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A N
A N S W E R

T O

Mr. PEIRCE'S

Western Inquisition, &c.

Can none of their adversaries be justly censured as angry men? What, not those who cry out, that the Western Inquisition which they underwent rivals the bloody Tribunals of Spain and Portugal, which can appear true only to those who are enlightned with the loss of their eyes, and lie under the deplorable desertion of common Sense. Sir R. Blackmore's Just Prejudices against the Arian Hypothesis, p. 79.



L O N D O N :

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Alum 170 M.

A. d. . . .



T H E

P R E F A C E.

MR. Peirce in several of his papers, upon the differences between him and his people, had promis'd, that a full and large account of those matters should be laid before the publick, which accordingly came out some time after; under the odious title of the WESTERN INQUISITION. On perusal thereof, several who found themselves injur'd, resolv'd upon an answer; and that the facts mention'd

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in the Narrative and in the CITIZENS accounts (which he chiefly examines and bears upon) should in competent time be supported with sufficient Vouchers. This, tho' by several occasions much later than was intended, is now made good; not without regret indeed, that things of such a nature should be thus laid open: But hereof, they only must in justice bear the blame, who made it necessary, by misrepresentations, arguings upon false grounds, denying divers truths, and demanding proofs in such a publick way. Nothing but self-defence, and fear of prejudice to religion, by silence in such circumstances; could have prevail'd for this publication. Regard to the honour of GOD, and service of Truth, must take place of other considerations.

THE editors of the Narrative, take the opportunity to signify, they were not, nor well could be, much more than the bare editors of it. The matter and expressions were taken out of original letters, from persons of known integrity, on or near the place where the controversy chiefly lay. They can think but of two things, touching which any can possibly expect satisfaction from them, viz. Their concern in any such Narrative at all, and the unexceptionableness of their conduct in drawing and publishing of it.

IN reference to the former of these, they say, It was not matter of choice, but a sort of constraints

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strait upon them. They were among those against whom heavy charges were brought, as if they had made a stir and out-cry about error concerning the doctrine of the TRINITY when there was little or no ground for it; that they had fomented and inflam'd the contentions at Exeter, and made themselves parties in them; and in concert with some there or in that neighbourhood, had brought them in among the LONDON ministers, and undertaken for they know not what undue methods about them. To these things they were called to answer, and they thought thereupon, that a plain and faithful Narrative of matters, as far as they had any knowledge of them, or concern in them, would be their best vindication.

THEREBY it would appear, that there was more in the case of persons going off from the Scripture doctrine of the TRINITY, as it had been generally receiv'd in the Christian Churches, than those who blam'd them would allow; at least, that by the accounts given them (the truth of which they saw no reason to question) it did so appear. The Narrative would also show, that those differences began not from them; that they were not officious or forward about them; much less did they inflame or any way heighten them. When they receiv'd letters of information or complaint with desire of their advice, they gave but necessary civil answers to
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them, suggesting nothing but what was healing and pacifying, as far as regard to truth could admit; and excusing themselves by reason of distance, and other obvious grounds from interposing: Putting all, as far as decency would allow, from their own to other more proper hands that were near them.

THUS the occasion of the Narrative they take to be sufficiently accounted for. It was in necessary self defence and to wipe of ill suggestions, which had made impression upon some to their disadvantage; among whom may be reckon'd Mr. Peirce himself, tho' it seems it came not up so fully, nor answer'd so roundly as he expected; which fault they'l endeavour to amend, when page 190 of his Inquisition comes to be consider'd.

AS to the other particular, the unexceptionableness of their conduct, in drawing and publishing of the Narrative, they doubt not this will be own'd, when they assure; it was all taken from the letters of such, as had opportunities to know the truth, with ability and faithfulness to represent it. The whole was sent to the Authors for their review and confirmation, with express desire, that nothing might be suffer'd to pass, of which they had not good proof; it was return'd with assurance, that they had deliberately and carefully examin'd it, and
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were able to support all the facts with sufficient evidence. It was then writ out and printed the same as receiv'd back, those in LONDON, being, as was said, but the bare editors of it.

ON the challenges and exceptions of Mr. Peirce in his Inquisition, the printed Narrative hath been examin'd and compar'd with the Originals, and found intirely agreeing with them; yet because he hath fallen heavily upon it, charging it with falseness and faithfulness, and that the whole is a mere collusion and juggle, and what no regard should be paid to, till the charges be made out by good evidence, * (such language does this christian and charitable gentleman see fit to use.) The editors of the Narrative, saw it requisite to recur to the authors and inquire, Whether they would not think it fit; to give that proof of facts, which in such manner was call'd for?

THEY signify'd in return, That they were able and ready to do it, and were willing it should be advertised, that in reasonable time the proofs demanded should be given. Accordingly, having themselves perused Mr. Peirce's INQUISITION, and taken notice of the facts disputed by him, they sent up not only those in
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* See *Western Inquisition*, pag. 41, 53, 61, 157.

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the Narrative, but those mention'd in their own printed accounts of things; all attended with their proper vouchers. These are now publish'd for matter and words as receiv'd, with what the Editors have offer'd in their own vindication, and some needful remarks on what Mr. Peirce has seen fit to say touching these matters.



The Reader is desired to correct the following Errors before he reads the Book.

PAGE 7. l. 32. put a full point at *them*, and for *if* read *If*. p. 11. l. 13. blot out the *comma* at the word *after*. p. 17. l. 1. after *Title* add [*of God*]. p. 24. l. 18. for *and*, r. *or*. p. 29. l. 33. before *what*, r. *As to*. p. 49. l. 1. for *convince*, r. *convict*. p. 51. l. 12. put the Note of the Parenthesis before *to* and after *Words*. p. 58. l. 37. blot out *to that*. p. 79. l. 11. after *was* add *said*. p. 85. for *reason* r. *reason*. p. 92. l. 9. after *certificate*, add p. 119. of *this book*. p. 115. l. 6. for *hi*. r. *his*. and l. 9. for 104 r. 140. p. 119. l. 1. for *principle*, r. *principles*. p. 125. for *hit*. r. *his*. p. 130. l. blot out *different*. p. 136. at the End for *Joseph*, r. *John*. p. 175. after *religion* r. *attack'd*, *insulted* and *blasphem'd*.

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A N S W E R

T O

Mr. PEIRCE'S*Western Inquisition, &c.*

IT is now past all doubt, that an attempt has been on foot for some time to revive the *Arian Heresy* among the *Dissenters*, as well as those of the *Establish'd Church*.

Mr. Peirce, who confesses he was settled in his present opinion before he came to *Exeter, West. Inq.* p. 10. but did artfully conceal himself for several years under scripture expressions taken and us'd by him in a sense very different from, and contrary to what is commonly receiv'd, has at length seen fit to throw off the mask, and show himself in his proper colours.

A PARTY being gain'd on his side (by what methods and inducements he best knows) he is come forth at the head of them in great anger against those, who seeing through his disguises enter'd into such christian and prudent measures, as were judg'd necessary to preserve that important article of faith, which they found to be secretly but too successfully invaded.

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How far in his management he has had regard to the rules of christian *charity* (which he would have all men believe he has the greatest veneration for) or to those of *truth*, nay, of common decency and honour, is left to the sober judgment of such as shall peruse, what he himself has constrain'd us to set in publick view.

THE *Title* he has prefix'd to his book presents us with an extraordinary specimen of his temper. Nothing can be more flaming than it is. Every one must be surpriz'd and startled at the first cast of his eye upon it. *THE WESTERN INQUISITION, Or A RELATION of the Controversy among the Dissenters in the West of England.* What could he intend by this? Would he have us understand these as synonymous terms? But what congruity is there between them? Unless he means, that in giving this *RELATION*, he has acted the part of an angry, uncharitable and revengeful *INQUISITOR*, by searching for, and making the worst of every thing he could pick up, to expose the weakness, blemish the reputation, and obstruct the usefulness of his brethren. In this sense indeed the *Title* and the *Book* do too well agree, and in no other do they agree with *truth*. But surely it was not his *intention* thus to represent himself how much soever he has done it through inadvertence.

'Tis more probably conjectur'd, that his aim was to raise in peoples minds the blackest idea possible of the proceedings of those ministers and christians, who vigorously oppos'd the new notions that were spreading among them, and to suggest to the world; That the whole of their management was such, as can be represented by no assembly of men so fitly and truly, as that of a *Popish Inquisition*: for what can the *Reader* infer from such a comparison at large, but that they were a set of men who acted upon the same principles, pursu'd the same measures, and only wanted power to practice the same cruelties as are in the *Inquisition*, or perhaps that were practic'd not long since under a *Popish Reign* in the *West of England*. What dismal and tragical accounts must every one expect from a book with such a *Title*! And yet we are bold to say, there is no man of modesty and temper that has the least acquaint-

acquaintance with the proceedings of those ministers and christians, but must pronounce them clear of these odious and abominable insinuations. Let any one read the history of the *Inquisition*, and compare it with the account which those of *Exeter* have given of their proceedings; or that which even Mr. *Peirce* himself has given, and then judge, if he had any reason to insinuate a parallel, or so much as any resemblance between them; or whether the *Title* he has prefix'd to his book be not as monstrous and insolent, as it is causeless and without foundation. But Mr. *Enty* in his book of *Truth and Liberty*, has so well defended himself and Brethren from the charge of acting as an *Inquisition*; that more need not here be added except an hearty wish, that Mr. *Peirce* may see and repent of the great wrong he has done his brethren and friends by this scandalous abuse.

WE proceed to the book itself: Mr. *P.* acquaints his reader of his being convinced, That the common doctrine of the Trinity was *not according to the Scriptures*, and that he was *settled in his present Opinion* before he came to *Exeter*. *West Inq.* p. 10. But previous to this he uses no small skill to guard him against the shock, which this surprizing news might give him, and to procure if possible his good esteem, and lead him gently into a favourable opinion at least, of his sentiments, by giving a plausible account of the way in which he himself was gradually brought into them. It must be confess'd his management here has something in it, that may amuse the unwary and stagger those, that are weak in the Faith.

BUT whatever be the advantage he might hope to gain in this way, he must lose it in another; seeing that hereby he has extreamly enervated, if not wholly destroy'd the force of all he has said in answer to the objections laid against him by the *Exeter* people, and done as much as they need desire, to satisfy them, that they did him no wrong, when from his own conduct and other circumstances, they thought they had good ground to suspect him to be, what now he owns he really was; at least he has sav'd them the trouble of maintaining any further dispute with him upon this head. And they cannot but think they have abundantly more to justify

their withdrawing from his ministry, than he could have as an honest man to justify his continuing with them, or clear himself from the charge of prevaricating in the worship of GOD, during all the time he officiated as their minister.

BESIDES, It falls out the worse for him, that there is nothing to be concluded for a certainty, from all he has said in the first ten pages of his book; except that he has renounc'd the common doctrine of the Trinity. If any will form an argument from the account he there gives of himself, we hope the same liberty will be allow'd on our side, which will shew that no advantage can accrue to Mr. Peirce by it.

FOR we can say, that others have read the *Antinice* writers and *Novatian*, and more lately Dr. *Clark* and Mr. *Whiston*, as well as Mr. *Peirce*; that there is no instance of caution or of diligence, by which he would recommend himself, that they have omitted. that the doctrine he now charges as *unscriptural*, has been often examin'd by whole bodies of learned and holy men, and at those times when persons equal at least, if not superior in capacity to Mr. *Peirce*, have used the utmost efforts of their wit and learning to corrupt and subvert it; and that by the mighty power of its evidence it has so prevail'd, that the generality of professing Christians, in all ages, have been constrain'd to yield to it as the truth, which GOD hath most certainly revealed in the holy scriptures.

FROM these general remarks we shall now descend to particulars. The first thing Mr. *Peirce* pretends to, is, a necessity for writing his *Inquisition*, and that the blame of all our divisions, is owing to those, who stood up in defence of the COMMON FAITH: Whereas 'tis most plain from his own confession, that he brought his new notions with him to *Exeter*, and was not so ingenuous as to own them, but imposed upon the people, as not being of the same judgment they thought him to be, at the time they chose him for their minister. He knew they were a congregation of Christians, that believ'd the proper Godhead of the SON and of the SPIRIT, and worshipp'd them as the One GOD with the FATHER. If he did not believe such principles, nor could join with them in such worship, he had acted with

with integrity and honour in refusing their call, or in declaring his own notions to them; and if after this, they had accepted him, he would have had reason to complain of what has been lately done.

HE acknowledges, he should be *at a loss about some circumstances of time*; yet he could not but be sensible that in the present case, much depended upon this, for stating matters of fact; and that that, may be a prudent and necessary act at one certain time, which would have been otherwise some months before. By false dates he casts the blame where it ought not to lie, in attributing that to unseasonable heat, which was but a timely and necessary vindication of truth, after some had undermin'd and forsaken it.

HE pleads, That there have been always differences among the Protestant Dissenters *pag. 4* about this doctrine. But tho' there have been some differences among those, who have attempted to explain the *modus* of it, yet this has been consistent with their agreeing in the *substance* of the doctrine.

THIS is a gross mistake to think that Dr. Clark's or the *Arian scheme*, is the only *medium* between proper *Tritheism* and *Sabellianism*, as is suggested, *p. 5*. Tho' the great Mr. Howe thought the distinction of persons in the GODHEAD to be greater than some others account it, yet he is clear in asserting *the Unity of the Godhead*. Whatever be the distinction, he owns the *Union* to be *necessary* and eternal, and such as could not but be. His *scheme* does effectually secure the honour of the SON and SPIRIT, and lays a sufficient foundation for our adoration and trust. They on the other hand, who according to the common scheme make the distinction less, are far from *Sabellianism*, for they own it to be *real*, and not nominal only, or a mere *Ens rationis*, *viz.* something that had a foundation in the divine nature from all eternity, and would have been the same, tho' there had been no creation or redemption. The SON is not the FATHER, nor the FATHER the SON, nor the HOLY GHOST either. Such things may be said of the One, which cannot of the Other; therefore they are more than three external manifestations or relations of GOD to the creature.

IF Mr. Peirce could make nothing but *Sabellianism* of the scheme he was bred up in. He knows that many great and learned men think otherwise, and that it is the true medium between *Sabellianism* and *Tritheism*. His own new notions derogate from the honour of the SON and SPIRIT, by robbing them of their proper Deity, and destroy the Unity of the GODHEAD, by bringing in a *Plurality* of Gods, not indeed of supreme ones, but of one *supreme*, and one or more *subordinate*; and what is this but the *Polytheism* of the *Pagan* world reviv'd, and a little more rein'd? After all, these *subordinate Deities*, will prove but deify'd creatures, who receiv'd their being, and all their excellencies from the will and pleasure of another, and depend upon him for their continuance.

AND tho' the Doctrine of the TRINITY runs thro' the whole Scheme of Christianity; yet Mr. Peirce thinks it is so obscurely reveal'd, that we can come to no certainty about it. What then! Has GOD left us in the dark, whether there be more Gods than One? And whether the SON and SPIRIT be God, or two Creatures? Are we not sure, that there can be but One GOD; and yet do we not find, that all the titles, attributes, works and Worship of GOD are ascrib'd to These as well as to the FATHER? Why should we go off from what is certain, merely because we cannot apprehend the Manner of it?

WHEN Mr. Peirce began to be shaken in his mind about the common faith, he seems studiously to have avoided all such proper means of satisfaction as one would think the nature and importance of the doctrine did require. He gives us no account of any books he read in defence of the common faith, and when he was put upon reading more books on the subject, they seem'd chiefly to be such as were in the *new scheme*, and did tend to strengthen and increase his prejudices against the old.

As to what he says concerning the *Antinicens* and *Postnicens* Fathers: When he has given a fair answer to Bishop Bull's and Dr. Waterland's account of them, what he says in his *Inquisition*, may deserve more regard.

NOTWITHSTANDING his great *Encomium* of Dr. Clark's book, we think the Doctor would have acted a fairer part, if he had compar'd the *Old* and *New Testament* together, and consider'd the light that would arise from such a comparison concerning the person and dignity of the *Messiah*. He says, he *does not fall in with him in every thing*; but is not pleased to tell us wherein he agrees, and wherein he differs. However, he owns, he was brought to part with some of his darling notions. If these were the common notions of the TRINITY, 'tis to be fear'd, he had lost his fondness for them before he had read that book, notwithstanding all its charms. After he look'd upon these as false, 'tis no wonder he should no longer esteem them a *fundamental article of the christian faith*. pag. 9.

FROM thence he fell to look upon the doctrine in any scheme to be of little significancy or importance. For if persons may mistake or err about a doctrine without danger, they may as safely continue ignorant of it; because error is something more and worse than bare ignorance. If an uniform belief *as to the substance* of this doctrine, be not absolutely necessary, we may think no belief at all is necessary; for if it is not uniform, it must be erroneous on one side or t'other. Where he says, that *good men widely differ*; if he means *as to the substance* of the doctrine, 'tis *gratis dictum*.

HE pleases himself with finding he had very much kept to scripture expressions in speaking of this doctrine, p. 5. and *with resolving to do so for the future*; but surely he did not satisfy himself with repeating the words as a parrot may do, without forming any conception in his mind about the sense of them, if he intended any sense, whether it were according to the old or new scheme, tho' he might answer some low and mean ends, by concealing it from others; yet with respect to the divine acceptance it had been the same thing if he had us'd other words, that would have more plainly express'd the notions he had form'd.

BECAUSE he made use of the same expressions with other christians who are in the *old scheme*, when he pray'd *to the Father through the Son, and by the Holy Spirit*, it does not follow that he and they perform'd the same kind of worship, and were agreed

agreed in the same object of it. He knew his congregation worshipp'd the Father not *exclusive* but *inclusive* of the Son and Spirit ; whereas he did not worship them at all, or only as subordinate Beings with an inferior kind of worship. How he could safely depend upon the merits of one for acceptance, and upon another for assistance, who, according to the new scheme, cannot be prov'd to be almighty, omniscient and omnipresent, is not to be apprehended ; or how he could honestly joyn with those, who he knew were paying another kind of worship, or they with him if his sentiments had been known to them, is as hard to conceive. It is observable, that when he cannot bring the people to entertain his notions, his great design seems to be, to make the doctrine be thought a matter of little or no importance. He represents it as having little or no influence upon the christian virtues, *pag.* 9. tho' if all these flow from *faith unfeigned*, the excellency and efficacy of the one, must depend on the soundness of the other. A false faith can never be the parent or nourisher of truly christian virtues.

HAVING said what is sufficient to the introductory part of his book, we shall now follow *pag.* 13. him through a long relation of matters of fact which are so unfairly represented, with many unworthy reflections upon his brethren, and with so much ill temper, that we wish for his own sake he had acted with a greater guard upon himself.

His first attempt is to fasten the rise of the controversy upon Mr. *Lavington*, how far he has done it with reason and truth, may be seen by the following account given of that affair under Mr. *Lavington's* own hand.

WHEREAS Mr. *Peirce* in his *Western Inquisition*, *page* 13. says, That Mr. *Stogdon* fell upon the controversy with me, and talk'd very freely, and seems to ascribe the beginning of our differences to my publishing what passed at that time.

I do hereby declare, That we had only some very slight and superficial talk about the present controversy ; nor did I till some time after this conference, know, what Mr. *Stogdon's* notions concerning the
Trinity

Trinity, were ; and so far was I from publishing what then pass'd, that I did not think it worth the least notice or regard. And tho' Mr. *Peirce* would date the *first occasion* and rise of our disturbances from what pass'd between Mr. *Stogdon* and me ; 'tis certain they began higher, for several things relating thereto had fallen out before this, as is evident from what follows.

IN *December* 1716, the notions of Dr. *Clark* and Mr. *Whiston* began to spread, and were secretly propagated, as appears from a following certificate, p. 14. given by Mr. *Atkins*.

On *February* the 17th, 1716, I preach'd on 1 *John* v. 7. without the least regard to any disputes among us ; for tho' the *Arian scheme*, had got footing in this city [*Exon*] ; yet I had not at that time, the least suspicion of it. But the occasion of my preaching on that text was, That I had undertaken to discourse in order upon the fundamental principles of religion, and having before preach'd upon the *Being of a God*, I came then in course, according to my prescrib'd method, to treat of the TRINITY. The week after I had preach'd this sermon, a poor woman came to me in great perplexity, and told me, That she knew not how to come to the Lord's-table ; for that they told her, That *CHRIST was not God*, and the text I had preach'd upon, was not in the *Bible* : The woman mention'd no man's name to me, neither did I ask her, but went immediately and acquainted Mr. *Withers* with what she had said. Mr. *Withers* of his own accord went to Mr. *Hallett*, senior, in order to put a stop to this matter. A few days after this, Mr. *Stogdon* and Mr. *Spiring* came to my house to vindicate themselves, imagining, as I suppose, that the woman had accus'd them to me ; tho' indeed she did not, nor did I suspect them. Much about this time (a day or two before or after) I was sent for to a layman of the *Church of England*, who was just a dying, and in great perplexity about this controversy, which, he told me, had been for some months spreading in our city to his knowledge ; and that, among those of our persuasion, as well as those of the *establish'd Church* : And mention'd some of their names ; tho' Mr. *Peirce* does not touch upon this matter, till in pag. 100. of his *Western Inquisition*.] From whence it appears, that

Mr. *Peirce* should have set the rise of this controversy some months higher than my conversation with Mr. *Stogdon*.

ABOUT this time (as I guess) three of Mr. *Peirce*'s chief friends, went to him to inquire of the genuineness of 1 *Joh. v. 7*. I guess it to be about this time, because, it is reasonable to suppose, that they did it when this matter was most talk'd of, which was the week after I preach'd upon it; and I am assur'd by Mr. *Manstou*, that two of them came to him at this time with the same question: And I am certain, that it was but a little while after, that Mr. *Peirce* also own'd to me, that they had been with him, and that he told them, *That he held it as long as he could, but on reading Dr. Clark he had given it up*. This he told me at my own house, long before the meeting of the Committee in November, 1718. tho' in pag. 35. *West. Inq.* he suggests, he did not say it till then.

Or about the 29th of April 1717, Mr. *Stogdon* and Mr. *Spiring* had a debate with Mr. *Jewell* part of which is set down in a following certificate.

A few days after this, Mr. *Jewell* and Mr. *Spiring* had another conference at Mr. *Spiring*'s own house, where Mr. *Spiring* blam'd Mr. *Jewell* for divulging their former debates; and then declar'd, that the majority of the ministers of the City held these notions: And about this time likewise Mr. *Spiring* had a formal dispute with seven women at once upon this controversy. All this had pass'd before the preaching of Mr. *Atkin*'s Sermon; and yet Mr. *Peirce* would represent us as very peaceable till that time; and p. 29. of his *West. Inq.* asserts, that 'twas Mr. *Atkin*'s sermon that had inflam'd the people. This is a true and faithful account of matters thus far.

John Lavington.

FROM what has been said, it appears, that Mr. *Peirce* has not given a clear and just account of the first occasion and rise of our differences, by imputing them to me; and the reader may easily see thorough the slender excuse by which he would bring off Mr. *Stogdon*: For in *West. Inq.* pag. 13. he owns, that Mr. *Stogdon* quite alter'd his notion concerning the doctrine of the TRINITY, and tho' he tells us, That he [Mr. *Stogdon*] endeavour'd to conceal it from the world; yet, the contrary to this appears by Mr. *Edgley*'s and Mr. *Galpin*'s

Galpin's certificates, and 'tis plain, he was free enough with his *intimate friends*, and was not wanting in his zeal, both before and after he was discover'd, to propagate his notion, where he found any likelihood of doing it with success.

WHAT I have asserted above does justify the *Faithful Narrative*, and must reflect dishonour on Mr. *Peirce*, who to bring the *Narrative* under discredit, suggests, *West. Inq.* p. 36. he did not say he had given up that text, *1 John v. 7. till the meeting of the thirteen, the November after the Assembly*, which was in 1718. whereas long before the meeting of that committee, and but a little while after, I had preach'd my sermon in *February 1716.* he own'd to me he had given up that text.

I desire the *Reader* will now examine the *Western Inquisition*, p. 34. where he will find Mr. *Peirce* represents the sermon I preach'd *February 17. 1716.* as preach'd by me *some time after* his sermon, which sermon of his, was not preach'd till *June 2. 1717.* that is, above *three months* after, which according to his own account, was when our differences were far advanc'd; and yet he represents the conference that happen'd soon after my sermon between me and Mr. *Stegdon*, and was occasion'd by it, to be the beginning of our disturbances. The world will see from hence, how little his *History* is to be depended on, and make due reflections on it when they observe how ready he is to be severe upon others, and to charge mistakes even where there are none. Surely Mr. *Peirce* should have had a better memory, or at least have been more modest in his reflections on the *Faithful Narrative*; with respect to which, I take this occasion to declare, That after the strictest searches I can make, I find it to have given a very just and faithful account of the *rise and progress* of our debates..”

John Lavington.

WITH respect to what is mention'd in the foregoing account concerning Mr. *Stegdon*, Mr. *pag. 14. Spiring*, Mr. *Jewell*, and the dispute with *seven women*; and likewise to show, that matters were not so

very peaceable before Mr. *Atkins* preach'd his sermon; as Mr. *Peirce* says they were, *Western Inquisition*, p. 14. 'tis thought proper to subjoin here the following *certificates*.

Exon the 12th of November 1719.

THIS is to certify, all whom it may concern, that I George Jewell having been inform'd, That Mr. Spiring (a person I was intimately acquainted with) was fallen into the Errors of Arius, and meeting the said Mr. Spiring on Easter Monday the 22 April 1717, I said to him, Mr. Spiring, I understand you hold very strange notions; he reply'd, I can't stay now, but I will come up to your house. And about a week after that, he came up to my house with Mr. Stogdon. In discourse I assertcd, That CHRIST was GOD, and equal to the FATHER, and I urg'd, for proof of his Deity, his Omniscience, from Rev. ii. 23. To which Mr. Stogdon reply'd, How did I know, but GOD might communicate Omniscience to a creature: And Mr. Spiring caution'd me against making the SON equal with the FATHER, saying, THE FATHER will say at the last day, I did not make my SON equal with me, and why will you make him equal with me? and urg'd, that CHRIST was not One GOD with the FATHER, from that Scripture, Matth. xiii. 32. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. This was some time before Mr. Henry Atkins preach'd the sermon mention'd in the Western Inquisition.

George Jewell.

THES E are to certify all persons, whom it may concern, That Mr. John Spiring, did, in the presence of us, and five other women dispute and argue, That CHRIST was not One GOD with the FATHER, but an inferior Being to Him, and Mr. Spiring declar'd, that a great deal of hurt was done in religion, by mens making the SON equal to the FATHER, and he demanded, How we could prove the equality of the SON with the FATHER? One of us urg'd that text, Zach. xiii. 7. Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man, that is my fellow, saith the LORD of Hosts. Another said, It's clear from John x. 30. I and my Father are One, And 1 John v. 7. For there

there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. Mr. Spiring reply'd, It was one, only in will and affection: And when one of us said, She could not bear to have his glory lessen'd, that had done so much for us; He reply'd, God the FATHER, would never give us thanks, for giving that glory to the SON, that was due to Himself. And this debate was some time before Mr. Henry Atkins preach'd the sermon mention'd in Mr. Peirce's Western Inquisition.

Witness our Hands,

Eliz. Marks,
Joan Force.

THIS is to certify, all persons, whom it may concern, That Mr. John Spiring, upon a thursday morning (before Mr. Henry Atkins preach'd that sermon mention'd in Mr. Peirce's Western Inquisition) invited me to his house, and then discoursing with him of these new notions, I ask'd him, If the ministers held these notions? To which he reply'd, Most of the ministers of the City did.

Witness my hand, this 19th of
January 1719.

George Jewell.

ABOUT this time it was, that Mr. Stogdon made the declaration of his being an *Arian*, and glory'd in the name.

MR. Henry Atkins being the next person brought on the stage, for a sermon preach'd at *Exon* against *Arianism*, vindicates himself in the following account. pag. 14.

ON perusal of Mr. Peirce's *Western Inquisition*, I observ'd, pag. 14. the article following relating to me, viz.

“ BEING at London a good part of April and May
“ 1717, Mr. Henry Atkins, who resides in *Exon*, but
“ preaches stately at *Puddington*, preach'd in my turn,
“ the *Wednesday* lecture: What his design was he knows
“ best himself, but by all the accounts I have receiv'd
“ of his sermon, it was very warm and furious, charg-
“ ing some among the dissenters in *Exon* with damna-
“ ble Heresies, denying the Lord that bought them; tho'
“ he

“ he own'd after he had preach'd the sermon, that he
 “ had not study'd the controversy. I could not find,
 “ that his prudence was much applauded by any at
 “ first, especially considering, that he was not preaching
 “ in his own pulpit; but afterwards when the contro-
 “ versy began to run higher, I perceiv'd that he had
 “ work'd some persons into a more favourable opinion
 “ of him than they had before.

THE above article containing in it some malicious reflections upon me, and exhibiting heavy charges against me, I think I am oblig'd to vindicate my self, and undeceive the world.

I. THE world by these words, [*What was his design, he knows best himself;*] is given, I apprehend, to understand, that my design was not good in preaching that sermon; but I solemnly declare, that I had no other design either in composing or delivering that discourse, than to demonstrate the true and proper Divinity of our blessed SAVIOUR. As to the occasion of my preaching on that subject, it is fit that I should give some account of it.

I had reason to believe, that there were not a few, who call'd in question that important doctrine of christianity even in *Exon*, and therefore concluded, that since I was desir'd to preach a lecture, I could not make choice of a more pertinent subject, that I might if possible convince such persons of their mistake.

IN *December 1716*, a considerable person now in communion with Mr. *Peirce*, declar'd himself (in the hearing of several persons at my house) of the same sentiments with Dr. *Clark* and Mr. *Whiston*; assur'd me, that some of Mr. *Peirce's* present hearers and communicants had embrac'd the same opinions, and was very positive, that the *new scheme* would universally prevail. Some time after this I had information, from persons of undoubted credit that a pupil of Mr. *Haller's*, had us'd his endeavours to make *proselytes* in *Tiverton* to Dr. *Clark* and Mr. *Whiston*; and the subject was also become matter of warm debate in a *coffee-house*. When I consider'd these things, I thought myself oblig'd, to appear to the best of my ability in defence of the Truth, and oppose *Gain-sayers*.

2. IT is not true, that I was warm and furious in the delivering of the sermon: I was heartily griev'd, indeed, that there should be occasion to insist upon that topick, and deliver'd myself with a compassionate concern, but was far from anger or prejudice against any particular person.

AND whereas Mr. Peirce asserts, That I charg'd some among the dissenters of Exon with *damnabie heresies, denying the Lord that bought them*. I assert, that the words *damnabie heresies*, were not in my sermon; and if there were some passages in my discourse, from which it might be inferr'd, that I had the dissenters of Exon in view; and grant I had in express terms drawn up a charge in Mr. Peirce's words; it is evident from the above account, that I had sufficient reason for so doing, and I am satisfy'd, that I should but have acted agreeably to my duty, had I express'd myself so plainly, as that some of the then *auditory*, could not have avoided concluding themselves aim'd at: and I own to Mr. Peirce and all the world, that my design was to endeavour the rendring those whom I apprehended had fallen into the error, sensible of it, to prevent others being infected, and to establish all in the truth.

3. I declare that to be false, That after the preaching of my sermon, I said, *I had not study'd the controversy*. I very well remember, I was in company with two gentlemen of Mr. Peirce's intimate acquaintance and mine. I had some debate with them on this subject. There were at that time some difficulties started, which I am not ashamed to own I could not then resolve. And the reply I made on that occasion, was, That I had not as yet study'd the controversy so fully, as to be able to resolve all difficulties: Between which, and my not having study'd the controversy *at all*, there is I conceive a vast difference.

FINALLY, as to my prudence in preaching the sermon in Mr. Peirce's pulpit, I can't call it into question, nor can I be sensible, that the place in which it was preach'd, could render it an imprudent act. I had not the applause and admiration of any in my view, nor do I know of any persons, who have entertain'd, either

a better or more uncharitable opinion of me since the preaching of that sermon, than they had before.

Henry Atkins.

THIS sermon was preach'd by Mr. *Atkins*, May 15. 1717. Mr. *Peirce* was so offended at it, that he owns he made a motion to his brethren, and thought it had been agreed to, that Mr. *Atkins* should be ask'd no more to preach in their pulpit. See *West. Inq.* pag. 29. So that to assert the Godhead of CHRIST, and endeavour to prove it from scripture arguments, was, in Mr. *Peirce's* Judgment, so great a crime that he deserv'd for this to be deny'd their pulpit. Such a procedure must needs tend to increase the dissatisfaction of those, who had any concern for the honour of the blessed REDEEMER. They had reason to question his friendship to the Godhead of CHRIST, who could upon Mr. *Atkins's* preaching on that subject carry his resentments so high.

FROM Mr. *Atkins*, Mr. P. proceeds to pag 14. give an account of what pass'd between him and three considerable persons of the congregation, which plainly shew'd the turn of his mind in the wild conception he had form'd of a *medium* between the supreme GOD and a creature. And what he recites from p. 15 to the 25th of the sermon he afterwards preach'd at the desire of those gentlemen, confirms what is said of *it* in the citizens *Account*.

AND whereas pag. 26. he suggests, as pag. 26. if the sermon had given satisfaction, and he had hopes we should have no more disturbance, and that he did not hear of the objection of his third friend, till at least half a year afterward. His third friend, well remembers that four or five days after the preaching of that sermon, a minister of London came to Exon, to whom complaint was made by him of the sermon, and particularly of this; That when he mention'd some texts which assert the Godhead of CHRIST, he introduc'd them with these words,

words, *We need not be shy of giving him the title, &c.* and the uneasiness this had given: of which the said minister gave Mr. Peirce an account, and brought back his answer; so that Mr. Peirce knew it was the matter of the sermon, and not the quickness of the delivery, that gave the uneasiness: tho' he is pleas'd to give it that artful turn, pag. 29.

AND tho' he dislik'd the *Socinian* interpretation of the text, which denies his *pre-existence*; yet he has nothing about it but what is consistent with the *Arian* scheme. If he had believ'd CHRIST'S *supreme Godhead*, he would have been the *first*, that ever us'd such an odd phrase, *viz. We need not be shy in giving him the title.* This plainly intimates, that the title was too high for the notion he had entertain'd of CHRIST'S nature, if the Scriptures had not us'd it; but out of seeming reverence to them, he wou'd not refuse it, so he might interpret it as an *Arian* would do. His *sermon* gave just ground to suspect he look'd upon CHRIST to be only such a God as was a different Being from, and inferior to the FATHER; and what he has publish'd since, makes it evident.

MR. Peirce speaks of an aged and worthy person (suppos'd to be Mr. Ball) with whom he pag. 27. had talk'd freely on the point, and that he could not perceive he differ'd a Hair's breadth from him.

To this Mr. Ball replies in the manner following:

I must confess at that time, I did not understand their language, but thought they had meant quite otherwise than it seems they did, hiding themselves under *equivocal phrases*. But I protest before the whole world, that I was ever remote from their notions, and abhor'd the supposing of CHRIST, or the HOLY SPIRIT to be *creatures*, or distinguish'd in nature and perfections from the FATHER, and detested the worship of any thing but the ONE GOD.

WHEREAS the *Account* had charg'd Mr. Peirce with stating in that sermon, the *new notion* of the unity of the Godhead, Mr. Peirce owns the charge, pag. 29. and says, *If he pleases he may call it a new notion, and I believe it is so to him; but I dare say, upon inquiry, it will be found as old as the New Testament.* It may suffice to answer him, That we are as confident of the contrary,

MR. Peirce, pag. 30. says, *About this time, pag. 30. a reverend person, who was afterwards at the head of the seven worthies, who advis'd our judges, &c. and pag. 31. says, That he understood by others, that it was not unusual with him, (meaning Mr. Ball) to advance positive charges by way of pump.*

To which Mr. Ball makes this reply:

I went to Mr. Peirce the morning when I first heard the discourse about Mr. Stogdon, I thought Mr. Peirce, had it in his power, to prevent the spreading of Mr. Stogdon's opinions, and desir'd him to consider the consequence.

I told him, I thought, it was plain, that we should have more, or fewer meetings quickly, (meaning that some would go off to the church, and others set up new meetings, when they saw that their ministers, if they did not openly profess these opinions, yet did countenance them by their silence, which would be a great encouragement to the spreaders of them) and told him, as he says, that Mr. Stogdon would be accounted the third, Mr. Joseph Hallet, Jun. the second, and Mr. Peirce the first; this I laid upon the great intimacy between the two last nam'd; I remember not, that I said any thing of books: but I perceiv'd presently that Mr. Peirce knew Mr. Joseph Hallet's mind, better than his own father, at that time; for when I told Mr. Peirce, that I would talk with every minister in Exon upon this matter, he desir'd that I would not talk with Mr. Joseph Hallet before his father. Mr. Peirce adds, That he learned from others, that I us'd to advance positive charges against men, when I knew of no such thing. I desire the reader to cast his eye upon pag. 53. of Mr. Peirce's book, where he says, That there is no viler way of calumniating others, than by *innuendo's*; and calls it a mean, pitiful, disingenuous way of writing: And doth this way of Mr. P's deserve any better epithets to bring such a charge against me, without naming the person who told him so? He doth this in many places of his book, particularly pag. 73. where he says, a great confident of curs reported, &c. but he names no one. Mr. Peirce knows, that some people have said, he was a Jesuit; and if I had heard those angry persons to say the same, and had printed this

this idle tale, what exclamations would he presently have made! I would not be understood amiss here, I never thought him to be a *Jesuit* or a *Papist*, but I only intimate to him how ill this treatment would appear in his own case. Yet such treatment I and others have from him throughout the book.

John Ball.

Mr. *Peirce* charges Mr. *Lavington* as censuring him and Mr. *Withers* for conversing *pag. 32.* freely with some of the people talk'd of for their being in the new notion, and letting them come to their houses. To which, it is answer'd, That Mr. *Peirce's* intimacy with those people, might give Mr. *Lavington* ground to fear that they receiv'd them from him, or were like to be confirm'd in them by him; especially, when he told him, that he took them to be very good men, and would not give him any satisfaction, that in his private conversation he endeavour'd to convince them of their error. What he attributes to Mr. *Lavington's* suspicious temper, was but a godly jealousy, lest Mr. *Peirce* should in a more private way attempt doing that, which some secular views might hinder him from doing in a more publick manner.

IN *page 32, 33.* Mr. *Peirce* owns the subordination, or inferiority, as was charg'd in the *Citizens Account*, p. 4. And what the notion of Mr. *Peirce's* friends concerning the said subordination is, will appear from the following certificates.

