal Vows, and those we are under to renew the *solemn League*, &c. by virtue of our Fore-fathers Oath. If this Argument were true, it would prove more than I suppose our Author will allow of, viz. that all Covenants are of the same Extent, and equally bind the Children with the Fathers: But will Mr. A. venture to assert, that because the Father married, his Son must marry too; because he vowed to devote a third Part of his Estate to charitable Uses, so must his Son? If not, I suppose he must part with the Distinction between Vows and the Obligations resulting from them, as an improper Medium to invalidate the Force of our Argument. Our Argument will stand good, notwithstanding all his twisting and Mistakes, (of which his Attempts to Reason are very full) until he prove that the *solemn League* and *national Covenants*, or one of equal Import and Extent with them, are Ordinances appointed in the Church, of indispensable moral Obligation.

MR. G. to prove his Point, refers us to the Covenant made with the *Gibeonites*, Part II. p. 53. Besides what has been replied to this Argument, p. 9, I beg leave to suggest one Thought more: The *Gibeonites* Covenant is meetly *civil*, the *solemn League* &c. partly *religious*: Now the Argument will not hold from a civil to a religious Covenant. The Reason is not because Matters respecting Creatures are of greater Force, or more punctually to be observed, than those which belong more immediately to God; but because civil Matters are in our own Power; and tho' we are not at Liberty, in respect of the Law of God, to do herein as we please, but are accountable to him for our Conduct; yet by civil Covenants, even when we sin in making them, the Parties with whom we covenant, are vested with a civil Right to the Matters therein granted; we transfer the Right from
 ourselves

ourselves to them, so that they are no longer *ours*, but *theirs*, and it is no longer in our Power, or the Power of our Posterity, to retract that Right, seeing it is alienated from us, and belongs to another; therefore tho' in this Sense we swear to our own Hurt, we must not change, *Psa.* xv. 4. Thus tho' God had forbid his People to make any League with the Inhabitants of the Land, yet the *Gibsonites* having obtained one, they acquired a civil Right to their Lives; and this *League* was the *Charter* by which they held it; Consequently the taking away their Lives was Murder, and an unjust Invasion of their Right: But in Matters of Religion we are to call no Man Master: We must derive our Religion immediately from God, and not from the previous Disposition of our Fore-fathers, *Isa.* viii. 20. *Mat.* xv. 9. Indeed we are to observe the Example of the Flock that have gone before us, and follow their Footsteps, so far as is practicable for us, and so far as they followed Christ, but no farther. Moreover, tho' the *Iyraittes* were obliged by their League to conduct towards the *Gibeonites* according to the Tenor of it; yet I would ask our Authors, if a Part of the Nation, or even the Whole Nation, were obliged to renew it with them, formally from Time to Time? If not, then this Instance will not prove what the *Seceders* intend by it.

OUR Authors, p. 28, 53. quote in Defence of their Point, *Deut.* xxix. 14, 15. *Neither with you only do I make this Covenant, and this Oath; but with him that standeth here with us this Day before the Lord our God; and also with him that is not here with us this Day.* By the last Clause, they understand such as were not then born: To which I would observe, 1st. This Covenant was strictly and plainly the Law of God, which he had revealed to them, and which they here swore to observe, more especially, to cleave to the true God, and his Worship, and to abandon Idols, v. 13 --- 16, 17, 18. It contains the very Duties and Privileges of *Abraham's* Covenant: For it is just the Dispensation of the Covenant of Grace. 2^{dly}, *Moses* conducted that Matter by the special Command of God, v. 1. and so acting in his Name, and by his Order, he, as it were, represented the blessed God in that Transaction. 3^{dly}, the Oath here, is not taken strictly, and only for the Peoples Act of swearing, but also largely, and upon God's Part, it contained a solemn Denunciation of the Curse of the Law against the Violators of that Covenant, whether those present or succeeding Generations, as is evident from v. 19, 20, 21. which Covenant breaking did not consist in Disputations and Doubts how far the Oath of their Fore-fathers extended, while they still cleaved to the true God, and obeyed his Law; but in forsaking *Jehovah*, and turning to Idols, v. 25, 26, 27. so that the Matter comes to this: God, by the Ministry of *Moses*, takes the People then present engaged to cleave to him, and observe his Law by a solemn Oath on their Part, and on his Part, enjoins this upon them, and all succeeding Generations, by his dread Authority, which he confirms

and enforces, by promising to be their God, upon their cleaving him, v. 13. and the solemn Sanction of his tremendous Curse, in Case of Disobedience: If any there, or their Children after them, wou'd disavow the true God, and cast off his Law, they shou'd do it at their utmost Peril; for he wou'd bring upon them all the Curses written in this Book (*viz.* of the Law) v. 20, 27. From all which it follows, (1.) that the Obligation of this Covenant upon Posterity, did not flow from their Fore-father's Oath or Act of swearing, but from the solemn Sanction, wherewith the Lord by the Ministry of *Moses*, ratified and confirm'd it. (2.) That no Matters of doubtful Disputation were sworn; what they engag'd for, or against, was evidently contain'd in the Law.

AS to the other Instances of covenanting mention'd, p. 29. *viz.* *Jos.* xxiv. 25. *2 Chron.* xv. 12. and xxxiv. 31, 32. *Neh.* ix. 38. We don't find in these Passages any Reference to, or that they were a Renovation of a former Covenant sworn by their Fore-fathers. The Law of God in general, is called the Book of the Covenant, because he had confirm'd it as such by sacramental Seals; and it was that which his People vow'd to observe. But the Oaths by which they bound themselves to observe this Law, at these different Times, were all of them different, and then fram'd without any Reference to any former Oath of their Fore-fathers; which certainly they wou'd not have been, had they then known any Thing of the Obligation of Covenants upon Posterity, by the super-added Tie of Fore-fathers Oath and Engagements.

AS to these *old Testament* Promises, respecting *new Testament* Times, *Jsa.* xix. 18, and xlv. 5. mention'd p. 30. They have not the least Relation to the Point in Question; and I'm really surpriz'd that the *Seceders* pretend to prove it from them. They might have known, that they were accomplish'd in the *Gentiles* embracing the Gospel, choosing the Lord to be their God, yielding themselves up to his Feat and Service, and ratifying the same by a Participation of the Seals of the Covenant; and that these Things were done, when there was no national Bond or Covenant used in the Church.

MR. A. adduces one Text from the *new Testament*, p. 30. *viz.* *2 Cor.* viii. 5. which only proves what we strictly urge, *viz.* that as every one ought to give up himself to the Lord in Covenant, so this Duty is necessary to the right Discharge of other Duties.

OUR Authors speak very confus'dly, and go quite beside the Point, which very ill becomes those who so loudly complain that others jumble Matters, and mistake the Question in Debate. Mr. A. tells us, that 'God has appointed Covenants of Duty to be observed in his Church,' p. 28.-----That 'Covenants of Duty are enjoin'd by Heaven's Authority,' p. 31. which is true, but quite foreign to the Point in Question. From these general Hints, with the three last mention'd Passages of Scripture brought to confirm them,

which do not refer to *national* covenanting, in the common Sense of the Words, it seems as if our Author either thought that wherever the Scripture mentions covenanting, it must mean a *national* Covenant; or that we deny covenanting with God to be a moral Duty, neither of which is true. We grant, that to covenant with God, and that both in a personal and social Capacity, is a moral Duty: Every one ought to choose the Lord for his God; and with deep and becoming solemnity yield himself to him as his Servant for ever, viewing the Righteousness of Christ as the only Ground of his Acceptance. And this ought not only to be done by the Consent of our Hearts, but may be expressed by Word or writing: Besides such secret personal Covenant Transactions, the Lord has afforded his Church a Dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, wherein he enjoins Duty upon, and exhibits to his People Gospel Benefits, which he ratifies and confirms by visible *sacramental* Seals, by a joint Participation in which, especially in the *Lord's Supper*, he commands them to profess Allegiance to, and renew Covenant with him, in a publick social Manner. And the Covenant of Grace thus dispensed and ratified, is to the Christian a Covenant of Duty, as well as a Charter of Gospel Privileges. But our Authors have not yet proven, and I believe they will find it a very difficult Task to prove, that any other Mode of publick covenanting with God, is enjoined by divine Authority, as an Ordinance of perpetual moral Obligation: Hence, tho' covenanting with God be a moral Duty, our Authors have gained Nothing to their Purpose; for it will not follow that the Mode they plead for, is of indisputable moral Obligation too.

IT will, indeed, follow from some of the preceding Instances, that *national* covenanting is *lawful*, and at some Times may be very *expedient* (as at the Time when the *solemn League* and *national Covenants* were fram'd) and consequently may be perform'd with much Joy by the Lords People, when under due Impressions of the excellency of Religion: And this may serve to vindicate *Judah* when they rejoiced at the Oath, from rejoicing in a Thing of Nought; notwithstanding Mr. A's. Remark, p. 29.

UPON our Author's Plan it will follow, 1st. that if a Church were ever so pure in her Doctrines, Worship and Government, and the Lives of her Members ever so holy, yet if she neglected, or when call'd upon by some of her Members, shou'd look upon it in expedient on sundry Accounts, and so refuse to make such a Covenant, she wou'd be chargeable with very great Corruption; yea, so great, as to justify a Separation from her: But according to the Word of God, we ought to hold Communion with such a Church; therefore such a Term contradicts those which Christ has fixed, and wou'd have a Tendency rather to scatter and offend, than unite and edify the Flock of Christ.

2dly. IT wou'd hence follow, that the Apostles and primitive Christians were guilty of the gross neglect of a moral Duty: For tho' they cou'd not enter into a *national* Covenant, they ought to have fram'd one suited to their Circumstances, and that of such Latitude as to take in the whole Church in the several Kingdoms where it was planted; or, rather, diverse Instruments of Covenanting suited to their various Circumstances: But there was no such Practice among them.

3dly. IT will follow upon their Plan, that after all the Perfection a Church may arrive at, as to her Worship and Government, and clearly adjusting the Doctrines of her Faith, yet she is never quite settled as to her Terms of Communion, there is something new still to be added to them, agreeable to the Vicissitudes of Providence and their change of Place; for a *public* Covenant suited to these, must be form'd, and sworn as a Term of Communion. But this brings me to make some brief Observations on what they say in Opposition to Mr. Delap's Remarks, on some Articles of their New Covenant, and their Act of Presbytery, making it *the Term of Communion, christian and ministerial*.

MR. G. insinuates, *Part I. p. 36.* that Mr. D's proper Business was, to prove that the disputed Articles in the *Seceders* new Covenant are not sinful: None of the Scriptures Mr. D. quotes, says he, 'are so much as pretended to prove any of the Articles he quarrels to be no Sin.' He also asserts, that Mr. D. has determin'd Nothing. But neither of these are true: He has determin'd that they are doubtful; and therefore shou'd not be made Terms of Communion: This only was his proper Business.

THE Substance of his Reasoning through the whole, may be compriz'd in the following Syllogism. *No Matters of doubtful Disputation, are to be made Terms of Communion Christian and ministerial; but the Seceders new Covenant Confession, contains sundry doubtful Articles; therefore the swearing of it, shou'd not be made a Term of Communion.* His Major he proves from positive Scripture Testimony, with sundry other Arguments, *p. 37, 38, 39, 40, 41.* His Minor he makes appear, by pointing out some of those particulars that were in Fact much controverted, at the Time the Matters were transacted, with the Reasons upon which the different Sides of the Question founded their Judgments; and shewing that these were debated, not by unsound Men, who were Enemies to Religion, and unconscientious with respect to Duty; but by Men, in the Eye of all the Church who knew them, pious, sound and judicious, on both Sides; Men, who living upon the spot, knowing exactly the Circumstances or Affairs, and stating the different Arguments upon which their Judgments were respectively founded, were much better qualified to judge, than those at a Distance, can be supposed to be.

NOW, this being a just View of the Case, the whole of Mr. G's Reasoning in his 2d Section, falls to the Ground at once; for therein he only insists, that the Matters confess'd by the *Seceders* as Sins, are really such: But as there are always a right Side and a wrong, in a disputable Point, as appears from *Rom. xiv.* this was Nothing to the Purpose. Had our Author intended to dispute with Mr. D. and reason properly to the Point, he shou'd have proven, that the Articles in Debate, are not Matters of doubtful Disputation, but attended with that Evidence and Certainty, and are of that Importance and Necessity to the Purity of the Church, as to be plainly scriptural Terms of Communion: But this was a difficult Undertaking; therefore with Violence he turns himself out of his Way.

MR. D. has proven his Point from Scripture Consequence; for he has made appear, that we ought to hold Communion with those that are sound, tho' they may be weak in the Faith; and therefore, as these Articles were disputed by those that were not only sound, but many of them strong in the Faith too, they ought not to be made Terms of Communion. Exclusive Terms of Communion shou'd be plainly warranted by Scripture, either in express Words, or such as may by so evident Consequence be drawn from it, that whoever admits the Premises must, if he acts rationally, natively admit the Conclusion. Mr. G. catches at the Word *plainly*, P. 1. p. 49. and supposes, that this Doctrine is *versive of the whole Office of the Gospel Ministry*; for, if it be true, *when a Minister writes, he must only transcribe a Part of the Bible; when he preaches, confine himself to Scripture Expressions, &c.* In this our Author Reasons like himself. He can never vindicate his Assertion, except he can prove, (1) that it is impossible to prove a Doctrine plainly from Scripture, which we deduce from it by Consequence. And (2) that where the Scripture teaches a Doctrine in express Words, there is no need to explain, illustrate and improve the Subject. We are expressly taught that *all have sinned*, *Rom. iii. 23.* has, then, a Minister nothing to do when he preaches on this Text but repeat it, or other parallel Texts? But this is our Author's very Argument!

OUR Author closes his 2d. Section with a mighty Flourish, saying, Mr. D. ' has all along been reasoning upon the Foundation of good Mens different Sentiments, and now in the Close of the Argument, he comes in with his confident Assertion, *that these Articles are made Terms of Communion, neither by the old Testament nor new*, as if Scripture had been the Source of his Arguments all along.' The Idea already given of Mr. D's Reasoning, and that may hereafter be further clear'd, shews, that these Words are but a meer Amusement to divert the Reader's Mind from the true State of the Question.

IT is their Part who State Terms of Communion, to demonstrate from Scripture, that they are so clear and important as they ought to

be made Terms. But tho' Mr. G. holds that the Articles in Dispute are such, he has proven his Point, neither from Scripture, nor Confession of Faith. Nothing has ever shatter'd the Orthodox more, or afforded them greater Uneasiness, than Disputes and Contentions about doubtful Matters. And Mr. G. either is ignorant of the Doctrine, the Knowledge of which is of so much Importance in settling the Point of Christian Communion justly; or else he wilfully obscures the Subject, and tries to cast Dust in the Eyes of his Reader, to render their Scheme more acceptable to People, and make us appear as the meekest Scepticks. A doubtful Matter, is that which is dark to some honest Persons in peculiar Circumstances; or that which is not so clearly express'd or laid down in Scripture, but that a Person of ordinary Capacity and Honesty, faithfully enquiring after Truth, may remain in the dark, and not be able to determine about it: Doubtless then, that may be call'd doubtful, which great and sound Men, faithfully searching into Truth, differ in Judgment about. Nor will it follow from hence, that a doubtful disputation is that about which a Person must always be doubting. The *Gentile Converts at Rome, Rom. xiv.* were fully persuaded that Christ's Death had put an End to ceremonial Meats and Days, and rightly judg'd that the *Jews* were wrong in observing them, tho' they cou'd not convince them of their Error; yet the Apostle call'd their Controversy a doubtful Disputation, and prov'd that it shou'd not be made a Term of Communion. I may come to a Conclusion about what I call a doubtful Disputation, and regulate my Practice accordingly. But it being a Matter I determine upon, not from clear Scripture Testimony, (for that is contrary to the Supposition of its being a doubtful Disputation,) but by way of Interence from some plainer Truth and Duty; yet I may not be able to make the Connection between my Premises and Conclusion so plain, as to make another see the Matter in the same Light I do; after all the Attention he can give it, he may deny the Consequence, and judge my Argument inconclusive. But as he may be sound in the Faith notwithstanding, and a sincere Christian, all I plead for, or yet Mr. D. is, that however clear I may be about the Matter, I may not refuse to keep Communion with him: For this is, in the Apostles Sense of the Word, a doubtful Disputation. In such Cases, the Scriptures require Forbearance: And for our Help, we ought to observe what has been the Practice of the Godly in them.

MR. *Durham*, in his Treatise upon *Scandal*, speaks pertinently to this Point, particularly, p. 183. 'other Things, (saith he,) again, may be Truths, and there may be to some Persons a Possibility of reaching them by many Consequences from Scripture, yet are they not so clear to many, whereupon it is, that Men, yea even learned and godly Men, do differ in their Apprehensions of several Truths, the Lord so thinking good to
bride

• bridle their Humours, and to let us see the Necessity of Hu-
 • mility and Soberness, and this may be in the meanest like
 • Things; this the Apostle, *Rom. xiv. 1.* calleth doubtful Dis-
 • putations, as being Things wherein to many, at least, there is not
 • such Evidence attainable, as to stay the Min's of ordinary People,
 • or to reture the contrary Assertion of an Adversary, of which are
 • Genealogies, and other Things that *Paul* mentioneth to *Timothy*,
 • *1 Tim. i, 4.* and calleth them *endless*, because there is no solid
 • Ground to rest on, but one Question doth generate another, and so
 • the Principle that must be laid down for clearing such a Thing to
 • one, is also disputable to another, as the Thing itself is, and Men
 • know but in Part, even those that are eminent, so that an universal
 • Harmony in these cannot well be expected,---by Reason of the Prac-
 • tice of the Apostles in Scripture, yea, and of Necessity there is a For-
 • bearance, (as to them) necessary.--- It is better therefore to trie
 • these by the common Account that the godly and learned have had
 • in all Times of such Truths, if there hath been still Differences,
 • and yet Moderation in these Differences.'

THE *Seceding* Controversy (as Mr. *Durham* observes of doubt-
 ful Disputations) is indeed *Endless*, for as the Principles we dispute
 are doubtful, so the Arguments they bring to support them, are
 either doubtful, or worse; so that they rather kindle a new Flame of
 Controversy, than put an End to the former. It is here also to be
 observ'd, that what gave Occasion to this excellent Man's Writing in
 the foregoing Strain, was some of those very Disputes then subsisting,
 which the *Seceders* now revive, and introduce as Terms of Commu-
 nion, tho' no Practice of the Church now depends upon a Determi-
 nation of them, as there was then. He disapprov'd the Divines con-
 sending them so warmly at that Time; and wou'd much more con-
 demn the *Seceders* Conduct were he now alive.

NEITHER will our Doctrine, nor yet Mr. *D's* on this Point
 infer, that we must make good Men the Rule of our Conduct, as Mr.
G. asserts, *P. I, p. 100.* It only supposes that we may be assisted
 to learn our Duty, by observing the Foot-steps of the Flock. Nor
 will it infer, that 'we must believe Consubstantiation, because *Luther*
 did,---observe holy Days because good Men allow'd them.' &c. For it
 does not require us to give up with the smallest Truth, believe or
 practice as true and good the least Tittle we judge otherwise of. The
 Apostle's Exhortation to the Christians at *Rome*, to Union and For-
 bearance notwithstanding their Differences, by no Means infers, that
 he commands them to receive a Falshood for, or to give up with
 Truth, as the Sense in which our Author understands the Doctrine
 supposes. Nor does it suppose, that the Foundation Articles of the
 Gospel are doubtful, as he endeavours to persuade the World, *P. II. p.*
48. 49. 'it must (says he) according to Mr. *D's* Definition of
 Thing

• Things be reckoned a *doubtful Disputation*, whether the Son of
 • God be in Essence and Perfection equal to the Father; for when *A-*
 • *rianism* first took Place, *there were not only many but exceeding*
 • *eminent Men both civil and ecclesiastical led away with that Error.*
 Durham's *Comment on Rev. Chap. viii. Lect. 3.* 'Must we then,
 • (says our Author) allow Men because they are pious, to dispute away
 • our Lords Divinity.' Mr. *Durham* says *eminent*, Mr. G. adds *pious*,
 by which it seems, he thinks, an *Arian* may be *pious*, i. e. one who
 denies Christs proper Divinity, may yet believe on him for eternal
 Life. All this mighty Puff is a Mistake of the Question, and (I
 can't help thinking) a wilful one too, that he may persuade the
 World, we have no Regard for Truth. What sound and orthodox
 Men have disputed away or denied Christs Divinity, or any of the
 Foundation Articles of the Gospel? Or where have we or Mr. D.
 rank'd any of these Things among doubtful Disputations? Have we
 not expressly said otherwise? *Warning, p. 47.* 'that may be call'd a
 • doubtful Disputation concerning which clear and certain Evidence
 • cannot ordinarily be obtain'd; and concerning which the holy and
 • learn'd dispute, who are agreed in the great Fundamentals of
 • Religion, relating both to Doctrine and Worship, Discipline and
 • Government.' And such an Agreement was between the Authori-
 ties quoted by Mr. *Delap.* These were quite agree'd with those
 they disputed with, that Christ was the only Head of the Church,
 and that Censure shou'd be inflict'd on Offenders, &c. And only
 disputed whether such and such Actions intic'd a practical disowning
 his Headship, and what Degree of Censure shou'd be inflict'd for
 Crimes so and so circumstanc'd, &c. And the Dispute between us
 and the *Seceders* is, whether a swearing to contend against the Con-
 duct of one of the Parties as sinful, shou'd be made a Term of Com-
 munion in the Church. Hence the valuable Branches of the Refor-
 mation remain un sullied, notwithstanding all Mr. G. unjustly says
 to the contrary, P. I. p. 121, 122, 123.

NEITHER, in the next Place, will our Scheme of doubtful
 Disputations make the Apostle 'in Effect contradict the Scriptures,'
 because he contended and testified 'against what the pious and learned
 • Peter and Barnabas, and the other godly Jews did Countenance, Gal.
 • ii. 2.' as Mr. G. asserts, P. II. p. 86. Paul, 'tis true, did refuse to
 circumcise *Titus* being a *Greek*. and reprov'd *Peter* sharply to his Face,
 because he was to be blam'd, for dissembling with the judaizing Chris-
 tians at *Antioch*; and he oppos'd the Imposition of the ceremonial
 Law on the *Galatian* Church. And Mr. G. may know, 'tis as true, that
 he circumcil'd *Timothy* whose Father was a *Greek*, *Acts* xvi. 3. and
 that he purified himself after the Manner of the *Jews*, *Acts*. xxi. The
 Case was in brief this: The Apostle in Condescension to the *Jews*
 Weakness and Prejudice, lest he shou'd cause them to stumble, allow'd
 them

them to use the ceremonial Law, and did so himself on Occasion. But when it was impos'd as a Term of Communion, as in *Rom. xiv.* and urg'd to the prejudicing the *Gentiles*, or as necessary in order to Justification, by which that important Article of the Gospel was like to be overthrown, and the Peace of the Church obstructed, then he strenuously oppos'd it, and gave Place by Subjection, no not for an Hour, that the Truth of the Gospel might continue with them. *Gal. i. ii. and iii. Chapters.* ' *Paul*, who became all Things to all Men, (that he might save some,) circumcis'd *Timothy*, that he might not offend the *Jewish Converts*, *1 Cor. ix. 21.* but wou'd not circumcise *Titus*, *Gal. ii. 3.* lest that he should harden them and offend the *Gentiles*. These indifferent Things require a single Eye, to the edifying of the Church, and the Salvation of Souls. *Poole's Annot. on Act. xvi. 3.* the same Author adds on *Gal. ii. 3.* ' As to the *Jews* at this Time, it was Matter of Liberty, that they might or might not be circumcis'd: Now in Matters of this Nature, where Men have a Liberty, they ought to have a Regard to Circumstances, and do that which they from a View of Circumstances, judge will be most for the Glory of God, the good of others, and give least Offence, *1 Cor. x. 28, 29.*' In the same Strain, *Henry, Marloratus, Doddridge, and Guise*, with the chief approv'd Interpreters, write, ' We may bear with some Things we wou'd rather were otherwise, for the Sake of the Peace and Edification of the Church; but if these very Things are impos'd as Terms of Communion, or so propagated as to destroy any Ordinance or Article of the Gospel, we may not give Place, no not for a Moment.

OUR Author endeavours, *P. I. p. 107, 108, 109.* to take away the Force of Mr. D's reasoning from *Rom. xiv. 1.* and *xv. 17.* And I think, he renders these Passages (in his way of reasoning) without any proper meaning at all, to any after the apostolic Age. To what has already been replied on this Point, I shall only briefly consider the Sense in which our Author understands *Rom. xiv. 1.* ' This Verse, (says he) has a Respect to Meats and Days of a ceremonial Kind, is own'd by all.' What then? Do not all Disputations equally doubtful, come within the Reason of it, and so are equally excluded from being Terms of Communion? Well, ' But it was (only) in the Interval between Christ's Resurrection, and the Destruction of the Temple, that ceremonial Institutions were of doubtful Disputation.' After that it became sinful to meddle with the ceremonial Law, because, ' by this Devastation, sufficient objective Evidence was given to all that the Substance was come.' But did all doubtful Disputations cease then too? Or was it only in that Interval they were not to be Terms of Communion? Will Mr. G. deny that this Text excludes from being Terms, all Disputations that are dark with Respect to objective Evidence now, as those Disputations

were then? It is plain, there was as much objective Evidence then, as to the Abolition of the ceremonial Law, as there is now, with Respect to the controverted Articles in the Associate Presbytery's Confession of Sins. It was obvious, the Sacrifices and shadows of the ceremonial Law refer'd to Christ, and were fulfilled in him. From this Topic, it appears, the *Gentile* Converts reason'd with their *Jewish* Brethren against the Observation of the ceremonial Law: For they believ'd they might eat all Things, and esteem'd every Day alike, *Rom. xiv: 2. 5.* And I think the Connection between their Premises and Conclusion, was full as clear as this of the *Seceders*, viz. Places of Power and Trust were fill'd with Enemies to a covenanted Work of Reformation, in Consequence of the Resolutions (tho' herein their Limitations were disregarded;) therefore the Public Resolutions were sinful. Or, the King sinfully claim'd and exercis'd an erastian Supremacy in granting the Indulgence, therefore the Ministers who accepted the Indulgence, (tho' in different Ways they testified against the Supremacy,) acted sinfully, &c. yea, the Evidence then was much clearer: For the Synod at *Jerusalem*, *Acts. xv.* had determin'd against the Imposition of the ceremonial Law on *Gentile* Converts. And the Apostle, in this Chapter, plainly signified, that the Truth lay on the *Gentile's* Side of the Question: *I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is Nothing Unclean of itself, v. 14. And all Things indeed are pure, v. 20.* It may be also further observ'd, that the Apostle's Argument does not turn upon the want of Evidence; but upon their greater Agreement, and the Advantages resulting from it: Their Differences as they now stood, were not inconsistent with Soundness in the Faith, and true Holiness; nor were they of such Moment as the Things wherewith they were united: *For the Kingdom of God is not Meats and Drinks, but Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost, v. 17.*

THOUGH the ceremonial Law ought now to be laid aside, according to the Judgment of the *Gentile* Converts; yet they ought not to insist on this Point so far, or in such a contentious Manner on either Side, as to mar the Peace of the Church, and the more Important Interests of Religion: *Let us therefore, follow after the Things that make for Peace, and Things wherewith one may edify another. For Meat destroy not the Work of God. v. 19, 20. Q. d. do not by your Meats, which are inconsiderable, compar'd with the greater Importances of Christianity, obstruct and ruin your Harmony and Love. spiritual Comfort and Edification, &c. which are noble Branches of the Work of God's Spirit and Grace. The Application to the Case in Hand, is very easy: The *Seceders* ought not to destroy the Work of God by their Meats; but follow after the Things that make for Peace, and Things wherewith they may edify the Church of God. They refuse, indeed, that their Principles or Conduct do obstruct the Churches Edification and Progress in Religion: But, be-*

sides what common Observation teaches, I shall rather believe the Spirit of God in his Word, than their say so.

