







CONGREGATIONAL ORDER.

THE

ANCIENT PLATFORMS

OF THE

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES

OF

NEW ENGLAND;

WITH A DIGEST

OF RULES AND USAGES IN CONNECTICUT,

AND AN APPENDIX,

CONTAINING NOTICES OF CONGREGATIONAL BODIES IN OTHER
STATES.

Published by direction of the General Association of Connecticut.

MIDDLETOWN:

EDWIN HUNT.

1843.

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P R E F A C E.

THE General Association of Connecticut, at New Milford, in 1837, appointed a committee of one from each district association, "to collect from the different associations and consociations the various rules and usages which modify the application of the Platform; and to report to the next General Association a summary or digest of the same, which may be incorporated with a new edition of the Platform.

By the labors of that committee, a beginning was made in the work now completed. But the contemplated edition of the Saybrook Platform having been published without the proposed "summary or digest," the committee supposed that they were released from the service; and by the General Association at Norwalk, in June, 1838, they were, at their request, discharged from the further consideration of the subject.

The design, however, was felt to be too important to be abandoned; and at the same meeting, the subscribers were appointed a committee "to collect from the different associations and consociations, their various rules and usages, and to report a digest of the same to the next General Association."

At Danbury, in 1839, and at New Haven, in 1840, this committee reported the progress they were making in the work, and were directed to proceed. At New Haven, in 1841, they made a final report as follows:—

"That in attending to the duty assigned to them, it seemed proper to inquire, first, into the origin and history of the associations and consociations,—secondly, to inquire how far the several

articles of the Saybrook Platform are now observed by those bodies and by the churches,—and thirdly, to combine and arrange the existing rules and usages in the form of a Digest.”

“The committee further report, that it seemed to them convenient to distribute these three parts of the work among the three members of the committee ; and that, accordingly, the Historical Account of the origin and progress of our ecclesiastical confederation has been prepared by the Rev. Dr. Field,—the account of the degree in which our ecclesiastical order is now conformed to the principles of the Saybrook Platform, has been prepared by the Rev. Mr. Gillett,—and the Digest has been drawn up by the chairman of the committee.”

This report, and the accompanying documents, having been received and accepted, the Rev. Edward R. Tyler and Mr. Samuel Porter immediately made liberal proposals to the General Association, for the publication of the work thus prepared. Whereupon the following resolutions were adopted.

“1. That the documents presented to this body by the committee on rules and usages, be published under the superintendence of the committee.

“2. That the committee be authorized to make corrections and additions as upon further inquiry they may find requisite ; and that to this end they be requested to cause a copy of the Digest at least, to be sent to one or more ministers in each district, before publication, for their revision.

“3. That the publication include the Confession of Faith, assented to by the synod at Saybrook, with the Heads of Agreement and Articles of Discipline, and also the Cambridge Platform.

“4. That the committee be authorized to append to the Cambridge Platform any notes and illustrations which may be in their judgment expedient.

“5. That our delegate to the general association of Massachusetts, be requested to inform that body, of our intention to publish the Cambridge Platform, in connection with our own rules and usages, and that they be respectfully invited to render to our committee any assistance in their power, which may make the work more complete, and more extensively useful.

“6. That the proposals of Rev. E. R. Tyler, and Mr. Samuel Porter be accepted, it being understood that the said proposals refer to the volume as described in the preceding resolutions.”

The General Association of Massachusetts, at Westfield, in June, 1841, adopted the following resolutions :

“That we approve of the publication of the Cambridge Platform, in its simple form, in the volume about to be published by that body (the General Association of Connecticut,) consisting of the Saybrook Platform, with notes, and a Digest of rules and usages; and that this resolution be communicated to the committee of the Connecticut Association.”

In completing their task, the committee have thought best to include, in an appendix, some account of the origin, constitution, and rules of the General Association of Massachusetts, and of similar bodies in other states.

We may add, that while each member of the committee has devoted his chief attention to his own particular task, he has been aided by the suggestions of his colleagues; and the entire work has been repeatedly and carefully examined by the whole committee.

From this statement, the reader will learn, not only the character of the work, and the manner in which it has been produced, but also the nature, and degree of its authority in respect to the opinions, and practice of the Congregational churches and ministers. It is a work undertaken at the appointment, and crowned with the favorable acceptance of the General Association of Connecticut. It proceeds from no legislative or judicial power. The General Association cannot prescribe to the churches, or to the ministry, either opinions to be maintained, or rules to be obeyed. Each church, each consociation of churches, each association of pastors, acts for itself in its own sphere, and will continue to do so hereafter. Among ministers and churches, there always have been, and will still continue to be, different opinions, and different practices. Unity without uniformity, is better than uniformity without unity.

But if this book has no legislative or judicial authority, what is it good for? We reply, the immediate design of the work is simply to present an outline, as complete as possible, of the actual polity and usages of the Congregational churches.

of New England, and particularly of Connecticut. Such an outline is hardly to be found in any other work ; and our expectation is, that the work now offered to the public may serve :

1. To furnish that sort of knowledge, for the want of which the transaction of business in churches and in other ecclesiastical bodies, is often retarded and embarrassed, and which Congregationalism makes it necessary, not only for every church officer, but for every brother in the church, to acquire :

2. To be a convenient text-book for theological students, who may wish to become acquainted with the details of the Congregational church order.

3. To guide those in other parts of our country who may wish to organize churches, and other ecclesiastical bodies, on the Congregational model either of Connecticut or of Massachusetts ; and to afford some of the benefits of our New England experience where such churches have already been formed.

To our brethren in the ministry, to the Congregational churches, and above all to Him who hath said, that so trivial an offering as a cup of cold water given to a disciple in the name of a disciple shall not lose its reward, we present this result of our united labors.

LEONARD BACON,
DAVID D. FIELD,
TIMOTHY P. GILLET

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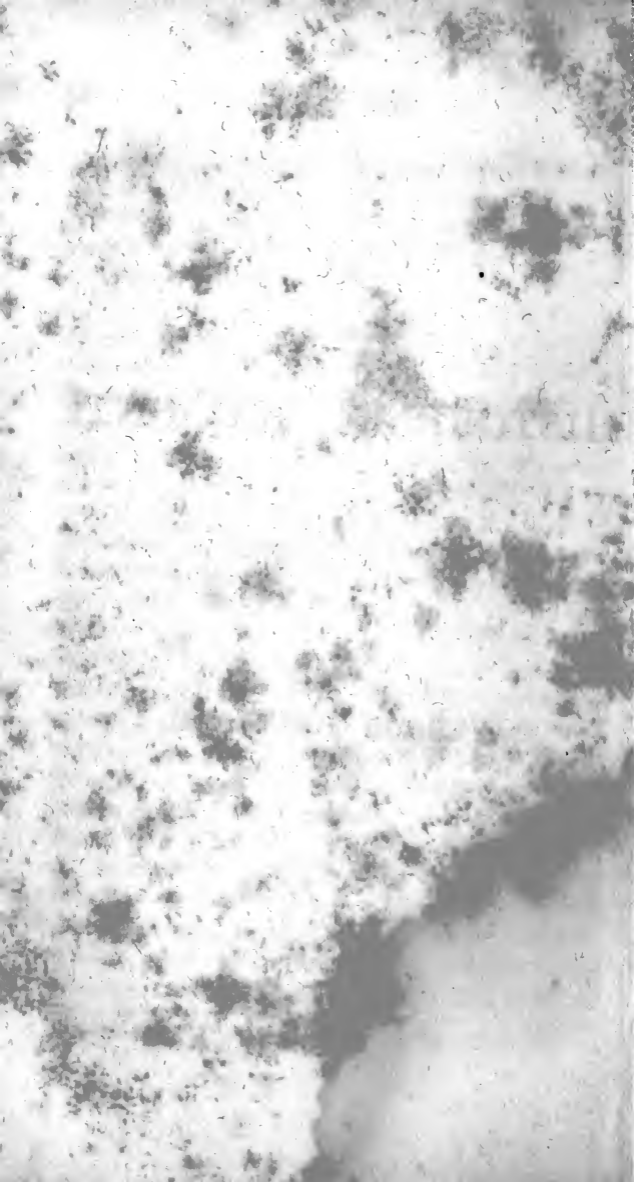
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HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

OF THE

SAYBROOK PLATFORM.



HISTORICAL ACCOUNT
OF THE
SAYBROOK PLATFORM.

THE Congregational churches of Connecticut have had public and known standards of their common faith and discipline, from nearly the time of their earliest organization. Though the Saybrook Platform was not formed until 1708, "yet the ministers and churches of Connecticut and New Haven, [colonies] were present and united in the formation of the Cambridge Platform in 1648, which, with the ecclesiastical laws, became thenceforward the religious constitution of these, as well as of the other New England colonies."* The synod which framed this Platform, unanimously adopted the Westminster Confession of Faith, in the following words: "This synod having perused and considered, with much gladness of heart and thankfulness to God, the confession of faith, published of late by the reverend assembly in England, do judge it to be very holy, orthodox, and judicious in all matters of faith, and do therefore freely and fully consent thereunto, for

* Trumbull's History of Connecticut, Vol. I, page 289.

the substance thereof. Only in those things which have respect unto church government and discipline, we refer ourselves to the Platform agreed upon by the present assembly."* The things excepted were of a Presbyterian character, and points of controversy, contained in some sections in the twenty-fifth, thirtieth, and thirty-first chapters. For sometime previous, the New England churches, "next unto the Bible (which was their professed, perpetual and only directory,) had no platform of their church government, more exact, than their famous *John Cotton's* well known book of the Keys." This contains the principles of the Cambridge Platform; but being the production of an individual, "it was convenient the churches of New England," being increased in numbers, "should have a system of their *discipline*, extracted from the word of God, and exhibited unto them, with a more effectual, acknowledged and established recommendation.†" While this was in use, the churches were not, strictly speaking, without a public Confession of Faith. The early Puritans of New England, particularly of Connecticut, were non-conformists, and not separatists, and known to be strongly attached to the doctrinal articles of the Church of England. They loved them after they adopted the Westminster Confession, and believed the doc-

* Boston Ed. Cambridge and Saybrook Platform, p. 14. † Mag-nalia, B. 5, pp. 20, 21, London Ed. 1702.

trinal articles in this Confession to be the same with them in meaning.

The Saybrook Platform consists of two parts: "A Confession of Faith;" and "Heads of Agreement, and Articles for the administration of Church Discipline."

The Confession of Faith was not new to the Connecticut churches. It is the Savoy Confession, consented to by the elders and messengers of the Congregational churches in England, who met at the Savoy in London in 1658, and which was probably circulated in New England from nearly that period. "A general Synod of the elders and messengers of the churches in *New England*," at Boston, "in 1680, approved of and consented to this Confession, and the General Court" of Massachusetts, "ordered it to be printed for the benefit of the churches in the present and after times."* It was printed about that time in connection with the Cambridge Platform; and afterwards it was republished, in the same connection, by Cotton Mather, in his *Magnalia*. The compilers at Saybrook did not alter this at all, but subjoined to each section proof-texts from the scriptures. This, too, is the Westminster Confession substantially, those things being omitted which have been already mentioned, and some expressions altered. The Boston Synod "made some little variations from one of these Confessions in compliance with the other, but chose to

* See the Act in the Platform.

express themselves in the main in the words of those reverend assemblies, that so they might, not only with one heart, but with one mouth" (with those who had previously assented to this Confession) "glorify God and our Lord Jesus Christ."* They in fact adopted both Confessions in one. This regard to harmony was probably one reason why the Synod of 1648 adopted the Westminster Confession, instead of forming a new Confession. After the example of the Synod of 1680, the churches and ministers of Connecticut in 1703 "met in a consociated council and gave their consent to the Westminster and Savoy Confessions both. This was done upon a circular issued by the trustees of Yale College, then just established. "It seems that they also drew up certain rules of ecclesiastical union in discipline."† After the adoption of the Saybrook Platform, "the ministers of Connecticut, in their public conventions, several times renewed their consent to this Confession of Faith,"‡ which remains as it was when it first received their approbation, and as it was when it was approved by the New England churches.

The far greater part of the sections in the Savoy and Westminster Confessions appear precisely in the same dress. In some of the sections which vary, the variations extend mere-

* Pref. of Cambridge and Saybrook Platform, pp. 9, 10.

† Trumbull, vol. I. p. 478. ‡ Pres. Clapp's Defence of the New England Churches, pages 17, 18.

ly to the change, omission or supply of a word, phrase, or clause in a sentence; to the transposition of the parts of a sentence, or to the reconstruction or division of a section: in some the alterations are greater.

From these statements and references, it is clear the churches of Connecticut have had either the Savoy or the Westminster Confession for nearly two hundred years, and that these are for the most part one and the same, in language as well as signification. Our ancestors regarded the three Confessions which have been named as meaning the same, so far as doctrines are concerned, and all, of course, as agreeable to the sacred oracles. Accordingly it is said in the ninth head of agreement: "As to what appertains to soundness of judgment in matters of faith, we esteem it sufficient that a church acknowledge the Scriptures to be the Word of God, the perfect and only rule of faith and practice, and own either the doctrinal part of those commonly called the Articles of the Church of England, or the Confession, or Catechisms, shorter or larger, compiled by the Assembly at Westminster, or the Confession agreed on at the Savoy, to be agreeable to said rule."

Agreeably to these views, Cotton Mather, in his preface to the "Faith professed by the churches of New England," says: "It was once an unrighteous and injurious aspersion

cast upon the churches of *New England*, that the world knew not their principles: whereas they took all the occasions imaginable to make all the world know, that in the doctrinal part of religion they have agreed entirely with the Reformed Churches of Europe. And that they desired most particularly to maintain the faith professed by the churches of *Old England*, whereunto was owing their original. Few pastors of mankind ever took such pains at catechising as have been taken by our New English Divines: now let any man living read the most judicious and elaborate catechisms published, [of which a large number are referred to] and say whether true divinity was ever better handled, or whether they were not the truest sons of the Church of England, who thus maintained its fundamental articles.”*

The New England ministers proclaimed their faith in various ways; and the churches of Connecticut have had general and coincident Confessions of Faith from the beginning.

It should, however, be said here, that these churches, when the Saybrook Platform was adopted, did not consider their general Confession as setting aside their particular Confessions; these were retained: nor did they, nor their sister churches before, consider their general Confessions as superseding particular ones. All that could have been claimed was, that the par-

*Magnalia, Book V. page 3.

ticular confessions should not clash with those which were general. Dr. Mather, in the preface just referred to, says : "It is true that *particular churches* in the country have confessions by themselves, drawn up in their own forms ; nor indeed were the symbols in the most primitive times 'ipsissimis verbis' [in precisely the same language.] It is also true that few *learned men* have been admitted as members of our churches, but what have, at their admission, entertained them with notable confessions of their own composing ; insomuch that if the *Protestants* have been by the Papists called the Confessionists, the *Protestants of New England* have of all, given the most laudable occasion to be called so. Nevertheless all this variety has been the exactest *unity* : all those confessions have been but so many derivations from, and explanations and confirmations of that confession, which the Synod had voted for them all : for ut plures rivuli ab uno fonte, ita plures fidei confessiones ab una eademque fidei veritate manare possunt : [many confessions may be formed from one and the same system of truth, as many little streams may flow from a single fountain.]"

The churches in Connecticut have generally had particular confessions, though the associated churches in Litchfield South, in 1828, adopted common articles of faith, and a common covenant. And assuredly, if particular churches

may have a brief confession of their own, associated churches may have a common confession of this description.

It has been mentioned that the compilers at Saybrook appended to the articles of faith which they adopted, proof-texts from the Scriptures; and here seems to be the place for noticing that they did not consider these articles, nor any other formularies, binding, as the productions of men, by their own authority, but as expressing concisely and happily the great truths of the Word of God. They counted it the glory of their fathers, "that they heartily professed the only rule of their religion, from the very first, to be the Holy Scriptures, according whereunto, so far as they were persuaded, upon diligent inquiry, solicitous search and faithful prayer, conformed was their faith, their worship, together with the whole administration of the house of Christ, and their manners; allowance being given to human failures and imperfections."

In offering the Savoy Confession, they doubted not that the same had been "the constant faith of the churches of Connecticut from the first foundation of them." They offered it as being, in their firm persuasion, "well and fully grounded upon the Holy Scriptures," and they commended the same unto all, and particularly the people of Connecticut, "to be examined, accepted and constantly maintained." They

did not assume that any thing should be taken upon trust from themselves, "but commended to the people several counsels," concerning the articles of Faith, in which the authority of Scripture is strongly urged.*

The Second Part of the Platform consists of the Heads of Agreement, and Articles for the Administration of Discipline.

The Puritans were not at first as fully settled and agreed upon church government and discipline as upon doctrines : and in this fact there is nothing at which we need to marvel. Doctrines are more clearly and fully revealed in the Scriptures, than matters pertaining to government and discipline, and the latter were subjects of much controversy when New England was settled. While some principles of government are obvious, the formation of a system of government, whether ecclesiastical or civil, defining the rights and duties of different classes of officers, their relations to each other, and the privileges of the people, has always been found a difficult work : and then, when a system of government is formed, to sustain it, and to carry all its principles and provisions, even in the church of God, into harmonious and full execution, is a work of greater difficulty. "The Pœdobaptist part of the dissenting interest in England," in the language of President Stiles, "was

* See Preface to the Platform.

unhappily divided into Presbyterians and Congregationalists, both unanimously agreeing in doctrines, and differing only in forms of church government, and yet generally very amicably differing, as knowing they were harmoniously agreed in all the great, essential and most important things in religion.* The Puritans who came to New England, particularly those who came to Connecticut, were neither Presbyterians, nor Independents, but Congregationalists. Though the sentiment prevailed extensively among them for a time, that in every church fully organized, "there is a pastor and teacher, ruling elder and deacons;" though all these are mentioned as church officers in the Cambridge Platform, and a number of the first and largest churches were furnished with them, yet where they all existed, they did not constitute a church session, nor were the concerns of the church transacted by a session. The distinction between pastor and teacher soon ceased: for it was too tenuous to be long held: and the office of ruling elder, also, soon died away in most of the churches where it was introduced, and finally in all.† The voice of the churches was for Congregationalism in matter and form; and while these were conducted upon Congregational principles, early measures were taken to guard against Presbyterianism, and to establish a general platform of Congregational discipline;

* Stiles' Judges, p. 16. † Savage's Winthrop, Vol. I. pp. 31, 32

particularly by the Reverend John Cotton,* and the Reverend Thomas Hooker, whose influence was patriarchal, more especially in the colonies in which they resided. About 1635 Mr. Cotton sent to the Reverend John Davenport such a favorable account of the order of the churches and commonwealth of New England as then settled by common consent, that he was induced to emigrate to this country.† He became the patriarch of New Haven, and exerted himself in favor of the same ecclesiastical polity.

These three eminent men, in 1642, were earnestly invited to return to England for a season, and assist in the Assembly at Westminster, appointed to consider and advise about the settling of church government, "though for one reason and another neither attended. Mr. Hooker was preparing for the press about that time a vindication of Congregational churches, or rather forming a system or plan of church government, (the "Summe of Discipline") which he designed for the churches of New England, let the determination at Westminster be what it might.‡ "Cotton and Hooker, the next year, were moderators of an assembly at Cambridge, of all the elders in the country, about 50, convened principally because some of the elders went about to set up some things according to

* Holmes' Annals, Vol. 1, pp. 218-19. † Trumbull, Vol. I. p. 466.

‡ Hutchinson, Vol. I. pp. 116-17.

Presbytery, as of Newbury, &c. The assembly concluded against some parts of the Presbyterial way, and the Newbury ministers took time to consider arguments, &c.”* Two years after, as many books came “out of England, some in defence of anabaptism, and other errors, and for liberty of conscience, as a shelter for their toleration, &c., others in maintainance of the Presbyterial government, (agreed upon by the assembly of divines in England,) against the Congregational way, which was practised here, the elders of the churches through all the United Colonies held by agreement *another* meeting at Cambridge, in which they conferred their counsels and examined the writings, which some of them had prepared in answer to the said books, which being agreed and perfected, were sent over into England to be printed. Among these answers was one by Mr. Hooker to Mr. Rutterford, the Scotch minister, about Presbyterial government.”†

Though “the Summe of Discipline” was not published until 1648, the year after Mr. Hooker’s death, yet the principles of it were known and fully discussed in this Synod, and contributed powerfully to check the growth of Presbyterianism, and to settle the churches upon the Congregational basis. These principles are interwoven in the articles of the Cambridge

* Savage’s Winthrop, Vol. II. pp. 136-7. † Savage’s Winthrop, Vol. II. pp. 248-9.

Platform, the penman of which is said to have been the Rev. Richard Mather.

But while the Puritans disliked Presbyterianism, they objected to strict independency. The Rev. John Robinson, in his farewell address to those of his congregation who emigrated to America, said, "I must also advise you to abandon, avoid and shake off the name of Brownists," [who were rigid Independents,] "it is a mere nick-name, and a brand for the making religion, and the professors of it, odious to the Christian world."* In a book written by the Rev. Mr. Mather, just named, in 1639, nine years before the Cambridge Platform, are these words: "The consociation of churches into classes and synods, we hold to be lawful, and in some cases necessary, as, namely, in things that are not peculiar to one church, but common to them all. And likewise when a church is not able to end any matter which concerns only themselves, then they are to seek for counsel and advice from neighbor churches, as the church at Antioch did send unto the church at Jerusalem, Acts xv. 2. The ground and use of classes and synods, with the limitations therein to be observed, is summarily laid down by Dr. Ames, unto whom we do wholly consent in this matter." His son, Pres. Mather, in his treatise entitled, "The Order of the Gospel professed and practiced by the churches of Christ in New

* Ct. Mag. and Intel. Vol. V. p. 205.

England," published in 1700, affirms; "This was and is the judgment of all that adhere to the order of the gospel professed in the churches of New England;" and he cites various authorities in support of his affirmation. "The world is much mistaken," he adds, "in thinking that Congregational churches are independent. That name has indeed been fastened upon them by their adversaries; but our Platform of Discipline, Chap. 2. Sect. 5, disclaims the name." President Oakes in his election sermon before the Massachusetts Legislature, in 1673, inquires, speaking of our way of church order, "Consider what will be the real issue of revolting from the way fixed upon to one extreme or another, whether it be to Presbyterianism or Brownism."

The object of the New England fathers was, to establish churches, and to provide for their communion or consociation, upon the principles of the New Testament, which they believed to be Congregational. While they felt strongly for the rights and privileges of particular churches, and insisted upon their equality, they wished them not only to exercise the most friendly feelings, but to be continually helpful to one another. Mr. Hooker, who is said "to have assisted in gathering and organizing all the churches which were formed in the towns settled within the present limits of this State before his death, to have helped to ordain their minis-

ters, and to have given them such advice as their peculiar situation required," was a great friend to the meeting and consociation of ministers and churches, as a grand mean of promoting purity, union and brotherly affection, among ministers and churches. During his life, the ministers in the vicinity of Hartford, had frequent meetings at his house, and about a week before his death, he observed with great earnestness; "We must agree upon constant meetings of ministers, and settle the consociation of churches, or else we are undone."* Other wise and good men felt very much as he did about consociation, and a year after his death, an effort was made to provide for it, or for something approximating towards it, under the phrase "Communion of Churches," in the Cambridge Platform, as may be seen by looking into the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters. But whatever truths those chapters contain, it was found sufficient provision was not made for securing the blessings desired. The Massachusetts synod which met in 1662, fourteen years after, acknowledged "that some few particulars, referring to the continuation and combination of churches, needed yet a more explicit stating and reducing unto practice." The expression "combination of churches," respects the passages in the Platform about the "communion of churches," and they endeavored to remedy the defect

* Trumbull, Vol. I. p. 479.

in what they advanced on *consociation*, in answer to the question, "Whether, according to the word of God, there ought to be a Consociation of Churches, and what should be the manner of it?" This question they answered with great brevity; "partly," as they say, "*because so much is already said thereabout in the aforesaid Platform of Discipline; and partly by reason of great straits of time.*"* Although what they presented was the joint conclusion of the synod; yet, occupied almost wholly with the question about baptism, they left the subject in an imperfect state. The consociation was not made a fixed, definite body; though expected ordinarily to consist of the representatives of churches "planted in a convenient vicinity, yet liberty was reserved for others to be used without offence." Churches might meet in consociation from the vicinity or from a distance, in larger or smaller numbers; and there was nothing to prevent one consociation from sitting after another upon the same case. There was no suitable nor direct provision for the relief of aggrieved individuals; nor indeed for convening the members of the body. The churches of Connecticut realized these defects both before and after the session of this synod. The difficulty in the first church in Hartford, growing out of a controversy between the pastor and ruling elder, afflicted them exceedingly, and in

* Preface to Cam. Platform, p. 5. Boston Edition.

fact, all the churches in New England.* Other difficulties, arising in different churches, afflicted them also. The Legislature were so annoyed by these, that in 1668, "they conceived the design of uniting the churches of Connecticut in some general plan of church government and discipline, by which they might walk, notwithstanding their different sentiments in points of less importance." With this view an act passed, authorizing four distinguished clergymen in different parts of the colony, viz. : the Reverend Messrs. James Fitch of Norwich, Gershom Buckley of Wethersfield, Joseph Elliot of Guilford, and Samuel Wakeman of Fairfield, "to meet at Saybrook, and devise a way in which this desirable purpose might be effected. This appears to have been," Trumbull remarks, "the first step towards forming a religious constitution," and though he does not inform us what those clergymen did, yet he adds, "From this time it became more and more a general object of desire and pursuit,—though many years elapsed before the work could be accomplished."† The occurrence of new difficulties from time to time, showed that it was necessary something should be done. "For the want of a more general and energetic government," the same writer observes, "many churches ran into confusion: councils were not sufficient to relieve the aggrieved and restore peace. As

* Trumbull, Vol. I. p. 297. Savage's Winthrop, Vol. I. p. 142.

† Trumbull, Vol. I. p. 461.

there was no general rule for the calling of councils, council was called against council, and opposite results were given upon the same cases to the reproach of councils and the wounding of religion. Aggrieved churches and brethren were discouraged, as in this way their case seemed to be without remedy. There was no such thing in this way, as bringing their difficulties to a final issue.* The substance of all this appears from the act of the Legislature appointing those conventions in 1708, in the different counties then in Connecticut, whose delegates formed the Saybrook Platform. "This assembly, from their own observation, and the complaint of many others, being made sensible of *the defects of the discipline of the churches of this government, arising from the want of a more explicit asserting of the rules given for that end in the Holy Scriptures*, from which would arise a permanent establishment among ourselves, a good and regular issue in cases subject to ecclesiastical discipline, glory to Christ our head, and edification to his members; hath seen fit to ordain and require, and it is by the authority of the same, ordained and required, that the ministers of the several counties in this government, shall meet together at their respective county towns, with such messengers as the churches to which they belong shall see cause to send with them, on

* Trumbull, Vol. I. p. 480.

the last Monday in June next; there to consider and agree upon those methods and rules for the management of ecclesiastical discipline, which by them shall be adjudged agreeable to the word of God, and shall at the same meeting appoint two or more of their number to be their delegates, who shall all meet together at Saybrook, at the next commencement to be held there, where they shall compare the results of the meetings of the several counties, and out and from them, draw a form of ecclesiastical discipline.”*

Agreeably to this order, the ministers and messengers of the churches met and drafted four models of church discipline, and appointed delegates to the convention at Saybrook. The delegates met and adopted the Confession of Faith which has been spoken of, and the Heads of Agreement, and Articles for the Administration of Discipline.

The Heads of Agreement were not drafted in the conventions, though they may have been the subject of consideration: for they were previously circulated in the country, “and in general were highly approved.”† They were drawn up and assented to by the ministers in England, formerly called Presbyterian and Congregational, and were probably adopted by the delegates at Saybrook for the sake of effecting greater union and harmony among

* Trumbull, Vol. I. p. 481, 2. † Ibid, p. 481.

themselves, and the churches they represented ; though the declaration they contain respecting the examination of candidates for the ministry, by pastors of known ability, had its influence : for young men for a time had been permitted to preach hastily and irregularly, and there was no existing remedy for the evil. From this the inference is not to be drawn that any of the delegates were Presbyterians themselves. Such was not the fact : nor is there any evidence that any churches then or before in Connecticut, acknowledged Presbyterian principles, though there may have been before a very few ministers and professors who embraced them, as there have been a few since.* What Trumbull states about the different views of the delegates is this : “ Though the council were unanimous in passing the Platform of Discipline, yet they were not all of one opinion. Some were for high consociational government, and in their sentiments, *nearly Presbyterians* ; others were much more moderate and rather verging on independency ; but exceedingly desirous of keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. They exercised great Christian condescension and amiableness towards each other.”†

This desire of unison and peace, which so far as we know, was the principal reason for

* Trumbull, Vol. I. p. 468. † Trumbull, Vol. I. p. 487.

the adoption of these Heads at Saybrook, operated upon those who originally drafted and adopted them in England; who, for the sake of accomplishing their object, cheerfully made concessions to each other. These concessions appear in various sections: in the second and fourth, under the first head, *concerning churches and church members*: in the sixth section, under the second head, *concerning the ministry*; in the section, constituting the fifth head, *concerning deacons and ruling elders*, and in the section constituting the eighth head, *concerning a confession of faith*.

Adopted in such a spirit, the Heads of Agreement effected a union among the Presbyterians and Congregationalists in England. "The brethren of the Presbyterian way in England," says Cotton Mather, "are lately come into such a happy *union* with those of the Congregational, that all former names of distinction are lost in that blessed one of United Brethren."* With like spirit the "Heads" were adopted at Saybrook. The delegates appended proof-texts to the sections as they did to the articles of the Confession of Faith.

These Heads, to use their language, "hold forth *the power of particular churches in the management of discipline among themselves*. They refer also to the relations of such churches to each other, and to their communion. Had

* Magnalia, V. p. 59.

these been deemed sufficient for all the wants of the churches, nothing would have been done about articles for the administration of church discipline.

Such articles were added, and designed "to preserve, promote or recover the peace and edification of the churches, by the means of a consociation of the elders and churches, or of an association of elders: both of which," the compilers say, "we are agreed have countenance from the Scriptures, and the propositions in answer to the second question given by the Synod, met at Boston, 1662."*

The Articles for the Administration of Church Discipline, were what the churches of Connecticut especially needed, after the troubles which they had suffered. These were compiled at Saybrook, from the models prepared in the county conventions. President Stiles observes, "I have been told that the model from New Haven county, said to have been draughted principally by the reverend Mr. *James Pierpont*, was that which, with some amendments, passed the Synod."† These provided for one or more consociations in each county, which should be standing, known and responsible tribunals, with appellate and final jurisdiction; to which particular churches might refer cases too difficult to be well adjudged and issued by them-

* Preface to Saybrook Platform, and Hobart's Attempts, pp. 9, 10. † Christian Union, p. 70.

selves: cases concerning which there should "be need of a council for the determination of them," and to which aggrieved individuals might apply for redress. "One principal thing," says President Clapp, "wherein these articles differed from what had been before generally received and practised in the New England churches, was this; that whereas the Cambridge Platform had said in general terms, that councils should consist of neighboring churches, and some question had arisen who should be esteemed neighboring churches, and what number should be called in particular cases; these articles reduced it to greater certainty, that councils should consist of neighboring churches of the county, they forming themselves into one or more consociations for the purpose."* The object was to prevent *picked* councils; *exparte* councils; and councils upon councils, which should give contradictory results, and plunge the churches into deeper troubles.

The articles provided also for one or more associations in each county, consisting of the teaching elders, who should meet at least twice in the year, consult the duties of their office, and the common interest of the churches, and perform various other specified and important duties.

Some prototypes of such meetings of minis-

* Clapp's Defence, p. 6. See also Note A.

ters had existed from the beginning in New England, particularly in Connecticut; but being "countenanced by no ecclesiastical constitution, attended only by such ministers in one place and in another, as were willing to associate, they could bind none but themselves. The churches might advise with them if they chose it, or neglect it at pleasure. There was no regular way of introducing candidates" into the ministry, "by the general consent either of themselves or the elders."* The platform brought these things into more order and system.

This also recommended a General Association, to be composed of one or more delegates from each of the district associations, which should meet once a year. In recommending this, the Platform said nothing about the duties of this body:† it was not deemed necessary; for in the general meetings which the ministers in New England had long held at the time of the colony elections at Boston and Hartford, they had been accustomed to go into consultations on the interests of the churches, and of the cause of literature, and to give advice when necessary; sometimes to devise measures for the relief of the poor, and for civilizing and christianizing the Indians.‡ Being general, the recommendation gave abundant scope for that range of consultation and discussion,

* Trumbull, Vol I. p. 480. † Note B. ‡ Note C.

which has taken place in this body, particularly for attending to those various objects of benevolence towards our fellow-creatures around us, and in other parts of our country and the world; and for opening correspondence with other ministerial and ecclesiastical bodies;* which for no inconsiderable time past, have given increased interest to the annual assembling of the ministers of the State.

From what has been presented, it is evident the prominent reasons for adopting the Heads of Agreement, and the Articles of Discipline, were:

1. The promotion of order and harmony among the ministers and churches.

2. The regular introduction of candidates into the ministry.

3. And especially, the establishment of a fixed board of appeal, by which such difficulties, as the particular churches themselves could not settle, might be adjusted.

The delegates at Saybrook, who compiled the Articles of Discipline, thought it probable that at some future time they might receive improvement: for in their preface to the Articles, they observe: "The Scriptures are added for the illustration of the substance of the articles, yet with an apprehension that there may be alterations made, and further concessions agreed upon, which will afterwards appear necessary for the order and edification

* Note D.

of these churches." In commending them to the acceptance and observation of the people, they express the hope, "that until it shall please the Lord to send further light and truth in these more controversial matters, this method might be a blessed means of our better unanimity and success in our Lord's work, for the gathering and edifying of the body of Christ, for which they bespoke the concurring prayers of all that feared the Lord." The articles remain in the Platform as they were at the beginning,* notwithstanding the apprehension of the compilers; and the good they hoped for has been realized.

After what has been advanced, it seems hardly necessary to remark, that the Platform left it with the bodies which it proposed; to adopt their own mode of organization, and to make such by-laws from time to time, as they should deem expedient. Indeed, it is said expressly in the tenth article, in regard to all councils, "that they may prepare such rules as occasions may require," &c.

Being thus formed, the Platform was sanctioned by the Colony Legislature, and as soon as practicable, went into operation. Conventions were held early in 1709, in the different counties, in which steps were taken for the organization of the primary bodies, and at the proper time, the General Association, composed

* Note E.

of delegates from the District Associations, held its first meeting.

A council, consisting of nine elders and eleven messengers, representing ten churches, was held in Hartford county, at Hartford, February 1st and 2d. This resolved that the churches of the county should be two consociations, and divided them accordingly, providing that should either of the consociations find the "division inconvenient, there might be an alteration afterwards." The ministers then present, agreed that there should "be two associations, or ministers' meetings, in the county; the associational division proposed, corresponding as to limits with the consociational.* The bodies then resolved and agreed upon, are those now known as Hartford North and South Consociations and Associations. Two bodies of each description were probably deemed important, because the churches and ministers then were comparatively numerous, and the prospect was they would become more so, the county embracing most of the territory now included in Litchfield and Tolland counties.

A council of five elders and eight messengers from five churches in the county of New Haven, convened at *Branford*, April 13th, passed the following vote; "We now, whose names are here specified, for ourselves and in

* Records of Hartford North Association.

behalf of the several churches from which we are come, according to the method agreed on by the council of all the churches in the colony, met at Saybrook, September 9th, 1708, do, (until we shall otherwise agree,) form ourselves into one consociation; and through the strength of Christ, (without whom we can do nothing,) promise for the future, we will better mutually watch over each other, and be ready at all times, according to the rule of God's word, "to be helpful to each other, in the service and work of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, as we may have opportunity for the same, and be called thereunto, according to the said method and rule agreed on at said council at Saybrook."* "Some members desiring the council's sense of *several articles* in the written method of managing discipline as it was agreed on by the council at Saybrook," they expressed by votes their views on the first thirteen articles, which will be given in a note in the proper place. An association was organized by the ministers present at that time, or by the ministers of the county at a meeting soon after. This association, at a meeting held September 26, 1786, amicably agreed upon a division into two associations, one to be known by the name of "the Association of the Eastern District in the county of New Haven," and the other "the Association of the Western District:" the line of

* Records of New Haven East Association.

division fixed upon being the "river running through Wallingford and North Haven to the sea." At the same meeting the association made provision for a corresponding division of the consociation.* The division of the association took effect May 29, 1787, and that of the consociation probably not long afterwards, though the present constitution of the western consociation was not adopted until 1800.—Hence arose the eastern and western associations and consociations of New Haven.

A council early met in Fairfield county, which, we are assured, "gave to the Platform a hearty welcome," though the precise day and place of its meeting cannot be stated, as the book containing the records of its proceedings has been recently lost. The presumption is, the nine churches then regarded as being within the county, (the church of Rye, found afterwards to be within the bounds of New York, being one of them,) were represented. This formed one consociation, and both a consociation and association existed there, either from that meeting, or from meetings held very soon afterwards. These were divided, August 29, 1734, into Fairfield eastern and western consociations and associations.

"At a meeting of the elders and messengers of the churches of the county of New London, convened at New London, March 2, 1709, in order

* Records of New Haven E. Association.

to the forming of themselves into one or more consociations," five elders were present and eight messengers, from seven different churches. By this council "it was unanimously agreed that there shall be but one consociation in this county for the hearing, trying and determining of all cases that [shall] regularly be brought before them from any of the churches in said county." To this agreement the following explanation is appended: "This is not to be interpreted to be any obstruction to a future division of the county into more consociations if it be found needful."* The ministers met in association the following May. The county then covered most of the present territory of Windham county, and a part of that pertaining to Middlesex. Several settlements, begun on the north about that time, having progressed so much that churches were formed in them, of sufficient strength to sustain pastors, the following vote was passed at a meeting of the association, Oct. 28, 1723. "Whereas the late settlements that have been made of ministers in several towns and societies in this county, has made the members of this association so numerous as to render it difficult for them all to meet in one place, it is agreed upon that the association be divided into two associations;" and the dividing line between a north and south association was designated; a division which was confirm-

* Records of New London Association.

ed the succeeding year, excepting that the relations of one minister were changed. The North Association formed rules for the regulation of its proceedings in 1725. But this association was not destined to remain long as an association of New London. It was merged in that of Windham shortly after the organization of Windham county in May, 1726; for as the Platform proposed that there should be one or more associations and consociations in each county in Connecticut at the beginning, it was considered as consonant to its scope and spirit, that upon the formation of a new county the same principle should be observed. Hence at a meeting of the Association in Windham county, Sept. 6, 1726, it was voted, "that the rules made and established August 31, 1725, by the North Association of the county of New London, be and remain the rules by which this association govern themselves in future."*

About forty years since, a small association was organized in this county, (first represented in the General Association in 1800,) denominated Windham East, which is now extinct.

Probably the consociation of New London county was divided about the time the association was; for the committee who reported the rules of Windham Consociation inform us: "From the history which we have of the churches in this county, it is evident that, from their

* Records of Windham Association.

earliest establishment, they have regarded the Saybrook Platform as their ecclesiastical constitution."

For the same general reason, as before, New London Association was again divided, June 5, 1750, into a Western and Eastern Association. "New London river" was the dividing line as far north as Norwich, whence the line so ran as to leave the four first societies in Norwich to the Eastern, and the fifth society to the Western Association. The division was made with entire unanimity, with expressions of respect and love, and desire for future harmony and mutual helpfulness. These two associations (with which consociations appear to have been connected,) remained as such until Oct. 2, 1787, more than two years after the formation of Middlesex county, which was taken from the counties of New London and Hartford.

The erection of Middlesex county opened the way for several changes: for a portion of the ministers of the Western District of New London, with others from Hartford South, to be formed into a new association, and for other ministers in Western New London to join their Eastern brethren. Hence at a meeting of the Western Association, held at the time just named, (none attending but those living within the limits of the new county,) the following resolution was adopted: "Whereas the Honorable General Assembly of this State have formed a new county

by the name of Middlesex, which includes the towns of Saybrook and Killingworth, [then containing six churches and six pastors] it becomes expedient, according to the Platform, that an association and consociation should be formed, consisting of ministers and churches within the county: We, the ministers of the towns of Saybrook and Killingworth, think it expedient to form an association by the name of the Consociated Association of the county of Middlesex, leaving full liberty, however, to our brethren who are of the Association and Consociation of Hartford South, within the limits of Middlesex county, to remain where they are, or join us, as they shall judge most expedient; who upon their signing with us, shall be members of this Consociated Association, and be deemed associated and consociated pastors of the county of Middlesex. And whereas the first and third churches of Lyme, who were with us associated as members of the Western District of New London County, have by some of their members signified their desire to be of our body in association and consociation; we hereby agree that we will accept them into our body, as consociated with our churches, and their pastors as consociated pastors, when they shall be resettled, on their subscribing to this association as consociated pastors.* Agreea-

* Records of Middlesex Association.

bly to these provisions, the ministers of Haddam, Middle Haddam, East Hampton, Westchester, the three societies in East Haddam, and of North Lyme, united with the association the succeeding June, and the minister of Lyme afterwards; but the churches and ministers of Middletown and Chatham First Society, [now Portland,] as a matter of convenience retained their original connection with Hartford South. Durham, annexed to the county in 1799, for the same reason, retained its connection ministerially and consociationally with New Haven East.

Litchfield county was erected from Hartford, New Haven and Fairfield counties, principally from Hartford county, in October, 1751. "At a consociational meeting of the churches within the county," convened at Litchfield, July 7, 1752, agreeably to the original provision in the 10th article of the Platform, it was voted, "That all the churches within the county *** hereby are for the present constituted one consociation." Fourteen elders were present, and fifteen delegates representing fifteen churches. The ministers and churches had previously belonged to the ministerial and consociational bodies in the counties from which Litchfield County was taken. "At a meeting of the ministers," the same day, it was "agreed that all the ministers of the county be one association."* In September, 1791, the consociation,

* Records of Litchfield South.

at a meeting of the whole body, "by mutual agreement," was divided into the North and South consociations of that county: the association was divided the June following.

Tolland County was formed from Hartford and Windham counties in 1785, in which counties the ministers and churches had had their connexions, and in which they retained them until 1789 and 90. The association of Tolland was organized in the former year, and the consociation in the latter.*

Thus have these bodies been formed from time to time. The associations and consociations have been co-extensive. Those first formed, covered a given district; and when divided, they were divided sectionally, so as to meet the principles of the Platform as to "neighboring churches."

For a considerable period, consociations were held in different parts of Connecticut as occasions called for them. It was proposed however, at the time the consociation was formed in Litchfield County, that there should be a stated meeting of the consociation there, besides intervening occasional conventions. The year previous to this, the General Association proposed to the district Associations to prepare each a draught, from which a plan might be drawn for a general consociation. The subject was brought up before the General Association for several years, after which it was suffered to

* Minutes of General Association, 1812.

rest until 1793, when the subject was resumed, accompanied by a proposal for an annual meeting of the district consociations. The project for a general consociation did not succeed, but the proposal for an annual meeting of the district consociations was adopted in some parts of the State, and for some time it has been the common practice for such consociations to be held.

The district associations have met regularly from the beginning, usually twice a year; though it has become customary recently, to hold one of these meetings in connection with the annual consociation.

Though the regular records of the General Association go back only about a century, yet it is evident from Trumbull, that it has been accustomed to meet at least once a year from the beginning: for a considerable period it met twice a year, and in a very few instances it has held adjourned sessions. At first it passed from one county or association to another, and its sessions were usually in September. When it met twice a year, as it did from 1721 until 1735, unless 1732 be an exception, it met at Hartford and New Haven. The custom was to hold the meetings in connection with the Colony election and the commencement of Yale College. In some instances delegates were appointed to meet on the day following those occasions, and perhaps that was always re-

garded as the day of meeting. Confining the sessions to those places was deemed a departure from the Platform; and Hartford North Association repeatedly remonstrated against it. Since 1735 they have been held within the limits of the several associations in rotation, the needed alterations being made as new associations were formed; and the sessions have commenced upon the third Tuesday in June.*

As there were but four district associations at first, the General Association was small. Only two delegates were ordinarily appointed from each, and some of these often failed. After the associations were increased to seven or eight, the average number of delegates did not exceed eleven. This was the fact in sixteen instances between 1740 and 1761. In 1828 it was voted that in future, every district association shall send three delegates to the General Association.

For a long time delegates from the district associations were required to take attested copies of all the acts of the General Association, to be recorded or kept on file for the use of their respective bodies. How far this requisition was regarded it would now be difficult to ascertain. If copies were uniformly taken, they were not always recorded; though in some instances they are found on the books of the associations. In 1776 a vote was passed

* Note F.

that important acts of the General Association should be printed. How far this was done is not known. Since 1800 this body has uniformly published either extracts from its minutes, or the minutes at large; and in consequence of improvements made from time to time, these now form a document of much value.

After the Platform was adopted "and had time to operate, the churches became more regular and harmonious in their discipline, enjoyed more general peace, and their numbers constantly increased."* Better rules for the examination of candidates for the ministry could hardly have been given than were prepared and recommended by the General Association in 1712.†

Though the Platform was severely tested by several trials, particularly by the well known "Wallingford Case,"‡ in 1758, yet when that case was over, and the high excitements produced by it had time to subside, the confidence of the people in ecclesiastical bodies, so far as it had been impaired, was in a measure restored; and where their feelings were not disturbed, it was greatly increased. After this, "the advice of the General Association was very generally adopted by the associations and consociations; greater attention was paid, both

* Trumbull, Vol. II. p. 17. † Trumbull, Vol. I. p. 489, 90.
‡ Note G.

to the morals, qualifications and orthodoxy of candidates for the ministry; ordinations have generally been attended by the consociations of the several districts in which they have been performed.”*

When the Cambridge Platform was adopted, there were twelve worshiping assemblies within the present limits of Connecticut, several of which enjoyed the labors of two ministers, though it does not appear that quite so many churches were duly organized. When the Saybrook Platform was adopted, there were forty-one churches in what was at that time regarded as the territory of Connecticut: excluding the one in Rye, there were forty, and about as many ministers. President Stiles speaks of *thirty churches* as acceding to the Platform at first,† probably referring to those represented in the conventions in 1709, in which, as far as we know, there was entire unanimity on the point of accepting the Platform. But it does not follow that the churches not represented did not fall in at once or very soon with what was done: for other reasons may be assigned for their not being represented than a supposed opposition to the constitution. There is satisfactory evidence that all the churches then existing were consociated sooner or later, and the presumption is, that they were generally, if not universally consociated in 1709,

* Trumbull, Vol. II. p. 525. † Note H.

and that the pastors were associated. The number of churches reported to the General Association the present year, [1841,] is 246; the number of pastors 190, and of stated supplies 21: total 211. All the churches are represented as consociated excepting 15: almost all the pastors and stated supplies belong to the district associations, together with other ministers who are without charge.

NOTES.

NOTE A, p. 35.

"THE principal alteration," says President Stiles, "which they [the churches] deemed [to have been made] was this, that whereas the congregational councils were elected promiscuously from the churches, the churches were now limited to the consociated council, as a standing council on matters of discipline, which they vested with a decisive power on matters which they submitted to them: and which they might on all other matters repair to, advise with, and consult as congregational councils."* This view is far more agreeable to the letter of the articles, than the construction which he undertakes to make out *might* be put upon them. The President, however, errs in supposing "that for the first forty years after the Platform there was not a single instance of *consociated* ordinations." "In the three western consociations," the Rev. Moses Dickinson affirms, "it always has been the practice ever since the first formation, for the whole consociation to be convened at every ordination. How it has been," he adds, "in the county of Fairfield," will appear from the following letter:—

REV. SIR,

Agreeable to your request, I have examined the records of consociations for the western district in Fairfield county, from which it appears that the con-

* Christian Union, p. 79.

sociation was divided Aug. 29, 1734. Since which, there have been nine ordinations in this district; in every [one] of which, the council assisting, consisted of the consociation, as such. And from the old book of records, reaching back to the year 1725, it appears, that all the ordinations, and all the installments, except one, were in like manner performed by councils consisting of the consociation of said county. Dated in Stamford, March 21, 1761.

NOAH WELLES, Register of the Consociation.

The other consociation to which Mr. Dickinson refers is the original consociation of Litchfield county.*

Ordinations in Connecticut now, in the greater proportion of instances, are performed by consociation, or by councils called from the consociations, within whose limits they take place; and so long ago as 1759, the year before Dr. Stiles made the supposition just mentioned, the General Association recommended that ordinations be performed universally by consociation.

NOTE B, p. 36.

This was deemed a defect by the members of a General Association in 1728, and a remedy was proposed to the district association for adoption, as appears from the following letter sent to them as a circular:—

“At a General Association of the colony of Connecticut, convened at Hartford, May 10, 1728.—

This association, taking into consideration that in the articles of agreement made and concluded at Saybrook,

* Answer to the letter of an aged layman, p. 17.

1708, there is no particular business assigned to the General Association, nor are they thereby expressly invested with any powers, which we apprehend a disadvantage to their being serviceable. We therefore refer it to the particular associations to concur and to consent that the General Association have power and capacity to act and do in the particulars following, viz.

I. To receive appeals from particular associations, and to hear and do thereupon in weighty cases as the particular associations are empowered to do in cases orderly brought to them.