T^{HIS} is to certify, all whom it may concern, That I John Scutt did hear Mr. John Spiring say, That CHRIST was an inferior God.

John Scutt.

WE whose names are under-written, do certify, That we heard William Goswell, jun. say, That JESUS CHRIST is God, no otherwise, than as King George,, or a magistrate of a city.

Richard Fuge,
Elizabeth Fuge.

AND if Mr. Peirce was not of the opinion of his friends about CHRIST'S *inferiority*, he could easily have clear'd himself. They seem to have had truer notions of the weight and importance of the doctrine one way or other than himself, and therefore they honestly express'd a proportionable warmth, as judging it either an important truth, or a dangerous error: whereas, he seems to think it of little consequence what notions men entertain of the nature of their *Saviour*, who is the object of their worship and trust for *eternal salvation*. Certainly the scripture revelation must be very obscure and defective, if it leaves us in the dark about matters of such a nature. Mr. Peirce mentions *subordination* and *inferiority* as equivalent terms; whereas Dr. Waterland shows that subordination is always between persons of the *same nature*, but inferiority between those of a *different*.

THIS is Mr. Peirce's notion of CHRIST'S *subordination*, that he is not only a distinct person, but a Being *different* from, and *inferior* to the FATHER. Which (if he be God at all) must infer the absurd notion of two Gods, one supreme and the other subordinate, and how this is consistent with what both reason and revelation discover of the Unity of the Godhead. Mr. Peirce would do well to show. In his argument he confounds the *Personality* or *Subsistence* of the FATHER and SON with their nature. The SON may be subordinate to the FATHER in *relation*, and yet the same in *nature*; equal in power and glory. This is more than to make FATHER and SON but two different *names* for the same Being. They are different persons in the same undivided Godhead, all the essential perfections of which do belong to each of them, tho' the *manner of subsisting* in it, be past our finding out. The Nature is but one, tho' the Persons are distinct, and the one in a *relative sense*, subordinate to the other. They are not two supreme Gods, but One GOD, and two Persons subsisting in the self-same Godhead. Tho' there be nothing parallel to this in created nature; yet why may not that be possible in an *infinite*, uncreated BEING, which is not so in a *finite* one? It is much more reasonable to believe this upon the credit of revelation, tho' we acknowledge it above our *comprehension*, than to rob

CHRIST

CHRIST of his Godhead, and run into the absurdity of asserting more Gods than One.

WHEREAS Mr. P. affirms, That *the woman deny'd, what the Narrative says she spake pag. 34 to me, with relation to peoples denying the Divinity of CHRIST: I have since the publishing Mr. Peirce's West. Inq. been with the woman, who voluntarily before witnesses, sign'd the following certificate; and whereas Mr. P. affirms, That the story is considerably alter'd from what it was at my first telling it; I do hereby declare, that the first person I told it unto, was Mr. Withers, who is ready to assure Mr. Peirce or any other, that I told it him in the words of the following certificate; nor did I relate it otherwise to any other person.*

J. Lavington.

THIS is to certify; all whom it may concern, That I did go to Mr. Lavington, and told him, I knew not how to come to the Lord's-table; for that they told me, CHRIST was not GOD, and that the text he had preach'd upon was not in the Bible.

signed by

Sarah Blake.

signed in the presence of us, John Tawman,
Exon, Novemb. 9, 1719. Hannah Tawman.

WHEREAS Mr. Peirce, suggests, That it was upon some mens reflecting on my *pag. 35.* conduct in preaching on 1 John v. 7. that I took occasion to express my notion of the TRINITY in these words, That GOD was some way One, and some way Three; and to assert it to be a fundamental. I hereby declare, That it was in this very sermon on 1 John v. 7. that I had these expressions, and therefore before any reflections could be made on it; nor did I (upon the strictest review) make use of 'em in any other sermon before or after: and since Mr. Peirce is pleas'd to represent it as so very ridiculous, I am contented to lay it before the world in the very words that were deliver'd without the least alteration. I had
been

been showing, according to my propos'd method, 1.) That GOD, represented himself as One GOD. 2.) That notwithstanding this, he represented himself as a Plurality of Persons. 3.) That these Persons or Subsistences, are but Three, *viz.* FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. 4.) That these were distinct from one another, that each was GOD, tho' the GODHEAD be but One.

Having gone over these particulars, I then had the following words.

THUS then I have endeavour'd to lay before you the Scripture account of the TRINITY. GOD represents himself as One GOD, and yet under Three distinct Subsistences. The same Authority which obliges us to believe GOD to be but One, obliges us also to believe him to be Three. But then (which must be carefully observ'd) 'tis not in the same sense. I say the Scripture doth not represent GOD as One and Three in the same sense; for this would be a contradiction, and not only above, but contrary to reason. All therefore I say, that the Scriptures affirm, is, *That GOD is some way One, and some way Three.* And this we must believe, for 'tis one of the grand fundamental truths of our religion; and upon this especially depends the doctrine of our salvation by a Redeemer. Take away this fundamental doctrine, and most of the chief doctrines of the Christian religion will fall after it. This is the discourse which Mr. Peirce so ridicules. I was, it seems, despis'd and laugh'd at; and so was an inspir'd apostle, for preaching JESUS and the resurrection. If Mr. Peirce had loo'd into the 1st Psalm, he would have found it one of the characters of a blessed man, *That he sitteth not in the seat of the scornful.*

John Lavington.

WHEREAS Mr. Peirce, excuses a young
pag. 35. minister, meaning Mr. Jof. Hallet, jun. for blotting out 1 John v. 7. out of his greek Testament, with this, *That he did it seven or eight years since, while he was a student, and had never preach'd;* and his father hath laid since in his excuse, *That he did it in his younger years, and was sorry for it.* How true both these accounts are, will appear from the following certificate.

This

THIS is to certify, That whereas Mr. Peirce positively asserts, That the young minister charg'd with blotting out 1 John v. 7 did it seven or eight years since: That assertion is false, unless he has repeated the same fact; for 'tis not six years since I saw him blot out that text from a greek Testament, and have very lately heard him say, That he gloried in doing it.

Exon, the 27th of January 1719.

Henry Atkins.

As for the charge against one of the seven (by which is thought to be intended Mr. *Jos. Manston*) That he also should blot that text out of his Bible. This charge is false, as appears by the following certificate, which he gives (to use his own expression) in the words of a dying man.

WHEREAS Mr. *Peirce* asserts in pag. 35. of his *Western Inquisition*, [That there was another minister, who declar'd about this time, that he had long ago put this text out of his Bible, and was indeed the first person who shock'd one of our people, whom I could name: But no objection was made against him for this grievous crime, he having afterwards prudently aton'd for it, by being one of the seven adviters.] And I find that both Mr. *P's* friends and mine apply that passage to me; I shall give this short and true account of it.

Br. Burnet's Letters rais'd considerable doubts in me of the genuineness of it. And when I saw the *Enquiry* of Mr. *Emlin* speak so confidently against its being in any greek manuscript or very ancient translation, I was led to look upon it as an interpolation. But I never did strike or put it out of my Bible, never spake a word to that purpose, nor had a thought of that nature. I have argued with some ministers according to my then apprehensions about it, and once I remember at Mr. *Powell's*, (before I knew *Arianism* or the new scheme to be prevailing in *Exeter*) a discourse happen'd about this text, I did express my doubt of it, and I believe might say, that I had given it up, and could not defend it; but then I presently added, that if that text was not to be defended,

defended, the doctrine of the TRINITY might be prov'd from many other texts of Scripture. This last passage, I perfectly remember, and aver to be true. However, I do now find that I was misled by the groundless confidence of Mr. *Emlin*, and upon reading Mr. *Martin's Critical Inquiries* I am fully convinc'd that the text is as genuine as any other part of the *Epistle*, and that it was in the ancient versions, and in the *greek manuscripts*. And, I hope, if any were so weak as to build upon so slender an authority as an occasional word of mine, they will on my advice read Mr. *Martin*, and have reason to bless GOD that they did it, as I heartily do.

WHAT Mr. *Peirce* means by *shocking one of their people*; I cannot imagine, I positively aver, That I never used any argument or suggestion to draw them off from the doctrine of CHRIST'S Godhead into his notion, that he was a middle Being between the FATHER and the most high GOD and the creatures; nor ever directly or indirectly endeavour'd to bring any person into it, but argu'd against it with himself, when he first to'd me that it was his notion at Mr. *Peter Powell's*, the evening that he read me the notes which are since printed of his sermon that gave such offence. I have always own'd a *relative* subordination, such as is commonly defended; and if any persons will make false inferences from thence, I am sorry for it, and shall be more cautious in speaking of it for the future. Possibly I may also come nearer Mr. *How's* notion in my conception of the doctrine of the *Trinity* than some other of my brethren; but if any thing in my manner of conceiving of that mystery, or of my notion of the *Subordination* be inconsistent with the true and proper Divinity of CHRIST, or necessarily infers more Gods than one, or that *the Father and the Son are not one God*, I do hereby declare my readiness to renounce those notions.

Joseph Manston.

The Testimony which this worthy person (who dy'd soon after) has left behind him, is a proof of his exemplary candor and ingenuity, which add to the many excellent qualities that grace his character. He owes he had his difficulties in relation to 1 *Joh. v. 7.* but he bless'd
GOD

GOD for the satisfaction he received upon reading Monsieur *Martin's* treatise. Mr. *Peirce* has done him wrong by affirming he had blotted it out of his bible, and he has shown but little regard to his own honour and the truth, when pleading in defence of another that had done it, he represents those that blam'd him for that rashness, as endeavouring to blast his reputation for an *innocent and commendable searching of the Scriptures*; whereas it was not for this but *blotting out the text*, that he was deservedly censur'd.

UPON this occasion, he is pleas'd to give an account of what he himself has said and tho't upon it, and he allows the *authors* of the *Narrative*, to name him as *the minister who gave up that text*, only he reflects upon them for misplacing the account in point of time, to *put the better colour*, (as he says) *upon the advice sent from London, and the proceedings of the September Assembly*.

BEFORE we answer this, 'tis fit to observe his presumption, and want of charity, in pretending to know the inward motives of persons in what they say or do, and drawing them often by such surmises to somewhat criminal.

'TIS strange, how Mr. *Peirce* can affirm this, when the *Narrative* is so far from laying the advice sent from *London* upon the *whole foregoing account* of the affairs at *Exeter*, in order to put the better colour upon it; that it expressly declares, p. 9. it was only in answer to the *first letter* sent to a private brother from those parts. And tho' the authors of the *Narrative*, (as he calls them) reckon themselves no farther concern'd, than to make good the matter of fact, which Mr. *Peirce* himself has confirm'd; yet had they undertaken for *the circumstance of time*, they had not been out in that particular, and what Mr. *Lavington* has given under his hand, p. 11. may convince him of his gross mistake: for long before the meeting of the *thirteen* and the *September assembly*, 1718, he said to him, he had given up that text. And the *Editors* of the *Narrative* can assure him also from the *originals*, that before the meeting of that assembly, they receiv'd accounts of several, who had *blotted that text out of their Bible*, tho' they did not know that he was the particular person, who upon reading Dr. *Clark* had given it up, till he himself was pleas'd to oblige them with the information-

BUT to proceed, Mr. P. says, *The Narrative* pag. 37. has here *a great deal more of the like stories*. They are not invented stories, or slanderous reports; but of such a nature, as being proved, will not only establish the faithfulness of the *Narrative*, but evince the necessity there was of entering into measures to put a check to those growing evils. And it is a plain indication, how much Mr. Peirce's heart was in these matters, that he undertakes the defence of them, and throws all the reproach he is able upon those who after much forbearance and patience found themselves oblig'd in conscience to appear openly against them. But as Mr. Peirce demands a proof of the charges that are advanc'd in the *Narrative*, the evidences shall now be produc'd, and they are such, as must needs engage a greater regard to them than he would wish for, and oblige him, in point of honour and honesty, to retract the invidious reflections he has cast upon the *Narrative*.

WHEREAS then he requires *a proof of young candidates coming from their academical studies tainted with erroneous notions concerning the sacred TRINITY*. In answer to this, we refer the reader to the following part of a letter writ by the reverend Mr. Pitts of Chard, concerning his own son, and another young man, who were both Mr. Hallet's pupils.

SIR,

Dec. 23.

“ I Receiv'd your letter, and am very desirous to do all
 “ the service I can in so just a cause, and there-
 “ fore am willing you should make use of my name in
 “ the case of my son, who thanks GOD, he is better in-
 “ form'd: And as a farther proof, that the infection had
 “ reach'd Mr. H——t's young men, you may mention a
 “ letter seen by me, from one of Mr. H——t's students
 “ to another that was gone from thence, not doubting of
 “ his *steadfastness in the truth*, tho' he question'd not but
 “ by that time (which was not long after he had been
 “ at home) he had *endured the fiery trial*. This seems
 “ to be much to the purpose, it being an expression that
 “ carries in it no small reflection upon the person, by
 “ whom

“ whom it was concluded an endeavour would be made
 “ to convince him. The letter was subscrib'd *Philalæthes*.
 “ This I certify as truth, tho' I do not think it pro-
 “ per to mention the person to whom the letter was sent.
 “ It is enough that the letter was seen by me, and that
 “ what I write you was in it.”

yours,

Aar. Pitts.

WE also refer the reader to the following *certificate*, from the reverend Mr. *Westcott*, who was another pupil in the same academy.

THIS is to certify, all whom it may concern, That I was told by a person of credit, (who was often at Mr. Spiring's house, and whom I could name, if there were occasion) that there were frequent meetings at Mr. Spiring's house, where Whiston was read with applause, and his notions of the TRINITY defended. I myself was present once at Mr. Foster's (where I know there were frequent meetings of young men, students and candidates for the ministry) and when I offer'd some of Mr. Boyle's arguments for the Divinity of CHRIST, they all began to answer them, and to defend the contrary opinion; and at another time, when I was absent, I was told by one of them, that I kept off for fear I should be convinc'd.

Samue! Westcott.

THERE was another of Mr. *Hallet's* pupils, who declar'd, He knew no other Trinity, but faith, hope, and charity. But that we may not be thought to copy after an ill example, in throwing reproaches on parties or persons without evidence; if Mr. *Peirce* or Mr. *Hallet* please to inquire of Mr. N. mention'd in Mr. P's *West. Inq.* he will satisfy them of the truth of it. This expression doubtless was very unadvis'd, as the person himself has since acknowledg'd; but there is no assurance that it was contrary to his real sentiments.

AND that others deceiv'd their ordainers, we need go no farther than Mr. *Jos. Hallet, jun.* as a flaming instance.

SEVERAL others, who seem'd very found as to this doctrine, in the confessions made at their ordination, afterwards appear'd of very different sentiments, to the great grief of several of their ordainers. For instance, Mr. Beadon, Mr. How, Mr. Par, Mr. Cock, Mr. Force, the last of whom, hath made the bold declaration in the following certificate.

THESSE are to certify. That Mr. John Force, of Bovey, at or about Whituntide last, in a Discourse with me, ask'd, What Mr. Colton had done? I told him, He had subscrib'd with the other ministers. To which he answer'd, I pity him then. When he made that answer, I further added, How comes this to pass, seeing 'tis not very long since you declar'd (meaning at his ordination) That you believ'd the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, to be the One GOD? To which he reply'd, I never preach'd, nor believed it in all my Life. To which I again answer'd, Mr. Force, I and many others must be witnesses against you.

Anna Edgley.

THIS is to certify, all persons whom it may concern; That when I, James Pope, did urge to the reverend Mr. Force of Bovey, the necessity of a satisfaction of infinite value, and that I thought CHRIST had made such. He reply'd, Infinite satisfaction, is infinite non-tense.

Nov. 19, 1719.

James Pope.

AND whereas Mr. Peirce condemns the Narrative for affirming, That children had been taught to say, They would not for the world repeat the sixth answer about the TRINITY, in the Assembly's Catechism. The Narrative will appear true, by the following certificate.

THIS is to certify, all whom it may concern, That we, whose names are under-written, did hear Mrs. Mary Powel say, She would not answer the sixth question in the Assembly's Catechism, relating to the TRINITY, for never so much.

Joan Dennis.
Elizabeth Pitts.

WHEREAS also Mr. Peirce doth farther insinuate; That Mr. *Lavington* made complaint to Mr. Withers of a story of this nature, and asserts, That Mr. *Withers* on inquiry found it to have nothing of truth in it. The contrary doth appear by the following account.

Mr. *Peirce* being led into a mistake in his *West. Inq.* relating to me, and being call'd pag. 37. upon to set that matter of fact in a true light. The case in short was this: Mr. *Lavington* never complain'd to me of any children that were taught to declare their aversion to the *Assembly's Catechism*; but of a girl's asserting, That we must not say, that the HOLY GHOST is G. D. Upon my inquiry into that matter, she confidently deny'd the words: But one Mr. *Bennet* some time after affirm'd to me, That he heard her speak these words which made me suspect, that she did as children are too often wont to do, endeavour to excuse one fault by the commission of another.

John Withers.

Mr. *Peirce* in the same Page, is offended at the *Narrative* for letting it be known, that many loose and unsteady persons, had been secretly practis'd upon in several towns as well as Exeter. The *Narrative* relates this as it was receiv'd, and if the fact was true, it was necessary to be known, to show the zeal of the adverse party in spreading their errors, and to inform the world of the necessity there was of entering into measures for opposing them. He complains in the same place, That it was cry'd about the streets, that they were a loose people. And is this any wonder, when such base insinuations as those above in relation to Mr. *Lavington*, are thought fit to appear in his history.

WHAT is said of the case of Bristol, and pag. 38. that this doctrine was become the common subject of discourse and dispute in conversation; of the dissenters being tax'd in the publick markets with denying their Church first, and their SAVIOUR afterwards; as like-wise of Judge *Price's* charge at the castle of *Exon*; and the *Archdeacon* of *Barnstaple's* speech to the clergy; and some of the
Exeter

Exeter clergy warning the people from the pulpits against the dissenters, who were now come to deny the Lord that bought them, and made the press to sweat with their blasphemies. As to all these Mr P. does not deny the facts, nor can he charge the *Narrative* with falshood in these accounts; but only endeavours to excuse and evade them, and that by arts so evidently sophistical, by such mean and trifling criticisms, and by such an indifferent turn of wit, that it may be safely left to the common judgment of men to confute them. And if the contagion of error was not only beginning in *Exeter*, and the parts adjacent, but had got as far as *Bristol*; and the most awful points of our religion were disputed in common conversation, and places of the most publick resort; and the dissenters were reproach'd from the pulpit not for their non-conformity to the rites and ceremonies of the *establish'd church*, but for departing from the essential and necessary articles of our common *faith*: surely it was high time for ministers to endeavour to roul away this reproach, and to appear in the most publick manner for the defence of the Truth.

HITHERTO Mr. *Peirce* has no reason to charge the *Narrative* as *faithless*; and as to what remains, it shall be attended with its vouchers.

WHEREAS Mr. *Peirce* declares, That pag. 40. what the *Narrative* asserts, viz. That the *Baptists* had dismiss'd their minister on account of his being in the new notion, is not true, as he is satisfy'd. To confirm the truth of the *Narrative*, the following letter is produc'd.

Reverend Sir,

“ HAVING read Mr. *Peirce's* *West. Inq.* and ob-
 “ serving, pag. 40. that he represents what the
 “ *Narrative* says, relating to the *Baptists* dismissing
 “ their minister, as not true. I was desirous to know
 “ the certainty of that affair; and do hereby certify,
 “ that several members of the *Baptists* church gave me
 “ this account of it: That Mr. *Lucas* (the minister re-
 “ ferr'd to) was call'd here upon trial. About a year
 “ after

“ after it was propos’d in the church, Whether they
 “ should give the said Mr. L—— any farther call? not
 “ above five or six of the church express’d their desire
 “ of it, and those members from whom I had the in-
 “ formation, declar’d, that they thought the reason why
 “ they did not do it, was, because they believ’d him
 “ in these new notions.”

I am your humble servant,

Exon. Feb. 2. 1719.

Aaron Tozer.

OBSERVE, that this does evidently contradict Mr. P---’s printed account, for whereas he says, *some few were uneasy, but the far greater part were very desirous of his settling with them.* This says, that not above five or six were desirous of it.

THE Narrative farther asserts, That *the young men and candidates for the ministry, used to assemble at the baptist minister’s house, as was suppos’d, to confer upon this subject.* Mr. P. will not allow this to be true, and represents their meeting to have been but *once*, and that by *accident*.

THAT this is not a groundless supposition, or a mere improvement of an *impertinently jealous temper*, as he suggests; but that they frequently met there, appears by the following lines.

Reverend Sir,

“ I Do hereby certify, That N. N. who liv’d with the
 “ gentewoman, where Mr. Lucas boarded, all
 “ the while he was in Exon; when I inquir’d of her
 “ about the young mens coming to see Mr. Lucas,
 “ she gave me this account of it, That several young
 “ men very frequently came to see Mr. L——, and
 “ that she heard Mr. L—— tell her mistress, they were
 “ Mr. Haller’s students: Sometimes they came once a
 “ week; she said, she did not know all their names;
 “ but she remembred and mention’d the names of three
 “ persons, one of whom was ordain’d while Mr. L---
 “ was at Exon, the other two, candidates for the mini-
 “ stry or students at Mr. Haller’s. And she said, she
 “ should be able to tell me of more, if she heard their
 “ names.

“ names. But the names of the persons above are
 “ conceal'd, in hopes the young men may alter the
 “ ill notions they had imbib'd.”

“ THE character Mr. P—— gives of Mr. Lucas, and
 “ his desire that he should be one to preach at our
 “ morning lecture, is an indication of the great respect
 “ which Mr. P—— had for him; but that which makes
 “ this friendship between Mr. L---- and Mr. P---- the
 “ more remarkable, was, that some time before this, be-
 “ ing at London, I was desir'd to procure a person, that
 “ might come and settle at Exon, to teach the dissenters
 “ children; and accordingly I made it my business, and
 “ found out one that was proper for such an under-
 “ taking, but was, as to her opinion, a *baptist*. After
 “ my return from London, several of our friends met
 “ upon this affair, to whom I gave an account of what
 “ I had done. Mr. P—— on hearing she was a *baptist*,
 “ represented the baptists to be a sort of people that he
 “ would not have us have to do with. And this was a
 “ main, if not the only thing, that hinder'd the gentle-
 “ woman's coming hither, tho' she declar'd she would
 “ attend our ministers. You may make what use of this
 “ you think fit.

I am your humble Servant,

Aaron Tozer.

By this and the following *certificate*, let the world judge, upon what motive Mr. Peirce hath since enlarg'd his charity, even so far as to propose Mr. L——'s preaching at the young mens Morning lecture, as will appear by the following *certificate*.

THIS is to certify, all whom it may concern, That when Mr. Withers and Mr. Peirce were once at my house, it was propos'd, that Mr. Lucas should preach at our morning lecture: Mr. Peirce consented to it; but I reply'd, I should have been willing of it some time ago, but I was averse to it at present, because he lay under suspicion of being in the new scheme. Mr. Withers reply'd, I never heard of it. Mr. Peirce subjoin'd, Yes, I have; and then said, I wish the young men had done it of themselves, without asking advice.

John Lavington.

WHAT is certify'd above by Mr. Tozer, puts it out of all doubt, that what the *Narrative* says, is not the result of a *dreaming supposition*. And if by the *informer that delights in suppositions*, Mr. P. means Mr. *Lavington* (as seems evident by his after reflection) this is a groundless suspicion of Mr. P. for Mr. *Lavington* declares, he was not the informer, nor did he in the least concern himself about those who visited Mr. *Lucas*. But rather than want an occasion to ridicule and expose Mr. *Lavington*, Mr. P. will feign and suppose one, as he does in several places of his *West. Inq.* charging Mr. *Lavington* upon mere suspicion of carrying stories and informations, of which he was intirely free as any that are yet unborn; and yet doth Mr. P. complain of a suspicious, jealous temper in others. But 'tis the way of the man. Thus he complains of want of charity in others, and yet who more uncharitable! He complains of reproachful abusive treatment, and yet who more reviling and abusive! *Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione querentes?*

To the passages Mr. *Peince* has thus far recited from the *Narrative*, he adds, That all pag. 41. these things were related as true Matters of fact, and were refer'd to several brethren in the country, and the citizens of Exeter for a confirmation of them; but he is pleas'd to say, They were several of them false, and others strangely impertinent. It is plain from hence, that as to many, or most of them, he allows the account in the *Narrative* to be true, and as to the rest, they are but meanly evaded. Those he charges as false, are 1st the story of the *Girl*, in which he is sufficiently confuted by the testimony of the reverend Mr. *Withers*. 2dly, The dismissal of the *baptist* minister, answer'd by Mr. *Tozer's* Leader. And 3dly, the meeting of the young men at Mr. *Lucas's* lodgings, answer'd by the same. And that some young persons had a club, wherein they endeavour'd to propagate the new notions will appear undeniable, when p. 72. of the *West. Inq.* shall come to be considered. What Mr. P. says of the *Impertinence* of some accounts, is but like his other accusations, without ground. And he marvellously overvalues himself, if he thinks his bare authority sufficient to impose characters upon persons and things. Nothing could be more pertinent than

the relations given in the *Narrative*, to show the miserable state into which things were hastning, and the necessity there was of the ministers appearing to stop the mischief that was spreading not only at *Exeter*, but in divers other parts. There is nothing thus far, to weaken the reputation or credit of the *Narrative*, nor have the *Editors* any reason to blush; and if on the review Mr. P. blush not for himself, they shall be sorry.

BUT to proceed, Mr. *Peince* calls for a pag. 41. *voucher* with respect to the charge against a certain minister who declar'd his disbelief of the doctrine of the TRINITY in Unity. To confirm this the following certificate has been produc'd, containing the very words in which that minister, viz. the reverend Mr. *Gilling*, deliver'd himself to the reverend Mr. *Aaron Pitts*.

Mr. *Gilling* said to me, *Your Trinity in Unity, I neither do, nor will believe.*

I thought that declaration of his prov'd him to be more honest than some others, and likewise thought myself oblig'd in conscience to make known his opinion, that others might not be unwarily drawn into it; and am nothing concern'd at being accus'd of *betraying private conversation*, and *representing Mr. Gilling under an ill character.*

Aaron Pitts.

AND whereas Mr. *Peince* in his *West. Inq.* pag. 41, hath publish'd an account of a conference which Mr. *Stogdon* had with Mr. N. and I am suppos'd to be the minister design'd: These are to certify, That Mr. *Stogdon* did in a conference with me freely confess, *that he was an Arian, and gloried in the name; that our Lord JESUS CHRIST in his highest character was but a mere creature, tho' advanced above the angels; and farther asserted at that conference, that the LOGOS animat-ed his body instead of an human soul.* These I thought were what all the world call'd the *distinguishing tenets of Arius*, and therefore made no scruple to call them so. Several persons unknown to me were present at this conference besides Mr. *Galpin* now minister at *Morsfield* near *Bath*, from whom I lately receiv'd a letter on this head, part of which for the farther satisfaction of the world,

world with reference to the truth of this certificate, and the *insincerity* of Mr. Stogdon's account, is under transcribed by me,

Thomas Edgley.

Reverend Sir,

Morsfield Decemb. 16, 1719.

“ **I**N compliance with your request, I have sent you as
 “ particular an account, as my memory will serve
 “ to give, of what pass'd at that conference. I remem-
 “ ber perfectly well, that you told Mr. Stogdon, that
 “ you understood he was fallen into the *Arian scheme*,
 “ and that you was very sorry to hear of it. He reply'd,
 “ *I am an Arian, and glory in the name.* Mr. Stogdon
 “ did make no scruple to acknowledge, *that he did be-*
 “ *lieve our blessed Saviour to be but a creature, tho' ad-*
 “ *vanc'd above angels.* And I think also, that he said,
 “ that he was of opinion, *that it was the LOGOS that*
 “ *animated the Body of CHRIST instead of a human soul.*
 “ He spake his mind with a great deal of freedom, and
 “ did not seem to be in the least upon his guard. I
 “ can't see with what justice Mr. Stogdon can charge you
 “ with betraying private conversation, when there were
 “ many others in company; and he himself did not
 “ seem to be at all upon the reserve, but readily acknow-
 “ ledg'd himself to be an *Arian*; and added, he *glor-*
 “ *ied in the character.* I leave it to you, to make use
 “ of this account as you shall think fit. I have only to
 “ add, that I am

your very much oblig'd, and most

obedient, humble servant

Calvin Galpin.

It is here to be observ'd, That tho' Mr. Stogdon mentions his study as the place of their conference, yet it was in the hearing of many others; and his notions concerning CHRIST by whatever name they are call'd, are doubtless of a dangerous nature. He that could believe, that CHRIST in his highest capacity is but a creature, and yet is in the dark, whether he was *consubstantial*

tial or not, eternal or not, had too mean thoughts of CHRIST, and too dark and confus'd a head of his own, to be entrusted with the preaching of the everlasting Gospel of CHRIST. His ordainers had done a considerable service to the church if they had delay'd the setting him apart till he had clearer notions, and a more settled mind. And if Mr. P. had retain'd a due regard to the honour of his blessed REDEEMER, he would not have been concern'd in recommending him to ordination. That he was not one of his *ordainers*, did not proceed from a dislike of his notions, but to prevent an alarm and contention in that country, which he prudently enough foresaw would be prejudicial to the *new scheme*, which 'tis plain he had at heart; and therefore no wonder he did all he could to prevent an open rupture, whilst there were too many that secretly endeavour'd to poison the people. And tho' he might not himself be active in it, yet it was encouragement sufficient not to appear against them: His apology for [Mr. *Stogdon*, That there can be no harm in desiring a truth may be extensive,] has more of art than strength in it; for if we take destructive error for truth, and desire and endeavour to spread it as far as we can, we are highly criminal, and they that do not what in them lies to prevent it will be sharers in the guilt.

AND now let every one judge, that hath any love to his REDEEMER, whether the ministers that knew of these things, were not bound to make opposition to such as grew so bold and daring in their impious errors. And how could Mr. P. say of Mr. *Stogdon*, that tho' he had alter'd his notion, yet he endeavour'd to conceal it from the world, p. 13. when he acknowledg'd himself to be an *Arian*, and glory'd in the character.

THE same author endeavours to take pag. 44. some advantage of Mr. *Walton*, with respect to a funeral sermon preach'd by him on the death of Mr. *Staddon* of *Sidbury*. To which Mr. *Walton* gives this reply.

As to the opinion of the reverend Mr. *Staddon* mention'd by Mr. *Peirce*, *Wesl. Inq.* pag. 44. (into whose ashes that author has thought not to rake) I acknowledge he had some different notions from the common explanation

cation of the TRINITY, which related especially to the word *Person*, which word he disliked, as also the phrases of the *eternal generation* of the SON, and *procession* of the HOLY GHOST, as unscriptural; explaining the doctrine in a way peculiar to himself, but still agreeing with the *Nicene fathers*, and the first article of the *church of England* in the main point of the true and proper Divinity of the WORD, and HOLY SPIRIT; and therefore is very severe upon what he styles in the same papers, the *blasphemy of the Socinians*, and the *curst Arian heresy*, and withal disclaims the heresy of *Sabellius* also. He acknowledges the genuineness of 1 *John* v. 7. and declares, [That these Three are One and the same GOD; that the SON of GOD, is very GOD, and very Man, and the only begotten SON of GOD, and that he is equal and coessential with the FATHER, which he pronounces to be the chief articles of the christian faith, expressly renouncing all those hereticks, that ever deny'd or question'd it.] And his explication of the 6th answer in the *Assembly's Catechism* (which explication of his own composing, he constantly used in publick to his last sickness) show'd his opinion very distinctly, [That the FATHER is GOD, the SON is GOD, and the HOLY GHOST is GOD, and that these Three *Persons*, (which term he there uses) are in the Unity of the same GODHEAD.] These are his own words. And as to his character in his funeral sermon, I cannot but think I was modest in it (or rather forbore to give him a character at all) since I said not a word more than this (tho' I might have enlarg'd very justly) *Should I mention his learning and judgment, his exact and excellent preaching, or those abilities wherewith GOD had furnish'd him, both for calling sinners to repentance, and reducing many others to their reason **, I should speak to those that are better judges, and have been longer acquainted with it than I have been. All that farther concern'd it, was only the recital of his own *dying sayings*. And that which Mr. P. was told of in a broken manner, was exactly this: " That he had such a fervent affection to that Holy One, CHRIST JESUS; as that he thought, he could never serve him enough, nor suffer too much for his good

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* He cur'd many distracted people.

a Master, that he could willingly go through all the troubles and miseries of the flesh; nay, he said, if it were not too high an expression for him, *he could be content to go through Hell itself to come to CHRIST.*" So that these were indeed Mr. Stoddon's words, and not mine; and this was the person that Mr. P. was so civil as to style the *dead heretick*. But ill language both towards the living and the dead, we must not scruple to receive, but accept it as the reproach of CHRIST.

John Walrond.

AFTER this account given by Mr. Walrond of Mr. Stoddon's sentiments, we see how little regard is due to what is said of him by Mr. P. who represents him as having *quitted the commonly receiv'd doctrine of the TRINITY, and drawn up as different a scheme as that which is now so much decry'd.* This is a mistake, for Mr. Stoddon believ'd the true and proper Divinity of the WORD, and HOLY SPIRIT, and that, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, are *One GOD, and the same GOD*; and that the Son of GOD is equal or coessential with the FATHER; and that these are the chief articles of the christian faith, and look'd upon *Arianism* as a *curst heresy*: therefore he could not be in a scheme as different from the commonly receiv'd doctrine, as those who believe none of these things.

As to what Mr. Peirce says about Mr. Walrond's agreeing to a testimonial for Mr. Stoddon. pag. 43, 44, 45. The case in short was this: A London minister (then in the country) came to me from some of the Exeter ministers (as I understood) with this proposal, That if Mr. Stoddon would engage, neither in word nor writing, to meddle with this doctrine in dispute, and was remov'd into some distant part of Somerset, I would then be content, and make no further opposition to him? To which I reply'd, That he would then be out of our care, and under another assembly, and I should concern myself no further about him. After this, as well as I can remember, I was ask'd by Mr. P. in the street in Exeter, (meeting him accidentally) Whether I would subscribe a testimonial for Mr. Stoddon, upon his removal? To which I readily answer'd, I could, as to his conversation, but meant no farther;

lit^e

little imagining it was to have been made use of, to procure his ordination in such an irregular manner; and not doubting that when Mr. *Stogdon* was in *Somersetshire*, he would be regularly and strictly examin'd in point of doctrine, by their *assembly* before his ordination, as usual; acquiescing in the care and conscience of those reverend ministers, either to approve, or to reject him. Instead of which, he was ordain'd by the charitable help of ministers call'd in as far as from *Newbury* and *Andover*, without the order of any *assembly at all*. I never saw the testimonial till it was printed in this late book, nor was ever afterwards desir'd to subscribe it: and indeed was very glad I had no concern with that person, when not long after I saw a *Confession of Faith*, which had been handed about in *Exeter* and in the *Country* as a great performance, said to be drawn up by Mr. *Stogdon*, and is as follows:

“ I declare, I am no *Arian*, either in the strict genuine sense of the word, or even in the common vulgar notion of it, but abhor both name and thing; for I firmly believe JESUS CHRIST is as truly GOD, as GOD the FATHER; that he is not only GOD by *title* and by *office*, but by *nature* too, being so partaker of the Divine Nature with the FATHER, that, as the Scripture saith, *In him the fulness of the Godhead dwells*; and this I believe was communicated from the FATHER in a Manner, which I cannot comprehend. I believe therefore there is some kind of *subordination* of the SON to the FATHER, but exactly to fix the limits of it, I know not, and am content to be ignorant until I shall see Him as He is. In the mean time, I know it is my duty to honour the Son as I honour the Father; for he had divine perfections before he was exalted to the Godhead over all, being in the beginning not only with GOD, but himself even then a GOD; and since made more fully partaker of the same Divine nature, to fit him for the mediatorial Kingdom: so that he was GOD as to his *nature*, to qualify him for such a great GOD as he is by *office*.”

It is thought fit that this declaration should be publish'd, that the world may know what sort of divinity had started up in the *West of England*, and what kind of *creeds* and *confessions*, were likely to be offer'd in those parts,
and

and that christians may be sensible how much our blessed SAVIOUR might be diminish'd and dishonour'd under that single word *Subordination*, and how *fairly* men may speak of CHRIST, as in the former part of this *confession*. and yet how *oddly* they may think of him at the same time, as appears from the latter part. And this practice of equivocation *, has been the cause of most of the trouble and difficulty that the ministers have labour'd under.

MR. *Stogdon* afterwards upon inquiry, own'd himself to be the author of this famous declaration to a minister in *London*, tho' indeed he added withal, that *he had since seen cause to alter his sentiments*. If he is sure he hath done so, it would be but reasonable, he should take as effectual methods to recover people from his error, as he had already taken to lead them into it; and therefore its hoped, he will give us a new confession of his faith.

John Waterland.

MR. *Peirce* endeavours to excuse himself pag. 45. and the brethren that with him sign'd the *testimonial*. But if a due regard had been had to the honour of the blessed REDEEMER, it would have caus'd a demurr at least. And that Mr. P. was not one of his ordainers, did not proceed from a dislike of his notions, but to avoid some inconveniencies that might happen to himself as well as others at *Exeter*.

MR. *Peirce*, who never fails to bestow all pag. 46. the marks possible of his good-will upon the *Narrative*, thinks it *not amiss here to take notice of one thing*, and a mighty thing it is, *viz. That he [Mr. Stogdon] was ordain'd in Somerset near Bath; (oddly enough express'd, says he, and more oddly remark'd, may it be said, considering the usual abbreviations of speech in common letters).* That it was done *upon a testimonial from three ministers in Exon, who fear'd he could not have his ordination by consent of the assembly there.*

* Of which see Dr. *Waterland* of the disguises of the ancient *Arians*, p. 206. And Mr. *Lob's* excellent book of the *Growth of Error*. And Bishop *Stillingfleet's* *Origines Britannicæ* cap. iv. p. 146—180.

there. His design by this is to convince the Narrative of falshood, and therefore he *supposes it cannot be faithfully taken from the originals, but is an alteration made since.* But this is another gross abuse upon the Narrative; for the words are exactly as they stand in the originals without any the least alteration ever made in them.

AND whereas Mr. Peirce does intend a reflection hereby upon Mr. Walrond, as if he had procur'd this alteration. He makes the following reply.