MR. G. thinks he has a good Plea against us, nay, that we are very near of kin to the *new Light* in *Ireland*, because some Things we occasionally hinted respecting good Qualifications for Communion, is similar to some Things they advance on the same Head, P. I. p. 118, 119. But by the same Argument he might condemn us as being allied to *Papists*, because we profess that there are three Persons in the God-head; for the *Pope* maintains the same Doctrine. Nay, more, by the same Rule he will condemn the Scriptures too, for they teach us this Doctrine, and fully prove the Truth of what we let drop *en passant*, on Terms of Communion. Knowledge, Faith, Repentance, Love and holy walking, are good Qualifications, tho' expressed by *new Light* Men, (who fix false Ideas to, at least some of these Terms) and had they added a *sound Profession*, as we have done, wou'd be sufficiently good according to the Scripture; nor can Mr. G. prove the Contrary, except he bring us a new Bible. Messieurs *Calvin*, *Rutherford*, *Durham*, and all the good Authors I have seen on the Point, prove that good and sufficient Qualifications for Communion, consists in general, in these three Things, *viz. a sound Profession, competent Knowledge of what we profess, and holy walking.*

OUR Author adds, the Import of all the Quotations from which he drew his Comparisons, is, 'that we may have abundantly well qualified Church Members, tho' they throw off all Creeds, Confessions and Covenants.' This, as it respects us, is a notorious Falshood: We can't subscribe their *new Creed*; but it does not follow from hence, that we think People may throw off all Creeds, &c. We heartily approve of many Confessions the Church has been blest with, and especially of the *Westminster* Confession, to profess and maintain the Doctrines contain'd in which, we are all bound by solemn Oath.

BUT from our own Conduct herein, Mr. G. thinks, he has sufficiently invalidated the Force of Mr. D's and our Arguments against their Terms of Communion. He also supposes that the Conduct of the general Synod of *Ulster*, in rejecting the *new Light* for Non-subscription, and using the Confession of Faith as a Term of Communion, yea, and the Conduct of all *Presbyterians* who admit Confessions of Faith, equally proves, that they impose doubtful Terms, and make People swear implicitly, as the *Seceders* making People swear their new Covenant Confession as a Term of Communion, proves them guilty in these Points, P. I. p. 105, 111, 112. This Argument wou'd indeed do some Execution; we cou'd not but sensibly feel the Force of it, were the Articles contain'd in the Confession and Catechisms equally doubtful with the disputed Articles in the *Seceders* Confession of Sins, and of no greater Weight and Necessity to the Purity of the Church, as Mr. G's Argument supposes:

Then

Then wou'd the new Light Arguments against the Former as a Term of Communion, be as good as Mr. D's against the Latter. But is it as doubtful, whether Jesus Christ died as a Substitute in the Stead of Sinners, as if the Union between *England* and *Scotland* be sinful? Is it of as much Importance to determine respecting the Conduct of Men that liv'd a considerable Time ago, as it is to determine whether our Conversion to God depends on our own Power, or the conquering Energy of supernatural Grace? &c. Sure Mr. G. can't prevail upon himself to answer in the Affirmative. And if not, our Arguments stand ~~in~~ in full Force against the *Seceders*, without any Reflection on our own, or the laudable Conduct of any of the *Presbyterians*, in making the Confession of Faith a Term of Communion. Hence let us be no more amused by a Comparison with new Light Men, who wickedly avoid bringing a Profession of sound Principles into their Terms of Communion.

THO' the generality of ordinary Christians have not so thorough a Knowledge of all the Doctrines contain'd in the Confession of Faith, in all the Intricacies and Difficulties that attend them, as Ministers ought to have, yet they may attain such a Competent Knowledge of them, as to be able rationally to believe that to be the true System of christian Doctrine contain'd in God's Word, profess their Belief of, and receive it, as such, and solemnly engage to educate their Children in the same Faith: The Reason is obvious: They derive their Knowledge of these Doctrines from the Word of God. But they must obtain their Knowledge of the Articles contain'd in the *Seceders* new Covenant, at least in Part, from human History. And are they sure the Historian was under no partial bias? That they have met with all that is to be said on both Sides, and have a full Idea of all the Circumstances that had Influence on these Affairs? If not, they can't with safety swear.

THE *moral Certainty* of such Facts and Deeds taking Place, will not help in the present Case, as Mr. G. supposes it will, *P. II. p. 87.* For a moral Certainty arising from human Testimony, can only beget a human Faith: But we shou'd have a Certainty for the Articles that are the Terms of our Communion arising from a divine Testimony, and believe them with a divine Faith. The *Seceders* Terms of Communion are at best of a mixed Kind, to be believ'd partly by a human, partly by a divine Faith.

ESTHER x. 2. and *Zit. i. 12, 13.* quoted by Mr. G. on this Point, only proves what we never denied, *viz.* that human Histories and Chronologies are useful to inform us of Persons and Facts; and that, as we shou'd reprove others for, so we may use human Testimony to convict them of their evil Deeds. But our Author urges these Passages with the greatest Impropriety, except he can prove that the *Jewish Church* was directed to the Chronicles of the *Medes* and *Persians*, to be supplied in Materials for Terms of Communion; and

and that the Christian Church both in *Titus's* Day, and afterwards, was commanded to make the condemning of his Corrupt by a solemn Oath, a Term of Communion, if they suppos'd he did not thoroughly act up to the Instructions given him.

OUR Author's next Shift to condemn us on this Head is, an unfair Representation: He labours to persuade the World, *P. II. p. 88.* that we ' blame the *Seceders* for asserting the *moral Certainty* of Things from such a Foundation as the Word of God allows of, and yet we assert the *moral Goodness* of Things, from such a Foundation as the Word of God no where allows of, viz. the *moral Goodness* of the Work in *Scotland* from the Testimony of the Ministers there. What we blam'd them for was, their making it a Term of Communion for the People to swear respecting those Things the Orthodox and Godly differ'd in, and so were doubtful at the Time they were debated; and not only so, but at this Day the State of the Controversy is doubtful, seeing Historians differ in their Narration of some of them, as Mr. G. may know they do, notwithstanding the Flourish he makes on this Point.

NOW, how clear soever our Authors, or their Brethren suppose they are about these Controversies, I know, that sundry who join with them in sealing Ordinances, have no proper Idea of the State of them; and therefore if they swear their Covenant, must swear implicitly. The *Seceders* may tell them these Controversies were so and so, as History informs them; and if they do, this is only Human Testimony: But tho' Historians may be good Men, yet, through Party Prejudice and Imperfection, &c. they are too frequently bias'd, and give a partial Narrative, especially when they touch upon controverted Points; therefore it is very unsafe to swear so solemnly upon the Strength of their Narration. To believe merely because the Church says so, and make Men the Lords of our Faith and Conscience, is Antichristian: This has by Degrees brought the Church of *Rome* to all that dreadful Pitch of Apostacy she has arriv'd at. How zealous soever our Authors seem to be against Superstition, they are evidently setting it up with one Hand, while they appear to be pulling it down with the other; otherwise they wou'd not furnish the Church with doubtful Materials for Communion from fallible History, and enforce the same with the penal Sanction of Excommunication too: A Practice our Lord and his Apostles never us'd! Our Authors accuse us of pinning our Faith on good Mens Sleeves; but I leave it with the impartial Reader to judge, whether themselves be not more liable to this Charge. We say, Christ has fix'd the Terms of Communion in his Word, and has not left it in the Power of the Church to add to them, *J. n. viii. 20. Rev. xxii. 18.* Their Reasoning and Practice supposes, that Human History supplies us in Part, and that the Church may fix those Terms Christ has not.

89

WHAT we asserted about the Work in *Scotland* was, that according to the best Information we cou'd get, we were satisfied the Work with them was the same in Substance with that among ourselves; and that it wou'd be a crying Iniquity for us to condemn this Work, being fully satisfied, that it was (as to the Substance of it) promoted by the holy Spirit of God. This is the occasional Hint we drop, from whence our Author forms his false Charge against us.

IF Mr. G. pleases, I will ask him, whence he judg'd of the moral Evil of Facts done before he was born? Was it from the Testimony of Historians? If he says no, but from the Scriptures, and the moral Certainty of them he learn'd from History, or Report, then I think, he must be very sparing of his Charity, if he did not think we judg'd in the same Manner about the Work in *Scotland*; especially seeing we offer'd Nothing to the Contrary. We were not barely inform'd there was a good Work in *Scotland*, but a Work attended with the same Kind of Evidences as the Work in *America*, and so concluded it was the same in Substance with it; and by comparing the Evidences of both with the Scripture, we found they agree'd to it, and consequently that the Work was good. So that our Information from *Scotland* respected Matters of Fact; and the Rule by which we judg'd of the Quality of those Facts, was the Word of God. Nor have we any Reason, as yet, to be ashamed of our Judgment, notwithstanding all our Author has rak'd up against it. And we still think it was a Sin in the *Seceders*, to make it a Term of Communion in the Church, that People shou'd swear to testify against it as a Delusion of Satan. But tho' we have good Reason to conclude, the Work in *Scotland* was of God, and may speak of it to the Praise of divine Grace, and to excite Mankind to breathe after those special Influences by which it was promoted; yet we think it is far from being our Duty to fix it as a Term of Communion, for People to swear to approve it as such, by solemn covenant Oath.

I might here renew Mr. *Delap's* Query, *Rem. p. 35.* if the swearing their new Covenant be a moral Duty, as the Associate Presbytery calls it, and if the Scripture has made it a Term of Communion, by what Authority do the *Seceders* dispense with it in the first Instance? For I think Mr. G. has not yet answer'd it. He indeed tells us, *P. II. p. 45.* That Mr. *D's* Remark, *viz.* that the *Seceders* believe they have a dispensing Power to break their own Act, is a violent Inference, because the Presbytery's Words anent exercising *much Tenderne's and Lenity towards the Weak of Christ's Flock*, are a Part of the Act itself, and no way a Dispensation with any former Act. But Mr. *D.* does not say, nor insinuate, that it was; nor can I believe Mr. G. understood him so. All that Mr. *D's* Remark amounts to, is this, that the Associate Presbytery's Act is self contradictory; for therein they fix their (as they must suppose scriptural

scriptural) Terms of Communion; and yet in the very same Act, they reserve to themselves a Power to dispense with it for a Time, with Respect to some who cannot comply with these Terms. And Mr. G's own Words, as well as the Presbytery's Act, shew, that this was the Case.

MR. G's Definition of moral Precepts into negative and positive, p. 46. and all he says upon it, p. 47, 48. are Nothing to the Purpose. For our Reasoning does not suppose, that if the *Seceders* Covenant were a moral Duty, therefore they shou'd admit Persons to swear it without a Competency of Knowledge: They might defer them until they be instructed.

OUR Author brings in a Sentence at the Close, without any Connection or Argument, p. 48. ' In the mean Time, it is proper that we enjoy our other Sanctuary Privileges.' What? Is it proper that Persons enjoy Sanctuary Privileges, without coming up to the Terms upon which they are ordinarily to be enjoy'd? And without coming up to which, they must be presently cast out again? Has the Word of God a distinct Class of Terms of Communion for Christians of a lower Order, which yet, even they can have Benefit of only for a Time? If not, why mayn't they be continu'd in the Enjoyment of their Sanctuary Privileges, on the same Terms, upon which they were at first admitted? Wou'd it not be more candid and consistent, not to make such Terms, or else to defer the Admission of the Weak and Ignorant, until they are qualified according to them?

HENCE Mr. G's Appeal to our own Practice, contributes Nothing to his Purpose; for tho' we defer the Baptism of a Child, whose Sponsor is ignorant, till ' *in the due Use of Means, and by the divine Blessing,* he arrive to a more satisfactory Attainment in Knowledge, yet when he affords competent Satisfaction, so that we can with Clearness receive, we may not afterwards reject him, except he expose himself to such a Censure, by Error in Judgment or Practice. But their Principle leads them to receive some, who cannot accept their ordinary fix'd Terms of Communion, and afterwards reject them for the same Reason when they have taken some Pains to instruct them. On the Whole, I can, as yet, see Nothing else in their Practice in this Point, but a politic Scheme to hook many into a Party.

I confess, I have already been too tedious; yet I beg the Readers Patience, while I add a brief Remark or two on what Mr. G. says in Vindication of that Article of the *Seceders* Terms of Communion, viz. that People must swear to contend against the Work of God in *Scotland* as a Delusion of Satan. Our Author insists that it was a Delusion; yet makes a kind of extorted Concession, that some might get saving Benefit to their Souls in the Time of it. P. 11. p. 74. even in ' such Times (says he) of spiritual Delusion, some may be really and effectually wrought upon.' And as to such Persons, he adds, p. 75. ' they need not be afraid as to their own personal Case, tho' the flying Arrow

‘ *Arrow and pestilential Delusion shou’d make a Thousand fall at their Side, and ten thousand at their right Hand.*’ The Amount of which is just this: God, as a Sovereign, may bestow his Grace on some Persons, in such a Time of *prevailing and pestilential Delusions*, as *New-Castle Presbytery* call a Day of the Power of his Grace; and those who are thus visited by him, will be preserv’d safe to the Kingdom of Glory, notwithstanding all the Danger they are in from such Delusions as destroy thousands around them.

OUR Author does not speak like a sincere Friend, who is griev’d for, and desires to have remov’d, any bad Appendages which he apprehends might cast a Slur on the Work, and prejudice the World against Religion; but on the contrary, he uses the same Methods to stumble People at, and reproach it, that wicked Men and Scoffers have ever used to discredit Religion, *viz.* to take up all they can against, and represent it as a confus’d Chaos, and Bundle of wicked or delusive Inconsistencies, while its Glory and Amiability is quite overlook’d, except what might thro’ Complaisance, Policy or by Accident be extorted from them. I have heard atheistical Mockers of all Religion, make as large Concessions as our Author has done on this Head, tho’ the Weight of their Conversation lean’d to the opposite Point.

OUR Author blames us for not being more particular on this Point. But this we judg’d needless, after so much had been said upon it, both from the Pulpit and Pulpit. And tho’ I cou’d swell a Volume by writing upon this Subject, my Business at present will not allow me to wait on it. Nor is it needful, seeing so much is pertinently wrote already in the *Christian History*, and by messieurs *Blair, Finley, Dickenson* and *Edwards*, to which I refer the Reader. By the Latter of these especially, the Distinctions between a true and false Spirit are judiciously handled, and the Objections against the Work skilfully and judiciously answer’d. I shall, therefore, only add, a brief Testimony of the Rev. Mr. *Willison*, late of *Dundee*, in *Scotland*, to the Work there, wherein he was join’d by a Number of other judicious Ministers of *Scotland*, in a Piece entitled *a fair and impartial TESTIMONY, &c.* in which, after giving an Account of the Rise and Progress of the Work, in sundry *Parishes* in *Scotland*, he adds, p. 103. ‘ The Work indeed was very surprising and extraordinary, much resembling that which was in the last Century at *Stewarton, Irvine, Kirk of Scots* and other Places, in the Years 1625, 1626, and several Years after, tho’ in a very dismal Backsliding Time; and that Work in *Ireland*, about *Antrim*, and the *Six Mile Water*, about the Year 1628; of both which Mr. *Robert Fleming*, once Minister at *Cambustang*, gives Account, in the *Fulfilling of the Scriptures*; as do Mr. *Robert Blair* and Mr. *John Livingstone*, in the Manuscripts of their Lives.-----And there being much said and written about this Work, in the West of *Scotland*, we have thought

out

• ourselves bound to enquire into the Nature, Fruits and Evidences of
 • it; and from what some of us have seen of that Work, and hath
 • been attested by the Ministers immediately concerned, and others
 • who have seen it, we judge ourselves warranted to give our Testi-
 • mony to it, as a glorious Work of the Spirit of God, which he
 • has been pleased to send in his sovereign free Mercy, at a Time of
 • great Infidelity, Formality and Backsliding, to glorify his own
 • Name, by awakning, convincing, humbling, converting, comfort-
 • ing, reviving, strengthening and confirming many Souls thro' the
 • Land. And our Reasons for it are these: *1mo.* The Convictions
 • and Comforts of the People of *Canuslang*, and other awakned
 • Parishes, have come to them in a scripturall Way, by Christs Ordi-
 • nances, and particularly by the Word preach'd, and Passages of Scrip-
 • ture carried in upon their Minds, suited to their Cases and Circum-
 • stances. *2do.* The Fruits and Effects of that Work in the Peoples
 • Lives and Conversations, do evidence themselves to be from the
 • Holy Spirit, according to the Scripture account of these fruits: For
 • these who formerly were blind and ignorant, have soon come to
 • advance in the Knowledge of Jesus Christ and divine Things; and
 • the Tongues which were dumb in the Things of God, have soon
 • learned to speak the Language of *Canaan*. They who formerly
 • were given to Cursing, Swearing, Drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking,
 • Scoffing at sacred Things, and other Immoralities, have presently
 • changed their Course into sober Living, godly Conference, Read-
 • ing, Praying and singing Psalms. They who formerly were trusting
 • to their own Performances, Attainments and Self-righteousness, have
 • presently renounced all these for the Righteousness of Christ only,
 • imputed to them for their Justification before God. They who
 • formerly were glewed to the World, and to the Love of sensual
 • and sinful Things, are made willing to part with all these for the
 • Love of Jesus Christ their Saviour, desiring earnestly to be conform-
 • ed to him in his Contempt of the World, Self-denial, Humility and
 • Holiness both in Heart and Life. They who before thought it an
 • unmanly Thing to shed a Tear for Sin, and piercing of Christ, have
 • been made to mourn as for an only Son, and be in bitterness as for
 • a First-born. These who have been guilty of secret Acts of Injus-
 • tice, have been filled with Remorse for them, and made Restitution
 • to the Persons jniured or their Children. They who hated and
 • mocked the People of God, have their Hearts warmed with Love
 • to them, and account them the excellent Ones of the Earth. They
 • who were before contentious, malicious and revengeful, do present-
 • ly drop their Quarrels, forgive their Enemies, wish well to their
 • Souls, and the Salvation of all around them. They who before
 • minded only their own Things, are highly concerned for the In-
 • terests of Jesus Christ, and for the declarative Glory of God in
 • the

• the World. Swearers have dropt their Oaths, and with Reverence
 • mention the Name of God. And they who loved carnal Company,
 • merry Jest, profane Songs and foolish talking, seek after the Com-
 • pany of those who will join with them in Prayer, Praises, and
 • talking about their Soul Concerns. They who before complain'd
 • of Nothing but bodily Ailments, worldly Losses, Crosses, and Dis-
 • sapointments, now complain mainly of unbelieving Hearts and in-
 • dwelling Corruptions. They who before ascribed their Virtues and
 • good Things to themselves, do now exalt Christ and free Grace for
 • every Attainment, and in the whole of their Salvation: And yet,
 • while they ascribe all to free Grace, they aim in Christ's Strength at
 • universal Holiness, at the subduing of every Sin, and the Practice of
 • every Duty and good Work, according to both the first and second
 • Table of the Law, and make Conscience of stational and relational
 • Duties as well as others. Families, that formerly were Synagogues
 • of Satan, are now Temples where God is devoutly worshipp'd:
 • And many of all Ages and Sexes do form themselves into little So-
 • cieties for Prayer, Praise, and religious Discourse. And tho' Tares
 • are mixed among the Wheat, and several Hypocrites discovered,
 • yet the Body of the Awakned persevere, as to what can be seen, in
 • the Ways of Religion.

• Notwithstanding of all these gracious Changes, which are clear
 • Evidences of the Operations of the Holy Spirit; yet this blessed
 • Work is mightily oppos'd and reproach'd, and that not only by
 • atheistical and profane Men, but even by many of those who have
 • long been praying for the Effusion of the Spirit and the Coming of
 • Christ's Kingdom, particularly our Seceding Brethren, who have,
 • alas! preach'd, pray'd, and print'd against this good Work, and
 • even kept Fasts in all their Meetings, for putting a Stop to it, as a
 • Delusion and Work of the Devil, who hath transform'd himself in-
 • to an Angel of Light (as they say) and have thereby given their
 • Followers very frightful Notions of it, and stop't them from going
 • near the Places where they might have got full Satisfaction: And
 • also they have hindered many from giving Praise to God for his
 • wonderful Goodness, and from praying for the Continuance and
 • Spreading of the Work. May the Lord lay all this to their Hearts,
 • but not to their Charge! Their main Quartel with the Work
 • seems to be, that it is begun and carried on by the Instrumentality
 • of Ministers of the National Church, and some whom they judg'd
 • accessory to the Defections therein; and because it is attended with
 • Out-crying, Trembling, Falling down and Fainting in many of these
 • who are awakned; which (they say) are not Symptoms of a Work
 • of the Spirit.

• Concerning which we shall observe these few Things:

• 1^{mo}. Our Brethren had certainly acted much more the Part of
 • wise and unbiass'd Judges, if in Obedience to Christ's Commands

• to try the Spirit, and prove all things, they had used all proper
 • Means of Enquiry, such as going themselves to the Places, conversi-
 • ing with the Ministers there, and with the Subjects wrought upon,
 • before they had pronounced a judicial Sentence in such a weighty
 • Case, and intimated it from their Pulpits; and not have proceeded
 • to a Decision so hastily upon Hearsays, or the malicious Reports of
 • profane Spirits, and these who were Enemies to the Work. They
 • also had done wisely, to have waited some Time to see the Issue of
 • the Work before they had past such a terrible Sentence upon it;
 • for they might have remembered that it is not an easy Thing for
 • Clergymen, after doing a bad Thing, to own their Mistake.

• 200. It cannot be denied but there have been many eminently
 • godly Ministers employed in promoting this Work; and, tho' there
 • had been some not so remarkable that Way, we must not find Fault
 • with a holy Sovereign God, for making use of what Instruments he
 • pleases. Our Brethren cannot but know that it is a most provoking
 • Sin to limit the Holy One of Israel, who frequently thinks fit to
 • employ mean and despised Instruments to do his Work, that so he
 • may stain the Pride of all our Glory, and shew that he is not be-
 • holden to any.

• 180. We are grieved in our very Hearts, that our Brethren should
 • have adventured upon such a daring Step, as by a judicial Sentence
 • to ascribe to the Devil such a gracious God-like Work, as that be-
 • fore described; when they cannot bring an Instance from Scripture,
 • or any other History; of the Devil's being permitted to work in
 • the like Manner before. Surely it may make us tremble to think
 • what kind of a Sin it must be to make the Devil the Reprover of
 • Sin, and Minister of Righteousness, and so to assign the Office and
 • Work of the Holy Ghost to that wicked One! Doth it not look
 • like a fearful Limiting of God, for a few Men to act as if they
 • would confine the Holy Spirit's Workings to themselves, and give
 • up the Ministry of all their Brethren thro' the Island to the Devil?
 • As Jesus Christ himself, so his Ministers, *Moses, John Baptist, the*
 • *Apottles Peter and Paul,* were of quite different Tempers and Dis-
 • positions; they rejoiced to see the Spirit poured down upon others,
 • and to see Christ preached, Sinners brought in to him, and his King-
 • dom enlarged, whoever were the Instruments of it.

• 40. As for the Effects of this Work upon the Bodies of some
 • of the Awakned, such as Outcrying, Trembling, Falling down, or
 • Fainting; these are not at all new in this Land: For many Instances
 • of such like Symptoms in Persons under piercing Convictions of
 • Sin, or under ravishing Views of Christ, can be given, even since
 • our happy Revolution, as well as in former Times; as is evident
 • from Messieurs *Robe, Currie* and *Webster's* Writings on this Subject.
 • And yet we hear not of any heretofore ascribing the Work in these
 • People to the Devil, nor condemning it as contrary to Scripture, up-

on account of these Symptoms: No; for the Scripture gives frequent Instances of such Impressions made on the Body, by the great inward Exercise and Concern of the Mind. The sharp Convictions of the three Thousand, *Acts ii.* brought them under great Agonies, being pricked as with a Sword in their Hearts, and forced to cry out, and say to the Apostles, *Men and Brethren, what shall we do?* The Auditory being great, they must have cried in such a Manner that the Apostles heard them; for *Peter* was forced to crie aloude that they might hear him, *Acts. ii. 14.* So *Paul*, when he was throughly convicted of his sin of persecuting Christ, and the Wrath due to him for it, he was seized with Trembling and Astonishment, and fell to the Ground, *Acts ix. 4, 6.* Also the *Jaylor*, when awakned to see his sinful and lost State under Wrath, trembled and fell down, saying, *What must I do to be saved?* *Acts xvi, 29, 30.* And it appears to have been usual in the Apostles Days for Sinners to fall down before God, when they were first convinced, and got the secret Wickedness of their Heart laid open to them by the Word, *1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25.* Even that great Man *Felix*, was made to tremble under his Conviction of Sin and Apprehension of Wrath, while *Paul* preached to him. *Acts xxiv. 25.* And that mighty King *Belshazzar*, was strangely affected when he saw the Hand-writing on the Wall, which he took to be a Prefage of Wrath against him, *Dan. v. 6.* His Countenance was changed, his Joints loosed, and his Knees smote one against another. A View of the Wrath of a Sin-revenging God, is enough to throw the stoutest Sinner into the most terrible Disorder, and to overwhelm all his Senses and Faculties. We see *Baruch*, when in Danger of the Wrath of Man, was so overwhelmed with Grief, that he fainted under it, and cries out, *Jer. xlv. 3.* *Who is me now, for the Lord hath added Grief to my Sorrow: I fainted in my Sighing, and had no Rest.* And how much more would he been distressed with the immediate Views and approaches of the Wrath of God! For who knoweth the Power of his Anger? *Job*, when under the Apprehension of God being his Enemy, and his Terrors pursuing him, he was so little Master of himself, that he stood up, and cried in the Congregation, *Job xxx. 15, 28.* King *David* says, he roared by Reason of the Disquietness of his Heart, *Psal. xxxviii. 8.* Nay, he had such Impressions of the Wrath of God upon his Soul, that they made all his Flesh to tremble, *Psal. cxix. 120.* *My Flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy Judgments.* *Haman* saith, *While I suffer thy Terrors, I am distracted.* *Psal. lxxxviii. 15.* We see also how the Prophet *Hebakkuk* was seized with the greatest bodily Distress, with Quivering of Lips, and Tremblings over all his Body, at the View of approaching Wrath, *Hab. iii. 16.* Again, it ought to be remembered, that God hath told us, that in the New-Testament Days he would pour out his Spirit upon People in such a Manner

Manner that they should look upon him they had pierced by their Sins,
 and mourn, and be in bitterness, as Parents for an only Son or First-
 born. Now it is well known, that some Parents will not only cry
 out bitterly, but also faint, upon such Occasions; nay, some
 will be brought to such Agonies and Faintings by the meet Ap-
 prehension and Prospect of Man's Wrath and of temporal
 Difficulties: And have they not much greater Cause for them, who
 get a clear and manifest Discovery of the heinous Guilt of their
 Sins, and of the Wrath of an angry God hanging over them?
 Who can paint forth the Distress of these poor Creatures, whose
 Spirits are wounded by the amazing Apprehensions of God's Wrath
 for Sin, and the fearful Expectations of Judgments and fiery Indigna-
 tion, without having any View of Relief? Such a wise Man as So-
 lomon would not have been surpris'd to see such Persons tremble,
 cry out, or faint; for saith he, *A wounded Spirit who can bear?*
 Prov. xviii. 14.