II. To act, advise, and do in matters ecclesiastical which are of such a general nature as cannot be managed in particular associations.

III. As also to propose and offer to the particular associations what they apprehend may be of general benefit to the interest of religion and the service of the churches.

IV. That the delegates chosen for the General Association, to be convened in May, shall stand delegates for the General Association in September following, also annually.

V. That the moderator of the General Association last convened shall have power to call together the General Association when he judgeth the same needful; and the General Association so occasionally convened, shall have the same powers as in the stated conventions of the same.

And desire the particular associations to send their thoughts and determinations upon the premises by their delegates unto the next General Association.

A true copy.

Attest, NATHANIEL CHAUNCEY, Scribe."

The original association of New London, from whose records the foregoing is taken, voted at their meeting, May 29, 1728, "that copies of it [the letter] be taken for a mature thought on them, [the articles,] and [that] the full consideration of them be reserved to the next association." At the next association, Aug. 20, the following answer was prepared, which deserves insertion here.

I. "With respect to the first article, we cannot find by the constitution that any appeals do properly lie from particular associations, inasmuch as they are only to advise and not to determine; and then further, if any matters do go from the particular associations, they are directed to be brought before the council or consociation of the churches of the county.

II. With respect to the second, we do not fully understand the meaning and extent of the proposal, and therefore don't judge it proper for us to comply with it.

III. With respect to the third, we are of opinion that the General Associations are already possessed of that power.

IV. With respect to the fourth, we think it to be too great an imposition upon the delegates, that they be obliged to stand for the year, and that some impropriety might attend such a practice.

V. And with respect to the last, we are of opinion that the moderator had better advise with two or three of the neighboring elders in calling the association together, as the moderator of the council is directed to do."

As no change was effected in the Platform, the proposed remedy must have been deemed unnecessary by the associations generally.

NOTE C. p. 36.

Several of the early pastors devoted a portion of their labors to the welfare of these heathen,* and when President Wheelock's Indian school was instructed in that part of Lebanon, now constituting the town of Columbia, contributions were made in various places for the support of the pupils. In 1768, the General Association not only expressed their approbation of the school, but their pleasure in hearing of the kind and charitable dispositions entertained towards it by the good and pious people in England; and they have not ceased yet to care for the salvation of the remnants of the aboriginal tribes, scattered as they are in our land.

Among the white inhabitants of Connecticut there was no call for a long time for missionary effort: for the people settled in clusters, were of one denomination, and made provision for supporting religious institutions among themselves. During this period the ministers and churches were not indifferent to the wants of any who were destitute of religious instruction upon their borders, or who enjoyed it in an imperfect manner. In the beginning of the last century, "divers ministers in the eastern parts of the Colony were at the pains and charge of going and preaching in the town of Providence, Rhode Island, by turns." The difficulty of supplying the people there with instruction in this mode, was such, that the association of New London County, in 1722, petitioned his excellency, Gurdon Saltonstall, then governor of the Colony, to grant a brief for "contributions in so many towns and congregations as his wisdom should see meet," for the support of preaching in that place.

* Trumbull, Vol. I. pp. 494-5.

When emigrants from Connecticut began to settle in Vermont and New York, they did not take clergymen with them, as their fathers had done when they settled in the wilderness, but went away without providing for the enjoyment of the institutions of the gospel. Their pious friends left behind, became alarmed for the consequences, and in view of their destitution, the General Association, in 1774, deemed it advisable that missionaries should be sent among them; and they recommended it to their brethren to promote subscriptions among their people for the purpose of sustaining these heralds of the cross. The subject awakened so much interest that they held an adjourned session, that they might mature and execute their benevolent design. The occurrence and expenses of the revolutionary war stayed their operations, and in fact, retarded the settlements. But in 1792, the system of 1774 was, in part, revived; annual contributions were obtained through the State; numbers of missionaries took the field; the General Association partly conducted the work themselves, but managed principally by their committee. In 1798 the Association formed themselves into the Missionary Society of Connecticut; and in 1802 the trustees were incorporated with power to possess property to an amount not exceeding one hundred thousand dollars. The specified objects were to "Christianize the heathen in North America, and to support and promote Christian knowledge in the new settlements within the United States." From this time the missionary system proceeded under the advantages of a complete organization: donations were made to the Society, and contributions were taken up annually in the congregations on the first Sabbath in May. Every year from 1793 until 1830 inclusive, a "narrative" was published and exten-

sively circulated, showing the receipts and expenditures, the missionaries employed, their fields of labor, and the salutary effects. Extracts from this also appeared in the Connecticut Evangelical Magazine, while that publication continued. All the profits of that magazine were sacredly devoted to the formation of a permanent fund, the annual interest of which is appropriated by the trustees to the support of missions. Thus originated a large proportion of the fund of the Connecticut Missionary Society. Other donations and legacies have been devoted to the same object; and the fund now amounts to \$30,000. In the early periods of this society much missionary labor was performed under its influence, and immense good accomplished in Vermont, the northern and western sections of New York, in the northern settlements of Pennsylvania, and on the Connecticut Reserve: and either in its earlier or later stages, other parts of the land have been blessed by its efforts.*

In 1815, the General Association, upon the request of the Association in New London County, chose a committee to take into consideration the formation of a Domestic Missionary Society for the State and its vicinity, and to report to the next meeting of that body a plan for Domestic Missions; and, in the mean time, to procure preaching for such destitute places as were referred to by the Association of New London, and for others in a similar situation, so far as they could obtain, by gratuities, the requisite means.—The committee reported a constitution in 1816, which was adopted. “The General Association was constituted the Society.”

The influence of this Society has been eminently

* For many facts in this paragraph, see Ct. Mag. and Int. Vol. VI. pp. 339-343.

happy. It has comforted the desponding, strengthened the weak, and given the bread of life to many who otherwise would have remained partially or wholly destitute ; though at the same time it has diverted a portion of the contributions, which, had not the Society been instituted, would have gone to the original Connecticut Missionary Society.

In 1828 a committee was appointed "to consider and report, what, if any measures can be adopted to effect a co-operation between the Domestic Missionary Society of Connecticut and the American Home Missionary Society ; and to take into consideration the interests of the Connecticut Missionary Society in relation to this subject." Though the committee reported unfavorably to the proposed union in 1829, and the report was adopted ; yet in 1830, resolutions were passed, by which the Domestic Missionary Society became, on certain conditions, auxiliary to the American Home Missionary Society ; and by which the operations of the Connecticut Missionary Society were modified. Since that time, the last mentioned Society has confined "its operations to the care and improvement of its permanent fund, and to the appropriation of the annual income of the same, together with such donations and bequests" as from time to time have been made to it. The Domestic Missionary Society has "the control of the raising and application of funds ; the selection and appointment of missionaries, and the general designation of their fields of labor." "The treasurer and auditor of the Missionary Society are *ex-officio* treasurer and auditor" of the Domestic Missionary Society : and the twelve trustees of the former Society, with six other persons, appointed for the purpose, are the directors of the latter.

The officers of each Society make a report of their

doings annually to the General Association, which is the Society in both cases.

From the last reports it appears that the Missionary Society employed the preceding year "nineteen missionaries, of which thirteen are stationed on the Western Reserve, five in Illinois, one among the Mohegans in Connecticut:" and that "the receipts of the Society for the year ending January 1, 1841, were \$2,676.79. The expenditures during the same period, were \$2,673.54. From the reports it appears also that the Domestic Society, since its organization, has "extended aid to sixty-eight churches and congregations in Connecticut;" many of which now rely on their own resources: thirty-two were aided the last year. In addition to what it "has done in Connecticut, it has, since its union with the American Home Missionary Society, contributed about \$50,000 to extend the institutions of religion in Rhode Island and in the Western States." It paid the directors of the Rhode Island Domestic Missionary Society the last year \$500, to be expended by them in that State. Its whole expenditures for the year ending June 3, 1841, were \$3,333.26; its receipts for the same time, \$3,356.90.

Though the Connecticut Missionary Society now does less than it once did, yet the two Societies accomplish more than the original Society was ever able to perform.

Beside the reports of these Societies, there is annually made to the General Association a report of the fund, styled "the Everest Fund," the annual interest of which is applied for the "purchase of Bibles, religious tracts, &c. for distribution; for the support of Domestic Missions in this State; for the education of indigent pious youth for the gospel ministry; to any, or all

of the above purposes, as a committee appointed by the General Association deems most expedient. The fund is the result of one-fourth of a residuary legacy left by Dr. Solomon Everest of Canton, who deceased April 3, 1822. The interest received from this the year preceding the last report was \$264.89.

NOTE D, p. 37.

In June, 1766, a proposal was made to the General Association, then sitting at Guilford, by the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, for a correspondence between that Synod and the Congregational Churches of Connecticut. Presented in the kindest manner, the proposal was accepted in the same spirit, and the several Associations were advised "to appoint one or more of their body to meet commissioners from the Synod, to converse with them upon a plan and articles of such desired union." The advice was followed, and the delegates and commissioners met at Elizabethtown, N. J., in November of the same year, and accomplished the objects of their appointment. From that time a convention was held annually, alternately within the bounds of the General Association and of the Synod until 1775. The delegates from Connecticut were appointed by the district Associations. The immediate and prominent cause of the convention was the apprehension that the English government, at the solicitation of some of the friends of the National Church here, would establish bishops in the colonies; that these, of course, would "bring with them, or if not, might be clothed with the paramount authority of Britain, with the powers of English bishops, to the great preju-

dice of people of other communions, and in contrariety to the principles on which the settlement of the colonies had taken place :”* an apprehension which the rise of the American Revolution dissipated. Beside communicating information and collecting accounts of the united cause and interest of their churches, combining their endeavors and counsels for preserving their liberties, they sought the spread of the gospel, and other objects then deemed important; and it is worthy of notice, that about the period of the close of these conventions, the present general system of missions commenced in Connecticut.

In 1790 a motion was made in the General Association “by the delegates of the Western Association of Fairfield County, respecting a general union of the Congregational and Presbyterian Churches throughout the United States,” and a committee of correspondence was raised on the subject. In September, 1791, committees, mutually appointed by the General Association and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, met in the chapel of Yale College, and devised a plan of correspondence, which was approved the year after, and went into operation in 1793. Three delegates were to be annually chosen by the respective bodies who should have the right of sitting in the other’s general meeting, making such communications as were directed by their respective constituents, and deliberating on such matters as should come before them, but no right of voting. In 1794, the right of voting was added, but rescinded in 1827. The present year (1841), it has been agreed that the number of delegates be reduced to two.

* See Bishop White’s *Memoirs of the Prot. Epis. Ch.* p. 19, and *Note A.*; also *Memoirs of Rev. John Rogers*, pp. 185-187.

In 1802 the following articles of union and correspondence were ratified between the General Association and the General Convention of Vermont:—

“ARTICLE 1. Each body shall send one or two delegates or commissioners to meet and sit with the other at the stated sessions of the body.

ARTICLE 2. The delegate or delegates from each body, severally, shall have the privilege of entering into the discussions and deliberations of the body as freely and equally as their own members.

ARTICLE 3. That the union and intercourse may be full and complete between the said bodies, the commissioner or commissioners from each, respectively, shall not only sit and deliberate, but act and vote.”

Similar terms of correspondence were entered into with the General Association of Massachusetts in 1809, except that two delegates were to be annually appointed by each body; with the General Association of New Hampshire in 1810; with the Evangelical Consociation of Rhode Island in 1821, and with the General Conference of Maine about 1828. The General Association of the State of New York was admitted into union with us on the same terms of correspondence as the Ecclesiastical bodies in New England in 1835.

Beside these connections, a correspondence has been carried on by letter since 1833, between the General Association and the Congregational Union of England and Wales. Occasionally a delegate, designated by a committee of the General Association, has set in the annual meeting of that body.

Letters also have passed between the General Association and the pastors and ministers of the *Canton de Vaud* in Switzerland.

NOTE E, p. 38.

Alterations in some of the articles have occasionally been thought of by one district association and another, or by the General Association itself, as may be seen by turning to Note B ; but on referring them to the district associations at large for further consideration, they have not been adopted. The general voice has been for retaining the Platform as prepared in 1708. This has been judged a safer and better course than to attempt alterations, even if some passages are not the most happily worded.

The Association of Litchfield County, at a meeting on the last Tuesday of May, 1757, voted :

“Whereas the Rev. General Association, in their meeting, June, 1756, recommended it to the particular associations of this Colony to manifest their concurrence with the Saybrook Confession of Faith, this association having taken it into consideration, do hereby declare their unanimous assent and consent to the Articles of the Christian Religion in said Confession, so far as they are contained in the Assembly of Divines' Shorter Catechism ; and as to the Platform of Discipline, we think it not expedient that any alteration be made in the public impression, but that every consociation be at liberty to vary in such things as to them appear exceptionable.”

“The reason of our expressing ourselves as above concerning the Confession of Faith, is, because some expressions therein appear to us exceptionable, which we are willing to send in to the next General Association, if desired.”

It will be noticed that the things deemed exceptionable in the Confession, are expressions and not senti-

ments ; and concerning the Platform, the principal variation which the consociation in that county had adopted, respects the 4th Article, and is found in the following rule:—"In all acts of this consociation, nothing shall be allowed as a vote of this body but where there is a major part of the ministers, and also a major part of the messengers agreed."

The consociation of New Haven West, in the Preamble to their present constitution say, "that serious objections have been entertained by the churches against the Saybrook Platform on account of the power given to the pastors in their churches and in the consociation, although in other respects that rule of discipline was in general cordially approved." The fourth article has been specially faulted, though the principle of voting in councils there laid down, is said in the article itself to have been the common practice of our churches before. But there is some doubt whether the reason of the principle is well understood. The construction of the article by the convention of New Haven County in 1709, in which some of the compilers were present, is given elsewhere. There is a tradition, also, "that this article was intended to prevent the overpowering influence of the churches, as it was customary for them in those days, to send to consociations a number of delegates."* The custom was an unhappy one, very liable to abuse, and to become the occasion of dissatisfaction and mischief.†

* Rev. Dr. John Elliott's Sermon on Consociation, p. 18.

† See Turell's Life of Dr. Colman, p. 99.

NOTE F. p. 49.

Hartford was designated as the place where the first meeting should be held for the purpose of organization. The delegates met there accordingly on the 18th of May, 1709. Where the meeting was held in 1710 is not certainly known: the presumption is, it was held in New Haven. It was in New London in 1711, in Fairfield 1712, Wethersfield 1713, Milford 1714, Norwich 1715, and Stratford 1717. Where it was in 1716, 1718, 1719, 1720 and 1721, we are unable to state. The sessions from 1721 until 1735 are given in the Historical Account. The place of meeting in the last mentioned year has not been ascertained. Since then the sessions have been as follows:—

In Killingworth,	1736	In Killingworth,	1752
“ Middletown,	1737	“ Fairfield, West Parish,	
“ Stratford,	1738	Green's Farms	1753
“ Wallingford,	1739	“ Cheshire,	1754
“ Hartford,	1740	“ Middletown, U. H.	1755
“ Lebanon,	1741	“ Windham,	1756
“ New London,	1742	“ Stonington, E. Parish,	1757
“ Fairfield,	1743	“ Woodbury,*	1758
“ Durham,	1744	“ Danbury,	1759
“ Newington Parish, in		“ North Branford,	1760
Wethersfield,	1745	“ Hartford,	1761
“ Lebanon Goshen,	1746	“ Mansfield,	1762
“ Westbrook, then 3d		“ North P. of Lyme,	1763
Parish in Saybrook,	1747	“ Woodbury,	1764
“ Reading,	1748	“ Norwalk,	1765
“ New Haven,	1749	“ Guilford,	1766
“ Hartford,	1750	“ Middletown,	1767
“ Windham,	1751	“ Coventry,	1768

* G. A. was appointed there, but there is no record of a meeting.

In Norwich,	1769	In Stratford,	1803
“ New Milford,	1770	“ North Haven,	1804
“ Reading,	1771	“ Guilford,	1805
“ Westbury, now Wa-		“ Wethersfield,	1806
tertown,	1772	“ Saybrook, Pautapoug	
“ New Cambridge, now		Parish,	1807
Bristol,	1773	“ New London,	1808
“ Mansfield,	1774	“ Lebanon,	1809
“ Norwich,	1775	“ Ellington,	1810
“ Cornwall,	1776	“ Farmington,	1811
“ Fairfield,	1777	“ Sharon,	1812
“ Northford,	1778	“ Watertown,	1813
“ Haddam,	1779	“ Fairfield,	1814
“ Tolland,	1780	“ Danbury,	1815
“ Lebanon Goshen,	1781	“ New Haven,	1816
“ Ripton,	1782	“ East Guilford, now	
“ Lyme,	1783	Madison,	1817
“ Torrington,	1784	“ Middletown,	1818
“ Franklin,	1785	“ Lyme,	1819
“ Durham,	1786	“ Colchester,	1820
“ Berlin, Britain Society,	1787	“ Thompson,	1821
“ West Hartford,	1788	“ Tolland,	1822
“ Second Parish in Leba-		“ Windsor,	1823
non, now Columbia,	1789	“ Goshen,	1824
“ Greenfield,	1790	“ Litchfield,	1825
“ Washington,	1791	“ Stamford,	1826
“ Waterbury,	1792	“ Stratford,	1827
“ Cheshire,	1793	“ New Haven,	1828
“ Kensington Parish, in		“ Wallingford,	1829
Berlin,	1794	“ Wethersfield,	1830
“ Killingworth,	1795	“ Saybrook,	1831
“ Norwich,	1796	“ Norwich,	1832
“ Windham,	1797	“ Brooklyn,	1833
“ Hebron,	1798	“ Vernon,	1834
“ Hartford,	1799	“ Enfield,	1835
“ Norfolk,	1800	“ Norfolk,	1836
“ Litchfield,	1801	“ New Milford,	1837
“ Norwalk,	1802	“ Norwalk,	1838

In Danbury,	1839		In New Haven, United	
“ New Haven, First			Society,	1841
Church,	1840			

NOTE G, p. 50.

Dr. Trumbull, who has given very great prominence to this “Case” in his History of Connecticut, has failed of entire correctness in saying “the gentlemen of the ordaining council, never reconciled themselves to their brethren, but died in a state of exclusion from associational and consociational communion.* This is probably true of most of them. Two of the ministers were old men at the time, and in their graves before the high excitements produced by the affair subsided. Concerning three others, if they did not seek reconciliation, special reasons may be assigned for the omission. But in regard to the Rev. Jonathan Todd, the remaining individual, who was scribe of the council, and wrote more in its defense than any other person, he did, in a letter dated Dec. 24, 1765, seek reconciliation to the consociation. Among other things in that letter he observed—“In my present view of things, [I] should not in the same circumstances as at Wallingford, proceed as we then did.” He prosecuted his application for reconciliation and was finally and cordially restored. He died in fellowship with the Eastern Association of New Haven County, within whose limits he lived, and was in several instances moderator at its meetings.†

It may be proper to add here, that Mr. Dana, (afterwards Doct. Dana,) and the church in Wallingford, at

* Vol. II. p. 526

† See books and files of New Haven East Consociation and Association.

the same time sought union with the consociation, and though that does not appear to have been obtained, yet Mr. Dana finally became a member of the association, in the Eastern District of New Haven, and died in fellowship with that body.

NOTE H. p. 51.

Churches and Teaching Elders in Connecticut in the beginning of 1709, when Conventions were held for forming Consociations and Associations.

Hartford County.

CHURCHES.	TEACHING ELDERS.
1. Hartford First Ch.*	Timothy Woodbridge.
2. Do. Second Ch.*	{ Samuel Whiting, Thomas Buckingham.
3. Wethersfield,*	Stephen Mix.
4. Farmington,*	Samuel Whitman.
5. Windsor,*	Samuel Mather.
6. East Windsor,*	Timothy Edwards,
7. Middletown,	Noadiah Russel.
8. Glastenbury,*	Timothy Stephens.
9. Waterbury,	John Southmaid.
10. Simsbury,	Dudley Woodbridge.
11. Haddam,	Jeremiah Hobart.
12. Windham,*	Samuel Whiting.
13. Colchester,*	John Buckley.
14. East Haddam,*	Stephen Hosmer.
15. Plainfield,	Joseph Coit.

New Haven County.

16. New Haven,*	James Pierpont.
17. Milford,*	Samuel Andrew.
18. Guilford,	Thomas Ruggles.
19. East Guilford,*	John Hart.
20. Branford,*	Samuel Russel

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 21. Derby,* | Joseph Moss. |
| 22. Wallingford, | Samuel Street. |
| 23. East Haven, | James Hemmingway. |

Fairfield County.

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| 24. Fairfield, | Joseph Webb. |
| 25. Stratford, | { Israel Chauncey. |
| | { Timothy Cutler. |
| 26. Do. Second, | Vacant. |
| 27. Stamford, | John Davenport. |
| 28. Norwalk, | Stephen Buckingham. |
| 29. Greenwich, | Joseph Morgan. |
| 30. Danbury, | Seth Shaw. |
| 31. Woodbury, | Zachariah Walker. |
| 32. Rye, (found afterward }
to be in N. York,) } | John Bowers. |

New London County.

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 33. New London,* | Eliphalet Adams. |
| 34. Saybrook, | Thomas Buckingham. |
| 35. Stonington,* | James Noyes. |
| 36. Norwich,* | John Woodard. |
| 37. Killingworth,* | Vacant. |
| 38. Lyme, | Moses Noyes. |
| 39. Preston,* | Samuel Treat. |
| 40. Lebanon,* | Vacant. |

The foregoing list, with due examination of dates, is taken from Trumbull. One church, however, namely, that of Groton, is omitted by him, which was represented in the convention of New London county by its Pastor, Rev. Ephraim Woodbridge.

The churches starred in the list, together with those in Fairfield county, are understood to be the churches referred to by Pres. Stiles. They are just thirty, and with Groton, thirty-one. Three other churches, viz.

those of Saybrook, Lyme, and Middletown, not represented in the conventions for adopting the Platform, were present by their delegates in the Synod at Saybrook, and may not therefore have deemed their presence important in the conventions. The Rev. Mr. Buckingham of Saybrook may have been sick when the convention met in New London, as he died at the close of the succeeding month. That the church acceded early to the Platform is evident, because the following June it consulted the Association, agreeably to one of its articles, about a candidate. The minister of Lyme was a member of that Association in September, and the minister of Plainfield the next Spring, and afterwards. Mr. Street of Wallingford was probably infirm when the convention met at Branford, as from about a month from that time he had the constant assistance of the candidate who became his colleague. Mr. Hobart of Haddam, was 78 years old when the convention met in Hartford. These and other circumstances may show why ten churches were not represented in the conventions, though they felt a disposition to adopt the Platform.

PLATFORM

OF

CHURCH DISCIPLINE,

GATHERED OUT OF THE WORD OF GOD, AND AGREED UPON
BY THE

ELDERS AND MESSENGERS

OF THE CHURCHES ASSEMBLED IN THE

SYNOD

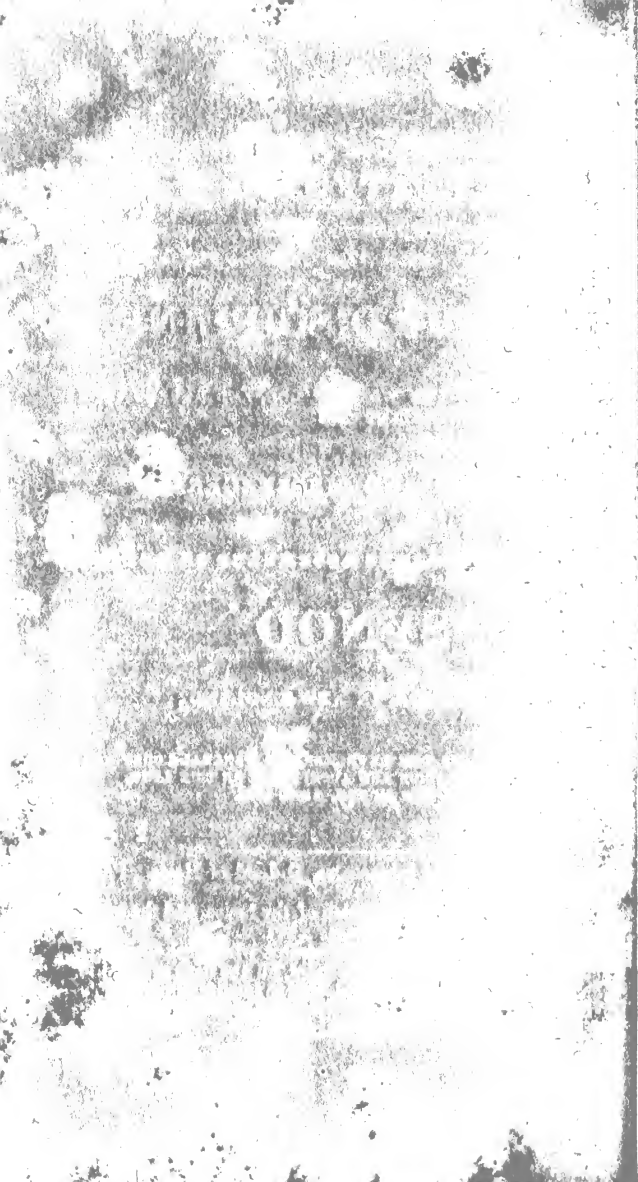
AT CAMBRIDGE, IN NEW ENGLAND;

TO BE PRESENTED TO THE CHURCHES AND GENERAL COURT FOR
THEIR CONSIDERATION AND ACCEPTANCE IN THE LORD,
THE 8TH MONTH, ANNO 1648.

How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts. PSAL.
LXXXIV. 1.

LORD I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place
where thine honor dwelleth. PSAL. XXVI. 8.

One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that
I may dwell in the house of the Lord, all the days of my life,
to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.
PSAL. XXVII. 4.



P R E F A C E .

THE setting forth of the public Confession of the Faith of churches hath a double end, and both tending to public edification : First, the maintenance of the faith entire within itself : Secondly, the holding forth of unity and harmony, both amongst and with other churches. Our churches here, as, by the grace of Christ, we believe and profess the same doctrine of the truth of the gospel, which generally is received in all the reformed churches of Christ in Europe, so especially we desire not to vary from the doctrine of faith and truth held forth by the churches of our native country. For though it be not one native country that can breed us all of one mind ; nor ought we to have the glorious faith of our Lord Jesus with respect to persons, yet as Paul, who was himself a Jew, professed to hold forth the doctrine of justification by faith, and of the resurrection of the dead, according as he knew his godly countrymen did, who were Jews by nature, (Gal. ii. 15, Acts xxvi. 6, 7,) so we who are by nature Englishmen, do desire to hold forth the same doctrine of religion, especially in fundamentals, which we see and know to be held by the churches of England, according to the truth of the gospel.

The more we discern (that which we do, and have causes to do with incessant mourning and trembling) the unkind, and unbrotherly, and unchristian contentions of our godly brethren and countrymen, in matters of church government, the more earnestly do we desire to see them join together in one common faith, and ourselves with them. For this end, having perused the public Confession of the Faith, agreed upon by the reverend assembly of divines at Westminster, and finding the sum and substance thereof, in matters of doctrine, to express not their own judgment only, but ours also; and being likewise called upon by our godly magistrates, to draw up a public confession of that faith which is constantly taught, and generally professed amongst us; we thought good to present unto them, and with them to our churches, and with them to all the churches of Christ abroad, our professed and hearty assent and attestation to the whole confession of faith (for substance of doctrine) which the reverend assembly presented to the religious and honorable parliament of England:* excepting only some sections in the 25, 30, and 31, chapters

* Reference is here made to the Westminster Confession of Faith, from which the Savoy Confession inserted in this volume, differs only in the omission of the chapters on church discipline and in some unimportant variations in respect to doctrine. As the New England churches differed from the then dominant party in England on the great subject of Church government, the Synod were the more earnest to profess the agreement of New England with old England in respect to doctrines. B.

of their Confession, which concern points of controversy in church discipline; touching which, we refer ourselves to the draught of Church Discipline in the ensuing treatise.

The truth of what we here declare, may appear by the unanimous vote of the Synod of the Elders and Messengers of our churches, assembled at Cambridge, the last of the sixth month, 1648, which jointly passed in these words: "This synod having perused and considered, with much gladness of heart and thankfulness to God, the Confession of Faith, published of late by the reverend assembly in England, do judge it to be very holy, orthodox, and judicious in all matters of faith; and do therefore freely and fully consent thereunto, for the substance thereof. Only in those things which have respect to church government and discipline, we refer ourselves to the Platform of Church Discipline, agreed upon by this present assembly; and do therefore think it meet, that this Confession of Faith should be commended to the churches of Christ amongst us, and to the honored court, as worthy of their due consideration and acceptance. Howbeit, we may not conceal, that the doctrine of *vocation*, expressed in chap. x. sect. 1, and summarily repeated in chapter xiii. sect. 1, passed not without some debate. Yet considering that term of *vocation*, and others by which it is described, are capable of a large, or more strict

sense and use, and that it is not intended to bind apprehensions precisely in point of order or method, there hath been a general condescendency thereunto."

Now by this our professed consent and free concurrence with them in all the doctrinals of religion, we hope it may appear to the world, that as we are a remnant of the people of the same nation with them, so we are professors of the same common faith, and fellow-heirs of the same common salvation. Yea moreover, as this our profession of the same faith with them, will exempt us, even in their judgments, from suspicion of heresy; so, we trust, it may exempt us in the like sort from suspicion of *schism*: that though we are forced to dissent from them in matters of church discipline, yet our dissent is not taken up out of arrogance of spirit in ourselves, whom, they see, willingly condescend to learn of them; neither is it carried with uncharitable censoriousness towards them, (both which are the proper and essential characters of *schism*,) but in meekness of wisdom, as we walk along with them, and follow them as they follow Christ; so where we conceive a different apprehension of the mind of Christ; as it falleth out in some few points touching church-order, we still reserve due reverence to them whom we judge to be, through Christ, the glorious lights of both nations, and only crave leave, as in the spirit we are bound, to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, and,

after the apostle's example, as we believe, so we speak.

And if the example of such poor outcasts as ourselves might prevail, if not with all (for that were too great a blessing to hope for) yet with some or other of our brethren in England, so far as they are come to mind and speak the same thing with such as dissent from them, we hope in Christ it would not only moderate the harsh judging and condemning of one another in such differences of judgment as may be found in the choicest saints; but also prevent, by the mercy of Christ, the peril of the distraction and destruction of all the churches in both kingdoms. Otherwise, if brethren shall go on to bite and devour one another, the apostle feared, as we also with sadness of heart do, it will tend to the consuming of them, and us all: which the Lord prevent.

We are not ignorant, that, besides these aspersions of *heresy* and *schism*, other exceptions also are taken at our way of church government, but, as we conceive, upon as little ground. As,

1. That by admitting none into the fellowship of our church but saints by calling, we rob many parish churches of their best members, to make up one of our congregations, which is not only to gather churches out of churches, a thing unheard of in scripture, but also to weaken the hearts and hands of the best ministers in the parishes, by despoiling them of their best hearers.

2. That we provide no course for the gaining, and calling in of ignorant, and erroneous, and scandalous persons, whom we refuse to receive into our churches, and so exclude from the wholesome remedy of church discipline.

3. That in our way, we sow seeds of division, and hindrance of edification in every family; whilst admitting into our churches only voluntaries, the husband will be of one church, the wife of another; the parents of one church, the children of another; the master of one church, the servants of another. And so the parents and masters being of different churches from their children and servants, they cannot take a just account of their profiting by what they hear; yea, by this means the husbands, parents, and masters, shall be chargeable to the maintenance of many other churches and church officers, besides their own: which will prove a charge and burthen unsupportable.

But for answer, as to the *first*; for gathering churches out of churches, we cannot say that it is a thing unheard of in scripture. The first Christian church was gathered out of the Jewish church, and out of many synagogues in that church, and consisted partly of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, partly of the Galileans; who though they kept some communion in some parts of public worship with the temple, yet neither did they frequent the sacrifices, nor repair to the sanhedrim for the determining of

their church-causes, but kept entire and constant communion with the apostles' church in all the ordinances of the gospel. And for the first Christian church of the Gentiles at Antioch, it appeareth to have been gathered and constituted partly of the dispersed brethren of the church at Jerusalem, whereof some were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, and partly of the believing Gentiles. Acts xi. 20, 21.

If it be said, the first Christian church at Jerusalem, and that at Antioch, were gathered not out of any Christian church, but out of the Jewish temple and synagogues, which were shortly after to be abolished, and their gathering to Antioch, was upon occasion of dispersion in time of persecution :

We desire it may be considered, 1. That the members of the Jewish church were more strongly and straitly tied by express holy covenant, to keep fellowship with the Jewish church till it was abolished, than any members of Christian parish churches are wont to be tied to keep fellowship with their parish churches. The episcopal canons, which bind them to attend on their parish church, it is likely they are now abolished with the episcopacy.* The common law of the land is satisfied, as we conceive, if they attend upon the worship of God in any other church, though not within

* Episcopacy was at this time abolished in England, and the parish churches were for the time Presbyterian, or, as the word is used in this preface, "Presbyterial" churches. B.

their own parish. But no such like covenant of God, nor any other religious tie lieth upon them to attend the worship of God, in their own parish church, as did lie upon the Jews to attend upon the worship of God in their temple and synagogues.

2. Though the Jewish temple-church at Jerusalem was to be abolished, yet that doth not make the desertion of it by the members to be lawful, till it was abolished. Future abolition is no warrant for present desertion, unless it be lawful, in some case, whilst the church is yet in present standing, to desert it; to wit, either for avoiding present pollutions, or for hope of greater edification, and so for better satisfaction to conscience in either. Future events, or foresight of them, do not dissolve present relations, else wives, children, servants, might desert their husbands, parents, masters, when they be mortally sick.

3. What the members of the Jewish church did, in joining to the church at Antioch in time of persecution, it may well be conceived the members of any Christian church may do the like for satisfaction of conscience. Peace of conscience is more desirable than the peace of the outward man; and freedom from scruples of conscience is more comfortable to a sincere heart, than freedom from persecution.

If it be said, those members of the Christian church at Jerusalem that joined to the church at Antioch, removed their habitations together with

their relations ; which if the brethren of the congregational way would do, it would much abate the grievance of their departure from their presbyterial churches :

We verily could wish them so to do, as well approving the like removal of habitation, in case of changing church relations, provided that it may be done without too much detriment to their outward estates : and we for our parts have done the same. But to put a necessity of removal of habitation in such a case, it is to foment and cherish a corrupt principle of making civil cohabitation, if not a formal cause, yet at least a proper adjunct of church relation, which the truth of the gospel doth not acknowledge. Now to foment an error to the prejudice of the truth of the gospel, is not to walk with a right foot, according to the truth of the gospel, as Paul judgeth, Gal. ii. 14.

4. We do not think it meet or safe, for a member of a presbyterial church forthwith to desert his relation to his church, [and] betake himself to the fellowship of a congregational church, though he may discern some defect in the estate or government of his own. For,

(1.) Faithfulness of brotherly love in church relation, requireth that the members of the church should first convince their brethren of their sinful defects, and duly wait for their reformation, before they depart from them. For if we must take such a course for the healing

of a private brother, in a way of brotherly love, with much meekness and patience; how much more ought we so to walk with like tenderness towards an whole church.

Again, (2.) By the hasty departure of sound members from a defective church, reformation is not promoted, but many times retarded, and corruption increased. Whereas on the contrary, while sincere members breathing after purity of reformation abide together, they may, by the blessing of God upon their faithful endeavours, prevail much with their elders and neighbors towards a reformation, it may be, so much as that their elders in their own church shall receive none to the seals but visible saints; and in the classis shall put forth no authoritative act, but consultative only, touching the members of other churches, nor touching their own, but with the consent (silent consent at least) of their own church: Which two things, if they can obtain with any humble, meek, holy, faithful endeavors, we conceive they might, by the grace of Christ, find liberty of conscience to continue their relation with their own presbyterial church without scruple.

5. But to add a word further, touching the gathering of churches out of churches: what if there were no express example of such a thing extant in the scriptures? That which we are wont to answer the antipædo-baptists, may suffice here; it is enough, if any evidence

thereof may be gathered from just consequence of scripture light. Dr. Ames' judgment concerning this case passeth, for aught we know, without exception, which he gave in his fourth book of conscience, in answer to two questions, chap. xiv. num. 16. "If any," saith he "wronged with unjust vexation, or providing for his own edification, or in testimony against sin, depart from a church, where some evils are tolerated, and join himself to another more pure, yet without condemning of the church he leaveth, he is not therefore to be held as a schismatic, or as guilty of any other sin." Where the tripartite disjunction, which the judicious doctor putteth, declareth the lawfulness of the departure of a church member from his church, when *either* through weariness of unjust vexation, *or* in way of provision for his own edification, *or* in testimony against sin, he joineth himself to another congregation more reformed: any one of these, he judgeth a lawful departure, though all of them do not concur together.

Neither will such a practice despoil the best ministers of the parishes of their best hearers. For,

1. Sometimes the ministers themselves are willing to join with their better sort of hearers in this way of reformation; and then they and their hearers continue still their church relation together; yea, and confirm it more straitly and strongly, by an express renewed covenant

though the ministers may still continue their wonted preaching to the whole parish.

2. If the ministers do dislike the way of those whom they otherwise count their best members, and so refuse to join with them therein; yet if those members can procure some other ministers to join with them in their own way, and still continue their dwelling together in the same town, they may easily order the times of the public assembly, as to attend constantly upon the ministry of their former church; and either after or before the public assembly of the parish, take an opportunity to gather together for the administration of the sacraments and censures, and other church ordinances amongst themselves. The first apostolic church assembled to hear the word with the Jewish church in the open courts of the temple; but afterwards gathered together for breaking of bread, and other acts of church order, from house to house.

3. Suppose presbyterial churches should communicate some of their best gifted members towards the erecting and gathering of another church, it would not forthwith be their detriment, but may be their enlargement. It is the most noble and perfect work of a living creature, both in nature and grace, to propagate and multiply his kind; and it is the honor of the faithful spouse of Christ to set forward the work of Christ, as well abroad as at home.

The church in Cant. viii. 8, to help forward her little sister church, was willing to part with her choice materials, even beams of cedar, and such precious living stones as were fit to build a silver palace. In the same book, the church is sometimes compared to a garden, sometimes to an orchard, Cant. iv. 12, 13. No man planteth a garden or orchard, but seeketh to get the choicest herbs and plants of his neighbors, and they freely impart them: nor do they count it a spoil to their garden, and orchard, but rather a glory. Nevertheless we go not so far, we neither seek nor ask the choice members of the parishes, but accept them being offered.

If it be said, they are not offered by the ministers, nor by the parish churches, who have most right in them, but only by themselves:

It may justly be demanded, what right or what power have either the ministers or parish church over them? Not by solemn church covenant, for that, though it be the firmest engagement, is not owned, but rejected. If it be by their joining with the parish in calling and electing of a minister to such a congregation at his first coming, there is indeed just weight in such an engagement; nor do we judge it safe for such to remove from such a minister, unless it be upon such grounds as may justly give him due satisfaction. But if the union of such

members to a parish church, and to the ministry thereof, be only by cohabitation within the precincts of the parish, that union, as it was founded upon human law, so by human law it may easily be released. Or otherwise, if a man remove his habitation, he removeth also the bond of his relation, and the ground of offence.

4. It need not be feared, that all the best hearers of the best ministers, no, nor the most of them, will depart from them upon point of church government. Those who have found the presence and power of the spirit of Christ breathing in their ministers, either to their conversion or edification, will be slow to change such a ministry of faith and holiness, for the liberty of church order. Upon which ground, and sundry other such like, there be doubtless sundry godly and judicious hearers in many parishes in England, that do and will prefer their relation to their ministers, though in a presbyterial way, above the congregational confederation.

5. But if all, or the most part of the best hearers of the best ministers of the parishes should depart from them, as preferring in their judgments the congregational way; yet in case the congregational way should prove to be of Christ, it will never grieve the holy hearts of godly ministers, that their hearers should follow Christ: yea many of themselves, upon due

deliberation, will be ready to go along with them. It never grieved nor troubled John Baptist, that his disciples departed from him to follow after Christ, John iii. But if the congregational way should prove to be, not the institution of Christ, as we take it, but the invention of men; then doubtless the presbyterial form, if it be of God, will swallow up the other, as Moses' rod devoured the rods of the Egyptians. Nor will this put a necessity upon both the opposite parties to shift for themselves, and to seek to supplant one another, but only it will call upon them (*aletheuein en agape*) to seek and to follow the truth in love, to attend in faithfulness each unto his own flock, and to administer to them all the holy things of God, and their portion of food in due season: and as for others, quietly to forbear them, and yet to instruct them with meekness that are contrary minded, leaving it to Christ, in the use of all good means, to reveal his own truth in his own time, and meanwhile endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Phil. iii. 15, 16. Eph. iv. 3.

To the *second* exception, that we take no course for the gaining, and healing, and calling in of ignorant and erroneous persons, whom we refuse to receive into our churches, and so exclude them from the remedy of church discipline:

We conceive the receiving of them into our

churches, would rather lose and corrupt our churches, than gain and heal them. A little leaven laid in a lump of dough, will sooner leaven the whole lump, than the whole lump will sweeten it. We find it therefore safer to square rough and unhewn stones before they be laid into the building, rather than to hammer and hew them when they lie unevenly in the building. And accordingly two means we use to gain and call in such as are ignorant and scandalous.

1. The public ministry of the word, upon which they are invited by counsel, and required by wholesome laws, [to attend.] And the word it is, which is the power of God to salvation, to the calling and winning of souls.

2. Private conference, and conviction by the elders, and other able brethren of the church, whom they do the most respectfully hearken unto, when they see no hope of enjoying church fellowship, or participation in the sacraments for themselves or their children, till they approve their judgments to be sound and orthodox, and their lives subdued to some hope of a godly conversation. What can classical discipline, or excommunication itself do more in this case?

The *third* exception wraps up in it a threefold domestic inconvenience, and each of them meet to be eschewed. 1. Disunion in families between each relation. 2. Disappointment of edification, for want of opportunity in the governors of families to take account of

things heard by their children and servants.

3. Disbursements of chargeable maintenance to the several churches, whereto the several persons of their families are joined.

All which inconveniences either do not fall out in congregational churches, or are easily redressed; for none are orderly admitted into congregational churches, but such as are well approved by good testimony to be duly observant of family relation: or if any otherwise disposed should creep in, they are either orderly healed, or duly removed in a way of Christ. Nor are they admitted, unless they can give some good account of their profiting by ordinances, before the elders and brethren of the church, and much more to their parents and masters. Godly tutors in the university can take an account of their pupils; and godly householders in the city take an account of their children and servants, how they profit by the word they have heard in several churches, and that to the greater edification of the whole family by a variety of such administrations. Bees may bring more honey and wax into the hive, when they are not limited to one garden of flowers, but may fly abroad to many.

Nor is any charge expected from wives, children or servants to the maintenance of congregational churches, further than they be furnished with personal estates or livings, which may enable them to contribute of such things as

they have, and not of such things as they have not. God accepteth not robbery for a sacrifice. And though a godly householder may justly take himself bound in conscience to contribute to any such church, whereto his wife, or children, or servants do stand in relation, yet that will not aggravate the burden of his charge, no more than if they were received members of the same church whereto himself is related.

But why do we stand thus long to plead exemptions from exceptions? The Lord help all his faithful servants, whether presbyterial or congregational, to judge and shame ourselves before the Lord, for all our former compliances to greater enormities in church government, than are to be found either in the congregational or presbyterial way; and then surely either the Lord will clear up his own will to us, and so frame and subdue us all to one mind and one way, (Ezek. xliii. 10, 11,) or else we shall learn to bear one another's burthens in a spirit of meekness. It will then doubtless be far from us, so to attest the discipline of Christ, as to detest the disciples of Christ: so to contend for the seamless coat of Christ, as to crucify the living members of Christ: so to divide ourselves about church communion, as through breaches to open a wide gap for a deluge of antichristian and profane malignity to swallow up both church and civil state.

What shall we say more? Is difference of

church order become the inlet of all the disorders in the kingdom? Hath the Lord indeed left us to such hardness of heart, that church government shall become a snare to Zion, as sometimes Moses was to Egypt, Exod. x. 7, that we cannot leave contesting and contending about it, till the kingdom be destroyed? Did not the Lord Jesus, when he dedicated his sufferings for his church, and his also unto his Father, make it his earnest and only prayer for us in this world, that we all might be one in him? John, xvii. 20, 21, 22, 23. And is it possible that he, whom the Father heard always, John xi. 42, should not have this last most solemn prayer heard and granted? Or shall it be granted for all the saints elsewhere, and not for the saints in England; so that amongst them disunion shall grow even about church union and communion? If it be possible for a little faith, so much as a grain of mustard seed, to remove a mountain, is it not possible for so much strength of faith as is to be found in all the godly in the kingdom, to remove those images of jealousy, and to cast those stumbling-blocks out of the way, which may hinder the free passage of brotherly love amongst brethren? It is true indeed, the national covenant doth justly engage both parties faithfully to endeavor the utter extirpation of the antichristian hierarchy; and much more of all blasphemies, heresies, and errors. Certainly, if congregational discipline

be independent from the inventions of men, is it not much more independent from the delusions of Satan? What fellowship hath Christ with Belial? Light with darkness? Truth with error? The faithful Jews needed not the help of the Samaritans to re-edify the temple of God; yea, they rejected their help when it was offered, Ezra, iv. 1, 2, 3. And if the congregational way be a way of truth, as we believe, and if the brethren that walk in it be zealous of the truth, and hate every false way, as by the rule of their holy discipline they are instructed, 2 John, 10, 11, then verily there is no branch in the national covenant, that engageth the covenanters to abhor either the congregational churches, or their way: which being duly administered, do no less effectually extirpate the antichristian hierarchy, and all blasphemies, heresies, and pernicious errors, than the other way of discipline doth, which is more generally and publicly received and ratified.

But the Lord Jesus commune with all our hearts in secret; and he who is the king of his church, let him be pleased to exercise his kingly power in our spirits, that so his kingdom may come into our churches in purity and peace. Amen.

PLATFORM.

CHAP. I.

Of the form of church government; and that it is one, immutable, and prescribed in the word.

1. ECCLESIASTICAL polity, or church government or discipline, is nothing else but that form and order that is to be observed in the church of Christ upon earth, both for the constitution of it, and all the administrations that therein are to be performed.

Ezek. xliii. 11. Col. ii. 5. 1 Tim. iii. 15.

2. Church government is considered in a double respect, either in regard of the *parts* of government themselves, or *necessary circumstances* thereof. The parts of government are prescribed in the word, because the Lord Jesus Christ, the king and lawgiver of his church, is no less faithful in the house of God than was Moses, who from the Lord delivered a form and pattern of government to the children of Israel in the Old Testament: and the holy scriptures are now also so perfect, as they are able to make the man of God perfect, and thoroughly furnished unto every good work; and

therefore doubtless to the well ordering of the house of God.

Heb. iii. 5, 6. Exod. xxv. 40. 2 Tim. iii. 16.

3. The parts of church government are all of them exactly described in the word of God, being parts or means of instituted worship, according to the second commandment, and therefore to continue one and the same unto the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, as a kingdom that cannot be shaken, until he shall deliver it up unto God, even to the Father. So that it is not left in the power of men, officers, churches, or any state in the world to add, or diminish, or alter any thing in the least measure therein.

1 Tim. iii. 15. 1 Chron. xv. 13. Ex. xx. 4. 1 Tim. vi. 13, 16. Heb. xii. 27, 28. 1 Cor. xv. 24. Deut. xii. 32. Ezek. xliv. 8. 1 Kings, xii. 31—33.

4. The necessary circumstances, as time and place, &c., belonging unto order and decency, are not so left unto men, as that under pretence of them they may thrust their own inventions upon the churches, being circumscribed in the word with many general limitations, where they are determined in respect of the matter, to be neither worship itself, nor circumstances separable from worship. In respect of their end, they must be done unto edification. In respect of the manner, decently and in order, according to the nature of the things themselves, and civil and church custom. Doth not even

nature itself teach you? Yea, they are in some sort determined particularly, namely, that they be done in such a manner, as, all circumstances considered, is most expedient for edification; so, as if there be no error of man concerning their determination, the determining of them is to be accounted as if it were divine.

2 Kings xii. Ex. xx. 19. Isa. xxviii. 13. Col. i. 22, 23. Acts xv. 28. Matt. xv. 9. 1 Cor. xi. 23, and viii. 34. 1 Cor. xiv. 26, and xiv. 40, and xi. 14, 16, and xiv. 12, 19 Acts, xv. 27.

CHAP. II.

Of the nature of the catholic church in general, and in special of a particular visible church.

1. THE catholic church is the whole company of those that are elected, redeemed, and in time effectually called from the state of sin and death, unto a state of grace and salvation in Jesus Christ.

Eph. i. 22, 23, and v. 25, 26, 30. Heb. xii. 23.

2. This church is either triumphant, or militant. Triumphant, the number of them who are glorified in heaven; militant, the number of them who are conflicting with their enemies upon earth.

Rom. viii. 17. 2 Tim. ii. 12, and iv. 8. Eph. vi. 12, 13.

3. This militant church is to be considered

as invisible, and visible. Invisible, in respect of their relation wherein they stand to Christ, as a body unto the head, being united unto him by the Spirit of God, and faith in their hearts. Visible, in respect of the profession of their faith, in their persons, and in particular churches. And so there may be acknowledged an universal visible church.