I know of no such alteration at all from what was written in any letter of mine, nor desir'd any; but allowing it to be thus express'd, that Mr. Stogdon was *refus'd ordination in Devonshire*, I think it amounted to no less than a tacit *refusal*, when all the ministers, with whom I discours'd upon the subject of that young man's ordination (which were not a few, nor inconsiderable) unanimously protested against it, and declar'd, they would *oppose it whenever he should move it, except it appear'd he was reform'd in those erroneous opinions.* Upon the expectation of which negative from our *assembly*, it is not doubted he desisted, and afterwards upon the same view withdrew into *Somersetshire*. He says true, That I did not answer his letter; resolving to enter into no correspondence with him.

John Walrond.

MR. Peirce allows, the heats reviv'd, as the Account says, after Mr. Stogdon's removal; but says, The ministers were not chargeable with having any hand in reviving them: that they were cautious not only in their sermons, but in their conversation, and took occasion to press the people to a mutual forbearance. Mr. P. could not be ignorant that these heats were occasion'd by the opposition that was made to the Deity of our SAVIOUR and the HOLY GHOST, so that his pressing persons to a mutual forbearance, was in effect to give countenance to those errors that were spreading among his people. If he would have done any thing to purpose to extinguish those heats, he should have defended what his people took to be truth; but indeed in the method he took, he acted consistently with himself, though he could not have taken a more effectual course to increase

their jealousies, and to raise their heats to a greater height, by thus discouraging all others from making opposition to these growing errors.

pag. 47, Mr. *Lavington* falling again under his censure, gives this vindication of himself,

WHEREAS Mr. *Peirce* satyrically inveighs against me for a remark I had made on a passage in his sermon the 25th of *December* 1717. I shall here take occasion to give the world another instance of his great insincerity, and the pitiful shifts, evasions, and misrepresentations, he hath recourse to.

1. I have to observe, That I never made use of any such expression to Mr. *P.* which yet he says, I did, viz. *That as the heart thinketh, the mouth speaks.*

2. THAT Mr. *Peirce* was not in that part of his sermon setting forth the love of the FATHER in sending the SON, but the love of CHRIST; in that He, who was so nearly ally'd or related to the Blessed GOD, should put himself in our nature.

THE text he preach'd upon, was *Luke* ii. and the middle clause of the 34th verse, *This Child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel.*

HE was showing, " That there were many things in CHRIST that were apt to give offence, and be matter of stumbling to those that were not dispos'd to fall in with divine methods: As 1. the meanness of his appearance, and the figure he made, and character he bore here in this world. This was occasion of offence and stumbling to many while CHRIST was here in the world, and to many afterwards, when they came to hear of him in the preaching of the Gospel: Here he gave a particular account of several things in CHRIST which would be apt to be a stumbling-block, and then adds, And this was foretold concerning our REDEEMER, that men should on this account despise, and be ready to reject him, *Isa.* liii. 2, 3, 4. But now every christian doth the more prize and value the REDEEMER on this account, that when he was Lord of all, when he was so nearly related to the Ever-blessed GOD, he would put himself in our nature; because we were partakers of flesh and blood, that he would himself take part of the same, in order to his bringing about our advantage and benefit."

So

So that here was nothing said of the FATHER, nor of his Love. With what justness then can Mr. P. say, *The next time it would serve his purpose full as well to say, God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, &c.*

I took notice of Mr. Peirce's expression while he was preaching, but I was resolv'd not to make mention of it to any unless I should hear of it from others, nor did I; but being ask'd by a friend, Whether I did not observe such an expression in the sermon? I told him, Yes; and to me it was unaccountable, that Mr. P. who insists so much upon keeping to scripture words, should yet make use of *so low an expression* as that of being *so nearly related to the ever-blessed God*, when he might have made use of scripture words, that would have been much more forcible; viz. *That he who was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, should yet humble himself, &c.* And I believe, whoever considers the scope of Mr. P's discourse, will not think my remark so exceeding ridiculous, as he would represent it.

John Loxington.

THE next thing Mr. Peirce endeavours to cast a slur upon, is the account the gentlemen of Exeter give of the *beatings of those persons that were fallen into the new opinion, with respect to their numbers and strength among the ministers; even desiring the assembly to take cognizance of it.* As to this, he questions very much the truth of what is said. But this is confirm'd by the following certificate, as to their boasts concerning their strength among the ministers.

I Do hereby certify, That a leading man of Mr. Peirce's meeting (whose name I forbear to mention, because I have receiv'd very great kindnesses from him) did some time before the assembly, September 1718, boast of the numbers and strength they had among the ministers for the new notions, and upbraided us as if we were afraid to bring the matter into the assembly, for fear we should not be able to carry the vote. And the occasion of

the discourse was, my reporting, that when I was last at Bath, I had heard in my journey, that Mr. Stogdon reported, that he was going down to vindicate himself before the assembly. He (my friend) then ask'd me, Why we had not call'd him to an account? and upon that occasion upbraided us as above: Nor is it less true, that there were boastings concerning their numbers among the people. One of Mr. Peirce's communicants, viz. Richard Berry, declaring several times in the hearing of Mrs. Mary Treat, that there were more in the new notions than she knew or did suppose; and another very considerable friend and communicant of Mr. Peirce's, has several times boasted of the spread and growth of these notions.

Josiah Eveleigh.

THERE is little in what he offers here from the characters of the ministers, for tho' they were *neither despicable nor scandalous*, yet when the people had ground to fear that the unsoundness of some of their ministers was one cause of the spreading of those errors, their own prudence would put them upon consulting among themselves what method was most proper for obtaining satisfaction concerning the faith of their ministers, and for their own *farther* establishments in the truth.

As to what Mr. Peirce suggests of the committee, 'tis enough to observe, That Mr. P. pag. 49, says, [The gentlemen who made up this number at my coming, and ever since, were persons of figure and reputation, whom I much esteem'd, nor did I see that they did not manage affairs for the good of the whole.]

THE world will certainly believe this character of these worthy persons to be very well deserv'd when it comes from Mr. P's pen. He says, [Had that committee been dissolv'd, I am apt to think our fatal breach had been prevented:] But 'tis hoped he will give others leave to think, that had it been dissolv'd, we had run into much greater confusion. GOD hath made this *constitution* a means of preserving the peace and unity of the City hitherto, and tho' Mr. P. thinks them so obnoxious, the excellent Mr. Tress, who was Mr. P's predecessor was of another mind, for when these gentlemen some years

years since offer'd to give up their trust, the ministers unanimously oppos'd it, and Mr. *Tross* in particular declar'd, he thought it would be of pernicious consequence.

AT the opening the liberty the people concurr'd in choosing that *committee*, who fill'd up any vacancy as necessity requir'd, which has been follow'd with such success, that Mr. P. himself is forc'd to confess, that *he did not see but that they manag'd affairs to the good of the whole.*

[HE speaks of their assuming another kind *pag.* 49. of power than they were entrusted with,] and *pag.* 145. he says, [they (speaking of the *ministers*) did not understand these gentlemen had any more authority to proceed, as they did, than any of the rest of the people.]

THESE gentlemen assum'd no such power as Mr. P. unjustly charges them with assuming. This they disclaim'd upon all occasions, and particularly to the *seven ministers* they call'd in to advise with upon this occasion, and also to the people whom they summon'd together in a body, to acquaint them with the measures they had taken to preserve their own faith and manner of worship, when one of the *committee*, at the opening that meeting, address'd himself to the people in these words, (or words to this purpose) *We have acted herein only as private persons, and not as having any authority or power over you; their business being only to collect and pay to each minister his salary.*

WHENEVER any thing extraordinary occur'd relating to the affairs of the church, they us'd to call in to their assistance some others of the people to advise with; as they did in the beginning of these their unhappy differences: and 'twas from such a body as this, that the four persons were first sent, to desire the ministers to preach up the *Divinity of CHRIST.*

MR. *Peirce* says, That *the Account doth not truly relate the desire of the gentlemen,* which *pag.* 50. he says was express'd in these words, *That the ministers should assert the Eternity of the SON of GOD.*

THE ministers were well appriz'd, that it was the desire of the people, That the proper Godhead of CHRIST should be defended in their sermons, in order to prevent the farther growth of *Arianism*; and how far Mr. P. comply'd with the purport of their request, we refer the reader to the sermon itself, beginning *pag.* 54. and desire him to take notice of the marginal note, *pag.* 56. as an explication of Mr. P's opinion of Eternity. And it is to be observ'd, that the way of delivery was not a little shocking to the congregation, it being accompany'd with so vehement a flame; and therefore it is no wonder, if there was such a visible concern in the congregation, as he mentions *pag.* 63.

BUT farther, as to what Mr. P. says of the gentlemen's desire: Some of these gentlemen who went with this desire have since been consulted about this matter, and are very positive, that they desir'd Mr. P. &c. to preach in defence of the Eternal *Deity* of our Blessed SAVIOUR, as the *Account* says, and if Mr. P. out of regard to his own notions would not understand the gentlemen, yet evident it is, that the matter is justly represented from what pass'd in the preaching of some in pursuance of this desire; nor doth Mr. P. seem to have any other design in what he preach'd, than to amuse and impose upon the people.

MR. Peirce resents the gentlemen desiring *pag.* 51. him to preach upon a particular subject, and *thought himself as capable of choosing proper subjects as they were of choosing for him.* But is it not his duty in the choice he makes to consult their edification, and may they not at some special seasons be more capable and competent judges than himself, concerning what they need to have their faith establish'd in? Is it not the duty of ministers to oppose the errors of the day and place in which they live, and to preach up the contrary truths? And in case they prove defective and negligent, will this great patron of the people's liberty, magnify himself or his office to such a degree, as that the people must not be allow'd tho' in the most respectful manner, to remind them of their duty, and put them upon the discharge of it? 'Tis most probable
the

the subject they desir'd him to preach upon, was the principal thing that gave offence, and now it appears evident, that if they expected he should establish their faith in the proper Godhead of CHRIST, they were very much mistaken.

THE author of the *Account* had the greatest reason to say that the sermon was not satisfactory: But that the uneasiness and suspicions of the people increas'd thereupon. This, is so evident by its consequences, that every body will believe, that the author of the *Account* more justly gives the sense of the people than Mr. P. doth. pag. 52.
53.

MR. Peirce has so good an opinion of himself and his performances, that he is resolv'd to verify the *Motto*, *Nemo me impune lacessit*, none must expect to escape his resentment, that shall offer to say any thing that would seem to lessen them in the least. He says, It is mean and disingenuous in the *Narrative* to say, that he was slight and ambiguous in his discourses, But was he not slight, when tho' in his great condescension he so far yielded at last to the desire of the people as to preach upon the subject, yet did it in such manner as gave no satisfaction to those who needed it most, and wanted to know for a certainty what his opinion was about the Deity of CHRIST. He makes Mr. *Lavington*, pay for this charge with interest. *If we were slight in our discourses, what was Mr. Lavington.* To this we say, that it is no unusual thing for Mr. P. and those of his kidney to think every thing slight and mean that is contrary to their sentiments. Since Mr. *Lavington* has the unhappiness to differ from him, he takes all occasions to speak contemptibly of his performances. But tho' there be few, if any, that equal Mr. P. (as himself conceits) yet many, and those capable judges of mens abilities, bless GOD for Mr. *Lavington's* valuable and useful Gifts. If Mr. P. had been but as clear and full in the doctrine as Mr. *Lavington* was, tho' he had preach'd as slightly as 'tis pretended this brother did, there would have been no cause of complaint. pag. 53.

He says, *The only thing wanting in his discourse was not argument*; yet he must be conscious pag. 54.

scious

scious there was want of argument to prove that; which his auditory would gladly have seen prov'd. For none will believe that he who makes such mighty pretences to sincerity, did use arguments to prove that; which now it appears plainly he did not believe. If he had clearly, strenuously, and without ambiguity asserted and prov'd the common opinion, it would have given satisfaction, tho' he had not confidently threatned those with damnation that receded from it.

How can Mr. Peirce say, That *none will* pag. 53. *charge him with using ambiguous phrases* when in the long account he gives of the word *eternity*, his plain design is to amuse the people, as if he had believ'd the proper Eternity of JESUS CHRIST, tho' he meant no such thing; but takes eternity when apply'd to the SON in a sense different from what he does when apply'd to the FATHER? Whereas had he believ'd the SON was absolutely eternal, and had himself declar'd so, it would have been much more satisfactory than that long discourse: or, if he had declar'd the contrary he had done honestly. But before his dismissal he had attain'd an admirable art of concealing his real sense under a multitude of plausible words, without giving any satisfaction touching the matter in debate. Why do we call that eternal which existed before the world's beginning, but for this reason, because we know nothing did exist except GOD himself, FATHER SON, and HOLY GHOST? Nothing is properly eternal *a parte ante*, but that which never had nor could have a beginning. It's possible in the nature of things for multitudes of beings to have existed long before the beginning of this world, but would they have been eternal for this reason? According to this notion of *Eternity*, if GOD should cause a new world of creatures to come into being after us, we might be styl'd eternal with respect to them.

As to what he says of Mr. Ball, That when pag. 53. *he told him, the argument he used in the sermon. He answer'd, He could not see what the people could desire more. Mr. Ball replies as follows.*

Mr.

MR. Peirce says, *he satisfy'd me*: and no wonder, for I durst not then have suspected what I since find to be true by their printed *Pamphlets*; that they used words and phrases in quite different senses than they were commonly taken in, and deceiv'd men with equivocations: When *the Innocent vindicated* said, CHRIST was truly GOD, I thought they had meant, He was the true GOD; but now Mr. P. has told us, he is not so; tho' it is no great argument to prove that he was not true GOD, because he was Man as well as GOD, when the same writer tells you in the beginning of the *Gospel* he was both, and brings *Thomas* calling him, *his Lord* and *his God*: and is not this the Glory given to the only true GOD in the *Old Testament*? I could not then have suspected that under the title of *plain Christianity*, they were bringing downright *Heathenism* into the church (as Dr. *Stillingfleet* truly calls it) viz. the worship of One GOD, and a creature besides him: These men accuse others of having little regard to Scripture, and say, they are for the plain letter without any human additions or explications; and yet after all this, can break through our LORD's express command in a matter of greatest consequence: *Thou shalt worship the LORD thy GOD, and him only shalt thou serve.* GOD hath declar'd himself jealous of his worship, *Exod 24. Thou shalt worship no other God: for the LORD, whose name is jealous, is a jealous GOD*; yet they can break through all this, with a distinction which I think is not scripture, of supreme and subordinate worship, a distinction which will serve to excuse a *Papist* in worshipping a saint or angel, and will excuse most of the idolaters in the world. I am sure they that worshipp'd one supreme GOD, and *Baal* beside, (as the *Jews* did in *Jeremiah's* time) might have pleaded it before the magistrate, who was requir'd to put to death the man that sacrific'd to any but the true GOD. They might have pleaded this distinction, that it was but *subordinate* worship which they perform'd to *Baal*, whereas the law spake of *supreme* worship. And I can't see, but according to this doctrine, a man must have been acquitted. I shall have better thoughts of these things, when they can show us a repeal of the *first commandment*; that GOD hath any where in the *New Testament* told us, that we may now

to worship one supreme GOD, and a creature under him; which was idolatry under the law. Is this way of speaking and writing, the simplicity and godly sincerity which the scripture commends? To tell men that they believe CHRIST was truly GOD, or with Mr. *Emlyn*, that we were all agreed about the true and proper Divinity of CHRIST, when yet he is properly a *creature* with some of them, and not the *true* GOD with others; but their notions must be disguis'd under good words at first, until they have got into the good opinion of plain Christians, who if they had known their meaning at the beginning, would have started from them.

As to Mr. *Lavington's* not preaching on the subject at this time, which Mr. *P.* mentions *p.* 53, 54. He had preach'd on it before, and the people were fully satisfy'd of his soundness in the faith.

To dismiss this matter, he that shall read *p.* 63. the close of Mr. *Peirce's* sermon from *p.* 59, will see reason to observe that he can be as warm and zealous as any of his neighbours. Whilst he is offended with others for showing a just concern and warmth for that doctrine, in which they apprehend the honour of the Ever-blessed REDEEMER and their eternal happiness is nearly concern'd; he discovers much more warmth in defending his own honour and reputation, and instead of giving people satisfaction, he severely chides those who had desir'd it. The plain design of that harangue is to lull them asleep, that he and his party might the more securely sow their tares among them, or if at any time they might perceive it, they should not dare however to complain for fear of being charg'd as men of strife and contention, and of an unpeaceable and uncharitable spirit. 'Tis not to be wonder'd at, that a discourse of this tendency, and the heat where-with it was deliver'd, should cause a considerable concern in the congregation.

pag. 63, As to the letter he receiv'd from his friend
64. in *London*, he does not mention the person from whom he receiv'd it, or from whom that person had his information; *scil.* that Mr. *Lavington* and

and Mr. *Larkham* had so preach'd up the common doctrine, as to be despis'd for it. It's probable the persons at *Exeter* that gave the information were gone into the *new scheme*, and then they would easily despise what they did not like; and his friend in *London* knowing his abilities, and thinking him still in the old scheme, might desire that he would set himself to maintain it. But from whomsoever this information as to Mr. *Larkham* and Mr. *Lavington* came, Mr. *Lavington* challenges Mr. *Peirce* or any of his friends to mention those arguments that were so despis'd, and is ready to vindicate them. Mr. *P.* to use his own words, if he had the spirit of a man or a christian, he would have scorn'd such a mean, pitiful and disingenuous way of writing.

IN these pages Mr. *Peirce* is pleas'd to represent all things *to be easy and quiet in the* pag. 65. *City at the time of the assembly in May 1718.* 68. *and that there was no disturbance till just before the September assembly:* The contrary is evident, the *Citizens* were uneasy, and the *Account* the *Citizens* gave of the heats that were at that time in the *City*, is farther confirm'd by what follows. It was this very month that the reverend Mr. *Piers* of *Chard* went to Mr. *Hallet* and gave him to know, the people were too much alarm'd to be silent much longer.

DISCOURSING in *May 1718*, with the reverend Mr. *Jos. Hallet*, sen. in his own house, about the new notions relating to the *proper Divinity* of CHRIST, which were at that time entertain'd by many in the *City* of *Exon*, and expressing my fears of my son then under Mr. *Hallet's* tuition, and acquainting him that many of the principal persons which attended the ministry of the four ministers were too much alarm'd to be silent much longer, he told me (altering his voice) being as I apprehended unwilling to be heard in the lower room: *That it was all owing to Mr. Peirce*, adding, *that the citizens might thank themselves for all:* Which last words consider'd with the alteration of his voice in the former, seem to make it appear, that he

spake his own words and sense, and not the words and sense of others.

Aaron Pitts.

WHEREAS *Mr. Peirce* represents *the City* pag. 65, *to be all in peace at May assembly, and long after.* We are sure the assertion is not true:

The complaints of the *citizens* upon this head were many, and we were loudly charg'd by them in particular, with neglect of duty in not declaring against those growing errors at the time of that very assembly.

John Ball,
John Walrond.

WHEREAS *Mr. Peirce* says, That *Mr. Lavington* upon satisfaction, that there was such quiet in the City, resolv'd to meddle no more;

Mr. Lavington on the strictest recollection declares, that he remembers nothing of this passage; and there is the greater reason to believe he is in the right, because he knew the facts mention'd in the foregoing accounts.

Mr. Peirce says, *After his return from London,* pag. 68. *Mr. Lavington was quite chang'd, Mr. Ball and Mr. Walrond become exceeding warm, and desies them to tell what new thing had happen'd to provoke them to appear in publick.* To which they give this answer: That they were so much blam'd by the people of *Exeter*, and many others in the *Country* for not declaring in the former assembly, and saw what encouragement the silence of the assembly had given to the *Arian* faction, that they durst not in conscience be silent any longer.

IN the same page and that which follows, pag. 69. *Mr. Peirce* makes mention of a letter he receiv'd from *London*, acquainting him with one which *Mr. Walrond* had sent to a minister there, making the most dismal complaint of their case, and desiring advice; that very tragical out-cries were contain'd in it, concerning blasphemous expressions with relation to
the

the TRINITY, and that these were charg'd only upon young ministers. But as it is in p. 90. that Mr. P. makes the greatest stir about this, and takes occasion from it to be very abusive upon the Narrative; the reader's patience is desir'd till that page comes to be consider'd, when this matter shall be particularly spoken to. Therefore we proceed to another complaint, pag. 69. of circular letters being sent round the country to form a party in the assembly. This is presum'd to be levell'd at Mr. Ball, who gives the following answer to it.

I wrote only to two or three ministers desiring their presence at the assembly; which letters he is pleas'd to call *circular*. I thought it time to joyn heart and hand against the bringing of *creature-worship* into the church, or of any thing besides that of the LORD our GOD. Now Mr. P. says, that CHRIST is not the only true GOD, and his reason is, because he is distinguish'd from him; and if he be not the true GOD, I cannot see but the worshipping him must be flat idolatry, tho' he be not a mere creature, but something between the supreme GOD and a creature, as Mr. P. would have it; and shall never believe that GOD hath commanded me to worship him, until some of these bright people (as their admirers call them) can shew me in the Scripture; that whereas GOD gave Israel ten commandments, christians are bound only to nine, and may safely strike the first out of their Bible: or else that they can shew me a place where the Lord CHRIST hath retracted his saying, That GOD was to be worshipp'd, and GOD, only; and hath told us in some other place, that he in particular must be excepted, and must be pray'd to, and trusted in, and we are to be dedicated to him, tho' he be not true GOD, but a mere creature, as some will have it, or something between GOD and a creature, which Mr. P. knows not but he may be.

John Ball.

AGAIN, Mr. Peirce relates, That Mr. Livingston told Mr. Withers, that in the assembly they pag. 69. would assert, that the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, were the One GOD; and when Mr. Withers ask'd

ask'd him, Whether they would assert they were Three Persons? He answered, They would have nothing to do about Persons.

To which Mr. *Lavington* replies, They declin'd the word *Person*, because they would avoid all disputes about words among such as did agree in the substance of the doctrine.

WHAT he says of Mr. *Ball* and Mr. *Wal-*
pag. 60, *rond*, is groundless and uncharitable. The
 79. justifying themselves to the world, That they
 were no *Arians*, was more than a pretence,
 they had a loud call to it, and since they could do it
 with a good conscience, it was their duty. They had
 been wanting to the Truth, their own reputation and
 usefulness, had they omitted it. As for Mr. *P.* and
 those of his opinion, they could not thus justify them-
 selves without some *subtle fetch*, as he without ground
 charges others with. No wonder therefore that he op-
 posed such a method of purgation. Why this should be
 call'd a handle for setting up an *Inquisition* is not to be
 conceiv'd, supposing he means more by it than an inqui-
 ry what a man believes; if not, 'tis to be suppos'd he sets
 up such an *Inquisition* himself every time he administers
 baptism, or admits any to the LORD'S-table: for 'tis ro
 be hop'd, he will not admit men to either of these ordi-
 nances without inquiring into their faith. With respect to
 what he says of Mr. *Walrond's* professing, *He had a ten-*
der regard to his reputation, and that the usefulness of his wri-
tings might not be hinder'd. 'Tis answer'd, he did not on-
 ly profess it, but really had so. But when he himself by
 the erroneous notions he had entertain'd, had greatly
 lessen'd his own reputation and usefulness, and was like
 to become an instrument of more hurt than ever he had
 done good to the church of CHRIST; it is not to be
 conceiv'd how Mr. *Walrond* could have been faithful to
 CHRIST and the Truth, if he had declin'd his own
 duty for fear of lessening Mr. *P's* reputation.

HERE he mentions *the forming of a ca-*
pag. 70. *bal, &c.* To which exception Mr. *Ball* thus
 replies.

MR. Peirce charges Mr. *Walrond* and me with cabal-
ling against him, whereas we desir'd and had a meeting
with Mr. *Withers* and him before the assembly. And
then I ask'd him how our proceedings could be call'd 'cab-
balling, when I had told Mr. *Withers* more than once what
I design'd, and desir'd him, as soon as Mr. P. came from
London to acquaint him with it, that we might meet
and discourse the matter before the meeting of the as-
sembly, which was accordingly done. And if we, who
were of the true and commonly receiv'd doctrine, had
met by ourselves, to consider of the best measures we
were to take for its security, tho' Mr. P. may use his
hard words, if he pleases, and call it what he will ;
yet I can see nothing in it to be ashamed of.

John Ball.

“ MR. Peirce says, That Mr. *Bell* (at the meet-
ing at Ottery) to show the necessity of their pro- pag. 71.
ceedings in the manner they propos'd, and to ju-
stify them in sending circular letters, insisted, That there
was a club of young men that met together statedly, where
these notions were propagated. Mr. P. calls this several
times a false story, and says, p. 72. the truth is, the
story had not the least foundation, that ever he could
hear of. He owns, there was a club of young men met
together, but one article they had agreed upon was,
That nothing should be brought into discourse by
any of them on this subject. Mr. *Lavington's* suspi-
cious temper had caus'd him to give out reports to
the contrary ; but *this*, says he, *is the truth*” Surely
there never was a history that had more of calumny and
loss of truth in it than the *West. Ing.* has ; and this is
not one of the least misrepresentations. That there was
a club of young men met statedly where the Deity of
CHRIST was deny'd and disputed against, and that
there was no such article to prevent these disputes till
the club was in a manner broke by the disputes, and
several had withdrawn upon that account, the follow-
ing certificates do fully confirm.

THESE

THIS is to certify, That in the club of young men mention'd by Mr. Peirce in his *Western Inquisition*, pag. 71, 72. the Deity of CHRIST was frequently deny'd and argu'd against; and it was also insisted on, that the usual Doxologies in the end of our prayers should be alter'd. The debates on this run so high, that several of us declar'd we would withdraw, and it was not till then, that any such article as Mr. Peirce speaks of, was proposed to prevent disputes on this subject. And we never heard it was Mr. Peirce's desire that this club should be broke, till publish'd in his *Inquisition*.

Witness our hands

Joseph Force,
John Churchill,
William Colton.

I Joseph Force do farther certify, That after we had withdrawn upon the disputes mention'd in the above certificate, I met with one of the society who thought fit, to continue, and who then desir'd me to come again, alleging, that they had enter'd into an agreement to avoid all disputes upon those difficult points in religion; upon which I went again once or twice, and then wholly withdrew.

Joseph Force.

THIS is to certify, all whom it may concern, That in the club of young men mention'd in Mr. Peirce's *Inquisition*, p. 71, 72. the Deity of CHRIST was frequently deny'd and argu'd against, and it was insisted on by many, that the doxologies in the end of our prayers should be alter'd; upon which several withdrew, particularly those who sign'd the above certificate, and it was not till then, that there was any such article made to prevent disputes of this nature, which Mr. Peirce makes mention of.

Thomas Dryer.

NB. Tho. Dryer, who makes this certificate met with the remainder of the club, after the persons above had withdrawn, when the article Mr. P. speaks of was added.

As to the blasphemous expressions said to be mention'd by Mr *Withers*, as let fall by people on the other side, and again taken notice of *pag. 77*. And again in Mr. *Withers's* reasons: The persons who subscrib'd the underneath *certificate*, being the only persons that we hear of, that were nam'd as chargeable with these blasphemies, do offer as follows in Lehalf of themselves:

WHEREAS it is given out, That there are many in this City, who embrace the notion of Sabelius, or that say, the FATHER is the SON, or the SON the FATHER, or that GOD the FATHER took flesh, &c. We whose names are under-written, with others, do hereby declare, That we abeminate these opinions, nor do we know of any that hold them, and if it be laid to the charge of any of us; we declare this can be no otherways than by mens unjust fastning of consequences upon us, which we utterly deny and detest. We acknowledge, according to the received faith of the christian churches, that there is but One GOD, and in that GOD or GODHEAD there are Three Distinctions or Persons, the FATHER, the SON, and the HOLY GHOST, and that these are more than distinct modes or names.

Dudley Cary;
George Jewell,

Mr. *Ball* is charg'd with the breach of an agreement, which he knows nothing of. The *pag. 72*: truth of this matter will appear by the following account.

As to what Mr. *Peirce* says *p. 72*. That he was content with the offer that was made him, that care should be taken for the future in the examination of candidates for the ministry. This is the truth of that matter, viz. That Mr. *Peirce* was violent against bringing any thing about these opinions into the assembly at all, and told us, that it was in the power of the assembly to appoint whom they pleas'd, to examine candidates, and by this means prevent the growth of these errors. I answer'd, That they were spread among many already, and the spreaders of them gave out, that

many ministers were in them; and upon this consideration there was need of a publick declaration in the *assembly*, that our people might not be impos'd upon. And therefore, whereas Mr. *Peirce* intinuates, that he and Mr. *Walrond* and I agreed not to bring the business of declaring into the *assembly*, and that thereupon we parted, hoping our labour was not lost, and that peace might still be preserv'd. This intinuation is intirely false: For we gave Mr. *Withers* and him to know that we resolv'd to declare our faith in the ensuing *assembly*; and when Mr. *P.* said, then you must answer for the consequences; To this Mr. *Walrond* reply'd, They that began the fray, must answer for the conclusion: and so we parted. Farther, there was great reason for making such a publick declaration, when several men of different congregations had told me and other ministers, That the great sticklers in these opinions gave out, that Mr. *P.* was of their mind, and would commonly add, if Mr. *P.* was not of these opinions, why did he not declare against them? and I defended him as long as I could upon this, which I now find to be a quibble, that he was not of the *peculiar opinion of Arius*; tho' the difference between *Arius* and them, is only this; the first says, There is a *Time* when CHRIST was not; the latter say, there is an *Eternity* when he was not.

AND was it not time to make a publick declaration of our faith, when twenty ministers subscrib'd against the *assembly*? of which twenty, not above three, that ever I heard of, offer'd in any words whatsoever, to declare their belief of the TRINITY.

John Ball.

WHEREAS Mr. *Peirce* speaks farther of
 pag. 73. a previous meeting before the *assembly*, to which Mr. *Withers*, was invited, &c. this we allow; but whereas Mr. *P.* farther says, That when it was expected that he [Mr. *Withers*] would have join'd with us, and that to this, he answer'd, "That they knew how unanimously I [Mr. *Peirce*] was invited thither, not only by the people but by the *assembly*; and that for his part he could never concur in such dishonour-

honourable measures as they were taking to turn me out,"

WE whose names are under-written being present all the while Mr. Withers was there, do solemnly declare, That none of us have the least remembrance of any such answer made by Mr. Withers; and we are the better assur'd that our memories can't fail us because there was no occasion given for such an answer, it never being in our thoughts or intention to turn out Mr. Peirce or any other person; but should have receiv'd such a charge with the utmost resentment.

John Ball,
John Walrond,
John Enty,
John Lavington.

BUT to go on, Mr. Peirce charges Mr. Ball and Mr. Walrond with *perfidy* and breach of pag. 73: promise, for not inviting him to a meeting previous to the bringing this matter into the *assembly*. Concerning which those two ministers make the following declaration.

WE don't remember, we brought ourselves under any such obligation; but if we did, it was fulfill'd; for notice was sent him of the meeting at Mr. Pym's, and with our Approbation (which was previous to the bringing the matter into the *assembly*) and accordingly he was present there: Where then is there any ground for this out-cry of *perfidiousness*? and with what conscience could he give it such an opprobrious term? or who will say, that we were bound to call in Mr. P. to every lesser meeting that we had with particular friends?

John Ball,
John Walrond.

WHAT Mr. Peirce alledges in the same page of a minister's saying, *If any would not declare, they would leave them to the people.* No particular reply can be made to it, because 'tis not known who is charg'd.

And whereas he adds, I take it to be a farther evidence of perfidiousness; the reader is desir'd to cast his eye on what Mr. Ball remarks on pag. 31, of the *West. Inq.*

Mr. Peirce in this page boasts of his conquest in the choice of a moderator; but he has the less reason to triumph in this, because the said gentleman has since prov'd himself an *Arian* under his own hand, which 'tis probable Mr. P. and his friends were appriz'd of before the choice: tho' very few, if any, of the other side had any suspicion of it. Some of these were not come into the assembly, whereas Mr. P. and his friends took care to be there, and therefore seeing a moderator is chosen when only fourteen ordain'd ministers are present, what wonder is it that Mr. P. and his friends had their choice, and what a poor occasion is this for triumph.

To Mr. Peirce's farther reflections. Mr. pag. 75. *Jesiah Eveleigh* and Mr. *Hall*, make the following reply.

THE reader is desir'd to take notice I have hitherto had the honour of the greatest share of Mr. P's Indignation to light upon me. He tells me, * *I know your temper to be over officious I know no business you had to intermeddle in our affair except you design'd to act the part of an incendiary, a busy impertinence must have been dearer to you than your right hand:* And yet when he now comes to relate the history at large of the affairs at *Exeter*, and of a ferment working in the city for two years antecedent to his ejection, he does not see cause to mention me, as concern'd in any one instance, and I knew he could not; except my coming twice to the City on purpose to persuade to conferences, and twice at the request of the committee. What then shall the world think of Mr. P's reflections and accusations? But to what he says, pag. 74. of his *West. Inq.* That himself with three other zealous brethren, (so he is pleas'd to style us, for I was one of them) were appointed to examine two candidates; that we ask'd them what we pleas'd, and particularly about the TRINITY, and reported our satisfaction to the assembly: And yet afterwards by our own
a bitrary

* See his letters to Mr. *Eveleigh*.

arbitrary authority, would have insisted upon these candidates *signing the doctrine of the TRINITY in the words of the Assemblies Catechism or some such form.*

THE truth of the matter between the candidates (which I with my colleagues were concern'd with) and me, consequent upon our report to the *assembly*, is what Mr. P's is an utter stranger to, and therefore shoud have said nothing about it, rather than have reported what was so very distant from truth. When the candidate I was concern'd with, was examin'd, among other things that pass'd, two of the ministers ask'd me, What I thought of him as to the TRINITY? I said, He had profess'd the doctrine of the TRINITY to me several times, *very lately*. But after the report was made of our satisfaction in him to the *assembly*, and exercises appointed; I had great reason to believe endeavours had been used to intangle him, and I thought if he came into the pulpit with these new notions, I, that was his voucher, must bear the blame; therefore I could not sign his licencie unless I knew him clear. Mr. P. is mistaken, this was no arbitrary act or breach of order; but a new emergency the *assembly* could not foresee, and of more importance to be guarded against than a mere regard to former order: Nor had it been a crime, but a duty, if I had ventur'd to break through order to prevent such a mischief to the church. For order is for the end of order, and must not be insisted on to destroy its own end. See 2 Cor. x. 8. Neither did we, nor would we insist *upon signing the words of the Assembly's Catechism or any such form* as Mr. P. falsely says, but only offer'd to accept one out of several forms, or that he should be open and free in declaring in his own words; and that we would not insist upon what did not appear to be very important. *He was open and free* in declaring in his own words, and gave us satisfaction not in the words of any form, but to this purpose, "That the one infinite Essence was the Essence of the FATHER, of the SON, and so of the HOLY GHOST." One of my colleagues concurr'd with me in these measures, and the candidate concern'd *very cheerfully confirms this account, and professes his firm adherence to the eternal Godhead of the SON and of the HOLY GHOST.* And as I am willing to believe he was never

ver in the new faith, but stagger'd and set on by others of Mr. *Hallet's* young men to give us a little trouble; so I have good hopes, that he will be a useful servant in the Gospel of CHRIST. This is the truth; and now let the reader compare it with the account Mr. *P.* gives, and see what he fills the world with, instead of true history.

Josiah Eveleigh.

As to what relates to the other candidate, the minister who made the report from the examiners, owns, That upon recollection of the answers made at the time of examination, he could not think them to be satisfactory, or any other than an *Arian* might make; and therefore without consulting any of his brethren, he gave an account of his dissatisfaction to the candidate, who some time after declar'd himself fully upon these heads. This is all the *arbitrary proceeding* this minister is chargeable with, *viz.* That he could not himself be concern'd in giving a licence to this candidate without acting contrary to his conscience; and if Mr. *P.* can give himself a greater liberty, this minister is free to own he can, not.

IN this page Mr. *Peirce* gives an account *pag. 75.* of what happen'd at a meeting where complaint was made of the growth of *Arianism*. He says, he call'd for a text where *the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST,* were call'd the *One GOD*; and *they reply'd to him with consequences.* Well, and a good reply it was; for it appears, that plain and necessary consequences from *Scripture*, are as truly and properly parts of the divine revelation as the propositions syllabically contain'd in the *Bible*. For proof of this the reader need only compare verse 31, 32, with verse. 29, of *Matth.* chap. xvii. Our *LORD* there tells the *Sadducees*, That their errors in relation to the being of spirits, the soul's immortality, and the *RESURRECTION* of the body, sprung from their ignorance of the *Scriptures*, even of those very *Scriptures*, which they themselves admitted as canonical, *viz.* the writings of *Moses*; and quotes a particular passage (*Exod. iii. 6.*) as carrying in it a sufficient confutation.

confutation of their heresies. *As touching the resurrection of the body, have you not read what was spoken to you by GOD, saying, I am the GOD of Abraham, and the GOD of Isaac, and the GOD of Jacob. GOD is not the GOD of the dead, but of the living.* What can be more plain, than that our LORD makes an INFERENCE gather'd FROM such and such Premises in a reasoning way to the Scripture, since the doctrines of the soul's immortality, and the resurrection of the body (in proof of which this passage is refer'd to) are not literally contain'd in the passage, nor any other way to be come at, than by attending to a series of deductions or consequences? without admitting this principle, *viz.* That a Scripture consequence is Scripture, the quotation seems to be impertinent; no other end to be serv'd by it, than confirming the Sadducees in the mistakes of which our Lord seems concern'd to undeceive them: But allowing this principle, it contains what's abundantly sufficient for their conviction. This will appear by examining the strength of the argument, *viz.* You find (says CHRIST) in *Moses's* writings (which you receive) that long after those patriarchs had slept with their fathers, GOD says of them, *I am the GOD of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob.* The covenant relation he stood in to them was not dissolv'd by death; for if it were he could not say, I AM their GOD after they had been gather'd to the grave. This covenant was made with their entire persons, and as the SOUL is so richly provided for by it, so the bodies of those good men were included in the covenant, for upon this was that circumcision which was *the seal of the righteousness of faith* (or the seal of this gracious covenant.) Consequently as their souls were then alive, their bodies were also to be rais'd from the dust of death, that the whole man might inherit the full blessedness secur'd to him by that covenant which respected his intire person. If *Abraham's* soul did not then live how could GOD be properly call'd the God of the living *Abraham*? in what other respect could he be said to live, for his body was long since laid up in the cave *Macpelah*? This concludes the soul's immortality. And if God was *Abraham's* God (his intire person in covenant) how is it possible that his body should not rise, but it must be said that GOD's faithfulness did fail? The reader

reader may see that all our LORD aims at in this passage; is secur'd, being implicitly, tho' not in *totidem verbis* contain'd in his quotation; and since he calls this CONSEQUENTIAL way of reasoning SCRIPTURE, let those answer it to him, who oppose themselves to it.