We read also in Scripture of Persons fainting upon other Occa-
 sions. *Jacob* fainted for Joy, when he heard that his Son was alive
 and highly exalted: So *Daniel*, after singular Manifestations from
 God, fainted and was sick certain Days, Dan. viii. 27. and x. 9. 2.
 And the Apostle *John*, when he saw the Lord in his Glory, fell at
 his Feet as a dead Man. So it is no Wonder tho' a poor Soul that
 was like to sink in Despair under a Sense of Sin and Wrath, when
 coming out of this Plague to a surprisng View of Christ's Mercy,
 Loveliness, and Fulness, should in like Manner be overwhelmed and
 faint for Love and Joy. Wherefore it is our Duty to put favoura-
 ble Constructions upon the various Cases of awakned and exercised
 Souls, when thereby they are thrown into Extracies, Faintings, or
 bodily Distresses. The Holy Spirit is a free sovereign Agent; and
 in Times of large Effusions, he may, for his own wite Ends, take an
 uncommon Latitude in his Way of Dealing with Sinners, for bring-
 ing them in to Christ. And as their Discoveries of Sin and Wrath,
 and the Commotion in their Affections, prove very different; so the
 Impressions upon their Bodies must be either less or more, and ex-
 ceeding various, according to the Measure and Degree of the in-
 ward Exercise and Concern of their Minds: For as their Sorrow for
 piercing Christ by their Sins is compared to that of Parents for an
 only Son, which admits of many different Degrees, and produc-
 eth very different Effects in different Persons; so it must be un-
 reasonable in any to require Instances in Scripture for every mi-
 nute Circumstance of the innumerably various Cases of Persons
 brought in to Christ; for then the Spirit of God must have enlarged
 the Scriptures into very many different Volumes, which had not
 been convenient for us. If we read the Accounts given us of the
 Conversions of *Augustine*, *Luther*, *Junius*, *Beza*, *Latimer*, *Bolton*,
Professor Halyburton, and many other eminent Saints, we will find
 particular Circumstances in them for which no Scripture-precedent

• can be shewn; but no wise Man will say upon that Account, that
 • the Work in them was delusive or diabolical.

• I shall conclude this Part of the *Vindication*, viz. respecting the
 • *Seceders* Terms of Communion, by an Extract from the foregoing
 • *TESTIMONY*, *Postscript* p. 130. • There is also joined with
 • the aforesaid *Act*, another *Act for renewing the Covenants* National
 • and Solemn League, with a *new Covenant* of the Brethren's fram-
 • ing, in which some Things might be noticed: Not that I quarrel
 • the Duty itself; No: I approve of covenanting Work, whether it
 • be National, Presbyterial or Congregational, when rightly managed
 • and gone about; and I pray earnestly for a covenanting Frame and
 • Disposition to the whole Land. I likewise own, there are several
 • excellent Things in the Brethrens Covenant, which we are all bound
 • to by the Word of God and our National Engagements; and also
 • in their *Confession of Sins*, there are many Evils enumerate which all
 • Ranks among us ought to be deeply humbled for before the Lord:
 • But, alas! they have marred their Confession, by throwing into it
 • several Things which either are doubtful, or else plain Mistakes or
 • Falshoods; and yet all these must be confessed condemned as Sins
 • and Evils, as if they were the most plain and undoubted Facts, and
 • that by a solemn Oath: For their Confession of Sins (which is ve-
 • ry long) is adopted and sworn to in their Covenant. Yea, the As-
 • sociate Brethren have carried this Matter to a prodigious Height, by
 • making an *Act* dated at *Edinburgh, February 14th, 1744*. wherein
 • they agree and determine, that the swearing the aforesaid Covenant
 • shall be *the Term of Ministerial Communion* with them, and like-
 • wise *the Term of Christian Communion* to the People, with respect
 • to their partaking of the Seals of God's Covenant. A surprising
 • *Act* indeed! This new Oath and Covenant of theirs is called in it,
 • not a *Term*, but *the Term of Christian Communion*, as if it were
 • the only Qualification for Admission required, and as if it answered
 • for the want of others; and indeed there is not another Qualificati-
 • on besides swearing this Covenant mentioned in their *Act*. Now
 • by this new *Act*, let a Man be never so well qualified according to
 • the Terms Christ hath determined in his Word, yet, if he have
 • not Freedom to go in to this *Term* of the Brethrens making, he
 • must be excluded both from Ministerial and Christian Communion;
 • *that is*, he must neither be owned as a Minister of Christ, nor al-
 • lowed any of the Childrens Bread, so far as their Authority can go.
 • Wherefore I cannot but testify against this *Act*, as framing new
 • Terms and Conditions of Access to the Benefits of Christs Purchase,
 • for which the Framers have no Warrant in Gods Word; and there-
 • fore it must be a manifest Usurpation and Inroad upon the
 • Headship of the King of Zion, and an Infringement upon that
 • precious Article of our Creed, *the Communion of Saints*; which is
 • too much for any Judicatory or Power on Earth to adventure upon.

• Tho' the foresaid Oath were in Things indifferent or lawful, yet it
• were unwarrantable to impose it as a Term of Communion, but
• much more when it is in Things sinful, doubtful or false.

• *Quest.* How do you make it appear that the Brethren's new Oath
• and Covenant (which they make *the Term of Communion*) is in
• itself sinful?

• *Ans.* Because by this Oath they adopt and approve a *Confession of*
• *Sins* prefixed to it, and swear by the *great Name of the Lord our God,*
• with their right Hand lifted up to the Lord, that they shall testify
• against the Evils named in that Confession, sundry of which are
• false in Fact, calumnious, unjust and uncharitable; and yet, by the
• foresaid solemn Oath, the Takers own them to be real, just and true.
• As for Instance, they swear that the General Assembly dismissed Pro-
• fessor *Simson* without any Censure or express Testimony against his
• Errors, p. 104. which is false. Also, they swear that the taking of
• the Oath of Abjuration is a national Sin, p. 103. which they can-
• not make out. They swear that Assembly 1736 adopted Professor
• *Campbell's* Error concerning *Self-love*, p. 106. which is false. They
• swear that Assembly 1738, condemned the Brethrens Testimony in
• bulk, p. 107. which is not Fact. They swear that Assembly 1739
• condemned their *Declination*, as containing Nothing but ground-
• less Prejudices, p. 107. which is not Fact. They swear that the
• kind Reception of Mr. *Whitefield* hath increased the Sins of the
• Land, and is a denying of any particular Form of Church-govern-
• ment as being of Divine Institution, p. 109. which is false. They
• swear that a Scheme is now laid for uniting Parties of all Denomi-
• nations into Church communion, in a Way destructive of any Tes-
• timony for Christs declarative Glory, p. 110. which they can never
• make appear. They swear that the blessed Work in the *West* of
• *Scotland* is a Delusion, p. 110. tho' it hath been demonstrate to
• have the plain Scripture-tokens of a glorious Work of the Spirit of
• God. They also by their Oath condemn all the old persecuted Pres-
• byterian Ministers, who accepted of the Liberty of Preaching the
• Gospel, under King *James's* Toleration, as involving the Land in
• hainous Guilt; which is a most rash and uncharitable Censure of
• these Worthies, who were honoured to be great Sufferers for Truth,
• were Men of eminent Piety and Tenderness of Conscience; were
• signally owned of God in their Ministry during that Liberty, and ne-
• ver saw Cause to repent of accepting it to their dying Hour. And
• now, after these glorified Saints and Sufferers have for many Years
• been triumphing before the Throne of the Lamb, a heavy Blot and
• Slur must be cast upon their Memory by a solemn Oath; and they,
• who have not Freedom to join in that calumnious Oath, must be
• denied Christian Communion: This indeed seems to be an Act ex-
• ceeding hard and Tyranical. Alas! there are Thousands who are
• appointed to swear this Oath and the Things above-mentioned, be-
• sides

sides many other Things in it, who cannot say they know any Thing
 of the Truth of them from their own proper Knowledge, but only
 have them by Hear-say, or by Information from others: And yet
 they must swear to the Truth of them as fully as if they had been
 Eye or Ear Witnesses of them, or had read all the Histories concern-
 ing them. Now, what is this but to bring People to swear rashly
 or inconsiderately, or upon implicate Faith? which is contrary to
 the Bible, that requires us to *swear in Truth, Judgment and Right-
 ousness*, Jer. iv. 2. and also contrary to our *Confession of Faith*,
 which declareth, Chap. xxii. *That whosoever taketh an Oath, must
 avouch Nothing therein, but what he is fully persuaded is the Truth.*
 O that God in Mercy would open the Eyes of these who impose
 this Oath, and these who are drawn in or intend to take it, that
 they may bethink themselves, repent, and proceed no further! For
because of swearing the Land mourneth already, and there is no need
 to add to the Grounds of this Mourning.

Likewise, in the aforefaid Oath and Covenant, there are some
 Things ambiguous, obscure and doubtful, which great Numbers of
 the Takers know not the Meaning of, and so cannot swear them
in Judgment and Right-ousness; as for Instance, when they abjure
Independency, and Latitudinarian Tenets, these are Words very ge-
 neral, dark and dubious, to which the Imposers may affix any Mean-
 ing they think proper. Now, seeing it is commonly granted that
 the Words of an Oath ought to be very clear and plain, and these
 which are dubious may be refused; what a cruel Thing must it be
 to excommunicate all these sincere Christians and tender Consciences
 who may scruple to swear either to or against what they know not?
 I am sure, there are many valuable Ministers of Jesus Christ, and
 precious Sons of Zion, whom Christ doth honour and admit to near
 Communion with himself, who will not adventure to swear such an
 Oath; and will our Brethren notwithstanding take it on them to
 reject them as earthen Pitchers, and refuse all Communion with
 them? Oh, where have they their Master's Warrant to act so, or to
 exclude his redeemed Ones from his Table, and the Food he hath
 provided for them, for refusing an Oath of their framing, con-
 taining so many Things false, uncharitable and dark? when yet in
 the mean Time these *excluded Persons* appear evidently to be the
Friends of Christ, whom he himself invites most heartily, saying to
 them, *Cant. v. 1. --- Eat, O Friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly,
 O Beloved.*

I now proceed to consider what Mr. *Arnot* offers in Vindication of
 the *Seceders* Sentiments respecting the Gospel Offer and Nature of saving
 Faith, and vindicate *New-Castle* Presbytery from the Charges he exhibits
 against them on these Points. Our Author herein, as well as in other
 Particulars he speaks upon, acts like a Person of a Sovereign Temper,
 who, impatient of Contradiction, and quite overcome by ill Nature,

wou'd thro' Pride of Heart, either right or wrong, trample his Opponent under Foot, and say any Thing to be avenged of him. He violently distorts the Presbytery's Arguments; unnaturally deduces Consequences from them they by no Means affor^d, and sophistically Reasons from his own Transitions, not the Presbytery's Arguments, by which the unwary Reader may be led to imagine, he's arguing against an absurd Position of ours, as may more particularly be seen in the Sequel of the following Discourse.

OUR Author, *Part II. p. 4.* * mentions the *Seceders* Description of the Gospel Offer, and says, 'if we find any Thing censurable therein, it must be their asserting, *that God has made a Deed of Gift and Grant of his Son Jesus Christ unto Mankind in the Word.*' The Presbytery justly found Fault with their representing Jesus Christ as a *Deed of Gift to Mankind indiscriminately*, seeing this Method of speaking, has a tendency to lead People into an Error in one of the most momentous Points. A Deed of Gift is a forensic Term used in conveying Property from one to another; and most properly signifies the actual Conveyance of an Estate, or Part of an Estate, by which the Person to whom it is made over, has an actual Title to and Interest in it, and it becomes his own Right and Property, so that whoever attempts to deprive him of it, is guilty of Fraud and Injustice. Now, to apply this to the Case in Hand; if the Gospel be a *Deed of Gift*, making over Jesus Christ (as their Right) to fallen Sinners *as such*, then has God made an actual Conveyance of him and all the Blessings of his Purchase, to all graceless Sinners who hear the Sound of it, so that they have an actual Title to, and as real an Interest in them before, as after believing. Hence all will be saved, contrary to *Mat. xx. 16.* or many that have an actual Title to Christ, and the Blessings of the new Covenant, will be refused the Possession of them; and thus God will be chargeable (*horresco referens*) with Fraud and Injustice, in detaining from them that which they have a special Right to, and that by Virtue of his own Promise; which is absurd. Sinners, while in a State of Nature, are under the Curse, *Gal. iii. 10.* Heirs of Wrath, without God and without Christ in the World, *Eph. ii. 3.---13.* and if so, they cannot at the same Time have a Title to Christ and thro' him to eternal Glory.

OUR Author tells us, the Associate Presbytery understood by the Phrase in Dispute, 'a Revelation of the Divine Will in the Word, affording a Warrant to offer Christ unto all Mankind without Exception, and a Warrant to all freely to receive him, however great Sinners they are, or have been.' And makes a Supposition of our fixing a Charge upon this, the Consequence of which must be, that we will
exclude

* In my Quotations from the Detection, I have for the most Part to the End, only mention'd the Pages, as they are chiefly taken from the second Part.

exclude the whole unbelieving World from an Offer of Christ, the Unregenerate must content themselves with the Denomination of Dogs, Swine and what not, (this no Doubt, is to be observ'd as a smart Side-stroke as he pass'd along) and that the Offer of Christ can be made only to Believers *as such*. Mr. *A.* may know that the Denomination of Dogs and Swine justly belongs to the Wicked, *Mat.* vii. 6. *2 Pet.* ii. 22. and that the Case of Unbelievers is very dangerous, *Jo.* iii. 18. 36. and if continued in, is altogether hopeless, *Jo.* viii. 34. *Mark* xvi. 16. But seeing the Gospel sets open a glorious Door of Hope to all that fly to it for Refuge, *Heb.* vi. 18. and offers Salvation to all who hear it, *Mat.* xxviii. 19. *Luk.* xxiv. 44. Whoever wou'd teach us, that the Gospel Offer is to be made only to Believers; that Mercy is not to be offer'd to Unbelievers; I say, whoever he be that wou'd teach us such damnable Doctrine which we have not receiv'd, tho' it were an Angel from Heaven, *let him be accursed, Gal.* i. 7. The Judgment of N. C. Presbytery on this Point is clearly express'd in their *Warning*, p. 6, 7. 'if by these Expressions he means, that God in the Gospel, makes a free and indefinite Offer of Christ, as a sufficient and willing Saviour, to all that hear it, without Exception, however guilty and unworthy they are, requiring no Qualifications in them to recommend them to his Favour; and giving the highest Assurances that all that accept of this Offer shall certainly be saved: That the Ministers of the Gospel have sufficient Authority to make a Tender of Christ and Salvation thro' him, freely and indefinitely to all to whom they have Access; and that all that hear it, are strongly oblig'd and sufficiently encourag'd to accept it by Faith. If this be his Meaning, then we have here no Controversy with him,' *viz.* no Controversy as to Sense. tho' they might justly charge him with a very dangerous Impropriety in Expressions to signify his Meaning by. Hence the unprejudiced Reader may easily see, how unjustly our Authors have sometimes very liberally insinuated, that we darken and restrict the Gospel Offer.

I can cheerfully agree to the Explication Mr. *A.* mentions as good sound Doctrine; and had it alone stood as a Description of the Gospel Offer, or had the Word *Offer*, or some one of like Import been put instead of *Deed of Gift*, they wou'd have afforded no Ground of Controversy on this Point. But seeing their *Metaphor* can't be made to agree with their Explanation, without straining it beyond the Meaning of the Words as commonly in Use among Mankind, they are very unhappy in the Choice of it to represent their Ideas, if they intend as they speak in the Explication; for every one that attends to the proper Import of Words, must conclude, that their Sentiments are the direct Reverse of what they profess to mean. Words, indeed, are but arbitrary Signs, yet when by Custom they are made to represent such and such Ideas, a Man may not alter or use them at Pleasure; but as Mr. *Lock* observes, in the *Abridgment of his Essay on*

the Human Understanding, p. 100. ' he must apply his Words, as near as may be, to such Ideas, as common Use has affixed them to for Words, especially of Languages already fram'd, are no Man's private Possession, but the common Measure of Commerce and Communication; and therefore it is not for any One to change the Stamp they are current in, nor alter the Ideas they are affixed to.' The same Author says, p. 98. we fail in making known our Ideas to another ' when we apply received Names to Ideas, to which the common Use of that Language does not apply them.' Therefore if our Authors Mean according to the Import of their Explication they are really in a fault for using Words that signify quite another Thing. Such a Conduct can answer no other End than obscure the Subject, create Disputes and lay a Foundation for Error.

BUT the Agreement between the disputed Phrase, and their Description, of saving Faith, viz. that it is a Persuasion in the Heart of a Sinner that Christ is his, &c. gives Ground of Suspicion, that they understood said Phrase, in its proper Meaning as I have explain'd it. For Faith receives Christ as he is offer'd in the Gospel, *short Cat. Ans. to Ques. 86. i. e.* in like Manner as Christ is offer'd Faith receives him, its Acts correspond with the Offer, as the Impression on the Wax with the engraving on the Seal. Hence, then we are natively led to conclude, that by their Explication of the *Deed of Gift*, or by the Gospel Offer, they mean, that God by the Gospel is publishing to Sinners *as such*, that he has made an actual Conveyance of Christ and the Benefits of his Purchase to them, as their own Property; in Consequence of which, he urges them to be persuaded of their Interest in these Mercies, and make a Demand of them as their own, which Persuasion and Demand is Faith.

AGREEABLE to this Mr. A. asks us, p. 6. ' what we mean by all that hear the Gospel being strongly oblig'd, and sufficiently encouraged to accept it by Faith, *if it is not an Authority and Command to put in a Claim of Right to him as theirs, by Virtue of the Deed of Gift and Grant made of him in the Word.*' To which answer, we mean, that the Gospel Offer making a full and free Tender of Christ to the most sinful and unworthy, and promising eternal Life to those who embrace him, gives them a sufficient Warranty and Authority to be persuaded of his Sufficiency and Willingness to save them, and consequently to yield the unreserved Consent of their Hearts to take him for their Saviour, that they may have an undeniable Title to and Interest in him, and all his unsearchable Riches. But our Author's Question imports, that he understands the foregoing Words in a quite different Sense, or that he does not understand his own Phrases at all. For a *Deed of Gift* (as we have already seen) is an *Instrument making over an Estate to a Person as his own*. The Pronoun *Theirs* is a *Positive*, as is also *yours, his, thine and mine*, is often used by our Authors when speaking on this Point; and they do

note that a Person has *already* the *rightful* Possession of what is called *his*. &c. or that he has a *real* Interest in and *actual* Title to it. So also a *Right* to a Thing, signifies a Persons Interest in and Title to it as his own Property. But if a *Right to do any thing* is spoken of it signifies a *Warrant* or *Authority* to do that Action. A *Claim* is a *Challenge* or Demand; and *to claim*, or *put in a Claim* to a Thing, is *to challenge* it as the Persons own, and *vindicate* his Right of Possession in Opposition to any that *wou'd* take it from him. And sometimes it signifies *to Demand* Possession, as that to which a Person is entitled by Virtue of a *prior* Right.

UPON the whole, these Words properly mean, either a Person's vindicating the Rights he already possesses as his own in Opposition to any Invasion of them; or his demanding Possession of what he looks upon to be his Right according to Law. If then, we judge of Mt. A's Ideas by his Words, we must conclude, he means either (1) that antecedent to believing, we have the actual Possession of Christ, which Right Faith vindicates against any attack from Satan, our misbelieving Hearts, or the Claims of Law and Justice. Or rather (2) that the Gospel is an Instrument, wherein God by his Oath and Promise makes over to Sinners an actual Title to Christ and the Benefits of his Purchase, so that they have a real Interest in these as their special Right and Property antecedent to Faith, tho' not the actual Possession; and that Faith is just a demanding Possession, as being properly due to them, upon the Score of the prior Right given by the foresaid Instrument. But thus, the Unbeliever is both an Heir of Wrath and Glory at the same Time. As an Unbeliever, he is under the Sentence of Condemnation, *John* i. 18. And as Christ and the Blessings of the new Covenant belong to him, by virtue of the Fathers *Deed of Gift* making them over to him, and giving him a claim to them, he is entitled to eternal Life; for those that *are Christs* are *Heirs according to the Promise*, *Gal.* iii. 29.

TO this it is objected, how can we receive Christ by Faith except he be given us? To which I answer (1) Christ is tender'd as a Gift in the Gospel Offer, to all who hear it, *Isa.* lv. 1. *Mark* xvi. 15. And this is their Warrant to receive him. But we may have an Offer of Christ, and yet not have a Right to him. The Gospel Offer, indeed, gives us Authority to receive Christ, *i. e.* a Right or Warrant to do that Action, but it does not give us a Right to him as ours, or any of his saving Benefits, untill we comply with the Terms upon which an Interest in these is offer'd; for we are suspended from having a Title to them until we believe *John* iii. 36. A Nobleman may offer a Beggar a Gift, and promise that it shall be his, if he accept it; but it cannot be said to belong to him as his own Property, until he accept it. (2) Christ is given to some as their actual Right and Property; and in this Sense he is given only to Believers, the Gospel is a *Deed of Gift* affording them only a proper

per Claim to and Interest in him *John* i. 12. But as many as received him to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God, even so them that believe in his Name. *Exousia*, here rendered Power, does also signify Dignity, Privilege or Authority. Now this dignifying Privilege of belonging to the Family of God, and having Right to the Privileges of his Sons, 'is given to those who do now already believe, and it is certain, they are now the Children of God indeed.' *Calvin's Harm. Evang.* *John* i. 12. These only are Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Jesus Christ, *Rom.* viii. 17.

OUR Authors exclaim against us for asserting, that Christ does not belong to Sinners *as such*, that they have not a Right to and Interest in him as theirs, untill they believe, &c. And with as much Reason may they condemn a great Number of precious and eminent Gospel Divines on these and sundry other Particulars in the Doctrines of Grace. Mr. *Rutherford* in his *Trial and triumph of Faith*, p. 133, 134. says, 'it is most untrue, that Christ *belongeth to Sinners, as Sinners*, for then Christ should belong to all Unbelievers, how obstinate soever, even to those that Sin against the *Holy Ghost*. Nay, Christ *belongeth only to Sinners elected to Glory*, as elected to Glory, in Regard of God's gracious Purpose, and he *belongeth only to believing Sinners, as believing*; in Regard of actual Union with Christ, *Eph.* iii. 17. *Gal.* ii. 20.' So the judicious Mr. *Ashwood* says, 'they have none of Christ's personal or purchased Treasures, to enrich them: They have no Right to his Person, and so none to his Excellency,-----Till they come to Christ, neither himself nor his is theirs: they have no Part of his Fulness:-----No Treasures of Grace, or Glory, are the Unbelievers Interest, *1 John* v. 12. *Rev.* iii. 17. *Eph.* ii. 12.' *Ashwood's unsearchable Riches of Christ*, p. 324. The same Author adds, p. 192, 193. 'Christ is offered in the Gospel by Grace, and is received by Faith, the Acceptance as offered of God is that which Interests the Soul in him.----Neither doth this Acceptance make a Person worthy of the Gift, but fulfils the Terms in order to an Interest in it, as a poor Man's accepting a Sum of Money freely offered, does not merit, but appropriate it.' And p. 266, he says, 'they have new Rights and Interests: Believers being once entered into the Family of God by Christ, are presently invested with new and glorious Rights which they never held before, nor any besides the Children of God have or can ever have.' These, he says, are 'a Right to the special blessed Presence of God, *Psal.* cil. *John* viii. 35.----The Purchase of Christ with all the Fruits of it, *1sa.* liii. 5. *Jo.* xvii. 9.----he Promises, *2 Pet.* i. 4. *2 Cor.* i. 20. *1 Tim.* iv. 8.----The Inheritance of Glory, *Tit.* iii. 7. *1 Pet.* i. 3, 4. &c.' The famous Mr. *Sedgwick*, whose Praises are in the Churches, says, in his *Treatise on Faith*, p. 196. 'Christ is not that Man's who doth believe on him---For a Man to solace himself, that the Estate is his, before the Person is his; or that the Per-

son is his, before he hath accepted the Person; why, this is but the
Fruit of a vain idle Fancy.'

WHAT has been said, affords a plain Answer to Mr. A's Question respecting the Nature of Faith, p. 10. ' Where the Testimony to be believ'd is a Promise of good to be communicated, a Man's Faith of that Testimony necessarily includes his believing the certain Accomplishment of the Promise to him, and his Confidence in the Person who has given the Promise; that he will do as he has said,' upon his compliance with the Terms on which the good contain'd in the Promise is offer'd to him, but not otherwise.

FROM what has been said, we may also readily answer Mr. A's next Query, in the forecited Page, viz. ' When an Offer is made in a Word of Grace to be received by Faith, if a Person can be said to receive by Faith, that which is offered, while he has never believ'd it to be his, by Virtue, or upon the Warrant of that Offer made of it to him.' It is evident, a Person can receive what is offer'd, while he has never believ'd it to be his, and must too; for he must receive it as offer'd, before he can in a rational scriptural Manner be persuaded it is his: His Interest in it must subsist, before he can on good Grounds be persuaded of it; but it does not subsist, before he embraces the Offer by Faith. I grant, indeed, he can by no Means receive by Faith that which is offer'd: while he has never believ'd, that the Offer gives him a Warrant to take it to be his, to appropriate it to himself. The Gospel Offer, by its Invitations and Commands to believe, and Promises of a sure unsullied Title to Glory, upon our doing so, must persuade us of Christ's Willingness to accept us, and the special Authority we have to receive him, before we will lay hold upon him to be our Saviour. Says the last cited Author, p. 97. ' To be assured of Christ as mine, is no Ground for to move a Man to believe, but a Consequent of it. But to be assured that Christ is willing, and ready to be mine, and to accept of me, this is a sweet Motive, and an encouraging Ground to believe.'

OUR Author seems to be aware of the defencelessness of his Cause, and hence he tells us, p. 6. ' it is but idle to talk of an actual Interest in Christ, as contain'd in the Word of Offer; an actual Possession of Christ being peculiar unto such as by Faith embrace the Offer.' Which is really true: And therefore I wonder that he talk'd at so idle a Rate; for the common Sense of Mankind, who understand the Meaning of the Words he uses, can fix no other proper Idea to them, than what he here calls idle. The same idle Chace our Author seems still resolv'd to pursue; for in the very next Branch of his Sentence he asserts that ' the Gospel Offer contains in it a Right, Warrant, or Authority for such to whom it is made to put in a Claim of Right to the Object or Privilege offered.' and seems to suppose, that this, and ' a giving of Christ in a Way of Offer unto Mankind Sinners, whereupon they may take Possession of him as theirs,' are

of the same Import; whereas they convey quite different Ideas, except what may be couch'd under the possessive *theirs*, which, perhaps, he puts in as a Reserve to play upon, as may best suit his Turn.

MOREOVER, Mr. *A.* tartly asserts, *p.* 7. That N. C. Presbytery, when speaking of the Gospel, ' miserably bemist themselves, and overcloud the Subject under Consideration; in Regard they either wilfully refuse, or ignorantly neglect to observe the Difference between a Right to claim Possession and the actual Possession itself.' Here our Author, not the Presbytery, either wilfully or ignorantly beclouds the Subject under Consideration: For, if by *a right to claim Possession*, he means, a Warrant or Authority to embrace the Offer by Faith, and so take Possession of the Blessings contain'd in it, as he had before insinuat'd, why does he find Fault with the Presbytery for want of Distinction; seeing they have sufficiently made the Distinction between that and an actual Interest in and Right to Christ, which, according to the divine Constitution, commences upon their believing in him and not before? But if his Meaning be according to the proper Import of his Words, as I have already explain'd them, why did he tell us, it is idle to talk of an actual Interest in Christ, as contain'd in the Offer? And insinuate that they mean by such Expressions, a Warrant to receive the Offer?