2 Tim. ii. 19. Rev. ii. 17. 1 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. iii. 17. Rom. i. 8. 1 Thess. i. 8. Isa. ii. 2. 1 Tim. vi. 12.

4. The members of the militant visible church, considered either as not yet in church order, or walking according to the church order of the gospel. In order, and so besides the spiritual union and communion common to all believers, they enjoy moreover an union and communion ecclesiastical-political. So we deny an universal visible church.*

Acts xix. 1. Col. ii. 5. Matt. xviii. 17. 1 Cor. v. 12.

5. The state of the members of the militant visible church walking in order, was either before the law, economical, that is in families; or under the law, national; or since the coming of Christ, only congregational; the term *independent* we approve not, therefore neither national, provincial nor classical.

Gen. xviii. 19. Exod. xix. 6.

6. A congregational church is by the institution of Christ a part of the militant visible

* These four Sections may be compared with Heads of Agreements, Ch. 1. Sec. 1. B.

church, consisting of a company of saints by calling, united into one body by an holy covenant, for the public worship of God, and the mutual edification one of another, in the fellowship of the Lord Jesus.

1 Cor. xiv. 23, 36, and i. 2, and xii. 27. Exod. xix. 5, 6. Deut. xxix. 1, and 9, to 15. Acts, ii. 42. 1 Cor. xiv. 26.

CHAP. III.

Of the matter of the visible church, both in respect of quality and quantity.

1. THE matter of a visible church are saints by calling.

1 Cor. i. 2. Eph. i. 1.

2. By saints, we understand, 1. Such as have not only attained the knowledge of the principles of religion, and are free from gross and open scandals, but also do together with the profession of their faith and repentance, walk in blameless obedience to the word, so as that in charitable discretion they may be accounted saints by calling, though perhaps some or more of them be unsound, and hypocrites inwardly, because the members of such particular churches are commonly by the Holy Ghost called saints and faithful brethren in Christ; and sundry churches have been re-proved for receiving, and suffering such persons to continue in fellowship amongst them, as have

been offensive and scandalous; the name of God also by this means is blasphemed, and the holy things of God defiled and profaned, the hearts of the godly grieved, and the wicked themselves hardened, and helped forward to damnation. The example of such doth endanger the sanctity of others: a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. 2. The children of such, who are also holy.*

Heb. vi. 1. 1 Cor. i. 5. Rom. xv. 14. Ps. l. 16, 17. Acts, viii. 37. Mat. iii. 6. Rom. vi. 17. 1 Cor. i. 2. Phil. i. 2. Col. i. 2. Eph. i. 1. 1 Cor. v. 12, 13. Rev. ii. 14, 15, 20. Ezk. xlv. 7, 9, and xxiii. 38, 39. Num. xix. 20. Hag. ii. 13, 14. 1 Cor. xi. 27, 29. Psal. xxxvii. 21. 1 Cor. v. 6. 2 Cor. vii. 14.

3. The members of churches, though orderly constituted, may in time degenerate, and grow corrupt and scandalous, which though they ought not to be tolerated in the church, yet their continuance therein, through the defect of the execution of discipline and just censures, doth not immediately dissolve the being of a church, as appears in the church of Israel, and the churches of Galatia and Corinth, Pergamus and Thyatira.

Jer. ii. 21. 1 Cor. v. 12. Jer. ii. 4. Gal. v. 4. 2 Cor. xii. 21. Rev. ii. 14, 15, and xxi. 21.

4. The matter of the church in respect of its quantity, ought not to be of greater number than may ordinarily meet together conveniently in one place; nor ordinarily fewer, than may

* Compare Heads of Agreement Chap. 1, Sec. 2, 3. B.

conveniently carry on church work. Hence when the holy scripture makes mention of the saints combined into a church estate, in a town or city where was but one congregation, it usually calleth those saints *The Church*, in the singular number; as, the church of the Thesalonians, the church of Smyrna, Philadelphia, and the like; but when it speaketh of the saints in a nation or province, wherein there were sundry congregations, it frequently and usually calleth them by the name of *Churches*, in the plural number, as the churches of Asia, Galatia, Macedonia, and the like; which is further confirmed by what is written of sundry of those churches in particular, how they were assembled and met together, the whole church in one place, as the church at Jerusalem, the church at Antioch, the church at Corinth, and Cenchrea, though it were more near to Corinth, it being the port thereof, and answerable to a village, yet being a distinct congregation from Corinth, it had a church of its own, as well as Corinth had.

1 Cor. xiv. 21. Matt. xviii. 17. Rom. xvi. 1. 1 Thess. i. 1. Rev. ii. 8, and iii. 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 19. Gal. i. 2. 2 Cor. viii. 1. 1 Thess. ii. 14. Acts ii. 46, and v. 12, and vi. 2, and xiv. 27, and xv. 38. 1 Cor. v. 4, and xiv. 23. Rom. xvi. 1.

5. Nor can it with reason be thought but that every church appointed and ordained by Christ, had a ministry ordained and appointed for the same; and yet plain it is, that there were no ordinary officers appointed by Christ for any

other than congregational churches ; elders being appointed to feed not all flocks, but the particular flock of God over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers, and that flock they must attend, even the whole flock ; and one congregation being as much as any ordinary elder can attend, therefore there is no greater church than a congregation, which may ordinarily meet in one place.

Acts. xx. 28.

CHAP. IV.

Of the form of a visible church, and of church covenant.

1. SAINTS by calling must have a visible political union among themselves, or else they are not yet a particular church, as those similitudes hold forth, which the scripture makes use of to show the nature of particular churches, as a body, a building, a house. Hands, eyes, feet, and other members must be united, or else (remaining separate) are not a body. Stones, timber, though squared, hewn and polished, are not a house, until they are compacted and united ; so saints or believers in judgment of charity, are not a church, unless orderly knit together.

1 Cor. xii. 27. 1 Tim. iii. 15. Eph. ii. 22. 1 Cor. xii. 15, 16, 17. Rev. ii.

2. Particular churches cannot be distinguished one from another, but by their forms : Ephesus is not Smyrna, nor Pergamus, Thyatira, but each one a distinct society of itself, having officers of their own, which had not the charge of others ; virtues of their own, for which others are not praised ; corruptions of their own, for which others are not blamed.

3. This form is the visible covenant, agreement, or consent, whereby they give up themselves unto the Lord, to the observing of the ordinances of Christ together in the same society, which is usually called the church covenant : For we see not otherwise how members can have church power one over another mutually. The comparing of each particular church to a city, and unto a spouse, seemeth to conclude not only a form, but that that form is by way of covenant. The covenant, as it was that which made the family of Abraham, and children of Israel, to be a church and people unto God, so it is that which now makes the several societies of Gentile believers to be churches in these days.

Exod. xix. 5, 8. Deut. xxix. 12, 13. Zech. xi. 14, and ix. 11. Eph. ii. 19. 2 Cor. xi. 2. Gen. xvii. 7. Deut. xxix. 12, 13. Eph. ii. 12, 18.

4. This voluntary agreement, consent, or covenant, (for all of these are here taken for the same,) although the more express and plain it is, the more fully it puts us in mind of our mu-

tual duty, and stirreth us up to it, and leaveth less room for the questioning of the truth of the church estate of a company of professors, and the truth of membership of particular persons ; yet we conceive the substance of it is kept, where there is a real agreement and consent of a company of faithful persons to meet constantly together in one congregation, for the public worship of God, and their mutual edification ; which real agreement and consent they do express by their constant practice in coming together for the public worship of God, and by their religious subjection to the ordinances of God there ; the rather if we consider how scripture covenants have been entered into not only expressly by word of mouth, but by sacrifice, by hand writing and seal, and also sometimes by silent consent, without any writing or expression of words at all.*

Exod. xix. 5, and xx. 8, and xxiv. 3, 17. Josh. xxiv. 18—24. Psalm, 1. 5. Neh. ix. 38, and x. 1, Gen. xvii. Deut. xxix.

5. This form being by mutual covenant, it followeth, it is not faith in the heart, nor the profession of that faith, nor cohabitation, nor baptism. 1. Not faith in the heart, because that is invisible. 2. Not a bare profession, because that declareth them no more to be members of one church than another. 3. Not cohabitation : atheists or infidels may dwell together with believers. 4. Not baptism, be-

* Compare Heads of Agreement Ch. 1. Sec 4. B.

cause it presupposeth a church estate, as circumcision in the Old Testament, which gave no being to the church, the church being before it, and in the wilderness without it. Seals presuppose a covenant already in being. One person is a complete subject of baptism, but one person is incapable of being a church.

6. All believers ought, as God giveth them opportunity thereunto, to endeavor to join themselves unto a particular church, and that in respect of the honor of Jesus Christ, in his example and institution, by the professed acknowledgment of, and subjection unto the order and ordinances of the gospel; as also in respect of their good of communion, founded upon their visible union, and contained in the promises of Christ's special presence in the church; whence they have fellowship with him, and in him one with another; also, for the keeping of them in the way of God's commandments, and recovering of them in case of wandering, which all Christ's sheep are subject to in this life, being unable to return of themselves; together with the benefit of their mutual edification, and of their posterity, that they may not be cut off from the privileges of the covenant. Otherwise, if a believer offends he remains destitute of the remedy provided in that behalf. And should all believers neglect this duty of joining all particular congregations, it might fol

low thereupon, that Christ should have no visible political churches upon earth.*

Acts ii. 47, and ix. 26. Matt. iii. 13, 14, 15, and xxviii. 19, 20. Psalms, cxxxiii. 2, 3, and lxxxvii. 7. Matt. xviii. 20. 1 John, i. 3. Psalms, cxix. 176. 1 Peter, ii. 25. Eph. iv. 16. John, xxii. 24, 25. Matt. xviii. 15, 16, 17.

CHAP. V.

Of the first subject of church power; or, to whom church power doth first belong.

1. THE first subject of church power, is either supreme, or subordinate and ministerial. The supreme, by way of gift from the Father, is the Lord Jesus Christ: The ministerial is either extraordinary, as the apostles, prophets and evangelists; or ordinary, as every particular congregational church.

Matt. xviii. 18. Rev. iii. 7. Isa. ix. 6. John xx. 21, 23. 1 Cor. xiv. 32. Tit. i. 5. 1 Cor. v. 12.

2. Ordinary church power, is either the power of office, that is such as is proper to the eldership; or power of privilege, such as belongs to the brotherhood. The latter is in the brethren, formally, and immediately from Christ, that is, so as it may be acted or exercised immediately by themselves; the former is not in them formally or immediately, and therefore

* Compare Heads of Agreement, Ch. I. Sec. 8, 9. B.

cannot be acted or exercised immediately by them, but is said to be in them, in that they design the persons unto office, who only are to act, or to exercise this power.*

Rom. xii. 4. 8. Acts, i. 23, and vi. 3, 4, and xiv. 23.
1 Cor. x. 29, 30.

CHAP. VI.

Of the officers of a church, and especially of pastors and teachers.

1. A CHURCH being a company of people combined together by covenant for the worship of God, it appeareth thereby, that there may be the essence and being of a church without any officers, seeing there is both the form and matter of a church; which is implied when it is said, the apostles ordained elders in every church.

Acts, xiv. 23.

2. Nevertheless, though officers be not absolutely necessary to the simple being of churches, when they be called, yet ordinarily to their calling they are, and to their well being, and therefore the Lord Jesus, out of his tender compassion, hath appointed and ordained officers, which he would not have done, if they had not been useful and needful for the church;

* Heads of Agreement, Ch. 1. Sec. 7. B.

yea being ascended into heaven, he received gifts for men, and gave gifts to men, whereof officers for the church are justly accounted no small parts, they being to continue to the end of the world, and for the perfecting of all the saints.

Rom. x. 17. Jer. iii. 15. 1 Cor. xii. 28. Eph. iv. 11. Psalm. lxxviii. 18. Eph. iv. 8,—13.

3. These officers were either extraordinary or ordinary: extraordinary, as apostles, prophets, evangelists; ordinary, as elders and deacons. The apostles, prophets, and evangelists, as they were called extraordinarily by Christ, so their office ended with themselves: whence it is that Paul directing Timothy how to carry along church administrations, giveth no direction about the choice or course of apostles, prophets, or evangelists, but only of elders and deacons; and when Paul was to take his last leave of the church of Ephesus, he committed the care of feeding the church to no other but unto the elders of that church: The like charge doth Peter commit to the elders.*

1 Cor. xii. 28. Eph. iv. 11. Acts viii. 6, 16, 19, and xi. 28. Rom. xi. 13. 1 Cor. iv. 9. 1 Tim. iii. 1, 2, 8, to 13. Tit. i. 5. Acts, xx. 17, 28. 1 Peter, v. 1, 2, 3.

* This Platform recognizes no ministry at large—no minister of the Gospel other than the pastor or teacher of a particular church. But now all the congregational churches acknowledge the difference between a minister of the Gospel, and a pastor of a church. The former has no official power in any church or over any Christian. He is only a man set apart to preach the Gospel where God in his providence may call him. B.

4. Of elders, who are also in scripture called bishops, some attend chiefly to the ministry of the word, as the pastors and teachers; others attend especially unto rule, who are therefore called ruling elders.

1 Tim. ii. 3. Phil. i. 1. Acts, xx. 17, 28. 1 Tim. v. 17.

5. The office of pastor and teacher, appears to be distinct. The pastor's special work is, to attend to exhortation, and therein to administer a word of wisdom; the teacher is to attend to doctrine, and therein to administer a word of knowledge; and either of them to administer the seals of that covenant, unto the dispensation whereof they are alike called; as also to execute the censures, being but a kind of application of the word: The preaching of which, together with the application thereof, they are alike charged withal.

Eph. iv. 11. Rom. xii. 7, 8. 1 Cor. xii. 8. 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2. 2 Titus, i. 9.

6. And forasmuch as both pastors and teachers are given by Christ for the perfecting of the saints, and edifying of his body; which saints and body of Christ is his church: and therefore we account pastors and teachers to be both of them church officers, and not the pastor for the church, and the teacher only for the schools: though this we gladly acknowledge, that schools are both lawful, profitable, and necessary for the training up of such in good literature or learning, as may afterwards be

called forth unto office of pastor or teacher in the church.*

Eph. iv. 11, 12, and i. 22, 23. 1 Sam. x. 12, 19, 20. 2 Kings, ii. 3, 15.

CHAP. VII.

Of ruling elders and deacons.

1. THE ruling elder's office is distinct from the office of pastor and teacher. The ruling elders are not so called, to exclude the pastors and teachers from ruling, because ruling and governing is common to these with the other, whereas attending to teach and preach the word is peculiar unto the former.

Rom. xii. 7, 8, 9. 1 Tim. v. 17. 1 Cor. xii. 28. Heb. xiii. 17. 1 Tim. v. 17.

2. The ruling elder's work is to join with the pastor and teacher in those acts of spiritual rule, which are distinct from the ministry of the word and sacraments committed to them. Of which sort these be as followeth: 1. To open and shut the doors of God's house, by the admission of members approved by the church; by ordination of officers chosen by the church, and by excommunication of notori-

* The distinction between pastor and teacher, was at first strictly observed in the churches of New England, but after the first generation it was generally disused, and now it is somewhat difficult to be understood. B.

ous and obstinate offenders renounced by the church, and by restoring of penitents forgiven by the church. 2. To call the church together when there is occasion, and seasonably to dismiss them again. 3. To prepare matters in private, that in public they may be carried to an end with less trouble, and more speedy despatch. 4. To moderate the carriage of all matters in the church assembled; as, to propound matters to the church, to order the season of speech and silence, and to pronounce sentence according to the mind of Christ, with the consent of the church. 5. To be guides and leaders to the church in all matters whatsoever pertaining to church administrations and actions. 6. To see that none in the church live inordinately, out of rank and place, without a calling, or idly in their calling. 7. To prevent and heal such offences in life or in doctrine, as might corrupt the church. 8. To feed the flock of God with a word of admonition. 9. And as they shall be sent for, to visit and pray over their sick brethren. 10. And at other times as opportunity shall serve thereunto.*

1 Tim. v. 17. 2 Chron. xxiii. 19. Rev. xxi. 12. 1 Tim. iv. 14. Matt. xviii. 17. 2 Cor. ii. 7, 8. Acts, ii. 6, and xxi. 18, 22, 23, and vi. 2, 3, and xiii. 15. 2 Cor. viii. 19. Heb. xiii. 7, 17. 2 Thess. 10—12. Acts, xx. 28, 32. 1 Thess. v. 12. James, v. 14. Acts, xx. 20.

* The congregational ruling elder is not to be confounded with the ruling elder of the Presbyterian church. The former was an ordained and ordaining minister, though he was not a professional

3. The office of a deacon is instituted in the church by the Lord Jesus ; sometimes they are called helps. The scripture telleth us how they should be qualified, "Grave, not double tongued, not given to much wine, not given to filthy lucre." They must first be proved, and then use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. The office and work of a deacon, is to receive the offerings of the church, gifts given to the church, and to keep the treasury of the church, and therewith to serve the tables which the church is to provide for ; as the Lord's table, the table of the ministers, and of such as are in necessity, to whom they are to distribute in simplicity.*

Acts, vi. 3, 6. Phil. i. 1. 1 Tim. iii. 8. 1 Cor. xii. 28. 1 Tim. iii. 8, 9. Acts, iv. 35, and vi. 2, 3. Rom. xii. 8.

4. The office therefore being limited unto the care of the temporal good things of the church, it extends not to the attendance upon, and administration of the spiritual things thereof, as the word and sacraments, or the like.
1 Cor. vii. 17.

5. The ordinance of the apostle, and practice of the church, commends the Lord's day as a fit time for the contribution of the saints.

1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2, 3.

6. The instituting of all these officers in the church, is the work of God himself, of the

preacher and did not administer baptism or the Lord's Supper. Such an officer as a ruling elder has not been known in any congregational church for several generations past, except as a matter of history. B.

* Heads of Agreement, Ch. V. B.

Lord Jesus Christ, of the Holy Ghost; and therefore such officers as he hath not appointed, are altogether unlawful either to be placed in the church, or to be retained therein, and are to be looked at as human creatures, mere inventions and appointments of man, to the great dishonor of Christ Jesus, the Lord of his house, the king of his church, whether popes, patriarchs, cardinals, archbishops, lord-bishops, arch-deacons, officials, commissaries, and the like. These and the rest of that hierarchy and retinue, not being plants of the Lord's planting, shall all be certainly rooted out and cast forth.

1 Cor. xii. 28. Eph. iv. 8, 11. Acts, xx. 28. Matt. xv. 13.

7. The Lord hath appointed ancient widows, where they may be had, to minister in the church, in giving attendance to the sick, and to give succor unto them, and others in the like necessity.

1 Tim. v. 9, 10.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the election of church officers.

1. No man may take the honor of a church officer unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

Heb. v. 4.

2. Calling unto office is either immediate,

by Christ himself, such was the call of the apostles and prophets, this manner of calling ended with them, as hath been said: or mediate, by the church.

Gal. i. 1. Acts, xiv. 23, and vi. 3.

3. It is meet that before any be ordained or chosen officers, they should first be tried and proved, because hands are not suddenly to be laid upon any, and both elders and deacons must be of honest and good report.*

1 Tim. v. 22, and vii. 10. Acts. xvi. 2, and vi. 3.

4. The things in respect of which they are to be tried, are those gifts and virtues which the scripture requireth in men that are to be elected into such places, viz. that elders must be blameless, sober, apt to teach, and endued with such other qualifications as are laid down, 1 Tim. iii. 2. Tit. i. 6 to 9. Deacons to be fitted as is directed, Acts. vi. 3. 1 Tim. iii. 8 to 11.

5. Officers are to be called by such churches whereunto they are to minister. Of such moment is the preservation of this power, that the churches exercised it in the presence of the apostles.†

Acts, xiv. 23, and i. 23, and vi. 3, 4, 5.

6. A church being free, cannot become subject to any, but by a free election; yet when such a people do choose any to be over them

* Heads of Agreement, Chap. II. Sec. 7. B.

† Ibid. Chap. I. Sec. 6. B.

in the Lord, then do they become subject, and most willingly submit to their ministry in the Lord, whom they have so chosen.

Gal. v. 13. Heb. xiii. 17.

7. And if the church have power to choose their officers and ministers, then in case of manifest unworthiness and delinquency, they have power also to depose them; for, to open and shut, to choose and refuse, to constitute in office and remove from office, are acts belonging to the same power.

Rom. xvi. 17.

8. We judge it much conducing to the well being and communion of churches, that where it may conveniently be done, neighbor churches be advised withal, and their help be made use of in the trial of church officers, in order to their choice.*

Cant. viii. 8, 9.

9. The choice of such church officers belongeth not to the civil magistrates, as such, or diocesan bishops, or patrons; for of these, or any such like, the scripture is wholly silent, as having any power therein.

* Heads of Agreement, Chap. II. Sec. 4.

CHAP. IX.

Of ordination, and imposition of hands.

1. CHURCH officers are not only to be chosen by the church, but also to be ordained by imposition of hands and prayer, with which, at the ordination of elders, fasting is also to be joined.

Acts, xiii. 3, and, xiv. 23. Tim. v. 22.

2. This ordination we account nothing else, but the solemn putting a man into his place and office in the church, whereunto he had right before by election; being like the installing of a magistrate in the commonwealth. Ordination therefore is not to go before, but to follow election. The essence and substance of the outward calling of an ordinary officer in the church, doth not consist in his ordination, but in his voluntary and free election by the church, and his accepting of that election; whereupon is founded that relation between pastor and flock, between such a minister and such a people. Ordination doth not constitute an officer, nor give him the essentials of his office. The apostles were elders without imposition of hands by men; Paul and Barnabas were officers before the imposition of hands, Acts, xiii. 3. The posterity of Levi were priests and Levites, before hands were laid on them by the children of Israel.

Numb. viii. 10. Acts, vi. 5, 6, and xiii. 2, 3, and xiv. 23.

3. In such churches where there are elders, imposition of hands in ordination is to be performed by those elders.

1 Tim. iv. 14. Acts, xiii. 3. 1 Tim. v. 22.

4. In such churches where there are no elders, imposition of hands may be performed by some of the brethren orderly chosen by the church thereunto. For if the people may elect officers, which is the greater, and wherein the substance of the office doth consist, they may much more, occasion and need so requiring, impose hands in ordination, which is less, and but the accomplishment of the other.

Numb. viii. 10.

5. Nevertheless, in such churches where there are no elders, and the church so desire, we see not why imposition of hands may not be performed by the elders of other churches. Ordinary officers laid hands upon the officers of many churches: the presbytery at Ephesus laid hands upon Timothy, an evangelist; the presbytery at Antioch laid hands upon Paul and Barnabas.*

1 Tim. iv. 14. Acts, xiii. 3.

6. Church officers are officers to one church, even that particular church over which the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers. Inso-much as elders are commanded to feed, not all flocks, but that flock which is committed to their faith and trust, and dependeth upon them.

* Heads of Agreement, Ch. II. Sec. 5. B.

Nor can constant residence at one congregation be necessary for a minister, no, nor yet lawful, if he be not a minister to one congregation only, but to the church universal; because he may not attend one part only of the church to which he is a minister, but he is called to attend unto all the flock.

1 Pet. v. 2. Acts. xx. 28.

7. He that is clearly loosed from his office relation unto that church whereof he was a minister, cannot be looked at as an officer, nor perform any act of office in any other church, unless he be again orderly called unto office; which when it shall be, we know nothing to hinder, but imposition of hands also in his ordination ought to be used towards him again. For so Paul the apostle received imposition of hands twice at least.*

Acts, ix. 17, and xiii. 3.

CHAP. X.

Of the power of the church, and its presbytery.

1. SUPREME and lordly power over all the churches upon earth doth only belong unto Jesus Christ, who is king of the church, and the head thereof. He hath the government upon his

* Heads of Agreement, Ch. II. Sec. 6. B.

shoulders, and hath all power given to him both in heaven and earth.

Psalms, ii. 6. Eph. i. 21, 22. Isa. ix. 6. Matt. xxviii. 18.

2. A company of professed believers ecclesiastically confederate, as they are a church before they have officers, and without them; so even in that estate, subordinate church power under Christ, delegated to them by him, doth belong to them in such a manner as is before expressed, Chap. v. sect. 2, and as flowing from the very nature and essence of a church: it being natural to all bodies, and so unto a church body, to be furnished with sufficient power for its own preservation and subsistence.

Acts, i. 23, and xiv. 23, and vi. 3, 4. Matt. xviii. 17. 1 Cor. v. 4, 5.

3. This government of the church is a mixt government, and so hath been acknowledged long before the term of independency was heard of. In respect of Christ, the head and King of the church, and the sovereign power residing in him, and exercised by him, it is a monarchy; in respect of the body or brotherhood of the church, and power from Christ granted unto them, it resembles a democracy; in respect of the presbytery, and power committed unto them, it is an aristocracy.

Rev. iii. 7. 1 Cor. v. 12. 1 Tim. v. 27.

4. The sovereign power which is peculiar unto Christ, is exercised, 1. In calling the church out of the world into holy fellowship

with himself. 2. In instituting the ordinances of his worship, and appointing his ministers and officers for the dispensing of them. 3. In giving laws for the ordering of all our ways, and the ways of his house. 4. In giving power and life to all his institutions, and to his people by them. 5. In protecting and delivering his church against and from all the enemies of their peace.

Gal. i. 4. Rev. v. 8, 9. Matt. xxviii. 20. Eph. iv. 8, 11. James, iv. 12. Isa. xxxiii. 22. 1 Tim. iii. 15. 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. Isa. xxxii. 2. Luke. i. 71.

5. The power granted by Christ unto the body of the church and brotherhood, is a prerogative or privilege which the church doth exercise, 1. In choosing their own officers, whether elders or deacons. 2. In admission of their own members, and therefore there is great reason they should have power to remove any from their fellowship again. Hence in case of offence, any brother hath power to convince and admonish an offending brother; and in case of not hearing him, to take one or two more to set on the admonition; and in case of not hearing them, to proceed to tell the church; and as his offence may require, the whole church hath power to proceed to the censure of him, whether by admonition or excommunication; and upon his repentance, to restore him again unto his former communion.

Acts, vi. 3, 5, and xiv. 23, and ix. 26. Matt. xviii. 15, 16, 17. Tit. iii. 10. Col. iv. 17. 2. Cor. ii. 7 8.

6. In case an elder offend incorrigibly, the matter so requiring, as the church had power to call him to office, so they have power according to order (the council of other churches, where it may be had, directing thereto) to remove him from his office; and being now but a member, in case he add contumacy to his sin, the church that had power to receive him into their fellowship, hath also the same power to cast him out, that they have concerning any other member.

Col. iv. 17. Rom. xvi. 17. Matt. xviii. 17.

7. Church government or rule, is placed by Christ in the officers of the church, who are therefore called rulers, while they rule with God; yet in case of mal-administration, they are subject to the power of the church, as hath been said before. The Holy Ghost frequently, yea always, where it mentioneth church rule, and church government, ascribeth it to elders; whereas the work and duty of the people is expressed in the phrase of obeying their elders, and submitting themselves unto them in the Lord. So as it is manifest, that an organic or complete church is a body politic, consisting of some that are governors, and some that are governed in the Lord.

1 Tim. v. 17. Heb. xiii. 17. 1 Thess. v. 12. Rom. xii 8. 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29. Heb. xiii. 7, 17.

8. The power which Christ had committed to the elders, is to feed and rule the church of God, and accordingly to call the church togeth-

er upon any weighty occasion; when the members so called, without just cause, may not refuse to come, nor when they are come, depart before they are dismissed, nor speak in the church before they have leave from the elders; nor continue so doing when they require silence; nor may they oppose nor contradict the judgment or sentence of the elders, without sufficient and weighty cause, because such practices are manifestly contrary unto order and government, and inlets of disturbance and tend to confusion.

Acts, xx. 28, and vi. 2. Numb. xvi. 12. Ezek. xlvi. 10. Acts, xiii. 15. Hos. iv. 4.

9. It belongs also unto the elders to examine any officers or members before they be received of the church; to receive the accusations brought to the church, and to prepare them for the church's hearing. In handling of offences and other matters before the church, they have power to declare and publish the counsel and will of God touching the same, and to pronounce sentence with consent of the church. Lastly, they have power, when they dismiss the people, to bless them in the name of the Lord.

Rev. ii. 2. 1 Tim. v. 19. Acts, xxi. 18; 22, 23. 1 Cor. v. 4, 5. Num. vi. 23, to 26.

10. This power of government in the elders doth not any wise prejudice the power of privilege in the brotherhood; as neither the power of privilege in the brethren, doth prejudice the power of government in the elders, but they may sweetly agree together; as we may see in

the example of the apostles, furnished with the greatest church power, who took in the concurrence and consent of the brethren in church administrations. Also that scripture, 2 Cor. ii. 9, and x. 6, do declare, That what the churches were to act and do in these matters, they were to do in a way of obedience, and that not only to the direction of the apostles, but also of their ordinary elders.

Acts, xiv. 15, 23, and vi. 2. 1 Cor. v. 4. 2 Cor. ii. 6, 7. Heb. xiii. 17.

11. From the premises, namely, That the ordinary power of government belonging only to the elders, power of privilege remaineth with the brotherhood (as the power of judgment in matters of censure, and power of liberty in matters of liberty) it followeth, that in an organic church, and right administration, all church acts proceed after the manner of a mixt administration, so as no church act can be consummated or perfected without the consent of both.*

* This chapter, and particularly the last section, may be taken as an illustration of the fourth Article, and of the first part of the first Article, in the Saybrook Platform. It is now the prevalent opinion among the churches that a church without a pastor, teacher, or ruling elder of its own, i. e. without a presbytery in the sense of this chapter, can perform all church acts. Some churches in the administration of discipline, if destitute of a pastor, call in the pastor of a neighboring church to act as Moderator. B.

CHAP. XI.

Of the maintenance of church officers.

2. THE apostle concludes, that necessary and sufficient maintenance is due unto the ministers of the word, from the law of nature and nations, from the law of Moses, the equity thereof, as also the rule of common reason. Moreover, the scripture doth not only call elders laborers and workmen, but also speaking of them doth say, that the laborer is worthy of his hire; and requires, that he which is taught in the word should communicate to him in all good things; and mentions it as an ordinance of the Lord, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel: and forbiddeth the muzzling of the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn.

1 Cor. ix. 14, 15. Matt. ix. 38, and x. 10. 1 Tim. v. 18. Gal. vi. 6. 1 Cor. ix. 9, 14.

2. The scriptures alledged, requiring this maintenance as a bounden duty, and due debt, and not as a matter of alms and free gift, therefore people are not at liberty to do or not to do what and when they please in this matter, no more than in any other commanded duty, and ordinance of the Lord; but ought of duty to minister of their carnal things, to them that labor among them in the word and doctrine, as well as they ought to pay any other workman their wages, and to discharge and satisfy their

other debts, or to submit themselves to observe any other ordinance of the Lord.

Rom. xv. 27. 1 Cor. ix. 21.

3. The apostle (Gal. vi. 6,) enjoining that he which is taught communicate to him that teacheth in all good things, doth not leave it arbitrary, what or how much a man shall give, or in what proportion, but even the latter, as well as the former, is prescribed and appointed by the Lord.

1 Cor. xvi. 2.

4. Not only members of churches, but all that are taught in the word, are to contribute unto him that teacheth, in all good things. In case that congregations are defective in their contributions, the deacons are to call upon them to do their duty; if their call sufficeth not, the church by her power is to require it of their members; and where church power, through the corruption of men, doth not, or cannot attain the end, the magistrate is to see that the ministry be duly provided for, as appears from the commended example of Nehemiah. The magistrates are nursing-fathers and nursing-mothers, and stand charged with the custody of both tables; because it is better to prevent a scandal that it may not come, and easier also, than to remove it when it is given. It is most suitable to rule, that by the church's care each man should know his proportion according to rule, what he should do, before he do it, that so his judgment

and heart may be satisfied in what he doth, and just offence prevented in what is done.

Gal. vi. 6. Acts, vi. 3, 4. Neh. xiii. 11, Isa. xlix. 23.
2 Cor. viii. 13, 14.

CHAP. XII.

Of the admission of members into the church.

1. THE doors of the churches of Christ upon earth, do not by God's appointment stand so wide open, that all sorts of people, good or bad, may freely enter therein at their pleasure, but such as are admitted thereto as members, ought to be examined and tried first, whether they be fit and meet to be received into church society, or not. The eunuch of Ethiopia, before his admission, was examined by Philip, whether he did believe on Jesus Christ with all his heart. The angel of the church at Ephesus is commended for trying such as said they were apostles and were not. There is like reason for trying of them that profess to be believers. The officers are charged with the keeping of the doors of the church, and therefore are in a special manner to make trial of the fitness of such who enter. Twelve angels are set at the gates of the temple, lest such as were ceremonially unclean should enter thereinto.

2 Chron. xxiii. 19. Matt. xiii. 25, and xxii. 12. Acts, viii, 37. Rev. ii. 2. Acts, ix. 26. Rev. xxi. 12.

2. The things which are requisite to be found in all church members, are *repentance* from sin, and *faith* in Jesus Christ; and therefore these are the things whereof men are to be examined at their admission into the church, and which then they must profess and hold forth in such sort, as may satisfy rational charity that the things are there indeed. John Baptist admitted men to baptism, confessing and bewailing their sins; and of others it is said, that they came, and confessed and showed their deeds.*

Acts, ii. 38 to 42, and viii. 37. Matt. iii. 6. Acts, xix. 8.

3. The weakest measure of faith is to be accepted in those that desire to be admitted into the church, because weak christians, if sincere, have the substance of that faith, repentance and holiness, which is required in church members; and such have most need of the ordinances, for their confirmation and growth in grace. The Lord Jesus would not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed, but gather the tender lambs in his arms and carry them gently in his bosom. Such charity and tenderness is to be used, as the weakest christian, if sincere, may not be excluded nor discouraged. Severity of examination is to be avoided.†

Rom. xiv. 1. Matt. xii. 20. Isa. xl. 11.

4. In case any through excessive fear, or other infirmity, be unable to make their personal

* Heads of Agreement, Ch, I, Sec. 3. B.

† Ibid. Ch. IX. Sec. 3. B.

relation of their spiritual estate in public, it is sufficient that the elders having received private satisfaction, make relation thereof in public before the church, they testifying their assents thereunto: this being the way that tendeth most to edification. But where persons are of greater abilities, there it is most expedient that they make their relations and confessions personally with their own mouth, as David professeth of himself.

Psalm, lxvi. 16.

5. A personal and public confession, and declaring of God's manner of working on the soul, is both lawful, expedient and useful, in sundry respects, and upon sundry grounds. Those three thousand, Acts ii. 37, 41, before they were admitted by the apostles, did manifest that they were pricked in their hearts at Peter's sermon, together with earnest desire to be delivered from their sins, which now wounded their consciences, and their ready receiving of the word of promise and exhortation. We are to be ready to render a reason of the hope that is in us, to every one that asketh us; therefore we must be able and ready upon any occasion to declare and show our repentance for sin, faith unfeigned, and effectual calling, because these are the reasons of a well grounded hope. I have not hidden thy righteousness from the great congregation.

Psalm xl. 10. 1 Pet. iii. 15. Heb. xi. 1. Eph. i. 18.

6. This profession of faith and repentance, as it must be made by such at their admission, that were never in church society before; so nothing hindereth but the same way also be performed by such as have formerly been members of some other church, and the church to which they now join themselves as members may lawfully require the same. Those three thousand, Acts ii., which made their confession, were members of the church of the Jews before, so were they that were baptized by John. Churches may err in their admission, and persons regularly admitted may fall into offence. Otherwise if churches might obtrude their members, or if church members might obtrude themselves upon other churches without due trial, the matter so requiring, both the liberty of churches would hereby be infringed in that they might not examine those, concerning whose fitness for communion they were unsatisfied; and besides the infringing of their liberty, the churches themselves would unavoidably be corrupted, and the ordinances defiled, whilst they might not refuse, but must receive the unworthy; which is contrary unto the scripture, teaching that all churches are sisters, and therefore equal.

Matt. iii. 5, 6. Gal. ii. 4. 1 Tim. v. 24. Cant. viii. 8.

7. The like trial is to be required from such members of the church as were born in the same, or received their membership and were baptized in their infancy or minority, by virtue of the cove-

nant of their parents, when being grown up unto years of discretion, they shall desire to be made partakers of the Lord's supper ; unto which, because holy things must not be given to the unworthy, therefore it is requisite, that these as well as others should come to their trial and examination, and manifest their faith and repentance by an open profession thereof, before they are received to the Lord's supper, and otherwise not to be admitted thereunto. Yet these church members that were so born, or received in their childhood, before they are capable of being made partakers of full communion, have many privileges which others, not church members, have not ; they are in covenant with God, have the seal thereof upon them, viz. baptism ; and so if not regenerated, yet are in a more hopeful way of obtaining regenerating grace, and all the spiritual blessings both of the covenant and seal : they are also under church-watch and consequently subject to the reprehensions, admonitions, and censures thereof, for their hearing and amendment, as need shall require

Matt. vii. 6. 1 Cor. xi. 27.

CHAP. XIII.

Of church members, their removal from one church to another, and of recommendation and dismissal.

1. CHURCH members may not remove or depart from the church, and so one from another, as they please, nor without just and weighty cause, but ought to live and dwell together, forasmuch as they are commanded, not to forsake the assembling of themselves together. Such departure tends to the dissolution and ruin of the body, as the pulling of stones and pieces of timber from the building, and of members from the natural body, tend to the destruction of the whole.

Heb. x. 25.

2. It is therefore the duty of church members, in such times and places where counsel may be had, to consult with the church whereof they are members about their removal, that accordingly they having their approbation, may be encouraged, or otherwise desist. They who are joined with consent, should not depart without consent, except forced thereunto.

Prov. xi. 16.

3. If a member's departure be manifestly unsafe and sinful, the church may not consent thereunto; for in so doing, they should not act in faith, and should partake with him in his sin. If the case be doubtful, and the person not to

be persuaded, it seemeth best to leave the matter unto God, and not forcibly to detain him.

Rom. xiv. 23. 1 Tim. v. 22. Acts, xxi. 14.

4. Just reasons for a member's removal of himself from the church, are, 1. If a man cannot continue without partaking in sin. 2. In case of personal persecution; so Paul departed from the disciples at Damascus. Also in case of general persecution, when all are scattered. 3. In case of real, and not only pretended want of competent subsistence, a door being opened for better supply in another place, together with the means of spiritual edification. In these, or like cases, a member may lawfully remove, and the church cannot lawfully detain him.

Eph. v. 11. Acts, xi. 25, 29, 30, and viii. 1. Neh. ziii. 20.

5. To separate from a church, either out of contempt of their holy fellowship, or out of covetousness, or for greater enlargements, with just grief to the church; or out of schism, or want of love, and out of a spirit of contention in respect of some unkindness, or some evil only conceived, or indeed in the church, which might and should be tolerated and healed with a spirit of meekness, and of which evil the church is not yet convinced (though perhaps himself be) nor admonished: for these or the like reasons to withdraw from public communion in word, or seals, or censures, is unlawful and sinful.

2 Tim. iv. 10. Rom. xvi. 17. Jude, 19. Eph. iv. 2. 3. Col. iii. 13. Gal. vi. 1, 2.

6. Such members as have orderly removed

their habitation, ought to join themselves unto the church in order where they do inhabit, if it may be; otherwise they can neither perform the duties nor receive the privileges of members. Such an example tolerated in some, is apt to corrupt others, which if many should follow, would threaten the dissolution and confusion of churches, contrary to the scripture.

Isa. lvi. 8. Acts, xi. 26. 1 Cor. ixv. 33.

7. Order requires, that a member thus removing, have letters testimonial and of dismissal from the church whereof he yet is, unto the church whereunto he desireth to be joined, lest the church should be deluded; that the church may receive him in faith, and not be corrupted by receiving deceivers and false brethren. Until the person dismissed be received into another church, he ceaseth not by his letters of dismissal to be a member of the church whereof he was, the church cannot make a member no member but by excommunication.

Acts, xviii. 27.

8. If a member be called to remove only for a time, where a church is, letters of recommendation are requisite and sufficient for communion with that church in the ordinances and in their watch; as Phebe, a servant of the church at Cenchrea, had letters written for her to the church of Rome, that she might be received as becometh saints.

Rom, xvi. 1, 2. 2 Cor. iii. 1.

9. Such letters of recommendation and dismission, were written for Apollos; for Marcus to the Colossians; for Phebe to the Romans, for sundry others to other churches. And the apostle telleth us, that some persons, not sufficiently known otherwise, have special need of such letters, though he for his part had no need thereof. The use of them is to be a benefit and help to the party for whom they are written, and for the furthering of his receiving amongst the saints in the place whereto he goeth, and the due satisfaction of them in their receiving of him.*

Acts, xviii. 27. Col. iv. 10. Rom. xvi. 1. 2 Cor. iii. 1.

CHAP. XIV.

Of excommunication and other censures.

1. **THE** censures of the church are appointed by Christ for the preventing, removing, and healing of offences in the church; for the reclaiming and gaining of offending brethren; for the deterring others from the like offences; for purging out the leaven which may infect the whole lump; for vindicating the honor of Christ, and of his church, and the holy profession of the gospel; and for preventing of the wrath of

* This chapter may be compared with Heads of Agreement Ch. 1. Sec. 5, 8, 9. Also Ch. III. Sec. 4. B.

God, that may justly fall upon the church, if they should suffer his covenant, and the seals thereof to be profaned by notorious and obstinate offenders.

1 Tim. v. 20. Deut. xvii 12. 13. Jude, 19. Deut. xiii. 11. 1 Cor. v. 6. Rom. ii. 24. Rev. ii. 14—16, 20.

2. If an offence be private, one brother offending another, the offender is to go and acknowledge his repentance for it unto his offended brother, who is then to forgive him; but if the offender neglect or refuse to do it, the brother offended is to go and convince and admonish him of it, between themselves privately: If thereupon the offender be brought to repent of his offence, the admonisher hath won his brother; but if the offended hear not his brother, the brother offended is to take with him one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established, whether the word of admonition, if the offender receive it; or the word of complaint, if he refuse it; for if he refuse it, the offended brother is by the mouth of the elders to tell the church, and if he hear the church, and declare the same by penitent confession, he is recovered and gained; and if the church discern him willing to hear, yet not fully convinced of his offence, as in case of heresy, they are to dispense to him a public admonition; which declaring the offender to lie under the public offence of the church, doth thereby withhold or suspend him from the holy

fellowship of the Lord's supper, till his offence be removed by penitent confession. If he still continue obstinate, they are to cast him out by excommunication.

Matt. v. 23, 24. Luke. xvii. 3, 4. Matt. xviii. 15—17. Tit. iii. 10.

3. But if the offence be more public at first, and of a more heinous and criminal nature, to wit, such as are condemned by the light of nature, then the church, without such gradual proceeding, is to cast out the offender from their holy communion, for the further mortifying of his sin, and the healing of his soul in the day of the Lord Jesus.

1 Cor. v. 4, 5. 11.

4. In dealing with an offender, great care is to be taken, that we be neither over strict or rigorous, nor too indulgent or remiss; our proceeding herein ought to be with a spirit of meekness, considering ourselves, lest we also be tempted; and that the best of us have need of much forgiveness from the Lord. Yet the winning and healing of the offender's soul, being the end of these endeavors, we must not daub with untempered mortar, nor heal the wounds of our brethren slightly. On some have compassion, others save with fear.

Gal. vi. 1. Matt. xviii. 34. 35. Ezek. xiii. 10.

5. While the offender remains excommunicate, the church is to refrain from all member-like communion with him in spiritual things,

and also from all familiar communion with him in civil things, further than the necessity of natural, domestical or civil relations do require, and are therefore to forbear to eat and drink with him, that he may be ashamed.

Matt. xviii, 17. 1 Cor. v. 11. 2 Thess. iii. 6, 14,

6. Excommunication being a spiritual punishment, it doth not prejudice the excommunicate in, nor deprive him of his civil rights, and therefore toucheth not princes or other magistrates in point of their civil dignity or authority; and the excommunicate being but as a publican and a heathen, (heathens being lawfully permitted to come to hear the word in church assemblies,) we acknowledge therefore the like liberty of hearing the word, may be permitted to persons excommunicate, that is permitted unto heathen. And because we are not without hope of his recovery, we are not to account him as an enemy, but to admonish him as a brother.

1 Cor. xiv, 24, 25. 2 Thess. iii. 14.

7. If the Lord sanctify the censure to the offender, so as by the grace of Christ he doth testify his repentance with humble confession of his sins, and judging of himself, giving glory unto God, the church is then to forgive him, and to comfort him, and to restore him to the wonted brotherly communion which formerly he enjoyed with them.

2 Cor. ii. 7, 8.

8. The suffering of profane or scandalous

livers to continue in fellowship, and partake in the sacraments, is doubtless a great sin in those that have power in their hands to redress it, and do it not. Nevertheless, inasmuch as Christ and his apostles in their times, and the prophets and other godly in their's, did lawfully partake of the Lord's commanded ordinances in the Jewish church, and neither taught nor practiced separation from the same, though unworthy ones were permitted therein; and inasmuch as the faithful in the church of Corinth, wherein were many unworthy persons and practices, are never commanded to absent themselves from the sacraments, because of the same; therefore the godly in like cases are not presently to separate.

Rev. ii. 14, 15. 20. Matt. xxiii. 3. Acts, iii. 1. 1 Cor. vi., and xv. 12.

9. As separation from such a church wherein profane and scandalous persons are tolerated, is not presently necessary; so for the members thereof, otherwise unworthy, hereupon to abstain from communicating with such a church in the participation of the sacraments, is unlawful. For as it were unreasonable for an innocent person to be punished for the faults of others, wherein he hath no hand, and whereunto he gave no consent; so it is more unreasonable that a godly man should neglect duty, and punish himself, in not coming for his portion in the blessings of the seals as he ought,

because others are suffered to come that ought not: especially, considering that himself doth neither consent to their sins, nor to their approaching to the ordinance in their sin, nor to the neglect of others who should put them away, and do not; but on the contrary doth heartily mourn for these things, modestly and seasonably stir up others to do their duty. If the church cannot be reformed, they may use their liberty as is specified; chap. 13, sect. 4. But this all the godly are bound unto, even every one to do his endeavor, according to his power and place, that the unworthy may be duly proceeded against, by the church to whom this matter doth appertain.*

2 Chron. xxx. 18. Gen. xviii. 25. Ezek. ix. 4.

CHAP. XV.

Of the communion of churches one with another.

1. **ALTHOUGH** churches be distinct, and therefore may not be confounded one with another; and equal, and therefore have not dominion one over another; yet all the churches ought to preserve church communion one with another, because they are all united unto Christ, not only

* This Chapter may be compared with Heads of Agreement, Chap. III. B.

as a mystical, but as a political head, whence is derived a communion suitable thereunto.

Rev. i. 4. Cant. viii. 8. Rom. xvi. 16. 1 Cor. xvi. 19. Acts, 15, 23. Rev. ii. 1.

2. The communion of churches is exercised sundry ways. 1. By way of mutual care, in taking thought for one another's welfare. 2. By way of consultation one with another, when we have occasion to require the judgment and counsel of other churches, touching any person or cause wherewith they may be better acquainted than ourselves. As the church of Antioch consulted with the apostles and elders of the church at Jerusalem, about the question of circumcision of the Gentiles, and about the false teachers that broached that doctrine. In which case, when any church wanteth light or peace among themselves, it is a way of communion of churches, according to the word, to meet together by their elders and other messengers in a synod, to consider and argue the points in doubt or difference; and having found out the way of truth and peace, to commend the same by their letters and messengers to the churches whom the same may concern. But if a church be rent with divisions among themselves, or lie under any open scandal, and yet refuse to consult with other churches, for healing or removing of the same, it is matter of just offence both to the Lord Jesus and to other churches, as bewraying too much want of mercy and faithful-

ness not to seek to bind up the breaches and wounds of the church and brethren: and therefore the state of such a church calleth aloud upon other churches, to exercise a fuller act of brotherly communion, to wit, by way of admonition. 3. A third way then of communion of churches, is by way of admonition; to wit, in case any public offence be found in a church, which they either discern not, or are slow in proceeding to use the means for the removing and healing of. Paul had no authority over Peter, yet when he saw Peter not walking with a right foot, he publicly rebuked him before the church. Though churches have no more authority one over another, than one apostle had over another, yet as one apostle might admonish another, so may one church admonish another, and yet without usurpation. In which case, if the church that lieth under offence, do not hearken to the church that doth admonish her, the church is to acquaint other neighbor churches with that offence which the offending church still lieth under, together with the neglect of their brotherly admonition given unto them; whereupon those other churches are to join in seconding the admonition formerly given; and if still the offending church continue in obstinacy and impenitency, they may forbear communion with them, and are to proceed to make use of the help of a synod, or council of neighbor churches walking orderly (if a great

er cannot conveniently be had) for their conviction. If they hear not the synod, the synod having declared them to be obstinate, particular churches approving and accepting the judgment of the synod, are to declare the sentence of non-communication respectively concerning them; and thereupon, out of religious care to keep their own communion pure, they may justly withdraw themselves from participation with them at the Lord's table, and from such other acts of holy communion as the communion of churches doth otherwise allow and require.* Nevertheless, if any members of such a church as liveth under public offence, do not consent to the offence of the church, but do in due sort bear witness against it, they are still to be received to wonted communion; for it is not equal that the innocent should suffer with the offensive. Yea, furthermore, if such innocent members after due waiting in the use of all good means for the healing of the offence of their own church, shall at last, with the allowance of the council of neighbor churches, withdraw from the fellowship of their own church, and offer themselves to the fellowship of another, we judge it lawful for the other church to receive them (being otherwise fit) as if they had been orderly dismissed to them from their own church.