BUT to proceed, Mr. Peirce in his account of the previous conference at Mr. Pym's house, says, He propos'd the question. *If God commanded them to worship a creature, whether they would not do it?* He did so; and a minister present reply'd, That it was a *wicked question*; for it supposes that GOD contradicts himself. And whereas he says, he offer'd to prove to them, that they actually did worship a creature, according to their own notion, if they gave CHRIST all the worship that was due to him, let the reader observe what replies were made.

IT was answer'd by one, We do not worship CHRIST's human nature at all. Shall we worship our own flesh? He took our flesh.

AND further by another, That those things are in Scripture ascrib'd to the Person of CHRIST that strictly belong but to one of his natures; as for instance, when 'tis said, *God hath purchased his church by his own blood, Acts xx. 21.*

TO which may be added, In worshipping of CHRIST our regard is to the fulness of the Godhead as it dwells in CHRIST. We are bound to worship GOD under what form soever he pleases to appear, without fearing to worship the form He appears in. *Moses* worshipp'd GOD, that appear'd in the bush, because he knew GOD was there. The assumption of the human nature by the SON of GOD, and his dying, is not the original ground and foundation of our worship; for his right and our obligation is founded on the infinite perfections of his nature: however, redemption as well as creation is a powerful motive to worship him, as it as an act of the greatest kindness to us, and such an one as none but GOD was capable of performing. THE SON being the only Person in the GODHEAD that assum'd our nature, he only is capable of being worshipp'd as GOD incarnate; but still it is not the human nature (which is a creature) that we worship, but the Person who is GOD-MAN. To
worship

worship him as such, is not to pay a different kind of worship, it only shows that supposing He had not assum'd our nature in order to our redemption, we could not have worshipp'd him under this character, nor from the motives, which now we have. We acknowledge his human nature is advanc'd to the highest honour and perfection a creature is capable of, and its no small part of it to be for ever in personal union with him, who has a right to receive the utmost adoration of men and angels; but yet 'twas necessary the worshipping of GOD, as appearing in the human nature should be specially appointed and commanded; because otherwise mankind would be backward to worship the *Lord of Glory crucify'd*. To worship GOD, consider'd essentially, the light of nature dictates; but that GOD did manifest himself in flesh, could be only matter of revelation, and the practical owning our belief of this by our worshipping GOD under this appearance was thought fit to be made matter of special positive *direction*: and so was an honour or worship not properly given to our blessed SAVIOUR, as Mr. P. speaks, only it is signified hereby, that He who appear'd as GOD-MAN, was by divine appointment to receive homage from ALL.

Mr. Peirce says, That long before this Mr. Withers offer'd to draw up his scheme, pag. 77. &c. but could not be heard. It looks as if Mr. P. did not think it for his purpose to tell us when or to whom this offer was made before September 1718. 'twould then perhaps have appear'd like to many of his other stories. But that such an offer should be made at the conference, is not remember'd by several that were there all the time, and therefore to slur the *assembly* upon this account, is of apiece with his other accusations.

As to what Mr. Peirce says here of *a certain minister's way of beginning his prayer*, when pag. 75. we can have it intire without those intermediate strokes, and can be sure they are the very expressions he made use of, a proper answer may be return'd. However we can't but think it consistent with the rule of prayer to direct our supplications sometimes

to GOD essentially, and sometimes to GOD personally consider'd. Several such examples we have in the sacred Scriptures, and the reform'd *Liturgies* of the church. And this for substance is what Mr. *Lavington* has defended, and is all that the minister refer'd to, intend- ed. But how civil and brotherly it was in that author to pick up, divide, and then publish the beginning of that worthy minister's prayer in such a manner, let the world judge.

MR. *Peirce* sets down a dialogue between another minister and himself about *giving glory* pag. 78. to the HOLY SPIRIT. Mr. *Ball* knowing him- self to be the person intended (in the former part of it) gives this account.

MR. *Haller* (the younger) preach'd the *lecture* in the morning, and in the afternoon I was with Mr. *P.* who ask'd me, Whether we had not a good sermon that morning? I answer'd, Yes: But the preacher gave no glory to the HOLY SPIRIT. Mr. *P.* reply'd; and where do you find in the *New Testament* glory given to the HOLY GHOST? I answer'd, That I thought Baptism in his name was the greatest glory that could be given him: to dedicate ourselves to him. To which Mr. *P.* made no reply, but held up his hands, and said no more: tho' he hath given us such another history of a long formal conference, as he did in his case pag. 4, of a conference with the twelve gentlemen of the *committee*, of which not one of the gentlemen remembers one word. The same he did another time, when I urg'd out of *Romans* ch. i. That if CHRIST was but an instrument in the creation, the supreme GOD could expect no honour from his creatures, at least, before the writings of the *New Testament*. The *Gentiles*, the apostle tells us, might know by the visible creatures the *invisible things of God*, even his ETERNAL POWER and GODHEAD; (which are strange words to be spoken of any one creature, or half creature:) but how could they learn from the creation, that the immediate Creator was not to be worshipp'd as the supreme GOD upon this account, because he deriv'd his power from another and he himself was but an instrument? I added, that the *Jewish* church was taught to worship the *Creator of heaven and earth*, but never heard

heard of an instrument that was the immediate Creator. At this Mr. P. lifted up his hands, and made no reply. He may please to say, that this is no arguing, but *clamour* and *nonsense*; but it seems to me to be a strong argument against CHRIST's being an *instrument* in the creation: and the *abler hand*, as Mr. P. assures us he was, that answer'd the pamphlet call'd *Arius detected*, says nothing that will weaken it.

John Ball.

By this account of Mr. *Ball* it appears, That when Mr. P. met with any thing he either could not, or car'd not to answer, lest he should too much discover himself, he thought it sufficient to be silent, and only to hold up his hand; such a carriage in others would have been reckon'd by him either a sign of a bad cause, or want of courage to defend it.

MR. *Peirce* takes the liberty to present the reader with the REASONS offered by Mr. *Withers* against making the following DECLARATION, [I believe the FATHER, WORD, and SPIRIT, to be the One GOD.] Which REASONS might have been pass'd over with silence, as not being published by Mr. *Withers* himself, did not other obvious Considerations oblige to the contrary. The following remarks are offered upon them. The first thing to be taken notice of is the *introduction* which is in these words:

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

Ans. IT is conceived, that by the words of the HOLY GHOST, Mr. *Withers* must intend, such words as are immediately dictated by him. But will he say, That the mind of the HOLY GHOST cannot be express'd by any other words? If so, then no translation of the *Bible* can properly be call'd the word of GOD, and nothing ought to be deliver'd or receiv'd as such, except the original *Hebrew*, and *Chaldee* in the *Old Testament*, and

the *Greek* in the *New*. How far this sets aside the Authority of Scripture translations on the consciences of Men, and that acknowledg'd protestant principle, That it is the will of GOD that all nations should have the Scriptures in their own language ; not to say any thing of its vacating the office of the ministry: Mr. *Withers* would do well to consider. But if he or Mr. *P.* will allow, that the sense of the originals may be express'd in other words, 'tis all that is contended for ; and then, what he lays down as a *maxim*, will have nothing in it to affect the cause in debate. For tho' it be a human explication, (as he calls it) yet if it does truly express the sense of the HOLY GHOST, it ought to have from us the regard that is due to a divine Truth.

HE says, That in the Case before us, it is an explication of a *very abstruse point*.

As to this, it is to be wish'd, Mr. *Withers* had let the world know, what it is he calls *abstruse*. Whether the proper Deity of CHRIST and his eternal and necessary distinction from the FATHER, or the manner of that distinction in one and the same divine Nature? If he means the *first*, 'tis affirm'd, That it is plainly reveal'd in the Scriptures. If the *latter*, it will be obliging to name the man or minister that differs from him.

THE REASONS themselves are next to be consider'd, which are *first* against any *declaration* at all, and *then* against this in particular.

THE first of those against any at all, is deliver'd thus :

“ I conceive, with submission to better Judgments, that the bringing in such a test is contrary to the good old rule, allow'd by all divines and lawyers, That no man is bound to accuse himself. The declaration resolv'd upon, is no other than a discriminating test. Marks of infamy will be set upon such as do dislike it. If this be deny'd to be the design, yet every person sees this must be the event. I know no obligation any man is under to accuse himself of errors in judgment, any more than of crimes in practice. If any brother hath taught or preach'd contrary to the form of sound words, or his own subscriptions, let

“ him first be convicted, and then censur’d as he de-
 “ serves. But for the method now propos’d, I can
 “ look on it no otherwise than an infringement of the
 “ common liberties of mankind.”

Ans. THIS argument rests in a great measure upon the word *test*, by which, if he means the *testimony* which a man gives for himself to what he judges to be the truth, there is no harm in it. But if he means the *imposing* of the *declaration* as a standard of truth upon others, it is improperly, and very injuriously brought in here, as will appear from a naked account of the case. That which gave occasion to this intended *declaration*, was the importunity of many good people to know the sense of the *assembly*, touching an important article of faith; which was at that time disputed by some, and notions contrary to it advanc’d and maintain’d: As also to avoid the unjust charge of having departed from the commonly receiv’d faith in the HOLY TRINITY*. Under such circumstances, many ministers thought it their duty to declare their sense of that great article, and to propose the same to others, not pretending any authority over them in the matter, or imposing any thing upon them. This method, it seems, was dislik’d by Mr. Withers and some of his brethren.

Let his REASONINGS be now examin’d. He says, *It is allow’d by all divines and lawyers, that no man is bound to accuse himself.* Admitting it in those matters that subject men to temporal penalties to which this rule does primarily refer, ’tis judg’d it ought not to be brought here into the question. Which is not, Whether a man *in a court of judicature*, and liable to the penalties of the law, be bound to accuse himself of things which he knows to be punishable *crimes*? But whether, *as the case then stood*, a minister was under a call from GOD to declare what he believ’d to be the truth, how much soever that which he took to be the truth might differ from or agree with the doctrine commonly receiv’d. He calls it a *discriminating test*. The reader ought to
 carry

* *Vide Account of what was transacted in the Assembly May 5 and 6, 1719.*

carry it all along in his mind, that this assembly was only a voluntary meeting of ministers to confer and agree upon such things as they judg'd for the interest of religion, and the good of their congregations. The declaration which any might make at such a meeting can be no more accounted a test to others in the disapproved sense of the word, than a man's delivering his judgment in free conversation and what must be his conduct relating thereto, can be call'd a test to those that might differ from him. Again, it must be consider'd here, That ministers are however the *messengers of GOD*, and 'tis conceiv'd to be as much *their duty to declare* what they believe to be the mind of GOD, as it is the peoples to *seek the law at their mouth* *, especially in so great a point as that which concerns the object of their worship: And tho' this shall eventually cause a *discrimination*, it excuses not from a *duty*, which *must be perform'd*, and the event left to GOD. He says, *Marks of infamy will be set upon such as do dislike it*. If, as before, the *declaration* itself be necessary and justifiable, the ministers making it can by no means be chargeable with consequences drawn by others from it: And if it be the real truth and of the highest importance, it will, and it ought to affect so far, as to distinguish those who differ in their opinions and judgments. He says further, *I know no obligation any man is under to accuse himself of errors in judgment, any more than of crimes in practice, &c.* nor do any pretend to a power to compel them. The question is not of a man's accusing himself, but of his obligation to inform humble inquirers of the mind of GOD, and to help them against opposite errors. Besides, there is not a parity in these two cases; Does Mr. Peirce or Mr. Withers think that they whom he supposes to hold errors in Judgment, are as conscious of their errors, as of the crimes they are guilty of in practice? If they know them to be errors, and yet maintain them, they must be men of very bad principles, and base design. But if notwithstanding they be errors, they take them to be important truths and act conscientiously, surely they cannot but reckon themselves, especially if

Gospel

* Malachi ii. 7, 8, 9.

Gospel ministers, oblig'd to publish them, and be far from thinking this an accusing of themselves. If it be said, That tho' they account them to be truths, yet others who desire them to declare their faith, will look on them as dangerous errors. What then? may they not for all this be bound to declare it? Did not the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* look upon the doctrine of CHRIST as forgery and falshood, and treated those with severity that publish'd it? And yet CHRIST and his apostles did not refuse to declare it, nor did they defend themselves against their adversaries upon this maxim, That they were not bound to accuse themselves of error. Mr. *Withers* concludes this head with the following words: *For the method now propos'd, I can look on it no otherwise than an infringement of the common liberties of mankind.* 'Tis strange, that a proposal to ministers of making known their sentiments in a matter of this consequence, should be call'd an infringement of common liberty. The brethren thought they acted consistently with all just liberties, when tho' they conceiv'd themselves bound in duty to GOD to make a declaration of their faith, they did not offer to compel others to do the same, nor had it in their power or inclination to do so. But if their discharging what they take to be their indispensable duty, be an infringement of the others liberty, there is no such thing as liberty; because to secure their brethrens liberty, they must in this case suffer a manifest infringement of their own. Therefore with submission, it seems a very absurd way of preserving the common liberties of mankind, for one side to claim the whole of liberty to themselves, and leave none to the other.

HIS second REASON: " I apprehend such a management will condemn the puritans for refusing, and justify their adversaries in imposing the oath *ex officio*. With what face can we practice that ourselves, which we blame in others; who tho' they had no reason, had more authority for what they did? I can look on the intended project as no other than an *Inquisition* into mens consciences, a ransacking of their minds, and a piece of ecclesiastical tyranny."

Answ. THOSE of the *High-commission* in Queen Elizabeth's time, who were authoriz'd to administer the oath *ex officio*, pretended a power from parliament to *attach, fine* or *imprison* offenders. The *puritans* oppos'd this oath as a grievous imposition, and well they might; because it subjected them to severe penalties. But is there any parity or likeness between this case and that under present consideration? between a free meeting of brethren in the ministry, where a proposal is made touching which, every one is left at his liberty to act according to the direction of his conscience; and a court of commission arm'd with parliamentary power to inflict severe penalties upon such as refuse? And what is there in a proposal for a *declaration of faith* that must condemn the *puritans* for refusing, and justify their adversaries in imposing the oath *ex officio*? Does the disclaiming impositions and acting nothing like 'em, justify others in their impositions, or condemn those that refuse to submit to them? Do any think, that because the *puritans* objected to the oath *ex officio*, they would have objected to the making a *declaration* in the assembly? Till better arguments are produc'd, than any that have been seen hitherto, Mr. *Withers* must give his brethren leave to remain persuaded, that were the *puritans* now living, they would most of them have been as zealous for a declaration as they were *against* the oath: Yea, that good Mr. *Fox* himself, who refus'd to subscribe any thing but the *Greek Testament*, would have reckon'd the proposing a declaration in the assembly no imposition, as the matter has been stated, and whilst no legal penalties could be inflicted upon those that were of a contrary judgment. Our godly forefathers, how much soever they were against impositions, did never exclaim against mens making a voluntary declaration of their faith. Wherefore to cite the *puritans* here, is to abuse their example, and reflect upon their memories. And to use Mr. *Withers's* own words, tho' with some reluctance, *With what face can any man accuse his brethren of practising that themselves which they blame in others*, when they are so very remote from it; and seeing, as they had no power or authority to oblige any to fall in with what was offer'd, they were *unable* of imposing it upon

on others from their *circumstances* as well as *inclination*? However, that they had reason to make the above-mention'd proposal, must be evident to all that are willing to understand the case, and believe it to be the concern and duty of ministers to preserve the Truth, and to settle the minds of solicitous inquirers in that most important article of their religion. Their endeavouring this, was no ill *intended project*, tho' it be call'd an *Inquisition* into mens consciences, a ransacking of their minds, and a piece of *ecclesiastical tyranny*. Hard words! 'Tis pity they were ever pronounc'd by one of Mr. *Withers's* sense and character, especially since himself refers us to their own subscriptions as a rule of judging them *. Surely he had forgot how often he hath desir'd, nay, demanded the same thing of those in whose ordination he hath been concerned.

HIS third and last REASON is in these words: " I doubt this may be introductory to other innovations, if we should give way now. We have one test this year, perhaps we shall have another next; and every man that can get to be *head of a party*, will be for making a new *creed*, and we shall never know where to stop. And therefore what *Juvenal* [rather *Persius*] said of the natural, may be very well applied to an ecclesiastical body, *venienti occurrere morbo.*"

Ans. IF it was not usual for the ministers at this *assembly* to make a declaration of their faith, it is because they had not at any time before, so loud a call, or such special reasons moving them to it. The *matter* to be declar'd was no innovation. They were to do nothing, but what it is suppos'd they had done at their ordination or entrance upon the exercise of their ministry. If they did not repeat of their first subscription, why should they be unwilling to repeat it for fear of future possible consequences? Should any thing hereafter be offer'd of a more doubtful and less important nature, there would not be the same necessity of declaring then, as now; and wise men should know when, and how far

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* *Vide Reason the first.*

it is their duty to comply or refuse. He says, *We have one test this year, perhaps we shall have another next.* Truth is an invariable thing, and does not change with times and seasons. Supposing him to speak of the same particular Truth, that which is a test (as he thinks fit to term it) of mens *orthodoxy* this year, will be the same the next, and perpetually so. The insinuation, as if those who propos'd a declaration were for making a new *creed*, and aiming to be heads of a party, affords matter of sorrowful reflection. The only design was to preserve that faith, which was firmly believ'd to be *the faith once delivered to the saints*; and for that reason, the most effectual way to prevent the making of new *creeds*, or any one's getting to be *head of a party*. The method propos'd to the assembly, was to obviate a growing infection, and suitable enough to the maxim quoted from *Perfius*, except, that they were blam'd by their people for being too cautious and slow in their proceedings.

HAVING thus consider'd his reasons against any test at all, the next to be examin'd, are those he offers against this declaration in particular.

FIRST, he observes, " That this expression is not to be found in the most ancient *creeds*, even such as were drawn up against the *Arians* themselves; nay, even some of the most eminent defenders of the *Nicene* faith have cautiously avoided it. To prove this, he quotes *St. Hilary* and *St. Austin*. The first thus writes, *de Trinitate*, Lib. VIII. *Uterque [sc. Pater. & Filius] potius unum confitendus est esse, quam unus.* Again, *Patrem & Filium* singularem Deum *predicare* sacrilegum est." The latter of which passages may with reason be taken to be a fair explication of the former, the sense of which expression, seems evidently this, That to affirm the FATHER, and the SON, to be the ONE GOD, *exclusively one of another*, is sacrilegious.

THAT which he quotes from *Austin*, Tom. VI. p. 842. is this: *Non ergo unus & idem est Pater & Filius, sed unum sunt Pater & Filius.* Leave is crav'd to explain this quotation from *Austin* by *Austin* himself. His words are these: *Deus est unus & trinus, sed non secundum*

cundum idem ; est unus essentialiter, trinus personaliter, contradictoria enim non affirmantur de eodem, si ei non tribuantur secundum idem, in essentiâ divinâ est aliud & aliud non aliud & aliud, aliud enim est pater, aliud Filius, aliud Spiritus Sanctus, hi tres autem sunt potius Unum quam unus. Austin de Fid. & de Heres. What can his sense in these expressions be other than this, That tho' in the Divine Essence there be Three distinct Persons, yet in respect of Essence they are but One. And Mr. Withers will not say, that the assembly in their expression had any other meaning. Surely he had overlook'd another passage of St. Austin, which is this, Secundum philosophum solus idem est quod non cum alio, & ideo, tantummodo excludit illud quod alienatum dicit, Filius autem non est aliud a Patre in essentia sed tantum in persona. Tract. in Johan. And again, Quicquid est essentiæ divinæ & denominationis ab ea non minus de Filio & Spiritu Sancto quam de ipso Patre denuntiat. De prædesti. Sanct. Add to these, that passage with which he concludes his book of the TRINITY. Domine Deus unus, Deus Trinitas, quæcumque dixi in hoc libro de tuo, agnoscant & tui, si quid de meo, & tu ignosce, & tui. Mr. Withers says of both these Fathers, That they own'd the FATHER and SON to be one in Nature : it must then be difficult to know, what he means by one in nature, if he doth not intend that they are One GOD ? 'Tis hop'd, they are rightly explain'd ; if Mr. Withers thinks otherwise, it will be hard to find in what sense he understands them.

THE NEXT REASON Mr. Withers expresses thus : “ The words I object against, are the words of one of the most notorious Hereticks that ever disturb'd the church, I mean, Paulus Samosatenus, patriarch of Antioch, who liv'd in the middle of the third century, and was condemn'd by the most numerous council the church ever saw, before that of Nice. His heresy is thus describ'd by Epiphanius, Her. 65. This man affirms, That GOD the FATHER, SON, and HOLY SPIRIT, are One GOD : That the WORD and SPIRIT were from all Eternity in GOD, as a man's reason is in his own heart ; but the SON had no proper personal substance of his own.”

Answ. 'Tis matter of satisfaction, that Mr. *Withers* owns, there are such *mōsters* as *hereticks*, and that they are disturbers of the church; but will he say, there was any thing offer'd at the *assembly*, that carry'd any thing like *Paulus Samosatenu's* sense in it? 'Tis hoped, Mr. *Withers* did not intend to represent his brethren so to the world. The expression offer'd to the *assembly*, was in opposition to those who deny'd *CHRIST* to be one *GOD* with the *FATHER*; that asserted him to be another *GOD* and inferior to the *FATHER*: Their business was to provide against that error, and by their expression they took care to do it. *Paulus Samosatenu* was not adjudg'd an *heretick* for owning the *SON* to be *the eternal GOD*, but denying him to be a *distinct Subsistence*, and for saying, that *the WORD and SPIRIT were from all Eternity in GOD, as a man's reason is in his own heart*. But did any thing like this appear at the *assembly*? Mr. *Withers* must be conscious, that the only thing propos'd, was, to know, what the ministers thought touching this proposition, *The FATHER, WORD, and SPIRIT, are the One GOD*. Had there any such words as those of *P. Samosatenu*, or those of *Seruetus*, which he quotes out of *Turretin*, been mention'd, such a declaration would have countenanc'd *Sabellianism*, but whilst there was not the least appearance of any such thing, Mr. *Withers* must not be offended, if his reasons and quotations are thought foreign to the purpose.

HIS last REASON is this: " I am persuaded a declaration in these words, will give countenance to many
 " in this city, who embrace the wild *Sabellian* notions.
 " We have here some zealous mechanicks, who fill
 " town and country with fearful out-cries against the
 " *Arians*, and run into the contrary extreme, affirming,
 " That the *FATHER* is the *SON*, the *SON* the *FATHER*;
 " *THAT GOD the FATHER* took flesh, &c.

Answ. *Dudley Cury* and *George Jewell*, who are the only persons known to be charg'd with these blasphemous opinions, have declar'd under their hands, that they abominate these opinions, and that they do not know

know of any that hold them, and have acknowledg'd, according to the receiv'd faith of the christian churches, That there is but One GOD, and in that GOD or GODHEAD, there are three Distinctions or Persons, the FATHER, the SON, and the HOLY GHOST; and that these are more than distinct Modes or Names *.

AFTER what has been said. It must now be declar'd to the world, that Mr. *Withers* having (since his giving the reasons above recited) satisfy'd his people by assenting to the *first* article of the *Church of England*, this answer had never thus appear'd, nor his name been so much as mentioned here, had not Mr. *Peirce* by his publishing and applying them to the use he does, render'd it highly necessary. Such is Mr. *Withers's* character, that to say any thing which might seem in the least to detract from it, must put a force upon every generous and good mind.

FROM Mr. *Withers's* reasons we proceed to consider the reflections Mr. *Peirce* is pleas'd to cast upon the *assembly* for insisting on a declaration. He and his party were conscious to themselves of their private sentiments, and therefore no wonder they oppos'd any declaration whatsoever for fear of being detected. When they could not carry a vote against it, he endeavour'd to amuse the *assembly* with general charges of error of another nature, that he might divert them from declaring and defending the truth of the present day. He brings no particular charge against any that were guilty of the dangerous errors, and blasphemous expressions he makes mention of. It is not to be expected, that every private unlearned christian should be able to speak so accurately and justly about these matters as were to be desired, when they may be far from entertaining such gross apprehensions as Mr. *Peirce* and others would fasten upon them. It's to be wish'd indeed such christians would be cautious how they express themselves, and not venture out of their depth. However, we cannot but think, that such men as Mr. *Peirce* are undoubtedly

* See the certificate, p. 57.

ly much more guilty and highly to blame, who know how to express accurately enough, their real sense, and yet by their expressions, do too plainly evidence the very degrading and dishonourable thoughts they have of the SON and BLESSED SPIRIT. When we consider Mr. P——'s sentiments in relation to the FATHER 'tis possible those after all who speak of the SON and SPIRIT as the One GOD with the FATHER equal to him in power and glory, may be the persons look'd upon as holding these dangerous errors and uttering those blasphemous expressions. But supposing there are any more culpable, yet since Mr. P. on all occasions is so *favourable* and charitable to those who speak very dishonourably and wickedly (as appears by the certificates) of the SON and SPIRIT, why should he be so very *severe* upon those who are not of his sentiments concerning the FATHER? Especially if he remember that GOD will have *all men to honour the Son even as they honour the Father, and he that denieth the Son hath not the Father, but he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.* There may be as much danger in erring on the one hand as on the other, and therefore an equal concern and zeal should be shown in both cases.

THE Person here reflected on is the Reverend Mr. *Eny* who makes the following reply.

I am the Person represented as forward to interrupt any that mov'd for a fair Debate. This is false in fact, for I was willing to have the matter canvass'd, and to hear what persons had to object against declaring ourselves. I was rudely insulted by the *Moderator* without the least cause or provocation (as breaking in upon the order of the *assembly*) that I was forc'd for my own reputation, and to prevent the vain triumphs that I foresaw would be made upon this occasion, to demand satisfaction, having never in all my life been so treated in the *assembly*) and the *moderator* was so sensible of his mistake and of the injustice that he had done me, that he hath more than once begg'd my pardon; which I very readily granted, in the presence of several ministers at Mr. *Lavington's* the same day. This was all the satisfaction

risfaction I expected, and the reason why I did not insist upon having it before the *assembly*, was, because we had other business then before us, which I had nearer at heart than any concerns of my own, and which I was loth should be obstructed, as was design'd by this and some other methods. As to what is farther said, that I should offer [*That he did not consult his interest or reputation, and that I would take a Time to enquire into his opinions*] this I am very sure (as I can be of any thing of this nature) is a great mistake, and that nothing was to this purpose.

John Enty.

IT appears by Mr. *Enty's certificate*, he was not one of those, that oppos'd hearing what could be offer'd against the expediency of any declaration; but certainly the reasons of those persons were not like to weigh much, who were either so *weak*, as not to be able to distinguish between mens making a free and voluntary declaration for themselves, and their submitting to impositions and matters determin'd by mere authority; or else were so *crafty* as to confound these things, and make them be taken the one for the other, that by the odium of the one, they might slur the other which in itself is a very innocent thing, and in some cases, as in this before us, a very laudable and necessary duty. The members of the *assembly* knew their own sentiments, and were acquainted with the state of religion in those parts before they met, and therefore needed not a long debate, Whether they should declare or not? If the patrons of error *struggled hard* against every thing that had a tendency to take off their disguises, and to discover what really they were, there was but little reason, for them who were in the common faith and had a concern for the honour of CHRIST and religion to be much impress'd by it.

THE next thing to be remark'd, is, his clamour at a letter of Mr. *Walvond's* to his friend in *London*, of which Mr. *Walvond* gives the following account. pag. 86.

Mr.

MR. *Peirce* is pleas'd to give himself and the world a great deal of trouble about a letter which Mr. *Walrond* sent to Mr. *Tong*. The case was truly this ; which will let the reader into the beginning of this controversy in publick.

MR. *Ball*, Mr. *Walrond*, and several other ministers, as often as they met together, for above two years past; greatly lamented the state of religion in and near *Exeter*; where very dangerous errors concerning the Divinity of our *Blessed SAVIOUR* had obtain'd credit; but yet were willing to try what silence, forbearance, private argument, and mutual conferences might effect: But finding to their sorrow, that these errors spread the faster, and infected many souls, like the *pestilence that walketh in darkness*; and particularly in an *academy*, where many young men were educated for the ministry, and not a few were already tainted, little opposition being made, or discouragement given to them: And hearing with great compassion the lamentation of parents over the seduction of their children; others, of their friends and neighbours; and others suspecting their very *ministers*, and blaming their silence; and many scandals arising every day upon the *dissenters* on this account; and being earnestly importun'd by their own people to appear against these spreading errors: They at length resolv'd to advise with some of their brethren in *London* about so important a case, particularly the Reverend, Mr. *Tong*, and Mr. *Reynolds*, † to whom the two above named ministers were so happy as to be known, giving them as exact a state of the case as they could be inform'd of, by very credible Persons in *Exeter*, and desiring the Benefit of their Counsel, how to behave themselves in such a Juncture; particularly in the *Assembly* then approaching, *September 1718*. And Mr. *John Vowler*, then Mr. *Peirce's* special friend and communicant, being at *Ottery* (a person whose testimony will be credited as much as Mr. *Peirce's* or any of his

† The letter sent to Mr. *Reynolds*, did not reach his hands till after the letter of Advices was sent to *Exeter*, he being for some weeks at fifty miles distance from *London*.

his friends) I, who have underwritten my name shew'd him this *dangerous letter* to Mr. Tong before I sent it, that I might be the surer my account was right (this worthy person being well acquainted with the state of *Exeter*) he intirely approv'd of the letter, and desir'd me to forward it; *to which no other reply was expected, than from one private friend to another.* But Mr. Tong thought the subject of it to be of such Importance as to communicate it to several other worthy ministers in *London*, which produc'd the answer that has been more than once publish'd, which answer I was order'd by the *Assembly* to read to them; tho' Mr. Peirce labour'd hard to obstruct it, by offering a nameless letter from *London*, in which I was charg'd with reflecting upon the *ministers of Exon*, as *venting blasphemous expressions concerning the TRINITY*, which was A NOTORIOUS FALSHOOD; tho' indeed too many of such kind of expressions were utter'd by ignorant and erroneous people in that city, to the horror of sober minds, and the scandal of our christian profession.

BUT this *anonymous libel* was rejected by the *assembly* with indignation, the author of which, Mr. Peirce would not pretend to guess at. He then demanded a copy of my Letter, to which I reply'd, That it being written only to a private friend, and not imagining the subject of it would have been made so publick, I had kept none, but would write to Mr. Tong for it, which I did forthwith. But Mr. Tong was then gone down to *Coventry* for some time, and upon his return wrote me two letters, which were read in the next *assembly* of *May* following. In the first of which Mr. Tong is pleas'd to say, " I must own, I presum'd too much upon your candour, " in making your first letter so publick; but if the answer it produc'd has done any service, I am secure " of your pardon from your great concern for the cause " of Truth and Peace. I am sorry that the letter has " been quite worn out in my pocket, having carry'd it " some hundreds of miles: But there will be sufficient " evidence, that the *Anonymous paper* has done you " wrong." Upon the receipt of which letter, I wrote again to Mr. Tong, to desire even any fragments of my first letter, so much question'd on the *Arian* side; if possible

to be recover'd, as not being asham'd it should be felt by any man. To which he again reply'd in these words: " You cannot easily imagine how much I am griev'd, " and even asham'd, that I should wear to pieces and " lose such a letter as yours was; I am sure the matter, " the manner, and the writer, deserv'd much more re- " gard from me. If my life depended upon it, I can- " not recover ore inch of it, tho' I think I am pretty " well appriz'd of the contents, especially in the most " essential parts of it. I hope this failure of mine, tho' " not to be excus'd by me, will be pardon'd by " you; and that no ill effects, either to you or to the " Truth shall arise from it."

BOTH these letters being read in the *assembly* of May, above-mention'd, gave full satisfaction to the ministers, who said, *What could Mr Walrond have done more?* and yet we find Mr. P. so charitable as to suggest to the world, p. 91. that this letter has been found again. And after all this, when I wrote again to Mr. Ting to recollect himself as to the subject of that first letter, he was pleas'd to give me an ample acquittal from any thing injurious to the *Exeter* ministers; affirming, That there was nothing in it like a charge of *Arianism* or *Semianism*.

BUT whether any of these ministers were chargeable with errors of that nature, let some of their books decide, particularly the famous *West. Inq.* to go no farther; in which our blessed SAVIOUR is suppos'd to be neither the *supreme* GOD nor a creature, but a *medium* between both, *West. Inq.* p. 15. so that he is reduc'd to a *non-entity*, and the figment of a wild and unaccountable fancy, contrary to *revelation, reason and common sense*; but too much like that of the poet, *Sunt mihi semi Dei*, &c. †. But admit, that this letter so much cavill'd at, had indeed deserv'd their censure; yet I don't find they make the least exception to the *Answer* it occasion'd, nor find any fault with the advice it brought: so that it is a little odd, that so very much ado should

† Let the reader observe also *West. Inq.* pag. 24, 25. and pag. 140. and pag. 148, 149. See also his *Remarks on the account of the Assembly*, p. 26, 30.

should be made about it. Where is the harm done, if the advice that follow'd it, was good and wholesome? It is fit here to be observ'd, how unfairly Mr. P. blends all the letters together, and seems to insinuate, that the several informations given by various hands, came only from that *first* letter of mine, tho' the *Narrative* says, **THE LETTERS WERE RECEIVED FROM SOME EMINENT MINISTERS NEAR EXETER, COMPLAINING,** &c. p. 4. And, afterwards, *it was farther signify'd,* &c. pag 5. which intimates more letters and authors than one, as in deed there were. It is not amiss in this place to take Notice, that Mr. P. was pleas'd (with his usual truth and temper) in a former pamphlet, to say, That *Mr. Walrond gave a disingenuous account to London;* whereas he acknowledges he could not know what account he gave; but that his letter remain'd a mystery, *Inq.* p. 91. and, with great civility and christianity terms this unknown letter, *mischievous and malicious as ever any penn'd by the writer, and the whole Narrative a mere collusion and juggle.* These are words which a wise man would despise, and a christian never retaliate, especially when he can rejoyce in the innocence and integrity of his own mind; neither should I delight in drawing *so rough a saw,* in return to Mr. P's *ingenuity and good breeding,* in many places of his book I think, unbecoming a divine, a christian, or a gentleman. The truth is, this writer would fain condemn the *Letters* and the *Narrative*, extracted out of them, to lessen the reputation of the *authors*, which they have the comfort to hope, thro' God's goodness, may possibly be out of his shot, tho' he drew the arrow to the head. The *Letters* were true and faithful, the account they gave, a just account; but the fault of them was, that they discover'd the *hidden works of darkness,* that were carrying on apace, and laid open a conspiracy against the divinity and glory of **CHRIST** and the **HOLY SPIRIT;** which these gentlemen were at first asham'd to own, but have since spoken out more boldly upon the unexpected encouragement they have receiv'd from several quarters.

John Walrond.

THEY who read the account here given by Mr. *Walrond* of his letter to Mr. *Tong*, as to a private friend and minister, without any thought or design of his communicating it to others, will not wonder that he did not keep a copy of it; and whoever considers Mr. *Tong*'s account how it came to be worn out and lost, has all the reason in the world to be satisfy'd there could be no base design to serve in losing it; especially after it had been read more than once in a meeting of many ministers, some of whom were as great friends to Mr. *Peirce* as they were to Mr. *Walrond*. The substance of it might be guess'd at by the answer, and if Mr. *P.* and his party had nothing to object against that, why is all this clamour and outcry about a thing that produc'd no worse effects?

WE shall now answer what relates to the *London* ministers.

pag. 86. MR. *Peirce* says, That they at LONDON were not capable of judging, whether Mr. *Walrond*'s account was a just and fair one, &c. And, it is the easiest thing in the world for some men to give a disingenuous representation of a case. And we will say, a false one too, as to our grief we find is too much confirm'd by Mr. *P.* himself throughout his whole Book. But the objection he would raise from hence against the *London* ministers as judges in the case, is altogether groundless; for they took not upon them to judge Mr. *P.* nor did they enter into the merit of the cause. They only gave general rules of advice, and those as they are laid down in the *Scriptures*, and left it to others to make their use of them in the fear of GOD. This they are by their office bound to do, as oft as application is made to them in a christian manner; but they determin'd nothing against Mr. *P.* wherefore his complaints and exclamations both here and elsewhere are no other than the effect of a distemper'd spirit and downright calumny.

HE adds, That the ministers in *London*, did not take the proper course to know the full state of the case.

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This proper course was, that they should have writ to him. But in case he had given a different account, must all have gone for nothing that Mr. *Walrond* had wrote merely out of deference to Mr. *Peirce*? The minister who made the motion must upon this account be in his esteem a man of great prudence and equity. But if it had been comply'd with, they had certainly taken the most unlikely way of arriving at satisfaction. Mr. *Walrond* was well known to several, and there was no reason to suspect his integrity, or call his veracity into question. The sad event justifies the truth of his account, and that he was so far from aggravating things, that they were much worse than he represented them to be. There was no need of writing to Mr. *P.* since all that the ministers undertook or did, was only to send a letter of general advices agreeable to the *Scriptures*, touching which Mr. *P.* and his party can find no fault. And 'tis very plain from Mr. *P.*'s conduct, that if he had been apply'd to, he would have used so many shuffling arts and evasions, as would have kept the *London* ministers intirely in the dark as to the true state of their case at *Exeter*.

MATTERS being clear'd with respect to Mr. *Walrond* and the *London* ministers. The *pag. 90;* editors of the *Narrative* crave leave to re- 91.
ply to the very indecent and unworthy reflections Mr. *P.* has cast upon them, *pag. 90, 91.*

THE matters objected against them, are 1st, That Mr. *Tong*'s and Mr. *Robinson*'s letters, as they are printed in the *Narrative*, differ very much from the copy deliver'd to the scribe of the assembly at *Exeter*, *West. Inq. p. 90.* 2dly, That Mr. *Walrond*'s original letter was lost when he pretended to want it, and found again, when the *Narrative* was to publish an account from originals. 3dly, That the whole of that *Narrative* is to be look'd upon as a mere collusion and juggle, p. 91.