NOTWITHSTANDING our Author drops in Part of a Sentence now and then to abate the Force of his Words, and prevent any Umbrage might be taken at them, yet he continues to run in his own Channel still. Hence, *p.* 8. he says, ' I suppose the World will be at a Loss to know, according to our Authors Scheme what is in the Nature of saving Faith, if once they exclude all particular Claim to, and solid Persuasion of Interest in the Object of it:-----it will be a very heartless Faith-----at the End of Time, &c.' The Presbytery never excluded from the Nature of saving Faith, a solid Persuasion of Interest in and Claim to the Object of it to be obtain'd upon our embracing the Object by Faith. But Mr. *A.* rightly understood, that the Presbytery meant an actual Interest in Christ subsisting antecedent to believing, as appears from *p.* 15. and *p.* 14. he says, ' the amount of all our Arguings comes to this, that none ought to be persuaded of his gracious State before he is in it.' Hence, he either wilfully perverts the Presbytery's Argument, or speaks of an actual Interest in Christ antecedent to Faith, which it is a Persuasion of: And, indeed, this is the most native Conclusion can be put upon his Words. And if so, why did Mr. *A.* say, *it is but idle to speak of such an Interest?* And why does he tell us, *p.* 14. ' the Associate Presbytery are not speaking of the Assurance of our State of Grace? Moreover, how, or when does a Person obtain this Interest? Is it thro' the Persuasion he mentions? But that supposes it already subsisting; for none can be justly persuaded he has what is not in Being.

Is it by the Gospel Offer? But Mr. A. grants, that Sinners *may have an Offer of Christ, and yet not have an Interest in him, p. 15.*

BUT Mr. A. adds, p. 9. ' If our Authors had wanted to acquire themselves like Men, they behoved to have stated the Principles of the Associate Presbytery as laid in their Act, to have considered their Arguments judiciously, and shown the inconclusiveness of them to the World, but they must dun the World with childish Quibbles---- it is not a Persuasion that Christ is offered to fallen Mankind exclusive of fallen Angels, which the Presbytery assert to be saving Faith. ----But upon the Footing of the general Offer of him in the Gospel, and Warrant for every one of them in particular to accept it, the Presbytery assert, that the particular Application of the foresaid Offer, and solid Persuasion of Life and Salvation thro' the Object offered, is necessarily laid in the Nature of saving Faith.' Our Author shou'd have took to himself a little of that Advice he gives to others, instead of dunning the World with evasive Quibbles. The Presbytery never blam'd either Mr. *Cuthbertson* or them, for asserting that in Faith there is a particular Application of Christ to the Soul as exhibited in the Gospel Offer. But they found Fault with them for describing justifying Faith in such Language as supposes the Essence of it to consist in a Persuasion of saving Interest in Christ, and that subsisting too antecedent to Faith. And apprehensive, (which I find was not a groundless Conjecture,) that possibly, to avoid the Force of their Argument, it might be reply'd, a Persuasion of Interest in Offer only was design'd, they observe, this is as far from giving a just View of the Doctrine as the other. Hence their Argument in brief is this, a Persuasion of Interest in Christ, or, (which is the same Thing) that he is mine, &c. Which ever Way it be taken, is not a just Definition of saving Faith. It cannot consist in a Persuasion of actual Interest in him; for none but real Believers have that, and only those who have it can be truly persuaded of it. Nor can it consist in a Persuasion of an Interest in Offer; for that is no other than wicked Men and Reprobates may have. Now it is evident, that the *Soceders* place the Substance of a saving Faith, in a Persuasion of Interest in Christ, and the Benefits of his Mediatory Acts. And 'tis as evident, that this Persuasion can be view'd only in one of the foremention'd Respects. But as Mr. A. tells us, p. 15. that ' no other Right to Christ is presently on the Carpet of Debate, but a Right in Offer,' by which he excludes a Persuasion of actual Interest, what can be concluded, but that they believe, a Persuasion that Christ is mine in Offer, is saving Faith, tho' here he so warmly refuses it. Consequently their's is no better than the Faith of Reprobates; for Reprobates are easily persuaded that the Offer gives them an Interest in Christ.

MR. A's Allusion to the Manna raining about the *Israelites* Tent Doors, p. 6. makes Nothing to his Purpose; for we readily grant with him, (as he may see by our Description of the Gospel Offer)

that ' tho' many hearers of the Gospel will die and loose their Soul
 ' for ever; yet this is not for want of a Saviour's being provided,
 ' and offer'd, nor for want of a Right they had to receive him.
 But the Question still returns, have they a Right to and Interest in
 Christ before they do receive him? A Person may have a Warrant to
 receive a Gift, and yet not have a Right to the Gift itself, untill he
 receives it; when receiving is made the Term of his Right to or In-
 terest in it.

O U R Author professes Ignorance of what the Presbytery meant
 by ' *the Force and Obligation of Gods Deed and Grant of Christ unto*
 ' *Sinners*. And I am really as much at a Loss to know the Reason of
 Mr. A's. Loss in this Particular. The Presbytery knew long before
 he inform'd them, that Force and Obligation belong rather to a Pre-
 cept, than to a Promise *abstractly taken*; and that therefore the Gos-
 pel *simply* consider'd, only contains Privileges, tho' taken in a *large*
 Sense for its Dispensation, it includes Commands. But tho' in a Pro-
 mise *simply* consider'd there is no Force or Obligation on the Receiv-
 er, except that of Love and Gratitude; does it thence follow, that
 there is none on the Giver to make good his Promise? It is plain
 enough to them who are willing to see, what the Presbytery meant the
 latter; not the former. Their Argument is this: If the Gospel be
 a Deed of Gift, wherein God makes over his Son Jesus Christ to all
 the Hearers of it, then, they have a special Right to and Interest in
 him, by Virtue of the Promise therein made to them: In Conse-
 quence of this, *Faith*, according to Mr. C's Scheme, (and the *Sece-*
ders too) is the Sinners confident Persuasion of this Interest, and
 upon the Score of it, demanding Possession of Christ and the Bles-
 sings of his Purchase as his due; which demand, God in Faithfulness
 is engaged to answer, by the Obligation his Promise has laid upon
 him.

I now proceed to the next Point in Debate, which respects the *Se-*
ceders Definition of saving Faith. Mr. A. informs us p. 11. that in
 their Act concerning the Doctrine of Grace, p. 36. they declare and
 assert, ' *That in justifying Faith, there is a real Persuasion in the*
Heart of a Sinner, that Christ is his; that he shall have Life and
Salvation by him; and that whatsoever Christ did for the Salvation
of Mankind he did it for him, upon the Foundation and Ground of
the Gift or Promise of Christ in the Gospel, that is made to Sinners of
Adam's Family as such; and so there is in it a resting in him for the
whole of that Salvation.' This our Author says we ' condemn by a
 judicial Deed, without advancing one Reason to the Point; that we
 go on to convince the Reader of the Heterodoxy of their Principles
 in this Point, without shewing what they are.' *ipse dixit!* Did we
 not inform our Readers, that Mr. Cuthbertson and they, were agreed
 upon the Point; and therefore refer'd them to what we offer'd in Re-
 sutation of his Position in the Warning, it being a needless Tautol-
 ogy

ogy to repeat the same Things, in the *Appendix*? Have we not advanced sundry Arguments against said Position? And is not the very next Sentence Mr. *A.* quotes from the Warning a Part of one of them? Or will our Author venture to deny, that there is an Agreement between their Definition of Faith, and Mr. *C.*'s? As that Persuasion, which he asserts is saving Faith, must either be well or ill grounded, the Presbytery concluded, that Faith, according to him, is Nothing else than Assurance of personal Interest in Christ, or a blind Persuasion, not exceeding the Power of Nature. Nor can we as yet fix any other rational Ideas to the Words by which the *Seceders* define it, notwithstanding all Mr. *A.* has offer'd to persuade us of the Contrary. I presume a few Observations will make this evident.

THE *Seceders* place the Substance of saving Faith in Persuasion: For tho' they mention resting on Christ in the Close of their Definition of it, this is done as if it was in Nothing distinct from Persuasion; or so evidently a Part of it, as it might be readily seen, that this is the very Case: For, after they define it by Persuasion, they add, *so then, there is in it a resting on him, &c. q. d.* Faith is a Persuasion in the Heart of a Sinner, that Christ is his, &c. Hence you may see, there is in it a resting on him. We have this Observation confirm'd from Mr. *A.*'s calling the *Assurance of Faith*, a Persuasion of the Truth of God in the *Promise*, p. 12. compar'd with p. 16. where he asserts, that *this same Persuasion* carries in it *Trust, Confidence or the Assurance of Faith*, and that these Terms are in this Matter *Synonymous*, i. e. Words of the same Import. Hence, according to our Author, Faith, or resting on Christ, is Assurance, and Assurance is Faith, and both these are fully and fitly express'd by Persuasion.

MOREOVER, the Object of this Persuasion, or what the Sinner believes, is, that *Christ is his*, i. e. he has a real Interest in Christ; therefore *he shall have Life and Salvation by him*; and *whatsoever he did for the Salvation of Mankind, he did it for him*, i. e. the mediatory Acts of Christ were all design'd to purchase eternal Life for him, to qualify him for it, and bring him to it. Further, the Nature of this Persuasion is absolute, *Christ is his, he shall have Life, &c.* without the least enquiry whether he has believ'd, or Supposition of his believing hereafter, as the Foundation of such a Conclusion. And no Wonder; for the Ground upon which it is built, is the actual Conveyance of these Blessings to them, or the *Deed of Gift* they speak of, by which they are already certainly and absolutely confirm'd to them.

NOW it was for his Sheep only Christ laid down his Life, *Jo. x.* He interceeds only for those that were given him of the Father, that either had believ'd, or shou'd hereafter believe on him, *Jo. xvii. 9, 20.* And promises that all who were given him to be redeem'd, shou'd come to him, and he wou'd in no wise cast them out, *Jo.*

vi. 37. By which it appears that the Design of Christs Purchase was co-extended with the Application of it, and no farther. And to this our *Westminster Assembly* agrees, *Larg. Cat. Ans. to Quef. 19.* 'Redemption is certainly applied and effectually communicated to all for whom Christ hath purchas'd it, who are in Time by the Holy Ghost enabled to believe according to the Gospel.'

IF then, justifying Faith be such a firm and certain Persuasion or Assurance in the Heart of a Sinner, that Christ died for him, and he has therefore an undoubted Right and Title to all the Benefits of his Death, it easily follows, that at the Instant of Believing he has a certain Knowledge of his gracious State. For if Christs Purchase was only made for those to whom it shall be applied, and only those who have the Application of it made to them have a Right and Title to it as theirs, those only who know that they are partakers of the special Benefits of it in their effectual Calling, can upon good Grounds be persuaded it is theirs, except there be some other Method of proving our Interest in Christ, and the Benefits of his mediatorial Acts, than evidencing it by the Characters that prove we were the special Objects of his Mediation. This, according to the most judicious Divines, is the only safe and scriptural Method of drawing such Conclusions. And I can freely appeal to the Experience of the Saints, when they propose these important Querys to their Souls, is Christ mine? Shall I certainly obtain Salvation by him? Was it for me he agoniz'd and sweat, groan'd and died? Whither they can satisfactorily resolve them, and conclude in the Affirmative, before they examine into the State of their Souls, and be satisfy'd as to the Truth of Grace, by which their Title is manifested. The *Moravians* tell us, this is a legal Way of proving our Interest in Christ, but I am sure it is a scriptural Way; and to draw the Conclusion otherwise, is very dangerous.

THE foresaid Persuasion ordinarily on any other Foundation, is only a delusive fanciful Notion, flowing from mistaken Apprehensions of the Persons Goodness, or an erroneous destructive Conceit that Christ died for all, therefore for them in particular. But our Author intimates, that the *Seceders* do not maintain that Assurance of our State of Grace is essential to Faith, p. 14. compar'd with p. 12. yet they assert, it is a Persuasion that Christ is the Sinners own, and died for him, &c. Whereupon they urge, the Graceless to be persuaded of, and claim the Benefits of his Purchase as their Right. Seeing then, they deny the Former, and yet maintain the Latter, the next most rational Construction may be put upon their Words, is, that Christ has made a Purchase of Salvation for, at least, all Gospel-bearers, which they ought to be persuaded of, and claim on the Score of the Right they as Individuals have to that universal Purchase. If this be not their Meaning, the whole taken together, can be view'd only as a confus'd jumble of Improperities, from which it is very difficult to learn

learn what they intend. The *Seceders*, indeed, sometimes deny that they maintain the Doctrine of universal Redemption, in which they speak inconsistent with their other declared Sentiments. For if it be the Duty of some graceless Sinners, while such, to be persuaded Christ is theirs, and died for them, it is the Duty of them all; and if it be the Duty of them all, Christ certainly made a Purchase for them all, otherwise it is their Duty to be persuaded that a Falshood is Truth. But as many Hearers of the Gospel will be damned, Christ did not Purchase Salvation for all of them; otherwise some for whom he purchased Heaven will burn in Hell for ever, which is absurd; consequently, it is not the Duty of all to be persuaded that Christ died for them. And if it be not the Duty of all to be so persuaded, how can it be the Duty of any one, or any Number of graceless Sinners? Have they any Rule to determine this Matter which others have not? If they have, what is it?

NOTWITHSTANDING the Obedience and Sufferings of Christ, gives no Gospel-heaters a Right to him, except they be relyed on, it will not follow from hence, that 'they must sink into Despair,' as Mr. *A.* asserts, p. 14. For, as Christ died for ruin'd Sinners, so his Death is sufficient to wash away the foulest Blots, and he is freely offer'd to every one of them, even the most Guilty, with a Promise of Acceptance upon their embracing the Offer. This supports their sinking Spirits when press'd, with a Sense of Unworthiness, and excites them to lay hold on him for Deliverance from Sin, and deserv'd Wrath the Consequence of it. And tho' to Mr. *A.* it seems impossible for any to improve the Gospel Warrant, who were 'never persuaded of their Right to what is contain'd in it,' p. 15. it appears very possible to me, who consider that a Right to a Thing, and a Right (Warrant) to comply with the Terms upon which a Right to it is offer'd, are distinct Things. The Offer of Christ warrants our receiving of him, and upon our receiving him, we have a Right to the Blessings contain'd in it, and not before: See *Warrant to Believe in the practical Use and Sum of saving Knowledge*. But upon Mr. *A.*'s Principle, he can make an Offer of Christ only to Believers; or else he thinks Unbelievers have an Interest in him.

UPON this Point our Author gives N. C. Presbytery a very smart Stroke! They, (says he, p. 12.) 'both busk up a Man of Straw,' and befool themselves when they fall a beating him; as they would insinuate that the Associate Presbytery maintain that Faith consists in a Persuasion of real Interest in Christ, when they are speaking of that Faith all the Hearers of the Gospel are called unto.' If N. C. Presbytery *beat* a Man of Straw, I'm sure the *Seceders* have *busk'd* him up for them: For the most native Conclusion we cou'd draw from their Words, was, that Faith consists in such a Persuasion. And Mr. *A.* rightly uses a Persuasion that Christ is mine---of Right to and Interest in him, as synonymous Terms. Moreover, he asserts, as we have

have already seen, that the World will be at a Loss to know, what is in the Nature of Faith, if we exclude a *solid Persuasion of Interest in the Object*: Consequently, where this is not, there can be no saving Faith. Yet here he flings the *Fool* on us, as tho' we oppos'd meet Fiction, in reasoning against such a Principle. Let Mr. A. lay those two Sentences together, and see if he can reconcile them. The only difference is, that the one mentions *Interest*, the other *real Interest*. But if by the Former, he did not mean real Interest, what Kind of Interest did he mean? Was it a fictitious one? Seeing Mr. A. is so good at Distinction, he may employ his *metaphysical* Genius to point out the Distinction between these. But I believe he will find this a very difficult Task, notwithstanding all his Ingenuity and Learning. For between Interest and real Interest, there is no Opposition, and therefore can be no Distinction; seeing wherever there is an Interest, it is real. But between a real and imaginary Interest there is an Opposition, and consequently a proper Distinction. Hence our Author either imposes on the World, or lays great Stress on an imaginary Interest, which is only an airy Fancy, that will fly before the Blaze of Judgment.

IT will not relieve our Authors perplex'd Scheme, to tell us, an Interest, or Right in Offer only, 'is presently on the Carpet of Debate.' For if this be true, then in order to understand *Seceders*, we must conclude they mean the Reverse of what they say: For their Words suppose, not one in offer, but a real actual Interest. Besides, if this be the Case, their's is no better than the Faith of Hypocrites; for, it is so far from being difficult to persuade Hypocrites that the Offer gives them an Interest in Christ, that it is very difficult to persuade them of the contrary, that they *are without God and without Christ in the World*, until they embrace the Offer by Faith. And, indeed, their Faith will not be above, but within the Power of Nature, and very agreeable to it: And of Consequence, cannot be a saving Faith.

OUR Authors next Shift to vindicate the *Seceders*, and condemn Mr. A. is just of a Piece with the Scope of his reasoning; (if it may be call'd reasoning.) N. C. Presbytery says he, p. 12. 'are either unable or unwilling to distinguish between Things that are quite distinct in their Nature, *viz.* the Assurance of Faith, and Assurance of Sense; for a certain Persuasion of the Truth of God in the Promise, and a *solid* Persuasion of the Truth and Reality of their Faith in the Promise, &c.' And adds, p. 14. 'all their fighting here, (as he terms it) is but a mere *ignoratio Elenchi*, a mistaking of the Point,' for the Associate Presbytery mean the Former, not the Latter. If N. C. Presbytery mistook the Point in Debate, the *Seceders* mistake in treating it was properly the Cause of theirs. I shall premise two or three Things respecting the Doctrine of Assurance, and then make some brief Remarks on what our Author here objects against us.

ASSURANCE, in general, is the Evidence or certainty of the Mind about an Object. In the Affair of our Salvation it may be taken either (1) in a large Sense, for the Certainty of the Mind with respect to the Object of Faith, *viz.* the Truths of the Gospel relating to our Recovery by Christ, 1 *Thos.* i. 5. especially his willingness to accept, and sufficiency to save the Soul. The Ground upon which it is built, is the unlimited Offer of Christ, and Promise of Salvation to every one that embraces him. Or it may be taken (2) in a particular and proper Sense, for the Certainty of the Mind respecting the Subjects personal Interest in the Object, *Eph.* i. 13. And thus it is such a well grounded Persuasion of the Believer about the Truth of his Grace, as excludes uneasy Fears and Jealousies about the safety of his Soul. The Grounds upon which it is built in this Sense, are the Promises of God; the Evidences of Grace in the Soul to which the Promises are made; which Evidence, the Spirit of God so brightens by his witnessing Influences, as to enable the Believer to discern them clearly, and draw the comfortable Conclusion, that he is in a State of Grace, and shall persevere to eternal Life, 1 *Jo.* v. 13. and iii. 14. 18, 19, 20, 24. *Rom.* viii. 16. *Larg. Cas. ans. to Ques.* 80.

A G A I N, Assurance, in this last Sense, is either transient, or fix'd. Transient Assurance flows very much from present sweet Enjoyments, upon which Account it is call'd by some the Assurance of Sense; and it seldom continues longer than the Manifestations by which it is produc'd. Fix'd Assurance is the Effect of a constant high Degree of Faith, or a continued Series of Experiences, which have been frequently examin'd, and found agreeable to the Word of God; and may remain with the Person, even when he has lost sensible sweet Enjoyments, so that he can say with holy *Job.* *Tho' he slay me yet will I trust in him.*

N O W, neither Assurance of the Truth of Gospel Promises, nor of our personal Interest in them, is the justifying Act of Faith: For the Former is a necessary antecedent to, the Latter a consequent of it. Therefore the *Seceders* are to blame for confounding Faith and Assurance together.

I N this last Sense Assurance is properly to be taken, and thus sound Divines usually speak of it. Hence Assurance, or the Faith of Assurance, is no sooner mention'd, than People form an Idea of the Believer's being persuaded on good Grounds of the Truth of his personal Interest in Christ, in Consequence of his believing on him. And it is most proper still to apply the Term in this Sense, as our *Westminster Assembly* have done; For by the equivocal Use of it, putting it now for one Collection of Ideas, then for another, the Minds of People will be confus'd, and led into Mistakes. A clear Persuasion, or some Word of like Import, will sufficiently represent the Certainty of the Mind about the Truth and Goodness of Gospel Offers and Promises, which is included in every direct Act of Faith. **BUT TO COME TO THE POINT.**

IF Mr. A. by an Assurance of the Truth of the Promise, means the Certainty of the Mind respecting the Object of Faith, as I have explain'd it, it is a heedless, or rather a wilful Mistake in him to assert that we are either unable or unwilling to distinguish, &c. For we have sufficiently made the Distinction between that, and a well grounded Persuasion of our gracious State. But if, agreeable to the *Seceders* Discription of saving Faith, and the Scope of his own Discourse; he means, that saving Faith, is an Assurance or Persuasion in the Heart of a Sinner, that God has made an unfailing Promise of Life to him, by which he has a special Right to the good Things contain'd in it, and which shall certainly be made good to him: If this be his Meaning, his Distinction is only a Difference of Words without any Distinction in Sense. For if this be true, Assurance of Grace and Salvation is essential to Faith, except a Person can upon good Grounds be Assur'd, that the Promise will certainly be accomplish'd to him, who was never assur'd of his having embrac'd it by Faith. If by saying, *in Faith there is a Persuasion*, and the *Seceders* mean the Former, why did they use Words that convey an Idea the Reverse of their Meaning? If the Latter, why does Mr. A. impose on the World, by making a Distinction where there is none? And why did he acknowlege that Assurance of our gracious State is not essential to Faith.

DID I design to teach, that Assurance of Grace and Salvation is of the Essence of Faith, I think, I cou'd scarcely chuse stronger Terms to do it in, than those used by the *Seceders*, in their Discription of it: The very Language of it is, *Christ is mine and I am his, whatever he did for the Redemption of Mankind, he did it for me; therefore I shall certainly obtain Life and Salvation by him.* Cant. vi. 3. Gal. ii. 20. &c. But the Language of Faith is, I take Christ to be mine, Jo. i. 12. Col. ii. 6. To this agrees the learn'd Mr. Goodwine in his *Commentary* on Eph. p. 202. 'All Faith (says he) is an Application of Christ, but how? It is not an Application that Christ is mine, but it is a laying hold on Christ to be mine. It is not a logical Application in Way of Proposition that I may say Christ is mine; but it is a real one, I put him on, I take him to be mine, and that is the better of the two.' Mr. Seignwick on Faith, says, p. 37. 38. there are three Acts of Faith versant about Christ. 'the first is I know assuredly that Christ the Lord is the Saviour of Sinners. The second is, I take this, Jesus Christ to be my Lord and Saviour. A third is, I know assuredly that Christ is my Lord and my Saviour.' And p. 116. he adds, 'The vital Act of Faith is not this, Christ is mine, but this, I receive, and embrace Christ? And p. 261. I am Christ's, and Christ is mine, this is formal Assurance.' And p. 264. he says, 'If I were assured Christ were mine before I did believe; this were a Lie: Forasmuch as Christ is not mine, until I do by Faith accept of him.---I must repent
' of

of my Sins, I must accept of Jesus Christ offered to me in the Gospel, to be my Lord and Saviour, and now I labour to be assured, now I come to be persuaded, having subscribed to all the Propositions and Articles of the Gospel, that now Christ is mine.-----For thus I argue with my Soul, Whoever repents, and believes, and endeavours to walk in Christ, assuredly Christ is his, and he is Christs; ergo, Christ is mine. I cannot make so short a Cut as the presumptuous Person doth, Christ died for Sinners, therefore for me. One, There is an orderly Progress in true Assurance. It doth not stride over to Extreames; as if a Man should see a Lease drawn, and presently conclude the Houses are mine, the Lands are mine; no, but he must hear, and understand, and weigh Things, and Subscribe and Seal to the Conditions, and then he may safely and boldly say they are his.

MR. A. adds, p. 13. 'so until our Authors shall be able to learn the above Distinction, if all the Hearers of the Gospel are called to entertain a solid Persuasion of the Truth of God in his Word, they are according to them, enjoyn'd by him to believe a Lie.' Cou'd Mr. A. be so vain as to think, none wou'd see, or be able to detect this bare-fac'd Sophism? Or, was he so ignorant of the Nature of good Argument as to think, his false was true and solid Reasoning! He draws his Conclusion, not from the Presbytery's Argument, but from what he has sophistically shuffled in Place of it. They Reason from the Absurdity of the Thing, that a Persuasion of saving Interest in Christ can't be justifying Faith; because many Hearers of the Gospel have no such Interest; but they are all commanded to believe on him: If then, such a Persuasion were saving Faith, they wou'd be commanded to believe they had what they were not possess'd of; and consequently wou'd be commanded to believe a Lie; which is absurd. The Reason of the Consequence is so evident, that I presume I need say no more to shew the Justness of it.

OUR Author's Argument in Form, is this, If all the Hearers of the Gospel are call'd to entertain a solid Persuasion of the Truth of God in his Word, then, whoever are unable to distinguish between the Assurance of Faith and Sense, are, according to N. C. Presbytery, enjoyn'd to believe a Lie: But N. C. Presbytery themselves are unable to make this Distinction; therefore (so then) until they shall be able to learn it, all the Hearers of the Gospel, according to them, are enjoyn'd to believe a Lie. I can't take Time to expose all the palpable Nonsense of which this Argument is exceeding full. I shall therefore only observe briefly, that both the Premises are false: For neither are the Hearers of the Gospel enjoyn'd to believe a Lie by our Position, but the Contrary, inasmuch as our Argument is evidently against such a Position, as wou'd infer so vile a Conclusion; nor are N. C. Presbytery unable to make proper Distinctions upon Assurance. Hence it appears, that the Argument is false; for where one

or both the Premises are false, a true Conclusion can't be drawn from them.

MR. A. proceeds to confirm his Conclusion by an Argument as false as the Conclusion itself: For it is in brief this: All the Hearers of the Gospel are, according to us, enjoyn'd to believe a Lie; if they don't actually believe on Christ; except our Author has an equivocal Reserve in these Words, *hath given to us eternal Life*, which he observes, is a Part of the Gospel Record, all its Hearers are enjoyn'd to believe. I query, if 'tis any Part of the Gospel Record, all its Hearers are enjoyn'd to believe, that they have a real saving Interest in Christ, which Faith is a Persuasion of? If Mr. A. says it is, why did he deny that the Associate Presbytery maintain such a Principle? If not, what's the Reason he toils himself in busking up and beating a Man of Straw? For that's the very Thing the Presbytery opposes; and Mr. A. knew and acknowledg'd it was, and therefore said we beat a Man of Straw in opposing it. Hence he appears with Design to Reason falsely, and cast Dust in the Eyes of his Reader. He obscurely, and disingenuously winds about a Story of his own, from which he draws his Inferences against us, and so he warmly engages his own Fictions, as tho' he was closely grappling with the Presbytery's Argument. Upon the Whole we learn, if Mr. A. has any good Systems of Logic by him, he had need to peruse them better, that he may know how to reason fair, and communicate intelligibly.