4. A fourth way of communion of churches is by way of participation. The members of one

* Compare Saybrook Platform, Art. VI. B.

church occasionally coming to another, we willingly admit them to partake with us at the Lord's table, it being the seal of our communion, not only with Christ, nor only with the members of our own church, but also of all the churches of the saints; in which regard, we refuse not to baptize their children presented to us, if either their own minister be absent, or such a fruit of holy fellowship be desired with us. In like case such churches as are furnished with more ministers than one, do willingly afford one of their own ministers to supply the place of an absent or sick minister of another church for a needful season. 5. A fifth way of church communion is by way of recommendation, when the member of one church hath occasion to reside in another church, if but for a season, we commend him to their watchful fellowship by letters of recommendation, but if he be called to settle his abode there, we commit him according to his desire to the fellowship of their covenant, by letters of dismissal. 6. A sixth way of church communion is, in case of *need*, to minister relief and succor one unto another, either of able members, to furnish them with officers, or of outward support, to the necessities of poorer churches, as did the churches of the Gentiles contribute liberally to the poor saints at Jerusalem.

Cant. viii. 8. Acts, xv. 2, 6, 22, 23. Ezk. xxxiv. 4.

Gal. ii. 11—14. Matt. xviii. 15, 16, 17, by proportion. Gen. xviii. 25. 1 Cor. xii. 13. Rom. xvi. 1. Acts, xviii. 27, and xi. 22, 29. Rom. xiii. 26, 27.

3. When a company of believers purpose to gather into church fellowship, it is requisite for their safer proceedings, and the maintaining of the communion of churches, that they signify their intent unto the neighbor churches, walking according unto the order of the gospel, and desire their presence, and help, and right hand of fellowship, which they ought readily to give unto them, when there is no just cause to except against their proceedings.

Gal. ii. 1, 2, and 9, by proportion.

4. Besides these several ways of communion, there is also a way of propagation of churches: when a church shall grow too numerous, it is a way, and fit season, to propagate one church out of another, by sending forth such of their members as are willing to remove, and to procure some officers to them, as may enter with them into church estate amongst themselves. As bees, when the hive is too full, issue forth by swarms, and are gathered into hives, so the churches of Christ may do the same upon like necessity; and therein hold forth to them the right hand of fellowship, both in their gathering into a church, and in the ordination of their officers.*

Isa. xl. 20. Cant. viii. 8, 9.

* This Chapter may be compared with Heads of Agreement Ch. IV. and with Saybrook Platform, particularly the first nine Articles. The principal design of the Saybrook Articles was to

CHAP. XVI.

Of Synods.

1. **SYNODS** orderly assembled, and rightly proceeding according to the pattern, Acts xv. we acknowledge as the ordinance of Christ; and though not absolutely necessary to the being, yet many times, through the iniquity of men, and perverseness of times, necessary to the well-being of churches, for the establishment of truth and peace therein.

Acts, xv. 2—15.

2. Synods being spiritual and ecclesiastical assemblies, are therefore made up of spiritual and ecclesiastical causes. The next efficient cause of them under Christ, is the power of the churches, sending forth their elders and other messengers, who being met together in the name of Christ, are the matter of a synod: and they in arguing, debating, and determining matters of religion according to the word, and publishing the same to the churches it concerneth, do put forth the proper and formal act of a synod, to the conviction of errors and heresies, and the establishment of truth and peace in the churches, which is the end of a synod.

Acts, xv. 2, 3, 6, 7,—23, 31, and xvi. 4, 5.

provide more effectually for the exercise of the communion of Churches especially in the "third way of communion" above described. B.

3. Magistrates have power to call a synod, by calling to the churches to send forth their elders and other messengers, to counsel and assist them in matters of religion; but yet the constituting of a synod is a church act, and may be transacted by the churches, even when civil magistrates may be enemies to churches and to church assemblies.

2 Chron. xxix. 4, 5,—11 Acts, xv.

4. It belongeth unto synods and councils, to debate and determine controversies of faith, and cases of conscience; to clear from the word holy directions for the holy worship of God, and good government of the church; to bear witness against mal-administration and corruption in doctrine or manners in any particular church, and to give directions for the reformation thereof; not to exercise church censures in way of discipline, nor any other act of church authority or jurisdiction, which that presidential synod did forbear.

Acts, xv. 1, 2, 6, 7. 1 Chron. xv. 13. 2 Chron. xxix. 6, 7. Acts, xv. 24, 28, 29.

5. The synod's directions and determinations, so far as consonant to the word of God, are to be received with reverence and submission, not only for their agreement therewith (which is the principal ground thereof, and without which they bind not at all) but also secondarily for the power whereby they are made, as being an ordinance of God appointed thereunto in his word

Acts, xv.

6. Because it is difficult, if not impossible, for many churches to come together in one place, in all their members universally; therefore they may assemble by their delegates or messengers, as the church at Antioch went not all to Jerusalem, but some select men for that purpose. Because none are or should be more fit to know the state of the churches, nor to advise of ways for the good thereof, than elders; therefore it is fit that in the choice of the messengers for such assemblies, they have special respect unto such; yet inasmuch as not only Paul and Barnabas, but certain others also were sent to Jerusalem from Antioch, and when they were come to Jerusalem, not only the apostles and elders, but other brethren also do assemble and meet about the matter; therefore synods are to consist both of elders and other church members endued with gifts and sent by the churches, nor excluding the presence of any brethren in the churches.*

Acts, xv. 2, 22, 23.

* It will be observed that the synods described in this chapter, are occasional meetings, and not permanent ecclesiastical bodies. Several such synods were had on the invitation of the civil authorities, in the first and second generations of New England. The synod at Saybrook which formed the Articles of Discipline, was the last. Those articles by providing for the stated meeting of *pastors* in associations, both local and general, prevented any further occasion for synods in Connecticut; and a similar arrangement has since been adopted elsewhere. B.

CHAP. XVII.

Of the civil magistrate's power in matters ecclesiastical.

1. It is lawful, profitable, and necessary for christians to gather themselves together into church estate, and therein to exercise all the ordinances of Christ, according unto the word, although the consent of the magistrate could not be had thereunto; because the apostles and christians in their time did frequently thus practice, when the magistrates being all of them Jewish or Pagan, and most persecuting enemies, would give no countenance or consent to such matters.

Acts, ii. 41, 47, and iv. 1—3.

2. Church government stands in no opposition to civil government of commonwealths, nor any way intrencheth upon the authority of civil magistrates in their jurisdiction; nor any whit weakeneth their hands in governing, but rather strengtheneth them, and furthereth the people in yielding more hearty and conscionable obedience unto them, whatsoever some ill affected persons to the ways of Christ have suggested, to alienate the affection of kings and princes from the ordinances of Christ; as if the kingdom of Christ in his church could not rise and

stand, without the falling and weakening of their government, which is also of Christ: whereas the contrary is most true, that they may both stand together and flourish, the one being helpful unto the other, in their distinct and due administrations.

John, xviii. 36. Acts, xxv. 8. Isa. xlix. 23.

3. The power and authority of magistrates is not for the restraining of churches, or any other good works, but for the helping in and furthering thereof; and therefore the consent and countenance of magistrates, when it may be had, is not to be slighted, or lightly esteemed, but on the contrary, it is part of the honor due to christian magistrates, to desire and crave their consent and approbation therein; which being obtained, the churches may then proceed in their way with much more encouragement and comfort.

Rom. xiii. 4. 1 Tim. ii. 2.

4. It is not in the power of magistrates to compel their subjects to become church members, and to partake at the Lord's table; for the priests are reprov'd that brought unworthy ones into the sanctuary: then, as it was unlawful for the priests, so it is as unlawful to be done by civil magistrates; those whom the church is to cast out if they were in, the magistrate ought not to thrust them into the church, nor to hold them therein.

Ezk. xliv. 7 9. 1 Cor. v. 11.

5. As it is unlawful for church officers to meddle with the sword of the magistrate, so it is unlawful for the magistrate to meddle with the work proper to church officers. The acts of Moses and David, who were not only princes, but prophets, were extraordinary, therefore not imitable. Against such usurpation, the Lord witnessed by smiting Uzziah with leprosy, for presuming to offer incense.

Matt. ii. 25, 26. 2 Chron. xxvi. 16, 17.

6. It is the duty of the magistrate to take care of matters of religion, and to improve his civil authority for the observing of the duties commanded in the first, as well as for observing of the duties commanded in the second table. They are called Gods. The end of the magistrate's office, is not only the quiet and peaceable life of the subject in matters of righteousness and honesty, but also in matters of godliness, yea, of all godliness. Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, Asa, Jehosaphat, Hezekiah, Josiah, are much commended by the Holy Ghost, for the putting forth their authority in matters of religion: on the contrary, such kings as have been failing this way, are frequently taxed and reprov'd by the Lord. And not only the kings of Judah, but also Job, Nehemiah, the king of Nineveh, Darius, Artaxerxes, Nebuchadnezzar, whom none looked at as types of Christ, (though were it so, there were no place for any just objection) are com-

mended in the book of God, for exercising their authority this way.

Psalm, lxxxii. 6. 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. 1 Kings, xv, 14, and xxii. 43. 2 Kings, xii. 3, and xiv. 4, and xv. 35. 1 Kings, xx. 42. Job, xxxix. 25, and xxxi. 26, 28. Neh. xiii. Jonah, iii. 7. Ezra, vii. Dan. iii. 29.

7. The object of the power of the magistrate are not things merely inward, and so not subject to his cognizance and view, as unbelief, hardness of heart, erroneous opinions not vented, but only such things as are acted by the outward man; neither is their power to be exercised in commanding such acts of the outward man, and punishing the neglect thereof, as are but mere inventions and devices of men, but about such acts as are commanded and forbidden in the word; yea, such as the word doth clearly determine, though not always clearly to the judgment of the magistrate or others, yet clearly in itself. In these he of right ought to put forth his authority, though oft-times actually he doth it not.

1 Kings, xx. 28, 42.

8. Idolatry, blasphemy, heresy, venting corrupt and pernicious opinions that destroy the foundation, open contempt of the word preached, profanation of the Lord's day, disturbing the peaceable administration and exercise of the worship and holy things of God, and the like, are to be restrained and punished by civil authority.

Deut. xiii. 1 King, xx. 28, 42. Dan. iii. 29. Zech. xiii. 3. Neh. xiii. 31. 1 Tim. ii. 2. Rom. xiii. 4.

9. If any church, one or more, shall grow schismatical, rending itself from the communion of other churches, or shall walk incorrigibly or obstinately in any corrupt way of their own, contrary to the rule of the word; in such case the magistrate is to put forth his coercive power, as the matter shall require. The tribes on this side Jordan intended to make war against the other tribes, for building the altar of witness, whom they suspected to have turned away therein from following of the LORD.*

Josh. xxii.

* This chapter may be compared with Heads of Agreement, Chap. VII. The difference between the two may be partly because the Cambridge Platform was framed in New England, under a puritan magistracy, while the Heads of Agreement were drawn up in old England, after the restoration, under a government which was enforcing conformity to the established church of England. B.

A

CONFESSION OF FAITH,

OWNED AND CONSENTED TO

BY THE

ELDERS AND MESSENGERS

OF THE

Churches in the Colony of Connecticut,

IN NEW ENGLAND;

ASSEMBLED BY DELEGATION AT SAYBROOK,

SEPTEMBER 9, 1708.

Eph. 4: 5. — One Faith. —

Col. 2: 5. Joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

NEW LONDON, CONN. PRINTED, 1710.

THE FOLLOWING MEMORANDUM IS INSERTED IN THIS PLACE,
BY THE ORDER OF THE GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF CONNEC-
TICUT, AT THEIR SESSION AT WETHERSFIELD, JUNE, 1842.

N. B. For the right understanding of the relation which the following Confession of Faith has to the Congregational ministers and churches of Connecticut, the attention of the reader is directed to the eighth article of the Heads of Agreement, and the practice of the associations and churches based on that article.

PREFACE.

AMONG the memorable Providences relating to our English Nation in the last century, must be acknowledged the settling of English Colonies in the American parts of the world; among all which this hath been peculiar unto and to the distinguishing glory of that tract called New-England, that the colonies there were originally formed, not for the advantage of trade, and a worldly interest; but upon the most noble foundation, even of religion, and the *Liberty of their Consciences*, with respect unto the ordinances of the Gospel administered in the purity and power of them; a happiness then not to be enjoyed in their native soil.

We joyfully congratulate the religious liberty of our brethren, in the late auspicious reign of K. William and Q. Mary, of blessed memory, and in the present glorious reign, and from the bottom of our hearts bless the Lord, whose perogative it is to reserve the times and seasons in his own hand; who also hath inspired the pious mind of her most sacred Majesty, whose reign we constantly and unfeignedly pray may be long and glorious, with royal resolutions, inviolably to maintain the toleration.

Deus enim—hæc Otia fecit.

Undoubtedly if the same had been the liberty of those times, our fathers would have been far from exchanging a most pleasant land) *dulce solum patriæ*) for a vast and howling wilderness ; since for the enjoyment of so desirable liberty, a considerable number of learned, worthy, and pious persons, were, by divine impulse and extraordinary concurrence of dispositions, engaged to adventure their lives, families, and estates, upon the vast ocean, *following the Lord into a wilderness, a land then not sown.** wherein innumerable difficulties staring them in the face, were outbid by heroic resolution, magnanimity, and confidence in the Lord alone. *Our fathers trusted in the Lord and were delivered, they trusted in him and were not confounded.†* It was their care *to be with the Lord,* and their indulgence, *that the Lord was with them,‡* to a wonder, preserving, supporting, protecting, and animating them ; dispatching and destroying the pagan natives by extraordinary sickness and mortality, that there might *be room for his people to serve the Lord our God in.§* It was the glory of our fathers, that they heartily professed the only rule of their religion, from the very first, to be the Holy Scripture, according whereunto, so far as they were persuaded, upon diligent inquiry, solicitous search, and faithful prayer, conformed was their faith, their worship, to-

* Jer. 2 : 2.

† 2 Chron. 15 : 2.

† Psalms 22 : 4, 5.

§ Psalms 80 : 8, 9.

gether with the whole administration of the house of Christ, and their manners, allowance being given to human failures and imperfections.

That which they were most solicitous about, and wherein their liberty had been restrained, respecting the worship of God, and the government of the Church of Christ, according to his own appointment, their faith and profession of religion being the same which was generally received in all the reformed churches of Europe, and in substance the Assembly's Confession, as shall be shown anon.

It cannot be denied, that the usage of the Christian Church, whose faith wholly rested upon the Word of God respecting Confessions of Faith, is very ancient, and that which is universally acknowledged to be most so, and of universal acceptance and consent, is commonly called the Apostles' Creed, a symbol, sign, or badge of the Christian religion, called the Apostles', not because they composed it, for then it must have been received into the canon of the Holy Bible, but because the matter of it agreeth with the doctrine, and is taken out of the writings of the Apostles. Consequent hereunto, as the necessity of the Church, for the correcting, condemning, and suppressing of *heresy and error* required, have been emitted, ancient and famous Confessions of Faith, composed and agreed upon by Oecumenical Councils, *e. g.* of Nice against Arius, of Constantinople

against Macedonius, of Ephesus against Nestorius, of Chalcedon against Eutyches. And when the light of reformation broke forth to the dispersing of popish darkness, the reformed nations agreed upon Confessions of Faith, famous in the world, and of especial service to theirs and standing ages. And among those of latter times, published in our nation, most worthy of repute and acceptance, we take to be the Confession of Faith, composed by the reverend Assembly of Divines convened at Westminster, with that of the Savoy, in the substance, and in expressions for the most, part the same; the former* professedly assented and attested to, by the Fathers of our country, by unanimous vote of the Synod of Elders and Messengers of the Churches, met at Cambridge, the last of the 6th month, 1648: the latter owned and consented to by the Elders and Messengers of the Churches assembled at Boston, May 12th, 1680. The same, we doubt not to profess, to have been the constant faith of the churches in this Colony, from the first foundation of them. And that it may appear to the Christian world, that our churches do not maintain differing opinions in the doctrine of religion, nor are desirous, for any reason, to conceal the faith we are persuaded of, the Elders and Messengers of the Churches in this Colony of Connecticut, in New England, by virtue of the appointment and encouragement of the Hon-

* See the Preface to the Platform of Church Discipline.

orable the General Assembly, convened by delegation at Saybrook, September 9th, 1708, unanimously agreed, that the Confession of Faith, owned and consented unto by the Elders and Messengers of the Churches assembled at Boston, in New England, May 12th, 1680, being the second session of that Synod, be recommended to the Honorable General Assembly of this Colony at their next session, for their public testimony thereto, as the faith of the Churches of this Colony; which Confession, together with the Heads of Union, and Articles for the Administration of Church Government, herewith emitted, were presented unto, and approved and established by the said General Assembly, at New Haven, on the 14th of October, 1708.

This Confession of Faith, we offer as our firm persuasion, well and fully grounded upon the Holy Scripture, and commend the same unto all, and particularly to the people of our Colony, to be examined, accepted, and constantly maintained. We do not assume to ourselves, that any thing be taken upon trust from us, but commend to our people these following counsels :

1. *That you be immovably and unchangeably agreed in the only sufficient, and invariable rule of religion which is the Holy Scripture, the fixed Canon* incapable of addition or diminution.* You ought to account nothing

* Isa. 8 : 20.

ancient, that will not stand by this rule,* nor any thing new that will. Do not hold yourselves bound to unscriptural rites in religion, wherein custom itself doth many times misguide. Believe it to be the honor of religion to resign and captivate our wisdom and faith to Divine revelation.†

II. *That you be determined by this Rule in the whole of religion. That your faith be right and Divine, the Word of God must be the foundation of it, and the authority of the Word the reason of it.‡* You may believe the most important articles of Faith with no more than a human faith: And this is evermore the cause, when the principle Faith is resolved into, is any other than the Holy Scripture. For an orthodox Christian to resolve his faith into education, instruction, and the persuasion of others, is not a higher reason, than a *Papist, Mahometan, or Pagan* can produce for his religion.

Pay also unto God the worship, that will bear the trial of and receive establishment by this rule. Have always in readiness a Divine warrant for all the worship you perform to God. Believe that worship is accepted, and that only, which is directed unto and commanded, and hath the promise of a blessing from the Word of God. Believe that worship not divinely commanded *is in vain,*|| nor will answer the neces-

* Rev. 21 : 18, 19. † Jer. 6 : 16 ; Matt. 19 : 8, or 44 : 17.

‡ Matt. 11 : 27 ; 1 John 5 : 9. § Luke 10 : 26. || Matt. 15 : 9

sities and expectations of a Christian, and is a worshipping you know not what.* Believe in all divine worship, it is not enough that this or that act of worship is not forbidden in the Word of God; if it be not commanded, and you perform it, you may fear that you will be found guilty and exposed to divine displeasure.† *Nadab* and *Abihu* paid dear for offering in divine worship that which the Lord commanded them not. It is an honor done unto Christ, when you account that only decent, orderly, and convenient in his house, which depends upon the institution and appointment of himself, who is the only Head and Lawgiver of his church.

III. That you be well-grounded in the firm truths of religion. We have willingly taken pains to add the Holy Scriptures, whereon every point of faith contained in this Confession doth depend, and is borne up by, and commend the same to your diligent perusal, that you be established in the truth, and your faith rest upon its proper basis, the Word of God.‡ Follow the example of the noble Bereans, search the Scriptures, grow in grace and the knowledge of Christ, be not children in understanding, but men. Labor for a sound, confirmed knowledge of these points in the evidence of them. See that they be deeply rooted in

* John, 4:22; Jer. 1:22. † Lev. 10:1, 2.

‡ Acts, 17:10, 11; John, 5:39; 2 Pet. 3:18; 1 Cor. 14:20.

your minds and hearts, that so you be not an easy prey to such as lie in wait to deceive.* For the want hereof to be condoled is the unhappiness of many, ever learning, and never coming to the knowledge of the truth.†

IV. *That having applied the rule of Holy Scripture to all the Articles of this Confession, and found the same upon trial, the unchangeable and eternal truths of God,‡ you remember and hold them fast, contend earnestly for them as the faith once delivered to the saints.* Value them as your great charter, the instrument of your salvation, the evidence of your not failing of the grace of God, and receiving a crown that fadeth not away.§ Maintain them, and every of them, all your days, with undaunted resolution against all opposition, whatever the event be, and the same transmit safe and pure to posterity: Having brought the truth on no hand sell it. Believe || *the truth will make you free: Faithful is he that hath promised: So shall none take away your crown.*

Finally: *Do not think it is enough that your faith and order be according to the Word of God, but live accordingly.*** It is not enough to believe well, you run yourself into the greatest hazard unless you be careful to live well, and that this be,†† all your life and conversation

* Eph. 4: 13, 14. † 2 Tim. 3: 7. ‡ Rev. 3: 3; Jude, 3.

§ 1 Cor. 15: 18; 1 Cor. 16: 13; Psal. 78: 5.

|| John, 23: 23; John, 8: 32; Heb. 10: 13; Rev. 3: 11.

** Tit. 2: 11, 12. †† Gal. 1: 16; Mic. 6: 8.

must be agreeable to the rule of God's Word. This is the rule of a Christian conversation and practical reformation.* Rest not in *the form of godliness, denying the power of it.* Stir up an holy zeal, *strengthen the things that remain that are ready to die.* Be not carried away with the corruptions, temptations, and evil examples of the times, but be *blameless and without rebuke, the sons of God in a froward generation,† they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.*

Remember ye our brethren in this colony, that we are a part of that body,‡ for which the providence of God hath wrought wonders, and are obliged by and accountable for all the mercies dispensed from the beginning of our fathers' settling this country until now. *There he spake with us.§* That the practical piety and serious religion of our progenitors is exemplary and for our imitation,|| and will reflect confounding shame on us, if we prove degenerate. The Lord grant that thy noble design of our fathers in coming to this land, may not be forgotten by us, nor by our children after us, even the interest of religion, which we can never exchange for a temporal interest without the foulest degeneracy, and most inexcusable defection.** To conclude, the solemn rebukes of Providence, from

* 2 Tim. 3 : 15; Rev. 3 : 19; Rev. 3 : 2; Phil. 2 : 15.

† Rev. 3 : 4. ‡ Hosea, 12 : 2, 3.

§ Hosea, 12 : 4. || 2 Tim. 1 : 5; Job. 8 : 8.

** Exod. 15 : 2, 17; Jer. 2 : 21.

time to time, in a series of judgments, and in particular, *the general drought in the summer past, together with the greivous disappointment of our military undertaking, the distresses, sickness, and mortality of our camp, cannot successfully be improved but by a self-humbling consideration of our ways, and a thorough repentance of all that is amiss.** So will the God of our fathers be our God, and he will be a wall of fire round about us, and the glory in the midst of us in this present, and all succeeding generations. AMEN.

* Isa. 26 : 9 ; Gen. 43 : 23 ; Zech. 2 : 5.

A CONFESSION OF FAITH.

CHAP. I.

OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

I.

ALTHOUGH the light of nature, and the works of creation and Providence, do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men inexcusable;^a yet they are not sufficient to give that knowledge of God, and of his will, which is necessary unto salvation:^b Therefore it pleased the Lord at sundry times, and in divers manners, to reveal himself, and to declare that his will unto his Church;^c and afterwards, for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the Church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan and of the world, to commit the same wholly to writing;^d which maketh the Holy Scripture to be most necessary;^e those former ways of God's revealing his will unto his people, now ceased.^f

^a Rom. 2 : 14, 15 ; Rom. 1 : 19, 20 ; Psal. 19 : 1, 2, 3, Rom. 1 : 32 ; chap. 2 : 1. ^b 1 Cor. 1 : 21 ; chap. 2 : 13, 14. ^c Heb. 1, 1, 2. ^d Prov. 22 : 19, 20, 21 ; Luke, 1, 3, 4 ; Rom. 15 : 4 ; Matt. 4 : 4, 7, 10 ; Isa. 8 : 19, 20. ^e 2 Tim. 3 : 15 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 19. ^f Heb. 1 : 1, 2.

II.

Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the word of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testament, which are these :

Of the Old Testament.

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, The Song of Songs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

Of The New Testament.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, The Acts of the Apostles, Paul's Epistle to the Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 to Timothy, 2 to Timothy, to Titus, to Philemon, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistle of James, the first and second Epistles of Peter, the first, second, and third Epistles of John, the Epistle of Jude, the Revelation.

All which are given by the inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life.^g

^g Luke 16: 29, 31 ; Eph. 2: 20 ; Rev. 22: 18, 19 ; 2 Tim. 3: 16.

III.

The books commonly called Apocrypha not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the canon of the Scripture; and therefore are of no authority in the Church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved, or made use of, than other human writings.^h

^h Luke 24: 27, 44; Rom. 3: 2; 2 Pet. 1: 21.

IV.

The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed and obeyed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or church, but wholly upon God, (who is truth itself) the author thereof; and therefore it is to be received because it is the word of God.ⁱ

ⁱ 2 Pet. 1: 19, 21; 2 Tim. 3: 16; 1 John, 5: 9; 1 Thes. 2: 13.

V.

We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church, to a high and reverend esteem of the Holy Scripture;^k and the heaviness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole, (which is to give all glory to God) the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the

word of God: yet notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the word in our hearts.¹

^k1 Tim. 2: 15. ^l1 John, 2: 20, 27; John, 16: 13, 14; 1 Cor. 2: 10, 11, 12; Isa. 59: 21.

VI.

The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture; unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men.^m Nevertheless we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the word;ⁿ and there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature, and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the word, which are always to be observed.^o

^m 2 Tim. 3: 15, 16, 17; Gal. 1: 8, 9; 2 Thes. 2: 2, 15, ⁿ John 6: 45; 1 Cor. 2: 9, 10, 11, 12. ^o 1 Cor. 11: 13, 14, and chap. 14: 26, 40.

VII.

All things in Scripture are not alike plain in

themselves, nor alike clear unto all ;^p yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed, for salvation, are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of the Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them.^q

^p 2 Pet. 3 : 16. ^q Psal. 119 : 105, 130 ; Heb. 2 : 2.

VIII.

The Old Testament in Hebrew, (which was the native language of the people of God of old) and the New Testament in Greek, (which at the time of writing of it was most generally known to the nations) being immediately inspired by God, and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authenticall ;^r so as in all controversies of religion the Church is finally to appeal to them.^s But because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God, who have right unto and interest in the scriptures, and are commanded in the fear of God to read and search them,^t therefore they are to be translated into the vulgar language of every nation unto which they come,^u that the word of God dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship him in an acceptable manner,^w and through patience and comfort of the Scriptures may have hope.^x

^r Matt. 5 : 18. ^s Isa. 8 : 20 ; Acts, 15 : 15 ; John, 5 : 39, 46. ^t John, 5 : 39. ^u 1 Cor. 14 : 6, 9, 11, 12, 24, 27, 28. ^w Col. 3 : 16. ^x Rom. 15 : 4.

IX.

The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture, is the Scripture itself; and therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold, but one) it must be searched and known by other places, that speak more clearly.^y

^y 2 Pet. 1 : 20, 21 ; Acts, 15 : 15, 16.

X.

The Supreme Judge, by whom all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Scripture delivered by the Spirit, into which Scripture so delivered, our faith is finally resolved.^z

^z Matt. 22 : 29, 31 ; Eph. 2 : 20 ; Acts, 28 : 25.

 CHAP. II.

OF GOD, AND OF THE HOLY TRINITY.

I.

THERE is but one only^a living and true God ;^b who is infinite in being and perfection,^c a most pure spirit,^d invisible,^e without body, parts,^f or passions,^g immutable,^h immense,ⁱ eternal,^k incomprehensible,^l almighty,^m most

wise, ⁿ most holy, ^o most free, ^p most absolute, ^q working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will, ^r for his own glory, ^s most loving, ^t gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth; forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; ^u the rewarder of them that diligently seek him, ^w and withal, most just and terrible in his judgments, ^x hating all sin, ^y and who will by no means clear the guilty. ^z

^a Deut. 6 : 4 ; 1 Cor. 8 : 4, 6. ^b 1 Thes. 1 : 9 ; Jer. 10 : 10. ^c Job, 1 : 7, 8, 9, and 26 : 14. ^d John 4 : 24. ^e 1 Tim. 1 : 17. ^f Deut. 4 : 15, 16 ; John, 4 : 24 ; Luke, 24 : 39. ^g Acts, 14 : 11, 15. ^h James, 1 : 17 ; Mal. 3 : 6. ⁱ 1 Kings, 8 : 27 ; Jer. 23 : 23, 24. ^k Rom. 1 : 20 ; 1 Tim. 1 : 17 ; Psal. 90 : 2. ^l Psal. 145 : 3. ^m Gen. 17 : 1 ; Rev. 4 : 8. ⁿ Rom. 16 : 27. ^o Isa. 6 : 3. ^p Psal. 115 : 3. ^q Exod. 3 : 14. ^r Eph. 1 : 11. ^s Rom. 11 : 36. ^t 1 John, 4 : 8, 16. ^u Exod. 34 : 6, 7. ^w Heb. 11 : 6. ^x Neh. 9 ; 32, 33. ^y Psal. 6 : 5, 6. ^z Exod. 34 : 7 ; Nah. 1 : 2, 3.

II.

God hath all life, ^a glory, ^b goodness, ^c blessedness, ^d in and of himself ; and is alone in and unto himself all-sufficient, not standing in need of any creatures which he hath made, ^e nor deriving any glory from them, ^f but only manifesting his own glory in, by, unto, and upon them. He is the alone fountain of all being, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things ; ^g and hath most sovereign dominion over them, to do by them, for them, or upon them, whatsoever himself pleaseth. ^h In his sight all things are open and manifest ; ⁱ his knowledge is infi-

nite, infallible, and independent upon the creature; ^k so as nothing is to him contingent or uncertain. ^l He is most holy in all his counsels, in all his works, and in all his commands. ^m To him is due from angels and men, and every other creature, whatsoever worship, service, or obedience, as creatures, they owe unto the Creator, and whatever he is further pleased to require of them. ⁿ

^a John 5 : 26. ^b Acts, 7 : 2. ^c Psal. 119 ; 68. ^d 1 Tim. 6 : 15 ; Rom. 9 : 5. ^e Acts, 17 : 24, 25. ^f Job, 22 : 2, 3. ^g Rom. 11 : 36. ^h Rev. 4 : 11 ; 1 Tim. 6 : 15 ; Dan. 4 ; 25 31, 34, 35. ⁱ Heb. 4 : 13. ^k Rom. 11 : 33, 34 ; Psal. 147 : 5. ^l Acts, 15 : 18 ; Ezek. 11 : 5. ^m Psal. 145 : 17 ; Rom. 7 ; 12. ⁿ Rev. 5 : 12, 13, 14.

III.

In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons of one substance, power, and eternity ; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. ^o The Father is of none, neither begotten, nor proceeding ; the son is eternally begotten of the Father ; ^p the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son. ^q Which doctrine of the Trinity is the foundation of all our communion with God, and comfortable dependence upon him.

^o 1 John, 5 : 7 ; Matt. 3 : 16, 17 ; chap. 28 : 19 ; 2 Cor. 13 : 14. ^p John, 1 : 14, 18. ^q John, 15 : 26 ; Gal. 4 : 6 ; 2 Cor. 13 : 14.

CHAP. III.

OF GOD'S ETERNAL DECREES.

I.

God from all Eternity did by the most wise and holy counsel of his own *will*, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; ^a yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin, ^b nor is violence offered to the *will* of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away but rather established. ^c

^a Eph. 1 : 11 ; Rom. 11 : 33 ; Heb. 6 : 17 ; Rom. 9 ; 15, 18. ^b James, 1 : 13, 14 ; 1 John, 1 : 5. ^c Acts, 2 : 23 ; chap. 4 ; 27, 28 ; Matt. 17 : 12 ; John, 10 : 11 ; Prov. 16 : 33.

II.

Although God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass upon all supposed conditions; ^d yet hath he not decreed any thing, because he foresaw it as future, or that which would come to pass upon such conditions. ^e

^d Acts, 15 : 18, 15, and 23 : 11, 12 ; Matt. 11 : 21, 23.
^e Rom. 9 : 11, 13, 16, 18.

III.

By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels ^f are predestined unto everlasting life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting death. ^g

^f 1 Tim. 5 : 21 ; Matt. 25 : 41 ; Eph. 1 : 5, 6 ; Prov. 16 : 4. ^g Rom. 9 : 22, 23.

IV.

These angels and men, thus predestinated and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished. ^h

^h 2 Tim. 2 : 19 ; John, 13 : 18.

V.

Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen in Christ, unto everlasting glory, ⁱ out of his mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving him thereunto, ^k and all to the praise of his glorious grace. ^l

ⁱ Eph. 1 : 4, 9, 11 ; Rom. 8 : 30 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 9 ; 1 Thes. 5 : 9. ^k Rom. 9 : 11, 33, 16 ; Eph. 1 : 4, 9. ^l Eph. 1 : 6, 12.

VI.

As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he by the eternal and most free purpose of his will fore-ordained all the means thereunto. ^m Wherefore they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, ⁿ are effectually called unto faith in Christ by his Spirit working in due season, are justified,

adopted, sanctified,^o and kept by his power, through faith unto salvation.^p Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, or effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only.^q

^m 1 Pet. 1 : 2 ; Eph. 1 : 4, 5, and chap. 2 : 10 ; 2 Thes. 2 : 13. ⁿ 1 Thes. 5 : 9, 10 ; Tit. 2 : 14. ^o Rom. 8 : 30 ; Eph. 1 : 5 ; 2 Thes. 2 : 13. ^p 1 Pet. 1 : 5. ^q John 7 : 9 ; 6 : 64, 65 ; 8 : 47, and 10 : 26 ; Rom. 8 : 28, to the end : 1 John 2 : 19.

VII.

The rest of mankind, God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice.^r

^r Matt. 11 : 25, 26 ; Rom. 9 : 17, 18, 21, 22 ; 2 Tim. 2 : 19, 20 ; Jude, 4 : 1 Pet. 2 : 8.

VIII.

The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care,^s that men attending the will of God revealed in his word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their eternal election.^t So shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence and admiration of God,^u and of humility, diligence, and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the Gospel.^w

^s Rom. 9 : 20, 11, 33 ; Deut. 29 : 29. ^t 2 Pet. 1 : 10.
^u Eph. 1 : 6 ; Rom. 11 : 33. ^w Rom. 11 : 5, and 6 : 20 ;
 2 Pet. 1 : 10 ; Rom. 8 : 33 ; Luke 10 : 20.

CHAP. IV.

OF CREATION.

I.

It pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, ^a for the manifestation of the glory of his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, ^b in the beginning to create and make of nothing the world, and all things therein, whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days and all very good. ^c

^a Heb. 1 : 2 ; John 1 : 2, 3 ; Gen. 1 : 2 ; Job, 26 : 13, and 33 : 4. ^b Rom. 1 : 20 ; Jer. 10 : 12 ; Psal. 104 : 24, and 33 : 5, 6. ^c Gen. 1 chap. ; Heb. 11 : 3 ; Col. 1 : 16 ; Acts, 17 : 24.

II.

After God had made all other creatures, he created man, male and female, ^d with reasonable and immortal souls, ^e endued with knowledge, righteousness and true holiness, after his own image, ^f having the law of God written in their hearts, ^g and power to fulfil it ; ^h and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject to change. ⁱ Besides this law written in

their hearts, they received a command not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; which whilst they kept they were happy in their communion with God,^k and had dominion over the creatures.^l

^d Gen. 1 : 27. ^e Gen. 2 : 7 ; Eccl. 12 : 7 ; Luke. 23 : 43 ; Matt. 10 : 28. ^f Gen. 1 : 26 ; Col. 3 : 10 ; Eph. 4 : 24. ^g Rom. 2 : 14, 15. ^h Eccl. 7 : 29. ⁱ Gen. 3 : 6 ; Eccl. 7 : 29. ^k Gen. 3 : 8, 9, 10, 11, 23. ^l Gen. 1 : 26, 28, and 2 : 17.

CHAP. V.

OF PROVIDENCE.

I.

God, the great Creator of all things, doth uphold,^a direct, dispose, and govern all creatures, actions, and things^b from the greatest even to the least^c by his most wise and holy providence,^d according to his infallible fore-knowledge^e and the free and immutable counsel of his own will,^f to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, goodness, and mercy.^g

^a Heb. 1 : 3. ^b Dan. 4 : 34, 35 ; Psal. 135 : 6 ; Acts; 17 : 25, 26, 28, 29 ; Job. 38, 39, 40, 41, chapters. ^c Matt. 10 : 29, 30, 31. ^d Psal. 104 : 24 ; 15 : 3, and 145 : 17. ^e Acts, 15 : 18 ; Psal. 94 : 8, 9, 10, 11. ^f Eph. 1 : 11 ; Psal. 33 : 10, 11. ^g Isa. 63 : 14 ; Eph. 3 : 10 ; Rom. 9 : 17 ; Gen. 45 : 17 ; Psalm 145 : 17.

II.

Although in relation to the fore-knowledge and decree of God the first cause, all things come to pass immutably and infallibly;ⁿ yet by the same providence he ordereth them to fall out, according to the nature of the second causes, either necessarily freely or contingently.ⁱ

^h Acts, 2: 23. ⁱ Jer. 31: 35; Exod. 21: 13; Gen. 8: 22; Deut. 19: 5; 1 Kings, 22: 28, 34; Isa. 10: 6, 7.

III.

God, in his ordinary providence maketh use of means,^k yet is free to work without,^l above,^m and against them at his pleasure.ⁿ

^k Acts, 27: 31, 44; Isa. 55: 11; Hos. 2: 21, 22. ^l Hos. 1: 7; Matt. 4: 4; Job 34: 10. ^m Rom. 4: 19, 20, 21. ⁿ 2 Kings 6: 6; Dan. 3: 27.

IV.

The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and the infinite goodness of God so far manifest themselves in his providence, in that his determinate counsel extendeth itself even to the first fall and all other sins of angels and men,^o (and that not by a bare permission,) ^p which also he most wisely and powerfully boundeth,^q and otherwise ordereth and governeth in a manifold dispensation, to his own most holy ends,^r yet so as the sinfulness thereof proceedeth only from the creature, and not from God,

who being most holy and righteous, neither is, nor can be the author or approver of sin.^s

o Rom. 11 : 32, 33, 34 ; 2 Sam. 24 : 1, with 1 Chron. 21 : 1 ; 1 Kings, 2 : 2, 22, 23 ; 1 Chron. 10 : 4, 13, 14 ; 2 Sam. 6 : 10 ; Acts, 2 : 23, and 4 : 27, 28. p Acts, 14 : 16. q Psal. 76 : 10 ; 1 Kings, 19 : 28. r Gen. 50 : 20 ; Isa. 10 : 6, 7, 12. s Jam. 1 : 13, 14, 17 ; 1 John. 2 : 16 ; Psal. 50 : 21.

V.

The most wise, righteous, and gracious God doth oftentimes leave for a season his own children to manifold temptations, and the corruption of their own hearts, to chastise them for their former sins, or to discover unto them the hidden strength of corruption, and deceitfulness of their hearts, that they may be humbled, and to raise them to a more close and constant dependence for their support upon himself and to make them more watchful against all future occasions of sin, and for sundry other just and holy ends.^u

t 2 Chron. 32 : 25, 26, 31 ; 2 Sam. 24 ; 1. u 2 Cor. 12 : 7, 8, 9 ; Psal. 73, per tot. Psal. 77 : 1, 10, 12 ; Mark. 14 : 66 to the end ; John, 21 : 15, 16, 17.

VI.

As for those wicked and ungodly men, whom God as a righteous Judge, for former sins, doth blind and harden,^w from them he not only withholdeth his grace, whereby they might have been enlightened in their understandings, and wrought upon in their hearts,^x but sometimes

also withdraweth the gifts which they had,^y and exposeth them to such objects, as their corruption makes occasion of sin;^z and withal gives them over to their own lusts, the temptations of the world, and the power of Satan,^a whereby it comes to pass that they harden themselves under those means even which God useth for the softening of them.^b

^wRom. 1 : 24, 26, 28 ; Rom. 11 : 7, 8. ^xDeut. 29 : 4.
^yMatt. 13 : 12 ; Matt. 25 : 29. ^zDeut. 2 : 30 ; 2 Kings 8 : 12, 13. ^aPsal. 8 : 11, 12. ^bExod. 7 : 3, and 8 : 15, 33 ;
 2 Cor. 2 : 14, 16 ; Isa. 8 : 14 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 7, 8 ; Isa. 16 : 9,
 10, with Acts, 28 : 26, 27.

VII.

As the Providence of God doth in general reach to all creatures, so after a most special manner it taketh care of his church, and disposeth all things for the good thereof.^c

^c1 Tim. 4 : 10 ; Amos. 9 : 8, 9 ; Rom. 8 : 28 ; Isa. 43 : 3, 4, 5, 14.

CHAP. VI.

OF THE FALL OF MAN, OF SIN, AND OF THE PUNISHMENT THEREOF.

I.

God having made a covenant of works and life thereupon,^a with our first parents, and all their posterity in them,^b they being seduced by

the subtilty and temptation of Satan, did willfully transgress the law of their creation, and break the covenant in eating the forbidden fruit.^c

^aRom. 10 : 5. ^bRom. 5 : 12, 13 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 21, 22.
^cGen. 3 : 13 ; 2 Cor. 11 : 3.

II.

By this sin they, and we in them fell from original righteousness and communion with God,^d and so became dead in sin,^e and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.^f

^dGen. 3 : 6, 7, 8 ; Eccl. 7 : 29 ; Rom. 3 : 23. ^eGen. 2 : 17 ; Eph. 2 : 1. ^fTit. 1 : 15 ; Gen. 6 : 5 ; Jer. 17 : 9 ; Rom. 3 : 10 to 19.

III.

They being the root and by God's appointment standing in the room and stead of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed,^g and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation.^h

^gGen. 1 : 27, 28 ; Gen. 2 : 16, 17 ; Acts, 16 : 26 ; Rom. 5 : 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 21, 22, 45, 49. ^hPsal. 51 : 5 ; Gen. 5 : 3 ; Job, 14 ; 4, and 15 : 14.

IV.

From this original corruption whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good,ⁱ and wholly inclined to all evil,^k do proceed all actual transgressions.^l

ⁱRom. 5 : 6, and 8 : 7, and 7 : 18 ; Col. 1 : 21. ^kGen. 6 : 5, and 8 : 21 ; Rom. 3 : 10, 11, 12. ^lJam. 1 : 14, 15 ; Eph. 2 : 2, 3 ; Matt. 15 : 19.

V.

This corruption of nature during this life, doth remain in those that are regenerated ;^m and although it be through Christ pardoned and mortified, yet both itself and all the motions thereof are truly and properly sin.ⁿ

^m 1 John 1 : 8, 10 ; Rom. 7 : 14, 17, 18, 23 ; Jam. 3 : 2 ; Prov. 20 : 9 ; Eccl. 7 : 20. ⁿ Rom. 7 : 5, 7, 8, 24 ; Gal. 5 : 17.

VI.

Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto,^o doth in its own nature bring guilt upon the sinner,^p whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God,^q and curse of the law,^r and so made subject to death,^s with all miseries, spiritual,^t temporal,^u and eternal.^w

^o 1 John. 3 : 4. ^p Rom. 20 : 15, and 3 : 9, 19. ^q Eph. 2 : 3. ^r Gal. 3 : 10. ^s Rom. 1 : 23. ^t Eph, 4 : 18. ^u Rom. 8 : 20 ; Lam. 3 : 39. ^w Matt. 24 : 41 ; 2 Thes. 1 : 9.

 CHAP. VII.

OF GOD'S COVENANT WITH MAN.

I.

THE distance between God and the creature is so great, that although reasonable creatures

do owe obedience unto him as their Creator, yet they never could have attained the reward of life, but by some voluntary condescension on God's part, which he hath been pleased to express by way of covenant.^a

^a Isa. 40 : 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 ; Job. 9 : 32, 33 ; Psal. 113 : 56, and 100 : 2, 3 ; Job 22 : 2, 3, and 35 : 7, 8 ; Luke 17 : 10 ; Acts, 17 : 24, 25.

II.

The first covenant made with man, was a covenant of works,^b wherein life was promised to Adam, and in him to his posterity,^c upon condition of perfect and personal obedience.^d

^b Gal. 3 : 12. ^c Rom. 10 : 5, and 5 : 12 to 20. ^d Gen. 2 : 17 ; Gal. 3 : 10.

III.

Man by his fall having made himself incapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second,^e commonly called the covenant of grace ; wherein he freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them Faith in him that they may be saved,^f and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto life, his Holy Spirit to make them willing and able to believe.^g

^e Gal. 3 : 21 ; Rom. 3 : 20, 21 ; Gen. 3 : 5 ; Isa. 42 : 6. ^f Mark, 16 : 15, 16 ; John. 3 : 16 ; Rom. 10 : 6, 10 ; Gal. 3 : 11. ^g Ezek. 36 : 26, 27 ; John, 6 : 44, 45.

IV.

This covenant of grace is frequently set forth in Scripture by the name of a testament, in ref-

erence to the death of Jesus Christ the testator, and to the everlasting inheritance, with all things belonging to it, therein bequeathed.^h

^h Heb. 7 : 22, and 9 : 15, 16, 17 ; Luke. 22 : 20 ; 1 Cor. 11 : 25.

V.

Although this covenant hath been differently and variously administered in respect of Ordinances and institutions in the time of the law, and since the coming of Christ in the flesh,ⁱ yet for the substance and efficacy of it, to all its spiritual and saving ends, it is one and the same,^k upon the account of which various dispensations it is called the old and new testament.^l

ⁱ 2 Cor. 3 : 6, 7, 8, 9 ; Heb. 12 : 18 to 24 ; Col. 2 : 11, 12 ; 1 Cor. 5 : 7, 8 and 10 : 25. ^k Gal. 3 : 3 ; Eph. 4 : 5 ; Jer. 30 : 33, 34 ; Rom. 3 : 21, 22, 30, and 1 : 16. ^l 2 Cor. 3 : 6, 14.

CHAP. VIII.

OF CHRIST THE MEDIATOR.

I.

It pleased God in his eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, his only begotten Son, according to a covenant made between them both, to be the Mediator between God and man ;^a the prophet,^b priest,^c and king,^d

the head and savior of his church,^e the heir of all things,^f and judge of the world:^g unto whom he did from all eternity give a people to be his seed,^h and to be by him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified.^h

^a Isa. 42 : 1 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 19, 20 ; John 3 : 16 ; 1 Tim. 2 : 5. ^b Acts 3 : 22. ^c Heb. 5 : 5, 6. ^d Psal. 2 : 6 ; Luke 1 : 33. ^e Eph. 5 : 23. ^f Heb. 1 : 2. ^g Acts, 17 : 31. ^h John 17 : 6 ; Psal. 22 : 30 ; Isa. 53 : 10. ⁱ 1 Tim. 2 : 6 ; Isa. 55 : 45 ; 1 Cor. 1 : 30.

II.

The Son of God, the second Person in the Trinity, being very and Eternal God, of one substance and equal with the Father, did, when the fullness of time was come, take upon him man's nature,^k with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin,^l being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance ;^m so that two whole perfect and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion ;ⁿ which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and man.^o

^k John, 1 : 14, 17, and 5 : 20 ; Phil. 2 : 6 ; Gal. 4 : 4. ^l Heb. 2 : 14, 16, 17, and 4 : 15. ^m Luke, 1 : 27, 31, 35 ; Gal. 4 : 4. ⁿ Luke, 1 : 35 ; Rom. 9 : 5 ; Col. 2 : 9 ; 1 Pet. 3 : 18 ; 1 Tim. 3 : 16. ^o Rom. 1 : 31 ; 1 Tim. 2 : 5.

III.

The Lord Jesus Christ, in his human nature, thus united to the Divine, in the person of the Son, was sanctified and anointed with the Holy Spirit above measure,^p having in him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,^q in whom it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell,^r to the end that being holy, harmless, undefiled, and full of grace and truth,^s he might be thoroughly furnished to execute the office of a Mediator and Surety; ^t which office he took not unto himself, but was thereunto called by his Father, ^u who also put all power and judgment into his hands, and gave him commandment to execute the same.^w

^p Psal. 45 : 1 ; John, 3 : 34. ^q Col. 2 : 3. ^r Col. 1 : 10. ^s Heb. 7 : 26 ; John, 1 : 14. ^t Acts, 10 : 38 ; Heb. 12 : 24, and 7 : 22. ^u Heb. 5 : 4, 5. ^w John. 5 : 21, 27 ; Matt. 28 : 18 ; Acts 2 : 36.

IV.