To the first of these it is answer'd, That the letters were faithfully copied word for word as they were deliver'd to the transcriber, and so put into the *Narrative*, by which the editors thereof sufficiently acquit themselves.

selves. And upon comparing those in the *Narrative* with the letters printed in the *West. Inq.* the reader will find the variation so small as not to make the least exceptionable difference in matter or sense. Mr. *Tong* in copying his own original might see no danger (as indeed there was none) in such minute alterations. The paragraph omitted 'tis plain was no part of the letter read and agreed to by the brethren to be the answer to Mr. *Walrond*, only an after reference to it and Mr. *Robinson's* letter, and concludes with expressions of respect to Mr. *Ball* and Mr. *Walrond*; all which had been superfluous to put into the *Narrative*, nothing being said in this paragraph to the present purpose but what is said in Mr. *Robinson's* letter.

To the second, it is reply'd. That if Mr. *Walrond's* first letter had been the *only* one that gave an account of matters, there might have been some ground for the charge. But there were others besides this, and one from Mr. *Walrond* confirming what he had before sent, with further particulars. This letter bears date *August 30. 1718*, which was but four days after the date of Mr. *Tong's* and Mr. *Robinson's* letters: and before Mr. *Walrond*, (or it may be Mr. *Peirce* himself) could be inform'd of what he is charg'd to have written in his *first letter*. It was from this *second* letter, that several particulars in the *Narrative* were extracted and particularly that expression, *Laymen now talk'd and disputed about it, [the Arian error] in many odious and blasphemous phrases.* This not only furnishes a further proof that Mr. *Walrond* charg'd the people and not the ministers, with *these blasphemous expressions*; but shows, that Mr. *P's* remark as if *the first letter was found again*, was owing only to an unjust and groundless surmise.

His third and last charge, namely, that *the whole of the Narrative is to be look'd upon as a mere collusion and juggle* falls to the ground. The force of his argument is form'd upon an advantage hastily catch'd at by the loss of Mr. *Walrond's* first letter. But seeing there were other accounts given, and those (now) made good by sufficient vouchers and proofs, where has there been any collusion or juggle? The editors of the *Narrative* have comfort in reflecting on their sincerity; exactness

exactness and care about what they publish'd, and of which they have given an account in the *Introduction*. They have publish'd nothing but what those from whom they had their informations do acknowledge to be just and faithful; what they approve and confirm. And were it needful they could further assure Mr. P. and the world in the most solemn manner, that there was no *concert*, no *collusion*, no *juggle*, no *design to keep the world in the dark*; nor was there any occasion or reason for it. And it is left to the reader to judge, whether they would not have been notable jugglers, who after the calling together as many ministers as could be got; and laying before them a letter for their consideration and answer; and its being once and again read to them; and the answer directed and approv'd by every one present, to the number of twenty-five, some of them, at least, Mr. P's particular friends; they should notwithstanding, form a design of keeping the world in the dark as to what was contain'd in that letter. And as to the mischievousness and malice of it, let Mr. *Vowler*, who saw it, and whose character is well known, say whether he had such opinion of it.

MANY reflections might be made on this as well as the other parts of Mr. P's conduct, but these are rather left to his own conscience. May GOD, (who teaches us to *pray for such as despitefully use us*,) give him a heart to repent of the wrong he has done in this and many other instances to those, that have deserv'd better at his hands, and might have expected from him a more civil and christian treatment!

WE shall dismiss this matter (about which Mr. P. and his agents have endeavour'd to make a great noise without reason) after we have spoken to one or two things more.

MR. P. complains, That *he was not permitted to read the account he had receiv'd*. And he gives a very good reason for it himself, *viz.* Because his letter had not any name subscrib'd, and he would not tell who wrote it. Without knowing this, the *assembly* would have been at a loss whether it came from a man of wisdom and integrity or not, or how far there was ground for giving any credit to it. And seeing Mr. P. is far from being want-

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ing in any thing that might serve his cause, his refusing to tell the Name both then and since, tho' fully assur'd of it, is a plain evidence, that his letting it be known would be of no service to him and his party in that Assembly.

The last thing we shall observe, is his casting a foul slander upon Mr. *Walrond* from bare surmise, representing him as having procur'd or at least hastned Mr. *Beadon's* ejection for acquainting him [Mr. *Peirce*] That it was own'd, after the assembly, there was mention made in the letter of blasphemous Expressions concerning the TRINITY, but that these Expressions were charg'd upon the people and not upon ministers. And what was there in this to excite Mr. *Walrond's* revenge? He never did nor had any reason to deny his giving an account of this, which tho' a sad, was a very manifest truth. But it is utterly false that this procur'd or hastned Mr. *Roger Beadon's* ejection as appears from the following certificate given under the hands of the principal members of that congregation.

Mr. *Peirce* having suggested in his West. Inq. that Mr. *Beadon's* ejection was procur'd or hastned by Mr. *Walrond*.

WE do unanimously attest, That his ejection was intirely our own act, and not in the least, advised or persuaded by him or any minister whatsoever; and we do farther testify, That at the request of Mr. *Ball* and Mr. *Walrond*, his ejection was delay'd for some considerable time, that they might confer with him; after which conference (without giving us their opinion) they left the case to us, to bring the decision of it to such an issue, as we in our consciences should judge right.

John Bending.
 Samuel Leat.
 William Leat.
 Andrew Leat.
 John Baylie.
 Thomas Stocker.

John Pounce.
 Thomas Seward.
 Richard Baylie.
 Roger Paver.
 Henry Terleat.
 Samuel Teed.

WHAT follows, does not affect the case: the thing to be prov'd is, That Mr. *Walron* in his letter to Mr. *Tong*, should charge the ministers with *odious and blasphemous expressions* against the TRINITY. This is still as roundly deny'd, as it was at first in the *assembly*.

WE go on; Mr. *Peirce* sets himself to examine several particulars in the *Narrative*. In *p.* 93. he endeavoursto clear *Exeter* from the blame of the quarrels at *London*; or rather to lay it upon those who wrote thither, and principally upon the *London ministers* themselves, who preach'd up the GODHEAD of CHRIST several months before *August 1718*. This he calls *sounding an alarm*; but 'tis certain, he pays no great respect to those *London ministers*, whom he takes to be most his friends, if he thinks that this began or had any influence into the divisions that follow'd. What he charges upon them, or upon Mr. *Ball's* and Mr. *Walron's* letters is much more justly chargeable upon some *Gentlemens* endeavouring to get such advices past at *London* as would have effectually screen'd Mr. *P.* and his party, and enabled them to go on infecting the people without fear of being dismiss'd.

MR. *Peirce* in his great modesty, supposes, That he who wrote the complaint to *London*, had no very distinct notion of what principles were properly *Arian*, tho' impartial judges will conclude he understands his religion and the opposite errors, as thoroughly as himself. He may quibble and shuffle as long as he pleases. Whether he be an *Arian*, or a follower of Dr. *Clark* or Mr. *Whiston*, the doctrine relating to the divinity of CHRIST, is for substance the same. Why is the name of *Arian* hateful, but because of the nature of the doctrine that goes under that name? And as long as the same doctrine is maintain'd, let the name be chang'd never so often, it will be to all serious minds as much the object of detestation and abhorrence as ever. Mr. *P.* says, He could make nothing but *Sabbellianism* of the scheme he was bred up in; for him therefore to say, That the persons, (the writer of the

complaint to London, was displeas'd with) fell not in with the notions of either the Sabellians or Tritheists, is in effect to say, that they were departed from the commonly receiv'd doctrine, which with him is *Sabellianism*.

THE tragical account he gives, That they who use the name *Arian*, seem to have play'd their game as artfully as ever the heathen persecutors did against the primitive christians, is too ridiculous to deserve any confutation. Notwithstanding all the rage that he says has been stirr'd up against them, we dont hear that either he or his adherents have suffer'd so much as the lots of one hair of their heads. If he should now and then have heard a reproachful word from illiterate or rude people as he pass'd along the streets, it's no more than what dissenting ministers in London may hear every day. Is this such a grievous persecution, that the legislature should be call'd upon for redress? It's a sign he little knows what persecution is, and is ill prepar'd for the fiery trial, or else he would not make such a mighty matter of suffering a flout or insult for that which he takes to be the cause of truth.

MR. Peirce, calls upon Mr. Walronde to produce evidences for the charge upon the Exeter ministers of countenancing these errors. Yet he is at the pains of a pasted *Postscript* at the end of his book to discharge him from it again, without any request or motion of his, directly or indirectly, nor did he send him any such intelligence; tho' he says, Mr. Walronde let him know after his papers were sent to the press, that he said nothing of the Exeter ministers in the letter he wrote. And what he imputes in the *Postscript* to the carelesness or dissingenuity of the writer of the Narrative, is without any ground. It is a strange liberty Mr. P. has taken to abuse men, when he cannot fasten a false story upon one, to lay it upon another. The writer faithfully transcrib'd what is set down in the Narrative. But whoever brought that charge against the Exeter ministers, it shall now be fully justify'd.

1st. THAT the ministers of Exeter did countenance these errors, Mr. Peirce himself shall be our first evidence, *West. Ing.* p. 29. where he assures us, He thought it agreed

agreed between him and his two brethren (on his own proposal) That neither of them should desire Mr. *Atkins* to preach any more for any of them, for no other reason that we can imagine, but because he had elaborately prov'd the proper Divinity of JESUS CHRIST in one of their pulpits; to which we may add, This agreement was presently made known to the friends of Mr. P. one of whom declaring, That they were promised by the ministers, that Mr. *Atkins* should preach no more, as appears by the following *certificate*.

SOME time after Mr. Henry Atkins preach'd the sermon mention'd above (for which Mr. Peirce propos'd, that the other ministers should desire him no more to preach for either of them) he preach'd again at James's meeting-house; soon after which (I think the same day) Mr. Tho. Townsend, jun. inquir'd of me about that sermon, and added, *We were promis'd he should preach no more. I then demanded, Who promis'd them? He reply'd, The ministers.*

Witness my hand,

Aaron Tozer.

AND is it not amazing to any christians that shall hear of it, that it should admit of a debate among the ministers, Whether one of their brethren for preaching up the Deity of CHRIST, should be shut out of their pulpits?

2dly, ONE of them ordering the clerk to lay aside all *Doxologies*; and another of them directing the Clerk not to ute any, in which the Equality of the Divine Persons was asserted; and declaring in the presence of several citizens, that we had no warrant from the word of GOD for the *Doxologies* desir'd.

3dly, IF Mr. *Haller's* testimony will avail any thing with Mr. *Peirce*, he assur'd Mr. *Pitts*, May 1718. (when he told Mr. *Hallet* of the uneasiness of the citizens about the growth of *Arianism*) THAT ALL THIS WAS OWING TO MR. PEIRCE.

4thly, WHEN Mr. Hallet desir'd Mr. Walronde's assistance in recommending his son to the people of *Shobrook*, and Mr. Walronde, asking him, Whether his son was free from the *Arian* notions? He reply'd, *A certain man whom I need not name* (plainly intimating Mr. P.) *had indeed drawn him aside into some odd notions, but I have got him off again, and he is now very free.*

5thly, MR. Hallet's recommending *Whiston* to his pupils, as appears by Mr. *Westcot's certificate.*

6thly, THE people could not but interpret the ministers continual silence to be a countenancing these errors, which they knew were then propagating in their own congregations, and their not discouraging, as far as can be learn'd, (for at least a twelve month before their ejection) the error itself in publick or private; nor giving the least caution against such pernicious *Pamphlets*, as the *Innocent Vindicated*, the *Letter to the Dissenter*, and the *Answer to Mr. Tross's Catechism*, all which were handed about very industriously. And tho' Mr. P. in his sermon on a Fast-day, being the 27th of *August 1718*, (before it was brought into the *assembly*) took occasion to speak of the debates, controversies, strifes, contentions and divisions among us, which are his own words; yet he was so very tender and favourable upon the error (which was the occasion of all) as not to pass the least censure upon it, nor condemn the blasphemies then sounding in the streets.

7thly, THE people who held these notions, and were then, and still are, some of Mr. *Peirce's* chief intimates, declar'd, That their ministers were of the same opinions; and recommended others to them for satisfaction; which shews, that as the citizens fear'd, so these persons believ'd, the ministers were of their mind.

8thly, THO' Mr. *Peirce* knew Mr. *Lucas*, the *Baptist* minister was suspected of being in these notions, yet he propos'd to have him preach to the young men at the morning-lecture; whereas before, he shew'd great dislike to the *Baptists*. To which might be added,
Mr.

Mr P's declaring himself insulted by Mr. *Ball*, for offering in a sermon an argument to prove the Deity of CHRIST.

9thly, Mr. *Hallet's* altering his *Doxology* in his prayers, could not but be an encouragement to these persons: For whereas he was wont to ascribe, *All* honour and glory to FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST; he for a long time left out the word *All*; and when he had express'd himself as usual, and ascrib'd *all* honour and glory to FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, he call'd it back in the face of the congregation, as tho' he had ascrib'd too much to the SON and HOLY GHOST; and after these notions spread, he took care after the ascribing all honour and glory to FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, to add, *that is due*; and tho' in his *Reflections on the Citizens Defence*, p. 6. he says, *Sometimes I omitted the word due, and sometimes not*, he can't say, that he ever for thirty years together once added these words, *that is due*, till this error broke out; and 'tis a poor and silly thint to say, He did it in conformity to Mr. *Lavington*, to avoid censure; for he never had been censur'd had he not alter'd his own method of ascribing glory to FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, after thirty or forty years use: And the citizens think the same of his leaving out the word GOD (in his pronouncing the blessing) in that article, the communion of the HOLY GHOST, which he also used.

10thly, It can't but be thought that Mr. *Hallet* gave great countenance to these errors in the sermon he preach'd at the morning lecture the 27th of November 1718, when he took occasion to mention the new scheme, speaking doubtfully, whether it was an error or not; *but if it was*, he said, *it was not a fundamental one*. The reader is desir'd, to take notice it was in this sermon Mr. *Hallet* censur'd those that made a stand in defence of the Truth, &c. And it was on the preaching of this sermon, that that gentleman to whom Mr. *Hallet* gives so just a character (in his *Reflection on his Defence*, p. 23.) sent a messenger to him, and shew'd his dislike by taking away his son that day, who was till then a pupil with Mr. *Hallet*; tho' Mr. *Hallet* relates to the world a formal story of his preaching the

the *Christmas-day* after on the 1 *John* iv. 9. in which he had preach'd against the *Arian* notion and read part of the sermon to the messenger, and now publishes it to the world; and after the quotation expostulates, What is there in all this, that should call for such dishonourable treatment as he met with? Whereas the gentleman took away his son four weeks before, for the sermon preach'd as above, viz. the 27th of *November* 1718. But as he hath publish'd part of the sermon preach'd the *Christmas-day*, 1719. Some persons would have thank'd him if he had let the world know his gloss upon the first of *John* and first verse; because some suggest Mr. *Hallet* should say (on mentioning that text) to this purpose, *That he was not the same God with whom he was.* And at that or another time, when he mention'd *John* iii. 13, he took notice that some did urge, that it should be interpreted *was in Heaven*, without offering any thing to confute the notion.

Mr. *P.* talks much of an *assum'd authority* pag. 95. *viz.* but gives no proof of any that was exercis'd. It might reasonably be presum'd that the city and country round about were not so universally corrupted, nor would so tamely give up their christian faith, but that if they had known Mr. *P.*'s real sentiments, and theirs of his party, they would soon have discover'd a just resentment. But the ministers, who were fearful of this, rather chose to try first, what effect silence and patience, candour and tenderness would have. This was the result of a meeting of several ministers, in which neither Mr. *Peirce*, nor any other suppos'd to be in the new scheme, were concern'd; who so agreed as the *Narrative* relates, which was many months before the *assembly* of *September* 1718, as Mr. *Walton* avers: in a great part of which time they proceeded according to that resolution, till they found a necessity of acting more publickly. This shows how groundless Mr. *Peirce*'s insulting language is about agreements, in which no body ever said he had any concern. And as to the ministers concern'd in this agreement, if they were to blame in any thing it was in being silent so long, and in show-

showing a more tender regard for some that lay in wait to deceive than they ought. But since they have openly appear'd in defence of truth, their influence, by means of the Truth they have espous'd, is much greater, both in city and country (without any *assum'd authority*) than Mr. Peirce expected or desired.

Mr. Peirce declares, *he believes it to be a downright falshood, that any of their people should tell others, that the ministers were of their mind.* That the people in the new notions did thus boast, is evident from the following certificates.

THIS is to certify all persons whom it may concern, That Mr. John Spiring upon the Thursday morning (before Mr. Henry Atkins preach'd that sermon mention'd in Mr. Peirce's West. Inq.) invited me to his house, and then discoursing with him of these new notions. I ask'd him, *If the ministers held these notions? To which he reply'd, Most of the ministers of the city did.*

Witness my hand,
Jan. 19, 1719.

George Jewell,

BEING at Mr. Townsend's in May 1718, a little after Mr. Henry Atkins had preach'd a sermon upon Emmanuel, in which it appears, he inveighed somewhat smartly against Arianism; Mrs. Townland as much decry'd his sermon, telling me, he had kindled a fire in the city which would not be easily quenched, I commend-ed his courage, she told me Mr. Peirce was not of my mind; and wond'ed to hear me vindicate Mr. Atkins. I ask'd her, *What Mr. Peirce's opinion was? She answer-ed me, That there was a subordination in the SON to the FATHER.* I told her I was of the same opinion, and knew none that deny'd it. But ask'd her this Question, *Doth Mr. Peirce say that there is a subordination as GOD? she told me, Yes, as GOD.* My reply was, *tell Mr. Peirce from me, That he hath two Gods a great one and a little one.*

Aaron Pitts.

MR.

MR. Peirce mentions several things as signs
 pag. 96. of the refinedness of the age, which he calls ge-
 nerous principles. Such as, *That the Scriptures*
are the only rule of our faith; that nothing can be re-
quired as necessary to be believed in order to salvation,
that is not plainly revealed in them; and that no man has
a right to impose upon another's conscience, or persecute
him for differing from him. Who is there that denies
 the truth of these principles? Does he not slander the dis-
 senters, if he charges any *body* of them as embracing a
 scheme that is a stranger to such generous principles?
 possibly he and they may differ in explaining some of
 them. Who must judge what is plainly reveal'd in the
 holy Scriptures? If any man's thinking or saying a do-
 ctrine is not plainly reveal'd, be a sufficient evidence
 that it is not so, there will be little or nothing necessa-
 ry to be believ'd in order to salvation. For the grossest
 hereticks in the world will tell you, *That the doctrines*
they reject are not plainly reveal'd, and will often pretend
Scripture for their opposite errors. As we know of none
 among the dissenters, that pretend a right to impose upon
 another's conscience; so on the other hand, we know of
 no right that persons have for the sake of worldly emo-
 luments and advantages to subscribe one thing, and be-
 lieve and publish another. If men will call *these* ge-
 nerous principles, and principles of christian liberty; we
 fear they are such as will lay the conscience waste, and
 tend to destroy moral honesty and integrity among men.
 They had much better sustain the loss of their places,
 (which they unjustly call persecution) than thus make
 bold with G O D and conscience. Mr. P. makes a jest
 of that expression, *as if it would be the glory of noncon-*
formity to end in Arianism; but he should remember,
 'tis not the name but the thing they trembled at the
 thoughts of. They that know the pernicious nature and
 tendency of that doctrine, cannot but be affected at
 the apprehension of its over-running the churches of
 CHRIST, especially among protestant dissenters. Tho'
 it may be the glory of any cause, to end *in the discovery*
of Truth; yet it will be long before Mr. P. will be able
 to prove, *That in case Nonconformity should end in*
Arianism, it will end in the discovery of Truth. He
 seems

seems fond of drawing a comparison between *Popery* and the *Reformation* on the one hand, and the *old* and *new scheme* on the other: But he must prove, That the common faith of christians has as little foundation in the Scriptures as *Popery*, and that the establishment of *Arianism* among us would be as great a reformation as that from *Popery*; and then we shall have reason to desire it, and to bless G O D for it: But till then, we hope we may be admitted to enjoy our old Christianity, and do what we can to defend it.

MR. Peirce does not deny this part of the *Narrative*, viz. That the party gave out, *That* pag. 97. *a great, if not the greater part of the LONDON ministers had given into the same opinion, and would in a little time declare themselves.* But then he pretends, *That for a man to assert the sufficiency of the Scriptures, and to speak against the making any thing but the Bible a test of a man's faith, was esteem'd by many a certain sign of his being an Arian.* Who these *many* are, we know not. Such general charges without naming any particular persons, only prove the calumniating temper and spirit of their author. If by the *many*, he intends to include the *subscribing* ministers in city and country, its a charge he can never make good against them. They believe the *sufficiency of the Scriptures* as much as their brethren; but yet think it necessary upon proper occasions to make use of other than scripture words as a test or *testimony* of their faith, and how they understand the Scriptures. They can't but think those who deny this, to be in an error; yet not of such a nature as amounts to the charge of *Arianism*. *Arians*, with others, run into this error; but 'tis no peculiar principle by which this heresy is distinguish'd from others. We are sorry a great part of the *London ministers* should have done that, for which Mr. P. and his followers do so much bless G O D. They who really dislike his notions, as much as the *subscribing* ministers, would do well seriously to consider, Whether that can be for the honour of C H R I S T, the service of Truth, or for their own comfort and satisfaction, which these men rejoyce so much in; especially when from what they have done, Mr. P. would infer their agreement with him in the notion of a *sub-*
○
ordination.

ordination. He says, *I am persuaded that much the greater part if they do not contend for a subordination, yet esteem not those to be hereticks that do.* We would be glad to know, how he came by this persuasion, what grounds he has for it, and whether by a *subordination*, he means one of the same kind he contends for: a *subordination* in CHRIST'S *divine nature*, and not merely in relation and office? If not, how are he and they agreed? If he does, 'tis a vile calumny upon those who are not gone from the doctrine; a calumny which they ought publickly to resent and disown, and are more oblig'd to it since the account he has given of his being so kindly treated by the *non-subscribers*, when last in *London*. He says in his book, *The Security of Truth*, &c. pag. 101. "I was ask'd by several to preach for them,----- I convers'd freely with them, and that upon the controversy: I could not perceive any the least shyness in them. 'Tis true, they many of them (he does not say all) declar'd themselves to be of a contrary opinion concerning the TRINITY, but not one of them appear'd to have the least difficulty in holding communion with me; but they all, as far as I could find, were unanimous against disowning one another upon the account of this difference, nor did I meet with so much as one of them that did not condemn as well as bewail the *Exeter* proceedings. I am sure some of them did it heartily, and I can truly say, I know not that I met with more respect, and fuller proofs of it in any *London* journey I have taken since I have been in this country; I am sure I return'd intirely satisfi'd that my conduct had not lost me near so many valuable friends as it had gain'd me. Mr. *Enty's* informers could not be suppos'd witnesses of that conversation, without the knowledge of which, their information must be a grand impertinence, not worthy to be related by any man of sense and conscience; and I defy Mr. *Enty* to name so much as one of the *non-subscribing* ministers, who express'd such a disregard as he would here insinuate."

If this be a true account, we leave it to the world to judge, Whether the difference between the *London* ministers be a mere *prudential* about subscribing or non-subscribing.

Mr. Peirce goes on to take notice of what the Narrative lays, That some of the younger pag. 97. and meaner of the people had taken the liberty to treat some parts of the holy Scripture very irreverently. This, says he, was maliciously enough express'd, if hereby no more is meant, than that they declar'd their opinion, that that text 1 John v. 7. was not genuine.

To this censure it is now answer'd, That besides their declaration with respect to that text 1 John v. 7. mention'd in some other certificates, the reader is desir'd to take notice of the several texts of Scripture mention'd in these following.

WE, whose names are under-written, were present at the debate between Mr. Beadon and his people about November last, and among other things (which we heard from him that the people objected to) we heard him particularly assert, That if they built on our present translation of the Bible, they would build on a sandy foundation.

Witness our hands,
Nov. 30. 1719.

Isaac Simonds;
Samuel Hart.

Exon, Nov. 12. 1719.

THIS is to certify all persons, whom it may concern, That I Elizabeth Marks having heard that Mrs. Halle should have said, That the Devil put in that place of Scripture, Who being in the form of GOD, thought it no robbery to be equal with GOD; meeting with the said Mrs. Halle, I said to her, What, did you say, that the Devil put in that place of Scripture? She reply'd, He did. And repeated it several times.

Elizabeth Marks.

THIS is to certify all persons, whom it may concern, That I, John Small, having heard of Mrs. Halle's speaking so irreverently of the sacred Scriptures, as to say, That that expression (Who being in the form of GOD, thought it not robbery to be equal with GOD;) was put in by the Devil; I was griev'd to hear it, and discours'd

Mrs. Lavington about it, who sent for the said, Mrs. Halse, and ask'd her, Whether she said, that the Devil put in that place of Scripture? Mrs. Halse readily own'd, that she said it; and being ask'd, Who told her so? She reply'd, One that could tell. And when she own'd this, there were seven or eight persons present, and it was some time before the ejection of Mr. Peirce and Mr. Hallet.

Witness my hand, Dec. 15. 1719.

John Small.

THIS is to certify, That a person of this city having embrac'd the new notion (whose name I forbear to mention, only because of the great intimacy that hath been between him and myself) on the mentioning of Zachariah xiii. 7. to prove the Equality of the SON of GOD to the FATHER. The said person reply'd to this purpose, It was damnably translated.

Witness my hand, Jan. 14. 1719.

Hugh Jenkin.

MRS. Dorothy Lavington being in company with Mr. Peirce since his ejection, complain'd of Mrs. Halse's saying, That the Devil had put in that place as mentioned in the above certificate. Mr. Peirce reply'd, It was very foolish. Foolish! Sir, said Mrs. Lavington, it was very wicked. But all the censure she could get him to pass upon it, was, That it was very foolish.

THE complaint in the Narrative, That pag. 98. there was a very visible decay of serious and practical religion among those who are gone into the new scheme, Mr. Peirce would turn upon those who kept to their old path. But 'tis very evident from the certificates produc'd, that his party in speaking of these tremendous Mysteries, discover a very light and vain, nay, we cannot but say, a very profane and wicked spirit. Having griev'd the spirit by slighting and dishonouring him in his nature and office, no wonder if he has left 'em to themselves, that having made shipwreck of their Faith, they should lose a good Conscience too. It cannot be expected that he will vouchsafe his quickning

quickning and sanctifying influences to those who deny him the glory of his GODHEAD. Upon the withdrawalment of these, whatever Mr. P. may think, there will follow a visible decay of practical religion. Heresy and immorality usually go together.

To follow the Author of the *West. Inq.* pag. 98. He represents what the *Narrative* had said of laymens talking and disputing about these notions in many edicious and blasphemous Phrases, &c. as so many lies and slanders, and that little stress was to be laid upon them.

THAT there was sufficient ground for this charge will appear by the following certificates.

ABOUT two years since I happened to be at the house of Mr. Caleb Hodge, when I took an Opportunity to ask, Whether that by the LORD JEMOVAH we were not to understand FATHER, SON and SPIRIT three glorious Persons and but one eternal GOD? To which Mr. Hodge reply'd, that if we understood it so, we made three GOD's; no said I, we don't make three GOD's, for we allow but one GOD consisting of three glorious Persons. I refer'd him to John 10 and 30. I and my Father are one; to which he reply'd, so a man and his wife were one. Then I mention'd to him the 1st. of John v. 7. to which he answer'd, that it was not in the Original. I brought him several texts both from the Old and New-Testament to prove the Deity of CHRIST, but could get no other answer from him but this, That he was no other but a Mediator: And to back this, he brought the words of the apostle, that there was one GOD and one Mediator between GOD and man, &c. Whence he observ'd, that if he was GOD how could he be a Mediator between GOD and men? He must then mediate to himself, and refer'd me and my wife (who was present) to our ministers for satisfaction.

Mr. Spiring was sometime (before the ejection) at my house where (as we were in discourse) he said, He had rather embrace the doctrine of transubstantiation than the doctrine of the TRINITY in UNITY, saying that he did abominate the doctrine.

John Blamhard,

THIS is to certify, That, I John Churchill discoursing with Mr. Spiring about a Sermon which Mr. Larkham preach'd, wherein he asserted CHRIST to have the fulness of the GODHEAD in him, and to be GOD equal with the FATHER, He said it was false doctrine, and but little less than blasphemy, and came to me four or five days following and would not let me be quiet, till I had told Mr. Larkham from him, that it was false Doctrine.

WHEN I endeavour'd to prove from Scripture that CHRIST was GOD, He reply'd, So the Devil was call'd God. And when I mention'd to him for proof of the Deity of CHRIST these words, We are in him that is true, even in his SON JESUS CHRIST, this is the true GOD and eternal Life. He said, He would undertake to prove to a demonstration, that it was not meant of JESUS CHRIST. This was about two years since.

Witness my hand
Novemb. 23, 1719.

John Churchill.

THIS is to certify all Persons, whom it may concern; that I Robert Heath, meeting with Mr. Spiring about December 1717. at a neighbours house, we fell into a discourse of these notions that were then broach'd in this city. He demanded of me, What GOD was? I answer'd him in the words of the fourth answer of the Assemblies Catechism. Then he ask'd me how many Gods there were? I answer'd in the words of the 5th. and 6th. answers of the Assembly's Catechism: And I said, if ever any men since the apostles days had the Spirit of GOD, I believed they had, He reply'd they were good men, but they were mistaken, and could not prove what they said? And he would prove the contrary. After some discourse I urg'd, that CHRIST was GOD. He said, there were many Gods, and many Lords, the Devil was a GOD. I brought several places to prove the Deity of CHRIST particularly that of 1 John v. 7. He reply'd. That was not Scripture, I urg'd the 2d. of Philippians v. 6. He reply'd, That was mis-translated; It was, that

that he would not catch at an equality with GOD; and said, that GOD will judge the world by the MAN CHRIST JESUS: There is for you. To which I said, ay, by the GOD-MAN CHRIST JESUS, who will then manifest his GODHEAD; he will then manifest his Omnipotency in raising all the dead out of their graves, that have lain there ever since the fall of Adam.

Novemb. 16 1719.

Robert Heath.

WE whose names are underwritten do certify, That we heard William Goswell, Jun. say, We hope to propagate the Gospel in other nations. Now what a silly thing will it be, to tell them of three Persons and one GOD.

Richard Fuge:
Elizabeth Fuge.

To go on, Mr. Peirce comes to consider some blasphemous expressions, which had been pag. 99. charg'd on some of his friends, which to the astonishment of the reader, he excuses in a light and ludicrous manner: And yet the proof is most express and positive against them; as appears by the following certificates.

WE whose names are underwritten do certify That, we heard William Goswell Jun. say, That JESUS CHRIST is GOD, no otherwise than as King George, or a magistrate of a city.

Richard Fuge:
Elizabeth Fuge.

The Reverend Mr. Sandercock in the assembly September 1718. urg'd as a reason for their declaration at that time, That one of the city had deliver'd himself to him in an expression of the same import with what is inserted in the foregoing certificate.

THIS is to certify, all whom it may concern, That I, John Scutt, did hear Mr. John Spiring say, That **CHRIST** was an inferior **GOD**.

Witness my hand, John Scutt.

THIS is to certify, all persons whom it may concern, That Mr. John Spiring did say to me, He could shew me two texts of Scripture to prove **CHRIST** a creature, that would make me tremble.

Witness, Bridget Luke.

Mr. Spiring did say the above words to Mrs. Luke in my presence.

Witness my hand, Elizabeth Thomas.

THIS is to certify, all whom it may concern, That when I charg'd Mr. Spiring, that some should say, Our Lord **JESUS** is but a mere creature. He reply'd, I don't say so; but I believe it is no sin in them that do say so.

Dorothy Lavington.

AND at another time the said Mr. Spiring said words to the same import to another person; as appears by the following certificate.

THIS is to certify, all whom it may concern, That discoursing with Mr. John Spiring, of some persons that should say, **CHRIST** is but a creature. Mr. Spiring reply'd, I won't say, **CHRIST** is a creature; but I believe it is no sin for any one to say so.

Witness my hand, Jan. 25. 1719. Dorothy Wreyford.

As to the blasphemous expressions against the **HOLY GHOST** charg'd on several of his communicants, he says.

says, this he answer'd in his *Defence*, p. 32. In that answer, he would insinuate, *That it was a charge against one, and that person deny'd it.* So that positive assertion must pass with the weight against positive proof.

AND here, he suggests, *That a person may say, the HOLY GHOST is never call'd GOD in Scripture.* And then says, *The imposition of such an innocent and true expression was necessary to be made by a sort of men, who stuck not much at such things.* And then adds, *That the person charg'd with this, denies, that ever he said, what he is charg'd with.*

THE reader can't but see what an injurious charge Mr. Peirce here exhibits. And that it is without foundation, fully appears by the following *certification*.

THIS is to certify, all persons whom it may concern, *That I Richard Holditch, did hear Mr. Tho. Townsend, jun. say these blasphemous words in the publick Coffee-house: ILL P O R E FROM THE WORD OF GOD, THAT THE HOLY GHOST IS NOT GOD. This was several months before the ejection of Mr. Peirce and Mr. Hallet.*

Witness my hand, Nov. 14. 1719. Richard Holditch.

THIS is to certify, all whom it may concern, *That I, James Barons, did hear a gentlewoman (in communion with Mr. Peirce and Mr. Hallet, say, That the HOLY GHOST was not GOD at all.*

James Barons.

THESE are to certify, all whom it may concern, *That I heard Richard Berry say, He did not believe the HOLY GHOST to be GOD at all. And that he hath since deny'd it, and said, He only wish'd me to prove the HOLY GHOST to be GOD. I positively declare, and am ready to take my oath of it, That he did expressly deny him to be GOD. The occasion of his speaking the Words was as follows. He was remov'd from Baxter to Tottenham,*

and being willing to receive the LORD'S-Supper in that place, desired of me a line or two. I told him, He had been so busy in spreading erroneous pamphlets and making disturbances among us, that I could not in conscience recommend him to another society. He told me, If he was in an error, he should be willing to be convinc'd of it. I reply'd, If he would sit down, I would be very ready to discourse with him upon that subject; which accordingly I did; and told him, CHRIST was to be look'd upon as the SON of GOD on a twofold account, viz. as to his eternal, and as to his temporal Generation. I shew'd him how this latter sense remov'd many difficulties with respect to the subordination he contended for. Upon this, he told me, He had read the Bible once and again upon their scheme, and now he would go home and read it upon mine. All this while, we had not any mention of the HOLY GHOST; but when he was come to the door, he said of his own accord, and without any previous discourse of mine, As to the HOLY GHOST, Sir, I love to be open and plain, and therefore tell you, I do not believe him to be GOD at all. To which, I reply'd; Well, and can you expect that after such a declaration as this I should recommend you to any christian society? To which he answer'd, If you will not, I must do as I did before. And so we parted.

John Lavington.

THIS is to certify, all whom it may concern, That I Stephen Tremlet did hear Mr. John Spiring assert, That the HOLY GHOST was not GOD.

Witness my hand,
Exon, Nov. 9. 1719.

Stephen Tremlet.

THIS is to certify, all whom it may concern, That Mrs. Halse at the morning-lecture (before ever we came out of the meeting-house, without any previous discourse) demanded of me, Where I could prove in the Scripture, that the HOLY GHOST was GOD?

Witness my hand,

Eliz. Marks.

T H E S E

THESE persons charg'd in the five certificates foregoing, are now communicants with Mr. Peñee.

THIS is to certify, all whom it may concern, That we whose names are under-written, did hear Mrs. Mary Powel say, O tye! You must not say, the HOLY GHOST is GOD.

Exon. Nov. 9. 1719.

Alexander Benner,
Stephen Tremet.

WHAT the Narrative says of the common peoples having such arguments put into their mouths as must necessarily come from men of learning, Mr. P. would turn into a sign of their having study'd the matter diligently; but it was rather an evidence they were instructed in secret by those, who at that time were afraid to appear more openly. The common people were their mouth to utter and propagate those notions, which for politic ends, they durst not then in their own names preach or print. However this might be, it was an undeniable evidence of the spreading of those errors among them, and might justly increase an uneasiness about the faith of their ministers; especially when they did nothing to confute, or so much as discountenance them, by which their hearers might be establish'd in the common doctrine. This abundantly justifies the body of the people in the course they took for their own preservation. It does not appear, but that they who adher'd to the ancient faith, were as well furnish'd as those on the other side; tho' they did not owe any of their furniture to Mr. P. who would have thought himself bound by his office to assist them, if he had not been infected himself. His refusing to do it, was a just ground of his dismission. If Mr. P. thinks that every private christian has a call, and is qualify'd to read the most poysonous books of subtle and crafty hereticks, we are far from being of his mind. Heretical books and company, are as dangerous and infectious as those that are vicious and immoral, and we ought to be sure of our call before we venture, and when convenient should be very humble and modest, sensible of our dan-

ger, watchful and prayerful, or else GOD may justly leave us to ourselves, to take in the infection as a punishment to our pride and self confidence.

Mr. Peirce mentions the case of a *dying person of the church*. This, tho plac'd here, was at the latter end of 1716, as may be seen by Mr. Lavington's *certificate* in answer to what Mr. P. says, *pag. 13.*

BUT however, as to this case, which he makes light of, and intimates, that the cause of his trouble might be his *immorality*, we never heard of any immorality laid to his charge, that might be the cause of the horror of his mind; but his uneasiness was with respect to these notions: nor can it be a wonder that any person apprehending himself just ready to appear before that Glorious Person, whom upon slight and insufficient grounds, he had been led to think meanly of, should be under horror of conscience about it. However, these horrors are not made a standard of any doctrine, as Mr. P. suggests.

IT is amazing to observe with what an air *pag. 101.* Mr. Peirce is pleas'd to speak, *p. 101.* where he represents the relations given, as a parcel of *pitiful things*; but with his leave, they will not be thought so by the serious part of mankind. When he can talk thus lightly of them himself, 'tis no wonder to find his followers imitating their leader. The spirit this betrays, can no way turn to his honour, as being unsuitable to the character of a minister or a christian. And tho' he will have it both here and *p. 92.* That at the time when these accounts were sent, *viz. August 1718,* they were in much quiet on both sides. It is sufficiently evident from the remarks that have been made on *pag. 65,* and *68,* that the city was far from being at rest about these matters, but instead of that, people were in great concern and anguish. However, this representation of his is not to be wonder'd at, since, as we have before shewn, he has in so many places confidently affirm'd that which was directly true, which happens here also to be the very case; for in the close of his own sermon, preach'd on a fast-day that very month, on *Jeb xxxiv. 32.* he said, He might apply this to the *nation* in general; he might apply

apply it with respect to the calamities that lie upon us in common with those of our persuasion throughout the nation; but added, he chose to bring this nearer to *ourselves* in particular, and then hath these expressions: 'Tis very possible for persons to have their consciences clear, and to be perfectly innocent with reference to the particular *debates, controversies* and *strifes*, that are rais'd; and yet at the same time by their other sins, to have had a hand in provoking G O D to let loose a spirit of *contention* and *division* amongst us. How then could Mr. *Peirce* say, that we were quiet on both sides at that time?