I have made appear, p. 115. that Mr. A. maintains, that trusting in Christ and Assurance, are the same Thing, and that these are fully and fitly express'd by Persuasion. This Point he proceeds to prove, p. 15. 16. 'we find Faith (says he) some times termed a Persuasion, Rom. iv. 21. And expressed by the same Denomination, Luk. xvi. 31. That this Persuasion carries in it Trust, Confidence, or the Assurance of Faith (these Terms are in this Matter synonymous) is evident from Scripture Language. The original Greek Word (*Pisthein*) which signifies *to persuade*, and its derivatives, are sometimes put for Assurance, *to assure*, --- Confidence, --- and Trust.' Tho' the original Words which signify Confidence, Trust, *to trust*, and are deriv'd of *Tristhein*, yet are they distinct from it, not only in Sound, but Signification too; they convey Ideas as distinct as Acts and the Foundation of them. And tho' they with *Pisthein* be sometimes put for Assurance, Confidence, &c. yet that will not prove our Authors labouring Point: For in Scripture frequently the Object is by a *Metonymy* put for the Act, the Cause for the Effect, and a Part for the Whole. Christ the Object of Faith, is call'd Faith, Gal. iii. 23. But will it thence follow, that he is the Act of Faith? Or that the Act and Object are the same Thing? Faith is put for the Ground or Reason of it, *Ab. xvii. 31.* And therefore render'd Assurance: God, by the Resurrection of Christ, gave a convincing Argument or Reason, *to induce all to believe the general Judgment, &c.* Abraham's Per-

suasion

Reason of the Power and Faithfulness of God, *Rom. iv. 21.* is given as the Reason why he *believ'd in Hope against Hope, v. 18.* But he was not only persuaded of the Promises as true, but embrac'd them as good, *Heb. xi. 13.* And these were distinct Acts. The Persuasion mention'd, *Luk. xvi. 31.* imply's a Persuasion of interminable, unavoidable Misery, as a Consequent of persisting in Sin, as well as Relief to be obtain'd by Christ; both which are antecedent to receiving him, and necessary to excite the Soul to fly the Former, and lay hold on the Latter. The Passages Mr. A. refers to, prove that there is a Persuasion in Faith, and either points to the Reasons or Effects &c. of it, but do not teach us, that it's justifying Act consists in Persuasion, or that Persuasion is the same with trusting in Christ. Knowledge is antecedent to Persuasion itself, and is a necessary Ingredient of Faith; and therefore is put for believing, *Isa. liii. 9.* But will it hence follow, that to know Christ, is the justifying Act of Faith? Persuasion is equally an Ingredient of every Grace, as well as Faith: For it is a necessary Foundation to all the Acts of Grace. We must be persuaded of the Lords Amiabilitys, before we will love him; of the Evil of Sin, and the Grace of God in Christ to forgive it, before we will truly repent of it. But it will not follow from hence, that such a Persuasion is the formal Act of Love and Repentance. Upon the Whole, tho' I readily grant, that a Persuasion of the right Kind is a necessary Ingredient in Faith, yet I must conclude, it is distinct from, and antecedent to receiving or trusting to Christ, which is the principal and formal Act of a justifying Faith: We are first persuaded of the Suitableness of Christ to be an Object of Trust, and then put Trust in, and accept him for our Saviour. If trusting to Christ, and even objective Certainty be the same Thing, there is no Difference between an Act, and the Reason and Ground of it. And if a Persuasion that Christ is mine, or of real Interest in him, be the justifying Act of Faith, there is no Difference between its direct and reflex Acts.

THO' we reject Mr. A's Representation of this Matter as confus'd, and in Part unjust, yet it will not be so difficult a Task for us (as he seems to insinuate) to 'give some Marks of Distinction, whereby a true divine Faith may be differenced from an Opinion, Guess or Conjecture, and from the Popish general and doubtful Faith.' Nor will it puzzle us to vindicate our own Judgment of saving Faith against such a Charge. For *to guess,* is just to stumble on a Thing at a Venture, without so much as probable Evidence to incline a Person to either Side of a Question. *Opinion* is 'a slight Inclination to yield to a Thing propos'd, and but a slight one, because of the weighty Objections against it.' To yield the bare Assent of the Mind to this Truth in general, that Christ is the Son of God, and Saviour of the World; and to believe blindly as the Church believes, without knowing whether her Belief be agreeable to the Word of God or not, is the 'Popish general and doubtful Faith.' But a true divine

Faith as N. C. Presbytery assert, ' includes a lively and affecting Per-
 • suasion of Christs all-sufficiency, suitableness and willingness, to save
 • Sinners; the free unlimited Offer of him to every one that heare
 • the Gospel, and Promise of Salvation to those who embrace it;
 • the certain safety there is in depending on his Righteousness, and
 • the glorious Excellency of the Plan of Salvation; the hearty and
 • chearful Consent of the Soul to accept of Christ, as a compleat Sa-
 • viour, depending on him for the Pardon of Sin, and Acceptance in
 • the Sight of God, only upon the Encouragement afforded in the
 • foresaid Offer and Promise, without Respect to any Thing in itself
 • as an entitling Worth: And this Consent of the Will, and Acceptance
 • of Christs Righteousness, is the proper justifying and appropriating
 • Act of Faith.' Now, between this and *Opinion*, &c. there is a very
 wide Difference. Here's no uncertain Guess, or slight Opinion, but
 a well grounded affecting Persuasion of Christ the Object of Faith,---of
 the Persons invited to receive him, and the glory and suitableness of
 the Plan of Rēdemption for their Recovery; inasmuch as all even
 the most unworthy, are invited to come and lay hold upon it, with-
 out Respect to any entitling Worth in them; consequently every one
 may conclude, he has a divine Warrant to believe in this full and able
 Saviour. Here's no blind *popish* Faith, that stands upon the Footing
 of human Testimony, but has as its Warrant the infallible Offer and
 Promise of God; nor is it only a general Assent of the Mind, that
 Jesus Christ is the Son of God, &c. but also the full and free Con-
 sent of the Will to receive, and appropriate Christ to be their Saviour.

M. R. A. labours to persuade the World, p. 17. that the *Westmin-
 ster Confession* and *Catechisms* are on his Side of the Question; in
 which he imposes on his Reader, and abuses the worthy Authors of
 that excellent Performance. For they have not once said, that Assu-
 rance of Faith, and trusting to Christ, are the same Thing;---that a
 Persuasion that Christ is mine &c. is justifying Faith; or that a Per-
 suasion of any Kind is the Sum of it. Nor have they insinuated any
 Thing like these, but plainly declar'd the Contrary. For they tell us
 • that justifying Faith *not only* assenteth to the Truth of the Promise
 of the Gospel, *but* receiveth and resteth upon Christ and his Righte-
 ousness therein held forth, &c. *Larg. Cat. Ans. to Ques. 72.* And
 in this receiving and resting, they place the appropriating and justify-
 ing Act of Faith, as N. C. Presbytery have done, and not in Persua-
 sion or Assent. For they assert, that ' the principal Acts of saving
 Faith are *accepting, receiving and resting* upon Christ;' (which are sy-
 nonymous Terms) *Conf. of Faith, Chap. xiv. §. 2.* accordingly they
 describe the Sum of it by *receiving and resting* on Christ for Salvati-
 on, as he is offer'd to us in the Gospel. *Shors. Cat. Ans. to Ques. 86.*
 Now, let judicious Readers compare both our Definition of Faith,
 and the *Seceders*, with the Form of sound Words contain'd in the *West-
 minster Conf. and Catechisms*, and they will find an exact Agreement between

us and that; whereas, on the Contrary, they may find that the *Seceders* rather verge towards the *Antinomian* Side, a dangerous Extream our Divines carefully avoided. Hence they may also learn, that the *Seceders*, rather than N. C. Presbytery, 'cast off the Confession of Faith, in its genuine Sense and Import, as no way the Confession of their Faith;' and I hope they 'will apprehend some Danger in consenting to the Burial of her antient Land-marks.'

TO as little Purpose does our Author adduce the judicious Dr. *Owen* against us, p. 18. whom he justly ranks among the best Writers of systematical and practical Divinity, either at Home or abroad, tho' he was an *Independent*, and wou'd therefore have been anathematis'd by *Seceders*, had they liv'd in his Day, as unworthy of even occasional Communion with them in common Ordinances. This worthy Author places the Essence of a justifying Faith 'in the Heart's Approbation of the Way of Justification and Salvation of Sinners by Jesus Christ,-----with its Acquiescency therein as unto *its own Concernment* and Condition,' which excellently represents the Ideas included in receiving and resting on Christ, in Consequence of Believers Persuasion of his Suitableness to their Case. But Mr. *A.* seems chiefly to level his Stroak at us from these Words, 'as unto *its own Concernment* and Condition;' from which he insinuates most unjustly, that we maintain there is in Faith no Approbation of, or Acquiescency in the Gospel Plan of Redemption thro' Christ, as suited to a Person's *own Case*. But the Contrary is evident from our Description of Faith; nor can such a Conclusion be ever drawn from what we say on it, except by one of Mr. *A.*'s false Arguments, by which he artfully confuses, and sometimes conceals the precise Point in Debate, which is not whether in believing the Sinner applies Christ as suitable to his own Case, but whether Faith be a Persuasion of Christs being his own before he does believe, &c. Hence we see, how ridiculously Mr. *A.* insinuates p. 11. that according to our Sentiments, we must 'receive Christ, and yet not for ourselves in particular, &c.'

FROM the learn'd and judicious *Turretine*, we have two Things asserted, which the Presbytery never denied, *viz.* that a fiducial Assent, or Persuasion of the Truth and Goodness of the Gospel Promises, and Flight to and Reception of Christ, belong to the Essence of Faith, p. 18, 19. But our Author's Design in this Quotation, is to prove that this Assent may be term'd Assurance; therefore he translates *Fiducia*, Confidence or Assurance. Mr. *A.* may render it as he pleases; but the proper English of that Term is *Confidence*. And it appears evident from the Scope of Mr. *Turretine*'s Argument that he is proving, in Opposition to the *Papists*, that in Faith there is a positive Act of the Soul confiding in, and relying on Christ for its Salvation; as a Ground of which, it has sufficient objective Certainty from the free Offers and Promises of the Gospel.

I wou'd not desire one more to my Purpose than this worthy Author; and am very willing to try Titles with Mr. A. for his Patrocinium in our present Dispute. He *expresso* treats of the Acts of Faith, Vol. II. Loc. XV. Quest. 8. and tells us, in it there are in general a direct, and reflex Act.

IN the direct Act of Faith; he observes, five Acts are included, 1^o. *Actus Notitia* &c. i. e. the Knowledge of whatsoever we are to believe, either respecting our Misery or the Grace of God. 2^o. *Assensus Theoreticus* i. e. a theoretical Assent of the Mind, whereby we receive as true and divine the Things we know. 3^o. *Assensus fiducialis and practicus*, a fiducial and practical Assent or Persuasion, by which we judge the Gospel to be, not only true, but good also, and most worthy of our Love and Desire, and the Promises of Grace to be most certain, concerning the Remission of the Sins of, and conferring eternal Life upon all that believe and repent, and therefore upon me, if I shall believe and repent. 4^o. *Actus Refugii*. The Act of Flight, whereby with Desire we betake ourselves to Christ, thus known by us, seeking in him the Remission of our Sins and Salvation, Luk. xv. 17. 18. 19. 20. 5^o. *Actus Receptionis Christi*. the Act of receiving Christ, whereby we not only seek Christ by the Desire of the Soul, and betake ourselves to him, but also lay hold upon and receive him offer'd, embrace, and apply him to ourselves. (our Author adds) *hic formalis and principus est Actus justificantis Fidei*, this is the formal and principal Act of justifying Faith, and is described by receiving Christ, Jo. i. 12. Rom. v. 17. Holding him Cant. iii. 4. Leaning on him, Isa. xlviii. 2. &c."

FURTHER, he adds, "*Actus Reflexus*, &c. the Reflex Act of Faith, rises from the Sense of Faith, by which the Soul that receives Christ, reflects upon itself, and seeing the direct Acts of Persuasion, Flight to, and Reception of Christ in his Heart, concludes that he believes, and because he does believe, Christ certainly died for, and with all his Benefits belongs to him, and he shall certainly be made happy by him. The believing Soul forthwith concludes, Christ is his, and he is Christ's, Gal. ii. 20, 2 Tim. i. 12."

BY this Time the Reader may easily see, whether Mr. Turretin makes most for the Seceders Purpose or ours. We agree with him that the Persuasion or Assent, which is essential to Faith, is a Persuasion that the Promises shall certainly be fulfil'd to those who believe and repent; therefore to me if I shall believe and repent. But the Seceders will have it absolute, the good Things contain'd in them do already belong to me, and shall certainly be made good to me. We agree with him in placing the principal and justifying Act of Faith in receiving Christ; they place it in Persuasion. We also conclude with him, that a Persuasion that Christ is mine, belongs to and dy'd for me, is Assurance, or the reflex Act of Faith; the Seceders will have it to be its direct and justifying Act. I am taught by this Time, no

to wonder that our Author quotes Authorities against us, who, he might have known, condemn *Seceders*; for I find their Way is to force their Point, if they can't otherwise obtain it. They really impose on Mankind, when to prove that a Persuasion that *Christ died for me, is mine, &c.* is essential to saving Faith, they quote such Texts as *Gal. iii. 20. Who loved me, and gave himself for me:* For these Passages speak the Language of the Believer grown to a full Assurance of his Personal Interest in Christ.

IN this Language, indeed, some of the primitive Reformers from *Popery* discib'd Faith. But Divinity was not so well improv'd then as afterwards; they were but just coming out of the Shades of *Popish* Darknets, and opposing the *Papists* vague Scheme of Faith, they veig'd into the contrary extrem in Words. Others improv'd upon their Mistake, running into rank *Antinomianism*, which soon took Wing, and corrupted many in *Germany, Holland and Britain*. When our famous *Westminster Assembly* sat, Divinity was much better improv'd, and they saw the others Mistake, with the ill Use made of it. Hence they plac'd Faith, and Assurance, as two distinct Articles in our Confession; and chose most proper and significant Expressions to describe Faith by, so as on the one Hand to avoid a *Popish* dry Assent, and an *Antinomian* Persuasion on the other. The same Course the body of orthodox Divines of that Day, and since, have follow'd.

M. R. *Havel* always describes the Essence of justifying Faith by receiving Christ, and such like Expressions; and condemns the *Seceders* Method of treating it. He tells us, *Fol p. 270. Edinb. Edifi.*
 ' there be many justified Persons in the World, who have no such
 ' Manifestation, Evidence or Assurance, that God laid their Iniquities
 ' upon Christ, and that he died to put away their Sins.----there be
 ' two Things belonging to a justified State, (1) that which is essen-
 ' tial and inseparable, *viz.* Faith uniting the Soul to Christ. (2)
 ' that which is contingent and separable, *viz.* Evidence and Persuasion
 ' of our Interest in him.' And *p. 471.* he adds, That which I think
 ' led our Antinomians into this Error (*viz.* of eternal Justification)
 ' was an unsound unwary Definition of Faith, which in their Youth,
 ' they had imbibed from their Catechisms, and other Systems, pass-
 ' ing without Contradiction----in those Days.' This unwary Defini-
 ' tion of Faith he speaks of, is the same we have been reasoning against.
 They concluded, if Faith be a Persuasion in the Heart of a Sinner that *Christ died for him, &c.* Sinners have an Interest in him before they believe, yea, from all Eternity, the Manifestation of which is given them in Believing.

M. R. *Rutherford* informs us, in his *Survey of Antinomianism, p. 140.* that *Saltmark*, a Ring-leader of the *Antinomians*, asserted, that
 ' there needs no more on our Side, to work or warrant Salvation to
 ' us, but to be persuaded, that Jesus Christ died for us, because Christ
 ' hath suffered, and God is satisfied.' In such a Persuasion, he, with

Jesus and Satan, and the whole of that Sect, used to describe Faith, which Mr. *Rutherford* in the forecited Piece, strongly opposes as a very detestable Doctrine, as well as sundry other Things in which our Authors seem to agree with them; which I wou'd think worth while to Transcribe here, with his Reasonings against them, did Time allow.

SUCH a Definition of Faith, has a Tendency to settle Persons in destructive Security, or open the Door to Looseness both in Principle and Practice, as Messieurs *Flavel* and *Rutherford* found was the Case in their Day. The Thoughts of being Happy are very agreeable to human Nature; therefore the most Licentious, who will by no Means receive Christ in all his Offices, are easily carried with the soothing Dream, *Christ died for me, loves me, &c.* The wild *Moravians*, and *New-England Separatists*, are living Evidences of this against whom our Ministers both preach'd and wrote, long before the *Seceders* came into this Country: Therefore our opposing the Doctrine, is not to reproach them, as some have been pleas'd to report; but to prevent a Scheme of Doctrine from taking Place, the woeful Effects of which, the Church has before now deeply groan'd under. I don't suppose they are Favourites of many of the hellish Absurdities of the rank *Antinomians* in Mr. *Flavel's* Day, or of the *Moravians* in our own; yet their Definition of Faith, is in itself as bad as the other's, and has the same dangerous Tendency; I therefore wonder, they are not afraid, lest the wild Production of *Antinomian* Principles might spring from it. The Soul's Closure with Jesus Christ, is a fundamental Point in practical Religion; the true understanding of which, is therefore a Matter of the greatest Importance. It ought to be so treated, as to avoid splitting on the dangerous Rocks of *Arminianism* and *Legality* on the one Hand, and *Antinomianism*, *delusive Fancies*, and *Persuasions* on the other.

I charitably hope, there are some good Men among the *Seceders*; but, alas! in too many Points they seem to know Nothing but Extremes; the true Reason of which I do not well know, but perhaps it may be this: Carrying their Opposition too far, even against some honest Men, they have made some dangerous Sallies; and having done so, will keep to their Point, therein evidencing the Truth of that Proverb, *It is hard for Clergymen to own their Mistake when they do amiss.*

OUR Author concludes his fine Piece of Reasoning on these Points, with the following Fling, p. 19, 20. 'It is no Wonder Men content themselves with a general Faith of the Gospel, who know Nothing of a particular Faith of the Law;---and had those Convictions that were so much in Vogue (at the Season our Authors call Reformation) when many cast themselves down upon the Ground as taken with Convulsions, Fits and Foaming; I say, had these been as genuine as they were apparent, they never could have been quashed comfortably,

fortably, without a Persuasion upon the Footing of the Gospel Offer and Promise, that they had a *Right to and Salvation by Christ.* This is no Doubt, to the Point! Our Author plainly shows, he wou'd rather go a Mile out of his Way, than miss an Opportunity of discharging his Stomach against our Ministers, and the Work some of them were honour'd with being the Instruments of. The fittest Terms he sees meet to express it in, is, by way of Disdain, *Convulsions, Fits, Foaming,* and *what our Authors call Reformation.* But neither the Work, nor Instruments of it, are one Jot the worse for all the Lumps of ill Nature he tosses off against them. Tho' he refuses his Assent to it as a Work of the Spirit of God; nay, tho' he rages against, and condemns it as a Delusion, I'm persuaded it will one Day be proven by a better Judge, and own'd as his own Work. And I'm persuaded many will praise God to Eternity, that ever they heard and felt such just, paticular and powerful Preaching of both Law and Gospel, as was heard and felt in the Season of what our Author has the Confidence to ridicule. I grant, indeed, there were too many hypocritical Pretenders to Religion at that Time, who were possess'd with delusive fanciful Dreams of Happiness, for which they had no other Ground of Hope than a strong Persuasion in their Minds, that *Christ was their own, and died for them;* and as their Exercise appear'd then to be delusive, their Practice since discovers, that they have no true Sense of God or Religion on their Souls. The greatest Part of delusive Exercise at that Time, was of this Kind; and Professors of this Stamp were the most giddy, and greatest Reproach to Religion of any I know amongst us.

THE third Particular of Mr. *Cuthbertson's* Doctrine, *viz. that it is the Duty of a graceless Person, knowing himself to be such, to be persuaded that all the Promises of the Covenant of Grace belong to him, and shall be made out to him in particular,* is, (as the Presbytery observ'd,) so closely connected with his Notions of the Gospel Offer, and *saving Faith,* as to stand or fall with them. And tho' we did not charge the *Seceders* with maintaining this Doctrine, yet Mr. G. espouses, and by dropping Hints endeavours to vindicate it, while he condemns us upon the Point, p. 78, 79, &c. We briefly shew the Scope of an absolute Promise, as it respects the Graceless, from *Ezek. xxxvi. 26. A new Heart will I give you, &c.* he mistakes, nor does he once speak to our Arguments according to the proper State of them. He singles out the following Sentence from among other Things we say upon the Point, *viz. ' what appears particularly to be the Design of the holy Spirit in the forecited Passage, and those of like Import, is to teach us, that God will bestow renewing and converting Grace upon those whom he has appointed to eternal Life, that they may be qualified for it.'* And pray! is not this one Design of them? Mr. G. knows we did not say it was the only Design of them; for we added more. But if he be true, it is no Part of their De-
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Again; for, by this Doctrine he says, we *darken and hamper the Gospel Offer*, p. 82. --- *take away the Key of Knowledge, and hinder Sinners from entering into the Kingdom of Heaven*, p. 84. --- *make the Decree of Election disagree with the universal Offer of the Gospel*, p. 85. --- *Seclude Faith from being a necessary Mean to Interest us in the Promises, and cut off the Necessity of the Means of Grace entirely*, p. 80. &c. Round Charges indeed!

IT may be proper here to inform the Reader, that the following Sentence, which would have render'd the Sense more obvious, *viz. to encourage Sinners to make Application to God for that Grace, by the free unlimited Offer of it made in the Promise*, was by an Oversight left out, but not by any Neglect of the Presbytery. Nor had we an Opportunity of correcting the Mistake, till the Books were printed off, and a Number of them dispers'd. But what the Presbytery say upon the Point, abstracted from the foremention'd Sentence, will by no Means afford our Author's Consequences. Were Mr. G. *exprofesso* treating the Decree of Election, he ought, as a very native Use to be made of the Doctrine, to give an universal Offer of Salvation thro' Christ to Sinners, urge them to comply with it, and fly to God for Refuge, &c. The Reason is obvious, God in publishing this Decree, exhibits Salvation to *all* guilty Sinners, as well as reveals his gracious Design to save a Number of them. Now there is no other Method for any to prove their Election, than by embracing the Gospel Offer, and obtaining the Knowledge of their doing so. Seeing, then, this is the Case; and seeing the Call of the Gospel excludes none, the foresaid Publication shou'd be urg'd as a powerful Motive to excite the Unregenerate to believe in Christ, and give all Diligence to make their Calling and Election sure, as well as a sufficient Ground for them to go upon herein. But, it seems, our Author would make no such Use of the Doctrine; for (according to him) it *darkens and hampers the Gospel Offer*: Consequently, he must either reject the Doctrine entirely, or deny that any Application of it may be made to the Unregenerate.

NOW, if the Doctrine of Election, when treated as a principal Theme, affords the foresaid Application, it easily follows, that such a Use may be made of a Gospel Doctrine, which only touches the Point indirectly; and therefore, that Mr. G's Consequences are not only fore'd, but false. It is evident, the Presbytery's Scope is to shew that as God, in Christ, is executing his reconciling Design towards Sinners, so the absolute Promises signify his Will to bestow reconciling Grace on a Number of them, to fit them for Glory; and that as an encouraging Ground for all of them, humbly to plead for a Share of it, and betake themselves by Faith to him for Refuge. We might indeed, have said Sinners; and if we had, this indefinite Expression shou'd (as in all Propositions where the Matter predicated is to us consistent or uncertain) be understood with a particular Limitation: For,

tho' God will bestow Grace upon some of every Rank and Condition among Men; yet not upon a every Individual of them, seeing but few are chosen of the many who are called, *Mat. 20, 16.* And if in an absolute Promise this Limitation be necessarily employ'd with Respect to JEHOVAH's Design, or the Obligations he has graciously brought himself under to bestow Grace, where's the Error in expressing it? We might have said, some of Mankind, which wou'd have been strictly true. And if some, why not those whom he has appointed to eternal Life? which is the same Thing; only the Latter seems a little more explicit in declaring the Truth. And, indeed, to be particular on the Point was the more necessary, as a Scheme tending to promote the Doctrine of universal Redemption, was set on Foot.

Moreover, we added, that in the absolute Promises, God vindicates this Work (*viz.* of Grace) to be his own peculiar Property, that herein he Acts without the Endeavours of the Creature co-operating with him as an efficient Cause; and without Respect to any Thing in it as a meritorious Cause entitling it to such a Mercy: Therefore with sovereign Majesty and Glory he says, *I WILL DO IT.* Now while this Representation of the Case, gives a Dash to legal Pride, or Conceit of Power and Merit in the Creature, it greatly magnifies the Power, Sovereignty and Freedom of Grace; and affords a noble Encouragement to distress'd Souls, afflicted with a Sense of Weakness and Unworthiness, to come to God for Strength, and the Riches of his Grace. Are they Sinful? God has publish'd his Design to bestow Grace upon guilty Sinners, to prepare a Number of them for Glory. Are they Weak?---It is he that works all our Works in us, *Isa. 26, 12.* Are they vile and unworthy?---The impulsive Cause of Grace, is no good Disposition in us, but his meer Good Pleasure, *Phil. 2, 13.* Hence we concluded, that it is the Duty of all unconverted Sinners, seeing Christ has made the Attonement, and Grace is infinitely free, to fly to God for Refuge, with humble Hope in his Mercy; pleading importunately that of meer Mercy for Christ's sake, he would bestow his Grace upon them; acknowledging that if he did, it wou'd be an Instance of unmerited Favour; but that he wou'd be righteous, and his Throne Guiltless, if he received them for ever. Now, here are rational Scriptural Premises, and a rational Scriptural Conclusion. Yet our Author has the Confidence to assert, that our Conclusion is only a spacious Appearance tending to mislead Sinners in the weighty Matter of their Conversion, p. 83, and that in this solemn Direction there is not a Word of a Promise, p. 84. tho' the whole of it is a just Conclusion drawn from the Doctrines contain'd in absolute Promises. Our Author also tallies q. 11.

asserts, p. 82. that our Doctrine, instead of obviating, enforces Satan's Temptations. And adds, *there was little need of Ministers Declarations and Presbyterial Deeds to support the Temptation.*

Our Westminster Assembly are as particular on this Point as we: For they assert, *Cont. Faith, Chap. vii. §. iii.* that God promises his holy Spirit; (but to whom? why) 'unto all those that are ordained unto eternal Life, to make them willing and able to believe.' And *Jo. 6. 37.* says Christ, *all that the Father giveth me, shall come to me.* In this absolute Promise, we find Grace to come to, or believe in Christ, is promised only to those who were given him by the Father. And yet in the Application of it, he adds, as an Encouragement to all guilty Sinners to attempt believing, *him, (i. e. every one) that cometh, I will in no wise cast out.* Our Author may then say, *there was little need of Christ's Declarations, of Scriptural and confessional Deeds (if I may borrow the Phrase) to support the Temptation;--* that the Doctrine of Christ and our Divines *banquets and clouds the Gospel Offer, &c.*

A Promise, in the most strict and proper Sense of the Term, is an Obligation from one Person to another, whereby the Giver is bound to perform what he engag'd to the Receiver; and the Receiver may claim the Performance as his Right, which may not in Justice be detain'd from him. Now an Obligation of this kind, God has in adorable Condescension, brought himself under to Believers, and to them only; for *the Promise by Faith of Jesus Christ--is given to them that believe, Gal. 3. 22.* they only are Christ, and Heirs according to the Promise, *v. 29.* And Mr. G himself acknowledges, 'tis by Faith we take Possession of, and attain to an Interest in the Promise, p. 80. And if so, Graceless Sinners have no Interest in the Promises; consequently, it is not their Duty to be perswaded, that they belong to them, and will be made out to them in particular.

If it were their Duty to be so perswaded, 'they must believe that Contradictions are true; that they are in Danger and not in Danger at the same Time;--and that the Lord has brought himself under Obligations to bestow saving Grace upon all the Unconverted, so that they have an actual Claim of Right to it as their Privilege, by Virtue of a Promise made to them; and that as a Foundation of such a Perswasion: Which is not true. For, as the Presbytery assert, 'if this be the Case, all may claim it as their Privilege, or some only. If all, then if any will be damned,--God has fail'd of performing what he had oblig'd himself to do; such have Ground to plead, that he has broken his Promise to them: A too shocking Thought! If some only, then we ask where is that Privilege to be found that they have beyond others? &c.' The

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meer Publication of the Gospel, can give none of its hearers a Privilege, which others of them do not enjoy.