The office the Lord Jesus Christ did most willingly undertake,^x which, that he might discharge he was made under the law,^y and did perfectly fulfill it,^z and underwent the punishment due to us, which we should have borne and suffered, being made sin and a curse for us, enduring most grievous torments immediately from God in his soul,^a and most painful sufferings in his body,^b was crucified and died,^c was buried and remained under the power of death, yet saw no corruption,^d on the third day he

arose from the dead,^e with the same body in which he suffered, ^f with which also he ascended into Heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of his Father,^g making intercession,^h and shall return to judge men and angels at the end of the world.ⁱ

^x Psal. 40 : 7, 8 ; Heb. 10 : 5 to 10 ; John, 10 : 18 ; Phil. 2 : 8. ^y Gal. 4 : 4. ^x Matt. 3 : 15, and 5 : 17. ^a Matt. 26 : 37, 38, and 27 : 46 ; Luke, 22 : 44. ^b Matt. 26 : 27. ^c Phil. 2 : 8. ^d Acts 2 : 23, 24, 27, and 13 : 37 ; Rom. 6 : 9. ^e 1 Cor. 15 : 3, 4. ^f John, 20 : 25, 27. ^g Mark, 16 : 9. ^h Rom. 8 : 34 ; Heb. 9 : 24, and 7 : 25. ⁱ Rom. 14 : 9, 10 ; Acts, 1 : 11, and 10 : 42 ; Matt. 13 : 40, 41, 42 ; Jude, 6 ; Pet. 2 : 4.

V.

The Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience, and sacrifice of himself, which he, through the Eternal Spirit, once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of God,^k and purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto him.^l

^k Rom. 5 : 19 ; Heb. 9 : 14, 16, and 10 : 14 ; Eph. 5 : 2 ; Rom. 3 : 25, 26 ; 1 Col. 1 : 19, 20 ; Dan. 9 : 24, 26 ; Eph. 1 : 11, 14 ; John, 17 : 2 ; Heb. 9 : 12, 15.

VI.

Although the work of redemption was not actually wrought by Christ till after his incarnation, yet the virtue, efficacy, and benefits thereof were communicated to the elect in all ages successively, from the beginning of the

world, in and by those promises, types, and sacrifices, wherein he was revealed, and signified to be the seed of the woman, which should bruise the serpent's head, and the lamb slain from the beginning of the world, being yesterday and to-day the same, and forever.^m

^m Gal. 4 : 4, 5 ; Gen. 3 : 15 ; Rev. 11 : 8 ; Heb. 13 : 8.

VII.

Christ in the work of mediation acteth according to both natures, by each nature doing that which is proper in itself;ⁿ yet by reason of the unity of the person, that which is proper to one nature, is sometimes in Scripture attributed to the person denominated by the other nature.^o

ⁿ Heb. 9 : 14, 15 ; 1 Pet. 3 : 18. ^o Acts, 20 : 28 ; John 3 : 13 ; 1 John, 3 : 16.

VIII.

To all those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption, he doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same,^p making intercession for them,^q and revealing unto them, in and by the word, the mysteries of salvation,^r effectually persuading them by his Spirit to believe and obey, and governing their hearts by his word and Spirit,^s overcoming all their enemies by his almighty power and wisdom, in such manner and ways as are more consonant to his wonderful and unsearchable dispensation.^t

p John, 6 : 37, 39, and 10 : 15, 16. q 1 John, 2 : 1 ; Rom. 8 : 34. r John, 15 : 13, 15 ; Eph. 1 : 7, 8, 9 ; John, 17 : 6. s John, 14 : 16 ; Heb. 12 : 22 ; 2 Cor. 4 : 13 ; Rom. 8 : 9, 14, and 15 : 18, 19 ; John, 17 : 17. t Psal. 110 : 1 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 25, 26 ; Psal. 4 : 2, 3 ; Col. 2 : 15.

CHAP. IX.

OF FREE WILL.

I.

God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty and power of acting upon choice, that it is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined to do good or evil.^a

^a Matt. 17 : 12 ; Jam. 1 : 14 ; Deut. 30 : 19.

II.

Man in his state of innocency had freedom and power to will and to do that which was good and well-pleasing to God ;^b but yet mutably, so that he might fall from it.^c

^b Gen. 1 : 26 ; Eccl. 7 : 29 ; Gen. 3 : 6. ^c Gen. 2 : 16, 17.

III.

Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation,^d so as a natural

man, being altogether averse from that good,^e and dead in sin,^f is not able by his own strength to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.^g

^d Rom. 5 : 6 ; John, 15 : 5. ^e Rom. 3 : 10, 12. ^f Eph. 2 : 1, 5 ; Col. 2 : 13. ^g John, 6 : 44, 65 ; Eph. 2 : 2, 3, 4, 5 ; 1 Cor. 2 : 14 ; Tit. 3 : 3, 4, 5.

IV.

When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, he freeth him from his natural bondage under sin,^h and by his grace alone enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good ;ⁱ yet so as that by reason of his remaining corruption, he doth not perfectly nor only will that which is good, but doth also will that which is evil.^k

^h Col. 1 : 13 ; Phil. 2 : 13. ⁱ Rom. 6 : 18, 22. ^k Gal. 5 : 17 ; Rom. 7 : 15, 18, 19, 21, 23.

V.

The will of man is made perfectly and immutably free to good alone in the state of glory only.^l

^l 1 John, 3 : 2 ; Jude, 24 ; Eph. 4 : 13 ; Heb. 12 : 23.

CHAP. X.

OF EFFECTUAL CALLING.

I.

ALL those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only he is pleased in his appoint-

ed and accepted time effectually to call ^a by his word and Spirit, ^b out of that state of sin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ, ^c enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God, ^d taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them an heart of flesh. ^e Renewing their wills and by his almighty power determining them to that which is good, ^f and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ : ^g yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by his grace. ^h

^a Rom. 8 : 30, and 11 : 7 ; Eph. 1 : 10, 11. ^b Thes. 2 ; 13, 14 ; 2 Cor. 3 : 3, 6. ^c Rom. 8 : 7 ; Eph. 2 : 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 ; 1 Tim. 1 : 9, 10. ^d Acts, 26 : 18 ; Col. 2 : 10, 11 ; Eph. 1 : 17, 18. ^e Ezek. 36 : 26. ^f Ezek. 11 : 19 ; Phil. 2 : 13 ; Deut. 30 : 6 ; Ezek. 36 : 27. ^g Eph. 1 : 19 ; John. 6 : 44, 45. ^h Cant. 1 : 4 ; Psal. 110 : 3 ; John, 6 : 37 ; Rom. 6 : 16, 17, 18.

II.

This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not from any thing at all foreseen in man, ⁱ who is altogether passive therein, until being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, ^k he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it. ^l

ⁱ 2 Tim. 1 : 9 ; Tit. 3 : 4, 5 ; Eph. 2 : 4, 5, 8, 9 ; Rom. 9 : 11. ^k 1 Cor. 2 : 14 ; Rom. 8 : 7 ; Eph. 2 : 5. ^l 1 John 6 : 37 ; Ezek. 36 : 27 ; Rom. 8 : 9 ; John 5 : 25.

III.

Elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ,^m who worketh when and where, and how he pleaseth ;ⁿ so also are all other elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the word.^o

^m Luke, 18 : 15, 16, and Acts, 2 : 38, 39, and John 3 : 5, and 1 John, 5 : 22, compared Rom. 8 : 9. ⁿ John 3 : 8. ^o 1 John, 5 : 12 ; Acts 4 : 12.

IV.

Others not elected, although they may be called by the ministry of the word,^p and may have some common operations of the Spirit,^q yet not being effectually drawn by the Father, they neither do nor can come unto Christ, and, therefore cannot be saved ;^r much less can men not professing the Christian Religion, be saved in any other way whatsoever, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, and the law of that religion they do profess ;^s and to assert and maintain that they may, is very pernicious, and to be detested.^t

^p Matt. 23 : 14 ; ^q Matt. 7 : 22, and 13 : 20, 21 ; Heb. 6 : 4, 5. ^r John, 6 : 64, 65, 66, and 8 : 24. ^s Acts, 4 : 12 ; John, 14 : 6 ; Eph. 2 : 12 ; John, 4 : 22, and 17 : 3. ^t 2 John, 9 : 10, 11 ; 1 Cor. 16 : 22 ; Gal. 1 : 6, 7, 8.

CHAP. XI.

OF JUSTIFICATION.

I.

THOSE whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth,^a not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous, not for any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone; nor by imputing Faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness, but by imputing Christ's active obedience to the whole law, and passive obedience in his sufferings and death, for their whole and sole righteousness,^b they receiving and resting on him and his righteousness by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God.^c

^a Rom. 8 : 30, and 3 : 24. ^b Rom. 4 : 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 19, 21 ; Rom. 3 : 22, 24, 25, 27, 28 ; Tit. 3 : 5, 7 ; Eph. 1 : 7 ; Jer. 23 : 6 ; 1 Cor. 2 : 30, 31 ; Rom. 5 : 17, 18, 19. ^c Acts, 10 : 44 ; Gal. 2 : 16 ; Phil. 3 : 9 ; Acts 13 : 38, 39 ; Eph. 2 : 7, 8.

II.

Faith thus receiving and resting on Christ and his righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification ;^d yet it is not alone in the person jus-

tified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead Faith, but worketh by love.^e

^d John, 1 : 12 ; Rom. 3 : 20, and 5 : 1. ^e Jam. 2 : 17, 22, 26 ; Gal. 5 : 6.

III.

Christ by his obedience and death did fully discharge the debt of all those that are justified, and did by the sacrifice of himself in the blood of his Cross, undergoing in their stead the penalty due unto them, make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to God's justice in their behalf : ^f Yet inasmuch as he was given by the Father for them, ^g and his obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead, ^h and both freely, not for any thing in them, their justification is only of free grace, ⁱ that both the exact justice and and rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners. ^k

^f Rom. 5 : 8, 9, 10, 19 ; 1 Tim. 2 : 5, 6 ; Heb. 10 : 10, 14 ; Dan. 9 : 24, 26 ; Isa. 53 : 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12. ^g Rom. 8 : 32. ^h 2 Cor. 5 : 21 ; Matt. 3 : 17 ; Eph. 5 : 2. ⁱ Rom, 3 : 24 ; Eph. 1 : 7. ^k Rom. 3 : 26 ; Eph. 2 : 7.

IV.

God did from all eternity agree to justify all the elect, ^l and Christ did in the fullness of time die for their sins, and rise again for their justification : ^m nevertheless they are not justified personally until the Holy Spirit doth, in due time, actually apply Christ unto them. ⁿ

^l Gal. 3 : 8 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 2, 19, 20 ; Rom. 8 : 30. ^m Gal. 4 : 4 ; 1 Tim. 2 : 6 ; Rom. 4 : 25. ⁿ Col. 1 : 21, 22 ; Gal. 2 : 16 ; Tit. 3 : 4, 5, 6, 7.

V.

God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified ;^o and although they can never fall from that state of justification,^p yet they may by their sins fall under God's fatherly displeasure : and in that condition they have not usually the light of his countenance restored unto them, until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.^q

^o Matt. 6 : 12 ; 1 John 1 : 7, 9, and 2 : 1, 2. ^p Luke 12 : 32 ; John 10 : 28 ; Heb. 10 : 14. ^q Psal. 89 : 31, 32, 33, and 51 : 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 32 : 5 ; Matt. 26 : 75 ; 1 Cor. 11 : 30, 31, 32 ; Luke. 1 : 20.

VI.

The justification of believers under the Old Testament, was, in all these respects, one and the same with the justification of believers under the New Testament.^r

^r Gal. 3 : 8, 9, 13, 14 ; Rom. 4 : 22, 23, 24 ; Heb. 13 : 8.

 CHAP. XII.

OF ADOPTION.

ALL those that are justified, God vouchsafeth in, and for his only Son Jesus Christ, to make

partakers of the grace of adoption,^a by which they are taken into the number, and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God,^b have his name put upon them,^c receive the spirit of adoption,^d have access to the throne of grace with boldness,^e are enabled to cry *Abba, Father,*^f are pitied,^g protected,^h provided for,ⁱ and chastened by him as by a father,^k yet never cast off,^l but sealed to the day of redemption,^m and inherit the promisesⁿ as heirs of everlasting salvation.^o

^a Eph. 1 : 5. ^b Gal. 4 : 4, 5 ; Rom. 8 : 17 ; John, 1 : 12. ^c Jer. 14 : 9 ; 2 Cor. 6 : 18 ; Rev. 3 : 12. ^d Rom. 8 : 15. ^e Eph. 3 : 12 ; Rom. 5 : 2. ^f Gal. 4 : 6. ^g Psal. 103 : 13. ^h Prov. 24 : 26. ⁱ Matt. 6 : 30, 32 ; 1 Pet. 5 : 7. ^k Heb. 12 : 6. ^l Lam. 3 : 3. ^m Eph. 4 : 30. ⁿ Heb. 6 : 12. ^o 1 Pet. 1 : 3, 4 ; Heb. 1 : 14.

CHAP. XIII.

OF SANCTIFICATION.

I.

THEY that are effectually called and regenerated, being united to Christ, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them, through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection,^a are also further sanctified really and personally through the same virtue by his word and spirit dwelling in them,^b the dominion of the whole

body of sin is destroyed, ^c and the several lusts thereof are more and more weakened and mortified, ^d and they more and more quickened and strengthened in all saving graces, ^e to the practice of all true holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. ^f

^a 1 Cor. 6 : 11 ; Acts. 20 : 32 ; Phil. 3 : 10 ; Rom. 6 : 5, 6. ^b John, 17 : 17 ; Eph. 5 : 26 ; 2 Thess. 2 : 13. ^c Rom. 6 : 6, 14. ^d Gal. 5 : 24 ; Rom. 8 : 13. ^e Col. 1 : 11 ; Eph. 3 : 16, 17, 18, 19. ^f 2 Cor. 7 : 1 ; Heb. 12 : 14.

II.

This sanctification is throughout in the whole man, ^g yet imperfect in this life, there abides still some remnants of corruption in every part, ^h whence arises a continual and irreconcilable war, the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. ⁱ

^g 1 Thes. 5 : 23. ^h 1 John. 1 : 10 ; Rom. 7 : 18, 23 ; Phil. 3 : 12. ⁱ Gal. 5 : 17 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 11.

III.

In which war, although the remaining corruption for a time may much prevail, ^k yet through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying spirit of Christ, the regenerate part doth overcome, ^l and so the saints grow in grace, ^m perfecting holiness in the fear of God. ⁿ

^k Rom. 7 : 23. ^l Rom. 6 : 14 ; 1 John. 5 : 14 ; Eph. 4 ; 15, 16. ^m 2 Pet. 3 : 18. ⁿ 2 Cor. 3 : 18 ; 2 Cor. 7 : 1.

CHAP. XIV.

OF SAVING FAITH.

I.

THE grace of Faith whereby the elect are enabled to believe the saving of their souls,^a is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts,^b and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the word;^c by which also, and by the administration of the seals, prayer, and other means, it is increased and strengthened.^d

^a Heb. 10 : 39. ^b 2 Cor. 4 : 13 ; Eph. 1 : 17, 18, 19, and 2 : 8. ^c Rom. 10 : 14, 17 ; Acts, 20 : 32 ; Rom. 4 : 11 ; Luke, 17 : 5 ; Rom. 1 : 16, 17. ^d 1 Pet. 2 : 2.

II.

By this Faith, a Christian believeth to be true whatsoever is revealed in the word, for the authority of God himself speaketh therein,^e and acteth differently upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth, yielding obedience to the commands,^f trembling at the threatenings,^g and embracing the promises of God for this life, and that which is to come.^h But the principal acts of saving faith are, accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone, for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace.ⁱ

^e John, 4 : 42 ; 1 Thes. 2 : 13 ; 1 John, 5 : 10 ; Acts, 24 : 14. ^f Rom. 16 : 26. ^g Isa. 66 : 2. ^h Heb. 11 : 13 ; 1 Tim. 4 : 8. ⁱ John, 1 : 12 ; Acts, 16 : 31 ; Gal. 2 : 20 ; Acts, 15 : 11.

III.

This Faith, although it be different in degrees, and may be weak or strong,^k yet it is in the least degree of it different in the kind or nature of it, as all other saving grace, from the faith and common grace of temporary believers;^l and, therefore, though it may be many times assailed and weakened, yet it gets the victory,^m growing up in many to the attainment of a full assurance through Christ,ⁿ who is both the author and finisher of our faith.^o

^k Heb. 5 : 13, 14 : Rom. 4 : 19, 20 : Matt. 6 : 30, and 8 : 10. ^l Job, 8 : 13 ; 1 John, 3 : 9. ^m Luke, 22 : 31, 32 ; Eph. 6 : 16 ; 1 John, 5 : 4, 5. ⁿ Heb. 6 : 11, 12 and 10 : 22 ; Col. 2 : 2. ^o Heb. 12 : 2.

CHAP. XV.

OF REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE AND SALVATION.

I.

SUCH of the elect as are converted at riper years, having sometime lived in the state of nature, and therein served divers lusts and pleas-

ures,^a God in their effectual calling giveth them repentance unto life.^b

^a Eph. 2 : 1, 2, 3 ; Tit. 3 : 3, 4, 5 ; 1 Pet. 4 : 3. ^b Rom. 8 : 30 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 9 ; Acts, 11 : 18.

II.

Whereas there is none that doeth good and sinneth not,^c and the best of men may through the power and deceitfulness of their corruptions dwelling in them,^d with the prevalency of temptation,^e fall into great sins and provocations ;^f God hath in the covenant of grace mercifully provided that believers so sinning and falling, be renewed through repentance unto salvation.^g

^c 1 Kings, 8 : 46 ; Eccl. 7 : 20 ; Jam. 3 : 2. ^d Psal. 65 : 3, and 40 : 12 ; Rom. 7 : 21, 23 ; Jer. 17 : 9 ; Heb. 3 : 13. ^e Matt. 6 : 13 ; Luke, 22 : 31. ^f 2 Sam. 11 : 27 ; Luke, 22 : 57, 58, 60. ^g Luke, 22 : 32, 61, 62 ; 1 John, 1 : 9.

III.

This saving repentance is an evangelical grace,^h whereby a person being by the Holy Ghost made sensible of the manifold evils of his sin,ⁱ doth by faith in Christ humble himself for it, with godly sorrow, detestations of it, and self-aborrency,^k praying for pardon and strength of grace,^l with a purpose and endeavor by supplies of the Spirit, to walk before God unto all well-pleasing in all things.^m

^h Zech. 12 : 10 ; Acts, 11 : 18. ⁱ John, 16 : 7, 8, 9 ; Ezk. 18 : 30, 31, and 36 : 31 ; Psal. 51 : 4 ; 1 John, 3 : 4.

^k Zech. 12 : 10 ; Jer. 31 : 18, 19 ; Joel, 2 : 12, 13 ; Isa. 30 : 22 ; Amos, 5 : 15 ; Psal. 119 : 128 ; Ezek. 6 : 9 ; 2 Cor. 7 : 11. ^l Psal. 51, per tot. ^m Psal. 119 : 6, 9, 106 ; 2 Kings, 23 : 25 ; Col. 1 : 10.

IV.

As repentance is to be continued through the whole course of our lives,ⁿ upon the account of the body of death, and the motions thereof ;^o so it is every man's duty to repent of his particular known sins particularly.^p

ⁿ Matt. 6 : 11, 12 ; Psal. 51 : 17. ^o Rom. 7 : 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24 ; Gal. 5 : 17. ^p Psal. 19 : 13, and 18 : 23, and 51 : 4 ; Luke, 19 : 8 ; 1 Tim. 1 : 13, 15.

V.

Such is the provision which God hath made through Christ in the covenant of grace, for the preservation of believers unto salvation,^q that although there is no sin so small, but it deserves damnation ;^r yet there is no sin so great that it shall bring damnation on them who truly repent ;^s which makes the constant preaching of repentance necessary.^t

^q 1 Pet. 1 : 5. ^r Rom. 6 : 23, and 5 : 12 ; Matt. 12 : 36. ^s Isa. 55 : 7 ; Rom. 8 : 1 ; Isa. 1 : 16, 18. ^t Mark, 1 : 15 ; Acts, 20 : 21.

CHAP. XVI.

OF GOOD WORKS.

I.

Good works are only such as God hath commanded in his holy word,^a and not such as without the warrant thereof are devised by men out of blind zeal, or upon any pretence of good intentions.^b

^a Mic. 6 : 8 ; Rom. 12 : 2 ; Heb. 13 : 21. ^b Matt. 15 : 9 ; Isa. 29 : 13 ; Rom. 10 : 2 ; Job, 16 : 2 ; 1 Sam. 15 : 21, 22, 23 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 8.

II.

These good works done in obedience to God's commandments, are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith,^c and by them believers manifest their thankfulness,^d strengthen their assurance,^e edify their brethren,^f adorn the profession of the Gospel,^g stop the mouths of the adversaries,^h and glorify God,ⁱ whose workmanship they are created in Christ Jesus thereunto,^k that having their fruit unto holiness they may have the end eternal life.^l

^c Jam. 2 : 18, 22. ^d Psal. 116 : 12, 13 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 9. ^e 1 John, 2 : 3, 5 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 5, 6, 7 ; 2 : 9, 10. ^f 2 Cor. 9 : 2 ; Matt. 5 : 16. ^g Tit. 2 : 5, 9, 10, 11, 12 ; 1 Tim. 6 : 1. ^h 1 Pet. 2 : 15. ⁱ 1 Pet. 2 : 12 ; Phil. 1 : 11 ; John, 15 : 8. ^k Eph. 2 : 10. ^l Rom. 6 : 22.

III.

Their ability to do good works is not all of themselves, but wholly from the Spirit of Christ:^m And that they may be enabled thereunto, besides the graces they have already received, there is required an actual influence of the same Holy Spirit to work in them to will and to do of his good pleasure; ⁿ yet are they not hereupon to grow negligent, as if they were not bound to perform any duty unless upon a special motion of the Spirit, but they ought to be diligent in stirring up the grace of God that is in them.^o

^m John, 15 : 4, 6 ; Ezek. 36 : 26, 27. ⁿ Phil. 2 : 13, and 4 : 13 ; 2 Cor. 3 : 5. ^o Phil. 2 : 12 ; Heb. 6 : 11, 12 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 3, 5, 10, 11 ; Isa. 64 : 7 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 6 ; Acts, 26 : 6, 7 ; Jude, 20, 21.

IV.

They who in their obedience attain to the greatest height which is possible in this life, are so far from being able to supererogate, and to do more than God requires, as that they fall short of much, which in duty they are bound to do.^p

^p Luke, 17 : 10 ; Neh. 13 : 22 ; Job, 9 : 2, 3 ; Gal. 5 ; 17.

V.

We cannot by our best works merit pardon of sin, or eternal life at the hand of God, by reason of the great disproportion that is between them, and the glory to come ; and the infinite distance that is between us and God, whom by

them we can neither profit nor satisfy for the debt of our former sins;^q but when we have done all we can, we have done but our duty, and are unprofitable servants:^r And because as they are good, they proceed from his Spirit,^s and as they are wrought by us, they are defiled and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection, that they cannot endure the severity of God's judgments.^t

^q Rom. 3 : 20, and 4 : 2, 4, 6 ; Eph. 2 : 8, 9 ; Tit. 3 : 5, 6, 7 ; Rom. 8 : 18 ; Psal. 16 : 2 ; Job, 22 : 23, and 35 : 7, 8. ^r Luke, 17 : 10. ^s Gal. 5 : 22, 23. ^t Isa. 64 : 6 ; Gal. 5 : 17 ; Rom. 7 : 15 18 ; Psal. 143 : 2, and 130 : 3.

VI.

Yet notwithstanding the persons of believers being accepted through Christ, their good works also are accepted in him,^u not as though they were in this life wholly unblamable and un-reprovable in God's sight,^w but that he looking upon them in his Son, is pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere, although accompanied with many weaknesses and imperfections.^x

^u Eph. 1 : 6 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 5 ; Exod. 28 : 38 ; Gen. 4 : 4 ; Heb. 11 : 4. ^w Job, 9 : 20 ; Psal. 142 : 2 ; Phil. 3 : 12. ^x Heb. 13 : 20, 21 ; 2 Cor. 8 : 12 ; Heb. 6 : 10 ; Matt. 25 : 21, 28.

VII.

Works done by unregenerate men, although for the matter of them they may be things which

God commands, and of good use both to themselves and to others :^y yet because they proceed not from an heart purified by faith,^z nor are done in a right manner, according to the word,^a nor to a right end, the glory of God ;^b they are therefore sinful, and cannot please God, nor make a man meet to receive grace from God ;^c yet their neglect of them is more sinful and displeasing to God.^d

^y 2 Kings, 10 : 30, 31 : 1 Kings, 21 : 27, 29 ; Phil. 1 : 15, 16, 18. ^z Gen. 4 : 5 ; Heb. 11 : 4, 6. ^a 1 Cor. 13 : 3 ; Isa. 1 : 12. ^b Matt. 6 : 2, 5, 16. ^c Hag. 2 : 14 ; Tit. 1 : 15 ; Amos, 5 : 21, 22 ; Hos. 1 : 4 ; Rom. 9 : 16 ; Tit. 3 : 5. ^d Psal. 14 : 4, and 36 : 3 ; Job, 21 : 14, 15 ; Matt. 25 : 41, 42, 43, 45 ; Matt. 23 : 23.

CHAP. XVII.

OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS.

I.

THEY whom God hath accepted in his Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by his Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from a state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end and be eternally saved.^a

^a Phil. 1 : 6 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 10 ; John, 10 : 28, 29 ; 1 John, 3 : 9 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 5, 9.

II.

This perseverance of the saints depends not upon their own free will, but upon the immutability of the decree of election, from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father^b upon the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ,^c and union with him,^d the oath of God,^e the abiding of his Spirit, and the seed of God within them,^f and the nature of the covenant of grace,^g from all which ariseth also the certainty and infallibility thereof.^h

^b 2 Tim. 2 : 18, 19 ; Jer. 31 ; 33. ^c Heb. 10 : 10, 14, and 13 : 20, 21, and 9 : 12, 13, 14, 15 ; Rom. 8 : 33, to end ; John, 17 : 11, 24 ; Luke, 22 : 32 ; Heb. 7 : 25. ^d John, 17 : 21. ^e Hebrews, 6 : 17, 18 : Psal. 89 : 35, 36 . ^f John, 14 : 16, 17 ; 1 John, 2 : 27, and 3 : 9. ^g Jer. 32 : 40. ^h John, 10 : 28 ; 2 Thes. 3 : 3 ; 1 John, 2 : 19.

III.

And though they may through the temptation of Satan, and of the world, the prevalency of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of the means of their preservation, fall into grievous sins,ⁱ and for a time continue therein,^k whereby they incur God's displeasure,^l and grieve his Holy Spirit,^m come to have their graces and comforts impaired,ⁿ have their hearts hardened,^o and their consciences wounded,^p hurt and scandalize others,^q and bring temporal judgments upon themselves,^r yet they are and shall be kept by the power of God through faith, unto salvation.^s

l Matt. 26 : 70, 72 ; 74. k Psal. 51, title, and verse 14.
 m Isa. 64 : 5, 7, 9 ; 2 Sam. 11 : 27. n Eph. 4 : 30. o Psal.
 51 : 8, 10, 12 ; Rev. 2 : 4 ; Cant. 5 : 2, 3, 4, 6. p Isa. 63 :
 17 ; Mark, 6 : 52, and 16 : 14. q Psal. 32 : 3, 4, and 51 :
 8. r 2 Sam. 12 : 14. s Psal. 89 : 31, 32 ; 1 Cor. 11 : 30,
 31, 32. t 1 Pet. 1 : 5 ; 1 Thes. 5 : 23.

CHAP. XVIII.

OF THE ASSURANCE OF GRACE AND SALVATION.

I.

ALTHOUGH temporary believers, and other unregenerate men may vainly deceive themselves with false hopes and carnal presumptions of being in the favor of God, and state of salvation,^a which hope of theirs' shall perish ;^b yet such as truly believe in the Lord Jesus, and love him in sincerity, endeavoring to walk in all good conscience before him may in this life be certainly assured that they are in the state of grace,^c and may rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, which hope shall never make them ashamed.^d

^a Job, 8 : 13, 14 ; Mic. 3 : 11 ; Deut, 29 : 19 ; John, 8 ; 41. ^b Matt. 7 : 22, 23. ^c 1 John, 2 : 3, and 3 : 14, 18, 19, 21, 24, and 5 : 13. ^d Rom. 5 : 2, 5.

II.

This certainty is not a bare conjectural and probable persuasion, grounded upon a fallible

hope; ^e but an infallible assurance of faith, founded on the blood and righteousness of Christ revealed in the Gospel, ^f and also upon the inward evidences of those graces, unto which promises are made, ^g and on the immediate witness of the Spirit, testifying our adoption, ^h and as the fruit thereof, leaving the heart more humble and holy. ⁱ

^e Heb. 6 : 11, 19. ^f Heb. 10 : 19, 20 ; Rom. 3 : 22. ^g 2 Pet. 1 : 4, 5, 10, 11 ; 1 John, 2 : 3, and 3 : 14 ; 2 Cor. 1 : 12. ^h Rom. 8 : 15, 16. ⁱ Psal. 51 . 12, 17 ; 2 Cor. 7 : 1.

III.

This infallible assurance doth not so belong to the essence of faith, but that a true believer may wait long and conflict with many difficulties before he be partaker of it ; ^k yet being enabled by the Spirit to know the things which are freely given him of God, he may without extraordinary revelation, in the right use of ordinary means, attain thereunto. ^l And therefore it is the duty of every one, to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure, ^m that thereby his heart may be enlarged in peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, in love and thankfulness to God, and in strength and cheerfulness in the duties of obedience, the proper fruits of this assurance ; ⁿ so far is it from inclining men to looseness. ^o

^k 1 John, 5 : 13 ; Isa. 50 : 10 ; Matt. 9 : 24 ; Psal. 88, per tot. and 77 : 1 to 12. ^l 1 Cor. 2 : 1, 2 ; 1 John, 4 : 13 ; Heb. 6 : 11, 12 ; Eph. 3 : 17, 18, 19. ^m 2 Pet. 2 : 10. ⁿ Rom.

5 : 1, 2, 5, and 14 : 7, and 15 : 3 ; Eph. 1 : 3, 4 ; Psal. 4 .
6, 7, and 119 : 32. ° 1 John, 3 : 2, 3 ; Psal. 1 : 3, 4 ; 1
John, 2 : 1, 2 ; Rom. 6 : 12 ; Tit. 2 : 11, 12, 14 ; 2 Cor.
7 : 1 ; Rom. 8 : 1, 12 ; 1 John, 1 : 6, 7.

IV.

True believers may have the assurance of their salvation divers ways shaken, diminished, and intermitted ; as by negligence in preserving of it, by falling into some special sin, which woundeth the conscience and grieveth the Spirit by some sudden or vehement temptation, by God's withdrawing the light of his countenance, suffering even such as fear him to walk in darkness and to have no light ;^p yet are they neither utterly destitute of that seed of God and life of faith, that love of Christ and the brethren, that sincerity of the heart and conscience of duty, out of which, by the operation of the Spirit, this assurance may in due time be revived,^q and by the which, in the mean time, they are supported from utter despair.^r

p Cant. 5 : 2, 3, 6 ; Psal. 51 : 8, 12, 14 ; Eph. 4 : 30, 31 ; Psal. 77 : 1 to 10 ; Matt. 26 : 69, 70, 71, 72 ; Psal. 31 : 22, and 88, per tot. ; Isa. 51 : 10. q 1 John, 3 : 9 ; Luke, 22 : 32 ; Job, 13 : 15 ; Psal. 73 : 15, and 51 : 8, 12 ; Isa. 50 : 10. r Mic. 7 : 8, 9 ; Jer. 32 : 40 ; Isa. 54 : 7, 8, 9, 10 ; Psal. 22 : 1, and 88, per tot.

CHAP. XIX.

OF THE LAW OF GOD.

I.

God gave to Adam a law of universal obedience written in his heart, and a particular precept of not eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, as a covenant of works; by which he bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience; promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of it, and endued him with power and ability to keep it.^a

^a Gen. 1 : 26, 27, and 2 : 17; Rom. 2 : 14, 15; and 10 : 5, and 5 : 12, 19; Gal. 3 : 10, 12; Eccl. 7 : 29; Job, 28 : 28.

II.

This law, so written in the heart, continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness after the fall of man, and was delivered by God on Mount Sinai in ten commandments, and written in two tables; ^b the four first commandments, containing our duty towards God, and the other six our duty to man.^c

^b Jam. 1 : 25, and 2 : 8, 10, 11, 12; Rom. 13 : 8, 9; Deut. 5 : 3, and 10 : 4; Exod. 34 : 1. ^c Matt. 22 : 37, 38, 39, 40.

III.

Besides this law, commonly called moral, God was pleased to give the people of Israel, as a

church under age, ceremonial laws, containing several typical ordinances, partly of worshipping, prefiguring Christ, his graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits,^d and partly holding forth divers instructions of moral duties.^e All which ceremonial laws, being appointed only to the time of reformation, are by Jesus Christ, the true Messiah and only Lawgiver, who was furnished with power from the Father for that end, abrogated and taken away.^f

^d Heb. 9 : and 10 : 1. Gal. 4 : 1, 2, 3 ; Col. 2 : 17. ^e 1 Cor. 5 : 7 ; 2 Cor. 6 : 17 ; Jude, 23. ^f Heb. 9 : 10, 11 ; Jam. 4 : 12 ; Heb. 7 : 12 ; Col. 2 : 14, 16, 17 ; Dan. 9 : 27 ; Eph. 2 : 15, 16.

IV.

To them also he gave sundry judicial laws, which expired together with the state of that people, not obliging any now by virtue of that institution, their general equity only being still of moral use.^g

^g Exod. 21, and 22 : 1 to 29 ; Gen. 49 : 10, with 1 Pet. 2 : 13, 14 ; Matt. 5 : 17, with 38, 39 ; 1 Cor. 9 : 8, 9, 10.

V.

The moral law doth forever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof ;^h and that not only in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the authority of God the Creator, who gave it.ⁱ Nei-

ther doth Christ in the Gospel any way dissolve, but much strengthen, this obligation.^k

^h Rom. 13 : 8, 9, 10 ; Eph. 6 : 6, 1, 2 ; 1 John, 2 : 3, 4, 7, 8. ⁱ Jam. 2 : 10, 11. ^k Matt. 5 : 17, 18, 19 ; Jam. 2 : 8.

VI.

Although true believers be not under the law as a covenant of works, to be thereby justified or condemned ;^l yet it is of great use to them, as well as to others ; in that, as a rule of life, informing them of the will of God and their duty, and directs and binds them to walk accordingly ;^m discovering also the sinful pollutions of their nature, hearts, and lives ;ⁿ so as, examining themselves thereby, they may come to further conviction of, humiliation for, and hatred against sin,^o together with a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ, and the perfection of his obedience.^p It is likewise of use to the regenerate, to restrain their corruptions, in that it forbids sin,^q and the threatenings of it serve to show what even their sins deserve, and what afflictions in this life they may expect from them, although freed from the curse thereof, threatened in the law.^r The promises of it, in like manner, show them God's approbation of obedience, and what blessings they may expect upon the performance thereof,^s although not as due to them by the law, as a covenant of works,^t so as a man's doing good, and refraining from evil, because the law encourageth to

the one, and deterreth from the other, is no evidence of his being under the law, and not under grace. ^u

^l Rom. 6 : 14 ; Gal. 2 : 16, and 3 : 13, and 4 : 4, 5 ; Acts, 13 : 39 ; Rom. 8 : 1. ^m Rom. 7 : 12, 22, 25 ; Psal. 119 : 4, 5, 6 ; 1 Cor. 7 : 19 ; Gal. 5 : 14, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. ⁿ Rom. 7 : 7, and 3 : 20. ^o Jam. 1 : 23, 24, 25 ; Rom. 7 : 9, 14, 24. ^p Gal. 3 : 24 ; Rom. 7 : 24, 25, and 8 : 3, 4. ^q Jam. 2 : 11 ; Psal. 119 : 101, 104, 128. ^r Ezra, 9 : 13, 14 ; Psal. 89 : 30 to 35. ^s Lev. 26 : 3 to 14, with 2 Cor. 6 : 16 ; Eph. 6 : 2, 3 ; Psal. 37 : 11 ; Matt. 5 : 5 ; Psal. 19 : 11. ^t Gal. 2 : 16 ; Luke, 17 : 10. ^u Rom. 6 : 12, 14 ; 1 Pet. 3 : 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, with Psal. 34 : 12 to 16 ; Heb. 12 : 28, 29.

VII.

Neither are the fore-mentioned uses of the law, contrary to the grace of the Gospel, but do sweetly comply with it,^w the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely and cheerfully, which the will of God, revealed in the law, required to be done.^x

^w Gal. 3 : 21. ^x Ezek. 36 : 26, 27 ; Heb 8 : 10 ; Jer. 31 : 33.

CHAP. XX.

OF THE GOSPEL, AND OF THE EXTENT OF THE GRACES THEREOF.

I.

THE covenant of works being broken by sin, and made unprofitable unto life,^a God was

pleased to give unto the elect the promise of Christ, the seed of the woman,^b as the means of calling them, and begetting in them faith and repentance.^c In this promise, the Gospel, as to the substance of it, was revealed, and was therein effectual for the conversion and salvation of sinners.^d

^a Rom. 8 : 3 ; Gal. 3 : 12. ^b Gen. 3 : 15 ; Gal. 4 : 4, 5 ; Rev. 13 : 3. ^c 1 Cor. 1 : 23, 24, 26 ; Jam. 1 : 18 ; Rom. 10 : 8 ; Acts, 11 : 15, 18. ^d 1 Cor. 2 : 2.

II.

The promise of Christ, and salvation by him is revealed only in and by the word of God ;^e neither do the works of creation or Providence, with the light of nature, make discovery of Christ, or of grace by him, so much as in a general or obscure way ;^f much less that man destitute of the revelation of him by the promise, or Gospel, should be enabled thereby to attain saving faith or repentance.^g

^e Matt. 11 : 27 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 10 ; ^f Rom. 1 : 19, 20 ; Eph. 2 : 12 ; Rom. 16 : 25, 26 ; Eph. 3 : 9. ^g 1 Cor. 1 : 21 ; Rom. 10 : 14, 15 ; Prov. 29 : 18.

III.

The Revelation of the Gospel unto sinners, made at divers times, and by sundry parts, with the addition of promises and precepts for the obedience required therein, as to the nations and persons to whom it is granted, is merely of the sovereign will and good pleasure of God,^h not

being annexed by virtue of any promise to the due improvement of man's natural abilities, by virtue of common light received without it, which none ever did make, or can so do.ⁱ And therefore in all ages, the preaching of the Gospel hath been granted unto persons and nations, as to the extent or straitening of it, in great variety, according to the counsel of the will of God.^k

^h Heb. 1 : 1, 2 ; Deut. 7 : 7, 8 ; Psal. 147 : 19, 20 ; Matt 21 : 43, and 11 : 25, 26. ⁱ John, 1 : 13, and 3 : 6 ; Rom. 9 : 16 ; Phil. 2 : 13 ; John, 15 : 5 ; 1 Cor. 2 : 14 ; Rom. 8 : 7.
^k Amos, 3 : 2 ; Matt. 28 : 19, and 21 : 43 ; Eph. 1 : 11.

IV.

Although the Gospel be the only outward means of revealing Christ and saving grace, and is as such, abundantly sufficient thereunto ; yet that men who are dead in trespasses, may be born again, quickened or regenerated, there is moreover necessary, an effectual, irresistible work of the Holy Ghost upon the whole soul, for the producing in them a new spiritual life, without which no other means are sufficient for their conversion unto God.^l

^l Eph. 2 : 1, 5 ; Tit. 3 : 5 ; John, 16 : 7 to 12 ; Acts, 16 : 14 ; Eph. 1 : 19, 20 ; 1 Thes. 5 : 23 ; John, 3 : 6 ; Gal. 2 : 8 ; 1 Cor. 3 : 6, 7.

CHAP. XXI.

OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY, AND LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE.

I.

THE liberty which Christ hath purchased for believers under the Gospel, consists in their freedom from the guilt of sin, the condemning wrath of God, the rigor and curse of the law;^a and in their being delivered from this present evil world, bondage to Satan, and dominion of sin;^b from the evil of afflictions, the fear and sting of death, the victory of the grave, and everlasting damnation;^c as also in their free access to God,^d and their yielding obedience unto him, not out of slavish fear, but a child-like love and willing mind:^e All which were common also to believers under the law, for the substance of them;^f but under the New Testament, the liberty of Christians is further enlarged in their freedom from the yoke of the ceremonial law, the whole legal administration of the covenant of grace, to which the Jewish church was subjected,^g and in greater access to the throne of grace,^h and in fuller communications of the free Spirit of God, than believers under the law did ordinarily partake of.^a

^a Tit. 2 : 14 ; 1 Thes. 1 : 10 ; Gal. 3 : 13. ^b Gal. 1 : 4 ; Col. 1 : 13 ; Acts, 26 : 18 ; Rom. 6 : 14. ^c Rom. 8 : 28 ; Psal. 119 : 71 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 54 to 57 ; Rom. 6 : 1. ^d Rom.

5 : 1, 2. * Rom. 8 : 14, 15 ; 1 John, 4 : 18. † Gal. 3 : 13, 14. ‡ Gal. 4 : 1 to 7, and 5 : 1 ; Acts, 15 : 10, 11. † Heb. 4 : 14, 16, and 10 : 19 to 22. † John, 7 : 38, 39 ; 2 Cor. 13 : 17, 18.

II.

God alone is Lord of the conscience,^k and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are in any thing contrary to his word, or not contained in it ;^l so that to believe such doctrines, or to obey such commands out of conscience, is to betray true liberty of conscience ;^m and the requiring of an implicit faith, and an absolute and blind obedience, is to destroy liberty of conscience, and reason also.ⁿ

^k Jam. 4 : 12 ; Rom. 14 : 4. † Acts, 4 : 19, and 5 : 29 ; 1 Cor. 7 : 23 ; Matt. 23 : 8, 9, 10 ; 2 Cor. 1 : 24 ; Matt. 15 : 9 ; ^m Col. 2 : 10, 22, 23 ; Gal. 1 : 10, and 2 : 2, 4, 5, and 5 : 1. ⁿ Rom. 10 : 11, and 14 : 23 ; Isa. 8 : 20 ; Acts, 17 : 11 ; John, 4 : 22 ; Hosea, 5 : 11 ; Jer. 8 : 9.

III.

They who upon pretence of Christian liberty do practice any sin, or cherish any lust, as they do thereby pervert the main design of the grace of the Gospel to their own destruction ; so they wholly destroy the end of Christian liberty ; which is that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.^o

^o Gal. 5 : 13 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 16 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 19 ; John, 8 : 34
Luke, 1 : 74 75.

CHAP. XXII.

OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP, AND OF THE SABBATH-DAY.

I.

THE light of nature showeth that there is a God, who hath lordship and sovereignty over all, is just, good, and doth good unto all, and is therefore to be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served with all the heart and all the soul, and with all the might :^a But the acceptable way of worshipping the true God, is instituted by himself, and so limited by his own revealed will, that he may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representations, or any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scriptures.^b

^a Rom. 1 : 20 ; Acts, 17 : 24 ; Psal. 119 : 64 ; Jer. 10 : 7 ; Psal. 31 : 23, and 18 : 3 ; Rom. 10 : 12 ; Psal. 62 : 8 ; Josh. 24 : 14 ; Mark, 12 : 33. ^b Deut. 12 : 32 ; Matt. 15 : 9 ; Acts, 17 : 25 ; Matt. 4 : 9, 10 ; Deut. 4 : 15 to 20 ; Exod. 20 : 4, 5 ; Col. 2 : 23.

II.

Religious worship is to be given to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and to him alone ;^c not to Angels, Saints, or any other creatures ;^d and since the fall, not without a Mediator, nor in the mediation of any other but of Christ alone.^e

^c Matt. 4 : 10 ; John, 5 : 23, and 2 Cor. 13 : 14. ^d Col. 2 : 18 ; Rev. 19 : 10 ; Rom. 1 : 25. ^e John, 14 : 6 ; 1 Tim. 2 : 5 ; Eph. 2 : 18 ; Col. 3 : 17.

III.

Prayer with thanksgiving, being one special part of natural worship,^f is by God required of all men ;^g but that it may be accepted it is to be made in the name of the Son,^h by the help of the Spirit,ⁱ according to his will,^k with understanding, reverence, humility, fervency, faith, love, and perseverance :^l and when with others in a known tongue.^m

^f Phil. 4 : 6. ^g Psal. 65 : 2. ^h John, 14 : 13, 14 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 5. ⁱ Rom. 8 : 26. ^k 1 John, 5 : 14. ^l Psal. 47 : 7 ; Eccl. 5 : 1, 2 ; Heb. 12 : 28 ; Gen. 18 : 27 ; James, 5 : 10 ; Mark, 11 : 24 ; Matt. 6 : 12, 14, 15 ; Col. 4 : 2 ; Eph. 6 : 18. ^m 1 Cor. 14 : 14.

IV.

Prayer is to be made for things lawful,ⁿ and for all sorts of men living, or that shall live hereafter,^o but not for the dead,^p nor for those of whom it may be known that they have sinned the sin unto death.^q

ⁿ 1 John, 5 : 14. ^o 1 Tim. 2 : 1, 2 ; John. 17 : 20 ; 2 Sam. 7 : 29 ; Ruth, 4 : 12. ^p 2 Sam. 12 : 21, 22, 23, with Luke, 16 : 25, 26 ; Rev. 14 : 13. ^q 1 John, 5 : 16.

V.

The reading of the Scriptures,^r preaching,^s and hearing the word of God,^t singing of Psalms,^u as also the administration of Bap

tism and the Lord's Supper, are all parts of religious worship of God, to be performed in obedience unto God, with understanding, faith, reverence, and godly fear; ^w solemn humiliations, with fastings, ^x and thanksgiving upon special occasions, ^y are in their several times and seasons to be used in an holy and religious manner. ^z

^r Acts, 15 : 21 ; Rev. 1 : 3. ^s 2 Tim. 4 : 2. ^t Jam. 1 : 21, 22 ; Acts, 10 : 33 ; Matt. 13 : 19 ; Heb. 4 : 2 ; Isaiah, 66 : 2. ^u Col. 3 : 16 ; Eph. 5 : 19 ; James, 5 : 13. ^w Matt. 28 : 19 ; 1 Cor. 11 : 23 to 29 ; Acts, 2 : 41, 42. ^x Joel, 2 : 12 ; Esther, 4 ; 16 ; Mark, 9 : 29 ; 1 Cor. 7 : 5. ^y Psal. 107, per tot. ; Esther, 9 : 22. ^z Heb. 12 : 28.

VI.

Neither prayer, nor any other part of religious worship, is now under the Gospel either tied unto, or made more acceptable by any place in which it is performed, or towards which it is directed. ^a But God is to be worshipped every where, ^b in spirit and in truth, ^c as in private families ^d daily, ^e and in secret each one by himself, ^f so more solemnly in the public assemblies, which are not carelessly nor wilfully to be neglected or forsaken, when God by his word or providence calleth thereunto. ^g

^a John, 4 : 21. ^b Mal. 1 : 11 ; 1 Tim. 2 : 8. ^c John, 4 : 23, 24. ^d Jer. 10 : 25 ; Deut. 6 : 6, 7 ; Job, 1 : 5 ; 2 Sam. 6 : 18, 20 ; 1 Pet. 3 : 7 ; Acts, 10 : 2. ^e Matt. 6 : 11. ^f Matt. 6 : 6 ; Eph. 6 : 18. ^g Isa. 56 : 6, 7 ; Heb. 10 : 25 ; Prov. 1 : 20, 21, 24, and 8 : 34 ; Acts, 13 : 42 ; Luke, 4 : 16. Acts, 8 : 42.

VII.

As it is of the law of nature, that in general, a proportion of time, by God's appointment, be set apart for the worship of God; so by his word in a positive, moral, and perpetual commandment, binding all men in all ages, he hath particularly appointed one day in seven for a Sabbath to be kept holy unto him,^h which from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, was the last day of the week, and from the resurrection of Christ was changed into the first day of the week,ⁱ which in Scripture is called the Lord's day,^k and is to be continued to the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath,^l the observation of the last day of the week being abolished.^m

^h Exod. 20 : 8 to 11 ; Isa. 56 : 2 to 7. ⁱ Gen. 2 : 2, 3 ; 1 Cor. 6 : 1, 2 ; Acts, 20 : 7. ^k Rev. 1 : 10. ^l Exod. 20 : 8, 10, with Matt. 5 : 17, 18. ^m Col. 2 : 16, 17 ; Heb. 4 : 9, 10.

VIII.

This Sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord, when men, after a due preparing of their hearts and ordering their common affairs beforehand, do not only observe an holy rest all the day from their own works, words, and thoughts, about their worldly employments and recreations,ⁿ but also are taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of his worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy.^o

ⁿ Exod. 20 : 8, and 16 : 23 to 30, and 13 : 12 to 18 ; Isa. 58 : 13 ; Neh. 13 : 15 to 23. ^o Isa. 58 : 13 ; Matt. 12 : 1 to 14.

CHAP. XXIII.

OF LAWFUL OATHS AND VOWS.

I.