WE must now follow him in his *Remarks on the Proceedings of the assembly 1718.* which begins p. 83. We think it necessary to inform the world of the several following mistakes and misrepresentations therein. We are charg'd, p. 85, with *rude interruptions*, with *reflections* and *menaces*. We know of no rude language used to any of the brethren, much less of any menaces. If Mr. *Peirce* under *menaces*, includes Mr. *Colton's* case, mention'd, p. 106. This is the truth of that affair: Mr. *Colton* refusing to make a declaration of his faith, Mr. *Edgley* told Mr. *Ball*, That Mr. *Colton* believ'd as he and others did: Mr. *Ball* then reply'd to Mr. *Edgley*, Pray step to Mr. *Colton* and ask him, *Whether he has a mind to ruin himself?* intending by that expression no more than this, That Mr. *Colton's* refusing to declare his faith might make his congregation very uneasy, which he found afterwards to be true, tho' no one minister had any hand in influencing any of his people; neither do we know of any interruptions, but what commonly happen on both sides in such numerous assemblies. He has given many indefinite charges without naming the persons; which is complain'd of by himself as unfair in others, and therefore cannot be otherwise in him.

HE says, *The Question was stated. Whether the holy Scriptures are a sufficient rule of faith pag 101. without human additions or interpretations?*

We deny that this was the Question, but only an evasive

evasive one, thrown in to divert the main Question, which the scribe appear'd unwilling to offer to the vote.

AND whereas 'tis said, *It was many times desir'd to be put to the vote; Shall a declaration in words of Scripture be accepted as orthodox?* It was offer'd by Mr. Scribe, and immediately quash'd, as a mere banter: and doubtless was so design'd when first offer'd, as well as now from the press, as a way of speaking unsuitable to assemblies of ministers.

WHAT Mr. Peirce adds, seems as tho' it immediately follow'd, whereas it was offer'd at the end of the debate, had no connexion with the above-mention'd Question, which was towards the beginning of it, and we know none of our body but cheerfully own the Scripture: to be a sufficient, and the only rule of faith; but men have found out so many ways to wrest the Scripture, and put such strange interpretations upon the words and phrases of it, that a *Papist, Arian, or Socinian*, cannot by mere words of Scripture be distinguish'd or known from a sound Christian. And therefore the *assembly* thought it needful to explain themselves about the great matters of their faith, leaving others to do as they thought fit.

WHEREAS he says, That *the Scribe was pag. 101, three times forbidden to write*, we assert That he was never forbidden to write any thing that appear'd to be, the determination of the *assembly* that he should write.

COMPLAINT is made, that some mov'd, pag. 102. that seeing people waited at the door of the meeting place, the *assembly* should be adjourn'd but could not obtain it. The reason was because we were then upon the vote, which was to conclude the affair, which we had good reason to believe that motion was design'd to prevent.

MR. Hallet has brought a Quotation of pag. 104. Mr. Baxter's into his scriptural confession, but would not be well pleased with what he says a little lower in the same preface about *the magistrates*

gists restrain such as speak against fundamentals and evident truths, while yet they subscribe the Scripture misunderstood; or such as openly contradict what they subscribe; which restraint of Authority, he hopes GOD will one day bring into use. Nor would he relish Mr. Baxter's sentence pronounc'd on such as deny the Deity of CHRIST, that they are no christians. Abridg. Hist. Counc. pag. 48. To which may be added a very remarkable passage of the same author in his Preface to the unreasonableness of Infidelity, that seems to bear but too much resemblance to the present time. Speaking of some that went from one notion to another into infidelity at last; he says, "When I consider'd how many of them were once my intimate friends, whom I cannot yet choose but love with compassion; when I remember our former converse and familiarity; and some of them were ancient professors, who have done and suffer'd much in a better cause; and whose uprightness we were all as confident of, as most mens living on earth: All this did make the case more grievous to me. Yet I must needs say, that the most that I have known to fall thus far, were such as were formerly so proud, or sensual, or giddy professors, that they seem'd then but to stay, for a shaking temptation to lay 'em in the dirt; and those of better qualifications, of whose sincerity we were so confident, were very few." If this passage cannot justly be apply'd to the ministers; yet let many of their people look to it and take warning.

AND whereas Mr. Peirce affirms, That pag. 107. Mr. Lavington, should say, *We have bound or tied down the two counties.* Mr. Lavington absolutely denies the charge and says, That that which gave occasion to this mistake was a conference between him and Mr. Peirce; for when Mr. Peirce was so warmly opposing our making a declaration of our faith, Mr. Lavington told him, we did not oblige any to make it, but only crav'd the liberty ourselves to do it: To which Mr. Peirce reply'd, If you will make a declaration, make it in another place; But why must you make it here? To this Mr. Laving-

son answer'd, We would make it here, that the report of it might spread into other counties. And this was the expression which two persons, who were in the extreme parts of the *assembly*, so grossly misrepresented. And since this discourse was in the heart of the *assembly*, and with Mr. Peirce himself; Mr. Lavington appeals to Mr. Peirce, Whether he heard him use any such expression as of *binding the two Counties*, or no?

We whose names are under-written undertake to vindicate the truth of the foresaid account.

John Ball.
Henry Atkins.
Josiah Eveleigh.
John Walrond.

MR. Peirce takes notice of a remark in pag. 107, the *Narrative*, p. 16. which is in these words. 108. *It was observ'd, that all the elder ministers to a very few, were zealous in their votes and speeches for the common faith; so that the weight, as well as number, went that way.* To this he says, "That if the number of voters, or the number of their years, could add any weight to any controversy about a matter of Truth, there can be no farther dispute in our county. But truth if I mistake not, is to be tried another way; &c." To this it is reply'd, That tho' the truth of any doctrine is not to be tried by the Number of votes; yet when persons are abundantly satisfied in their minds what is the truth, and are establish'd in it, it must be a great comfort to them, to find that in degenerate and shaking times, the generality are not departed from it, and that the most aged and experienc'd of CHRIST'S ministers remain firm to it. The judgment of a few such, who have had the longest time to study his will, and have been most honour'd by him in their ministerial work, (whatever Mr. P. may think) is more to be regarded than of a multitude of conceited young men, who are far from
equalling

equalling them in years, and yet farther from equalling them in wisdom, experience, learning, or holiness.

pag. 109. MR. Peirce, speaking of Mr. Huddy, says, *All that know the brave spirit and good sense of the preacher, &c.* Its not wonder'd at now, that Mr. P. gives him such a character, since he has discover'd himself to be in the notion with him and the rest of the *bright men*, particularly at *Kingskerswell*, as appears by the following *certificate*.

Jan. 30. 1719.

THES E are to certify, That Mr. Huddy preach'd at our meeting about May last, and in a discourse with many of us after sermon caution'd us, not to give too much honour to the SON.

Witness our hands.
 Samuel Codnor,
 Edward Whiteway,
 Richard Colliton.

pag. 110. MR. Peirce, in his deriding way, intimates as if the two sermons the *Narrative* mentions had no more influence upon the *ferment* that follow'd in the city, than the *Sun's rising*. But whoever reads them will find that this is a great mistake. He and his party no doubt were well pleas'd with them; for the plain design and drift of the preachers, instead of appearing for the great Truth then struck at, was to screen the enemies of it, and to discourage others in their endeavours to hinder the pernicious influence of their errors. What wonder is it if discourses calculated for such a purpose, should cause a ferment among those who had any concern or zeal for preserving the Truth. And if for this, and the like reasons, the *assembly* refus'd to thank Mr. Huddy for his sermon, the world 'tis believ'd will justify them, except those, who happen to be in the same sentiments with the author of the discourse Mr. Peirce so much boasts of.

HAVING done with the affair of the *assembly*, he comes to the author of *The Account of the Reasons*.

In his observations upon him, he says, *He never objected against mens expressing their own sense in their own words.* He is only against imposing upon others as a test, words that are not Scripture. Who is there, that so insist upon any particular words, but will acknowledge that the same Truth may be express'd in other words, that are to the same sense? But suppose, Mr. P. had given us his sense of all the great doctrines of the Gospel, as well as this particular one in his own words, and others should not only refuse to use his words, but should use others that carry in them a contrary sense, What would he do in this case? Because he and they can agree in using the bare words of Scripture, must they hold communion as fellow-christians, tho' it be evident from their own words that they are not agreed in the sense of any one Scripture doctrine? "This would make the christian church a heap of repugnant materials, * a monstrous confus'd assemblage of persons of opposite principles, without any bond of union or agreement in any thing but in letters, sounds, and words of no settled meaning." This is the exact description of the church Mr. P. desires to see; of which however he hath nothing like a model in the sacred Scriptures, which he pretends to have such a value for.

THO' Mr. Peirce repents of the declaration pag. 111. he made in the *assembly*, in complaisance to some of his friends; yet he spends thirty pages in a long digression, to shew, that others who are accounted *orthodox*, have asserted a *subordination* as well as himself. Does he in his conscience think they believ'd a subordination in the same sense that he does? If not; what does this tedious quotation of authors signify? They might be *orthodox*, and he in a grand error notwithstanding. If a few unconnected passages, may seem to come up to his sense of subordination; yet there being many others, that more fully express the sentiments of those authors, which are utterly inconsistent with his scheme; he ought in justice to give such

* Sir Rich. Blackmore's *Just Prejudices against Arian Hypocrites*, pag. 50.

such an interpretation of the more dark and doubtful passages, as would consist with their avow'd doctrine. But he in his great modesty represents the greatest men, of the last and present age for learning and piety, as inconsistent with themselves, whilst he admires and applauds himself for his own consistency *. This is the sum total of that long digression and a sufficient answer to it.

Upon what he says p. 104. we shall only observe, that he should have prov'd and not have *pag. 140.* taken it for granted, that the apostle calls the FATHER the One GOD, and that our SAVIOUR calls him the only true GOD in *contradistinction* to, and *exclusive of himself*, and not merely of false Gods, the Idols of the *Gentiles*. The scriptures do not contradict themselves. One place must be so intrepreded as to be consistent with another. Now we are assur'd our SAVIOUR is the True GOD, the Mighty GOD, the Great GOD, our Lord and GOD, and therefore the FATHER cannot be the One GOD, the only True GOD exclusive of the SON, unless there be more Gods than one contrary to the first article of all Religion.

In the same page, he takes notice, That the *Account* says *pag. 6.* concerning the proceedings of the *assembly*, *This hath been cried out upon us as a Test, Imposition, Inquisition, &c.* Mr. Peirce has made and continues to make a grievous exclamation against the *assembly* as setting up an *Inquisition*. Whereas it is plain that they neither made nor impos'd any *test* upon their brethren; but without any compulsion every man freely made his own declaration or refus'd to make any, as he pleas'd; as appears by the account of the *assembly's* proceedings, 1718. Neither did the *assembly* act any thing like the *papists* in their *Inquisition* as Mr. Peirce unjustly surmises; for here were no questions ask'd; no account of their faith demanded; but the ministers gave a voluntary confession of their own faith, in order to

Q 2

delivers

* The opinion of many ancient Divines may be seen in a little pamphlet entitl'd, *A Caution against Deceivers*. The second Edition, printed at Exon.

deliver their own consciences, and purge their reputations without the least inquiry into the principles of other men. In what respect then could their proceedings have any tendency to advance a *popish* power, as they are unrighteously accus'd. *West. Inq.* pag. 142.

WHAT Mr. Peirce calls a *spiteful suggestion, viz. that some ministers were departed from the faith*, is a plain and sad truth, which he and his party are daily making more and more evident; therefore the rest should express their agreement in the faith they thought it their duty to the utmost of their power to defend. He cannot deny, that these notions did spread among the common people, and were openly avow'd by them. The persons infected were generally great friends and admirers of him, and such ministers as were in his sentiments. He and his brethren instead of setting themselves to defend the Truth, and deliver their friends from the snare in which they were caught, added rather to their intanglements. What could the rest of the ministers in such a case do, who had any concern for the honour of CHRIST and the safety of souls, but endeavour by an open declaration and defence of their own faith to put a stop to this growing infection? If hereby the Reputation of such as were seducing the people was diminished, and they had less power or influence in doing mischief than before, it was a consequence they have no reason to be sorry for or ashamed of. Mr. P. almost in every page makes a mighty outcry about the advancing of *popish power* and the *Inquisition*, but as the complaint is ridiculous, so it is now as plain as the Sun that the infection oblig'd the *Orthodox* to do what they did, unless they chose to continue under a ministry, that would have poyson'd them with errors of the most dangerous and destructive nature.

HE charges the person who publish'd a part of Mr. Tross's Catechism with *unfairness*, because he elsewhere declar'd for a *subordination*, whereas 'tis plain Mr. Tross's opinion was quite

quite different from what Mr. *Peirce* declares for. All the priority he ascribes to the FATHER is only in point of order; as is plain from his notes under his own hand, where he says, that there is a *Priority of order* tho' not of *time* nor of *dignity*, much less of *essence* in the TRINITY of Persons. Nor can the publication of that part of his *Catechism* be unfair, because what was publish'd was taken from the Clerk's own book; who had it from Mr. *Tress* to transcribe, and then deliver'd it to the *Catechumens* to learn.

WHEREAS the *Narrative* had said the book stit'd *the Innocent Vindicated* was thrust under shop-doors in the night. It should have been express'd, A printed paper recommending the innocent vindicated, as an answer to the arguments of Mr. *Tress's Catechism* with some remarks on some Passages in it. The editors of the *Narrative* gave the account as they receiv'd it, this mistake it seems was overlook'd when the *Narrative* was sent down to be examin'd before it was publish'd. But as this was an involuntary mistake, so it is of such little consequence that every one will be ready to excuse it, except Mr. *Peirce* whose eager temper, violently inclines him to lay hold of every minute circumstance. This paper was thrust under the doors of Captain *Lydston*, Mr. *Samuel Munkley*, and between the Shop windows of Mr. *Aaron Tezer*. Mr. *Peirce* in his letter to Mr. *Eveleigh* says, he made inquiry but could not get intelligence of any such paper. We cannot account for it how this can be true, unless he takes advantage of Mr. *Eveleigh's* calling it a paper of two leaves whereas indeed it was but one leaf.

HE is here very sharp upon the *Narrative* for showing respect to Mr. *Eveleigh* who well deserves it, tho' he and others be treated by Mr. *P.* in a manner the world must cry shame of. From his great care to magnify and applaud the performances of one that denies the infinite perfections of GOD to belong to CHRIST, and utterly renounces the Deity of the HOLY GHOST, any one may make a true guess at Mr. *Peirce's* disposition and sentiments

iments than Mr. Peirce can do at the *original author* of what he calls a *poor remark*, and in which his believ'd he is intirely out. But if publishing *blasphemy* against the ever-blessed Redeemer and the HOLY GHOST, shall with Mr. P. go for a proof of a man's good sense and reputation, he is wrong in his notion and can gain no reputation to himself in defending it. Mr. *Eveleigh* answers for himself, That Mr. P. seems to think it a matter of some importance to some end he has in view, to represent him in this and other places as not a man of sense. He does not set up for one, and if Mr. P. makes so light of our LORD and SAVIOUR, he takes it as an honour to be counted as nothing for his sake, and is sorry to see Mr. P. take so much pains to convince the world, what sort of sense he abounds in.

To proceed, Mr. Peirce reflects on the *pag. 145,* *committee of thirteen*, insinuating as tho' they pretended to have authority. This has been *146.* already disclaim'd, and he had no reason to make such a disingenuous reflection. He says, He *remembers not*, that they were desir'd to let them *know what they did believe of these matters*. This can be look'd upon as no other than a shuffle of Mr. P's, and such as can't well be consistent with truth, because *West. Inq. p. 147.* he grants, that the committee *intreated him* and his brethren to *give them satisfaction*, &c. Could Mr. P. understand this any other way than a desire to know what they did believe of these matters? And who but one that had a mind to aggravate without cause, and to say any thing that might serve to blacken, could so palpably contradict himself as it were in the same breath?

pag. 147, AND Whereas Mr. Peirce signifies, He *148.* was abus'd by being represented as the cause of this diversity of sentiments here. He may thank his own friends for their declaration of this, and particularly his Collegue Mr. *Hallett*, who declar'd all this was owing to Mr. P. as appears by the account given by Mr. *Pitts*, p. 51, 52.

AND tho' in the same page, Mr. *Hallett* is said, to deny

deny that ever he taught any of his pupils the principle they pretended he did; or that he knew of their being among the students. Yet that he recommended the new scheme to them is plain from this certificate under the hand of one of them, now an approv'd minister.

THIS is to certify, all whom it may concern, That I have heard the reverend Mr. Jos. Hallet, sen. commend and speak in favour of Whiston's notion of the TRINITY, and that when Mr. Hallet came to read that chapter in Picte's System: In quo probatur Christum esse verum Deum equalem Patri, he said, If he did prove that, he would prove all the rest.

Samuel Westcott.

MR. Peice in this page very injuriously pag. 146. misrepresents Mr. Lavington as speaking of GOD in the pulpit as One Person, and yet in discourse with him, as Three Persons. What he said in the pulpit was in order to aggravate the heinous nature of sin, and he urg'd it from the consideration of the Person, against whom it was committed. A phrase very frequent with divines when they mean only, that the Person against whom sin strikes is GOD, whether it be FATHER, SON, or HOLY GHOST, and not that GOD is but one Person. So that this is a very poor and mean way of cavilling at small matters; and taking every little occasion, he can find or make, to misrepresent and abuse; which one would imagine should be too low for a man that aims so high, as to be the head of the refin'd party in the West.

IN his reply to the desire of the committee, That he and his brethren would give them satisfaction one of those three ways they propos'd. pag. 147. He wonders they should not have added a fourth, that is, or any other words, wherein they should rather chuse to express themselves. No doubt if they had chosen other words that had as fully and strongly asserted the same doctrine, no objection would have been made against them; but instead of doing this, he declar'd his dislike of all the forms propos'd to them, and is not afraid to let the Legislature know, that if he were call'd upon

upon to subscribe again, he would not do it upon any account whatever. He says, The *Westminster Assembly* have asserted more than they could warrant by the word of GOD, which he declar'd before his dismissal. Was this no evidence that he was departed from the common faith, or a just ground of his ejection? Its plain his dislike of the words, did arise from his dislike of the doctrine contain'd in them. Tho' he often pretends ignorance of what is meant by the word *Person*, yet its evident from his own writings, that he has no doubt whether FATHER, SON, or HOLY GHOST, are three distinct Persons, but he denies them to be *the same in substance, equal in power and glory*. If he had not design'd to amuse the people and conceal himself, but to act a fair and open part, he would have own'd as much, and not have pretended a difficulty about the word *Person*.

IN the the account he gives of the conversation pag. 148. between Mr. *Lavington* and himself, he expresses a dislike of the words GOD and FATHER, taken sometimes personally, and sometimes essentially. He cannot but know that this distinction is common among those, who are in the *old scheme*, and is frequently used by men of the greatest learning and judgment. Because he is pleas'd to repeat and assert old exploded errors without adding new light or force to them, as we can perceive, he should not think that we must immediately acquiesce without any new proof. We acknowledge, that where there is mention made of the GOD and FATHER of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, it must be meant of the *first Person* in the Sacred TRINITY, and in other places, where it is evident from the context, that either the SON or SPIRIT is spoken of, it's taken *personally*: But where there is nothing in that or in the subject matter, that peculiarly appropriates it to any One of the Sacred Three, what hinders but that it may be meant of GOD *essentially*, or as including FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT? since we are assur'd from the whole tenor of the Scripture, that there is but One GOD, and yet that in the GODHEAD there is FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT. For Mr. P. to say, That in such places the FATHER is only spoken of,

of, is to take for granted what he should have prov'd. The like we say of the word FATHER, tho' the FATHER of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, is always the *first Person*, yet we are certain that the work of creation is ascrib'd to each of the Persons, and we are equally indebted to them for our being and blessings. They are jointly our CREATOR, and in that sense may be styl'd the FATHER or PARENT of all. We are requir'd to remember our CREATORS, (as the word imports in the original) because they are distinct Persons, tho' one in nature, power and operation.

IT'S desir'd the reader will remark how far Mr. Peice in this page acknowledges, That *pag. 148,*
CHRIST must be such a GOD as after the *149.*
day of judgment should have no rule, or authority, or power: and a little after, says, I can see no absurdity at all in supposing that a deriv'd authority may be surrender'd; or that the FATHER should then be All in All. And is not this an execrable doctrine that doth so directly abolish the Deity of CHRIST, our Saviour! contrary to the apostle to the Hebrews, speaking of the SON, *Thy throne, O GOD, is for ever and ever.* If such expositions and opinions prevail, they will destroy both the foundation and fabrick of Christianity, and by worshipping CHRIST as a creature (as Abp. Tillotson observ'd) bring idolatry into the church at the back-door. Let the reader observe, that this good doctrine comes amongst us from Dr. Clark and Mr. Whiston, and never belong'd to the *first Reformers, old Puritans, or later Nonconformists.*

BUT it is to be further observ'd, That tho' GOD, even the FATHER, spoken of in 1 Cor. xv. 24. to whom CHRIST will deliver up the kingdom, may be meant of the *first Person*; yet Mr. P. has not prov'd that the expression, v. 28. *That GOD may be All in All,* must be confin'd to the FATHER, exclusive of the SON and SPIRIT. Each of the Sacred Persons sustain distinct and different characters in the *economy* of our Redemption. This being by their *joint consent*, is no proof of any inequality in *nature*, or of one's having any *proper authority* over the other. The FATHER is re-
R
presented

presented as sustaining the rights of the Deity or the character of *supreme Legislator*. The SON as sustaining the character of *Mediator* or *Redeemer*. No doubt but this office and the authority belonging to it is *inferior* to that of the FATHER'S; but his voluntary condescending to this, did not deprive him of that *supreme power and authority* which did *originally and essentially* belong to him as the *eternal SON of GOD*, who with the FATHER and SPIRIT, is our chief GOD, and highest End, our sovereign LORD and Happiness. MR. P. confounds that *authority* which belongs to CHRIST as GOD, with that which belongs to CHRIST as *Redeemer*. The former He always was, and would have been possess'd of tho' there had been no Apostacy or Redemption; the latter necessarily supposes our apostacy from GOD, and his gracious undertaking to redeem us. It began in Time, and will end with it. Tho' this *mediatorial power* be so glorious and extensive that none but a divine Person was capable of exercising it, yet it was necessary he should assume our nature and die, before he could exercise it in a way becoming the honour of the divine Government. His *kingly power* as MEDIATOR is founded upon his priestly office, it's the consequence and reward of his obedience and suffering in his human nature. This belongs to the *Person* of our REDEEMER as GOD-MAN. That he in this capacity, should be the immediate Governor and Judge of the world, and have the immediate administration and execution of all Affairs committed to him; was owing to the mutual agreement between the FATHER and HIM, in consideration of what He was to do and suffer: And having faithfully and successfully finish'd his work, the FATHER, in our language, may be said to *give it to Him as Mediator*. This delegated Authority being suited to the state of apostate creatures in their present condition, and design'd to answer some special ends and purposes; when these are fully accomplish'd, as they will be after the general Judgment, the continuance of it will then be no longer necessary: and in this sense it may be said to *be delivered up*. CHRIST as *Mediator* will then make it appear, that He has faithfully accomplish'd all the ends for which He was vested with that Authority, and will no doubt have the Approbation of his FATHER,

and

and the praises and *hallelujahs* of men and angels, and this without divesting himself of that *supreme Authority*, which did always belong to Him as the *eternal SON* of GOD. If such as Mr. P. have so mean and impious notions concerning the blessed REDEEMER, as to think He is only such a GOD as after the day of judgment will have *no rule, or authority or power*, we for our part are not ashamed to profess our belief, that as He was GOD from everlasting, *in the beginning was with GOD the FATHER, and was GOD*, so He will be to everlasting. We hope to be for ever subject to his government, and happy in the enjoyment of Him, who with the FATHER, and SPIRIT, is GOD *All in All*.

MR. Peirce, denies there was *any appearance of warmth* in the dispute the *Narrative* takes notice of, *West. Inq.* p. 150. They who gave the information, tho' they thought it not worth while to send up *certificates* upon every particular, are no doubt if desir'd, able and ready to make good what is here related. Mr. P. will acknowledge no *vehemence*, except it be understood of the strength of his *arguments*; but how strong soever they were in his own opinion, they fail'd of giving satisfaction. He says, 'Tis like enough he might ask, *Where they found in Scripture that the HOLY GHOST was call'd GOD? &c.* And, Why did he put that question? Or why should he judge it hard, that the *citizens* after this, could not think themselves safe in committing the care of their souls to him, who did so *strongly* endeavour to stagger them in a fundamental article of their faith? He is pleas'd to put the same question to the *publishers* of the *Narrative*. To which it is reply'd, That he well knows the places that are commonly refer'd to, and their present business is to confirm the truth of the *Narrative*, and not to divert to that which has been done a thousand times already, and is needless as well as impertinent. His business is not to put us upon new proofs, but to resell the arguments that are already produc'd by judicious and godly divines.

HE is a good voucher for what follows. But the writers of the *Narrative* are not so sensible of the

truth of what was said by Mr. *Hallet*, *scil.* (That *not all the London ministers sentiments differ'd much from theirs*) as they are, that those ministers must now be more and more convinc'd of the truth of the charge against Mr. *Peirce*, Mr. *Hallet* and others, namely, That they are departed from the common faith, and that those fears the *Exeter* people had of their ministers were not altogether without ground.

WE only observe here, That 'tis to be fear'd Mr. *Hallet's* expression, and what has been elsewhere publish'd will be matter of stumbling to many, and therefore hope, the brethren refer'd to, will think themselves concern'd to satisfy the world more publicly and plainly that herein they have been wrong'd.

MR. *Peirce* throws out a *threatning*, by pag. 151. saying, *He would not in haste give them any occasion again to twit him with his writing in defence of the dissenters.* In answer to which, We hope so good a cause will never want advocates, and tho' he may think himself the very *Atlas* of it (as this lofty sentence looks that way) yet we have no fear upon us at all, that it will want a support after one pillar fails us, any more than it did before Mr. *P.* was born. And tho' we desire to keep a good conscience in every thing, and would have every Truth vindicated in its place, yet we cannot but think *that* controversy, if compar'd with *this*, to be no more than a gnat to a camel, or a pimple to the plague: And that it will avail us very little to embalm the memory or plead the cause of the ancient *Puritans*, if we destroy their faith. But perhaps the loose and general faith which Mr. *P.* aims at, is intended to usher in the *glorious time* approaching, which he, with his friend Mr. *Whiston*, had fix'd with so great assurance, while wise men look'd upon it a little *planetary*.

HE alledges, That Mr. *Trofs* and Mr. *Hallet* pag. 152. let always directed the Clerk what he should sing, and that Mr. *Trofs* was against singing any thing but the translation of Scripture: And appeals to the reader, pag. 153. *Whether the people had more or less be offended with him than with Mr. Trofs?*

To

To all which, this is a full reply, That tho' Mr. Troß directed what the Clerk should sing, yet never forbad our singing *Doxologies* at the end of those *Psalms*, as Mr. Peirce did: No; but he look'd upon thote as scriptural which Mr. P. would not suffer the congregation to sing; as is evident from his positive order to the clerk, to sing those wherein glory was expressly given to FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. That Mr. Troß did order it, appears by the following *certificate*.

THIS is to certify, all persons whom it may concern, That I Thomas Norman was clerk at James's Meeting-house about nine years and three quarters (while Mr. Troß and Mr. Jos. Hallet were pastors there) and that we then very often sang those *Doxologies* wherein there was express glory given to the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, and sometimes I had Mr. Troß's order and direction so to do.

Witness my hand,
Nov. 14, 1719.

Thomas Norman

THE world, to whom Mr. Peirce appeals, may from hence judge, that Mr. Troß never gave the people of Exen any uneasiness, as Mr. P. did, and will conclude, that none but Mr. P. would have made such an appeal.

As to the charge which Mr. Peirce brings against one of the clerks for boasting, he would fit some people with *Doxologies*; and that he himself stuck not to alter them; (if he did at the composing them) to render them more offensive: It is of a like nature with most of his other stories, viz. false and groundless, as appears by the following *certificate*.

WHEREAS Mr. Peirce in his West. Inq. pag. 152. says, That it was reported, that one of the clerks used to boast how he would fit some people with *Doxologies*, and that he was observ'd to be very dextrous in picking them up, and that he himself stuck
not,

not to alter them. (if he did at composing them) to render them the more offensive. This is to certify, all whom it may concern, That we whose names are under-written (being the clerks of the three united congregations) did never boast how we would fit some people with Doxologies, nor did we ever alter any, much less ever compose any Doxologies, to render them the more offensive.

Thomas Norman,
Richard Dawkins,
John Handleigh.

Witness our hands,

AND whereas Mr. Peirce cavills at two pag. 153. lines of a *Doxology* that was sung, Mr. Peirce never mention'd this at the meeting of the Committee, when they urg'd, that his permitting the use of the *Doxologies* would go a great way to the peace of the city; nor did the people desire this or that version of a *Doxology*, but only such as gave Glory to the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, as the One GOD: of which there are multitudes which would have given the people satisfaction. And no doubt the two former lines of this *Doxology*, he is pleas'd to mention but a part of, was as offensive to him as these he recites, and much more.

HE owns he was told (as it is mention'd pag. 154. in the account) that his complying with the peoples request to give them liberty to sing the *Doxologies*, whereby they might worship God according to the conviction of their minds, together with the teaching the *Assemblies Catechism* would go a great way to the peace of the city; And yet he would not comply with this request, but soon after calls upon Mr. Lavington to mention one step he had taken, that has not agreed perfectly with his pretences for liberty and peace. The world will think his abridging the people of their liberty to sing their former *Doxologies* a sufficient answer to that demand; and will look on it as a shameful evasion for him to say pag. 156. they were

were at liberty to do it at home, he hinder'd them not, that is, where it was not in his power to hinder 'em. The people ow'd him abundance of thanks for that liberty, which of his great grace he condescended to grant them; when at the same time he took away their liberty in publick, of praising God in the manner they thought they were bound to do; especially in this juncture, to testify their faith in and worship of the HOLY TRINITY.

It is a weak defence as well as a very indifferent compliment pass'd by Mr. Peirce pag. 155. upon the gentleman to insinuate, that he was not bound to take his word. 'Tis believ'd the gentleman was far from expecting he would be under his single direction. But as Mr. P. had reason to believe that what he spoke, was the sense of many others, besides his own, it deserv'd more regard. The reader may here observe, how, when he could not find, he frames a handle on purpose to throw out some further injurious reflections on Mr. Lavington, whom he condemns as an enemy to peace, but does it with as little truth as when he charges him with having furnish'd the passage he recites from pag. 8, of the Narrative and calls a reflection. The writers of the Narrative do assure him it is false. That account, upon which he takes occasion to abuse Mr. Lavington was receiv'd from one who knew the truth, but is no minister. And how can Mr. P. say for himself that he was determin'd to have no hand in making divisions, when his abridging people the liberty of singing GORY to the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, would unavoidably promote 'em, as Mr. P. knew.

HE seems to value himself highly upon what he has said in asserting the rights of the people. pag. 156. But if he argues no better in his other writings than in that paragraph, the people will have need to look out for a better patron. In this and other instances, he shows how difficult a thing it is to argue without bias and prejudice, where self is concern'd. Is it not the right of the people to worship God in publick, as well as in their closets and families in the way they

they think most agreeable to his will? Have they not a right, according to the real belief and practice of the christian church, to ascribe glory to the FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT as to the One GOD? If he would not suffer them to do this when he preach'd among them, did he not do what in him lay to deprive them of their liberty? Had they not reason to be uneasy at this, especially considering the notions that were then prevailing, and that his forbidding them the *Doxologies*, was a practical declaration that such glory was not due? What though the ordering these things be usually lodg'd in the minister, this is on supposition that he and they are of the same faith. When it appear'd, that he was going to deprive them of the liberty of declaring their faith in one of the most important doctrines of the Gospel, and of exercising their devotion in one of the highest acts of worship, it was full time for them to assert their own just rights and liberties. What tho' they did not use these *Doxologies* every time they met for publick worship, is there no difference between their not doing what they might have done if they had pleas'd, and another person's debarring them of this liberty without, nay, against their consent? If Mr. P. and the greatest part of the congregation had been of his sentiments, he would have had some colour for what he did; But what reason was there, that he and a few of his *Arian* friends should take upon them to deprive the body of the congregation, of this liberty? A separation could not but follow upon their not agreeing in the object of their worship. Before the *penal* laws against the protestant dissenters were repeal'd, those that made them, or were advocates for them, might have pleaded just as Mr. P. does, How, good Sir, do we debar you of your liberty? Have you not liberty to worship GOD in your closets, and families, or with a number not exceeding five? But if notwithstanding this, they have a further right to perform the same worship in larger assemblies, they that shall go about to deprive them of it, will by impartial persons be look'd upon as *betrayers* rather than *assertors* of their liberty.

pag. 157.

Mr. Peirce says, That the account in the *Narrative* of his forbidding the *Doxologies*, is

is brought in as a thing that mov'd the ministers to send their letter before the *September assembly*, whereas his forbidding the *Doxologies*, was not till some time after the *assembly*. It is plain Mr. P. does himself confirm the *fact*, viz. *That he forbid the Doxologies*; and so the *Narrative* is perfectly clear of his charge of *faithfulness* as to the main point here in hand. as it is in every other part of it, whatever hard epithets he is pleas'd out of his abundant liberality to bestow upon it. And he is wrong in saying. *That this is brought in as a thing that mov'd the ministers to send that letter*, since that *letter*, as appears by the *Narrative*, was not grounded upon the *whole* of the foregoing account; but only on the contents of the *first letter* directed to a private brother, which had nothing of this in it, nor could have, according to Mr. P. But granting a failure in circumstance of time, which, after what has been said, can signify little, and does no way affect the main charge; ought the *Narrative* to be deem'd FAITHLESS, and the whole of it brought under discredit upon the failure of a circumstance, that can be here but of small moment? Then what *epithets* in proportion of speech would be sufficient to bestow on Mr. P's *Inquisition!* which contains a continu'd train of falsehoods, even in the *most material things*, and those evidently prov'd upon him throughout his whole book.

As to what he says concerning his forbidding the *Doxologies*, that it is *not pertinently alledg'd as a reason for their ejection*; and his suggesting *as if it were an accusation wherein he alone was concern'd*; and as if Mr. Hallet had never been charg'd with forbidding these *Doxologies in singing*. This is not true; for if the reader casts his eye on *the Citizens Defence of their Account*, p. 8. he will find that they alledge this against Mr. Hallet, that he gave directions to the *clerk* to leave out such *Doxologies* as did most fully express the *Deity* of the SON and HOLY GHOST. His direction was to leave out all such wherein the *equality* of the Divine Persons was express'd. And whereas Mr. P. says, Mr. Hallet used to ascribe glory to the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST; in the said *Defence of the Account*, p. 7, 8. the citizens say, That whereas he was wont to conclude his prayer with ascribing *all* honour and glory to FATHER, SON, and

HOLY GHOST, he for a long time left out the word *all*; and when he had express'd himself as usual and ascrib'd *all* honour and glory to FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, he call'd it back again in the face of the congregation, as tho' he had ascrib'd too much to the SON, and HOLY GHOST. To which may be added Mr. *Hallet's* declaration before several of the city the 24th of *October* 1718. where one in company complaining of the hardness they of *James's meeting* were under, that they could not have leave to worship GOD according to the conviction of their consciences in giving glory to the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, one of them appeal'd to Mr. *Withers*, What he would do if he were in their case? Mr. *Hallet* answer'd, You do it oftner than ever you did; and then added, you have no warrant for it from the word of GOD: But Mr. *Withers* reply'd, It is their due, and were I able to sing, I'd sing it.

pag. 153. As to what Mr. *Peirce* says about *Catechising*, he owns, p. 154. *it was one of those things propos'd to him by one of the committee.* And tho' he says there, *I was well assur'd in my own mind, that what that gentleman said was not true.* And p. 155. adds, *Why was I bound to take that gentleman's word?* yet he could not but know that gentleman spake the sense of the committee, and many others; and that, as the *Account* says, his compliance with these two things, viz. Giving the people liberty to use those *Doxologies* in singing, and also their teaching the *Assembly's Catechism*, would go a great way to the peace of the city. And therefore, tho' he suggests, that it was not true that he was ask'd to teach it, or that he refus'd; What could he make of this proposal (which was several months before the ejection) but a plain desire? And what can his noncompliance with this proposal be, but a plain refusal? What is therefore said in the *Narrative* is not a *base and unworthy representation*, nor any argument of the *mean spirit* of its author or editors; but what Mr. *P.* offers in these different pages, will convince the world, that he himself hath not that regard to truth and sincerity, that a historian should have. In answer to the excuses he makes for Mr. *Hallet*, 'tis reply'd, That how difficult soever it was to procure children

children to answer, yet he had such as were ready to do it, as they had several times done; and to help the badness of his sight, a gentlewoman freely offer'd to get a larger print, if he would go on with it. By this it may be seen how far Mr. P. has given a true account of this whole affair.

As to the ejection of Mr. Roger Beadon, the pag. 158, promoting of which, Mr. Peirce endeavours 159. to charge upon Mr. Walrond, p. 90, 91. and 158, 159. There needs no more be said in answer to this calumny, than what is certifi'd by the principal members of that congregation, which is as follows:

IN pag. 90, 91. of Mr. Peirce's West. Inq. he suggests. That Mr. Beadon's ejection was procur'd or hasten'd by Mr. Walrond. We do unanimously attest, That his ejection was intirely our own act, and not in the least advised or persuaded by him, or any minister whatsoever. And we do further testify, That at the request of Mr. Ball and Mr. Walrond, his ejection was delay'd for some considerable time, that they might confer with him; after which conference (without giving us their opinion) they left the case to us to bring the decision of it to such an issue as we in our consciences should judge right.

John Bending,
William Leat,
Andrew Leat,
John Pounce,
Richard Baylie,
Henry Terleat,
Samuel Teed.

Samuel Lear,
John Baylie,
Tho. Stocker,
Thomas Seaward,
Roger Paver,
John Leat,

NB. This certificate is twice inserted, because it refers to pag. 91, 92. of the *West. Inq.* and again, to pag. 159, where M. P. resumes the slander.