But if Mr. G. be true, 'no such shocking Thought as a Breach of divine Promise, which we talk of, can take Place.' His thus upbraiding us with this Phrase, shows him either to be ignorant of our Arguments, which he does not once represent, nor attempt to answer, according to the true state of them; or else, that he believes the absolute Promises, not only 'contain an Offer of Grace---to every Individual, and the Obligations *Jehovah* brings himself under, to bestow it upon (some) SINNERS OF ALL KINDS, (who are particularly known only to himself;) but also, that he has brought himself under Obligations to bestow Grace upon every individual of all Kinds. Now, if this be his Sentiment, I do not see how he will free it from the Charge of universal Redemption, or be able to reconcile it to his Acknowledgement, that we 'attain to an Interest in the Promise by Faith.'

But Mr. G. insinuates, p. 80. that we deny the Use of Faith as a Mean in taking Possession of, and interesting us in the Promises: Which is false; for we assert, that they only who believe, receive the Promise of eternal Inheritance, Heb. 9. 15. Nor do I know upon what our Author founds his Innuendo, except it be our asserting, in Opposition to an Objection, we apprehended might possibly be advanc'd against our Doctrine, that 'it wou'd be quite foreign to the Purpose to say,---God has bound himself to fulfil the Promise only to those that make a believing Application of it, and therefore it is for want of such an Application that many come short of the Blessing contain'd in it? But our Author takes Care not to mention the Arguments by which this Assertion is supported. We added, this wou'd be just to say, God has bound himself to bestow Faith only on Believers;---seeing those only who have Faith can believingly apply a Promise: But the Question in Debate supposes a Person to be altogether destitute of Faith, and respects the first Implantation of Grace in the Soul.' God first plants a Principle of Grace in the Soul by the Influences of his holy Spirit, whereby it is regenerated and dispos'd to believe; and then by the same Influences draws this Principle into Act, enabling the Person actually to apply the Promises, and receive Christ exhibited in them. Hence, according to the absolute Promise, he gives Grace to believe, before a Person can believe, or lay hold upon a Promise: Otherwise, as the Presbytery observe, 'a Person must have saving Grace to apply an absolute Promise for the first Implantation of that Grace he is already possessed of, which will naturally run into this Absurdity, viz. that he is both graceless

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graceless and gracious at the same time: as he applies the
 ' absolute Promise for that Grace, he is destitute of, he is
 ' *graceless*; and as he applies in Faith, *gracious*.' The Principle
 and Act of Faith are quite distinct; and the former is ante-
 cedent in order of Nature to the latter; but it is by the latter
 we apply a Promise, and receive a Title to all the Blessings
 contain'd in it. Hence it appears, that, instead of denying, we
 assert the Instrumentality of Faith in laying hold on, and in-
 teresting us in the Promises; and that the Dispute here prop-
 erly is, whether we must Act Faith before, and in order to the
 implanting of Grace in our Hearts; and whether God has
 bound himself by Promise, to bestow this Grace on all grace-
 less Sinners; which we deny. And had Mr. G. been so hap-
 py as to take up, or so honest as to speak still to the proper State
 of the Question, he might have sav'd both himself and me
 much needless Expence of Time and Labour.

Our Author adds, p. 80. ' what doth hinder any one of
 ' Gospel Hearers, from *proving the Lord*, in a Way of believing,
 ' *if he will not pour on him a Blessing, Mat. 3, 10.* And tho' he
 ' cannot believe, yet at God's Call he ought (as he may essay
 ' Prayer, Reading, Hearing the Word, &c.) to essay believing
 ' *or stretching out the withered Hand, and who knoweth, but in so*
 ' *doing, the Lord will give Strength, and restore the Hand,*
 ' *Mark, 3, 2.* Very true. Nor have the Presbytery said one
 Word against attempting to believe in the Use of Means, but
 the contrary. We know, that tho' the Lord acts with a So-
 vereign Freedom in dispensing Grace, yet *for this will he be en-*
quired of by the House of Israel, to do it for them, Ezek. 36, 37.
 And therefore, we have directed all unconverted Sinners
 to fly to God for Refuge, with humble Hope in his Mercy, plead-
 ing importunately, &c. But the Question is, whether, upon their
 best Endeavours, God is certainly bound to give them his
 ' Grace? I grant, ' there is more to say in Behalf of God's
 ' Grace, that a Sinner in this Method will succeed, than can
 ' be said to the contrary,' yet after all they can do, it is still
 but a *who knoweth* but the Lord will give Strength, &c. There
 is no infallible Connection between the best Endeavours of the
 Unconverted, and the Lord's bestowing them his Grace. We
 readily allow, and urge the Necessity of Duties; but still we
 wou'd have them put in their proper Place. Nor do I know
 the Reason of our Author's Insinuation to the contrary, ex-
 cept it be our asserting, either, that it wou'd not lessen Mr.
 C's Difficulty to say, ' that graceless Sinners fail of obtaining
 ' their Right, because they don't ask it, and attempt, to be-
 ' lieve;' or, that in the Affair of our Conversion, God ' acts
 ' without

‘ without the Endeavours of the Creature co-operating with
 ‘ him as an efficient Cause.’ Now if we take Mr. G’s Words
 as a Reply to the former, then he must believe, that upon Sin-
 ner’s ‘ Endeavours God is bound to give them Grace:-- That Sovere-
 ‘ eign free Grace is dependent on the Acts of the Creature.’ If to
 the latter, he must believe, that JAHOVAH’s peculiar Property, viz.
 to work in us, as an efficient Cause, both to will and to do,
Phil. 2, 13. is, at least, in Part, given to the Creature: Both
 which are rank *Arminianism*. And if our Author intended to
 vindicate neither of these, he only quarrels his own Fiction,
 and nothing advanc’d by the Presbytery, as the Scope of our
 Arguments plainly makes appear.

I readily Grant, that Faith and Repentance, are not only
 Duties enjoin’d, but also Privileges contain’d in the Dispen-
 sation of the Gospel. But then, are they Privileges God pro-
 mises actually to confer on all Sinners who hear the Gospel?
 or only contain’d in the Promise by Way of Exhibition and
 Offer to them all? if the latter Mr. G. opposes the Presbytery
 in vain. If the former, there is more than *a cubo knows*, or a
 peradventure they may obtain saving Grace upon their asking
 it, and Attempts to believe: For God will certainly bestow it
 on them all; or else he will be chargeable with a *Breach of Pro-
 mise: A too shocking Thought.*

Our Author professes, p. 83. He knows not how any can
 (according to us) be guilty of the Sin of Unbelief: --for if they
 believe that God will confer saving Grace upon the Elect, they believe
 what is particularly the Design of the Spirit to teach, &c. But the
 Presbytery never judg’d, that a Belief that God will confer
 saving Grace upon the Elect, is the justifying Act of Faith; nor
 yet a Belief that he will confer it upon me; nor are we fond
 of imitating those who are of a different Judgment on this
 Point. But as we believe that Faith consists in the Assent of
 the Mind to the Truth of Gospel Offers and Promises, and the
 Consent of the Will to take Christ exhibited in these; so we
 believe, that Unbelief, the direct Opposite of Faith, formally con-
 sists in discrediting the Truth of the Gospel, and rejecting Christ
 offered in it. And, I fear, upon this Plan, the greatest Num-
 ber of Gospel Hearers, will be condemned as Unbelievers.

Mr. G. can’t dismiss his Subject before he gives a Fling at
 the Conversions that have been carry’d on amongst us, as the Ef-
 fect of our Preaching. He asserts p. 84. that upon our Plan,
 Sinners ‘ must set about framing them, (viz. Christ’s Attone-
 ‘ ment and infinite Freedom of Grace) in their Fancy, and so
 ‘ make

‘ make to themselves Idol Saviours, Salvations and Conversions.’ And adds, ‘ alas! there is awful Ground to Fear, that within these *twenty* Years past, there have been too many of such horrible Conversions!’ No Doubt, our Author thinks, this is to the very Point. And, indeed, so it is; to discover the Ground of his Stomach; which I presume, is the chief Discovery it will make to the World. He shou’d learn, not to speak so immodestly in his Passion about the Conversions that have been these Years past. Were he properly acquainted with the powerful Preaching of the Gospel that has been amongst us, and the Conversions, that, thro’ Grace, have follow’d it, he cou’d not view his Angry Expressions, without a horrible Reflection on himself for them.

P. 86. Our Author compares us to the *Weather Cock*. But why are we *Weather Cocks*? ‘ We want (says he p. 85.) ‘ a Change of Principles and Doctrines every other Year:’ which is false: Our Principles and Doctrines are the same they were. Well, but some of us a few Years ago, ‘ valued the *Gospel Sonnets* to be worth their Weight in Gold.’ What then? I doubt not but the same Persons do still esteem them to be worth, not only their Weight, but the Weight of Ten Thousand Worlds in Gold for the precious Truths contain’d in them; as they also do the Writings of sundry other worthy Authors, whom the *Antiburghers* wou’d deliver to Satan were it in their Power, as they did the Author of the *Sonnets* and his Brethren. We believe Mr. *Erskine* was an able and pious Minister, tho’ he was too far carry’d away with Party Prejudice; as Good Men sometimes are. And the chief Credit ever the *Seceders* had in this Country, was by Means of the *Erskine’s* Writings, whom our Authors, and their Party, treat as *Heathen Men* and *Publicans*. Tho’ we esteem’d many Things in their Writings as really excellent, yet we never approv’d of those things in the *Seceder’s* Testimony, wherein they, with others, went astray; yet there was no Necessity to give publick Warning of those Errors, until they were urg’d and propagated amongst us. I shall let what has been said serve as an Answer to their Query, who ask us, why we do not join our Authors, seeing we approv’d of the *Erskine’s* Writings? ----- until they shall be able to give a satisfying Answer to the following Queries, *viz.* Why they deliver’d the *Erskines* and their Brethren to Satan? And why they impose Terms of Communion which the greatest Number of honest *Presbyterian* Ministers cannot agree to.

(III)

I have insisted a little the longer on these Points, as a proper Understanding of the Doctrines of Grace in Dispute, is a Matter of very great Importance to Mankind. And I'm really sorry there shou'd be Occasion given for Disputes of this Kind, that have been long since so well adjusted.

I shall now proceed to take a Review of some Instances of our Authors Conduct, and their Sentiments in a few other Particulars. And, as I have been so tedious on the former Particulars. I shall be as brief as may be in this Part of my Answer--It may in general be observ'd, that our Authors rail, shuffle and evade, instead of giving a direct and fair Answer: Sometimes they seem to deny, and presently to vindicate the Particulars with which we charge them. They dwell much on Recriminations: *If we be bad, you are as bad,* seems to be a considerable Burden of their Arguments.

They accuse us of not following the Footsteps of the Flock; and yet when a Number of the best of the Flock are quoted, they say, Mr. D. and we determine our Controversy only by the Judgment of good Men, which is not Fact. But the Truth of the Matter is, they are willing to borrow an Argument from Authority, when they think it makes for their Purpose; but don't seem at all dispos'd to allow others the same Privilege, and yet will condemn them for want of it: So that whatever Course we take, it seems impossible to avoid their Exclamations. Mr. G. asserts, Preface, p. 5. That our main Weapons are only MEN'S NOTIONS and COUNTRY TALK, which will do no more Execution than *firing with blunt Powder*. We have already proven the first Part of our Author's Charge to be false. Nor is the Second more just. For we have taken the chief Part of our Charges against them from their own Writings; or we our selves have certainly known that they were really just. A few, indeed, we had from others; and these were so much of a Piece with what we knew our selves, that we gave the more easy Credit to them. But suppose what our Author says were true, I query, if the using such Armour will avail them any thing, more than us? *Mutato Nomine, de se Fabula narratur!* Their *unprecedented* Terms of Communion, are founded only on MEN'S NOTIONS, viz. the *Seceder's* own. Their Charges against us are unjustly fix'd, and injudiciously collected from COUNTRY TALK. These are the well disciplin'd Soldiers, who promis'd they would reject such Armour, and come forth against us with the SWORD OF THE LORD, AND OF GIDEON!--Big Words!--unperform'd.

They give out, and others receive it, that we are Enemies to the Cause of God, for no other Reason that I can find, but because we oppose their Errors, and vindicate ourselves. They feel quickly when any thing touches themselves; yet seem dispos'd to show no Mercy to others. They complain much of ill Usage from others; but don't seem once to reflect on the bad Treatment they themselves give. Mr. G. compares us to raging *Sanballat* and *Gashmu*, who reported Falsehoods of *Nehemiah* and the *Jews*; and to the Reporters in *Jeremiah* 15. Time who held him in Derision, p. 62. But he would have spoke nearer the Truth, had he told us, they unreasonably cause *Divisions and Offences*; and by fair Speeches deceive the Simple, for which Reasons we were oblig'd to mark them, *Rom.* 16, 17, 18. And give Place by Subjection, no not for an Hour, that the Truth of the Gospel may continue with us, *Gal.* 2, 5. They are really both able and willing to return with double Interest, all the Injury they at any Time complain of. They are as disrespectful and haughty, bitter and deceitful Writers as I have been acquainted with. They receive Reports from disaffected Persons and busy Bodies, who are destitute of Honesty and Judgment to represent the true State of the Case: These they scatter with a liberal Hand, and when they don't care to speak openly, will yet freely insinuate to the Prejudice of others, what is really unjust: Report say they, and we will report it. Yet what they speak unjustly, and (I can't help thinking) spitefully, must be view'd as Zeal for the Cause of God; but whatever others say to detect such Conduct, must be look'd upon as flowing from Enmity against it.

Mr. G. says we receive Reports from busy Bodies, &c. p. 105. If the Authors of the *Some says* are busy Bodies, they are the busy Bodies of their own Party; some of them, at least, appear'd to be well dispos'd to that Interest; nor do I suppose Mr. G. wou'd care to tell them to their Faces, that they are busy Bodies. Whatever Harm they design'd us, I believe they meant none to *Seceders*; but rather intended to serve their Interests; not knowing that the Intelligent wou'd easily discover such Sayings to be fair Speeches, and crafty Wiles to catch and seduce the Simple. To detect such Conduct, and teach those who are guilty of it more Honesty and Candor, was the only Reason why we attacked it so openly.

Pages 60, 61, 62. Mr. G. remarks on the Character we gave those of our Hearers who left us to join them. He denies that those who join them are generally and visibly ignorant, but *nourish and prejudiced*. Who they are that do generally join them, we do not certainly know, nor have we meddled with their

their Character; but those by whom they were *most* *caress'd* among us, we do know, and have given a just (tho' short) Description of their Character: Therefore Mr. G. falsely asserts, that our Argument has either *no Sense in it*; or else *it equally militates against every Denomination of Ministers whose adherents are not generally the most serious and judicious Christians.*

The Wickedness of some Professors, I grant, will not prove the religious Cause they espouse to be bad; but to fish after Persons of an indifferent Character, receive and shelter them from deserved Censure, will prove their Conduct to be bad who are guilty of such a Practice, and that they are fond of encreasing their Party by any means: And it is really lamentable that Mr. G. by such Conduct, shou'd disserve the Interests of Religion, and encourage Giddy, Inconscientious Persons in their Wickedness and Folly. He tells us, there are of our Communion, as well as others, *Abundance of naughty Persons*: Which is a doleful Truth. It is also true, that these are encourag'd in their *Naughtinejs*, by the open Door the Seceders have set them: They can readily escape the Dint of Censure, when call'd to account for their Faults by us, and gratify their wicked, revengetul and capricious Humours, by turning to those who are glad to receive them, with which we are sure to be threatned in the first Place, in order to bring us to their Measures. Some of them have told us, they were better pleas'd with our Preaching than the *Seceders*; yet wou'd not continue in Communion with us because of the Impurity of some fellow Member; tho' unhappily they had Communion where they went with those who were guilty of as great, and perhaps greater, Impurities. Others have also said, they esteem'd our Communion before the *Seceder's*; yet threatned they wou'd leave us and join them, if such and such things were not done so and so. When they have been desir'd to appeal to the Presbytery, if they thought they were too severely handled in the Session,---have refus'd, saying, they did not want to be troublesome; tho' Litigiousness be their general Charecteristic. But the Truth of the Matter is, these Persons wou'd not be satisfied with having the End of Discipline answer'd, except their Personal Grudge was fully gratify'd; and being justly dissident of their Cause, chose rather to go where they might be receiv'd on Terms that pleas'd them better, than taking any proper, regular Steps. Such People wou'd quibble, twist and endeavour to deceive us to our Faces: What wou'd they not then do with Strangers? I do not beleive they ever told our Authors the principal Charge we had against them.

I have known some People as opposite to *Seceders* as any, till they were offended, and found some Bar laid in their way of obtaining Privileges: Then they began to commend their Principles, and find Fault with us: We were not pure enough for them, because we bring not doubtful Matters into our Terms of Communion, and require People to condemn by Oath the Actions of departed Saints: doubtful foreign things in Religion, suits them much better than personal Piety, and a conscientious Regard to known Duties.

The *Seceders* may believe that such Persons are sincere in their Profession, if they please; but for my Part I know them too well to be able to afford them so much Charity. Mr. *Durham* in his *HEAVEN upon EARTH*, p. 233, gives a pertinent Re-proof to them. It is (says he) an Evil in this Time, that extrinsic and remote things trouble some so much, while the mean time, known Sins and duties are but little minded and laid to heart; as if forsooth, the *Consciences* of such were more delicate and tender than the *Consciences* of the Saints of old: nay there sare not a few, who will disdain to be challenged for the neglect of uncontroverted duties, who yet make a great deal of business and noise about these things, that are but of little moment, as if the whole and sum of Religion lay in them: this certainly shows a great deal of untenderness and slighting of Conscience whatever pretensions may be made to the contrary. And while a person is much, or wholly taken up with an extrinsic or very little thing, which, it may be, is but a meer circumstance, and is more affected with, and exercised about that, than with and about another of far greater concernment; it is not sure any awe of God, nor of *Conscience*, but some what flowing from the Man's own Inclination or Interest, that so mightily influenceth and stirreth him in the one, beyond what he is in the other.

Mr. G. denies p. 44, 45. that ever he argu'd that the late religious Appearances among us were not the Work of God, because the Ministers who were most instrumental in carrying it on, insisted on the Necessity and Importance of Ministers being gracious? And yet, in Conversation with the Rev. Mr. ROAN (other intelligent Persons being present) he gave the Substance of this Reasoning, as one of six Reasons to prove that these religious Appearances were not for God. When the Directory for Ordination was show'd to and the Judgment of the *Westminster Divines* alledg'd against him, viz. that the Presbytery should examine the Candidate concerning the Grace of God in him, he read the Words going before and following after, and pass'd over that Clause, concerning the Grace of God in him. Being reminded that he ought to read the whole fairly, he reply'd, that Clause only respected the Young Man's own Account

Account of his Exercises, wherein he might deal hypocritically? By which it is evident, he evaded the Argument, and discovered an unwillingness to own, that it is a Presbytery's Duty to examine a Candidate in this Point. Moreover, Messieurs *Campbel* and *Roan*, being in Conversation with Mr. G. and his Brother *A.* Mr. *Campbel* ask'd them, whether their Presbytery took any Care as to their Candidates, that they might admit only such as are religious? Mr. G. reply'd with some warmth, *Yes, too much of that?*

His Judgment on this Head farther appears from the following Testimony: ' I being in Conference with Mr. G. said to him, that a Candidate shou'd be examin'd of the Grace of God that is in him, before he shou'd be ordain'd. Mr. G. deny'd it, and said, that I cou'd not prove it out of the Scriptures. And further said, *Judas* was sent out to preach with the rest of the Disciples. I answer'd, Nothing was ascrib'd to him when he came in, or when they all came in. Mr. G. answer'd, neither was there any Thing ascrib'd to a good many more of them, &c.

Given under my Hand, this 14th of May, 1756.

York County,
Chanceford Township.

Robert Morton.

The Apostles were careful to put into the Ministry pious Men, that were full of the Holy Ghost; and our *Westminster* Assembly judg'd, that Presbyteries shou'd be punctual on this Point. But its like Mr. G. thinks otherwise.

He owns, it is Ministers Duty and Interest to be pious, both as their own Soul's Advantage, and by making the Work of the Ministry more pleasant to them; and tells us, he has said, --that insisting on real Grace as absolutely necessary to the Office of the Ministry, was delusive. But the Question is not whether real Grace be absolutely necessary to the very Being of a Minister, or to his Soul's Comfort and Advantage. But it precisely is, whether saving Grace be an absolutely necessary Part of the Call of God to the Ministry, and highly necessary (as a Mean) to a Minister's Success in his Office. Now, I believe Mr. G. must bring us a new Bible, before he be able to prove the Negative. ' A wooden Leg, (as he observ's) may be useful to a lame Man, but it will more readily deceive than the ' natural Leg; nor is a wooden leg'd Officer a very proper Person to send into the Field. So tho' 'tis possible a Graceless Minister may be of some Use in the Church; yet is he apter to deceive Souls,

Souls, and betray his Master's Interests, than one who is Gracious. The great End of Christ's appointing the Gospel-ministry, was to carry on a Treaty of Peace between the offended Majesty of Heaven and rebel Men, 2 Cor. v. 19, 20. But graceless Ministers being Rebels against the Prince of Peace, will not be faithful and hearty in promoting this noble Design. They have in all Ages been the Plagues and Scourges of the Church, coming frequently to the People with this Curse, *they shall not profit them at all, because they ran and God has not sent, nor commanded them.* Jer. xxiii. 21, 32.

As to Mr. A's Sentiments respecting the Obligation of the Covenants, deliver'd in a Sermon at *Middle-Ottorara*, he denies the Point as we have represented it, yet acknowledges the same Thing in his own Mode, p. 23, 24. What our Informers told us of the Affair, is fully contain'd in Mr. A's Concessions, tho' they cou'd not remember the whole Paragraph from which it was taken; therefore it is at best but trifling for Mr. A. to shuffle and deny the Affair. He seemingly denies p. 27, that any of them reason'd from Parents Engagements at the Baptism of their Children, to prove that we are under Obligations to renew the *Solemn League*, &c. But Mr. G. reason'd the Point with myself from that very Topic. It seems as if he was suspicious of the Validity of this Argument, tho' Mr. G. makes use of it in their Performance, and Mr. A. himself in vain attempts to vindicate it: Or else he endeavours to represent us as publishing Falshoods, because we tell the Truth of them.

We observ'd, that their asserting the formal Obligation of the Covenants upon us, and yet not binding Persons to the Form, but altering it from a *national* to a *Synodical* one, is (according to their Argument) to renounce their baptismal Engagements. Mr. A. instead of vindicating their Sentiments from this Absurdity, in a coarse and doderal Strain, rails and quibbles: ' This is, (says he,) a Piece of the most senseless Stuff that ever presented itself to my View, in all my Reading. Were we ever engaged to bring Persons to an Acknowledgment of the Oath of God by outward Force and Violence, whether they would or not? p. 34. Whatever senseless Stuff is in the Case, it does not flow from our Reasoning, but from their Sentiments and Practice. We never believ'd it was their Duty to use external Force or Violence; nor yet that a few private Persons cou'd formally renew the Covenants. Neither did we think they wanted to bind People formally to them

them, even tho' of themselves they were most willing to enter into such an Obligation; otherwise they never wou'd have so warmly contended this Point with the old Covenanters.

But as Mr. *A.* supposes, a denying that we are formally bound by the Covenants to renew them, is equivalent to renouncing, or believing that we may renounce our baptismal Obligation; we think, that his Sentiments herein, is inconsistent with his not binding People formally to the Covenants, and is (according to his own Argument) equivalent to renouncing his baptismal Obligations; and if our Authors Argument be true, this Consequence will inevitably follow.

Mr. *A.* with his usual Tartness asserts, p. 36. that 'it never possessed the Mind of a Member of the Associate Synod, to deny the reduplicating Clause of the Covenants &c. But Mr. *A.* himself, was deliberately ask'd in my hearing by one of my Brethren, if they look'd upon the reduplicating Clause to bring the Confession of Sins into their Covenant as a Part of it, so that People were thereby sworn to contend against all the Things mention'd in it as Evil; and he as deliberately answer'd in the Negative. Some may be surpriz'd that there shou'd be such a Contradiction between us in plain Matter of Fact; and People will probably believe just as they affect. But whatever Mr. *A.*'s Reasons were, I am as certain he express'd himself as above related, as I am of any Conversation I ever heard; For I took strict Notice both of the Question and Answer in the mean Time; and afterwards thought on it with Surprize, when I view'd over their Covenant Bond more particularly.

It also appear'd very probable, that they either continu'd to deny, or conceal the Point: For after they had preach'd and convers'd among the People several Months; Nay, after Mr. *A.* appointed a Day to declare their Principles, tho' many cou'd distinctly remember, that he asserted particularly their Adherence to the Confession of Faith, and the binding Obligation of the Covenants, yet I have not met with one Person, to my Knowledge, who heard them assert that they swate People to contend against all the Evils mention'd in their Confession of Sins, as a Term of Communion, until their Book was printed, or that they wou'd make such swearing a Term in this Country; but on the contrary, sundry of their adherents have branded Mr. *Delap* as a Liar, for asserting that they made such a Term. But I believe the Truth of the Matter is, they judg'd it impolitic to be very explicate on the Point, until they had form'd their Party.

It is really surprizing to find what trifling Evasions our Author uses, to excuse their Non-compliance with our Invitation to a Conference with us, p. 37, 38. ' That we refused to attend their Presbytery (says he) is true, but that we then, or since, retuled a Conference with them, is notoriously false: ' It is not notoriously false, but certainly true, that (as the Presbytery assert) ' Tho' they were invited by this Presbytery to a Conference, and they were in the Neighbourhood when we met, they refus'd to come; ' for they refus'd to accept the Invitation we gave them by two of our Members appointed for that Purpose.

Our Author adds, ' I then told such of their Number as made the Proposal, that if any of their Presbytery wanted Conversation with us, they might have it where we then stay'd.' Very true: Nor did we ever say, or yet think, that they had so far cast off all civility, as to refuse Conversation with those who go to them: But whether was it more proper, that a whole large Presbytery shou'd go to them, or that they shou'd meet us at the appointed Place of meeting? Had they been greater Persons than they were, more cou'd not reasonably be requir'd of us, than to send two of our Number to invite them to meet and confer with us.

He tries in the next Place to amuse us with a jingling, imperfect Induction: ' I know (says he) no other Way any can attend a Presbytery but either as a *Member*,---*Commissioner*---*Spectator*,---*Pannel*, or to *seek Redress of Grievances*: Did he forget that a Man may attend a Presbytery in order to come upon Trials for the Ministry? To join himself to it as a Member, if he is already in the Ministry? Or to give and receive mutual Intelligencies in a friendly Manner? It was for the End last mention'd we invited them to a Conference with us, and this Mr. A. was not ignorant of: For we told them by our Delegates, that we wou'd for a while postpone our presbyterial Business to converse with them in a free friendly Manner, if they wou'd accept our Invitation; and that with a View to learn their Sentiments about Religion, and inform them of ours. Yet Mr. A. asserts we acted from ' subtile Artifice to hook them into a Contradiction by acknowledging us as a regular constituted Presbytery; ' which is an invidious, groundless Surmise. Our real Design was to see whether we cou'd in Duty receive them, or they join with us that another Division in the Church might, if possible, be prevented. But their fatal Bigotry rendered our sincere Attempt abortive; they wou'd not so much as meet with us, lest by their Presence they shou'd acknowledge

us a regular Presbytery Mr. *S.* can never prove his Insinuation to the contrary to be true. But suppose he could, can he never prove, that their bare Attendance to confer with us, wou'd acknowledge us as a regular Court of Christ, but upon the Principles of the most dogmatical Sectarians. He wou'd not hear the most Orthodox Minister preach occasionally, who was not of a Mind with him in his Peculiarities, lest hereby he shou'd approve of those Things wherein he dissents from him. But if Mr. *S.*'s Principles in these Points be just, then, by the Conjunction of Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Erastians and Independents in the *Westminster* Assembly, each of these Sects acknowledg'd all the rest as regular Courts of Christ in every Point, and approv'd of every Thing in which they dissented from each other.