A LAWFUL oath is a part of religious worship,^a wherein the person swearing in truth, righteousness, and judgment, solemnly calleth God to witness what he asserteth, or promiseth, and to judge him according to the truth or falsehood of what he sweareth.^b

^a Deut. 10 : 20. ^b Jer. 4 : 2 ; Exod. 20 : 7 ; Lev. 19 ; 12 ; 2 Cor. 1 : 23 ; 2 Chron. 6 : 22, 23.

II.

The name of God only is that by which men ought to swear, and therein it is to be used with all holy fear and reverence :^c Therefore to swear vainly or rashly by that glorious and dreadful name, or to swear at all by any other thing, is sinful and to be abhorred :^d yet as in matters of weight and moment an oath is warranted by the word of God under the New Testament as well as under the Old,^e so a lawful

oath being imposed by lawful authority in such matters ought to be taken.^f

^c Deut. 6 : 13. ^d Exod. 20 : 7 ; Jer. 5 : 7 ; Matt. 5 : 34, 35, 36 ; James 5 : 12. ^e Heb. 6 : 16 ; 2 Cor. 1 : 23 ; Isa. 65 : 16. ^f 1 Kings, 8 : 31 ; Neh. 13 : 25 ; Ezra, 10 : 5.

III.

Whosoever taketh an oath warranted by the word of God, ought duly to consider the weightiness of so solemn an act, and therein to avouch, nothing but what he is fully persuaded is the truth :^g neither may any man bind himself by an oath to any thing but what is good and just, and what he believeth so to be, and what he is able and resolved to perform :^h yet it is a sin to refuse an oath touching any thing that is good and just being lawfully imposed by authority.ⁱ

^g Exod. 20 : 7 ; Jer. 4 : 2. ^h Gen. 24 : 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9. ⁱ Num. 5 : 19, 21 ; Neh. 5 : 12 ; Exod. 22 : 11.

IV.

An oath is to be taken in the plain and common sense of words, without equivocation or mental reservation.^k It cannot oblige to sin ; but in any thing not sinful being taken, it binds to performance, although to a man's own hurt ;^l nor is it to be violated, although made to heretics or infidels.^m

^k Jer. 4 : 2 ; Psal. 24 : 4. ^l 1 Sam. 25 : 22, 31, 33, 34 ; Psal. 15 : 4. ^m Ezek. 17 : 16, 18, 19 ; Josh. 9 : 18, 19, with 2 Sam. 21 : 1.

V.

A vow, which is not to be made to any creature, but to God alone, is of the like nature with a promissory oath, and ought to be made with the like religious care, and to be performed with the like faithfulness.¹¹

ⁿ Psal. 76 : 11 ; Jer. 44 : 25, 26 ; Psal. 50 : 14, and 65 : 1 ; Isa. 19 : 21 ; Eccl. 5 : 4, 5, 6 ; Psal. 61 : 8, and 66 : 13, 14.

VI.

Popish monastical vows of perpetual single life, professed poverty, and regular obedience, are so far from being degrees of higher perfection, that they are superstitious and sinful snares, in which no Christian may entangle himself.^o

^o Matt. 19 : 11, 12 ; 1 Cor. 7 : 2, 9 ; Eph. 4 : 28 ; 1 Peter, 4 : 2 ; 1 Cor. 7 : 23.

 CHAP. XXIV.

OF THE CIVIL MAGISTRATE.

I.

God the Supreme Lord and King of all the world, hath ordained civil magistrates to be, under him, over the people for his own glory and the public good ; and to this end hath armed them with the power of the sword, for

the defence and encouragement of them that do good, and for the punishment of evil-doers.^a

^aRom. 13 : 1 to 4 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 13, 14.

II.

It is lawful for Christians to accept and execute the office of a magistrate when called thereunto :^b in the management whereof, as they ought, especially to maintain piety, justice, and peace, according to the wholesome laws of each commonwealth ;^c so, for that end, they may lawfully now, under the New Testament, wage war upon just and necessary occasion.^d

^b Prov. 8 : 15, 16 ; Rom. 13 : 1, 2, 4. ^c Psal. 2 : 10 to 12 ; 1 Tim. 2 : 3 ; Psal. 82 : 3, 4 ; 2 Sam. 23 : 3 ; 1 Peter, 2 : 13. ^d Luke, 3 : 14 ; Rom. 13 : 4 ; Matt. 8 : 9, 10 ; Acts, 10 : 1, 2 ; Rev. 17 : 14, 16.

III.

They who, upon pretence of Christian liberty, shall oppose any lawful power, or the lawful exercise of it, resist the ordinance of God ; and for their publishing of such opinions, or maintaining of such practices as are contrary to the light of nature, or to the known principles of Christianity, whether concerning faith, worship, or conversation ; or to the power of godliness ; or such erroneous opinions or practices, as either in their own nature, or in the manner of publishing or maintaining them, are destructive to the external peace or order which Christ hath established in the church ; they may law-

fully be called to an account, and proceeded against by the censures of the church, and by the power of the civil magistrate : yet in such differences about the doctrines of the Gospel, or ways of the worship of God as may befall men exercising a good conscience, manifesting it in their conversation, and holding the foundation, and duly observing the rules of peace and order, there is no warrant for the magistrate to abridge them of their liberty.

IV.

It is the duty of the people to pray for magistrates, to honor their persons, to pay them tribute and other dues, to obey their lawful commands, and to be subject to their authority for conscience sake. Infidelity, or difference in religion, doth not make void the magistrate's just and legal authority, nor free the people from their due obedience to him, from which ecclesiastical persons are not exempted ; much less hath the Pope any power and jurisdiction over them in their dominions, or over any of their people, and least of all to deprive them of their dominions or lives if he shall judge them to be heretics, or upon any other pretence whatsoever.

1 Tim. 2 : 12 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 17 ; Rom. 13 : 6, 7, and 13 : 5 ; Tit. 3 : 1 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 13, 14, 16 ; Rom. 13 : 1 ; 1 Kings, 2 : 35 ; Acts, 25 : 9, 10, 11 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 1, 10, 11 ; Jude, 5 : 8 to 11 ; 2 Thes. 2 : 4 ; Rev. 13 : 15, 16, 17.

CHAP. XXV.

OF MARRIAGE.

I.

MARRIAGE is to be between one man and one woman : neither is it lawful for any man to have more than one wife, nor for any woman to have more than one husband, at the same time.^a

^a Gen. 2 : 24 ; Matt. 19 : 5, 6 ; Prov. 2 : 17.

II.

Marriage was ordained for the mutual help of husband and wife,^b for the increase of mankind with a legitimate issue, and of the church with an holy seed,^c and for preventing uncleanness.^d

^d Gen. 2 : 18. ^c Mal. 2 : 15. ^b 1 Cor. 7 : 2, 9.

III.

It is lawful for all sorts of people to marry, who are able with judgment to give their consent ;^e yet it is the duty of Christians to marry in the Lord,^f and therefore such as profess the true reformed religion, should not marry with infidels, papists, or other idolaters : neither should such as are godly be unequally yoked, by marrying such as are wicked in their life, or maintain damnable heresy.^g

^e Heb. 13 : 4 ; 1 Tim. 4 : 3 ; 1 Cor. 7 : 36, 37, 38 ; Gen. 24 : 57, 58. ^f 1 Cor. 7 : 39. ^g Gen. 34 : 14 ; Exod. 34 : 16 ; Deut. 7 : 3, 4 ; 1 Kings, 11 : 4 ; Neh. 13 : 25, 26, 27. Mal. 2 : 11, 12 ; 2 Cor. 6 : 14.

IV.

Marriage ought not to be within the degrees of consanguinity or affinity forbidden in the Word ;^h nor can such incestuous marriage ever be made lawful by any law of man or consent of parties, so as those persons may live together as man and wife.ⁱ

^h Lev. 18 : 1 Cor. 5 : 1 ; Amos, 2 : 7. ⁱ Mark, 6 : 18 ; Lev. 18 : 24 to 29.

CHAP. XXVI.

OF THE CHURCH.

I.

THE Catholic or Universal Church which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one under Christ, the Head thereof, and the Spouse, the Body, the fullness of Him that filleth all and in all.^a

^aEph. 1 : 10, 22, 23, and 5 : 23, 27, 32 ; Col. 1 : 18.

II.

The whole body of men throughout the world, professing the faith of the Gospel, and obedi-

ence unto God by Christ according unto it,^b not destroying their own profession by any errors everting the foundation,^c or unholiness of conversation, they^d and their children^e with them, are, and may be called the visible Catholic Church of Christ,^f although as such it is not intrusted with any officers to rule or govern over the whole body.^g

^b 1 Cor. 1 : 2 ; Col. 2 : 19 ; ^c 1 Tim. 1 : 19, 20. ^d 2 Tim. 2 : 19 ; Tit. 1 : 16. ^e 1 Cor. 7 : 14 ; Acts, 2 : 39 ; Ezek. 16 : 20, 21 ; Rom. 11 : 16 ; Gen. 17 : 7. ^f 1 Cor. 12 : 12, 13 ; Rom. 15 : 9, 10, 12. ^g Eph. 4 : 8, 11, 12 ; Rom. 12 : 6, 7, 8 ; 1 Cor. 12 : 28, 29, 30.

III.

The purest churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error,^h and some have so degenerated as to become no churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan :ⁱ Nevertheless Christ always hath had, and ever shall have a visible kingdom in this world, to the end thereof, of such as believe in him, and make profession of his name.^k

^h 1 Cor. 13 : 12 ; Rev. 2d and 3d chapters ; Matt. 13 : 24 to 30, 42. ⁱ Rev. 28 : 2 ; Rom. 11 : 18 to 23. ^k Matt. 16 : 18 ; Psal. 72 : 17, and 102 : 28 ; Matt. 28 : 19, 20.

IV.

There is no other head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ ;^l nor can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof, but is that Antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition that

exalteth himself in the Church against Christ and all that is called God, whom the Lord shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.^m

^l Col. 1 : 18 ; Eph. 1 : 22. ^m Matt. 23 : 8, 9, 10 ; 2 Thes. 2 : 3, 4, 8, 9 ; Rev. 13 : 6.

V.

As the Lord, in his care and love towards his Church, hath in his infinite wise providence, exercised it with great variety in all ages, for the good of them that love him, and his own glory ;ⁿ so according to his promise, we expect that in the latter days, Antichrist being destroyed,^o the Jews called,^p and the adversaries of the kingdom of his dear Son broken ;^q the churches of Christ, being enlarged and edified through a free and plentiful communication of light and grace, shall enjoy in this world a more quiet, peaceable, and glorious condition than they have enjoyed.^r

ⁿ Acts, 7 : 1 to 51, and 14 : 22, and 8 : 1, with 9 : 31. ^o 2 Thes. 2 : 8, 9, 10 ; Rev. 18 : 2, 4, 21, and 17 : 16. ^p Rom. 10 : 1, and 11 : 23 to 32. ^m Psal. 110 : 1, and 2 : 9. ^r Isa. 11 : 9 ; Joel, 2 : 28, 29 ; Isa. 2 : 2, 3, 4 ; Mic. 4 : 3 ; Psal. 87 : 2 to end ; Dan. 7 : 27.

CHAP. XXVII.

OF THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.

I.

ALL saints that are united to Jesus Christ their head by his Spirit and faith, although they are not made thereby one person with him,^a have fellowship in his graces, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory:^b and being united to one another in love, they have communion in each others' gifts and graces,^c and are obliged to the performance of such duties, public and private, as do conduce to their mutual good, both in the inward and outward man.^d

^a Col. 1 : 18, 19 ; 1 Cor. 8 : 6 ; Isa. 42 : 8 ; 1 Tim. 6 : 15, 16 ; Psal. 45 : 7, with Heb. 1 : 8, 9. ^b 1 John, 1 : 3 ; Eph. 3 : 16 to 19 ; John, 1 : 16 ; Eph. 2 : 5, 6 ; Phil. 3 : 10 ; Rom. 6 : 5, 6 ; 2 Tim. 2 : 12. ^c Eph. 4 : 15, 16 ; 1 Cor. 12 : 7, and 3 : 21, 22, 23 ; Col. 2 : 19. ^d 1 Thes. 5 : 11, 14 ; Rom. 1 : 11, 12, 14 ; 1 John, 3 : 16, 17, 18 ; Gal. 6 : 10.

II.

All saints are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God, and in performing such other spiritual services as tend to their mutual edification,^e as also in relieving each other in outward things according to their several abilities and necessities :

which communion, though especially to be exercised by them for the relations in which they stand, whether in families or in churches, yet as God offereth opportunity, is to be extended unto all those who in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus.^g

^e Heb. 10 : 24, 25 ; Acts, 2 : 42, 46 ; Isa. 2 : 3 ; 1 Cor. 2 : 20. ^f Eph. 6 : 2, 4, 5, 9, and 5 : 22 to 26 ; 1 Tim. 5 : 8 ; Gal. 6 : 10. ^g Acts, 2 : 44, 45 ; 1 John, 3 : 17 ; 2 Cor. 8th and 9th chapters ; Acts, 11 : 29, 30.

CHAP. XXVIII.

OF THE SACRAMENTS.

I.

SACRAMENTS are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace,^a immediately instituted by Christ,^b to represent him and his benefits, and to confirm our interest in him,^c and solemnly to engage us to the service of God in Christ, according to his Word.^d

^a Rom. 4 : 11 ; Gen. 17 : 7, 10. ^b Matt. 28 : 19 ; 1 Cor. 11 : 23. ^c 1 Cor. 10 : 16, and 11 : 25, 26. ^d Rom. 6 : 3, 4 ; 1 Cor. 10 : 16, 21.

II.

There is in every Sacrament a spiritual relation or sacramental union between the sign, and the thing signified ; whence it comes to pass

that the names and effects of the one are attributed to the other.^e

^e Gen. 17 : 10 ; Matt. 26 : 27, 28 ; Tit. 3 : 5.

III.

The grace which is exhibited in or by the sacraments rightly used, is not conferred by any power in them, neither doth the efficacy of the sacrament depend upon the piety or intention of him that doth administer it,^f but upon the work of the Spirit,^g and the Word of institution, which contains, together with a precept authorizing the use thereof, a promise of benefit to worthy receivers.^h

^f Rom. 2 : 28, 29 ; 1 Pet. 3 : 21. ^g Matt. 3 : 11 ; 1 Cor. 12 : 13. ^h Matt. 26 : 27, 28, and 28 : 19, 20.

IV.

There be only two sacraments ordained by Christ our Lord, in the Gospel, that is to say, Baptism and the Lord's Supper ; neither of which may be dispensed by any but by a minister of the Word lawfully called.ⁱ

ⁱ Matt. 28 : 19 ; 1 Cor. 11 : 20, 23, and 4 : 1 ; Heb. 5 : 4.

V.

The Sacraments of the Old Testament, in regard of the spiritual things thereby signified and exhibited, were for substance the same with those of the New.^k

^k 1 Cor. 10 : 1, 2, 3, 4.

CHAP. XXIX.

OF BAPTISM.

I.

BAPTISM is a Sacrament of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ,^a to be unto the party baptized a sign and seal of the Covenant of Grace;^b of his ingrafting into Christ;^c of regeneration;^d of remission of sins,^e and of his giving up unto God, through Jesus Christ, to walk in newness of life;^f which ordinance is by Christ's own appointment, to be continued in his church until the end of the world.^g

^a Matt. 28 : 16. ^b Rom. 4 : 11, with Col. 2 : 11, 12.
^c Gal. 3 : 27 ; Rom. 6 : 5. ^d Tit. 3 : 5. ^e Mark, 1 : 4 ;
^f Rom. 6 : 3, 4. ^g Matt. 28 : 19, 20.

II.

The outward element to be used in this ordinance is water, wherewith the party is to be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, by a minister of the Gospel, lawfully called thereunto.^h

^h Matt. 3 : 11 ; John, 1 : 33 ; Matt. 28 : 19, 20.

III.

Dipping of the person into the water is not necessary ; but baptism is rightly admin-

istered by pouring or sprinkling water upon the person.ⁱ

ⁱ Heb. 9 : 10, 19 to 22 ; Acts, 2 : 41, and 16 : 33 ; Mark, 7 : 4.

IV.

Not only those that do actually profess faith in, and obedience unto Christ,^k but also the infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptized, and those only.^l

^k Mark, 16 : 15, 16 ; Acts, 8 : 37, 38. ^l Gen. 17 : 7, 9, with Gal. 3 : 9, 14, and Col. 2 : 11, and Acts, 2 : 38, 39, and Rom. 4 : 11, 12 ; 1 Cor. 7 : 14 ; Matt. 28 : 19 ; Mark, 10 : 13 to 16 ; Luke, 18 : 15.

V.

Although it be a great sin to contemn or neglect this ordinance,^m yet grace and salvation are not so inseparably annexed to it, as that no person can be regenerate or saved without it ;ⁿ or that all that are baptized are undoubtedly regenerated.^o

^m Luke, 7 : 30, with Exod. 4 : 24, 25, 26. ⁿ Rom. 4 : 11 ; Acts, 10 : 2, 4, 22, 31, 45, 47. ^o Acts, 9 : 13, 23.

VI.

The efficacy of baptism is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administered ;^p yet notwithstanding, by the right use of this ordinance, the grace promised is not only offered, but really exhibited and conferred by the Holy Ghost to such, (whether of age or infants,) as that grace belongeth unto, according to the

counsel of God's own will in his appointed time.^q

^p John, 3 : 5, 8. ^q Gal. 3 : 27 ; Tit. 3 : 5 ; Eph. 5 : 25, 26 ; Acts, 2 : 38, 41.

VII.

Baptism is but once to be administered to any person.^r

^r Titus, 3. 5.

CHAP. XXX.

OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

I.

OUR Lord Jesus, in the night wherein he was betrayed, instituted the Sacrament of his body and blood, called the Lord's Supper, to be observed in his churches to the end of the world ; for the perpetual remembrance, and showing forth of the sacrifice of himself in his death ; the sealing of all benefits thereof unto true believers ; their spiritual nourishment and growth in Him ; their further engagement in and to all duties which they owe unto him ; and to be a bond and pledge of their communion, with Him and with each other.^a

^a 1 Cor. 11 : 23, to 26, and 10 : 16, 17, 21, and 12 : 13.

II.

In this Sacrament, Christ is not offered up to his Father, nor any real sacrifice made at all for remission of sin of the quick or dead ;^b but only a memorial of that one offering up of himself upon the Cross, once for all, and a spiritual oblation of all possible praise unto God for the same ;^c so that the Popish sacrifice of the Mass, (as they call it,) is most abominably injurious to Christ's own, only sacrifice, the alone propitiation for all the sins of the elect.^d

^b Heb. 9 : 22, 25, 26, 28. ^c 1 Cor. 11 : 24, 25, 26 ;
Matt 26 : 26, 27. ^d Heb. 7 : 23, 24, 27, and 10 : 11, 12,
14, 18

III.

The Lord Jesus hath in this ordinance appointed his ministers to declare his Word of institution to the people, to pray, and bless the elements of bread and wine, and thereby to set them apart from a common to an holy use, and to take and break the bread, to take the cup, and (they communicating also themselves) to give both to the communicants,^d but to none who are not then present in the congregation.^f

^e Matt. 26 : 26, 27, 28 ; Mark, 14 : 22, 23, 24 ; Luke,
22 : 19, 20 ; 1 Cor. 11 : 23 to 26. ^f Acts, 20 : 7 ; 1 Cor.
11 : 20.

IV.

Private Masses, or receiving the Sacrament by a Priest, or any other alone,^g as likewise the

denial of the cup to the people,^h worshipping the elements, the lifting them up or carrying them about for adoration, and reserving them for any pretended religious use, are all contrary to the nature of this sacrament, and to the institution of Christ.ⁱ

g 1 Cor. 10 : 6. h Mark. 14 : 23 ; 1 Cor. 11 : 25 to 30.
i Matt. 15 9.

V.

The outward elements in this Sacrament, duly set apart to the uses ordained by Christ, have such relation to him crucified, as that truly, yet sacramentally only, they are sometimes called by the name of the things they represent, to wit, the body and blood of Christ : ^k albeit in substance and nature they still remain truly and only bread and wine as they were before. ^l

^k Matt. 26 : 26, 27, 28. ^l 1 Cor. 11 : 26, 27 28 ; Matt. 26 : 29.

VI.

That doctrine which maintains a change of the substance of bread and wine into the substance of Christ's body and blood, (commonly called transubstantiation,) by consecration of a Priest, or by any other way, is repugnant not to the Scripture alone, but even to common sense and reason, overthroweth the nature of the Sacrament, and hath been, and is the cause of manifold superstitions, yea, of gross idolatries.^m

^m Acts, 3 : 21 ; 1 Cor. 11 : 24, 25, 26 ; Luke, 26 : 6, 39.

VII.

Worthy receivers outwardly partaking of the visible elements in this Sacrament,ⁿ do then also inwardly by faith, really and indeed, yet not carnally and corporally, but spiritually, receive and feed upon Christ crucified, and all benefits of his death; the body and blood of Christ being then not corporally or carnally, in, with, or under the bread and wine, yet as really, but spiritually present to the faith of believers in that ordinance, as the elements themselves are to their outward senses.^o

ⁿ 1 Cor. 11 : 28. ^o 1 Cor. 10 : 16.

VIII.

All ignorant and ungodly persons, as they are unfit to enjoy communion with Christ, so are they unworthy of the Lord's table, and cannot without great sin against him whilst they remain such, partake of these holy mysteries,^p or be admitted thereunto; ^x yea, whosoever shall receive unworthily, are guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, eating and drinking judgment to themselves.^r

^p 1 Cor. 11 : 27, 28, 29 ; 2 Cor. 6 : 14, 15, 16. ^q 1 Cor. 5 : 6, 7, 13 ; 2 Thes. 3 : 6, 14, 15 ; Matt. 7 : 6. ^r 1 Cor. 11 : 27, 29.

CHAP. XXXI.

OF THE STATE OF MAN AFTER DEATH, AND OF THE
RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

I.

THE bodies of men after death return to dust, and see corruption,^a but their souls, (which neither die nor sleep,) having an immortal subsistence, immediately return to God who gave them ;^b the souls of the righteous being then made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies ;^c and the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torment, and utter darkness, reserved for the judgment of the great day :^d besides these two places of souls separated from their bodies the Scripture acknowledgeth none.

^a Gen. 3 : 19 ; Acts, 13 : 36. ^b Luke, 23 : 43 ; Eccl. 12 : 7. ^c Heb. 12 : 23 ; 2 Cor. 5 ; 1, 6, 8 ; Phil. 1 : 23 ; Acts, 3 : 21 ; Eph. 4 : 10. ^d Luke, 16 : 23, 24 ; Acts, 1 ; 25 ; Jude, 5, 6 ; 1 Pet. 3 : 19.

II

At the last day, such as are found alive, shall not die, but be changed ;^e and all the dead shall be raised up with the self-same bodies and none other, although with different qualities, which shall be united again to their souls forever^f

o 1 Thes. 4 : 17 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 51, 52. d Job. 19 : 25, 27 ;
1 Cor. 15 : 42, 43, 44.

III.

The bodies of the unjust shall, by the power of Christ, be raised to dishonor ; the bodies of the just, by his Spirit, unto honor, and be made conformable unto his own glorious body.^g

g Acts, 24 : 15 ; John, 5 : 28, 29 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 42 ; Phil.
3 : 21

 CHAP. XXXII.

OF THE LAST JUDGMENT.

I.

God hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ,^a to whom all power and judgment is given of the Father ;^b in which day, not only the apostate angels shall be judged,^c but likewise all persons that have lived upon earth, shall appear before the tribunal of Christ, to give an account of their thoughts, words, and deeds, and to receive according to what they have done in the body, whether it be good or evil.^d

a Acts, 17 : 31. b John, 5 : 22, 27. c 1 Cor. 6 : 3 ; Jude, 5 : 6 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 4. d 2 Cor. 5 : 10 ; Eccl. 12 : 14 ; Rom. 2 : 16, and 14 : 10, 12 ; Matt. 12 : 36, 37.

II.

The end of God's appointing this day, is for the manifestation of the glory of his mercy in the eternal salvation of the elect, and of his justice in the damnation of the reprobate, who are wicked and disobedient; for then shall the righteous go into everlasting life, and receive that fullness of joy and glory, with everlasting reward in the presence of the Lord; but the wicked who know not God, and obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ, shall be cast into eternal torments, and be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.^e

^e Matt. 25 : 31 to end ; Rom. 2 : 5, 6, and 9 : 22, 23 ; Matt. 25 : 21 ; Acts, 3 : 19 ; 2 Thes. 1 : 7 to 10.

III.

As Christ would have us to be certainly persuaded that there shall be a judgment, both to deter all men from sin, and for the greater consolation of the godly in their adversity; ^f so will he have that day unknown to men, that they may shake off all carnal security, and be always watchful, because they know not at what hour the Lord will come, and may be ever prepared to say, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. *Amen.*

^f 2 Pet. 3 : 11, 14 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 10, 11 ; 2 Thes. 1 : 5, 6, 7 ; Luke, 21 : 27, 28 ; Rom. 8 : 23, 24, 25. ^g Matt. 24 : 36, 42, 43, 44 ; Mark, 13 : 35, 36, 37 ; Luke, 12 : 35, 36 ; Rev. 22 : 20.

THE
HEADS OF AGREEMENT,

ASSENTED TO BY THE UNITED MINISTERS,

FORMERLY CALLED

PRESBYTERIAN AND CONGREGATIONAL;

AND ALSO,

ARTICLES,

FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF

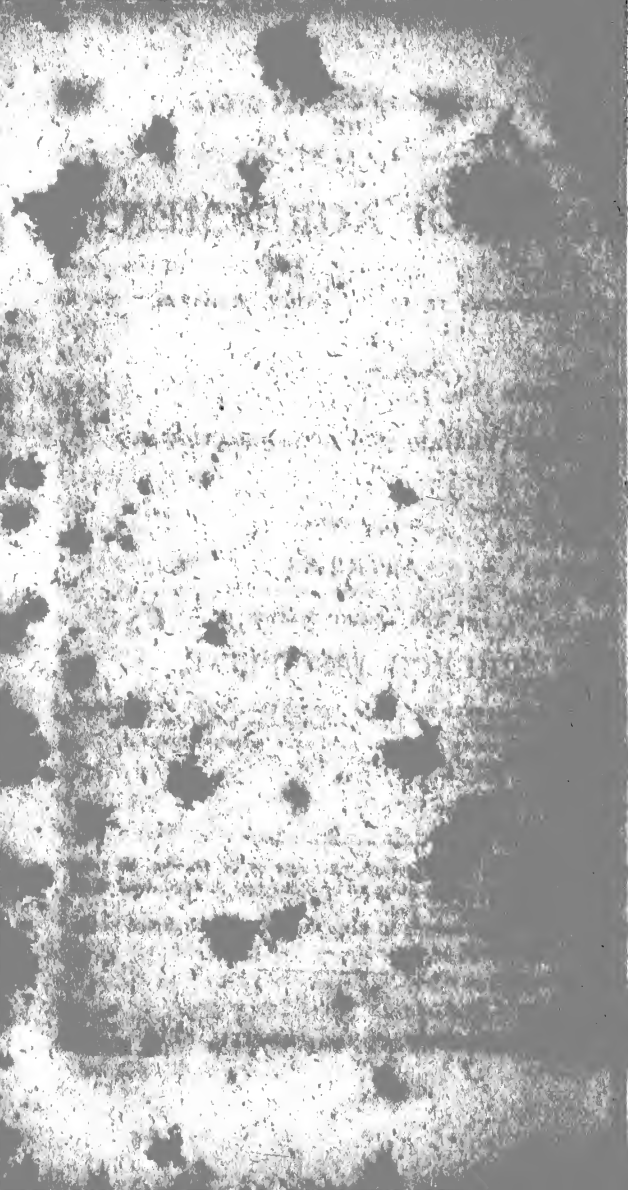
CHURCH DISCIPLINE,

UNANIMOUSLY AGREED UPON, AND CONSENTED TO, BY THE ELDERS
AND MESSENGERS OF THE CHURCHES IN THE COLONY OF
CONNECTICUT, IN NEW ENGLAND, ASSEMBLED BY
DELEGATION, AT SAYBROOK, SEPT. 9TH,
1708.

Phil. 3: 5. Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

Eph. 4: 3. Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

NEW LONDON, CONN., PRINTED, 1710.



PREFACE.

THERE is no Constitution on earth, hath ever been established on such sure foundation, nor so fully provided for its subsistence, as the Church of God—*It being built on the Prophets and Apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.* Hence, therefore, it hath from its holy hill beheld the ruins of the greatest States and most flourishing Empires; having continued in safety, free from the fatal accidents of time, and triumphed not only over the rage of men, but also the repeated insults of the gates of hell. And though it hath been often straitened as to its extent, and lessened as to its number, yet hath remained firm on its own basis: Yea, when most reduced, it hath forever made good that motto, *Depressa Resurgo*; and so it shall continue to the end of the world. But, to the shame of its offenders, the church hath suffered most from the wounds, which she hath received in the house of her friends, from those wolves that have come to her in sheep's clothing. Damnable errors and heresies have arisen from within her, whereby she hath some-

times been cast into horrible shades of darkness, as Rev. 9 : 2, *When the bottomless pit was opened, the smoke ascending darkened the sun and air.* Yet when thus grievously blackened, a comeliness remained still. Otherwhiles she is seen bleeding with the wounds of schism and contention, offensive and hurtful to her sacred head and members, for the undivided head rejoiceth in an undivided body. *His undefiled is but one.* Cant. 6 : 9. As she becomes divided, she becomes defiled—and hereby also the mutual offices of the respective members of this undefiled one, are interrupted to the prejudice of the whole. Whence follow great disorders, as when the eye will not see for the hand, nor the head take care of the feet, nor our union to Christ be acknowledged a sufficient bond to establish a relation between members in particular. 1 Cor. 12 : 27. God's Providence forever bears the upper hand in these events, who suffers the corrupt minds of men to run into errors and divisions, *that the approved may be made manifest.* 1 Cor. 11 : 19. Such ill-minded persons being threatened with a wo, that are the authors or promoters of such offences. *The Atheist endeavors to overthrow the whole constitution of religion: The Deist to take away all that part of it that promiseth sinners any safety from the wrath to come, and retain no more than what is enough to condemn him, and take away all excuse for his disobedience.*

Rom. 1 : 20. The church of Christ hath also been a great sufferer from the immoralities and disorderly walking of those that are related to her, whose *leaven hath sometimes hazarded the whole lump*. 1 Cor. 5 : 6. Whose unseemly practices have given advantage to enemies to speak evil of the ways of God, and to question the truth of our holy religion, and the sincerity of the professors thereof. These must be acknowledged to be *spots and blemishes*. 2 Pet. 2 : 13. The wisdom of our Lawgiver, King, and Judge; who alone hath the original sovereignty of giving being to, and laying the foundations of the church, and whose only is the legislative power therein; hath given such ample rights and privileges to the church, and such excellent rules for its government, as are inviting to strangers, *like a city set on a hill*. Matt. 5 : 14. And hath lodged the executive power in approved hands; that those who love the church may be in peace, and her enemies may find her *terrible as an army with banners*; and that she might yield seasonable edification to those that walk regularly within her limits, and be able to discharge herself of impenitent and incorrigible offenders. Many of the fore-mentioned mischiefs have to our sorrow afflicted the churches within this government, and by degrees we have fallen under much decay—Whereupon, our difficulties have been of a long time troublesome, for the healing our wounds,

a more explicate asserting the rules of government sufficiently provided in the holy word hath been thought highly expedient—Wherefore,

The Honorable, the General Assembly of this Colony, out of a tender regard to the welfare of the Churches within the limits of their government, were pleased to appoint the several elders of each county, with messengers from their Churches to meet in council; in which they should endeavor to agree in some general rules conformable to the Word of God for a method of discipline to be practiced in our Churches. These several councils having met and drawn up some rules for Church government, did by their delegates meet and constitute one General Assembly of the Churches of this colony, at Saybrook, September 9th, 1708. Who, after a full consent and agreement unto the Confession of Faith assented unto by the Synod of Boston, did, being studious of keeping *the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*, Eph. 4: 3., agree that the Heads of Agreement assented to by the united brethren formerly called Presbyterian and Congregational in England, be observed by the Churches throughout this colony; which are herewith published: and after consideration of the several draughts of the county councils, did, with a Christian condescension, and fraternal amicableness, unanimously agree to the Articles for the Administration of Church Discipline

now offered to public view, all which being presented, were allowed of and established by the General Assembly of this colony, as by their acts appears. For the better satisfaction of our people, we have undertaken a task, acceptable we trust unto many, though it escape not the exceptions of some, in subjoining Scriptures for confirmation of the Heads of Agreement, which we have not seen added thereunto. The aforesaid articles consist in two heads, *The one holding forth the power of particular Churches in the management of Discipline confirmed by scriptures annexed.*

The other serves to preserve, promote, or recover the peace and edification of the Churches by the means of a consociation of the Elders and Churches, or of an association of Elders: Both which we are agreed have countenance from the Scriptures, and the propositions in answer to the second question given by the Synod met at Boston, 1662. In both which having respect to the divine precepts of fraternal union, and that principle universally acknowledged, *Quod tangit omnes debet tractari ab omnibus.* The Scriptures are added for the illustration of the substance of the above-mentioned articles, yet with an apprehension that there may be alterations made, and further condescensions agreed upon, which shall afterwards appear necessary for the order and edification of our Churches.

As we have labored in this affair to approve ourselves unto God, so we are cheerful with humble prayer for his blessing to recommend the Heads of Agreement, with the subsequent articles, unto the acceptance and observation of our people; hoping, till it please the Lord to send forth further light and truth in these more controversial matters, this method may be a blessed means of our better unanimity and success in our Lord's work for the gathering and edifying of the body of Christ; for which we bespeak the concurring prayers of all that fear the Lord.

HEADS OF AGREEMENT,

ASSENTED TO BY THE UNITED MINISTERS FORMERLY
CALLED PRESBYTERIAN AND CONGREGATIONAL.

Of Churches and Church Members.

I. WE acknowledge our Lord Jesus Christ to have one Catholic Church or Kingdom, comprehending all that are united to him, whether in heaven or earth. - And do conceive the whole multitude of visible believers, and their infant seed, (commonly called the Catholic visible Church) to belong to Christ's spiritual kingdom in this world. But, for the notion of a Catholic visible Church here, as it signifies its having been collected into any formed society, under a visible common head on earth, whether one person singly, or many collectively, we, with the rest of Protestants, unan-
imously disclaim it.

Eph. 1 : 10, 22, and 44 ; Eph. 5 : 27 ; 1 Cor. 12 : 12, 13, Gen. 17 : 7 ; Acts, 2 : 39 ; Matt. 23 : 7 to 10.

II. We agree, that particular societies of visible saints, who under Christ their head, are stately joined together, for ordinary communion with one another in all the ordinances of

Christ, are *particular churches*, and are to be owned by each other, as instituted churches of Christ, though differing in *apprehensions* and *practice* in some lesser things.

1 Cor. 14 : 23, and 1 : 2, and 12 : 27 ; Rev. 1 : 4 ; Rom. 14 : 1.

III. That none shall be admitted as members, in order to communion in all the special ordinances of the Gospel, but such persons as are knowing and sound in the *fundamental doctrine of the Christian religion* ; without scandal in their lives ; and, to a judgment regulated by the word of God, are persons of visible holiness and honesty ; credibly professing cordial subjection to *Jesus Christ*.

Prov. 19 : 2 ; Acts, 8 : 32 ; 2 Tim. 2 : 19 ; Ezek. 44 : 9 ; Rom. 10 : 10 ; 2 Cor. 9 : 13.

IV. A competent number of such *visible saints*, (as before described) do become the capable subjects of stated communion in all the *special ordinances of Christ*, upon their mutual declared consent and agreement to *walk together therein according to Gospel rule*. In which declaration, different degrees of *explicitness*, shall no ways hinder such churches from owning each other, as instituted churches.

1 Cor. 14 : 23 ; Acts, 20 : 7 ; and 2 : 41, 42 ; Rom. 14 : 3.

V. Though *parochial bounds* be not of *divine right*, yet for common edification, the mem

bers of a particular church ought (as much as conveniently may be) to live near one another.

1 Thes. 5 : 11, 12, 13 ; Heb. 10 : 25.

VI. That each *particular church* hath right to choose their own officers ; and being furnished with such as are duly qualified and ordained according to the Gospel rule, hath authority from Christ for exercising government, and of enjoying all the ordinances of worship within itself.

Acts, 6 : 2 ; Tit. 1 : 5, 6, 7 ; 1 Tim. 4 : 14 ; Matt. 18 : 17 ; 1 Cor. 11, 2

VII. In the administration of church power, it belongs to the Pastors and other Elders of every particular church, if such there be, to rule and govern ; and to the brotherhood to consent according to the rule of the Gospel.

1 Tim. 5 : 17 ; Heb. 3 : 17 ; 1 Cor. 4 : 1, and 5 : 4 ; 2 Cor. 6 : 8, 10.

VIII. That all professors as before described, are bound in duty, as they have opportunity, to join themselves as *fixed members* of some particular church ; their thus joining, being part of their professed subjection to the Gospel of Christ, and an instituted means of their establishment and edification ; whereby they are under the pastoral care, and in case of scandalous or offensive walking, may be authoritatively admonished or censured for their recove-

ry, and for vindication of the truth, and the church professing it.

Acts, 2 : 47, and 5 : 13 ; 2 Cor. 9 : 13 ; Heb. 10 : 24, 25 ; 1 Thes. 5 : 12, 14 ; Acts, 20 : 23.

IX. That a *visible professor*, thus joined to a particular church, ought to continue steadfast with the said church ; and not forsake the ministry, and ordinances there dispensed, without an orderly seeking a recommendation unto another church ; which ought to be given, when the case of the person apparently requires it.

Acts, 2 : 42 ; Heb. 10 : 25 ; Rom. 16 : 1, 2.

II. *Of the Ministry.*

I. WE agree that the ministerial office is instituted by Jesus Christ for the gathering, guiding, edifying, and governing of his church ; and to continue to the end of the world.

Eph. 4 : 11, 12 ; Matt. 28 : 19, 20.

II. They who are called to this office ought to be endued with competent learning and ministerial gifts, as also with the grace of God, sound in judgment, not novices in the faith and knowledge of the Gospel : without scandal, of holy conversation, and such as devote themselves to the work and service thereof.

2 Tim. 2 : 24 ; Rom. 12 : 6 ; 1 Tim. 3 : 2 to 7 ; Tit. 1 : 6, 7 ; 1 Tim. 4 : 16.

III. That ordinarily none shall be ordained to the work of this ministry, but such as are called and chosen thereunto by a particular church.

Acts, 14 : 23.

IV. That in so great and weighty a matter as the calling and choosing a pastor, we judge it ordinarily requisite, that every such church consult and advise with the pastors of neighboring congregations.

Prov. 11 : 14, and 15 : 22.

V. That after such advice, the person consulted about, being chosen by the brotherhood of that particular church over which he is to be set, and he accepting, be duly ordained and set apart to his office over them ; wherein 'tis ordinarily requisite that the pastors of *neighboring congregations* concur with the preaching Elder or Elders, if such there be.

Acts, 14 : 23, and 1 : 23, and 13 : 23 ; 1 Tim. 4 : 14.

VI. That whereas, such ordination only is intended for such as *never before had been* ordained to the ministerial office ; if any judge, that in case also of the *removal of one formerly ordained*, to a new station, or pastoral charge, there ought to be a like solemn recommending him and his labors to the grace and blessing of God, no different sentiments or practice herein

shall be any occasion of contention, or breach of communion among us.

Phil. 3 : 15 ; Eph. 4 : 2, 3.

VII. It is expedient that they who enter on the work of preaching the Gospel, be not only qualified for the communion of saints ; but also, that except in *cases extraordinary*, they give proof of their gifts and fitness for the said work, unto the Pastors of churches of known abilities, to discern and judge of their qualifications ; that they may be sent forth with solemn approbation and prayer ; which we judge needful, that no doubt may remain concerning their being called unto the work ; and for preventing, (as much as in us lieth) ignorant and rash intruders.

1 Tim. 1 : 22, and 3 : 6.

III. *Of Censures.*

I. As it cannot be avoided, but that in the purest churches on earth, there will sometimes offences and scandals arise by reason of hypocrisy and prevailing corruption ; so Christ hath made it the duty of every church to reform itself, by spiritual remedies, appointed by him, to be applied in all such cases, viz : Admonition and Excommunication.

Matt. 8 : 7 ; Heb. 12 : 15 ; Tit. 3 : 10 ; 1 Cor. 5 : 6

II. Admonition, being the rebuking of an offending member in order to conviction, is in case of private offences to be performed according to the rule in Matt. 18 : 15, 16, 17 ; and in case of public offences openly before the church, as the honor of the Gospel, and the nature of the scandal shall require ; and if either of the Admonitions take place for the recovery of the *fallen person*, all further proceedings in a way of censure are thereon to cease, and satisfaction to be declared accordingly.

1 Tim. 1 : 20 ; Matt. 18 : 15, 17.

III. When all due means are used according to the order of the Gospel, for the restoring an offending and scandalous brother, and he, notwithstanding, remains impenitent, the censure of Excommunication is to be proceeded unto ; wherein the Pastor and other Elders (if there be such) are to lead and go before the church ; and the brotherhood to give their consent in a way of obedience unto Christ, and to the Elders, as over them in the Lord.

Matt. 18 : 15, 16, 17 ; Tit. 3 : 10 ; 1 Cor. 5 ; 1 Thes. 5 : 5, 12.

IV. It may sometimes come to pass, that a church member, not otherwise scandalous, may *fully withdraw* and divide himself from the communion of the church to which he belong-

eth: In which case, when all due means for the reducing him prove ineffectual, he having thereby cut himself off from that church's communion; the church may justly esteem and declare itself discharged of any further inspection over him.

Heb. 10 : 25 ; Rom. 16 : 17 ; 2 Thes. 3 : 14.

IV. *Of Communion of Churches.*

I. WE agree that particular churches ought not to walk so distinct and separate from each other, as not to have care and tenderness towards one another. But their Pastors ought to have frequent meetings together, that by mutual advice, support, encouragement, and brotherly intercourse, they may strengthen the hearts and hands of each other in the ways of the Lord.

Acts, 15 : 23, and 20 : 17, 28.

II. That none of our particular churches shall be subordinate to one another, each being endued with equality of power from Jesus Christ. And that none of the said particular churches, their officer or officers, shall exercise any power, or have any superiority over any other church or their officers.

Rev. 1 : 4 ; Cant. 8 : 8 ; 1 Cor. 16 : 19 ; Acts, 15 : 23.

III. That known members of particular churches constituted as aforesaid, may have occasional communion with one another in the ordinances of the Gospel, viz : the *Word, Prayer, Sacraments, Singing of Psalms*, dispensed according to the mind of Christ : unless that church with which they desire communion, hath any just exception against them.

Acts, 18 : 27 ; Rom. 16 : 1, 2 ; 2 Cor. 3 : 1 ; 1 Cor. 12 : 13.

IV. That we ought not to admit any one to be a member of our respective congregations, that hath joined himself to another, without endeavors of mutual satisfaction of the congregation concerned.

Heb. 13 : 1 ; 1 Cor. 14 : 40.

V. That one church ought not to blame the proceedings of another, until it hath heard what that church charged, its elders or messengers can say in vindication of themselves, from any charge of irregular or injurious proceedings.

Matt. 7 : 1 ; Prov. 18 : 17 Deut. 13 : 14.

VI. That we are most willing and ready to give an account of our church proceedings to each other, when desired, for preventing or removing any offences that may arise among us. Likewise we shall be ready to give the right hand of fellowship, and walk together accord-

ing to the Gospel rules of communion of churches.

1 Pet. 3 : 15 ; Rom. 14 : 19 ; Acts, 11 : 2, 3, 4, 18 ; Josh. 22 : 13, 21, 30 ; Gal. 2 : 9 ; Col. 2 : 5 ; 1 Pet. 4 : 10, 11 ; 1 Cor. 10 : 24 ; Rom. 1 : 15 ; Gal. 6 : 10.

V. *Of Deacons and Ruling Elders.*

WE, agree, the office of a Deacon is of divine appointment, and that it belongs to their office to receive, lay out, and distribute the church's stock to its proper uses, by the direction of the Pastor and brethren, if need be. And whereas, divers are of opinion, that there is also the office of Ruling Elders, who labor not in word and doctrine, and others think otherwise ; we agree that this difference make no breach among us.

Acts, 6 : 3, 5, 6 ; Phil. 1 : 1 ; 1 Tim. 3 : 8 to 13 ; Rom. 12 : 8 ; 1 Cor. 12 : 28 ; 1 Tim. 5 : 17 ; Phil. 3 : 15, 16.

VI. *Of Occasional Meeting of Ministers, &c.*

I. WE agree that in order to concord, and in other weighty and difficult cases, it is needful and according to the mind of Christ, that the Ministers of the several churches be consulted and advised with, about such matters.

Prov. 24 : 6 : Acts, 15 : 26.

II. That such meetings may consist of smaller or greater numbers, as the matters shall require.

III. That particular churches, their respective elders and members, ought to have a reverential regard to their judgment, so given, and not dissent therefrom, without apparent ground from the word of God.

Acts, 16 : 4, 5 ; 1 Cor. 14 : 32, 33 : Gal. 1 : 8 ; 1 Pet. 4 ; 11.

VII. *Of our Demeanor towards the Civil Magistrate.*

I. WE do reckon ourselves obliged continually to pray for God's protection, guidance, and blessing upon the rulers set over us.

1 Tim. 2 : 2 ; Psal. 20 : 1 to 4, and 72 : 1.

II. That we ought to yield unto them not only subjection in the Lord, but support, according to our station and abilities.

Matt. 22 : 21 ; Rom. 13 : 5, 6 ; Neh. 5 : 18.

III. That if at any time, it shall be their pleasure to call together any number of us, to require an account of our affairs, and the state of our congregations, we shall most readily express all dutiful regard to them herein.

Isa. 49 : 23 ; Chron. 29 : 4 to 11 ; Rom. 13 : 1 ; Tit. 3 : 1.

VIII. *Of a Confession of Faith.*

As to what appertains to soundness of judgment in matters of faith, we esteem it sufficient that a church acknowledge the Scriptures to be the word of God, the perfect and only rule of faith and practice, and own either the doctrinal part of those commonly called the Articles of the Church of England, or the Confession or Catechisms, shorter or larger, compiled by the Assembly at Westminster, or the Confession agreed on at the Savoy, to be agreeable to the said rule.

2 Tim. 1: 13; Eph. 4: 5; Phil. 2: 1, 2.

IX. *Of our Duty and Deportment towards them that are not in communion with us.*

I. WE judge it our duty to bear a Christian respect to all Christians, according to their several ranks and stations, that are not of our persuasion or communion.

1 Peter. 2: 17; Rom. 12: 10; Gal. 6: 2; Eph. 4: 2; Rom. 14: tot.

II. As for such as may be ignorant of the principles of the Christian Religion, or of *vicious conversation*, we shall, in our respective places, as they give opportunity, endeavor

to explain to them the doctrine of life and salvation, and to our utmost, persuade them to be reconciled to God.

2 Tim. 2 : 25 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 11, 20.

III. That such who appear to have the essential requisites to Church-communion, we shall willingly receive them in the Lord, not troubling them with disputes about lesser matters.

Rom. 14 : 1.

As we assent to the fore-mentioned *Heads of Agreement*, so we unanimously resolve, as the Lord shall enable us, to practice according to them.

ARTICLES
OR THE ADMINISTRATION OF
CHURCH DISCIPLINE,

UNANIMOUSLY AGREED UPON, AND CONSENTED TO, BY THE
ELDERS AND ALL THE CHURCHES IN THE COLONY OF
CONNECTICUT, IN NEW ENGLAND, CONVENED BY DELE-
GATION IN A GENERAL COUNCIL AT SAYBROOK, SEP-
TEMBER 9TH, 1708.

SUCH as has been narrated, in the Historical Account, on the preceding pages, were the circumstances in which the Saybrook Platform originated and in which it was sanctioned by the legislature of the colony, and adopted by most if not by all the ministers and churches. It is well known that at the period of its adoption, some diversity of opinion existed on the subject of church government. Hence the "Heads of Agreement," though not, strictly speaking, a part of the Platform, were assented to by the Convention, which "agreed that they should be observed by the churches throughout the colony" because they "were studious of keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." The fifteen "Articles for the administration of church discipline" are specially *the Platform*; and respecting the "Rules and Usages of associations and consociations," which tend to modify the application of these articles, the committee have supposed it to be their

province to inquire with particular attention. With a view to obtain the most accurate information of which the subject admits, application has been made to the registers of the respective associations and consociations, and also to other gentlemen in different parts of the state, and recourse has been had to other sources of information. Inaccuracies and deficiencies, however, may probably be found in this report, though we hope that our labors will not prove altogether useless; and if the result shall be a better acquaintance with our excellent constitution and a stronger attachment to it among ministers and churches, we feel that we shall not have labored in vain.

In general there has been some diversity of interpretation from the earliest period. Some pastors and churches, and some of the ecclesiastical bodies, have interpreted the articles with greater latitude, and others with less. But so far as information has been obtained, we find that all the associations and consociations in the state have, from the beginning recognized, and that they *do* still recognize the Platform as the basis of their organization and of their proceedings. Most or all of them, however, have their codes of By-laws, and their written constitutions, still referring to the Platform as their charter.