Mr. Peirce denies that Mr. Beadon was pag. 159. obstinate in his error.

WE therefore, whose names are under-written, do hereby testify, That we did desire Mr. Beadon's congregation to delay their design'd ejection till we had talk'd with him and endeavour'd to reclaim him; which we accordingly did, as other ministers had done before, but he prov'd inflexible, as 'tis known he continues to this day.

John Ball,
John Walrond.

AND whereas he asserts, That Mr. Beadon was ejected only for denying the genuineness of 1 John v. 7. and refusing to use the Assembly's Catechism, and saying, that the SON was not in all respects equal to the FATHER.

WE whose names are subscrib'd, who are members of the church at Budleigh, do aver and testify, That Mr. Beadon did not only refuse to use the Assembly's Catechism, but declar'd, that he had us'd it almost two years past, against his conscience. and would never use it more; and yet he had frequently within that time, and once particularly within three months of his ejection, exhorted parents and masters to teach the said Catechism to their children and servants, and blam'd them for their negligence in that respect. This we took to be an argument not only of his erroneous opinion, but of gross hypocrisy and prevarication.

Samuel Leat,
Henry Terleat,
William Leat,
Thomas Seaward,
Richard Pinn,
Richard Baylie,

John Bending, sen.
Andrew Leat,
John Baylie,
John Leat,
Roger Paver,
Samuel Teed,

AS to his denial of the text, in 1 John. v. 7. He did not only deny its genuineness, but asserted before several of us, that we might as well place the verse of a ballad or a rhyme in the Bible as that; nor was that the only place of scripture which he objected to, for he
also

also told us that Phil. ii. 6. was falsely translated, and not to be depended on.

Thomas Seaward.
Samuel Leat.
John Bending, sen.

AS to the 3d. particular mention'd, That he was ejected for saying that the SON was not in all respects equal to the FATHER. We believ'd CHRIST as GOD to be One GOD with or equal to the FATHER; and he also declar'd that to be his faith, when he was ordain'd among us, and upon that condition we chose him. We never desir'd him to declare that CHRIST as man was equal to GOD, or that he was in all respects equal to the FATHER. But as we were well satisfy'd that our Bible was the word of GOD, and our Catechism agreed therewith in this article of our faith, rather than get a new Bible for ourselves, or a new Catechism for our children, we resolv'd to get a new minister. Indeed he drew up a certificate without our concurrence much to the purpose that Mr. Peirce mentions; but this we utterly refus'd to subscribe, because we found he had not fairly stated the causes of our turning him out.

John Bending, sen.
Samuel Leat.
Andrew Leat.
John Leat.
John Baylie.

Thomas Seaward.
William Leat.
Richard Baylie.
Roger Paver.
Henry Terleat.

IN this page, We find that Mr. Beaden denies that he was unanimously discharg'd by pag. 159. his Congregation.

WE do testify that to our knowledge there were but two of the contributors (after we had debated the matter with Mr. Beaden) that appear'd any thing uneasy at his ejection and they both acquiesced in it, and continu'd

continu'd very willingly to contribute to the succeeding minister.

John Bending, *sen.*
Samuel Leat.
Thomas Seaward.
John Baylie.
Thomas Stocker,

John. Pounce.
Richard Baylie.
Roger Paver.
Henry Ter'leat.

WE whose names are under-written were present at the debate between Mr. Beadon and his people about November last, and among other things which we heard from him, that the people objected to, we heard him particularly assert, That if they built on our present translation of the Bible they would build on a sandy foundation.

Witness our hands,
Nov. 30. 1719.

Isaiah Simonds.
Samuel Hart.

MR. Beadon did deny in my hearing the genuineness of 1 John v. 7. and that he would not use the Assembly's Catechism.

Thomas Stocker.

MR. Roger Beadon did in my hearing deny 1 John v. 7. to be scripture, and declar'd, he had taught the Assembly's Catechism contrary to his conscience two years, and would not teach it more; notwithstanding he frequently exhorted parents and masters of families to instruct their children and servants to be more perfect therein, and blam'd them for not doing it, and particularly once within three months of his ejection, and when some places were quoted to him, he would answer, He knew it was so in our Bibles,

John Pounce.

IN the page above mention'd there is also a vile and slanderous representation of Mr. *Walrond's* stopping Mr. *Beadon's* money from *London*, because he had apply'd himself to the *assembly* and not to him to procure it, and Mr. P. makes many base reflections upon him afterwards; to shew no doubt, his *justice*, *charity* and *good-will* to that person at whom he so often levels in his book. But this unjust imputation will be effectually confuted by that worthy and reverend minister Mr. *Joseph Mansten*; who upon his admiring what could possibly be the occasion of so malicious a slander, told him, he could both inform and vindicate him, which he did, sending him the following *certificate* under his hand.

THE page 159. of Mr. Peirce's book is a very false and malicious account of what Mr. *Walrond* acted about Mr. *Beadon's* application to *London*; I am apt to think that Mr. *Beadon* by his particular friend refers to me; but whether he doth or not, I know this to be the true matter of fact; however perverted by him or Mr. Peirce. I apply'd to the ministers assembled at *Exon* in Mr. *Beadon's* behalf; and at the assembly's request, the late Mr. *Clement Weeks* wrote to *London* from whence he had a promise of some assistance. Mr. *Walrond*, who was always a friend and benefactor to Mr. *Beadon* afterwards meeting with Mr. *Weeks* told him, That according to his information *Sidmouth-meeting* had more need of help than *Budleigh*; for he was told, that they raised at *Budleigh* so much per. Annum, as exempted that case from the *London* charity; for they had resolv'd against applying their charity to any that had such an annual Income. As soon as I came to the knowledge of this, out of my particular friendship to Mr. *Beadon*, I assur'd Mr. *Walrond*, that his informers were mistaken, which I advis'd Mr. *Beadon* to go and confirm. As soon as Mr. *Walrond* found he was misinform'd, he acquainted Mr. *Weeks* with it, and accordingly the help from *London* was continu'd, with very little if any interruption, and Mr. *Walrond* himself continu'd even till Mr. *Beadon's* ejection, his own contribution to him. This is the truth of the matter, however

ever perverted, and is not the only instance of Mr. Beadon's gratitude to his hearty friends and benefactors.

Joseph Manston

WHAT makes Mr. Peirce so ready to receive a false report, and to seem so willing to pick up such idle and ungrounded stories against me, and then to make such bitter reflections on them, with an air of scorn and haughtiness, I can't imagine; since I ever carry'd it with great respect and civility towards him, and had no jarr or discord with him but in this doctrinal controversy. And surely if this gentleman will be so mean as to hearken to every idle tale and misrepresentation that is brought him by any of his *votaries* and then report it in print; he will find trouble enough both for himself and the world, but conciliate little credit to his writings.

BEFORE we part I am willing to acknowledge one debt I owe him besides *charity*, I mean my thanks for the honour he has done me, in recording my name with the six worthy ministers, that the gentlemen of *Exeter* thought fit to advise with. May it stand among them for ever as a joint testimony for the divinity of our Glorious Redeemer: And let all the adversaries of CHRIST'S GODHEAD know, that I esteem it my truest glory, and value it more than all the inscriptions that could be made by *art* and *flattery*. May he name us in all the pamphlets he shall spawn; and like *Ahab*, join us with such troublers of *Israel* as *Elijah* was. Every spot of dirt he shall cast upon us in this cause, I will venture to say, we shall all look upon as an *ornament*; and whatever censure he or the *men of liberty* shall bestow upon us, we hope we shall in all places, by *subscribing* as well as *preaching*, confess our LORD JESUS before men, that he may confess us before his FATHER which is in Heaven.

Joseph Walrond.

Mr.

Mr. *Peirce* insinuates here as if Mr. *Withers* was admired by the people only for *pag*, 160. satistying Mr. *Walrond*. Mr. *Withers* indeed came down to the gentleman's house where Mr. *Walrond* lodg'd, but declar'd his assent to the *first article* of the *Church of England* not only before him, but another minister, and several of the principal of the *citizens*; so that there was no foundation for Mr. *Peirce's* base reflection on Mr. *Walrond* in that page, neither does Mr. *Walrond* deserve to be treated by him in many other places of his book, with such indecency and injustice, but is able to appeal to all his brethren from Mr. *P's* unrighteous censures.

'TIS pity a Man of so much *sense* as Mr. *P.* should not aim at a little more *honour* and *good breeding*. Should we judge of the *catholick* spirit of *Arius* by this gentleman's temper, we should be apt to think it not a little fierce and fiery. And as he stiles his book the WESTERN INQUISITION, so we should be very sorry to see him a FATHER INQUISITOR. But we must not wonder at his manner of treating a single brother thus rudely, since he dealt with the whole *assembly* in such an haughty strain; nay, in his dialogue with Mr. *Eveleigh*, the reader will find the *whole Christian Church* arraign'd of *error*, and *our Christianity* *suppos'd not to have common sense*. See Mr. *Eveleigh's* letter to Mr. *P.* and his reply to Mr. *P's*, letter *p.* 20, 21. This renders him an unhappy instance of Archbishop *Tillotson's* observation, That they who have once drawn blood in controversy, are seldom known to return to a good temper again.

To go on, Mr. *Peirce* turns again to the *Narrative* to pass his remarks on a *letter sent to pag*, 160. *some London ministers* from twelve of the managers. But before he does this, being pretty much out of humour, he bestows a mark of his displeasure upon the *publisher* for printing their names at length with Mr. before them. That fault (committed in a hurry of writing) was corrected before the edition was finish'd. Mr. *P.* might have pass'd it by as no way affecting the cause, and

herein have shewn that he was above taking notice of so mean a trifle.

IN his *Remarks on the Letter*, he says, pag. 161. *The substance of it has been already consider'd.* And so has the substance of his *Remarks* upon it.

THE *gentlemen* needed not *much* zeal to fix on him and his party the charge of *Arian* notions, seeing they have sufficiently done it themselves. Without doubt he thinks to serve some considerable end in continually disclaiming the *name*; or else considering his real and avow'd sentiments, he might be ashamed of doing it. Nothing is plainer than that he advances such notions as were always esteem'd *Arian* ever since that *heresy* sprung up in the christian church.

THE world sees by the *certificates* produc'd in this book, what kind of wild notions the people had entertain'd, and yet in Mr. P's judgment this was owing to the conviction wrought in them by *scripture, reason, and argument*. Could any one in conscience say this, that was not of the same sentiments with them? This would tempt one to suspect he had some hand in propagating them. The *gentlemen* might not think that the bare authority of the *assembly* would put a stop to the growth of these notions, yet might hope, that when by a *declaration* the sense of so many wise, learned and good men, was known; it would put those, who were not puff'd up with pride and conceit, upon serious consideration and re-examining matters, by which means they might come to discern the vanity of those sophistical cavils by which they had been too unwarily intangled and insnar'd.

MR. Peirce is sorry they should reckon that a great and necessary point of faith, when, he says, they can't produce one place of Scripture that plainly asserts it. Will he affirm, that every necessary article of faith must be expressly contain'd in some one single place of Scripture, or deny that what unavoidably results from two places compar'd together, is necessary to be believ'd? If this be his real sentiment, why did he not answer Mr. Cummins on that argument? or if that be too long a task,
let

let him try his skill against what is offer'd in a shorter discourse by Sir *Richard Blackmore*.

THE *gentlemens* behaviour to him and his treatment of them being publish'd to the world, we believe few, except those who are infected with the same errors, but will be satisfy'd they were no way wanting in respect and deference, they will rather wonder they bore so long as they did.

MR. *Peirce* makes his reflections on a letter sent from *London*. It's plain that person pag. 162; did not imagine the infection was there so 163. deep and extensive as it hath since appear'd to be. No wonder that he and his other brethren were backward to meddle in an affair of this nature at so great a distance, and which did so properly lie before the neighbouring ministers, who could more easily come at a true knowledge of all the particulars belonging to it. Are they to blame for this their caution? They gave no judgment before, only in general declar'd by what rules they should think themselves oblig'd to act, without applying them to the case of *Exeter* in particular. They left that to the gentlemen as they should find themselves concern'd or not concern'd in them.

HE says, That the only grounds on which the *citizens* ejected their ministers were *negative*, and the only reason was, that they would not assent to human tests. The *citizens* think they have abundantly prov'd in their *Account* and the *Defence* of it, that their ministers were not only passive but active in propagating the new scheme. And therefore they judge it sufficient to insert their own answer to the like declaration of Mr. *P.* in his *Defence*, p. 5, 6, 33. It is in their *Def. of the Account*, p. 17. " We think this reply in these several places, is nothing but an artful turn, and playing with words on purpose to amuse and deceive the people, and conceal a faith he durst not own, and indeed a great part of the *Defence* is nothing else; for no one will believe that his ejection rests only on his not agreeing to a test of unscriptural words, if he would have profess'd to believe the thing. The *citizens* would have been satisfy'd with any other declaration of his

“ belief of the supreme Deity of CHRIST, and the HOLY GHOST, as *one GOD with the FATHER*, so that “ it had been but a plain and full evidence of his belief of the doctrine.”

MR. *Peirce* speaks of the difference between him and his people as if it was like to a money matter, that necessarily requir'd *arbitrators* to be chosen on both sides to determine it; but this is a very improper representation of the case. The people have an undoubted right to be satisfy'd of the soundness of their faith under whose ministry they continue. If their ministers refuse to give them satisfaction, and more especially if they give just ground of dissatisfaction, they have in this case a right to withdraw from their ministry; and provided they be the greatest part of a congregation, they may dismiss them without having the matter determin'd by way of arbitration. When Mr. *P.* has prov'd, that he had as much right to continue that peoples minister (tho' he was departed from the faith) till cast out by the *arbitration* of such as he should choose; as the gentlemen may have in money matters under debate till they are determin'd by law or arbitration, he may then draw a comparison between one and t'other: but till then, 'tis all amusement, and the *regardless trifle of inconsistency*, as he calls it, lies intirely on his own side.

AND whereas Mr. *Peirce* insinuates, That the ministers at *London and their friends in the country had agreed to turn out Mr. P. &c.* it is affirm'd, That there was no such agreement. The ministers apply'd to at *London* thought themselves no further engag'd, than to signify their approbation of the three general propositions * concerning which their judgment was ask'd. See *Narrative*

* The Propositions: 1. *That there are some errors in doctrine which are a sufficient ground for the people to withdraw from their ministers holding such errors.*

2. *That the denying the true and proper Divinity of the Son of GOD, viz. That He is one GOD with the FATHER, is an error of that nature; contrary to the holy Scriptures, and common faith of the reformed churches.*

3. *That*

Narrative, p. 27, 28. They declin'd the particular affair of *Exeter*, not because they were sure, there was no ground for what was afterwards done, and therefore *politically* avoided it, as Mr. P. intimates; but because they apprehended themselves not call'd to it, and that it properly belong'd to those who were immediately concern'd, and capable of making a true judgment, as being upon the spot and fully acquainted with all circumstances. The *ministers* both at *London* and in the country, acted with all the caution, concern and tenderness that was possible; and yet Mr. P. makes no scruple of abusing them. The *citizens* are not ashamed of the conclusion of this affair; but think that the accounts given here and elsewhere are a sufficient vindication of their conduct, and that many and those persons of good sense, cannot but approve of it, unless Mr. P. will allow none to pass for men of sense but those of his own party.

Mr. *Peirce* endeavours here to turn the serious and affecting account given in the *Nar-* pag. 164.
rative of the sad state of religion at *Exeter*, into banter and ridicule. The event shews, that there was but too much truth in that melancholy relation. When the ministers in those parts found by sad experience that their past silence had given but too much encouragement to others to propagate their pernicious errors in secret, and had reason to fear lest by their longer silence, they should be accessory to their infecting of more; they might without any distrust of their own ability, think it their duty to engage as many more as they could with them in an open defence of the Truth of the Gospel.

3. That when so dangerous an error is industriously propagated, to the overthrowing of the faith of many, we think it the indispensable duty of ministers, who are set for the defence of the Gospel earnestly to withstand it, and to give reasonable satisfaction to their people of their soundness in the faith. And we likewise recommend to the people, as their duty, To hold fast the truth in love; avoiding anger, clamour, and evil speaking, and to behave themselves with all sincerity and meekness, as becometh christians.

Gospel. Their longer delays would only have brought the peace and safety of those churches into more danger, and given a further opportunity for deceivers to carry on their designs.

He asks, whether in misunderstandings *pag. 165.* between ministers and people the most desirable issue be not *the adjusting such differences and the restoring peace.* 'Tis answer'd, that when the differences are on the account of doctrines of the highest nature and importance, they cannot be safely adjusted nor peace restor'd but upon the ministers renouncing their errors and acknowledging the truth. Without this it would be a peace founded in treachery and issuing in the betraying of the truth. He takes it for granted, that notwithstanding his present sentiments, methods might have been found out for the peoples continuing peaceably and safely under his ministry, but this is a gross mistake. He certainly acted a very bad part in being so long the peoples mouth to GOD, tho' he knew they paid supreme worship to the SON and SPIRIT as the One GOD with the FATHER and must for that reason (according to his notions) be guilty of idolatry. For what is idolatry, if giving that worship to another, which is due only to the supreme GOD, be not? Can he think his mental reservations or secret intention will excuse him from being an accessary and a sharer in such guilt? Ought he not in conscience, as an honest man, to have told 'em of their sin and danger? And if they would not upon this have renounc'd what he judges an error, and worshipp'd GOD in the way that he takes to be right, he ought to have left 'em of his own accord without their dismissal. And on the other hand when his sentiments were known, the people could not with safety entrust their souls any longer to such a ministry; or join with one who paid religious worship to a person he did not believe to be the supreme GOD. This made a separation necessary, and if Mr. P. had acted an open and honourable part as became a minister, he would have saved both those in city and in country the trouble of giving any advice at all. This is speaking plainly, but the question

Mr.

Mr. Peirce puts to the gentlemen concern'd in the *Narrative*, whether they are us'd to give their judgment only upon hearing one side, is ridiculous if he intends the *editors* of it, because they gave none. And the ministers in *London* gave only general Rules of advice and referr'd the determination of matters to those to whom it did more properly belong.

MR. Peirce having dismissed the *Narrative* comes here again to the account. Where the *pag. 165.* first thing complain'd of is it's being out in order of time. He can't say that the *charge* in the account is not true, and therefore what he offers, only shews a captious temper, especially when he is forc'd to own that it was several months at least before his ejection.

IN this page he quarrels with Mr. Ball for insulting him in his own pulpit and stiles the argument (tho' it hath not yet been answer'd) *such as was never calculated to work a rational conviction* (the sum of which is contain'd in Mr. Ball's reflection on p. 78. of the *West. Inq.*) to which Mr. Ball gives the following reply.

As to what Mr. Peirce says of my sermon, I did in the close of it encourage *pag. 166,* Christians to hope for the success of their *167,* prayers by the consideration of the dignity of the mediator: and here I propounded an argument to prove that CHRIST was truly GOD, One GOD with the FATHER. Whether there was no need of it let any one judge by the *certificates*, and the subscriptions of the *twenty ministers* and *candidates* that divided from the *assembly*. It was thought by those that were for the receiv'd doctrine to be very seasonable, (tho' Mr. P. says some of our own side wish'd I had let it alone) But I thought I could not have been silent in that place, without betraying my Master's cause; and there was not the least reflection upon any man, nor mention of the contrary opinion.

MR. Peirce calls it an *insult*: 'Tis pity any should take it amiss to have what he worships prov'd to be
GOD

GOD; and they that can't away with this, are wont to call whatever displeases them by *hard names*. 'Tis *uncharitable, bitter, foolish, full of contradiction and nonsense*, which is Mr. P's censure upon the greatest *divines* among all parties, such as *Usher, Pearson, Tillotson, Bull, Owen, Manton*. That if they do not understand *subordination* as he doth, they speak inconsistently with themselves (pag. 140.) and who will look into any of them after he hath pass'd such a sentence upon them? And what fools have all christians been to admire them!

IF Mr. Peirce thinks we want some learning that he has; yet if we have learn't to be *meek and lowly in heart*, we have profited something in CHRIST'S school.

John Ball.

IN this page he says, *That after the a-*
 pag. 167. *larm was sounded, he believes there was none, that entertain'd the least hopes or expectations of peace, however, that he would not be provok'd by this to bring the controversy into the pulpit, and therefore took no publick notice of it.* If there were no such expectations of peace after this, it was not owing to Mr. Ball but to Mr. Peirce himself; because about this time, he forbid the clerk to sing. And how could he hope the people should be easy, when their liberties were so openly invaded, and such an evident alteration made in their worship? Nor is it true; that Mr. P. took no publick notice of what he calls Mr. Ball's insult; for that the same *Lord's-Day* or very soon after he address'd himself to the passions of the people, complaining that several other ministers and himself in particular had a load of reproach and obloquy cast upon them, and were by many represented even as *the filth and off-scouring of all things*: and this was deliver'd in such a manner, that all must think that the keeping his place and the more successful spreading of the notion, was the great thing aim'd at in all his desires of peace.

HERE

HERE Mr. *Peirce* records the names of the *seven ministers* (a second time) that were pag. 168. call'd in to advise the citizens, and represents them *as men pick'd out, and fit for the purpose*, (whereas the citizens alledge, they were their near neighbours, and persons of very good esteem, and of unblemish'd character in their country) and then adds his desire, *That they may always be remember'd as the Troublers of our Israel.*

As to this, Mr. *Ball*, one of the seven ministers, is desirous to give the world his thoughts in the following paragraph.

MR. *Peirce* sets down again the names of the seven ministers, who were call'd in by pag. 168. the citizens of *Exon* to give their advice, *to record them to posterity as the TROUBLERS OF ISRAEL*; if he had thought fit to print my name in *capitals*, I should in such a cause not have been displeas'd. And when I read in his book that I am accounted a *Troubler of Israel*, I cannot but remember our SAVIOUR'S words, that this should be a comfort to us, when we are revil'd, that men us'd no worse language to us than they did formerly to the *prophets*; Is it not a satisfaction to share in the reproach of that great man of GOD, *Elijah*, AND FOR THE SAME CAUSE TOO? His crime was, that he stood up for the worship of the One GOD, against the *subordinate* worship of another that was not GOD, and as he said, *if Baal be God, serve him*; so say we, if CHRIST be GOD, serve him; but if he be not GOD at all or an inferior GOD, let us forbear. Remember his own words, *Thou shalt worship the LORD thy GOD, and him only shalt thou serve.* And the Angel in the *Revelations* says, *Worship GOD.* These are plain Scripture words, from our SAVIOUR'S own mouth; and He will be the Judge of the world. When I think on these things, I cannot be asham'd of mens revilings. I hope I have done what is acceptable in the sight of GOD, who knows I had no other design than that the Truth of the Gospel might remain among us. If Mr. P. will call what I firmly believe,

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believe, *contradictions* and *nonsense*, he says no worse of me than of the greatest men for learning and piety.

My conscience is my witness, that I had never the least grudge against him or Mr. *Hallet* (tho' the latter says the contrary of me) but heartily rejoyc'd in their reputation and acceptance. BUT I COULD NEVER THINK OF DYING WITH ANY PEACE, should I have been silent, and not have warn'd the churches of the doctrines that were privily bringing in among them, tho' cover'd a little while under *equivocations* and *false* and *unthought of senses* put upon words and phrases: Tho' indeed they now begin to speak more plainly, as I have hinted before.

John Ball.

IN the account Mr. *Peirce* gives of the *pag. 169.* conversation that pass'd between him and some of the seven advisers, he says, That the objections against him were his not preaching and writing against the new notions. 'Tis evident from the sermons he preach'd, that they tended to increase the peoples fears of him, and gave them fresh grounds of dissatisfaction. He continually speaks of these prime articles of the christian faith as mere *speculative points*, tho' they do most immediately affect our worship and trust, and have a direct influence into the practice of holiness. He pretended to them a distrust of his ability to write in this cause, and says, *That a man might be inclin'd to an opinion which he would not venture upon publicly defending.* This was a mean attempt to impose upon the ministers as well as the people, as if he were inclin'd to the common doctrine, tho' he did not care to appear a champion for it. He could not indeed with any good grace write in defence of what he did not believe, but now his secular views are over, he can appear openly and confidently enough for the contrary scheme, which shows all this conversation to be sham and collusion.

pag. 170, Mr. *Peirce* says, *He insisted on it as a piece*
271 of justice, that the seven ministers should give no
advice

advice against him without hearing first what he had to say; but says, they took no notice of it. It's a sufficient answer to this, That the seven ministers declin'd giving any advice to the citizens with respect to their ministers, but only laid down three general propositions, wherein they had the consent of multitudes of their brethren, which they consulted both in London and the Country, and tho' Mr. P. would have the reader observe the caution with which this is express'd, had Mr. P. observ'd the like caution, his history had not been fill'd with such a multitude of misrepresentations as now it is. 'Tis not said they had the approbation of all the ministers whom they thought fit to consult, &c. He then adds, *I am inform'd, that several in the country, who were sent to, gave advice of a different nature.* But this was a false information; for all whom they consulted, concurr'd with the above opinion, except one single minister.

HE says, He can't but reflect upon the scruple with which they of Exeter close their *Account*, wherein they say, *pag. 173.* "They can't joyn in communion with those who declare, 'tis no sin to say, CHRIST is a creature, or deny the Deity of the HOLY GHOST, and for this wise reason, many of them went from him, and joyn'd with Mr. Lavington, where the persons they charg'd with these sayings, were actually in communion, having never been suspended."

To this Mr. P. if he would have been fair and honest, should farther have added out of the same paragraph, *Account p. 16.* "And now we appeal to the whole world, Whether we had not cause of uneasiness, or whether 'tis a crime in us, that we can't be satisfy'd to sit under the ministry of one, who will not own the SON of GOD to be one GOD with the FATHER, nor worship and give glory to the HOLY GHOST as GOD at all?" If he had added this, the world would have been sensible, that the reason why many left Mr. P. when he administred the Lord's-supper, was their apprehension that they could not with a good conscience joyn with himself. Mr. Peirce may ridicule this

scruple also; but whatever his thoughts may be, he must excuse those that are afraid to offend GOD, and out-brave their consciences. He should have been just in telling the world why some left him, and then the world, 'tis hop'd, would have justify'd those who did it for such an important reason. As to what he adds concerning their going to joyn with Mr. *Lavington*, &c. 'Tis a sufficient answer to say, That tho' they were not suspended, yet those that were known to have utter'd these blasphemies, either did not belong to that *society*, or else withdrew when it was Mr. *Lavington's* turn to administer; as Mr. *Spiring* particularly did for several months before the separation, who is charg'd with these blasphemous expressions; and there was not one of those that are charg'd directly with denying the Deity of the HOLY GHOST, but what joyn'd with Mr. *P.* except this Mr. *Spiring*.

WHEREAS Mr. *Peirce* mentions again
 pag. 174, Mr. *Walrond's* letter; to this a full answer
 175. is given in Mr. *Walrond's* reply. *Vide* pag.
 80—84.

IN page 176, *West. Inq.* Mr. *Enty* ac-
 pag. 176. knowledges himself to be the person meant,
 and describes the case in the words follow-
 ing.

I desir'd the liberty of signing the first article of the *Church of England*, in order to clear myself of the charge of *Arianism*, on which Mr. *P.* makes this reflection: 'Tho' he, good man, knew well enough, there was no man suspected him of it. This is very imperfectly and artfully represented. I made indeed such a motion; but it was not only (I said) for my own sake, but in hope that others would joyn with me, that we might satisfy the world, that we did not deserve the charge of *Arianism*, that was brought against us; and also that we might hereby shew our concurrence with, and our approbation of what our brethren at *London* had done to the same purpose. And tho' I never gave any person the least occasion to suspect me of *Arianism*, yet I was nam'd (for what end they best know that did it) as
 being

being gone into the *new scheme*. So that my reputation was concern'd, as well as that of others.

John Enty.

As to what remains of this paragraph, there is no occasion to say any thing here, Mr. *Enty* having consider'd it already in his *farther defence of the proceedings of the assembly*.

Tho' I am not particularly mention'd, yet Mr. *Peirce* there says, That *the motion pag. 177. of a publick disputation was rejected*. But this also is intirely false. For after I had very sincerely acknowledg'd the better abilities of many of my brethren for a publick disputation, I accepted Mr. *P.*'s challenge, and exprets'd my willingness that he should appoint time and place, upon this condition; that, I might chuse three or four of my brethren to join with me, and he have the same number to join with him, upon which acceptance of mine, the challenge was dropt. Indeed, I thought *Exeter* to be an improper place, but was willing to leave it to Mr. *P.* to chuse another.

John Enty.

Besides the account with Mr. *Enty* has given above of Mr. *Peirce*'s challenge, Mr. *Edgley* (who was scribe in that *assembly*) gives the *sum* of it in the manner following.

Mr. *Peirce* came into the *assembly* and propos'd that some brethren might be appointed to keep a fast with him and others in the city of *Exon*, and afterwards he with others would dispute with them these two questions (1.) Whether it be in the power of any man or any body of men, to make a *test* for another, in any other but Scripture language? (2.) Whether there be not a supremacy in the FATHER which is not in the SON and HOLY GHOST? (tho' Mr. *P.* has rightly explain'd it in *West. Inq.* in other words, viz. whether CHRIST is the supreme God?) To his proposal

proposal of *keeping a fast*, it was answer'd, That it is not in our power to grant it, the pulpit being in the hands of the gentlemen of *Exeter*. To his challenge it was answer'd, That we all disclaim'd any power to make *tests* for others. But as to the second question three brethren offer'd to accept his challenge, and presently debate it with himself and any other of his party before the whole *assembly*, who must be allow'd to be competent judges. He urg'd, that this would *not satisfy the common people*, to which a brother reply'd, he might have a *sermon* write the whole *negotiation*, and afterwards publish it. And another, told him, That he would meet him and dispute the matter with him at any time and place, that should be thought convenient.

Thomas Edzley.

I am the *Orthodox* brother refer'd to as pag. 179. boggling to thank the preacher. I own, I did not only boggle but refuse it till he explain'd some passages in his sermon which I thought too favourable to *Antinomianism*. This he did to the satisfaction of the *assembly* and mine, and having thus clear'd himself of the suspicion of *Antinomianism*, I did, with the rest of the *assembly* return him thanks, and had afterwards the thanks of several of my brethren for what I offer'd.

John Enty.

Mr. Peirce is pleas'd to say, the ministers many of them *return'd home from the assembly very warm and furious, and preach'd against their brethren with much bitterness* &c. This language is so common with Mr. P. that he calls every thing that is deliver'd against the new notion, warm, furious, and bitter. He gives us no account of these bitter expressions and very probably for this very good reason because he can't. 'Tis very well known, that those discourses have been reckon'd so, that han't had one exasperating expression in them, and if the

the most modest defence of the doctrine of the TRINITY must have such a character because they seem to carry in them a tacit reflection on himself and brethren, who reject these Truths; they are satisfy'd to be reckon'd such furious persons as Mr. P. would make them.

Mr. Peirce speaking of the ministers which the people of Exeter, call'd in from abroad pag. 180. to preach to them during the vacancy after the ejection of Mr. Hallet and himself, says; some of them behaved themselves with moderation and temper, others were furious in railing at us, some in their sermons, some in their wrathful prayers, and some in both. This is an unjust and wicked charge, and what Mr. P. is call'd upon to make good.

AND whereas Mr. Peirce says, That I went about denouncing damnation on those that differ'd from me, 'tis a malicious insinuation. I never did pronounce damnation on any merely for differing from me; but this I have said, That there were opinions and heresies that were damnable, and that to deny the LORD, that bought them, was of this nature. And I have farther said that I thought the heresy of which St. Peter speaks was a denying him that bought them to be *δεσπότην* supreme LORD. And while this was my apprehension, it must certainly be my indispensable duty as a minister and a christian to tell men faithfully of the danger I thought they expos'd themselves to, by embracing notions of such pernicious consequence.

John Lavington.

IN the same page Mr. Peirce suggests, That by means of the ministers they were daily insulted and abus'd: Whereas, had Mr. P. done half so much to secure Truth, as Mr. Lavington particularly, hath done to promote charity, and to prevent all rudeness and indecent language, we had been a peaceable city to this day. For when he hath heard of any such, that have been guilty of rudeness and indecency, and he thought he could be useful to prevent it for the future; he hath not fail'd to attempt

attempt it; several instances of which he can give whenever call'd for.

FROM pag. 181 to 188, there is a conti-
 pag. 181. nu'd misrepresentation of the cases of some
ejected ministers, and others, whose people
 (many of them) had relinquish'd them, as will be evi-
 dent from the several accounts here given.

MR. Peirce having represented the case of Mr. *John Cox* of *Kingsbridge*, as transcrib'd from his own paper, *West. Inq.* pag. 81. The people of *Kingsbridge* give the following account, as containing the truth in relation to that affair.

'TIS not without deep concern, that we were oblig'd to part with Mr. *Cox*, our late minister, who labour'd for a considerable time among us. For several years his ministry was very acceptable to the generality of the people; but he had unhappily fallen into the *Arian notions*, and the congregation consisting of some hundreds of souls became universally disgusted. We long had the pain to hear the proper Deity of the Great REDEEMER deny'd, and our Glorious SAVIOUR degraded into a puny subordinate GOD; not only in private conferences, but also in *publick sermons*: Our ancient *Doxologies* were laid aside, and such constantly made use of, under a pretence of being *scriptural*, in which supreme honour and glory were not given to the SON, or HOLY GHOST. Mr. *Cox* had formerly preach'd to us the necessity of believing, That the FATHER, SON, and HOLY SPIRIT, are the One GOD, the only Object of adoration and worship; but when our people sent some of their number in a friendly way to represent their dissatisfaction to him, one of which remember'd him of the sermons he had formerly deliver'd to them upon this head: He reply'd, That he was sensible that he had asserted this doctrine; but that now *his thoughts were chang'd*, and he had entertain'd other notions about the DEITY. At this meeting, we desir'd him to give us leave to send for a few neighbouring ministers to discourse the matter in difference with him, to which (after he had objected against several) he reply'd, For what purpose will you send for them? if you think

think they will persuade me to alter my opinion, you are mistaken, for that's what *I am resolv'd never to do.* And with this melancholy answer, he dismiss'd them. We after this, apply'd ourselves to several worthy ministers for advice, and they directed us to wait on Mr. Cox again, and if possible agree upon some methods to satisfy the scruples and re-establish the tranquillity of the congregation. In prosecution of this advice, some of us attended Mr. Cox, and mutually agreed to summon all the people to meet in our ordinary place of worship the *Wednesday* following, which they accordingly comply'd with. This meeting was open'd with solemn prayer; after which, Mr. Cox refusing to give the people any better satisfaction than he had formerly done, ask'd them one by one, Whether they were content any longer to sit under his ministry? To which they all answer'd (four only excepted) That they were not. And of these four one of them only belong'd to the town, and he is a person who in alehouses, &c. makes the Deity of the SON, and Blessed SPIRIT, the common subject of railery, offers to prove that CHRIST had no human soul, saith, he dearly repented that ever he taught his children the Assembly's Catechism, and had pray'd GOD to forgive him that iniquity. This meeting broke up in some confusion, and Mr. Cox said, *He would never preach more in that place.* Whereas it is reported, That we withdrew from Mr. Cox's ministry, only because he would not subscribe to or declare *in the words of the assembly,* and Mr. Cox, in the representation he has made of his case, would seem to insinuate, as if it were only because he refus'd to subscribe the *first article of the Church of England,* or the *fifth and sixth answers of the Assembly's Catechism.* 'Tis so far from being true, that we solemnly profess, 'Twas chiefly because he had declar'd himself to believe a subordination in the GODHEAD, and openly renounc'd that doctrine of the HOLY TRINITY, which he had himself preach'd to us. Neither passion nor prejudice had any hand in the management, as far as we know our own hearts. Fear of sinning against GOD, betraying the Truths of CHRIST, and wronging our own souls, were the only considerations which prevail'd with us to take this melancholy step. For this part we dare appeal to

Mr. Cox himself, who hath since said, *That he was persuaded that his people ejected him from a principle of conscience.*

Nov. 28. 1719.

Owen Wymoth,	Richard Eales,
Thomas Batsen,	William Dove,
Andrew Beatt,	Roger Lock,
Matth. King,	Nathaniel King, jun.
Thomas Wakeham,	Robert King,
John Hodgc, jun.	Thomas Lock,
Jonathan Philips,	Andrew Cranch.

THAT the people had the greatest reason to proceed as they did, is evident from a paper under Mr. Cox's own hand, deliver'd to one of his people long before his ejection, and since laid before the ministers at their fund-board in *London*, who upon perusing the same judg'd him to be fallen into *Arianism*, and not to merit their regard.

THE people of *Newton Abbot* apprehending themselves aggriev'd and injur'd by Mr. *Gilling's* account in the *Inquisition-book*, pag. 182, 184. &c. are desirous to confute it, and vindicate themselves in this following letter to him.

Reverend Sir,

THIS publick representation of *our case*, tho' in our just defence, is the most melancholy work we were ever concern'd in; the consideration that you have made it necessary by publishing yours, is our *apology*. The sorrow we feel on this occasion is equal to the satisfaction we should have found in giving an open testimony to your soundness in the faith, could we have done it with a good conscience.

WE don't think ourselves oblig'd to take notice of your conference with Mr. *Pitts* *, or your proceeding in

* Which yet is far from being justly represented, as appears by Mr. *Pitts's* certificate, before mention'd pag. 34. in answer to *West. Inq.* p. 41.

in the *assembly*, since none of these things would have mov'd us, had you not given us sufficient reasons to believe, that you disown the doctrine of the HOLY TRINITY, which we received from the sacred Scriptures and were confirm'd in under your ministry.

WHEN we found you had chang'd your *Doxologies* in prayer, and betray'd a mighty uneasiness at those which were commonly sung, we grew jealous of your inclination to the *Arian* side: but when we saw what wide, tho' artful steps, you took to undermine the *proper Divinity* of the SON and HOLY GHOST, we no longer doubted, there was too much truth in the common report.