Upon the whole, it farther appears, the Remark we made on these Gentlemen is just, *viz.* that they are *bigotted Sectarians*, came with Design to set up a Church within a Church, and make a separate Party. To meet and confer with us did not answer their End so well, as to creep into Houses and lead away the Simple, receive the Prejudic'd, and scatter Falshoods. Hence also, those who blame us for not countenancing and encouraging them, may easily see who are most to blame in this Point, they or we. We cou'd not encourage them consistent with our Ordination Vows to maintain the Unity of the Church in Opposition to Schism.

Mr. *S.* endeavours to clear himself of the Charge of Schism, but I know not what he wou'd do for Argument, were it not for his old Trade of Recriminations, mistaking the Question, and Thread bare Story of good Systems of Logic. 'I shou'd
' (says he, p. 38.) have been oblig'd to take with their Charge
' (*viz.* of Schism) if I had behav'd towards any of the Presby-
' terian Denomination, as our Authors have lately done toward
' their Brethren; imagining them to be a Croud of graceless
' Wolves in Sheeps Cloathing, and running into their Con-
' gregations to rend and divide them on the Footing of such a
' Dream?' On the Footing of what Dream was it that the *Seceders*
in *Scotland* ran into Congregations of some of their valuable
Brethren, whom they acknowledg'd were a godly Remnant,
and with whom they own'd they themselves were not worthy
to be compar'd, teaching that it was the People's Duty to se-
parate from them? It is indeed an awful Truth, that graceless
Ministers are Wolves in Sheep's Cloathing; yet it is far from being
a Minister's Duty to single out any of his Brethren as graceless
upon a meer Imagination. But the Author of that Pamphlet
from which these Words seem to have been taken, having
answer'd

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answer'd for himself as to the Design and Manner of his using them, it does not fall in my Way to say any thing farther upon the Point.

Some of our Ministers preach'd at their Brethren's Invitation, in their Pulpits; but that they ran into their Congregations with a Design to rend and divide them, is not true. They look'd upon themselves to be aggriev'd because of their Brethren's Opposition to what they judg'd was the Power of Religion, as well as on some other Accounts; yet they resolv'd still to continue in Communion with them, and endeavor to have their Grievances redress'd; judging that active Separation from a Church is not a mean of Reformation, except she be universally corrupted in Doctrine and Practice, that she is become quite scandalous, and Communion with her is absolutely sinful. And notwithstanding they were rashly protested out of Communion by their Brethren, they met at the ensuing Synod to claim their Privilege as Members, and obtain their Seats as formerly; but in vain: A Breach is much easier made than repair'd.

This may help to suggest an Answer to Mr. G's Cavil against us, p. 65, 70. viz that a Scheme has been set on Foot for a Union with these Ministers again. If (as our Ministers judg'd) it was not their Duty to make an active Separation, tho' they did look upon themselves to be aggriev'd, can it be our Sin to give or receive Proposals of Union again? I hope our Authors will allow, that Union in the Church is as really a Com-manded Duty, as any other enjoin'd in the Law of God, and enforc'd with powerful Motives too. And if so, it is certainly so far from being a Sin, that it is a Duty to attempt tho' we shou'd never be able to accomplish it. I am for Truth as well as Peace, Purity as well as Unity; but I shall never know whether I can obtain both, till I make Trial; and it is premature in People to condemn the Birth, before they know whether it will be brought forth, or what kind of a Figure it will make. Our Author's Cavil supposes, that it is impossible to obtain Union and Purity at the same Time, or else that it is sinful ever to attempt a Reconciliation when people differ.

My present Design will not admit of Enlargements on the Head of our Differences; nor is it needful, seeing they have been so largely handled in the *Brunswick Presbytery's Apology, the excluded Brethren vindicated, and the Answer to the Protest*, with sundry other Pieces. 'Tis our Author's best Time to fish when the Water's muddy; and as they seem to be well skill'd in such

such Exercise, they bait their Hook by dropping a Clamour now and then about Union, and some other Things respecting our Differences, taking an Advantage to make their Gains. Or, perhaps they hope by attempting to revive former Controversies, they may turn the Attention of People from the *Seceder's* schismatical Practices. The obstinate Schisms that abound in the Church, are a manifest Indication of divine Displeasure against her, and give Ground to fear a sore Stroke from a savage, or popish persecuting Sword!

Mr.  charges us, p. 38, 39. with 'insisting for good and gracious Qualifications in Church Members, as essentially requisite for Church Communion, and materially throwing up Communion with others on Account of such a supposed want.' I know not our Author's Meaning in this Charge, and perhaps he wou'd be puzzled to explain it to me. We judge, that Christ the Head and Law-giver of his Church, has given us Authority as Ministers of the Gospel, to insist for the visible Credibility of their Holiness who join in full Communion with us by requiring a sound Profession, competent Knowledge of what they profess, and holy Practice. But we do not claim any Authority to exclude Persons from Distinguishing Privileges, only because they cannot give us a satisfactory Account of their real Piety, or are not clear in that Point themselves. But such an objection as this very ill becomes *Seceders*, who above all professing *Presbyterianism*, make Grace a Term of Communion. This is evident from the Bond of their Covenant, in which we have the following Clause, *I do sincerely with my Heart receive Jesus Christ*. Now, none can truly swear in such a positive and solemn Manner, that they *do receive Jesus Christ*, but those who both know that they have Grace, and the present Exercise of it.

Hence it easily appears, that we don't (as Mr. G. insinuates p. 94.) quarrel with Mr. *Rutherford* for asserting, *that it is unlawful to separate from the true Worship of God, because a Church is not wholly constituted of Saints, and a People all taught of God*. We heartily approv'd of this Sentence, as we did the whole of his Argument, tho' we cou'd rather his Expressions in some Parts of it had been a little better guarded, so as not to afford a seeming Handle to the Licentious. Mr. G. endeavours to evade the Force of his Argument, by telling us he us'd it against the *Brownists*. But if it be true (as Mr. *Rutherford* makes appear) that it is unlawful to separate from a Church, on Account of the Corruption of some of its Members, where *Jesus Christ* walks in the midst of his golden

an Candlestick and begets Faith by the preaching of profess'd Truth, &c. his Argument will unavoidably condemn *Seceders*; for they refuse to hold Communion with a sound and more pure Church than those he instances, not chargeable with such gross Corruptions in Doctrine, Worship or Discipline.

Mr. *A.* adds, in the foremention'd Page, 'it is hard to say where their Good Systems of Logic will land them at length,--do the Presbyterian Church by refusing Communion with Episcopalians, say there is no pure Gospel Truths preach'd by them? or does the whole Protestant Body by refusing Communion with the Church of Rome say, there is no pure Gospel Truths profess'd by her?' Mr. *B.* fallaciously singles out one particular Branch of the Sentence, obscures its Sense, nor does he consider its Connection with what goes before and follows after; whereas the whole shou'd be taken complexly, which (if reduc'd to the Form of an Argument) will stand thus: where the Church is favour'd with a true and regular Ministry;--proper Judicatures of Jesus Christ; the Gospel and Gospel Ordinances preach'd and administred purely; and her Members regular and well qualified, Separation from her is schismatical and unlawful; but such are the Ministers among us, &c. therefore the *Seceders* Conduct in pushing a Separation, as tho' there were none such amongst us, is schismatical and unlawful. Now, we are plainly thought the Connection between these Premises and the Conclusion from Jo. 17. 21. 1 Cor. 1, 10. and C. 8. Eph 4 2, 3. Rom 16, 17. with Chapters 14, 15, and many other Passages. To this agree Mess. *Calvin, Rutherford, Durbin, and Shields*, with a great Number of eminent Divines. Yet our Author insinuates, that our Reasoning will condemn *Dissenters*, and *Protestants* in the Lump. If he can prove, that the *Popish* and *Episcopalian* Ministers were regular, and their Judicatures proper Judicatures of Christ;--that they preach'd the Gospel purely;--did not corrupt the Worship and Ordinances of God nor ever impose sinful Terms of Communion, and yet Separation from them was lawful, then and not till then, will his Argument be of any Force against us.

Moreover, Mr. *B.* adds, 'what we are to understand by a regular Minister, our Authors give us no Account, only if we are allowed to read their Meaning in the Glass of Practice, Episcopal Curates and modern Independents are to be esteem'd regular Ministers.' Had he took proper Measures to learn our Practice, he wou'd have known that the regu-

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lar Ministers that are amongst us, from whom it is unlawful to separate, among whom there are neither *Curates* nor *Independents*, are those, who after a due Course of Trials by the Presbytery, have been approv'd of for their Gifts natural and gracious, and their Skill in the various Branches of Literature that Students for the Ministry usually learn; and having made an orthodox Profession of Faith agreeable to the Scriptures;— declar'd their Acceptance of the *Westminster* Confession of Faith and Catechisms as the Confession of their Faith, and the Directory for Worship and Government, sworn to teach and maintain the Doctrines therein contain'd, and faithfully discharge all the Duties their Office, &c. have been solemnly set apart to the Work of the Ministry by Imposition of the Hands of the Presbytery, with Prayer and fasting.

I am as far from approving of *Prelacy* or *Independency* as Mr. nor do I think it is the Duty of *Presbyterians* to change their own Mode of Government for either of these. Yet am I far from putting all *Prelates* and *Independents* on the same Level: Many of them, especially of the latter, have been eminent for Piety and Soundness in the common Faith; excellently qualify'd to preach the Gospel, and remarkably succeed'd therein; well dispos'd towards the *Presbyterian* Interest, nor had any Design to serve so far as cou'd be judg'd but purely the Glory of God and the Good of Souls. Therefore, I cannot think with our Author, that all occasional Communion with those who are of such a Character is sinful, and incurs the Charge of Irregularity; for they come to us, we do not go to them. Nor had he any other Ground for his insinuating Taunt, than a few Instances of such kind of Communion of Many of our primitive Reformers and *Scotch* sufferers, were not of his Mind in this Point. Bishop *Usher* was esteem'd an eminent Servant of Christ by the Dissenters of his Day, and those who had an Opportunity of it, cover'd a Correspondency with him. Mr. *Rutherford* himself, notwithstanding his Opposition to *Prelacy*, had occasional Communion with him. The Famous Mr. *Jeremiah Burroughs*, with a Number of his *Independent* Brethren, were Members of the *Westminster* Assembly and had otherwise Communion with the *Presbyterian* Divines of said Assembly. (I wonder that the *Seceders*, among all the Censures they inflict on, not only the living, but Memories of departed Saints, had not also lifted up a Testimony against the *Westminster* Assembly as irregular too.) Mr. *Frazer*, who carried the Point of Separation as far as most I have met with when writing against the vitious, licentious *Curates* intruded on their Charges, says 'not so among *Independents*; their are no unlawful Officers in *Independent* Government; and tho' they say that the Power radically is in the Commu-

nity of the Faithful, yet do they acknowledge it formally to be in the collective Body of the Guides: And their differences and the Presbyterians are but modal; and besides, the Lord by Blessing their Ministry, doth declare by the Conversion of Souls, that he owns them as lawful Ministers. And therefore, tho' we may withdraw from them in any Act wherein they swerve from the Rule, yet not in hearing? *Fraser's Lawfulness of Separation, &c.* p. 161, 162. The Seceders are for Walking with none in those things where to they have already attain'd according in to Phil. 3, 17. except they can walk with them in every Thing; they wou'd not hear the greatest and most holy Minister on Earth preach occasionally except he agreed with them in all their Peculiarities: But this is far from St. Paul's Judgment and Practice. There is proper Medium between a rigid Bigotry and boundless Licence; but our Authors seem to be pleas'd with nothing but Extrems.

Mr. A. tells us p. 40. he does not know that any of them stated the Difference between their Learning and ours. But, he may easily know, that if they have not professedly stated, they have freely insinuated it. He says, he has, indeed, expressed some Amazement at the Shortness of Time we take to get Learning, viz. in the Space of four or five Years. But his Amazement may cease, when I tell him, the most of us have taken a much longer Space of Time to learn. True indeed, some of our Ministers have learn'd in the Time he mentions; nor will that prove they are not duely qualified with Learning for the Ministry seeing it is no unusual Thing for one to learn more in a Day than others can in two or three. To learn quickly, is far from being an Argument of a Man's Unfitness for his Business, that it rather proves the Contrary. I know of none licens'd by our Synod in the Time Mr. A. specifies, that they have reason to be asham'd of: some of them have been Ornaments to the Church, fit for important Services, and justly esteem'd for their Learning and natural Accomplishments. And not only must our Authors Arguments be more exact and just, but their Composition clearer, and their Language more proper and expressive, &c. before they be fit to compare with much less; have Occasion to fling Snow Balls at them in Point of Learning.

Our Author says, 'He always thought he was a Man or Boy of a good Genius, that cou'd give a good Account of the Latin Tongue alone in less than four Years.' But the Man or Boy of a competent Age for Improvement, discovers no great Strength of Genius, that can't give a good Account of both Greek and Latin in that Time. He tells us

“ Some of their Youth for the Ministry are educated at private Schools, others at publick Universities”. I believe some of them have been educated at the Universities, but since the Secession, they have erected a private School for the Education of Youth, and do not require them to go to any University, tho’ they have the Opportunity of sundry in the Kingdom: Therefore their boasted Advantages for Learning, do not exceed, if they are equal to their Neighbours. I have seen in some of the *Edingburgh* Prints, Complaints on *Seceders* for letting Men raw into the Ministry. I shall not determine whether the Demand of their Synod, as to the Examination of Candidates for the Ministry be just or unjust; but Mr. G. wou’d find it a too difficult Task to prove, either that we were afraid of, or refus’d the just Demand of any Synod in this Point.

Part I. Pages 11, 12. Mr. G. asserts, *we never informed the World what are our Principles or Terms of Communion*, And Part I. p. 64. he says, *none of us know what we adhere to and agree in*. He should not indulge himself in evident Falshoods, we both know what we adhere to, and have published it to the World, not only from the Pulpit, but Press. The following *Extract* from the *Declaration of the conjunct Presbyteries of New-Castle and Brunswick*, after their Exclusion by the Synod of Philadelphia, may serve to show the Fallacy of our Author’s Assertion. Having given an Account of the Manner of their Exclusion, and the Steps they took in Consequence of it, they add, Pages 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

‘ We think it proper for the Satisfaction of all concerning us,
 ‘ and as a due Testimony to the Truths of God, to declare and
 ‘ testify to the World our Principles and Sentiments in Religion,
 ‘ according to which we design, thro’ divine Grace, ever to con-
 ‘ duct ourselves, both as Christians, and as Ministers and rul-
 ‘ ing Elders.

‘ And first, as to the Doctrines of Christian Religion, we
 ‘ believe with our Hearts, and profess and maintain with our
 ‘ Lips, the Doctrines sum’d up and contain’d in the *Con-
 ‘ fession of Faith*, and larger and shorter *Catechisms*, composed by
 ‘ the Reverend Assembly of Divines at *Westminster*, as the
 ‘ Truths of God revealed and contain’d in the Holy Scrip-
 ‘ tures of the Old and New Testaments, and do receive, ac-
 ‘ knowledge and declare the said *Confession of Faith and Cate-
 ‘ chisms*, to be the Confession of our Faith, yet so as that no
 ‘ Part of the 23d Chapter of said Confession, shall be so con-
 ‘ strued as to allow civil Magistrates, as such, to have any
 ‘ ecclesiastical Authority in Synods, or Church Judicature,
 ‘ much

much less the Power of a negative Voice over them in their ecclesiastical Transactions, nor is any Part of it to be understood as opposite to the memorable Revolution, and the Settlement of the Crown of the three Kingdoms in the illustrious House of *Hanover*.

Secondly, concerning Church Government, comprehensive of Discipline, we believe and maintain as follows.

1st, That the Lord JESUS CHRIST as Mediator by the Father's Constitution and Appointment, is the alone King, Head and Lawgiver of his Church, which is his peculiar, spiritual and free Kingdom, so as none have Authority and Right to give Laws and Ordinances to his Church, as such, but himself only.

2dly, That the Lord JESUS CHRIST as a Son over his own House, and King upon his Holy Hill of Zion, has for the Good and Edification of this his spiritual Kingdom, appointed Laws and Ordinances, and a spiritual Government to be observed and executed in the same.

3dly, That he has appointed and authorized particular Officers in his Church for the Administration and Execution of the Government which he has established in it, and that their Authority is not lordly and legislative, but ministerial and executive only.

4thly, That the particular Officers which he has authorized for the Administration of this Government, are the Ministers of his Gospel, and other Representatives of their respective Churches or Congregations chosen by the People for that Purpose, and solemnly set apart to that Charge, and likewise the Office of a Deacon is appointed in the Church, according to our Directory.

5thly, That there is a perfect equality of Power and Authority in all the Ministers of the Gospel, none having of Right from Christ any peculiar Powers or Prerogatives beyond or above others.

6thly, That none of the fore-mentioned Officers are to exercise any Acts of Church-Government singly by themselves alone, but in a conjunct collegiate Manner, by mutual concert together.

7thly, That the proper Church Judicatures wherein these Officers are to exercise their Office and Authority of Government,

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‘ verment, are first Congregational Sessions, consisting of
‘ the Pastors of the Congregations and other ruling Elders
‘ chosen by the People, and set apart as aforesaid: Next Pres-
‘ byteries, consisting of the Pastors of several neighbouring
‘ Congregations, and other Elders sent from their respective
‘ Church Sessions, and other Gospel Ministers in the Bounds,
‘ if such there be, who are joined as Members, tho’ they be
‘ not fixed Pastors of any particular Congregations: Then Sy-
‘ nods consisting of several Presbyteries. Again, national As-
‘ semblies, consisting of all the Synods in a Nation, or Dele-
‘ gates and Commissioners from their several Presbyteries; and
‘ after that if needful, higher Assemblies of Delegates from se-
‘ veral national Churches, and last of all, if such a Thing were
‘ practical and necessary, a general oecumenical Council consist-
‘ ing of Commissioners from all the true national Churches in
‘ the World

‘ 8thly, That these several forementioned judicatures are not
‘ Coordinate with but stand in Line of Subordination to one an-
‘ other, from a Congregational or Church Session, which is
‘ the lowest, to a General Council: One Church Session is
‘ Co-ordinate with another Church Session, so as that the one
‘ has no Superior Authority over the other, to call it to
‘ Account; and in like manner one Presbytery is Co ordinate with
‘ another Presbytery, and one National Synod or Assembly
‘ with another National Synod or Assembly, but a Church
‘ Session is Subordinate and accountable to a Presbytery and
‘ a Presbytery to a Synod, &c.

‘ 9thly, That the several Church Judicatures in a Country or
‘ Nation, have Right and Authority from Christ the King
‘ and Head of the Church, to meet and transact their Eccle-
‘ siastical Affairs, without the Command of secular Princes, or
‘ even tho’ it should be without their Concurrence, or against
‘ their Command as they did meet in the Apostolic Age, and
‘ some Ages after, when the Civil Powers were set against the
‘ Church.’

These are briefly the chief Heads, and our Sentiments on
this Subject; in a Word we heartily agree with the Plan of
‘ Government laid down by the *Westminster* Assembly in the
‘ Directory for Church Government, as that which is appoint-
‘ ed by Jesus Christ, and contain’d in his Word; and so we
‘ disown and reject as unscriptural, all other Forms and Models
‘ of Church Government whatsoever.

‘ Thirdly,

' Thirdly, Concerning Religious Worship, we maintain, 1st,
 ' That God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, three Persons and
 ' one Eternal God, is the alone Object of all Religious Wor-
 ' ship. 2d, That God is to be worshipped only in such Ordi-
 ' nances and Methods as himself has appointed in his Word
 ' and not according to the Inventions and Devices of Men, by
 ' whatsoever Authority recommended or with whatsoever Shew
 ' of humility, Decency or Piety; and we heartily approve of
 ' the Directions of the *Westminster Assembly* in their Directory
 ' for publick Worship as agreeable to God's Word recom-
 ' mending all the Ordinances of Worship which are of divine
 ' Appointment under the New Testament, and the right Manner
 ' of performing and attending upon them, only we would not
 ' be understood to mean as if every particular Direction and
 ' Advice contain'd therein, were of necessary Obligation upon
 ' us: As that for instance we must always begin publick Wor-
 ' ship first with Prayer, much less that we can now pray for
 ' the same afflicted Queen of *Bobemia* therein mention'd,
 ' and such like circumstantial things, which no understanding
 ' Person can judge to be of necessary or of constant Obliga-
 ' tion.

' We likewise agree to Directions of the General Assembly
 ' of the Church of *Scotland* in their Directory for Family
 ' Worship, excepting that we see not why Persons of Quality shou'd
 ' on that Account be exempted from performing the Wor-
 ' ship of God themselves in their own Families more than
 ' others. And the meeting of Persons of divers Families therein
 ' disapprov'd, are not to be understood of such private Societies as
 ' may meet stately at proper Times, for Reading and Prayer
 ' and mutual edifying Conferences, which Societies may be so
 ' regulated as to promote mutual Love and Edification, and
 ' the Greater Advantage of publick Ordinances.

' This is a Summary Account of our Faith and Principles, and
 ' agreeable to the same we Desire and Design, thro' divine Grace,
 ' ever to Conduct ourselves, that we may be faithful as Ser-
 ' vants in all God's House, &c.

Now, as our Ministers profess'd their Design and Desire to
 conduct always according to this Summary Account of their
 Faith and Principles; so, thro' Grace, have they still acted,
 and still resolve to act: Therefore, it is an ignorant and false
 Aspersion to say, we have not inform'd the World what are our
 Principles, nor know not what we adhere to or agree in.

From p. 90, to 95. Mr. G. gives an Account of the Reasons of, and vindicates their *Secession* from the Church of *Scotland*. I believe they received bad Treatment, and gave as bad, if not worse, in their Turn. But, as the great Integrity, known Abilities, long Standing, and universal Acquaintance with Church Affairs (especially in *Scotland*) which appear to be the just Character of the Rev. Mr. *John Wilson* of *Dundee* in *Scotland* with a Number who join'd him in the *fair and impartial* TESTIMONY already quoted, give Ground to expect a more just, proper Account of this Affair from them than either I or our Authors are capable of I shall reply to Mr. G. on this Point by a Quotation from said TESTIMONY from Page 72, to p. 78. It gives us an Account of the Rise of the *Secession*, &c. as follows.

“ BUT, to return to the State of the Church *Anno* 1732: This was a very critical Time to her, and most afflicting to many of her best Friends, by reason of the Stretching of Church-authority; the Intrusion made upon Parishes; the disregarding of Remonstrances and Petitions of a godly Remnant both of Ministers and People; the passing that Act 1732, which encouraged Heritors not of our Communion to impose Ministers upon many Parishes; and the refusing to record Ministers Dissents with their Reasons against such Deeds. These Proceedings were grievous to the Hearts of honest Ministers, and provoked many to go to Pulpits and testify against them, particularly at the Opening of Synods, and other Occasions; and severals of them printed their Sermons, as a Testimony against these prevailing Evils. Tho' this was very offensive to many of our Leaders, and to the Court-chaplains (whose Number was then increased) yet none was so much noticed as the Reverend Mr. *Ebenezer Erskine* Minister of *Stirling*, whose Turn was to preach at the Opening of the Synod at *Perth* in *October* 1732. The Synod judged him censurable, and appointed him to be rebuked for his Sermon, because in it he had impugned the Acts and Proceedings of the Assembly, and had used some strong Expressions against the Judicatories and Ministers of this Church, which they reckoned indecent. Upon which Mr. *Erskine* appealed to the Assembly 1733, who affirmed the Synod's Sentence, and rebuked him at their Bar. Whereupon Mr. *Erskine* with three other Ministers, gave in a Paper protesting against the Assembly's Sentence, viz. Mr. *Wilson* at *Perth*, Mr. *Moncrieff* at *Abernetby*, and Mr. *Fisher* at *Kinclaven*; and they all protested for Liberty to testify against the Act of Assembly 1732, or the like Defections. This Protestation the Assembly 1733 could not bear with.

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As it was very unwise in the Synod to proceed against Mr. *Erskine* for his Sermon in such a judicial Manner, so it was in the Assembly to resent the Protestation as they did. In former Times such Protestations were not reckoned so criminal as now. Mr. *Andrew Hunter* Minister protested against the Assembly at *Edinburgh* 1586, for relaxing Mr. *Patrick Adamson* from the Sentence of Excommunication without Signs of Repentance; and Mr. *Andrew Melvill* and Mr. *Thomas Buchanan* adhered to his Protest. Mr. *John Davidson* Minister at *Prestounpans* protested against the Assembly at *Dundee* 1598, for allowing Ministers to vote in Parliament in name of the Kirk, where the King was present. Mr. *James Melvill* protested against the Assembly their Meeting at *Holy-rood house* 1602, where the King was present. Mr. *David Chalderwood* protested against Assembly 1649, for enacting the Directory for Election of Ministers. Yet none of all these were censured for their Protestations; neither do the House of Peers censure these who protest against their Proceedings. Likewise the Twelve Brethren, who were rebuked by Assembly 1722 for impugning the Act of Assembly 1720 against the *Marrow*, offered their Protestation against the Censure; as did Mr. *Gabriel Wilson* against the Admonition of Assembly 1723: Yet none of these were censured for their Protestations. And doubtless it had been greatly for the Interest and Peace of the Church, that Assembly 1733 had followed the Example of their wise Predecessors. But now their Authority must be screwed up higher than at former Times. Wherefore the Assembly, without hearing the Four protesting Ministers any further before them, did summarily proceed to appoint their Commission in *August* thereafter to suspend them, if they did not retract their Protestation, and show their Sorrow for the same; and to proceed to a higher Censure, if they disobeyed the said Sentence.

Accordingly the Commission in *August* did suspend all the Four Brethren for adhering to their foresaid Protestation. And upon their acting contrary to the Suspension, the Commission in *November* determined to proceed presently to a higher Censure against them, and would not delay it until *March*, tho' the Assembly's Act allowed it. This Decision was carried only by Mr. *Goudie* the Moderator his casting Vote. --- And it is to be observed, the Commission went on in this forward and hasty Procedure against the Four Brethren, notwithstanding of the earnest Application and Intercession of many Synods, Presbyteries, Kirk-sessions, Magistrates and others through *Scotland* in their Behalf, pleading that the Commission might delay them, spare them, or deal tenderly with them. The Sentence which
the

the Commission came to against the Four protesting Ministers, was, to loose their Relation from their respective Parishes, and declare them no longer Ministers of this Church, and prohibit all Ministers of this Church to employ them. And they declared their Charges vacant from the Date of this Sentence.