The result of our inquiries we give in notes appended to the several articles, as follows.

1. THAT the Elder or Elders of a particular church, with the consent of the brethren of the same, have power

and ought to exercise church discipline according to the rule of God's Word, in relation to all scandals that fall out within the same. And it may be meet in all cases of difficulty for the respective Pastors of particular churches, to take advice of the Elders of the churches in the neighborhood, before they proceed to censure in such cases.

Matt. 18 : 17 ; Heb. 13 : 17 ; 1 Cor. 5 : 4, 5, 12 ; 2 Cor. 2 : 6 ; Prov. 11 : 14 ; Acts 15 : 12.

While the above principle has been admitted, the common practice has been for the elders or elders to lay the cases of alledged scandal before the brethren for trial and decision. They have acted rather as moderators of the church meeting than as judges on the merits of the case. So far as this article relates to the expediency of the pastor's taking advice of the elders of the churches in the neighborhood, we find the customs and usages of the churches have been in conformity with the spirit of the article, though the pastors and the churches have ever considered themselves the sole judges whether it were, or were not, expedient to ask such advice before they proceeded to inflict censures.

II. That the churches which are neighboring each to other, shall consociate for mutual affording to each other

such assistance as may be requisite, upon all occasions ecclesiastical. And that the particular pastors and churches, within the respective counties in this government, shall be one consociation, (or more if they shall judge meet,) for the end aforesaid.

Psal. 122 : 3, 4, 5, and 133 : 1 ; Eccl. 4 : 9 to 12 ; Acts, 15 : 2, 6, 22, 23 ; 1 Tim. 4 : 14 ; 1 Cor. 16 : 1.

This article, as has been already stated, was generally if not universally complied with, early in the year 1709. The committee have not been able to learn that a single church, which existed in the colony at that period, has remained unconsociated, at all times, until now. The directions of the Platform have, with a few exceptions, been followed from the beginning. It is, however, well known that there are at the present time several churches (about fifteen) not consociated. Some of these are churches which seceded from consociation on account of dissatisfaction with its decisions, and some are churches which have been organized long since the Platform was adopted, and which for various reasons have never joined consociation. In a few instances the associations and consociations are not bounded by county lines. This is probably owing to changes in those lines subsequently to the formation of the ecclesiastical bodies under the Platform ; or to avoid the local inconveniences to which particular churches would otherwise be

subject. There are precedents where churches, which, by a change of county lines, have been placed in a county different from that in which they were located at the time of their joining the consociation, have applied to consociations for a change of their connection and the request has been granted. Thus has been exhibited the fact that the Platform has been regarded as the constitution of the churches. The churches in New Haven county, at the time of becoming consociated, stated the sense in which they understood the constitution and the principles of interpretation on which they consented to adopt it. Their record will be given at the end of these notes.

“Assistance upon all occasions ecclesiastical.” usage includes Ordinations, Installations, and dismissions of Pastors; examinations of candidates for ordination or installation, in respect to their soundness in the faith and their qualifications for the work of the ministry; occasions in which advice is regularly asked by the churches or individual members; the hearing of appeals from the decisions of a consociated church; hearing and determining cases of discipline or difficulty submitted to the consociation previous to trial; trial of pastors accused of scandal or heresy on complaint or call of the association; and in general,—deliberations and advice concerning matters of common interest to the churches.

“Particular pastors and churches within, &c.” It appears from this language that an elder, who is not a pastor of some church within the limits of the consociation and belonging to it, cannot be constitutionally a member of consociation.

III. That all cases of scandal that fall out within the circuit of any of the aforesaid consociations shall be brought to a council of the Elders ; and also messengers, of the churches within the said circuit, i. e. the churches of one consociation, if they see cause to send messengers, when there shall be need of a council for the determination of them.

3 John, 9 : 10 ; 1 Cor. 16 : 1 ; Gal. 6 : 1, 2 ; 2 Cor. 13 : 2 ; Acts, 15 : 22 ; 2 Cor. 8 : 23.

This article has been and still is generally observed by the consociated churches ;—they having understood the article as allowing them to be the judges when there is need of calling the consociation to determine on cases of scandal ; and further as permitting them to call a mutual council if they judge that to be more expedient, or to call even a select council, reserving, in the latter case, and also in cases where judgment was passed by the church, the right to the censured party of appeal to the consociation, agreeably to the 8th article.

Some of the objections made against this article arise from the obscure arrangement of its parts, and they might be obviated by reading it as follows :—“ That all cases of scandal that fall out within the circuit of the aforesaid consociations, when there shall be need of a council for the determination of them, shall be brought,” &c. The churches are themselves to manage all the

cases of scandal which they can manage without special difficulty and hazard.

IV. That according to the common practice of our churches, nothing shall be deemed an act or judgment of any council, which hath not the major part of the Elders present concurring, and such a number of the messengers present as makes the majority of the council: Provided that if any such church shall not see cause to send any messengers to the council, or the persons chosen by them shall not attend; neither of these shall be any obstruction to the proceedings of the council, or invalidate any of their acts.

Acts, 15 : 23 ; 1 Cor. 14 : 32, 33.

In respect to this article there is a diversity of usage. Most of the consociations have for many years voted by a joint ballot, and a majority of the whole forms the decision. The consociation of New Haven county, voted, May 6th, 1780, "That nothing shall be deemed a vote of this council, in which there is not a majority of voices both among the elders and messengers." There was then but one consociation in the county, and this vote is in accordance with the interpretation given to the Platform by the churches in New Haven county, 1709. Other consociations have modi-

fied the original article in various ways. And we have not discovered any instance in which an adherence to the strict letter of the article has been insisted on so far as to prevent a decision of the consociation, or where it has made any serious difficulty. In almost all cases the decisions of consociations have been so nearly unanimous as not to call for the application of this rule.

The provisions of this article were framed to meet a common usage of the churches at the period when the Platform was framed. The churches were not restricted to one messenger each. A writer of Massachusetts, in 1749, speaking of the mischiefs arising from the prevailing practice, says, "Some churches send one, (messenger) others five, others ten or more, to the same council, and the vote of each member is of equal weight. When such was the usage of the churches, some provision seemed necessary to give the Elders a voice in the decisions of councils. That provision is in this fourth article. In practice, the principle deemed objectionable by some, is now laid aside.

V. That when any case is orderly brought before any council of the churches, it shall there be heard and determined, which (unless orderly removed from thence) shall be a final issue, and all parties therein concerned, shall sit down and be determined thereby. And the council, so hearing, and giving the

result or final issue, in the said case as aforesaid, shall see their determination, or judgment duly executed and attended in such way or manner, as shall in their judgment be most suitable and agreeable to the word of God.

Acts, 15 ; 1 Cor. 5 : 5 ; 2 Cor. 2 : 6, 11, and 13 : 2 ; Phil. 3 : 15 ; Rom. 14 : 2, 3.

We find the general practice has been to consider the decisions of the consociations final, with the exception specified in the article. This may be done as it sometimes has been done by advice of the consociation. It may be done also with their consent. Though some have maintained that the consociation can only advise, its advice is nevertheless universally without appeal. The instances have been rare in which a church has refused to comply with the decisions of a consociation regularly convened. In a few cases, churches have preferred to come under the censure of the consociation and submit to non-communication ; or, to withdraw and declare themselves independent. Some of these after the excitement passed away, have returned and been restored. It appears that one or two consociations choose to call their determinations advice rather than authoritative decisions, but even here their determinations are considered final.

The 2d part of this article prescribes the duty of the council, so hearing and giving the result or final issue in a case coming before them ;

which duty is "to see their determination or judgment duly executed and attended." So far as the committee have information, usage accords with the constitution on these points. Consociations have rarely permitted their decisions to be trifled with, though a commendable degree of christian forbearance has been exercised where churches felt aggrieved by their decisions.

There has been, we believe, some diversity of opinion and practice with respect to the mode in which the concurrence of the church in the decisions of the consociation, shall be made known, —whether it should be formally expressed or tacitly implied. In the opinion of the committee a formal concurrence is to be preferred.

VI. That, if any Pastor and church doth obstinately refuse a due attendance and conformity to the determination of the council, that hath the cognizance of the case, and determineth it as above, after due patience used, they shall be reputed guilty of scandalous contempt, and dealt with as the rule of God's word in such case doth provide, and the sentence of non-communication shall be declared against such Pastor and church. And the churches are to approve of the said sentence, by withdrawing from the communion of the Pastor and church which so refuseth to be healed.

Rom. 16 : 17 ; Matt. 18 : 15, 16, 17, by proportion ; Gal. 2 : 11 to 14 ; 2 Thes. 3 : 6, 14.

This article is deemed essential to the constitution, and is in substance uniformly observed. The churches have generally and with scarcely a known exception, sustained the doings of the consociation ; that is, they have sanctioned the doings of their pastors and delegates,—and where individual members of the consociated churches have refused to observe the sentence of non-communication with a delinquent church, they have been considered as liable to censure.

It was an ancient practice for the messengers to make a report of their doings to the churches, that the churches might have opportunity to approve or condemn ;—that is to ratify the doings of the consociation, :—a practice which might be revived with advantage.

VII. That in case any difficulties shall arise in any of the churches in this colony, which cannot be issued without considerable disquiet, that church in which they arise, (or that minister, or member aggrieved by them,) shall apply themselves to the council of the consociated churches of the circuit, to which the said church belongs, who, if they see cause shall thereupon convene, hear and determine such cases of difficulty, unless the matter brought before

them, shall be judged so great in the nature of it, or so doubtful in the issue, or of such general concern, that the said council shall judge best that it be referred to a fuller council, consisting of the churches of the other consociation within the same county, (or of the next adjoining consociation of another county, if there be not two consociations in the county where the difficulty ariseth,) who, together with themselves, shall hear judge, determine, and finally issue such case according to the word of God.

Prov. 11 : 14 ; 1 Cor. 14 : 33, and 14 ; 24, by proportion.

VIII. That a particular church, in which any difficulty doth arise, may, if they see cause, call a council of the consociated churches of the circuit, to which the said church belongs, before they proceed to sentence therein ; but there is not the same liberty to an offending brother to call the said council, before the church to which he belongs proceed to excommunication in the said case, unless with the consent of the church.

Acts, 15 : 2 ; Matt. 18 : 15, 16, 17.

The 7th and 8th articles are observed without any essential diversity of construction or practice.

IX. That all the churches of the respective consociations shall choose, if they see cause, one or two members of each church, to represent them in the councils of the said churches, as occasion may call for them, who shall stand in that capacity till new be chosen for the same service, unless any church shall incline to choose their messengers anew, upon the convening of such councils.

Acts 15: 2, 4; 2 Cor. 8: 23.

In reference to this article we find that the general usage is to appoint delegates for a single council only; not delegates to stand in that capacity until new ones are chosen. The usual practice is to send but one delegate, though instances occur in which two are chosen, especially to annual consociations.

X. That the minister or ministers of the county towns, and where there are no ministers in such towns, the two next ministers to the said town, shall as soon as conveniently may be, appoint a time and place, for the meeting of the Elders

and messengers of the churches in the said county, in order to their forming themselves into one or more consociations, and notify the said time and place to the Elders and churches of that county, who shall attend at the same, the Elders in their own persons, and the churches by their messengers, if they see cause to send them. Which Elders and messengers, so assembled in council, as also any other council hereby allowed of, shall have power to adjourn themselves as need shall be, for the space of one year, after the beginning or first session of the said council, and no longer. And that minister who was chosen at the last session of any council, to be moderator, shall with the advice and consent of two more Elders, (or in case of the moderator's death, any two Elders of the same consociation,) call another council within the circuit, when they shall judge there is need thereof. And all councils may prescribe rules as occasion may require, and whatsoever they shall judge needful within their circuit, for the well-performing, and order-

ly-managing their several Acts, to be attended by them, or matters that come under their cognizance.

Phil. 4 ; 8 ; 1 Cor. 14 : 40 ; Phil. 3 : 15, 16. Rom. 14 : 2, 3.

This article we believe has ever been regarded by all the consociations in the state ; and they all, acting in accordance with its provisions, have adopted rules for the regulating of their concerns ; and though there is some diversity in the mode of calling the consociation, in a general sense the rule of the constitution is followed.

XI. That if any person or persons orderly complained of to a council, or that are witnesses to such complaints, (having regular notification to appear,) shall refuse or neglect so to do, in the place, and at the time specified in the warning given, except they or he give some satisfying reason thereof to the said council, they shall be judged guilty of scandalous contempt.

Col. 2 : 5 ; Heb. 13 : 17 ; 1 Thes. 5 : 14.

With respect to this article, there appears to be no difference of opinion as to the principle. The only varieties in practice relate to the treatment of those who are guilty of such scandalous or disciplinable contempt ; and to what constitutes a

regular notification to the parties and to witnesses. On this latter point different consociations specify different modes of notification and different periods of time.

XII. That the teaching Elders of each county shall be one association, (or more if they see cause,) which association or associations shall assemble twice a year at least, at such time and place as they shall appoint, to consult the duties of their office, and the common interest of the churches; who shall consider and resolve questions and cases of importance which shall be offered by any among themselves, or others; who also shall have power of examining and recommending the candidates of the ministry to the work thereof.

Psal. 133 : 1 ; Acts, 20 : 17, 28 to 32 ; Mal. 2 : 7 ; Matt. 5 : 14 ; Deut. 17 : 8, 9, 10 ; 1 Tim. 5 : 22 ; 2 Tim. 2 : 15 ; 1 Tim. 3 : 6, 10 ; Rom. 10 : 15 ; 1 Tim. 4 : 14.

This article does not seem to have contemplated the case of ordained ministers without pastoral charge; nor does any part of the constitution. One hundred and thirty three years ago, such cases were of rare occurrence. Now, it is the uniform practice, so far as we know, to consider ordained ministers, though without pastoral charge, as lawful members of association, and also to admit as members of association, those

ministers who are pastors of churches not consociated. Formerly the associations did not receive such pastors without the express stipulation that they should not act in cases where a consociated pastor or church were concerned or under discipline, and with a very few exceptions such is the case now. Nearly all the consociations consider pastors of churches unconsociated as not legal members of that body, and also that dismissed ministers are not constituent parts of the consociation. This in our judgment, is the right construction of the Platform. But while in *practice*, dismissed ministers are considered members of association, though the constitution speaks only of "*associated pastors*," there is on one point a diversity of usage. Some associations send such ministers as delegates to the general association, and other associations, we believe, do not.

To associations and to them alone, belongs the business of examining and licensing candidates for the ministry. Such is the usage; and though they have, sometimes and for a season, delegated the power (or the right) to committees of their respective bodies, this practice, on conviction of its inexpediency and in compliance with the recommendation of the General Association, is now laid aside. (Some remarks on the licensure of candidates may be found in a subsequent part of this volume, and also on the discipline of dismissed ministers and of pastors not consociated.)

XIII. That the said associated pastors shall take notice of any among

themselves, that may be accused of scandal, or heresy unto, or cognizable by them, examine the matter carefully, and if they find just occasion, shall direct to the calling of the council, where such offenders shall be duly proceeded against.

Lev. 19 : 17 ; 1 Cor. 5 : 6 ; Tit. 3 : 10, 11 ; Isa. 52 : 11 ; Mal. 3 : 3 ; Tit. 1 : 6 to 9 ; Deut. 13 : 14 ; 3 John 9, 10 ; Rev. 2 : 14, 15 ; 1 Tim. 1 : 20, and 4 : 14.

There is not a strict uniformity of practice under this article. We suppose, however, that the usage has generally been for the association not to try and pass judgment upon a consociated pastor, but only to investigate so far as to ascertain whether there be just occasion for calling "the council." Happily for the reputation and usefulness of the ministry in Connecticut, precedents for settling this inquiry are rare.

"*The council.*" "*The council of the churches.*" This language in the Platform almost invariably denotes what is now called the consociation.

XIV. That the said associated pastors shall also be consulted by bereaved churches, belonging to their association, and recommend to such churches, such persons as may be fit to be called and settled in the work of the Gospel ministry among them. And if such bereaved

churches shall not seasonably call and settle a minister among them, the said associated pastors shall lay the state of such bereaved churches before the General Assembly of this colony, that they may take such order concerning them as shall be found necessary for their peace and edification.

2 Cor. 11 : 28 ; Phil. 2 : 19, 20, 21 ; 2 Tim. 2 : 15 ; Tit. 1 : 6 to 10 ; Isa. 49 : 23.

Formerly, and indeed until the last thirty years, the churches, in conformity with the provisions of this article, were accustomed to consult the associated pastors and to employ candidates recommended by them ; and the usage was attended with the most beneficial results. But in later years this excellent provision has been somewhat neglected, and neglected we believe, to the injury of the churches. The causes of this change of usage may be, first, the increasing independency of views cherished by the churches, so that they are less disposed to ask advice ;—secondly, the frequent changes in the ministry, which tend to weaken a sense of the importance and sacredness of the pastoral relation, and of the evils consequent upon calling and settling an incompetent person ;—and thirdly, a dependence on the advice or recommendation of the professors in our theological seminaries. These professors from their connection with candidates for the ministry, do, in many cases, take the place of the as-

sociated pastors, and are consulted by destitute churches. The latter part of the article, which makes it the duty of the associated pastors, in certain circumstances, to lay the case of a bereaved church before the General Assembly of the colony, is obsolete.

XV. That it be recommended as expedient that all the associations of this colony do meet in a General Association, by their respective delegates, one or more out of each association, once a year; the first meeting to be at Hartford, at the time of the General Election next ensuing the date hereof, and so annually in all the counties successively, at such time and place, as they, the said delegates, shall in their annual meetings appoint.

Heb. 13: 1.

Respecting the usages which modify the application of the 15th article, relative to the formation and meetings of the General Association, no remarks are deemed necessary in this place. A condensed and valuable history of the General Association, has been recently published by the venerable Register,—the Rev. Dr. Chapin.

ADDITIONAL NOTE.

THE minutes of the council which formed the Consociation of New Haven County, April 13th, 1709, are preserved on the records of the Association of New Haven county. Respecting that council, the Rev. Jonathan Todd, pastor of East Guilford (now Madison,) says, in a tract published in 1759, "Most of the elders and churches, by their messengers, attended, though with particular instructions, (as I was informed by one who was very active in bringing about such a consociation of the churches), to take care to secure their congregational privileges. When they came together, many of the messengers of the churches had some doubts whether their congregational liberties were sufficiently guarded in some of the articles. The Rev. Mr. Andrew, (of Milford,) and Mr. Pierpont, (of New Haven,) interpreted these articles to their satisfaction. They insisted that the sense of those articles, or clauses of articles that they were in greatest doubt about, should be written and fixed, to prevent a different interpretation hereafter." Todd's Faithful Narrative, p. 34.

As the interpretation then given and put upon record, was not only a cotemporaneous exposition of the Platform, but was given by two of the members of the Synod which formed the

Platform, one of whom (Mr. Pierpont,) is designated by tradition (Stiles' Christian Union, p. 70), as the author of that instrument, it has a historical value sufficient to justify its insertion here.

“ Some members desiring the Council's sense of several Articles in the written method of managing discipline, as it was agreed on by the Council, at Saybrook, Sept. 9, 1708.

“ Voted as follows :—

“ 1. As to the first Article, we conclude, if the majority of the brethren do not consent, the elders cannot proceed to act. If the elders do not consent, the fraternity cannot proceed; in which case it is proper to seek council.

“ 2. The second Article, we understand to be an explanation, or revival, of the duty engaged by our churches when they give the right hand of fellowship.

“ 3. By 'all cases of scandal' in Article third, we suppose such cases as need a council for their determination.

“ 4. A major part of the elders we suppose necessary. As in a particular church the brethren cannot act without the elder, so in a council, the messengers may not make an act of council, without the elders or a major part of them.

“ 5. 'Shall see their determination,' &c. *i. e.* shall by themselves, or some of their number deputed thereunto, observe whether the counsel of God, sought in this way, may be complied with or refused.

“ 6. Contempt of counsel sought of God, or offered in a way of God, must be scandalous, or a just offence, and to be dealt with. And that

clause, viz. 'The churches are to approve of said sentence,' &c., we understand as the Platform* expresseth it, viz. The churches being informed of the council's judgment, and the churches approving said sentence, then the non-communication to be declared. Without approbation of churches, there cannot be a non-communication of said churches.

"7. The seventh Article provides only for joining two councils in weighty, difficult, and dangerous cases.

"8. Churches may call a council before they proceed to censure; but, without their allowance, no particular person shall have a council before excommunication.

"9. That as no members of a council can remain such for longer than one year; so the churches may choose new messengers for every council, if they see cause.

"10. The tenth Article directs to the calling the first council, and adjourning the same, not beyond a year, and how a further council may afterwards be called.

"11. The eleventh Article shows how persons concerned may be obliged to attend, with their cases and evidence, on a council.

"12. The twelfth Article is the revival of our former ministers' meetings, for the ends and good services formerly aimed at; wherein our people did rejoice for a season, and hope yet will.

"13. The thirteenth Article shows how a minister offending may be proceeded against, till, by a council of that consociation, he be reclaimed, or removed from his office."

* See Camb. Platf. Ch. XV. § 2, 3d. way of Communion.

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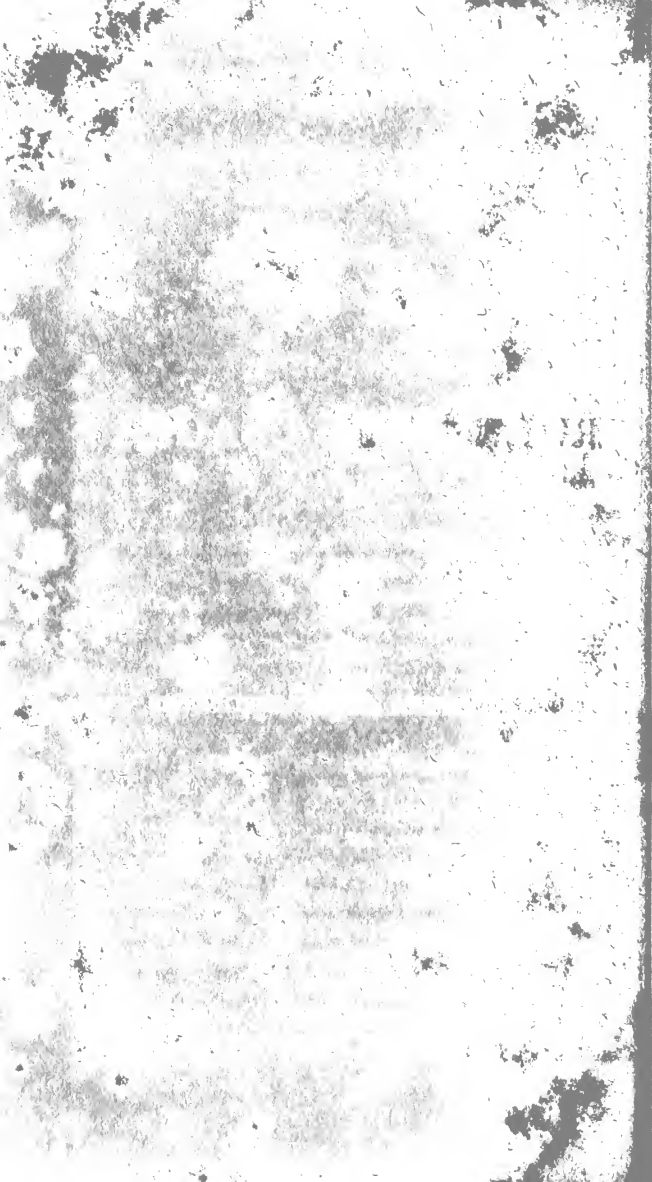
RULES AND USAGES

IN THE

Consociations and Associations

OF

CONNECTICUT.



PART FIRST.

OF CHURCHES.

I. The completeness of particular Churches.

THE rights, powers, and duties of particular churches are the basis of our ecclesiastical constitution. To none but the elder or elders of a particular church with the consent of the brethren of the same, does it belong to exercise church discipline, to open and shut, to receive and reject, to excommunicate and to absolve from excommunication. (Heads of Agreement I; 6, 7. Saybrook Articles I.)

II. The Communion of Churches.

1. Although churches are distinct, and equal, yet all the churches ought to preserve church communion, one with another; and all ought to be most willing to give account of their church proceedings to each other, when desired, for preventing or removing any offences that may arise among them. (Heads of Ag. IV, 6.)

2 The churches confederated under our ecclesiastical constitution, do not by their confed-

eration cease to be Congregational churches; nor do they part with any of the rights, powers and duties, which belong to them by Christ's institution. They only consent and covenant to exercise towards each other, under certain forms, that mutual communion which is their duty as churches of Christ; and particularly, *first*, by way of mutual care in taking thought for one another's welfare,—*secondly*, by way of consultation one with another in cases which require the judgment and counsel of other churches,—and *thirdly*, by way of admonition, to wit, in case any public offence be found in a church, in which case, if the church that lieth under offence be found obstinate, after due means used for its recovery, by a council or synod of neighboring churches, those neighboring churches approving and accepting the judgment of the council, are respectively to declare the sentence of non-communion concerning the offending church.*

* These and other particular instances of church communion, were distinctly defined by the synod at Cambridge, in 1648. Such responsibility of churches to each other was well known and practically recognized in Connecticut long before the Saybrook Platform was framed. See Camb. Platf. XV: 2.

PART SECOND.

OF CONSOCIATION.

1. The matter of a Consociation.

1 A CONSOCIATION consists of the churches neighboring to each other within a certain district, which is ordinarily either a whole or a part of a county, with the elders or pastors, agreeing to practice church communion, by affording to each other such assistance as may be requisite upon all occasions ecclesiastical. (Sayb. Art. II.)

2. A church proposing to unite with the consociation, may be required to give satisfaction to other churches respecting the conformity of its faith and order to the pattern of the scriptures. (Heads of Agr. VIII.)

II. The members of a Council of the Consociated Churches.

1. Every pastor of a consociated church is a member of the council of the consociation. (Saybr. Art. II.) Nevertheless, if a pastor of a consociated church has been introduced into

the pastoral office without the presence and concurrence of the council of the consociation, such pastor cannot be obtruded upon the churches of the district as a standing member of the council without their first obtaining, by examination, or otherwise, as they shall see fit, satisfaction respecting his fitness for the work.

2. The brotherhood of each consociated church is to be represented in the council by one or more messengers or delegates, chosen for that purpose by themselves, according to the rules and usages of each particular church. (Sayb. Art. IX.)

III. The officers of a Consociation.

1. Every council elects its moderator, to direct the debates and preserve order, and its scribe or scribes to write the minutes of the proceedings.

2. The only standing officer of a consociation, is the register who keeps the records, and transcribes into a book the minutes of each council as written down by the scribe or scribes.

3. In the consociation of New London county, the officers are a Moderator, Clerk, and Treasurer. The Moderator is chosen annually; the Clerk and Treasurer hold their offices during the pleasure of the consociation.

IV. Meetings of the Council.

1. In each consociation, an annual meeting is held at a time and place previously agreed on. In this annual council, the pastors and the messengers of the churches meet without being summoned by special letters missive.

2. The minister who was chosen at the last session of any council to be moderator, shall with the advice and consent of two or more elders, (or in case of the moderator's death, any two elders of the same consociation) call another council within the circuit when they shall judge there is need thereof. (Sayb. Art. X.)*

V. Business belonging to the Council.

1. In the districts of New Haven, Fairfield,

* To this rule prescribed in the Platform, there are, in practice, these exceptions. In New London county, the moderator, or in case of his death or disability, the senior pastor, is empowered to convene the council at his own discretion whenever he is orderly applied to for that purpose. In Fairfield East, the moderator may convene the council with the consent of one pastor, and must convene it at the request of two. In Litchfield North, the moderator on application from five members of the consociation, and in Litchfield South, the moderator on application from five members of any consociate church, is required to convene the council. In New Haven West, the senior pastor, is authorized, in case of the death of the moderator, to act in his stead.

and Litchfield counties, the rules and usages of the consociations, require a council of all the consociated churches to be called at the settlement or dismissal of a pastor. In Hartford North, each church, when settling or dismissing a pastor, calls a council at its own discretion. In Hartford South, Windham, and Tolland, the majority of the council, on such occasions, must be of the consociations. In Middlesex all the members of such councils, must be of the consociation.

In New London county, a particular rule exists, viz. "When any particular church and society shall present to the moderator, documents preparatory to the ordination or dismissal of a minister, the moderator shall, by letters missive, convoke such ministers and delegates from their respective churches, (not less than six of each) as said church and society shall request, which ministers and delegates, together with himself and a delegate from his church, shall constitute a council for the above purpose. In the case of ordination, the church and pastor elect shall have the privilege of inviting one or two pastors and delegates of churches without the consociation, but in fellowship with it, to act in concert with the consociation."

2 At the annual meeting, the council inquires into the state of religion in the churches of the district, enters into deliberations and

gives advice concerning matters of common interest, and when orderly applied to, gives advice to a particular church, or to individual members of the churches.

3. In case any difficulties arise in any of the churches, which cannot be issued without considerable disquiet, that church in which they arise, may before proceeding to sentence therein, or at any stage of the proceedings, apply to the council of the consociated churches of the circuit to which the said church belongs, who, if they see cause, shall thereupon convene, hear, and determine such cases of difficulty. (Sayb. Art. VII, VIII.)

4. When a consociated church has proceeded to the sentence of excommunication against a brother charged with any offence, such offending brother has liberty to call a council of the churches of the consociation to hear and determine in his case. (Sayb. Art. VII, VIII.)

VI. The form of proceeding in cases of difficulty.

1. *The case of an offending Pastor.* In some districts, as New Haven West, and Fairfield East, no complaint is entertained against a pastor, except on the presentation of the associated pastors of the district. (Sayb. Art. XIII.) In others, as Litchfield South,

if an elder has been complained of to the associated pastors, and they have refused to bring the matter before the council, the aggrieved brother may complain directly to the consociation. In New London, a complaint against a pastor may be brought by any other pastor, or by a church, directly to the council without any interposition of the associated pastors. In New London, none but a pastor, or a church, of that consociation, and in Litchfield North, none but a pastor, can commence a process of discipline with a pastor.

2. *The case of an offending Church.* In the consociation of New London county, any minister or church of the consociation, being aggrieved with unscriptural profession or deportment of any of the churches in that connection, and having used all those private means which the Gospel proposes for reforming the erring member, may present a complaint to the consociation. In Litchfield South, if the body of the church shall be guilty of heresy or scandal, an aggrieved brother shall use his endeavors to have a church meeting regularly convened; at which meeting he shall lay before the church their apprehended errors; and if they give not christian satisfaction, he shall regularly bring his complaint to the consociation: Or if the church refuse to meet and hear such complaint of an offended brother, he may directly, thereupon, bring his complaint to the consociation. In Litchfield North, a process

of discipline with a church may be commenced by a pastor, or any member of that church; the first steps to be taken in private, but at the second step, one pastor and one member, from another church are to assist, before the offending church shall be cited to answer to any complaint before the consociation; Should the proper officer for calling the church refuse to do it, on written application stating the grievance, or should the church refuse to assemble, he or they are to be adjudged contumacious. In other consociations, no method is expressly provided by which a church can be brought before a council of the consociation without its own consent, except in the case of an appeal from its sentence of excommunication.

3. *The Organ of communication with the Council.* A person having a complaint against a minister is to bring his complaint, not directly to the consociation, (except in New London county) but to the associated pastors of the district through the moderator of the association. A reference, complaint, or appeal to the consociation, is to be put into the hands of the moderator of the last council, or of the pastor or pastors upon whom, in the case of his death or disability, it devolves to act in his stead.

4. *Citation.* It is the duty of the moderator, or of the person or persons acting in his stead, to examine the reference, complaint, appeal, or request, put into his hands, and if he finds that it is in order, and that the case is one in which, ac-

ording to the rules of the consociation, a council is required, he is to issue not only letters missive convening the council, but also citations to the parties concerned, and if requested to the witnesses named by either party. The citation to a party complained of or appealed from, must be accompanied with a certified copy of the complaint or appeal, and ought to be presented, unless the consociation has some other special rule, at least eight days before the time appointed for the trial of the case. In Fairfield East, and Windham, a minister accused before the consociation must receive notice at least one month previous to the meeting of the consociation. In some consociations, usage permits either the moderator or the scribe to issue citations to parties or witnesses. And in some, as in Litchfield South, notice given to the church, or to the pastor, or moderator of the church by a party appealing, is sufficient notice to the church to appear before the consociation, at the next annual meeting, in answer to the appeal.

5. *Limitation of the Right of Appeal.* In Fairfield East, and Windham, every appellant is required to give the church notice in writing, of his intention to appeal, within one month after his conviction, and to prosecute the appeal before the council, within six months from the original trial. In Litchfield South, the appeal must be duly notified to the church

or to their Moderator within eight days after the sentence of the church is rendered.

6. *Censure of scandalous Contempt.* If any person or persons orderly complained of to a council, or that are witnesses to such complaints, (having regular notification to appear, shall refuse or neglect so to do, in the place, and at the time specified, in the warning given, except they or he give some satisfactory reason thereof, to the said council, they shall be judged guilty of scandalous contempt. (Sayb. Art. XI.) If any person thus guilty of scandalous contempt, be a member of a church, that church, ought to deal with him as an offender: otherwise, the church becomes partaker of his sin.

VII. Method of voting in a Council.

The rule according to which questions were anciently decided in councils of the consociated churches, was that nothing shall be deemed, an act, or judgment of any council, which hath not the major part of the elders present concurring, and such a number of the messengers present, as makes the majority of the council. (Sayb. Art. IV.) In the consociations of Litchfield county, and in that of New Haven East, this rule is still observed, with the modification that a majority of the elders must concur with

a majority of the messengers, to give validity to any act in reference to which, the application of the rule, is demanded by any member of the council. In New Haven West, two thirds of the votes are necessary to a decision.

VIII. Result or decision of the Council.

The result or decision of the council whether it be called advisory, as in some districts, or authoritative as in others, is in all cases to be a final issue. That is, no other council may be called to rejudge the matter: and in all cases, the church is to give effect to the decision of the council, by accepting and acting upon it, or by submitting to it, as the case may require. And the council, having seen their determination or judgment, duly executed and attended, may put upon its records the evidence of the compliance of the church with the decision.

IX. The right of parties to be heard by counsel.

No person is permitted to appear as counsel for another, before any consociation, who is not a member of a congregational church, and in good standing. In the consociation of New

Haven West, no person practicing as an attorney at law, in the civil courts, is allowed to appear as counsel. In New Haven East, no person who has made the pleading of the law, his professional business is admitted as an advocate unless he be a member of a church, belonging to that consociation. In the consociation of New London, no person is permitted to appear as counsel, for any party; nevertheless, the consociation, when in its judgment the fair and full investigation of any cause, shall require aid, may designate one of its own members to present and examine witnesses in favor of one or both the parties.

X. The union of two Consociations.

There is no appeal from the determination pronounced by a council of the consociated churches, in a district, to any other council or judicature. Yet if the matter brought before the counsel of any district shall be judged so great in the nature of it, or so doubtful in the issue, or of such general concern, that the said council shall judge best that it be referred to a fuller council, then they shall invite to their aid the churches of the other consociation, within the same county, (or of the next adjoining consociation of another county, if there be in it two

consociations in the county, where the difficulty ariseth,) and the fuller council of those two adjoining consociations, shall hear, judge, determine, and finally issue such case according to the word of God. (Sayb. Art. VII.)

XI. Proceedings when the Church refuses to abide by judgment of the Council.

1. If any pastor and church doth obstinately refuse a due attendance, and conformity to the determination of the council, that hath the cognizance of the case, and determineth it as above, after due patience used, they shall be reputed guilty of scandalous contempt. (Sayb. Art. VI.)

2. Such pastor and church, are to be dealt with as the rule of God's word doth provide, i. e. following the analogy of the rule, given by Christ, in Matthew XVIII; 15, 16, 17. (Sayb. Art. VI.)

3. If the offending church, and pastor, refuse to have the admonition of the consociated church, expressed by the council, then, after due patience, the sentence of non-communication shall be declared against such pastor and church. And the churches of the district, are severally to approve of the said sentence, by withdrawing from the communion of the pastor

and church, which so refuseth to be heard. (Sayb. Art. VI. See also above Part I. Art. II. § 2.)

XII. Select Councils.

1. The right of a church to ask advice of any other churches in cases of difficulty, is not taken away by our ecclesiastical confederation, yet the party concerned has always a right, to have his cause heard and determined by the consociation, after the church has proceeded to sentence of excommunication against him.

2. In Litchfield South, if it be requested by any offender, when prosecuted in any particular church, he or she shall have a right, (by the consent of the church,) to an advisory council to be mutually chosen by such church and offender, previously to a hearing and judgment by the church; unless by mutual consent of the parties, such case shall be immediately referred to the consociation.

3. The result of a select council, should be entered upon the records of the church; and in Litchfield North, it is distinctly required that an authentic copy of the result, be deposited with the register of the consociation to be kept on file.

4. No aggrieved party in a consociated church has a right in any case to call an *ex parte* council, for the redress of grievances ; no church is required to comply with such a call, or to attend to the advice of such a council ;—our ecclesiastical confederation having provided a more excellent way.

PART THIRD.

OF PARTICULAR ASSOCIATIONS.

I. Membership in the Association.

1. **THE** teaching elders of the churches in each county or district become an association by their own consent and covenant. (Sayb. Art. XII.) He who consents to become a teaching elder in a consociated church, consents to become a member of the association, but does not become actually a member, till the associated pastors, upon their satisfaction of his fitness, consent, either formally or informally, to receive him.

2. Ordained ministers of the gospel, having no pastoral relation to a church, but exercising their ministry within the bounds of an association, either as teachers in a theological school, or as supplying a congregation statedly with the ministration of the word, ought to be in connection with the association of the district

within which they reside, and become such by mutual consent.

3. A minister dismissed from his pastoral charge, and still exercising his ministry occasionally, does not cease to be a member of the association, but is under their fraternal inspection in all that concerns his ministerial character, and may sit in their meetings to aid with his advice and vote.

4. A minister ordained to the work of an evangelist whether as a missionary to foreign parts, or to labor among the destitute at home, ought to be connected with some association till such time, as it shall be convenient for him to be united with some other body.

II. Duties of the Association.

The duties of the associated pastors in each county or division of a county, are,

1. To consult the duties of their office, and common interest of the churches, [Sayb. Art. XII.] by carefully inquiring, at least twice in each year, into the state of religion in their respective charges :

2. To send three delegates each year to the general association, and by the hands of those delegates an authentic report of the state of religion in that district :

3. To act upon such matters as may be referred to them by the general association :

4. To consider and resolve questions and cases of importance which shall be offered by any among themselves or others : (Sayb. Art. XII.)

5. To examine candidates for the ministry, and by a certificate of approbation, (commonly called a license) to recommend to the churches such as they find to be duly qualified : (Sayb. Art. XII.)

6. To recommend to bereaved churches, on their application for advice, such persons as may be fit to be called and settled in the work of the Gospel ministry among them : (Sayb. Art. XIV.)

7. To take notice of any among themselves that may be accused of scandal or heresy unto them, or of scandal or heresy cognizable by them ; to examine the matter carefully ; and, if they find just occasion, to direct to the calling of the council of the consociated churches of the district, that such offenders may be duly proceeded against before the council. (Art. XIII.)

III. Officers of the Association.

1. A moderator and a scribe are chosen at the opening of each meeting.

2. Each association has its register who records in a book, the minutes put into his hands by the scribe of each meeting.

IV. Meetings of the Association.

1. Generally the associations hold two stated meetings in each year, one of the two being coincident with the annual meeting of the consociation. The association of New Haven West, meets three times annually.

2. Special meetings are called by letters missive from the moderator of the last meeting, at the desire of any two members. In case of the death or disability of the moderator, any two members may issue letters convoking a special meeting. In the association of New London county a special meeting is called, in case of the death or disability of the moderator, by the last preceding moderator.

3. The letters which call a special meeting, state the business for which the meeting is convened; and in accordance with a principle of natural justice, it is commonly understood that no business is to be taken up at a special meeting, other than that of which the letters missive have given due notice.

V. The examination and recommendation of candidates for the Ministry.

1. Each association has its own rules in respect to the time which a candidate must have devoted to the study of theology before examination; but generally, in compliance with a re-

commendation of the general association, the candidate for examination must have spent at least two years in theological studies, and must have a competent knowledge of the arts and sciences.

2. The certificate of approbation, or license to preach, confers on the candidate no ecclesiastical rank or authority. He is not a minister, but only a candidate for the ministry, approved by the associated pastors, and permitted to preach for the trial of his gifts. His certificate of approbation may therefore be revoked whenever the association shall see cause.

3. The certificate of approbation is ordinarily given only for the term of four years, at the end of which period, it may be renewed at the request of the candidate.

4. A candidate presenting himself to a council, or any other ecclesiastical body, for ordination, does not need a formal dismissal from the association which gave him license to preach. His ordination, terminates his connection with that association; and he is to enter into new relations, not as a candidate, but as a minister.*

* In the Presbyterian church, a license to preach is given by a presbytery; and all ordinations are also performed by presbyteries. The licentiate is "under the care" of the presbytery by which he was licensed, and cannot be ordained by another presbytery, without being first, by a special dismissal and recommendation, released from his former relation, and placed "under the care" of that other presbytery. In the congregational communion, no man begins to preach without being first examined and approved by an association of ministers; and in imitation of presbyterian usage, the approba-

VI. Proceedings against a Minister charged with scandal or heresy.

1. An offending brother in the association, is to be first dealt with privately accordingly to the rules of Christ in Matt. XVIII. 15, 16.

2. When the accused brother is a pastor of a consociated church, the association is to inquire whether the charge is of such a nature, in respect to the matter alledged, and of so much probability in respect to the grounds on which it rests, as to require a trial; and then, if they see cause, they are to direct to the calling of a council of the consociated churches, where such offenders may be duly proceeded against. (Sayb. Art. XIII.)

3. When the accused brother is pastor of a church not consociated, the association, having found upon inquiry sufficient cause to proceed against him, may bring the matter to the church of which he is pastor; and that church may call to its aid, as in the case of the ordination of its pastor, a select council of neighboring churches.

tion is called a license, and the candidate is called a licentiate. But the association by which candidates are licensed, is not the body by which ministers are ordained; and therefore an association knows nothing about dismissing a licentiate in order to his ordination. The license is itself a sufficient dismissal and recommendation to any ordaining body to whom it may be presented, and is valid for the term of four years from its date, unless otherwise limited in express terms.

Presbyterians have sometimes been perplexed in consequence of not understanding this distinction.

4. When the accused brother is not a pastor of any church, and is not by some special rule amenable to the consociation, or when being pastor of a church not consociated, that church refuses to submit the charges against him to a proper council, the association may proceed to investigate the truth of the charges, and if they find him guilty of any scandal or heresy for which he ought to be deposed from the ministry, they may expel him from their fellowship, and declare him to be no longer in communion with them, as a minister of Christ.

5. When a minister of the Gospel, residing or performing the work of the ministry among our churches, but not connected with the association as a member, is charged with scandal or heresy, it is the duty of the association to examine the matter as in the case of one of their own members, and (if they find just occasion,) to present the matter to the proper ecclesiastical authority, with which the accused is directly connected. But if it be not known, that the individual is connected with any ecclesiastical body competent to try the case,—or if he be connected with an ecclesiastical body too distant to act seasonably and intelligently upon the matters alledged,—or if the ecclesiastical body with which he is connected, refuse to do what is required by the laws of Christ, the purity of the ministry, and the safety of the churches,—then the association may proceed to investigate the charges, and finding him guilty of any scan-

dal or heresy for which he ought to be deposed from the ministry, may declare him to be out of this fellowship, and may warn the churches against him as a deceiver.

PART FOURTH.

OF THE GENERAL ASSOCIATION.

I. Its Constitution and Order of Proceedings.

1. THE general association consists of delegates from the several particular associations of Connecticut, (Sayb. Art. XV.) and of delegates from the congregational bodies in other states with which the general association is in fraternal correspondence. It also receives delegates from each of the two bodies entitled "The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church," who partake in the deliberations of the general association, but give no vote.

2. The general association for each year, meets at the place appointed by the general association of the preceding year, on the third Tuesday in June, at 11 o'clock, *ante meridiem*.

3. The objects for which the general association meets are, to learn the general state of re-

ligion,—to promote unity and order in ecclesiastical affairs,—and to recommend to the district associations such matters and things as they shall apprehend will be for the general welfare.

4 The general association has no legislative or judicial power over ministers or churches. It is nothing else than a meeting for consultation and advice, and for co-operation in the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom.

5. The district association within whose bounds the last but one preceding general association was held, appoints one of its own members to preach a sermon before the general association.

6. Each district association appoints three delegates to the general association; and it is recommended that one delegate at least from each district association, be of the number of those who attended at the general association last preceding.

7. A preacher is appointed by the general association, on the nomination of the district association within whose bounds the general association is assembled, who delivers a *concio ad clerum* in the chapel of Yale College, in the evening of the commencement day.

8. The meetings of the general association are held from year to year within the several districts, in the following order,—Hartford North, Litchfield North, Litchfield South, Fairfield West, Fairfield East, New Haven West,

New Haven East, Hartford South, Middlesex, New London, Windham, Tolland.

9. The rules of order for the general association are as follows.

SYSTEM OF RULES,

FOR THE REGULATION OF BUSINESS BEFORE THE GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT.

1. THE minister at whose house the association is to meet, when the hour of meeting is come, provided a majority of the members be present, shall call them to order, and call for, receive and count the ballots for a scribe, and declare the person chosen. If there be not a majority present, he shall wait one hour and then proceed.

2. The person chosen scribe shall call for, receive and count the ballots for a moderator, and declare the person chosen.

3. The moderator shall take the chair and direct the members to ballot for an assistant scribe.

4. The moderator, after the certificates of membership are read, shall open the association with prayer; he shall also open and close the association, each day, with prayer, except at the termination of the session, at which time he may request some other person to pray.

5. As soon as the association is opened, a committee of overtures shall be chosen to prepare business for the association.

6. Every morning and afternoon, at the time to which the association is adjourned, the moderator shall take the chair, and the scribe shall call over the roll of the

members; those who are tardy shall be called to give a reason for their delay.

7. No member shall withdraw from the body until the close of the session, without leave of absence first obtained from the moderator.

8. After the association is opened in the morning by prayer, the minutes of the preceding day shall be read by the scribe.

9. The moderator shall preserve order and decorum in the body; and when he speaks to the merits of any question, he shall leave the chair and address himself to the scribe.

10. Every member when he wishes to speak shall address the moderator.

11. No member shall speak more than twice to the merits of the question in debate, except by special permission of the body; nor more than once until every member choosing to speak shall have spoken.

12. Every motion, except for adjournment, shall be reduced to writing, if the moderator or any two members desire it.

13. When a question is under debate, no motion shall be made except for amendment—or the previous question—to postpone—or for an adjournment. The previous question is, *Shall the main question now be put?*

14. No motion, except for reconsideration, shall be acted upon until seconded.

15. When any member, in debating or otherwise, shall transgress the rules of the body, the moderator shall, by his own authority, or at the request of any member, call him to order; and if a question shall arise concerning his being in order, it shall be decided by an appeal to the body.

16. When two or more rise at once, the moderator shall name the member who is first to speak.

17. Whilst the moderator is putting any question, or addressing the body, no one shall walk out of or across the house; nor, in such case, or when a member is speaking, shall entertain private discourse, or read any printed book or paper; nor whilst a member is speaking, shall pass between him and the chair.

18. No motion, committed to writing, shall be finally decided upon, until it shall have had three several readings, if any member require it.

19. In cases of equal divisions of votes, the moderator shall have a casting vote.

20. If three or more members object against the appointment of a committee by nomination, the committee shall be chosen by ballot.

21. The moderator shall continue in office until the next annual meeting of the general association, and shall have power, upon the application of any district association, to convene the general association, and likewise, in case of necessity, to alter the appointed place of annual meeting; of both which he shall give public notice in such papers published in Hartford, New Haven, and New London as he shall judge to have the most extensive circulation.

22. These rules and orders shall be read at the opening of every session of the association, and shall be in force during the pleasure of the body, any rules to the contrary, previously made, notwithstanding.

II. Officers and Standing Committees.

1. The general association, like the district associations, has its register, or keeper of the records, in whose hands the minutes of each

meeting are placed by the scribe, to be copied into a book for future use and reference.

2. The general association appoints every year, a treasurer, who keeps the accounts, superintends the printing of the minutes, has charge of the moneys raised by the association for the payment of its incidental expenses, and pays out those moneys as directed by the votes of the association.

3. One minister in each district association, is appointed by the general association to receive from every pastor and stated supply, the annual contribution, or tax for defraying the incidental expenses of the general association.

4. One minister in each district is appointed by the general association to collect the statistical accounts of the churches, and to make returns to a general agent, who is also appointed by the general association to digest and arrange the returns and to make his report annually.

5. A committee of one in each district is appointed to certify the standing of ministers travelling out of the bounds of the state.

6. Four persons are annually appointed by the general association as a committee on the Everest Fund.*

* Dr. Solomon Everest of Canton, who deceased April 3d, 1822, left a residuary legacy including nearly one half of his personal property, and amounting in all to fourteen thousand dollars, to religious charities. One half of this legacy was to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions; and one fourth part to the Missionary Society of Connecti-

The committee on the Everest fund present their report to the general association every year.