SOME of us made frequent application to you for satisfaction upon this head, and generally came from you much more disturb'd in our minds than before. Having told your opinion to one of us, you desir'd him to keep it private, saying in these very words, or words to the same purpose, *That a person had suffer'd considerably for declaring his opinion.* To another, who ask'd you, Who CHRIST is, if he be not the supreme GOD? you roundly reply'd, He is a *superangelical BEING*. Sometimes you would tell us, *that you would not for a world declare you believ'd the answers to the 5th and 6th questions of the Assembly's Catechism to be true;* and at other times acknowledge, *you had other notions of the TRINITY than heretofore;* but refus'd to let us know what they were. At one time you demanded, *How we could prove from the Scriptures that the FATHER, SON and HOLY GHOST, are one GOD?* And when one of us repeated 1 John v. 7. with this addition as expressive of his sense of the text, the same in substance equal in power and glory; you cry'd out, *Is this Scripture? Good Lord look down in mercy upon an ignorant creature!* And at another time challeng'd us to *produce one text where-in the HOLY GHOST is call'd GOD.* To which we may add, that you affirm'd, *the GODHEAD of the HOLY GHOST was never so much as mention'd for several hundred years after CHRIST.* Once it must be acknowledg'd, you assur'd one of our number, to the joy of all who heard of it, that you believ'd the FATHER, SON and HOLY SPIRIT to be the One GOD, but

you took care to blast all our hopes of peace the day following, when you met and assur'd the same person, *that you was not satisfy'd that one could be three, and three one.*

WE doubt not but these things will convince the unprejudic'd world, that you had at this time embrac'd the distinguishing doctrines of *Arius*, notwithstanding your labour'd concealment, and the obligation you laid upon a person, to whom you freely open'd your sentiments, never to discover them.

WE were sensible that 'twas our duty to contend earnestly for the faith which was once deliver'd to the saints; and not betray the Truths of the HOLY JESUS by a sinful silence. We were persuaded that an error in doctrine of such importance as this, is a far more justifiable ground of separation, than errors on the head of ceremony or discipline: And yet we did not proceed so far as to set up a separate assembly, until we had waited long to see whether God would give you repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth; but when we found you persisted in the same dangerous opinions and had profelyted several of your people to 'em; when our deluded neighbours were grown bold enough to tell us, that the FATHER existed some time before the SON, &c. then, but not till then, we form'd a resolution to invite another minister and place ourselves under his care. Justice to ourselves and those worthy ministers, who boldly appear'd in this glorious Cause of CHRIST, commands us to make a few remarks on some other parts of your letter, before we conclude our reply.

“ You tell the world that soon after the assembly reports were spread among your hearers, that you was an *Arian* and oppos'd the assembly, by which some of them were prejudic'd against you. These prejudices were kept up and increased by letters from some of the ministers, and by the artful insinuations of some of the *Exon* gentlemen upon whom some of your hearers had a dependance as to their trade.”

To all which we answer, That 'tis not improbable many of your people might be very much troubled at the opposition you made to those wholesome methods the

the reverend *assembly* thought proper, to prevent the spread of such a pernicious doctrine, but then we must take leave to observe.

1. THAT no letters ever came to our hands from any minister or ministers in which there was a charge of *Arianism* prefer'd against you. Certainly, Sir, you should have been peculiarly careful not to accuse your brethren wrongfully, when you was complaining of *imaginary* hardships on yourself.

2. WE solemnly profess, that no worldly view, but an honest zeal for the honour of God our Redeemer and Sanctifier, influenc'd our proceedings in this matter. We know no reasons we ever gave you to insinuate to the world, that we are persons prepar'd to sacrifice our consciences and the peace of the church to our pockets. Such a suggestion would have been injurious and uncharitable from any other pen, but must be *intollerable* from yours, who just before, mention your sermon against rash judging. We see by this whatever offence you gave by preaching it, you are resolv'd none shall be offended with you for the practice of it.

Your next period informs us, " That when your name appear'd the second in the paper sign'd by twenty hands to vindicate yourselves from false accusations, the breaking your meeting was resolv'd upon, and neighbouring ministers were busy to inflame and seduce your hearers. To which we answer. "

1. THAT trifling paper, which we are inform'd you had the honour to draw up, as well as sign, was so far from being satisfactory to us, that we look'd on it rather as a slanting invective against the proper Divinity of the SON, and HOLY GHOST, and consequently a fresh evidence of your departure from the faith.

2. WE are not a little surpriz'd at your assurance in affirming, " That neighbouring ministers were very busy to inflame and seduce your hearers. " Whereas there was not one neighbouring minister who advised us to
set

set up a separate meeting. We challenge to ourselves the sole honour of the separation, and are content to inherit the consequences of our own choice. When you had renounc'd the faith profess'd and maintain'd by all the christian churches, we thought fit to make use of the liberty God and the laws of our country had given us, even to withdraw from your communion and call an *orthodox* minister to the care of our Souls. We desire therefore that whatever treatment you give the *first* command, you'll for the future pay a greater deference to the *ninth*. We thankfully acknowledge, that some neighbouring ministers upon our great importunity got us *supplies*, after we had resolv'd upon a separation, and got a place of worship, but we were the *authors* of it.

MUCH of a piece with this, is your account of the Fast held in our meeting-house, you say, " To draw off " more of your people and countenance the separatists ; " a *fast* was held among the latter, " To which, we answer, Had you said, to put an end to the separation, and restore to us in one day both Truth and Peace ; you would have given the world a juster account of the design of all those ministers, who were engag'd in that solemnity. The occasion of the fast was this : You had a little before made such concessions to a worthy minister, as persuaded not only himself, but several of his brethren to hope, you was come very near, if not intirely over, to the *orthodox* ; upon which they resolv'd to keep a fast in this town ; and, in case they found your principles and disposition, upon a conference, such as they desir'd ; to contribute their kind offices to procure a good understanding between you and your people, and so reunite your congregation. Upon these views, the ministers appointed to preach, furnish'd themselves with sermons fitted to cement your broken society ; but when they found you had impos'd upon their brother, and refus'd an amicable conference with them, their grief at the disappointment was very visible, and they enter'd on the work of the day with broken hearts.

Your account goes on, " This fast was grac'd " with the presence of Mr. *Horslam*, Mr. *Evans*, Mr. " *Edgley*, Mr. *Eveloigh*, Mr. *Hughes*, Mr. *Bond*, and Mr. " *Colton*."

“ *Colten.*” We don’t very much wonder you had not added to this catalogue Mr. *Gilling*, &c. since your whole behaviour made it evident, that the design of your attendance, was to *disgrace* it. Your writing, some part at least, of the prayers on this occasion; your tumultuous leaving the *assembly* before the work of the day was ended; your threatening to make Mr. *Eveleigh* ashamed of what he had said as you pass’d through the throng; your standing afterwards in the open street, and loudly calling to ministers and people; was such a discovery of your spirit, as cover’d the faces of your friends with shame, and gave occasion to the triumph of our common enemies.

You add, “ That Mr. *Bond* by his prayers, and Mr. *Eveleigh* by the application of his sermon, contributed not a little to widen the breach, and incense the people against their minister.” We have reason to believe that Mr. *Bond*’s prayer, and the application of Mr. *Eveleigh*’s sermon, were highly approv’d by the generality of both congregations who were present; and we can’t think any thing in either of ’em likely to offend you, unless the *Invocation* and *Doxology* of the first, and the unanswerable arguments for the *Deity* of the HOLY JESUS, advanc’d in the last. And we have equal reason to hope, that GOD made use of both to rectify the mistakes of some, and confirm the faith of others, who began to stagger in this hour of darkness and temptation. If invoking and adoring the HOLY TRINITY, if maintaining the Crown and Dignity of CHRIST by Scripture and argument, will widen our breaches, and incense the people against you, we rejoyce at the success, and dare not so much as hope for a cure of our divisions.

WE hope, Sir, you can’t charge any of us with having a hand in that *load of groundless calumnies* you complain of. We think all men have a *judgment of discretion*, which God expects they should make use of in the matters of their salvation; that their consciences are not subject to any human tribunal; and that Scripture and reason, not persecution with the hand or tongue, are the only proper methods of conviction; and we can assure you, that we are not surpris’d that our separation from you, or carriage towards you, have
been

been any ways inconsistent with these our avow'd principles : And yet we have been proclaim'd persecutors from the *press* and *pulpit*, and treated as if we were the worst of men, merely because we could not continue under your ministry for fear of offending GOD, and wounding our consciences. Had we lampoon'd and libell'd your hearers in sham letters, or abus'd and vilify'd 'em in publick markets ; had we express'd our kind wishes to see 'em whip'd from their houses to their place of worship ; or done our utmost to create a perpetual enmity between the nearest relations ; had we advis'd a husband and a father to turn his wife and children out of doors, because they would not worship GOD with us, or rudely assaulted and beaten any of them on the highway : In a word, had we disturb'd your congregation in the time of devotion, and loaden you with foul and scurrilous language, then there would have been sufficient ground for the cry of persecution : And yet all these things have we suffer'd, not from a rude and brainless mob, but from your peculiar intimates and communicants. However, we hope, amidst all these barbarous insults, GOD will enable us not only to govern our passions, but *rejoyce that we are accounted worthy to suffer persecution for the name of CHRIST*. To conclude ; our most fervent prayers for a more plentiful effusion of the Spirit of wisdom, charity, and a sound mind on you and your people, is the worst you have to fear from,

Rev'd. Sir,

your humble servants,

Samuel Stocker,
Nicholas Langaller,

*Who have sign'd in behalf of the rest of our society,
and undertake to make good the matters of fact
above-mention'd.*

pag. 185. THAT Mr. John Force hath made an
unfair representation of the case of Bover,
p. 185.

ſc. 155. &c. as evidently will appear by the following account.

WE whose names are hereunto subscrib'd being formerly hearers of Mr. *John Force of Beacy*, do in the fear and presence of GOD declare, That the great reason why we withdrew from his ministry, was because we understood by his pulpit performances, and private conferences, that he deny'd the proper Godhead of the SON, and HOLY GHOST, and held them to be two Beings in nature and perfections inferior to the FATHER. Our separation was not rash and unadvis'd, but deliberate and serious, after solemn prayer to GOD for direction in such an important affair, and frequent application to Mr. Force for satisfaction, even before he made any visits to us for that purpose. We were present at that meeting of the people, which he mentions in his case, publish'd by Mr. Peirce, and humbly intreated him to let us know, Whether he believ'd the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, to be the One GOD? as our ancient Divines and the whole Church of GOD according to the Scriptures, have hitherto done. To which he reply'd, That these words were the invention of men, and he would not declare his faith in any human forms; and then deliver'd us a long confession of his faith in Scripture words, without any explication. But this could give us no better satisfaction, than if he had only told us, he believ'd the divine authority of the holy Scriptures. Soon after this he proceeded to ask some questions, and wrote down such parts of our answer to them as he thought would best serve the mean purpose of exposing us to the contempt of the world. We were not aware of his design, and therefore some of us answer'd without that strictness and guard we should have observ'd. The questions were these:

1. WHETHER the sacred Scriptures were a sufficient rule of faith: To which one of us inaccurately answer'd, I take the Scripture for information, but I will go farther for confirmation; meaning (as he then explain'd himself) that not the bare words, but the sense of Scripture, as far as he could gather it from the teachings of the HOLY SPIRIT and the help of learned divines, was the only rule of his faith.

Y

2. WHETHER

2. WHETHER the FATHER was the SON, and the SON the FATHER? To which one answer'd in the affirmative, meaning (as Mr. Force well knew) that he and all others of us believ'd, that they were the same in nature and essence, tho' not in personality.

3. WHETHER the FATHER assum'd human nature, suffer'd and dy'd, and became our Redeemer? To which, one of us mistaking the question, and thinking it had been ask'd, Whether GOD assum'd human nature, &c. answer'd, He did believe it. This is a just account of that conference. We leave therefore the world to judge, Whether Mr. Force hath acted the part of a minister or a christian in that representation he hath made of it to the world? We thank GOD we are not so ignorant of the great fundamentals of religion, as he would fain persuade others to believe we are. Tho' were we so, 'twould be a reflection on himself, who took so little care during his ministry among us to instruct us better.

James Wotton,
William Valence,
John Beardon.

John Stidston,
John Wotton,

AND whereas Mr. Peirce, p. 186. of his pag. 186. *West. Inq.* says, we declar'd, *We could not make peace with him, (viz. Mr. Force) unless he did first make his peace with the assembly.* And that, we assu'd him, *That not one of us would have appear'd against him had it not been for the last assembly.* We who were present at that meeting, do declare, This is a false representation; for the truth is this: We told Mr. Force, That unless he did first go and join with the assembly in the orthodox faith, we could not continue any longer under his ministry; our separation from him did not depend on the assembly's declaration, but on Mr. Force's refusal to own the same faith which the assembly profess'd, and we firmly believ'd to be contain'd in the holy Scriptures.

William Valence,
John Beardon,
James Wotton.

John Stidston,
John Wotton,

AND

AND whereas Mr. Peirce in his *West. Inq.* p. 185, &c. asserts, That a minister sent a letter to create a feud in the congregation at Bovey, &c. 1, who am supposed to be the person thus charg'd, declare, 'tis all misrepresentation or falsehood. I acknowledge I did write a letter to the congregation at Bovey, but it was free from reflections of any kind, and such as I am confident any impartial person would think a minister, who had any regard to the Truth, might write to the congregation to which he was formerly related. For the writing of this letter, Mr. Force charg'd me the following *assembly*, with the injustice I had done him by it. I ask'd him, How it could be possible I should injure him, when I did not so much as mention his name, nor directly or indirectly reflect on him in it. He presently reply'd, *The letter had done him disservice*; and this was follow'd with base reflections on me.

So far was it from my design to create a feud by this letter, that I can say, it was written purely to discharge my duty. I was a perfect stranger to the temper of the congregation, as to this particular affair; only hearing that Mr. Force should rejoyce, because the congregation was of his opinion, I thought it my duty to write a few lines to them, that they might consider some arguments for what I apprehended to be the Truth: and so ignorant was I of the disposition of the people, that I sent my letter to one, who then was, and still is, a zealous advocate for Mr. Force.

THE next thing I am charg'd with (*West. Inq.* pag. 186, &c.) is, That I desir'd one of the male-contents, to write to me constantly how the matter went on against him, and soon after the conference went to Bovey, to stir up the people against him. As for my desiring one of the male-contents constantly to write to me, I am loth absolutely to deny what is so confidently asserted; but this I can say, It was far from my design to maintain a correspondence in order to promote a feud: And if I had so much regard to the congregation as to write a letter to them, it can't look very strange to desire one of them to write me

an account of the state of their affairs; and if there was any occasion for this charge, I am confident this was the whole. And as to my going to *Bovey soon after the conference, to stir up the people against him*; 'tis a very false accusation. I was indeed at *Bovey* about that time, but that it should be just after the conference, was intirely accidental; for I knew nothing of it: My own personal affairs call'd me thither at that time, and I carefully avoided going nigh the houses of any of Mr. *Force's* hearers, except where my business necessarily oblig'd me, because I would give no occasion of suspicion or uneasiness. This is a plain and true state of this affair, so far as I was concern'd in it.

Samuel Stodden.

As to the affair of *Biddiford*, mention'd in Mr. *Peirce's West. Inq.* The account is judg'd *pag. 137.* to be so loose and general, and is so little talk'd of or regarded in the town by either side, that both parties seem'd asham'd of the publication. However what Mr. *P.* hath offer'd, may make a few remarks necessary.

As to those peop'e who have left Mr. *Cock's* ministry, they solemnly declare, That what they have done is not owing to the management or influence of others, but to principles of conscience and liberty, and to real and insuperable scruples and difficulties; Mr. *Cock* having refus'd to give any satisfactory answer to several of their number touching his faith, in what they account-ed an important article of their religion, which they thought he had given them abundant reason to call in question by his conduct, on many accounts.

THIS makes them complain of great and undeserv'd injury and wrong done them by Mr. *Peirce* in that suggestion, which sums the account of the *Biddiford-affair*, as if *they had given themselves up to the management or influence of others.* They think it very strange, that Mr. *P's* notions of liberty are so much chang'd in a few years, and cannot imagine why persons may not enjoy the same liberty now, in choosing the place of their attendance and settled worship without any uncharitable reflection,

fection, as formerly they did in this town by Mr. P's particular approbation.

'Tis worthy of further remark, That one of these persons, who has now left Mr. *Cock*, was lately a member of the *Church of England*, but on principles of liberty join'd with that congregation, that has lately been under Mr. *Cock's* infection; and therefore let the world judge, Whether she has not as much reason to quit Mr. *Cock's* communion, on account of scruples and difficulties of a much higher nature in her judgment than those on account of which she left the communion of the *Church of England*.

As to those little impertinent stories which Mr. *Peirce* has endeavour'd to give weight to, by transmitting them to posterity in his works, no other consideration would render them worthy the least notice; and we are satisfy'd if Mr. *P.* had been rightly appriz'd of their nature, he would never have undervallu'd and lessen'd himself by becoming the instrument of their publication.

As to the first and chief of them and that which has made so much noise abroad, and probably was alluded to in the famous paper subscrib'd by the ministers of the other side, viz. *That Mr. Cock had baptiz'd a child only in the name of the FATHER*; 'tis a story so odd, so ridiculous, and so plainly carries its own confutation with it, that it never (for ought we can find) gain'd the least credit here: a story which was much talk'd of abroad but scarce mention'd at home and which made so little noise in *Biddisford*, that the principal persons of the town were surpriz'd at its publication, and wonder'd it should be known to the world before they had it whisper'd in the same town. Such a thing might perhaps by some odd or unaccountable mistake be talk'd of among a few persons, but sure it never obtain'd or prevail'd; and after all inquiries, we cannot trace its original here; which some think was from *Exon*, others from Mr. *Cock's* own people, and by a peculiar turn thrown upon the other party who took the least notice of it: So that this story must after all be dismiss'd as a piece of idle impertinent talk not worthy any man's notice or regard. But it seems any thing is thought worthy to
be

be made a handle of to serve a turn, and what makes no noise at home may be made use of to make a great sound abroad.

As to what Mr. Peirce says further, *That some of Mr. Cock's brethren were very busy in exasperating his people against him, insinuating to those who were satisfied with his declarations, that he had secret reserves, and that it was necessary to sift him, &c.* This indefinite charge, one would think, was contriv'd on purpose to affect the reputation of all Mr. Cock's brethren. It had been but fair for Mr. Cock to have particulariz'd those of his brethren, who were so busy in exasperating his people against him, that the charge might not have fallen undistinguish'd in such a manner. Such methods of accusation Mr. P. must needs be sensible are very unfair and unjustifiable, and perhaps he would charge it upon others as too, like the methods of an *Inquisition*; but if any particular minister had imagin'd, that Mr. Cock had impos'd upon his people by general confessions, and did think it adviseable for his people to ask him to *Speak plainly*, why must the worst turn be given to this? What if that minister protests he did this in love and compassion to their souls, and from a zeal for truth and for the glory of God? Or why may not this advice instead of exasperating his people rather tend to the laying a sure and better foundation of a good understanding between them by openness and plainness, without which, it could never be long maintain'd?

As to what Mr. Peirce next offers, *That one zealous brother in the town used to declare very furiously against the nonsubscribers AS CHRIST DESPISERS, &c.* And that *it was better to go to a pest-house than to hear such preach.* That zealous brother does not absolutely deny the charge, but only complains that Mr. P. or Mr. Cock has put in the word *nonsubscribers*, instead of *downright Arians*, which he made use of; so that here is an injury done to this zealous brother, unless the foregoing terms be allow'd to be convertible.

As to these charges which follow, *of one of Mr. Cock's people, that came and discours'd with him, and went away declaring himself satisfy'd, and afterwards giving out the direct contrary account; and of another declaring*

declaring himself satisfy'd this week, and the next withdrawing from the assembly; let such answer for themselves, when personally charg'd, for we know them not.

BUT a mighty charge follows. Two of Mr. Cock's people, its said, insisted on his subscribing an acknowledgment that the FATHER was the SON, and the SON was the FATHER, owning this to be their faith, and being surpriz'd when he endeavour'd to convince them, that this was a great error. Any one that reads this passage will be apt to think, that this was a formal demand made by some persons of consideration, and with some kind of authority too; but what will the world think of some peoples way of telling and magnifying little impertinent stories, and printing them too, if after all; this mighty matter should appear to be only a mistaken, and ungarded expression of a young person by Mr. C's fire side, whose unacquaintance with the terms of so nice a controversy led her to speak in this odd manner of the essential Union of the FATHER, and the SON? For that it was a sameness of Essence she intended, Mr. C. one would think should easily perceive from the question she immediately subjoin'd, *viz.* Whether he thought FATHER, SON and HOLY GHOST were three BEINGS, as they three were that sat together? (another person of the house being in company) to which she says, Mr. C. made her no direct answer; but said, That her *Catechism* taught her they were *three Persons*. But whereas it is represented, as if she insisted on his subscribing to the odd declaration before mention'd; she absolutely disowns it, and declares, she never desir'd Mr. C. to subscribe any thing but as the other ministers had done, which she owns she did at that time.

BUT on the whole, supposing the very worst, That this young person was mistaken both in her notions and expressions (which in such a case who can be absolutely sure) yet wherein is the world concern'd in this matter? What use can be made of such a pitiful story, or what end can it serve while on this supposition, it was only her private opinion? Is then such a piece of acknowledg'd weakness of a young person (not us'd to talk of such high matters) worth a publication to the world?

How

How common is it for ordinary persons on both sides the controversy, to talk inaccurately, and be guilty of the grossest blunders and absurdities? Or would it be worth our while to publish all the nonsense and contradiction of the common people of the new scheme, which are daily venting here and elsewhere, whilst some are openly avowing there are *no* God's? Perhaps it were easy to fix and prove such charges on the new converts of Mr. C's people. But we should not judge it worth while to mention these impertinencies, only to stop the mouths of others.

THES E are to certify, the truth of the foregoing particulars, on credible evidence.

John Umbles,
William Tallamy.

FROM these certificates, it appears how partial and unjust the account is Mr. Peirce has given of the ministers that were ejected by their people in these parts, and how little credit is to be paid to it; tho' he glories in them as persons not charg'd with immoralities: Yet if deceit, prevarication, and throwing calumnies upon the honest people they once ministred to, be immoralities, the character of some of them will not be very clear. But supposing them intirely innocent in this regard; is a sober life the only or principal qualification of a Gospel minister? Ought he not to hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience? and to Contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints? Tho' vicious ministers should be discourag'd and dismiss'd; yet whilst they preach sound doctrine, its more safe to sit under their ministry than heretical ones. Our SAVIOUR cautions the disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees, tho' so long as they sat in Moses's seat, *i. e.* deliver'd nothing but his doctrine, they were to hear what they said, and observe the commandments of the law; but not to do after their works. That these ministers acknowledge no other Master than CHRIST, was so far from being their only crime, (as he alledges) that it was none at all; but

but their crime lay, in attempting to rob him of his **GOD HEAD**, which is the chief jewel in his Crown and Dignity, and without which, we don't see how they can safely depend on him as *their LORD and MASTER*. They who do this, will do well to remember him, who said, *Hail Master*, and with a kiss betray'd him. We are as willing as Mr. P. to express our charity for every sincere inquirer after Truth, and hope, if any such are in a dangerous mistake, *GOD will reveal even this unto them*; but we think 'tis much easier for us to know from **GOD'S** word, what is a dangerous mistake, than to know who are sincere inquirers after Truth. Mens sincerity is a secret that lies between **GOD** and themselves. The holding and persisting in dangerous errors seems to be a plainer evidence to others of their insincerity, or the prevalency of some unmortified lusts, than *mere professions* can be of their sincerity. And if we hold any notions which the Churches of **CHRIST** have always look'd upon as dangerous in their nature and tendency, this in all reason should beget in us a great jealousy of our own hearts.

AFTER a long and labour'd account, Mr. Peirce at last concludes his **INQUISITION** pag. 190 with *an appeal to the world*, and *a short view of the case*, according to the representation he has seen fit to give of it, which are now to be consider'd.

WE begin with his *appeal*. As to this, The ministers and gentlemen in the *country*, are as willing as Mr. Peirce himself, that the world should judge, Whether there have been any such *rash, unrighteous, or unjust part acted by them*, as he pretends: And the ministers of *London* also, of whom he speaks; can with utmost freedom appeal to any, Whether it appears, that they *animated and exasperated* their brethren in the country, and are not able honestly and without blushing to answer the close question put to them. They had, in the place he cites, *Narrative*, p. 30. call'd it *a groundless suggestion, and an aspersion wrongfully cast upon them*. And what reason he hath to question the truth and honesty of this declaration of theirs, they cannot imagine; or why he should think they, (who might well, and had

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honestly and without occasion of *blushing*, deny'd the fact intimated) could not be able to do it in as round terms as could possibly be invented for them. But since he will have it, that the *Narrative* pass'd the matter over slightly, and thinks it proper to transcribe and put the question anew; "Have none of them rais'd and promoted uneasinesses on purpose to drive us [the *nonsubscribers* at *London*] into methods which they had undertaken for to that side at *Exeter*, with which they are plainly found to have corresponded, and with that only?" Rather than forfeit his good graces, they do hereby plainly, fully and absolutely deny all and every part of the matter of fact intimated in the question, *i. e.* They have none of them, that we know, rais'd or promoted uneasinesses at *Exeter*; nor do we know of any methods, that were undertaken for with any correspondents there; or of any design either to draw or drive into them any nonsubscribing brethren here; much less have we done *on purpose* any thing that can support such an insinuation.

AFTER so full an answer to this Question, heretofore sufficiently reply'd to, in the *Narrative*: The ministers concern'd, forbear expostulating with Mr. *Peirce* or upbraiding him in the manner they might well do, and for which he has given them too much provocation by this open abuse. But they chuse rather to leave this unpleasant work to himself. He must be conscious of the ill services he has endeavour'd to do them, and if he be a man of those generous principles he would pass for in the world; he'll readily and of his own accord do every thing that they might ask or the world expect by way of satisfaction, and show the regard he has to his own honour as well as the value he has for them.

BUT tho' they can easily pass by what is personal, yet in relation to the thing in debate, 'tis hop'd they may be allow'd to make the following observation, *scil.* That it is very unbecoming Mr. *Peirce* so vehemently to urge a question upon the consciences of others, when if He were to be question'd upon any account, 'tis plain with what earnestness he would remonstrate against it. Had he been call'd upon to answer *roundly* and *honestly* to a question of a far more important nature

nature and of much greater necessity to be resolv'd; what fearful exclamations would he have made of a popish *inquisition*, ransacking mens minds and tearing their consciences! Tho' in this, there would be no more of an *inquisition*, than what he has here set up himself. Why one side should put a question and expect a *round* answer to it, and not the same liberty be allow'd the other, is somewhat unaccountable. Would Mr. *Peirce* or those who first fram'd this *close question* (as he calls it) have *all of them* told the world as clearly and plainly what their sentiments are concerning the most important article of our faith, as these ministers have answer'd what has been propos'd to them? it would have prevented our differences or at least we should have known whereabouts we are. 'Tis strange that persons, who have declar'd with so much zeal against *inquisitive methods*, should so far neglect their own *principle*. This looks as if they only advanc'd it to serve a particular turn. If they have relinquish'd it; and will allow the subscribing brethren in their turn an equal privilege with themselves, they may go on to put as many questions as they please and be pretty well assur'd, there are none on our side will be offended with them.

WE come now to consider *the short view* he pretends to give of the sad difference at *Exon*. In which that he may make the stronger impression on his readers, he insinuates (as he hath all along throughout his book) how very harmless he and his friends have been in this whole affair.

THERE is nothing important in what he has offer'd, but what hath been particularly consider'd and confuted; prov'd to be either downright falshood, a misrepresentation, or nothing to the purpose.

WHAT is said of Mr. *Laxington* is *false*. It was the *arianising* party that began the innovations and to them the rumour of Mr. *P's* being with them in their notions was first owing, who under the shelter of his name endeavour'd to corrupt the city and neighbourhood with their errors. The uneasiness of the people ought not to be imputed to Mr. *Laxington*, but if when seeing his people in danger he endeavour'd to

secure them; 'twas his honour as well as duty: And will be remember'd to his praise by those, that still have a just regard to the important truths of the christian religion.

A *second falshood* in this short view is, that a minister sounded an alarm in the pulpit, who had not studied the controversy. Mr. *Atkins's* account (the person intended) puts this affair in a light that is not much to Mr. *P's* credit.*

Mr. *Lavingtons* preaching up the doctrine as a fundamental is far from being a reproach, but what he did being *Feb. 1716*. when he did not know these notions were in *Exon*, must be without any view to the differences there. † That Mr. *Peirce* reflects on his abilities is no wonder, when 'tis his custom to treat every body almost with disdain that are in no respect inferior to himself, except in those talents; that neither become a scholar, a minister or a christian, which none have reason to be fond of, or to envy him for. But besides, Mr. *Lavingtons* friends as they have no reason, so they never entertain'd the mean opinion of him, that Mr. *P.* both here and in many other places of his performance suggests. This therefore may be reckon'd a *third falshood*.

THAT Mr. *Peirce* did not engage in the controversy, no one can imagine it was from any distrust of his abilities; but he had the notions he was desir'd to oppose very near at heart, and a post in which 'tis likely he was loth to be disturb'd: And therefore would not *then*, venture to speak his mind, tho' *now*, he shews that he thinks he has an ability to overturn what he had not an inclination to support. 'Twas for want of this inclination or rather out of fondness for his new faith, that he was so remis in gratifying the peoples desire of his appearing in defence of the truth. He studiously attempted to lull them asleep, that his friends might go on sowing their tares without disturbance.

If Mr. *Lavington* and his friends instead of calling in the *London* ministers, the *Devonshire* assembly, and se-

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* See Mr. *Atkins's* account in this book. † See pag. 9.

ven famous *advisers*, as Mr. P. suggests; had call'd in others ever so many to their help against those, who boasted enough of their might and numbers, it had been no disparagement. Less help indeed is sufficient to support the truth, which besides *authority* (which is no disgrace to a good cause) hath *argument*, that never has nor can be answer'd; yet it was and ever will be their honour, that they had such a concern for the faith of the gospel, which they justly thought betray'd by some of those that were set for the defence of it. And if for this reason Mr. P. was dismissed his pulpit to which he had *no right*, but what the people gave and might reassume, and had the greatest reason to do considering Mr. P's management; he may go on to censure what was done as unjust and barbarous, and fill the world with tragical outcries, and oblige it if he think fit with another WESTERN INQUISITION: But if he do it under the influence of the same spirit and principles, that he has This; the good people of *Exon* won't henceforward need any other *apologist* for what they have done than Mr. P. himself.

THE treatment he complains of, has been no way owing to his being a *stranger*, but had he been always so to these parts of the kingdom; it had been much for the interest of truth and peace here. He has drawn several of his brethren into a snare, which some begin to repent of already, and others 'tis hop'd will see reason to do the same.

As to the last complaint wherewith he concludes his book, *viz.* " That one of the seven and the prime
" manager of all had been first secretly whispering a-
" bout a report, which he has since spoken of more
" freely, that he [Mr Peirce] did once deny the do-
" ctrine of the resurrection, which, he says, is as
" vile a calumny and as utterly false and groundless
" a slander as any man, himself not excepted, ever
" utter'd, and defies him or any of his agents to
" make out what he has reported, the following
reply is made.

IF Mr. Ball or Mr. Walrond, be the person refer'd to in this page, as some imagine, they neither of them declar'd he deny'd the resurrection of the dead in general;

neral; but said, That he argu'd against the resurrection of the same body. And therefore what they or either of them reported, was not a false and groundless story, but the truth, as is further confirm'd by the following certificate.

AS to what Mr. Peirce calls in the end of his book a vile calumny, That he was reported to deny the resurrection. *This is misrepresented: For it was not his denying the resurrection in general; but his disputing against the resurrection of the same body, that he was charg'd with; which only in propriety of speech is a resurrection.* Mr. Cox, a great friend of his, disputed against it also at Mr. Lavington's, and said, he would not sign that article of the Church of England, without his own explication. And honest Mr. Beadon, as Mr. Peirce calls him, hath been also upon the same argument with some of his hearers, as they are ready to attest. Passion might make Mr. Peirce forget himself, for he was very warm, (in Mr. Walrond's house) and demanded, What Scripture we could bring to prove the resurrection of the body? Mr. Walrond brought 1 Cor. xv. 43. *It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory, &c. and ask'd, Whether it were not the same IT that was sown, which should be rais'd? He likewise urg'd. Phil. iii. 21. Who shall change our vile body, &c. But Mr. Withers brake off the discourse, saying, Our meeting was not about this matter.*

John Ball.

I attest the truth of the above certificate, John Walrond.

IT appears from the remarks now made upon Mr. Peirce's Summary, that he has given an unfair representation of the case. Wherefore the reader in order to form the better judgment of the whole, may expect an account on the other side, which is this:

MR. Peirce before he came to Exon was settled in his present erroneous opinion of the doctrine of the TRINITY. The springs of the sad difference lay farther back than some will allow them. Several it seems had a good while before, espous'd *Arian* notions; one occasion of it, might be the reading some late books, which how they were recommended

recommended to them, or came into their hands, does not appear. Those who by reading these books took the liberty to differ from the common doctrine of the TRINITY, were some of them Mr. *Haller's* pupils, design'd for the ministry * ; and among the common people, there were some, who were too fond of their notions not to propagate them, and too noisy and talkative to conceal them.

By what means the discovery was first made of Mr. *Peirce's* inclinations this way, remains a secret. But no sooner was this perceiv'd, than the *Arianising party*, and not the other side, blew the trumpet and began the disturbance ; hoping to get their notions to obtain by the influence of Mr. P's name, and that now they should carry all before them.

It could not but give great concern to many judicious and serious christians to see their religion insulted blasphem'd and attack'd in its chief article, who dreaded the consequences of it. They were soon convinc'd, by the swift progress this error made, of the necessity of appearing in defence of the common faith.

WHEN Mr. *Peirce* and others were apply'd to by some of these persons, who thought it the proper business of their ministers to engage in defense of this great cause ; the cold reception they met with, and the manner in which this matter was manag'd instead of giving satisfaction increas'd their uneasinesses. †

THEIR finding Mr. *Peirce* so cold, and the other party taking encouragement, and giving out, that the ministers [in *Exon*] were in their notions, and many in *London*, who would soon declare themselves ; and these going on now in a more bold and open manner to spread their errors far and near ; it caus'd those who had their religion at heart, to call upon those ministers who adher'd to the ancient doctrine, to enter upon the proper measures by which the common faith might be publicly asserted and maintain'd.

THE persons apply'd to, tho' deeply concern'd at the sad posture of affairs, resolv'd, however, to act with all the

the slow steps, caution, and tenderness, that was possible; and to try first, what could be done to remedy these evils in private, and not without the most apparent necessity to enter upon any publick methods.

THEIR attempts this way not succeeding, and the error still spreading like a pestilence; serious people grew impatient, and began to blame, and even upbraid their ministers for neglecting their duty, whose consciences thereupon constrain'd them to appear in a more publick manner; and having consulted others of their brethren in divers parts, several of them agreed to propose at the meeting of their *assembly*, Sept. 1718 *. the making a voluntary declaration of their faith; nor did they this, without first acquainting Mr. *Peirce*, &c. of their design to make that motion †.

THIS was much oppos'd by Mr. *Peirce* and his party, who us'd all their arts to prevent it; whereupon matters open'd apace and it too plainly appear'd, that the reports spread of Mr. *P.* were not without foundation.

MR. *Peirce's* declaration in the *assembly* and his managements there, and afterwards his and Mr. *Hallet's* forbidding the *Doxologies* ‡ to be sung, and the latter having for a good while alter'd his accustom'd *Doxologies* at the end of his prayers, greatly increas'd the people's dissatisfaction.

THEY thought they had the greatest right to know the faith of their ministers, and accordingly apply'd to them in a christian and respectful manner, praying they would satisfy them in this great point, which they refusing to do in any of the ways propos'd, nor doing it in any other way that would have satisfy'd them, but instead thereof one of them [Mr. *Peirce*] expressing himself much to their dissatisfaction, it fill'd them with the greatest concern and perplexity.

VERY desirous they were of peace, and loth to break with their ministers, to whom they were not wanting in their respects; but being at a loss what steps

* See pag. 80.

† See pag. 55.

‡ Vide *Citizens Defence of their Account*, p. 8. And p 9^r. of this *Answer*.

steps to take for the preservation of Truth, they wrote to *London* desiring the advice of some ministers there; how to behave themselves in this critical juncture: These excusing themselves for several reasons given in their answer, * they apply'd to some of the elder ministers in their neighbourhood, who at their desire had a meeting at *Exon*; and after earnest prayer to *God*, and hearing what they had to say in relation to their ministers, took several hours consideration and debate to come to the three resolutions following.

1. THAT there are some errors in doctrine, which are a sufficient ground for the people to withdraw from their ministers.

2dly, THAT the denying the true and proper Divinity of the *SON of GOD*, viz. That He is *One GOD* with the *FATHER*, is an error of that nature; contrary to the holy Scripture and common faith of the reformed Churches.

3dly, THAT when so dangerous an error is industriously propagated to the overthrowing of the faith of many, we think it the indispensable duty of ministers, who are set for the defense of the Gospel, earnestly to withstand it; and to give reasonable satisfaction to their people of their soundness in the faith. And we likewise recommend to the people, as their duty, To hold fast the Truth in love; avoiding anger, clamour, and evil-speaking; and to behave themselves with all sincerity and meekness, as becometh Christians.

THESE were not given to the people till a considerable time after, while they were consulting other brethren in divers parts, who signify'd their approbation of them. They were then deliver'd to them as general rules, to be made use of as they thought fit.

THOSE concern'd, having maturely consider'd these advices, having also in vain us'd their utmost endeavours in private to obtain satisfaction from their ministers, and finding how error gain'd ground under the shelter

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* Narrative, p. 24, 25.

of their names, they saw they could not consistently with the duty they ow'd to the most important Truths and the regard they ought to have to their own safety, commit themselves any longer to their instruction and care. Wherefore those who had the management of the affairs of the congregation, and afterwards a vast majority of the people concurring with them; found it necessary, however grievous it was to them, to dismiss them from officiating as their ministers.

WHAT he says in his pasted *Postscript*, has been answer'd already, in p. 90.

THUS we have gone through Mr. *Peirce's* famous performance, *The WESTERN INQUISITION*, which from the beginning to the end, appears to be a composition full of heat and anger, of great uncharitableness, misrepresentations and falsehoods; besides the corrupt mixtures there are in it of many dangerous errors in doctrine; by which he has fully prov'd himself to be what the people apprehended him. And upon a serious review, we cannot but think the impartial part of mankind will conclude, That he endeavour'd to deceive and impose upon the good people of *Exeter* as long as he could; and when he could do it no longer, he now insults and abuses them. If that which breaths in this and his other writings be the temper and spirit of *Arianism*, we must say it is a temper vastly different from the true spirit of the Gospel.

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