As the Judicatories at this Time seem'd to act with much Heat and Severity, in order to support or screw up their Authority; so we must own that the Four Brethren seem'd to shew no little Humour and Stiffness in opposing their Authority, and despising their Sentences: For they would give no Ear to their Friends, who dealt with them to shew some Subjection to the Judicatories as to their Fathers and Superiors; and tho' they were just now abusing their Church-power, and unwarrantably provoking their Children, yet some Regard is to be shown to their Authority, even when so doing, as we do to our natural Parents, tho' correcting us in an arbitrary Way; according to *Heb. xii. 6.*---As to Mr. *Erskine*, tho' he was contending for the Truth, many of his Friends wished that he had not used such Asperity and Tartness of Expression about the Ministers and Judicatories of the Church as he did; and many of the leading Men in Judicatories said, This was the only Thing they quarrelled in his Sermon: But Mr. *Erskine* would make no Acknowledgment or Submission of any Sort, tho' even Mr. *Wilson* and Mr. *Moncrieff* said in their Reasons of Dissent, that they do not pretend to justify his Modes of Expression in that Sermon; and they grant that in several Cases it is most proper to use soft and modest Expressions in maintaining of Truth.-- We do not see that it would have been any Loss to the Truth the Four Brethren appeared for, that they had all shewed more Respect to the supreme Authority of the Church in their Conduct than they did; particularly, tho' they had forbore to protest, as they did in express Words, against the Sentence of the Assembly as UNJUST, and against any Censure they should inflict on them as null and void of itself; and if, upon their being suspended, any Minister or Probationer should preach in their Parishes, the same should be held as *Intrusion* upon their Charges. And as they protested, so they submitted not to the Sentence for one Day; tho' many worthy Ministers have formerly submitted to unjust Sentences of this Sort, to shew their Regard to the Authority of lawful Judicatories of a Church, which they owned as a true Church: And this is approv'd by the most orthodox and judicious Divines of the Presbyterian Perswasion. Again, the Brethren had the more Encouragement to have submitted for a Time, that they had Reason to expect the next Assembly would take off the Sentences, consider their Complaints, and

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do them all Manner of Justice ; and this they might have looked for, from the Interposition of so many Synods and Presbyteries with the Commission in their favours. And tho' many of their Friends were disobliged and offended at them for their contemning the Authority of the Church, yet there was a great Plurality in the Assembly 1734 for restoring them to their Charges and the Communion of the Church, and neither that nor any subsequent Assembly did ever approve the Commission who past the hard Sentences against them.

When the Sentence of the Commission in November 1733, loosing the Relation of the Four Brethren from their Charges, was past ; many protested against it, as did the Four Brethren themselves, who also appealed to the first free, faithful and reforming General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. Had they sisted here, they had done well ; but they went a great deal further, by making a Secession from the Judicatories of this Church, and in a short Time after constituting themselves into a distinct Judicatory for licensing Preachers, and ordaining Ministers, wherever they should find Encouragement. At the same Time they protested they would still hold Communion with all who were true Presbyterians, and groaned under, and wrestled against, the Evils they had been complaining of. This was then their declared Resolution, tho', alas ! they soon departed from it. At first they seemed to be determin'd to continue in Ministerial Communion with many worthy Ministers they had been formerly intimate with, tho' these had not Freedom to secede as they had done, nor go all their Lengths : And Mr. Erskine, in his Answers to the Synod, owned that there was still a *Body of faithful Ministers in the Church of Scotland, with whom he did not reckon himself worthy to be compared.* Which Body had the Truths contended for at Heart, together with the Peace of the Church, as well as the Four Brethren. And, seeing the Case was such, the Brethren ought in Justice to have communicated Counsels with that *faithful Body of Ministers*, who were willing to meet with them at the ensuing Assembly, before they had taken Two such strong Steps as their *Secession and Constitution* : Which uncommon Steps, they might easily see, tended greatly to affect that whole Body, yea, even to divide and rend them asunder, together with the People who should adhere to them *respectively*, in case that faithful Body should not have Light to go into all the Measures of the Four Brethren. Whatever Thoughts the Brethren might have about the Union of the Church in general, it might have been expected they would have shewed something of concern for the Union of that faithful Body of Ministers, for whom they did

did then profess a great Regard.---Moreover, since they had appealed for Redress to the first faithful General Assembly, they should have delayed any such extraordinary Steps until the Meeting of the next Assembly then approaching, and so have kept the Matter entire until the whole Case was laid before them; which the Brethren themselves should have been ready to do. For, considering how sensibly touched the whole Church was with their Case, and what Preparations were making for the approaching Assembly, the Brethren could not be sure but it might prove the reforming Assembly they had appealed unto. O what dreadful Calamities to the Church might have been prevented had the Four Brethren continued praying, and deliberating upon the foresaid two Steps until the Meeting of the Assembly in *May 1734*, and not have so precipitantly seceded from the National Church, and constituted themselves into an *Anti-Presbytery*, by which Means, alas! they became too much engaged in Honour to persist in their Separation, whatever Steps the Assembly should take to redress their Grievances: And we know not if there was an Assembly since the Revolution, more willing to do it than the Assembly 1734, had the Brethren applied to them for it, as they were urged by many to do.

The whole Church had been so much alarmed by the arbitrary Proceedings of former Years, and the present threatened Confusions, that there came up to the Assembly 1734 from all Parts, and even the remotest, many pious and experienced Ministers, with sincere Intentions to have Matters settled upon a better Footing if possible. And, upon Trial, the Plurality of the Assembly was found to be upon their Side, to the great Joy of the Friends of Peace and Truth. Now, it would have exceedingly strengthened their Hands in their good Designs to redress Grievances and advance Reformation, if the Four Brethren had tabled their Complaints before them, and represented what they would have the Assembly to do for to satisfy them: But this they declined to do, tho' they were all in the Town at the Time. But notwithstanding of this Discouragement from the Brethren, and the mighty Opposition of *great Men*, Ruling Elders, who had a strong Party in the House to support them; the Assembly, in the short Time they had, did all that was in their Power to satisfy the Friends of Reformation, and to put a Stop to violent Settlements and the prevailing Evils of the Time; and they were zealously inclined to have done much more, if their Time and the Situation of their Affairs could have allowed. Particularly, they renewed and strengthened the old Acts of Assembly, which were made to be Barriers and Fences

ees of our Constitution against Innovations; such as these made by Ass. 1639, Ass. 1697, Ass. 1700, and Ass. 1705. And they rescinded the 7th Act of Ass. 1730, which hindred Members to testify against wrong Deeds of Judicatories, by recording their Reason of Dissent; because the said Act was not made according to the foresaid Rules and Barrier-acts. And, upon the same Account, they repealed the 8th Act of Ass. 1732, anent the Method of Planting vacant Churches; and because it gave too much Countenance to violent Settlements, and too much Power to disaffected Heritors, and was unfavourable to the Liberties of the People. They reversed the Settlement of a Minister made by the Commission, at *Auchtermuchty*, against the Will of the Congregation, and of the Presbytery of the Bounds; and by that Decision they declared the Commission's Sentences reversible. Also they brought the Commission under several new Regulations, and discharged them to execute any Settlements of Churches, when the Presbytery or Synod of the Bounds declined to do it. They impowered their Commission to address the King and Parliament for Relief from Patronages; which they did, tho' in vain. Also they impowered the Synod of *Perth* and *Stirling* to restore the Four ejected Brethren to their Charges and the Communion of this Church; which they did very soon after the Assembly, without requiring any Acknowledgments from them. And, to facilitate their Return, the Assembly sincerely designed an Act for removing their Apprehensions, that, by the late Sentences past against them, they were laid under greater Restraints than before as to their Ministerial Freedom in testifying against wrong Acts and Deeds of the Church: Wherefore, for the Satisfaction of the Four Brethren, and all others, the Assembly made an Act, declaring, *That due and regular Ministerial Freedom is still left entire to all Ministers.* They also appointed a Committee to draw up an Overture for an Act to give Directions as to the right Preaching of the Gospel, and to restrain the legal Preaching and moral Harangues of many not so agreeable thereto. This had been several Times attempted in former Years, but still dropt, till now that the Assembly formed and referred the Overture to their Commission to ripen it. They also referred it to their Commission to appoint a *National Fast*, which had been long neglected, that all Ranks might mourn for the prevailing Evils and Defections of the Church and Land; which they did immediately after the Rising of the Assembly. This Ass. 1734 was a singularly faithful and reforming Assembly, who did very much in a short Time, against great Opposition, to rectify what was wrong and put Matters upon a better Footing.

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Footings. They gave remarkable Checks to violent Settlements, and Relief to several Parishes oppressed by them; for at this Assembly Methods were concerted to get sealing Ordinances to these Persons who submitted not to them, from other Ministers they chused to apply to. As this Assembly turned out one Minister violently settled, so they were ready to have cast out others, if Complaints had been regularly tabled before them. Their Time of Sitting did not allow them to consider and provide Remedies for every Thing amiss, and particularly for that wrong Act of Ass. 1733. concerning the Presbytery of *Dumfermline* and their Behaviour towards the Minister that was forcibly settled at *Kinross*, wherein the said Assembly threaten high Centures against these who refuse to own him as Minister of *Kinross*, or who admit any of that Parish to sealing Ordinances without his Consent. This was plainly Oppression, and a very high Stretch of Church authority, to settle Ministers contrary to the Rules of the Word and of the Church, and then oblige Presbyteries to receive them, and People to submit to them. But the Ass. 1734. gave a seasonable Check to such oppressive Courses; and for the People of *Kinross*, it was afterward referred to the Synod of *Fife* to do what was proper for their Relief, who thereupon allowed them the Benefit of Church-privileges wherever they should think fit to ask them. And Letters were written to Prebyteries in other Places, to indulge People in such Circumstances in the like Manner.

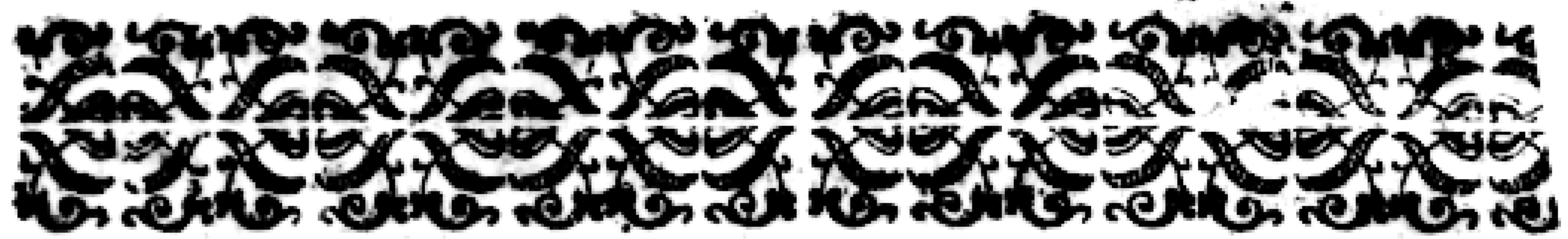
Thus did that faithful Body of Ministers (of whom Mr. *Ebenezer Lyskine* did speak) use their most strenuous Endeavours in the Assembly 1734. and in the Meetings of their Commission, and in after Assemblies, to get the Door opened, Stumbling-blocks removed, and the Way paved for the Return of their four Brethren to Communion with them as before. Yea they got Ministers sent up Year after Year to *London*, to solicit the King and Parliament for Relief from Patronages. And when honest Ministers were in this Manner Travelling, Sweating, Labouring and Struggling, even above their Strength, to get Things that were wrong reformed and rectified; it was extremely afflicting to them, that the Four Brethren, with whom they had formerly taken sweet Counsel, would by no Means return to their Assistance, tho' invited and pressed to it, but, instead of that, would still be disparaging their Actings, and misconstruing their most Sincere Intentions."

Having

Having thus inform'd us of the *Secession*, our Authors also give the *Reasons* of their *Testimony* against the Conduct of those concern'd in it, from Page 93 to p. 97.

But to come at length to a Conclusion: I presume, the main Hinge of the Controversy, and our Authors principal Arguments, have been consider'd; but I have either purposely omitted or insist'd more briefly on things of less Consequence: For to follow them thro' the whole of their loose Chace wou'd have been a needless Expence of Time and Labour. If I shall ever be oblig'd to write again on the same Subject, I am resolv'd not to trouble the World with an Answer to so many weak and ill-natur'd Things foreign to the principal Point in Question, tho' our Authors shou'd give Occasion. But they must keep closer to the Point, and reason more just and fair before they may expect the Notice of a Second Answer. *O that God wou'd revive his Work in the midst of the Years, and grant, that instead of jangling and Debates, we might join Hands in Hand, seeking the Way to Zion, with our Faces thitherward, weeping as we go! May the happy Period speedily come, when God's Watchmen will see Eye to Eye, and an End be put to those fruitless Controversies, that at present so much infect the Church, and mar her Peace and Edification!*

The . E N D.



To the PRINTER.

SIR,

I Have just now receiv'd in a Letter, the following Queries, the Author of which requests, that you may annex them to the Latter-end of the Vindication,

Pequea, March
20th, 1757.

I am Sir,
your humble Servant,

Robert Smith.

1. IF Scripture and Reason concur to the Condemnation of the Seceders Terms of Communion, and the Doctrines and Practices of their Ministers, whereby they distinguish themselves from other Sides of the Question, is it best to be a Seceder?
 2. May not two Persons differ about the Sense of a particular Passage of Scripture, and yet keep Communion together, if they agree in Doctrine, Worship, Government and Discipline?
 3. If Persons may lawfully keep Communion together, tho' they differ about the Meaning of a Scripture Text, may they not keep Communion if they differ about the Meaning of an Act of Parliament, or an Article of human History?
 4. Is not the Ground of the Excommunication, pronounced by the *Antiburghers* against the *Burghers*, the taking an Act of Parliament, or an Article of human History in different Senses?
 5. Are not many Things in the Seceders Covenant Confession of Sins? [See Act for renewing, &c. p. 96. to p. 110.] dependant on human History, which are diversely related by different Hands?
- And

And yet are they not homologated, approven and sworn in what they call the Bond of the Covenant? [See Answers to Reasons of Dissent, p. 95, and the Bond itself, Act for renewing, p. 116.] And is not that Approbation and Oath, made the *Terms* of Communion by the Act of the associate Presbytery immediately subjoin'd to the Bond, p. 119.

6. Is it certain that the Seceders Confession and Bond, is a Renewal of the National and Solemn League, because the Covenants and Renovation differ in Matter and Form? If the Renovation is the same with the Covenants for that Reason, then, Is not that Renovation the Popish Mass-Book for the same Reason, viz. They differ in Matter and Form? If that Reason doesn't prove the Renovation the same with the Covenants, why do the Seceders use it for that Purpose? [Answers to Reasons of Dissent p. 27, to 39. and Detect, P. I. p. 15, to 27]

7. Is it the Duty of Persons that doubt their actual believing, whilst doubting, to swear they do believe? If it be not Duty, why do the Seceders confess they are perplex'd with Doubts and Fears anent their actual believing, and yet with Hands lifted up to the MOST HIGH GOD, solemnly declare---That they do with their whole Hearts take hold of the Lord Jesus Christ; [See the aforesaid Bond, p. 116.] If this be Duty, how does it agree with the *Westminster* Confession, Chap. xxii. Art. 3. 'Whosoever taketh an Oath, ought therein to avouch Nothing but what he is fully persuaded is the Truth.'

8. Is every Believer at all Times sure of his actual believing? If he be not always sure of it, can he be persuaded that Christ is his, and not be persuaded that Faith is his? If he be always sure, how comes it that Seceders are so often perplex'd with Doubts and Fears anent their actual believing, as they say, in the foresaid Bond, p. 115.

9. Should there be one Set of Terms of Christian Communion for one Branch of the Church, and another for another Branch in the same Period? If there shou'd be different Setts in the same Period, must there not be one Bible for this, and another for that Branch of the Church, to found their respective Terms upon? Or may Church Judicatures make Terms of Communion for Christians that are not founded upon Scripture? Wou'dn't this be a divesting Christ the *One Law-giver*, of his Headship over the Church? If there shou'dn't be different Setts of Terms of Communion, why don't the Seceders here, as well as in *Scotland*, swear their Covenant? Yea, why don't the Seceders in *Ireland* swear it?

10. Is there any Church of Christ but the Seceders? If there be not, what constitutes them a Church? Is it their Terms of Com-
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union, or their distinguishing Doctrines, or both? Is not the affirmative Answer most uncharitable? If there be any Part of the Church besides the Seceders, have the Seceders any Communion in Ordinances therewith? Do the Seceders regard the Prayer of Christ for the Unity of the Church? *John xvii.* Do they not exclude from sealing Ordinances sober knowing Presbyterians, that approve of the *Westminster* Confession, Catechisms and Directories, because they dislike their new Covenant, whilst they receive ignorant, scandalous and erroneous Persons that approve their Renovation? Is this Management the distinguishing Character of the true Church? Will their Conduct herein be approved by the Head of the Church at last?

11. Have the Seceders Authority to absolve from Censure, and admit to sealing Ordinances, Persons put under just Censure by other Branches of the Church, and that without any Satisfaction to any Branch of the Church for their Drunkennels, Lying, profane Swearing, &c.? If Seceders have such Authority, must it not be because they are invested with an inferior Headship over the Churches? Do not their new Terms of Communion give ground to believe they claim such an Headship? If they have no Authority to absolve from just Censure, &c. Why do they what they have no Authority for both in *Ireland* and *America*?

12. Is there such a Sin as Presumption? If there be no such Sin, may not a Reprobate be verily persuaded that Christ is his, and that he shall have Life and Salvation by him, and that what Christ did and suffer'd for the Redemption of Mankind, he did it for him? Is not this Persuasion in a Reprobate, and the Seceders Faith, the same Thing? Do they not describe true Faith in these very Terms? [*See Act concerning the Doctrine of Grace. p. 25, to 36.*] If there be such a Sin, is it not described instead of Faith, in the Act and Pages last mention'd? Is such acting any Thing different from Ministers of the grand Enemy transforming themselves into Ministers of Righteousness, especially if done under the Pretence of Reformation, and the Exaltation of free Grace?

13. Is a Persuasion that Christ is mine, and died for me, essential to justifying Faith? If such a Persuasion be essential to Faith, and all Gospel Hearers be bound to believe as Seceders own, unless there be an universal Redemption, are not all the Reprobates where the Gospel comes, bound to believe a Lie, Yea, do not Seceders endeavour to persuade many to believe a Lie? If such a Persuasion be not justifying Faith, how is it that Seceders are full in asserting it, as in Act concerning the Doctrines of Grace, *p. 25. to 36.*

14. Can Justice ever deprive a Man of that which he has a Right to in the Sight of God? It not, must not the Reprobates, even in Hell, have a Right to Christ and the Benefits of Purchase according to Seceders Doctrine, as in the last cited Act, p. 22 to 25? Do not Seceders teach there, that there is a free Gift of Christ to every Man in the World, p. 21? That this Deed of Gift or grant made to all Mankind in the World, is the very Foundation of Faith? From whence it follows, that Christ is the Saviour of the World, and his Salvation a common Salvation, *Jud. iii.* So that Mankind lost, have a common Interest in him, *Ec. p. 22 to 25.* Are not the Heathen and Reprobates a Part of Mankind? Have these a Right or just claim to Christ, and the Benefits of his Purchase? Are not the Unregenerate in the Church a Part of Mankind? If it be said the last have a Right to Christ, *Ec. query,* how come they by this Right? Have the Unregenerate this Right by the first or second Covenant, or by a Mixture of both? If it be a new Covenant Blessing, can Persons not in the new Covenant have it? Might not an old Covenant Punishment fall as well upon a Person under the Covenant of Grace? If one new Covenant Blessing may come to a Person under the old Covenant, why may not all new Covenant Blessings come to unregenerate Men the same Way? Can a new Covenant Blessing flow to a Man any other Way than by Christ? And can a Person perish that thro' Christ has a Right or just claim to Christ, and all the Benefits of his Purchase, even eternal Life itself, freely granted to him? If it be said, there is a two-fold Right, a *Right by the Offer*, and an *actual Right*. I query, have the Heathen that never heard the Gospel, and so have had no Offer of Christ, any Right to Christ? If they have no Right, then are not Seceders deceivers, who affirm in the Act and Pages last cited, that all Mankind have a Right, unless they mean something besides a Right by the Offer? But if this *Right by the Offer* be still maintain'd, I query, why might not the Word *Right*, be left out, and the Words *Warrant to believe*, be put in? Did not the good old Presbyterians that composed the *Sum of saving Knowledge*, do so? Or is it best to flee in the Face of our Reformers, and rend the Church by asserting an unsaving Right, as Right that is not saving?

15. Can two Ministers without Elders, constitute a Presbytery? If they cannot, I query, Is there any Seceding Presbytery in *America*, or is not every one guilty of falsehood that says the Seceders have a Presbytery here? If it be said, Elders sent by the vacant Societies are admitted to sit and Act, it is queried, may not the El-

ders, whose Votes in Presbyteries Seceders own to be equal to Ministers Votes, rule over the Ministers if *vacant* Societies be more in Number than the Ministers? If it be said this Evil is prevented by admitting no more Elders than they have Ministers, it is queried, why han't every Society a Right to send an Elder? Are they not censurable if they do not send when they can? If two Ministers without Elders constitute a Presbytery, it is queried, are not Elders a Branch of Church Judicatures, which ought not to be excluded from sitting and acting in Judicatures? In sum, what kind of Presbyterians are the Seceders? To whom shall I complain when I have just Charges against either of their Ministers for Doctrine or Practice?

16. Is it a Sin to intrude into the Congregations of faithful Ministers against the Mind of the Congregation? If it be a Sin, why do Seceders practise it? If it be not a Sin, why are the Seceders displeas'd with Patronages?

Queries respecting the Covenants.

1. Are the Covenants National and Solemn League formally binding on the posterity of such as swear them? If they bind formally, why have the Seceders alter'd the Form? If they be not formally binding, why do the Seceders say they are? And is there any Obligation on any Person herefrom unless to the Matter of them?

2. Is the whole Matter of the Covenants, so far as they respect Religion, contain'd in the *Westminster* Confession and Catechism? If the whole of the Matter respecting Religion be therein contain'd, what need is there for the Seceders new Covenant? Is not solemn receiving the Confession and Catechisms Covenanting according to our present Circumstances? Or do not the Confession, &c. agree to our Time and Circumstances?

3. Was there any Thing farther design'd by the old Covenanters, than binding themselves to believe Christ as a Prophet, and obey him as a King, and to propagate Truth and Duty to Posterity? If they had no further Design? It is queried, whether all this be not done when Persons accept Christ in the Covenant of Grace, and agree to the Confession and Catechisms, and themselves to endeavour to propagate the same Truths and Duties to their Posterity? If the old Covenanters design'd any Thing further respecting Religion than what we have just mention'd, why is the World kept Ignorant of it? On the whole, are the Seceders attempting to promote any Truth in this Respect, more than other Parties of Presbyterians among us propagate?

4. Is the whole Matter of the Covenants binding? If yes, why is so great a Part of the Matter of the Covenants left out in the Seceders Renovation? If the whole of the Matter of the Covenants be not binding, how comes any of the Matter to be binding?

5. Are the Covenants any how Obligatory because of our Forefathers Oath? If they bind for this Reason, why are not all Things our Forefathers swear, (i. e. far as lawful) binding on us also, as the Covenants that were made in *Scotland* before the National, that Part of the National that was left out in the Year 1638? All that follows the Quotation of the Acts of Parliament? That Part of it that respects the Privileges of Parliament? These Parts of the Solemn League that respect the civil Government, the Privileges of the Parliament, and Liberty of the People? If these be binding because of our Forefathers Oath, why are they left out of the Seceders new Covenant?

6. If great Part of the Covenants is omitted in the Renovation, because it is not competent to Church Judicatures to meddle in civil Affairs, [Answers to Reasons of Dissent p. 95.] Ought not the whole of the Covenants to be omitted, because it is not competent to a Presbytery alone to renew a National Covenant? And ought not the Union of *Scotland* and *England* to be omitted, because that is a civil Affair?

7. Did our Forefathers swear we shou'd keep the Covenants, or only that they wou'd endeavour we shou'd keep them? If they swore we shou'd keep the Covenants, were they not as rash as the God-fathers and God-mothers in the Church of *England*, [See the 3d. Answer in their Catechism?] If the last, and they perform'd their Oath by endeavouring, &c. did they break the Covenant? If they did not endeavour, &c. was that our Sin? were they or we Breakers of the Covenant? If they broke the Covenants and we in them, how had they a Right to be our Representatives in religious Matters? Did God make them so, or did we? Or did they take it to themselves?

8. Is it a Sin in the old Scotch Dissenters to espouse Principles in favour of propagating Religion by offensive Arms? If it be a Sin, why do Seceders fall into the same Sin, in declaring so peremptorily against the Toleration of the Worship of the Church of *England* in *Scotland*? If the Episcopal Party be not tolerated, must they not be proceeded against by the Sword? If it be a Sin to espouse such Principles, why was it not inserted in the Covenant Confession, as well as some smaller Crimes? If it be no Sin, why do the Associate Presbytery say it is a Sin? [See Answer to Reasons of Dissent, Introduction, p. 5]

9. Are the Covenants any Part of Religion, or only Expedients

to promote and preserve it? If they are any Part of Religion, are not the Covenants set upon a par with the Bible, and the Bible accused of Defect? If they are only an Expedient, &c. Is the self same Expedient perpetually necessary, Why then have Seceders alter'd it?

10. Is it a Duty to Swear Contradictions to be true? If it be a Duty not only to speak Contradictions but swear them true, what can be a Sin? If it be a Sin, why have the Seceders done it, by swearing their Approbation of the first Book of Discipline, enjoining Marriage to be celebrated on Sunday; and the *Westminster Directory*, which advises that it shou'd not be on the Lord's Day? [See the Act for Renewing, &c. p. 97, and 116. compar'd.] Have they not sworn both without Limitation? Have they not made this Oath, wherein Contradictions are sworn to be true, a Term of Communion? [See the Act respecting the Terms of Communion, p. 119.]

11. Is it a Duty to bear true and faithful Allegiance to the King of *Great Britain*? If it be not Duty, why do the Seceders bear such Allegiance? If it be Duty, why do the Seceders refuse the Oath of Allegiance when duly tender'd? Is it because they wou'dn't be bound to Duty?

E R R A T A.

PAGE 1. Line 9. for *spaired*, read *spared*. & l. 29. for *bear*, r. *Heart*. p. 11, l. 40. r. *Basilidans*. p. 39. l. 25. & p. 43. l. 31. for *forbided*, r. *forbidden*. p. 42. l. 15, for *allude*, r. *elude*. p. 46. l. 39, for *differs*, r. *differ*. p. 66, l. 6, & p. 103, l. 7. for *is*, r. *are*. p. 66, l. 20. r. *consist*. p. 72. l. 11, r. *Cambuslang*. p. 80, l. 45. for *positive*, r. *Possessive*. p. 84, l. 45, for *doth*, r. *doth not*. p. 85. l. 34. r. *actual*. p. 86, l. 39, r. *Construction*. p. 91. l. 32, r. *Warrants*. p. 93, l. 15, r. *Evidences*, & l. 25, r. *Series*. p. 94, l. 17. & p. 96, l. 34, for *and*, r. *&c.* p. 96, l. 24, for 115, r. 89, p. 110 l. 12, & 23, for *and*, r. *&c.* p. 105, l. 5, r. *imply'd*, & l. 39, for *received*, r. *rejected*. p. 106, l. 27, r. *Christ's*. p. 112, l. 9. r. *in Jeremiah's Time*. p. 114, l. 7, for *he*, r. *she*. & l. 18, for *fare*, r. *are*. & l. 38, for *for*, r. *of*. p. 119, l. 2. for *can be*, r. *yet can be*. & l. 11, r. *sects*. p. 120, l. 13, for *be*, r. *be so*. p. 121, for *on*, r. *ons*. & l. 35, r. *impossible*. p. 121, l. 37, r. *wou'd*. p. 122, l. 25, r. *taught*. p. 123, l. 12, r. *Duties of*. p. 124, l. 10, for *into*, r. *to*. & l. 14, r. *a proper*. & l. 27, for *far*, r. *so far*. p. 128, l. 22, after *to*, add *the*. & l. 28, r. *Societies*. p. 129, l. 7, for *Wilson*, r. *Willison*, & l. 8, r. *and*