III. The General Association as a Missionary Society.

1. The general association began to take measures for prosecuting missions to the new and frontier settlements of the country, as early as the year 1774. In 1788 those measures were systematized by forming and adopting the constitution of the Missionary Society of Connecticut, which is as follows.

CONSTITUTION

OF THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF CONNECTICUT.

ART I. This society shall be known by the name of *The Missionary Society* of Connecticut.

ART. II. The general association of the state of Connecticut shall be the said Missionary Society.

ART. III. The general association shall annually by

cut. The other fourth part was directed by the testator "to be applied for the purchase of bibles, religious tracts &c. for distribution: for the support of the Domestic Mission in this state: for the education of indigent pious youth for the Gospel ministry: to any or all of the above purposes, as shall be thought most expedient by a committee which the general association of the state of Connecticut shall from time to time, appoint for that purpose."

ballot appoint twelve trustees, whereof six shall be clergymen and six shall be brethren of the churches, who shall conduct the business of the society in the manner hereafter described.

ART. IV. The object of this society shall be to christianize the heathen in North America, and to support and promote Christian knowledge in the new settlements within the United States, and both shall be pursued as circumstances shall point out, and as the trustees under the superintendence of the General Association shall direct.

ART. V. The General Association and the trustees shall adopt such measures, from time to time, for raising funds, as they shall judge expedient.

ART. VI. The trustees shall have power to apply the funds of the society according to their discretion, in all cases in which they shall not be limited by the General Association or by the donors. They shall correspond with other missionary societies; shall have power to appoint and dismiss missionaries, to pay them, and generally to transact all business necessary to attain the ends of the society; and shall be paid their necessary expenses, but nothing for their services.

ART. VII. The trustees shall annually appoint a secretary, who shall keep a fair account of their proceedings. They shall also appoint a chairman, who, with four of the trustees, shall be a quorum to transact business; or if the stated chairman shall not be present, any seven of the trustees shall be a quorum.

ART. VIII. The chairman shall have power to call a meeting of the trustees at his discretion, by letters left with them, or at the houses of their residence; and it shall be his duty to call such meeting whenever requested by two of the trustees; and in case of the death of the chairman, or of his absence from the state, any two trustees are hereby empowered to call a meeting.

ART. IX. The General Association shall annually appoint a treasurer and an auditor of accounts ; and the treasurer shall exhibit both to the General Association and to the trustees, the state of the treasury, whenever he shall be called upon for that purpose.

ART. X. The trustees shall annually exhibit to the General Association a particular account of the missionaries employed by them ; of the places to which they are sent ; of the missions ; of the state of the funds ; of the receipts and expenditures : and of whatever relating to this institution the General Association shall require.

ART. XI. The trustees and all officers of this society shall enter on their respective offices on the first Wednesday of August, annually ; and shall continue in office for one year.

ART. XII. The trustees shall hold their first meeting at the State House in Hartford, on the first Wednesday of August next, at 11 o'clock A. M., and in every year thereafter they shall meet at the same time and place, unless otherwise ordered by the General Association.

ART. XIII. If on experience it shall be found necessary to alter the constitution, an alteration may be made by the General Association at their stated session ; but not without having been drawn up in writing and lying under consideration one year ; nor unless at least two thirds of the General Association shall adopt said alteration.

The following additional article was adopted by vote of the society and approved by the legislature, in the year 1805 :

Voted, that it shall be the duty of the trustees of this society, to place the treasurer under bonds for the faithful discharge of his trust, and to such an amount as

they shall think proper. And in case such treasurer shall refuse to give bonds as aforesaid, it shall be in their power to displace him, and appoint one in his place, who will qualify himself for the trust; who shall continue in office, till the next meeting of the General Association.

This society was incorporated by the legislature of Connecticut in 1802; and, in conformity with the act of incorporation, the trustees make a report of their receipts and expenditures, to the legislature, annually.

2. The Domestic Missionary Society for Connecticut and its vicinity, was in like manner formed in 1816; the General Association itself being the society. For fourteen years the attention of its directors was confined to feeble congregations and waste places in Connecticut. In 1830, its plan was enlarged and its name was changed to "The Missionary Society of Connecticut, auxiliary to the American Home Missionary Society," by the adoption of the following revised constitution,

CONSTITUTION

OF THE
MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF CONNECTICUT, AUXILIARY TO THE
AMERICAN HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

As amended and adopted, June, 1831.

ART. I. This Society shall be known by the name of the Missionary Society of Connecticut, auxiliary to the American Home Missionary Society.

ART. II. The General Association of Connecticut shall be said Society.

ART. III. The object of the Society shall be to co-operate with the A. H. M. S. in building up the waste places of Connecticut, and in sending the Gospel to the destitute, and assisting feeble congregations in other and more destitute portions of the United States, according to the provisions of the 8th Article of the constitution of the parent society, with such stipulations as shall secure to this society the control of the raising and application of funds, the selection and appointment of missionaries, and the general designation of their fields of labor; the said stipulations to be mutually agreed upon by the directors of the society, and the executive committee of the A. H. M. S.

ART. IV. The officers of the society shall be, a secretary, a treasurer, an auditor, and eighteen directors. The treasurer and auditor of the Missionary Society of Connecticut shall be, *ex officio*, treasurer and auditor of this society. The twelve trustees of the Missionary Society of Connecticut shall be *ex officio*, directors of this society. Six additional directors shall be annually chosen by ballot by the General Association. The secretary shall be chosen by the directors. Seven of the directors shall be laymen, and eleven clergymen.

ART. V. The treasurer shall pay out the money of the society only as ordered by the directors, and shall exhibit a statement of his accounts to the board whenever called on for the purpose.

ART. VI. It shall be the duty of the directors, five of whom shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for business, to pursue the object of the society by adopting such measures, from time to time, as they shall judge expedient, under the superintendence of the General

Association, and subject to their special direction, should it, at any time, be thought proper to apply to the General Assembly for a brief.

ART. VII. The directors shall have power to apply the funds of the society according to their discretion, in all cases in which they shall not be limited by the General Association, or the donors ; to appoint and dismiss missionaries ; to pay them ; and generally, to transact all business necessary to attain the ends of the society. And no officer of the society, the treasurer excepted, shall receive any compensation for his services.*

ART. VIII. The board of directors shall meet twice a year ; on such day of the week of the state election, at Hartford, as they shall appoint, and on the first Wednesday of August. The board of directors shall annually report their doings to the General Association.

ART. IX. A permanent fund may be formed, consisting of donations of individuals, if the donations are made with that particular view ; but all other moneys of the society shall be appropriated, from year to year, to the attainment of the ends of the society.

ART. X. No alterations shall be made in this Constitution, unless the same shall have been proposed at a previous annual meeting, or recommended by the directors and adopted by a vote of two thirds of the members of the General Association present.

The last clause of this article was erased in June, 1832.

APPENDIX :

**CONTAINING NOTICES OF THE GENERAL ASSOCIATIONS OF
MASSACHUSETTS, NEW HAMPSHIRE, AND NEW YORK ;
THE GENERAL CONVENTION OF VERMONT ; THE
GENERAL CONFERENCE OF MAINE, AND
THE EVANGELICAL CONSOCIATION
OF RHODE ISLAND.**

APPENDIX

CONTAINING A LIST OF THE MEMBERS OF THE
COMMISSIONERS OF THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE
AND THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF
THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE IN IRELAND
AND THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF
THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE IN SCOTLAND

GENERAL ASSOCIATION

OF

MASSACHUSETTS.

THE confederation of churches, as it exists in Connecticut, under the Saybrook Articles, has never been introduced into Massachusetts. At different periods, the attempt has been made, in that state, to provide for the communion and intercourse of churches, more effectually than is done by the Cambridge Platform, or by the usages which have grown up under it, and which have now in a great measure superseded it. But such proposals have always been rejected there.

Associations of pastors, meeting statedly, for counsel and mutual improvement, began to exist in Massachusetts at a very early period. But these associations were never, as in Connecticut, formally adopted by the churches as an element in their system of communion. Gradually, however, the practice of examining and approving candidates for the ministry, was recognized by usage as belonging to the associations. A General Convention of Congregational Ministers was held annually at Boston, on the occasion of the general election and the meeting of the legislature. In this convention, which was not a representative body formed by delegation, the ministers of the metropolis, and its immediate vicinity, held of course, a

predominating influence. The convention still has its annual meeting; but in consequence of the division occasioned by Unitarianism, it is now little else than a charitable society.

In 1802, delegates from eight associations in the western part of the state, assembled at Northampton to consult on the expediency of forming a general association. In compliance with the recommendations of this meeting, delegates from five associations met at Northampton, June 29th, 1803, and formed the "General Association of Massachusetts Proper" by which title, the body continued to be known till the erection of Maine into a separate state. This arrangement for the promotion of intercourse and union among the ministers, commended itself slowly but effectually to pastors and churches; and the General Association of Massachusetts now includes twenty two district associations, and nearly all the Trinitarian Congregational ministers in the commonwealth.

The standing rules and by-laws of the body, are as follows:

RULES

OF THE ASSOCIATION.

1. THE association, by which the General Association of Massachusetts was originally organized, agreed to admit, and this association continue to admit, as articles of faith, the doctrines of Christianity, as they are generally expressed in the Assembly's Shorter Catechism; and the above-mentioned doctrines, understood by us to be distinctly those, which from the beginning, have been embraced by the churches of New England as the doctrines of the Gospel, are considered as the basis of our union.

2. This General Association is founded on the principles of Congregationalism, and wholly disclaims ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the churches, or the opinions of individuals. Its object is to promote brotherly harmony and intercourse among the min-

isters of Christ ;—to obtain religious information relative to the state of their churches, and of the christian church in this country, and throughout the world ;— and to co-operate with one another, and with other ecclesiastical bodies in the most eligible measures for advancing the cause of truth and holiness.

3. Each district association in Massachusetts, consenting to the principles of this union, as stated in the first article, may appoint two delegates annually, to compose this General Association : and it is recommended, that one be appointed, who attend the preceding year.

4. The time of the annual meeting of this association, shall be on the fourth Thursday of June, at five o'clock, P. M., at such place, as shall have been duly notified.

5. Seven members, delegated from the particular associations of Massachusetts, shall be requisite to form a quorum for transacting any business ; but for opening and adjourning the meeting, a less number shall be competent.

6. The secretary and minister of the church, where the association meet, shall have seats, and act as members ; the associations to which they belong retaining the right to elect their number of delegates in addition.

7. The minister of the church in the place where the association meets, or the secretary, may call the association to order and preside in the meeting until the association shall be properly organized.

8. The certificates of the delegates present shall be read by the secretary or by a temporary scribe, and the association shall then be organized by the choice of a moderator, a scribe, and, if necessary, an assistant scribe, by ballot. The rules of the association shall also be read, and the moderator shall open the business with prayer.

9. At the opening of the session on each subsequent day, the moderator shall take the chair at the hour to which the association stands adjourned ; shall immediately call the members to order ; direct the roll to be called ; shall open the meeting with prayer, and cause the minutes of the preceding day to be read ; and the session of each day shall be closed with prayer.

10. At each meeting of the association a committee of arrangements, consisting of three, shall be appointed by nomination, to prepare the business of the session ; and no business shall be introduced during the session, but through the hands, and with the approbation of the committee. But if said committee decline presenting any item of business proposed by any member, he shall have the privilege of appeal to the association.

11. Every motion on being seconded, shall, if requested by the moderator, or any two members, be reduced to writing, and no motion shall be open to discussion, until it be seconded.

12. The moderator may speak to points of order, in preference to other members, rising from his seat for that purpose; and shall decide questions of order, subject to an appeal to the house by any two members. But he may not speak to the merits of the question without leaving the chair, and placing some other member in it, to preside while he speaks.

13. On questions of order, adjournment, postponement, commitment, or the previous question, no member shall speak more than once. Nor on any question shall a member speak more than twice, without leave of the association.

14. When a question is under debate, no motion shall be received, except for adjournment, amendment, postponement, commitment, or the previous question; viz. Shall the main question be now put.

15. If a question under debate contain several parts, any member may have it divided, and a question taken on each part.

16. Every member, when speaking, shall address himself to the chair; and shall be subject to no needless interruption; if he acts disorderly, it shall be the duty of the moderator, and the privilege of other members, to call him to order.

17. The discussions in the association, and the whole deportment of the members, shall be in accordance with decorum, with due respect to the chair, and with courtesy to each other.

18. No member shall leave the association before the session is closed, except with the consent of the body; nor shall any one leave the house during a sitting, without the consent of the moderator.

19. Each annual meeting shall be closed with a psalm or hymn, and prayer by the moderator, or such other member as he shall appoint.

20. The principles of the connections formed with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, the General Associations of Connecticut and New Hampshire, the General Convention of Congregational and Presbyterian ministers in Vermont, and the Evangelical Consociation of Rhode Island, are, that this General Association, and each ecclesiastical body connected with it, shall annually appoint, each two delegates to the other, who shall be admitted into each body, to the same right of sitting, debating, and voting with their own members respectively.

21. Gentlemen, who are admitted as honorary members, shall be allowed full liberty to take part in all deliberations; though they are not considered as entitled to vote; and it is expected they will give notice to the body, if they find it necessary to withdraw previous to the close of the session. The approbation of the committee of arrangements shall be obtained, before a gentleman shall be proposed to sit as an honorary member.

22. The delegates, who the preceding year attended the meetings of foreign bodies, shall, *ex officio*, have seats as honorary members of the General Association.

23. A committee of three shall be annually appointed, to submit to the General Association at the next meeting, a *pastoral address*, to excite the attention of ministers and christians, to faithful discipline in the churches, the instruction of the rising generation, the sanctification of the sabbath, and other subjects relating to the general interests of religion. The address being approved by the General Association, shall be signed by the moderator, and printed with the minutes. This committee shall be chosen from the several associations in rotation.

24. The associational sermon shall be delivered at two o'clock, Thursday, P. M., after which the sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be administered. The narratives given by the delegates of the several associations concerning the state of religion and the churches, shall be given on Wednesday afternoon, and shall be presented in writing, with a view to obtain an accurate account of the principal facts, not, however, to prevent any more particular details which the delegates may think expedient to add, or the association to request. The returns, with respect to the number in the churches, etc., shall be made out according to a printed schedule of this body, and according to the numbers on the first of January past.

25. A committee shall be appointed to receive the narratives, and statements, and shall condense them into a narrative, to be submitted to the General Association and published. The written narratives shall be deposited with the secretary.

26. A committee shall be appointed to nominate delegates to foreign bodies, which delegates shall, as far as practicable, be selected from the district associations in rotation. The brethren chosen substitutes in the delegations to the several bodies in our connection, shall, at our next session be considered as delegates to the respective bodies, if they shall not previously have taken their seats there, through the failure of their principals.

27. The secretary shall be chosen for three years, from the close of the meeting at which the choice shall be made. He shall, *ex officio*, be the treasurer of the General Association; and shall be allowed his own travelling expenses in attending the meetings of this association. A committee shall be appointed annually, to audit the accounts, who shall report the state of the treasury, and the sum, in their opinion, necessary to be paid the next year by the members of the several associations connected with this body. The secretary shall be authorized to pay such expenses as are allowed by this association.

28. It shall be the duty of the delegates of the district associations, to pay the amount of the assessments due from their

respective associations for the past year, whether collected by them or not.

29. A publishing committee shall be annually appointed, to make such extracts from the minutes of the meeting, as, in their judgment, it will be proper to publish; procure to be printed such number of copies with the pastoral address and narrative of the state of religion, as will give one copy to each minister of the association represented in this body; and such a number of copies for other bodies connected with this association, as shall be mutually agreed upon. It shall be the duty of the secretary to receive the publications from foreign bodies, and distribute them among the several associations, in proportion to the tax paid by them respectively. One copy of each publication, received by the General Association, or printed by its order, shall be kept in the archives.

30. An agent shall be appointed in Boston to transmit the extracts of the minutes of this General Association to other ecclesiastical bodies, and to receive their extracts or other publications, and transmit them to the several district associations represented in this body. And notice of his appointment and place of business, shall be inserted in the printed extracts. He shall be entitled to a suitable compensation.

31. It shall be the duty of the secretary to communicate proper information to the agent in Boston, and to the publishing committee, for their directions.

32. Previously to the close of each meeting, the General Association shall specify a place for meeting the next year, and request some district association to appoint a preacher to deliver the associational sermon. And the church of the place of meeting is desired to make preparations to celebrate the Lord's Supper during the session.

33. A *vote* or *resolve* to establish, alter, or annul a *standing rule* of this body, shall be read twice on different days, and may be debated at each reading. At the first reading the question shall be, Shall it be read a second time?

BY-LAWS.

1. AN annual sermon shall be preached before the association, on the subject of home missions, and a collection taken. The preacher shall be appointed by this body.

2. No report of the state of religion shall be read in public, unless it be approved by the association from which it comes, or by the committee of arrangements of the General Association.

3. It is recommended to the several district associations, to have their narratives on the state of religion, condensed, so as not to exceed five minutes in the time of reading.

4. The printed minutes of this association, shall be sufficient testimonials of the appointment of delegates to foreign bodies.

5. It shall be the duty of each primary delegate to any foreign body, to notify the secretary of this association, at, or before, the opening of the annual meeting next after his appointment, of his attendance upon the duty assigned him; and until such notification be made, or an acceptable reason be assigned for his non-attendance, he shall be ineligible as a delegate to any foreign body.

6. It shall be the duty of each delegate to any foreign body appointed as a substitute, to notify the secretary of this association, at, or before, the opening of its annual meeting next after his appointment, of his attendance, or non-attendance as such delegate, and until such notification be made, he shall be ineligible to the same body.

7. The minutes of this association shall be sent to the individual members of the associations connected with this body by mail, and the chairman of the committee of publication, shall furnish a list of the names required to the agents of the association.

8. The minutes of this body, forwarded to the General Association of Connecticut, shall be, according to their request, sent by mail, under the direction of the publishing committee.

9. The names of all the members of the associations belonging to this body, whether with or without charge, shall be inserted in the published returns.

10. Every church without a pastor, by paying twenty-five cents, annually, to the treasurer of the General Association, through the treasurer of the local association, with which said church is connected, shall be entitled to receive the minutes of the General Association, to be forwarded in the same way as minutes are forwarded to members of the association.

GENERAL CONVENTION

OF

VERMONT.

IN 1795, a meeting of delegates from the several bodies of ministers in the state of Vermont, was held at Hanover, New Hampshire, in connection with the annual commencement at Dartmouth college, and a general convention was agreed upon, to consist of delegates from associations and presbyteries. The first meeting of "The General Convention of Congregational and Presbyterian Ministers in Vermont," was accordingly held at Rockingham, June 21, 1796.

The convention now includes thirteen associations, and about two hundred ministers.

CONSTITUTION

OF THE GENERAL CONVENTION OF CONGREGATIONAL MINISTERS AND CHURCHES IN VERMONT.

ART. 1. THE principal objects of the General Convention of Congregational Ministers and Churches in Vermont, shall be to promote brotherly intercourse and harmony; to yield mutual assistance, and excite in each other the spirit of Christian fervor; to learn the state and recommend measures for the welfare of the churches; to obtain religious information respecting the Christian church in this country and through the world; and to co-operate with other similar institutions in building up the cause of the great Redeemer.

ART. 2. The General Convention receive as articles of faith the doctrines of Christianity as they are generally expressed in the

Assembly's Shorter Catechism. These doctrines are understood by us to be those, which from the beginning have been generally embraced by the Congregational and Presbyterian churches in New England, and especially, in Vermont.

ART. 3. Every association, presbytery, county conference, or consociation, in Vermont, or partly in Vermont, which receives the doctrines above specified, as the christian faith, is entitled to send two delegates to the convention; but no county or district, shall ever be represented by both a consociation and a conference. Each association consisting of eight or more ordained ministers may send three members.

ART. 4. The convention shall annually choose, by ballot or orally, a moderator, scribe, and assistant scribe. There shall also be a register, to continue in office during the pleasure of the convention, whose duty it shall be to attend all the meetings of the convention, to record the minutes transmitted to him by the scribes, and to act as treasurer. The register, the preachers and the minister, or brother, at whose house the convention meet, shall be members.

ART. 5. The annual meeting of the convention shall be holden on the second Tuesday of September, at 2 o'clock, P. M.

ART. 6. The preceding articles shall not be subject to alteration without the concurrence of two thirds of the members present at an annual meeting.

BY-LAWS

AND PERMANENT REGULATIONS OF THE GENERAL CONVENTION.

1. THE convention propose, that in ordinary cases the following should be the course of exercises, at their future anniversaries. Tuesday, 2 o'clock, P. M. convention sermon,—the object of which shall be to promote pastoral fidelity and to urge on the churches the importance of being actively devoted to the divine service and the promotion of religion; in the evening an exercise to promote Sabbath Schools: Wednesday, at 2 o'clock, P. M., narratives or the state of religion; in the evening, Reports of the Education Society, with addresses: Thursday, half past 9 o'clock, A. M., Reports of the Missionary Society, with address, and contribution; at 2 o'clock P. M. a communion sermon and the administration of the Lord's Supper; in the evening, religious exercises.

2. The associations shall be entered on the records and on the roll in the following order, which is to be observed when they are enumerated in transacting business:—Windham, Pawlet.

Black River, Rutland, Windsor, Royalton, Addison, Orange, Montpelier, North Western, Caledonia, Orleans, Lancaster.

• 3. It is the duty of the scribe to furnish the register with a fair copy of the minutes of each meeting for record.

4. Reports on the state of religion shall be presented in writing.

5. Should no place be appointed for the meeting of the convention, or should the minister at whose house they are to meet, be removed by death or otherwise, the register is authorized by circular letters to appoint the place and call the convention together according to his discretion.

6. It shall be the duty of the register to make a docket of the ordinary business of the convention, and lay it before them at the opening of every annual meeting.

7. There shall be a standing committee of one in each association, appointed for five years, to make the annual statistical reports for their respective associations, on their own responsibility and under their own names respectively; and in case of the absence of any one of said committee, the duty shall devolve on the register of said association for the time being. The ministers and church clerks are requested, without fail, to forward the statistical report of their respective churches, (particularly specifying the number of non-resident members) on the first day of August, in each year, to the standing committee of their association. This report is to state the number, names, and congregations of settled ministers—the number and names of the unsettled ministers; and the number and names of the destitute churches within their limits, to which it will be necessary to subjoin a short account of circumstances which have occurred within the year, such as the removals of ministers by death or otherwise, ordinations, installations, with the time of such events; also an account of the number of members in each church, and the additions, whether by letter or profession, and the decrease, whether by deaths, dismissions, or exclusions.

8. Delegates from this convention to the foreign ecclesiastical bodies, with which it is connected, are required to report, if they attend agreeably to appointment. If the delegation fail, it is expected a reason will be rendered to the convention.

9. A committee of credentials shall be annually appointed by the convention, to certify the regular standing and good character of the preachers coming from abroad to officiate in Vermont, or leaving this state to officiate elsewhere. And the convention consider it the duty of strangers, who propose to labor in this state, and of their brethren who design to labor in congregations abroad, that are unacquainted with them, to procure a certificate of their regular standing, from at least one of the aforesaid committee.

10. Extracts from the minutes of the convention shall be an-

nally published, to be distributed in Vermont, and to the ecclesiastical bodies with which the convention has formed a connection.

NOTE. The general convention has formed a connection with the following Ecclesiastical bodies, viz:—The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America; the General Association of Connecticut; the General Association of Massachusetts; the General Association of New-Hampshire; the General Conference of Maine; the Evangelical Consociation of Rhode Island; the General Association of New-York; the Congregational Union of Lower Canada; and the Congregational Union of England and Wales. The principles of union with these several bodies is substantially the same, viz:—The convention sends to each of them one or two delegates or commissioners, annually, and they each send annually to the convention the same number. These delegates have the same right of sitting, debating and voting, as the members of the body to which they are sent, except that the arrangements with the General Assembly are such, that delegates sent to either body do not vote.

11. In order that the representation to foreign bodies may be distributed equally among the several associations of the state, each association shall send a member of its own body, from year to year, to some foreign body, in rotation, according to the annexed schedule*. Each association shall elect the delegate and substitute which it is entitled to appoint, and send their names to be approved by convention, that the certificates may be made in the name, and signed by the proper officers of that body. And in case any association fail of sending such nomination in time to be acted on, the convention may fill the vacancy from that or any other association, at pleasure.

RECOMMENDATIONS

OF THE GENERAL CONVENTION.

1. As the relation between a minister and his people is one of the most solemn that can be formed in this world, the convention recommend that this relation should never be dissolved without making public the true reasons of discontent in the parties since the opposite practice tends, on the one hand, to shield the immoralities and erroneous opinions of a minister, or on the other to gloss over the unreasonable discontents and vices of a people.

2. It is recommended to the several Congregational churches in this state, that they employ no stranger to preach among them, who is not recommended by some person of our communion authorized to give recommendations by the general body from within whose bounds he has come, or by some member of the committee of credentials appointed by this convention.

* The schedule is omitted in this volume.

3. It is recommended to the members of the several associations connected with the convention, to extend occasional assistance to destitute towns in their vicinity by preaching lectures, and by performing such other missionary labors, as they may deem consistent with the duties they owe to their respective parishes.

4. The churches in our connection are requested, at the monthly concert in September, to implore the special blessing of God upon the annual meeting of the convention, and of the respective societies, with which it is immediately connected.

5. The convention recommend to the Congregational churches in this state, to make it a standing rule, except in some uncommon cases, not to admit to occasional communion, after one year's residence, any persons of their own denomination, who by removal have become settled among them.

6. It is recommended to the several associations not to receive any member from another association, unless he brings a letter of dismission and recommendation from the association to which he has belonged.

7. As the temperance reformation is of vital importance to the interests of true religion, it is recommended to all the friends of God and the human race, to sustain and carry on this blessed work, and not to remit in their efforts till the way of the coming of the Son of man is every where fully prepared.

8. It is recommended to councils and other ecclesiastical bodies in connection with this convention, not to ordain persons without charge, or as evangelists; especially, if they are to labor in distant parts of the country, unless it should be required by peculiar circumstances, and appear to be an obvious call of Providence.

9. The convention fully believing that consociations greatly tend to promote the interests, the strength and the union of the churches, recommend and earnestly request that all the Congregational churches in Vermont, which have not adopted articles of particular union, should form themselves into consociations, to consist of pastors and delegates.

10. The convention affectionately and earnestly recommend to all ministers, and to all the friends of religion in our connection, the following system of operations to promote benevolent objects:—

(1) That there be but one meeting in each year for county anniversaries; that this ordinarily be held at a distinct time from the meetings of consociations or conferences; that the interests of the various most prominent objects of benevolence, in each county, be distinctly promoted at these anniversaries.

(2) That the county anniversaries be held as follows:—In Windham county on the 3d Tuesday in September; in Windsor

Co. on the Thursday following:—in Orange Co. on the 4th Tuesday in September; in Washington Co. on the Thursday following:—in Rutland or Bennington Co. on the Tuesday next after the 4th Tuesday in September; in Addison Co. on the Thursday following:—in Chittenden Co. on the 2d Tuesday after the 4th Tuesday in September; in Franklin Co. on the Thursday following:—in Orleans Co. on the 3d Tuesday after the 4th Tuesday in September; in Caledonia Co. on the Thursday following:—in Essex Co. on the 5th Tuesday after the 4th Tuesday in September.

(3) That two months of each year be appropriated to the consideration of certain prominent objects of benevolence, as follows:—*

RULES

TO BE OBSERVED BY THE GENERAL CONVENTION, IN TRANSACTIONING BUSINESS.

1. THE members of the convention are required, as soon as they arrive at the place of the annual meeting, to deposit their certificates of membership in the hands of the minister of the parish; and it shall be his duty, in conjunction with the register, to prepare a ROLL of the convention, on which shall be placed, in usual order, the names of all persons who present a regular certificate of their having been duly elected. But no person shall be enrolled who has not the regular certificate, unless by vote of the convention after being duly organized.

2. The meeting of the convention shall be opened with a sermon. At the close of the public exercises, the register, or, in his absence, the minister of the parish, shall call to order—read the Roll, and lead the convention to the choice of a moderator, scribe, and assistant scribe.

3. The moderator shall then take the chair—address the throne of grace, and cause the rules to be observed in transacting business, and the docket of the register to be read. It shall be his duty to lead in prayer, or request some other person to perform the duty, at the beginning and close of each day's session; to cause the roll to be called every morning; to preserve order and decorum in the meeting, and, in conjunction with the register, to nominate all committees. When the moderator speaks to the merits of any question, he shall leave the chair and address the scribe.

4. No member shall withdraw from the body until the close of the session, without leave of absence first obtained from the

* The schedule, here annexed, is omitted in this volume.

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moderator; and in case any member shall be tardy after an adjournment, without a reasonable excuse, he shall be subject to the admonition of the moderator.

5. Every member, when he wishes to speak, shall rise and address the moderator.

6. No member shall speak more than twice to the merits of the question in debate, except by special permission of the convention, nor more than once, until every member choosing to speak shall have spoken.

7. Every motion, except for adjournment, shall be reduced to writing if the moderator or any two members desire it. No motion shall be acted upon until seconded.

8. When any member, in debating or otherwise, shall transgress the rules of the convention, the moderator shall, by his own authority or at the request of any member, call him to order; and if a question shall arise concerning his being in order, it shall be decided by an appeal to the body.

9. When two or more rise at once, the moderator shall name the member who is first to speak.

10. When the moderator or any other person is speaking, the members shall keep their places and give attention.

11. No motion committed to writing shall be finally decided upon, until it shall have had three several readings, if any member require it.

12. In cases of an equal division of votes, the moderator shall have the casting vote.

13. These rules for the transaction of business shall be in force during the pleasure of the convention; and shall not be subject to any alteration, unless by the consent of two thirds of the members present, at an annual meeting.

GENERAL ASSOCIATION

OF

NEW HAMPSHIRE.

IN the state of New Hampshire a Pastoral Convention was formed, July 28, 1747, for promoting harmony, peace, and good order among the churches, and union among ministers. It is designed to include "those Congregational and Presbyterian ministers of that state, who own or acknowledge the Westminster Assembly's Shorter Catechism, as containing essentially their views of christian doctrine." It meets annually in June, at the metropolis of the state, on the day succeeding the general state election.

At its meeting in 1807, this convention appointed a committee "to correspond with the several district associations in the state, respecting a union of the churches, and a General Association on that plan of doctrine generally expressed in the Assembly's Catechism." The next year, it was determined, "that for the purpose of drawing the bond of union more closely, and promoting general harmony and fellowship among the churches, the Assembly's Catechism be adopted generally as a creed; and that a proposal be laid before the several associations of the state, that those associations that see fit to adopt it, appoint a delegate, or delegates, to meet in General Association at the time and place of the next General Convention, and in

General Association adopt such measures as they shall deem expedient, for carrying into effect the above-mentioned purposes." According to this arrangement, the General Association of New Hampshire held its first meeting at Concord, in June, 1809.

"This General Association wholly disclaims ecclesiastical power or authority over the churches, or the opinions of individuals."

"Its essential objects are to promote brotherly intercourse and harmony, and our mutual animation, assistance, and usefulness as ministers of Christ; to obtain religious information relative to the state of the churches, and the general state of the Christian church in this country, and through the Christian world; and to co-operate with other similar institutions, in the most eligible measures for building up the cause of truth and holiness."

The General Association of New Hampshire now includes twelve district associations, and about one hundred and fifty ministers.

Its business is conducted under the following regulations:

STANDING RULES

OF THE ASSOCIATION.

1. THIS General Association shall meet on the fourth Tuesday of August, annually; and be opened at 10 o'clock, A. M. by a *Concio ad Clerum* by a minister appointed by one of the district associations in rotation.
2. At the close of religious exercises, the preacher shall take the chair, and preside till a moderator is chosen by ballot.
3. A scribe and assistant scribe shall also be chosen by ballot.
4. The association shall be composed of the secretary, the

treasurer, the minister of the place of the meeting, the secretary of the N. H. Missionary Society ex-officio, and delegates from district associations, according to the following ratio of representation, viz.—One from every association, two from every association of seven members, three from every association of thirteen members, and four from every association of twenty members. No minister shall be counted or represented in two associations, and no preacher shall be eligible to appointment as a delegate, who has not received ordination.

5. The secretary shall receive the certificates of the delegates, and report the names of those duly appointed, before the choice of a moderator.

6. The meeting shall be daily opened and closed with prayer.

7. The secretary shall previously prepare a docket of business, which may afterwards be enlarged by the committee of overtures, as occasion shall require.

8. A committee of three shall be early chosen by ballot, who shall nominate delegates to foreign bodies, and all committees to whom business or subjects shall be referred, for them to report thereon, and also be a committee of overtures. The acceptance of their nominations shall confirm them as appointments.

9. No motion shall be discussed unless seconded. No member shall speak more than twice to the same motion, without liberty from the association; nor shall the moderator, while in the chair, speak to the merits of a question. Any motion or resolution shall, at the request of the moderator, or any two members, be reduced to writing.

10. Seven members shall be a quorum. No member shall retire without leave of the moderator, or have leave of absence without a vote of the association.

11. It shall be the duty of the moderator to prevent desultory remarks.

12. At the opening of the morning session, the minutes of the preceding day shall be read; and the minutes of the last day at the close of the meeting.

13. The appointment of delegates to corresponding bodies shall be certified by the printed minutes, or by a certificate from the secretary.

14. The narratives of the state of religion in our churches and corresponding bodies shall be written and brief, so that they can be given, in ordinary cases, on Tuesday afternoon.

15. The district associations shall annually present the schedules of their churches, ministers settled and unsettled, the number of their churches, &c. and the number of young men under twenty-five years of age, and the number who are preparing for the ministry in each church.

16. A condensed narrative of the state of religion in each association shall be prepared, and reported by a committee.

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17. The schedules and narratives of religion shall be lodged with the secretary, to be kept on file.

18. The publishing committee shall see that the minutes, as soon as printed, are sent to delegates to other bodies, and a copy sent by mail to every member of the district associations.

19. This association shall, as far as practicable, meet alternately in the eastern and western sections of the state.

20. These rules shall be read at the opening of every annual ~~meeting~~

GENERAL CONFERENCE

OF

MAINE.

IN the state of Maine, the arrangements for promoting the intercourse and communion of pastors and churches, differ somewhat from those in other states. The pastors there, as elsewhere, have their associations for mutual aid and advice; and to those associations is assigned by common consent the duty of examining and recommending, or licensing, candidates for the ministry. But in Maine there is no general association or convention of ministers; the objects aimed at in such organizations being secured, in part, at least, by another arrangement.

The churches of Maine, meet by their pastors and delegates, in stated conventions called conferences. Each conference has its own constitution, and is designed to include the churches of a county, or of some other convenient district. The rules of the conference expressly forbid the exercise of any authority or control over the churches. The meetings are held, not to receive appeals or complaints, or to inquire after error and disorders, but for united prayer, for the extension of christian intercourse and acquaintance between the members of different churches, for mutual instruction by the discussion of such questions as arise from time to time, for devising and imparting aid to

feeble churches, and for promoting in all such ways the prosperity of religion.

The first conference was formed in the county of York ; and the first annual meeting of the " York Conference of Churches," was held on the first Tuesday of October, 1823. The churches of other counties generally followed the example ; and in a few years the system was completed by the formation of a General Conference under the following constitution.

CONSTITUTION

OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF MAINE.

ART. 1. This conference shall be called, The General Conference of Maine.

ART. 2. The General Conference shall consist of six delegates from each county conference, which has twenty or more churches, three ministers and three laymen : and four delegates from each county conference, which has less than twenty churches, two ministers and two laymen ; and also of the officers, delegates to foreign bodies, preachers and committees for the times for which they are chosen, and also of the minister of the place, where the conference meet.

ART. 3. Ordained ministers, who may be present at the meetings of this body, may be invited to sit as honorary members to take part in the deliberations, but not to vote.

ART. 4. The annual meetings of this conference shall be opened with singing, reading the scriptures, and prayer.

ART. 5. The presiding officer shall be a moderator, chosen by ballot, to continue in office three years.

ART. 6. There shall be a corresponding secretary, chosen by ballot, who shall hold his office for three years, whose duty it shall be, to conduct the correspondence of the conference, and also collect information, and, at each meeting, exhibit a report on the state of religion within the limits of this conference.

ART. 7. A recording secretary shall have charge of the records of the conference, who shall be elected by ballot, and hold his office for three years.

ART. 8. The object of the General Conference shall be, to promote intercourse and harmony among the churches of the state, and produce a more extensive co-operation in every good work.

ART. 9. The several county conferences shall retain their individual right and privileges ; and no ecclesiastical power or authority shall ever be assumed by the general conference, or be delegates to it.

ART. 10. This conference shall meet on the Tuesday before the fourth Wednesday of June, annually, at 11 o'clock, A. M. at the place at which the Maine Missionary Society shall hold their annual meetings.

ART. 11. The conference shall establish its own by-laws and regulations, subject to alterations at their future meetings.

ART. 12. This conference may interchange friendly correspondence with other religious bodies in the habit of such intercourse.

ART. 13. At each meeting of the conference a first and second preacher shall be appointed by ballot for the next meeting.

ART. 14. Any county conference may withdraw from this connection by assigning to the recording secretary their reasons in writing.

ART. 15. The funds of the conference, to be raised by a contribution at each annual meeting, shall be appropriated, after deducting incidental expenses, to the aid of feeble conferences.

ART. 16. The public religious exercises shall be closed by the administration of the Lord's Supper.

ART. 17. The constitution of this conference may be altered at the annual meetings of this body, by two thirds of the members present.

EVANGELICAL CONSOCIATION

OF

RHODE ISLAND.

IN May, 1808, four pastors of congregational churches in Rhode Island, united in an association, to be called the Evangelical Association of Ministers in the State of Rhode Island. At their second meeting, it was agreed that each of the churches, under the pastoral care of the ministers of the association, be requested to appoint a brother to attend the next meeting, and assist in the discussion of the articles of faith and rules of business then proposed for adoption. At a subsequent meeting, held at Newport, May, 1809, the organization of the body was completed by the adoption of a brief profession of faith, and of certain rules of order; and as the body had ceased to be an association of ministers, it thenceforth named itself "the Evangelical Consociation of Rhode Island."

This body unites, to some extent, the duties which, in Connecticut, are divided between the association of pastors, and the consociation of pastors and churches. Like an association it examines and licenses candidates for the ministry. Its acts in relation to the churches are purely advisory.

About sixteen ministers, and as many churches, are now included in the consociation.

GENERAL ASSOCIATION

OF

NEW-YORK.

LARGE portions of the territory of central and western New York were settled chiefly by emigrants from New England, born and trained under the ecclesiastical institutions of the New England fathers. But from a desire to maintain a perfect union with fellow Christians, holding the same faith and worshiping according to the same forms, the churches founded in that region by emigrants from New England, were generally led to adopt, by degrees, the Presbyterian discipline. Many churches, however, which are commonly called Presbyterian, have only a qualified connection with presbyteries and synods, their Congregational privileges being guarded, in various degrees, by express stipulations.

In some instances churches originally formed by Congregationalists, have retained from the beginning their Congregational discipline without compromise. Where several such churches were found in the same district, they sometimes formed associations for mutual counsel and assistance.

In September, 1833, the Oneida Association appointed a committee to take into consideration the propriety of calling a convention of Congregational ministers and churches; and if upon consideration such a convention should seem expedient,

the committee were authorized to call it for the purpose of organizing a General Association for the state. At the call of that committee, a convention was held in Clinton, May 21, 1834; and at that time, the "General Association of New-York" was formed.

There are now in connection with this body, eight district associations or consociations, including about 116 churches, 122 ministers, and 23 licensed candidates for the ministry. Two other associations in the state are expected soon to unite with the General Association.

Most of the associations in New-York, unlike those in the New England States, consist not of ministers only, but of ministers and churches. The General Association, accordingly, admits laymen as members whenever they are deputed from the constituent bodies. Laymen, however, are rarely sent as delegates to the General Association.

The General Association neither exercises, nor claims any power over the associations connected with it, or over the churches, save that power which is implied in the right to reject, as not in its fellowship, those associations which deny the faith. Its meetings are for consultation and advice, and not for the exercise of any legislative or judicial powers.

CONSTITUTION.

THAT God has a visible church in the world, and ever will have until the end of time, is generally acknowledged by those who call themselves Christians; and that its interests are to be promoted by human instrumentality, is equally clear.

Union, in religion, is strength. Since different views are entertained with regard to doctrine and practice, and different denominations exist, it is believed a distinct organization of these different denominations is adapted to promote the best welfare of Zion. The Congregational ministers and Congregational churches in the state of New York have long felt the want of a bond of union for the advancement of the cause of our common Lord.

As they believe the Congregational form of church government is the Scriptural form, they deem it important that it should be maintained.

Entertaining these views, and having met in convention for the express purpose of considering this subject, therefore,

Resolved, That it is expedient to form an ecclesiastical body, composed of Congregational ministers, and Congregational churches, to be governed by the following

CONSTITUTION.

ART. 1. This body shall be called "The General Association of the State of New York."

ART. 2. This association shall be composed of delegates from the several associations and consociations belonging to this body, allowing one delegate for every five ministers, and one delegate for every five churches constituting each association and consociation. And the annual preacher, the register, and the minister of the church where the meeting is held, shall be *ex officio* members of the association.

ART. 3. Each association and consociation shall be entitled to, at least, two delegates.

ART. 4. Every member of an association and consociation connected with this body shall be entitled to a seat in the same, and may take part in its deliberations, but shall not be entitled to vote on any question.

ART. 5. Any association or consociation may hereafter be received into this body, if their articles of faith and constitution shall be found to harmonize with the articles of faith and constitution of this body.

ART. 6. Delegates from corresponding bodies shall be entitled to all the privileges of other members.

ART. 7. The officers of this association shall consist of a moderator, scribe and assistant scribe, register, treasurer, and auditor, to be elected annually by ballot.

ART. 8. This association shall meet annually on Thursday

preceding the last Sabbath in August, at such place as the body shall designate at a preceding meeting.

ART. 9. A minister shall be appointed at each meeting to preach at the following one; and a substitute or substitutes appointed to preach in case of his failure.

ART. 10. This constitution may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at any regular meeting.

ARTICLES

OF

FAITH.

ART. 1. THERE is one only living and true God, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth; subsisting in three persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the same in essence and equal in every divine perfection.

ART. 2. The scriptures of the Old and New Testament were given by inspiration of God, and are the only perfect rule of faith and practice

ART. 3. God hath foreordained and worketh all things according to his eternal purpose, and the counsel of his own will.

ART. 4. God executes his purposes in the work of creation and providence, in such a way as to secure his own glory and the highest good of the moral system, and yet in perfect consistency with the free moral agency of his intelligent creatures.

ART. 5. Our first parents were created holy, and, by voluntary transgression, became sinners, justly exposed to eternal punishment.

ART. 6. In consequence of the transgression of our first parents, all their posterity became sinners, and are in their natural unregenerate state, totally sinful, and by the law of God condemned to eternal death.

ART. 7. The Lord Jesus Christ, who is both God and man in one person, has, by his sufferings and death, made a complete atonement for all mankind, and thereby laid a foundation for the offer of a free and full pardon, which is made indiscriminately to all, on the condition of repentance for sin, and faith in Christ.

ART. 8. Mankind, in their natural state, universally reject the offers of salvation, performing nothing acceptable to God, until renewed by the special influences of the Holy Spirit, and therefore, in order to salvation, must be born again.

ART. 9. God has, in the covenant of redemption, given to Christ a part of mankind, who were from all eternity predestinated to be holy, and to be heirs of eternal glory, and by the agency of the Holy Spirit, renews them after his own moral image, and causes them to persevere in holy obedience unto the end.

ART. 10. The Lord Jesus Christ arose from the dead on the third day, and ever liveth to make intercession for his people, governing all things for their good; and, by virtue of his atonement, as the only meritorious cause, procures their justification, adoption, and final salvation.

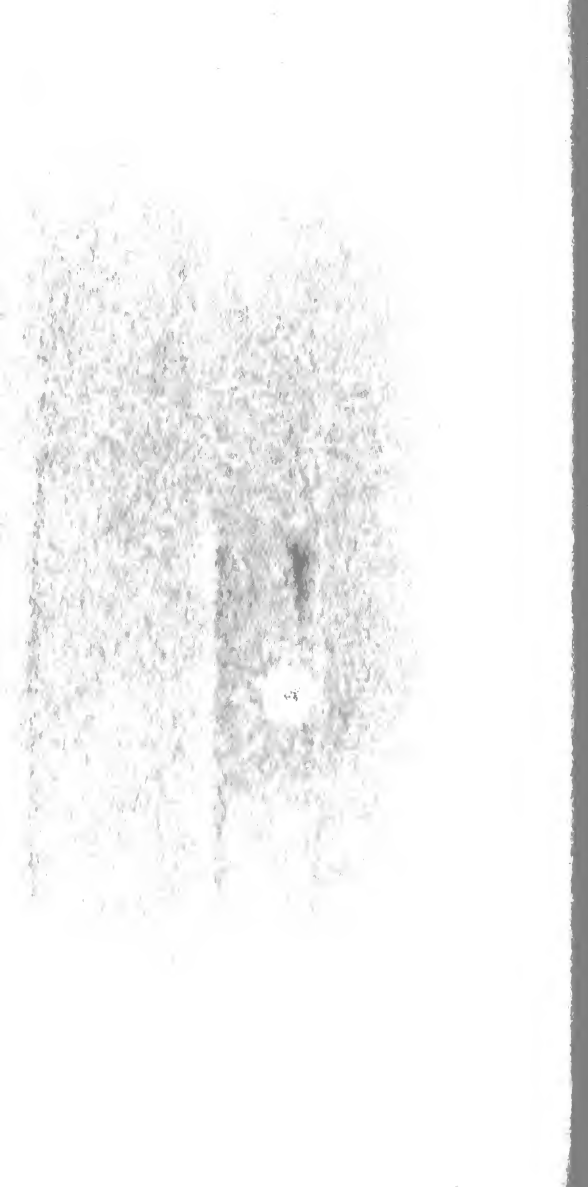
ART. 11. A church is a congregation of Christians, professing faith in Christ and obedience to him, and joined in covenant for ordinary communion in the ordinances of the gospel; invested with power to choose its own officers, to admit members, and to exercise government and discipline according to the rules of the gospel.

ART. 12. Christ has appointed two sacraments to be observed in the church—baptism and the Lord's Supper; the latter to be administered to professed believers in Christ who give credible evidence of piety, the former to them and their children.

ART. 13. The first day of the week is the Christian Sabbath, and is to be sanctified by a holy resting all the day, even from such worldly employments as are lawful on other days, and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in necessary works of mercy.

ART. 14. The souls of believers are, at their death, made perfectly holy, and immediately taken to glory. At the end of the world there will be a resurrection of the dead and a final judgment of all mankind, when the saints shall be publicly acquitted by Christ the Judge, and admitted to endless life and glory; and those who have continued in their sins shall be doomed to endless punishment.

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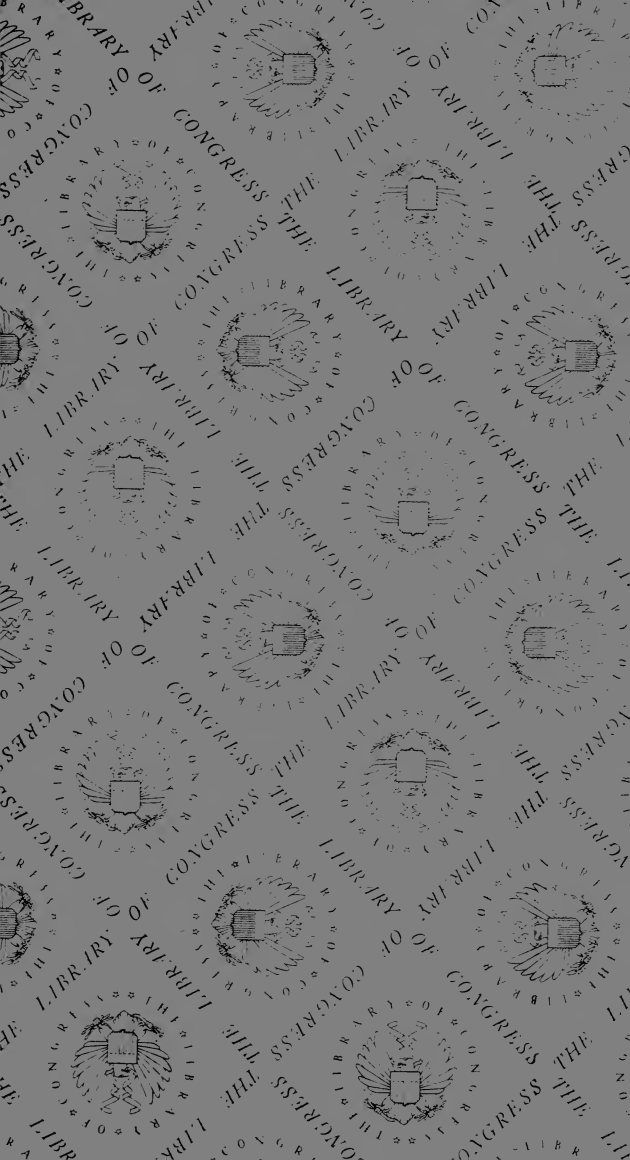


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