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QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY
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SEVERAL THINGS

Done and agreed upon by the

Diffenting Ministers

Lately asssembled at

SALTERS-HALL.

V I Z.

I. ADVICES for PEACE, &c. With a List of the Names of Those who have subscribed them.

II. The LETTER, sent with the Advices to EXETER.

III. REASONS for not subscribing, as Some of their Brethren did, the PAPER offered to them on March 3d, 1718-9.

L O N D O N :

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caſion. All that we here propoſe, is, to put ſome principal Matters in their true and proper Light, which we have found to be greatly miſrepreſented and miſunderſtood. We deſire not to aggravate any thing. We would be very careful, not to do what may in the leaſt hurt the Character of any of our Brethren, who have ſeen fit to differ from us: And we hope, that notwithstanding our late Differences, They will ſtill preſerve the ſame Eſteem and Affection for *Us*, which We are reſolved to do for *Them*.






I. *Advices for* P E A C E, &c.

After several Meetings of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers of the Three Denominations, in and about the City of London, the following *Rules and Advices* were finished, and agreed to, at *Salter's-Hall, March 10, 1718-19*, upon a general Summons sent to the whole Body.

We are clearly of Opinion,

1.  **HAT** there are Errors in Doctrine of that important Nature, as will not only warrant, but even oblige, a Christian Congregation to withdraw from the Minister, or Ministers, that maintain and defend those Doctrines.

2. That

2. That the People have a Right to judge for themselves, what those Errors are, and when they are so taught and propagated, as will justify them in withdrawing from such their Ministers.

However, we think it necessary, that the Right of thus judging and acting, be maintained and pursued, according to the following Advices.

I. That all Christians, especially Ministers of the Gospel of Peace, should on the one hand carefully avoid giving any just Occasion of Offence ; and on the other, avoid and discountenance all unreasonable Jealousy concerning the Sentiments and Opinions of others, particularly of Ministers ; and all rash judging of the Christianity and Sincerity of their Brethren ; and promote to their Power mutual Forbearance and Brotherly Love, as far as a just Concern for Truth and Holiness will allow.

II. If either Ministers, or other Christians, should be charg'd with not holding the Christian Faith, or propagating Opinions inconsistent with it, we apprehend, that no such Accusations should be received by any, to whom Application shall be made for Advice upon such Occasions, unless the Accusation be reduced to a Certainty, and two or more credible Persons shall declare themselves ready to support and justify it when call'd to it: That by this means all private Insinuations tending to Scandal may be avoided, and Proceedings had in that open and sincere Way which the Gospel prescribes.

III. That when such an Accusation is brought, the Person accused be first privately admonished, before the Matter come under the Examination of any Publick Assembly, or he be obliged to a publick Defence *.

IV. If

* Thus far we proceeded on *March 3d.* And then thought fit to adjourn the further Consideration of these Advices till the following *Tuesday, March 10th,*

IV. If after all, a publick Hearing be insisted on, we think the Protestant Principle, that *the Bible is the only and the perfect Rule of Faith*, obliges those who have the Case before them, not to condemn any Man upon the Authority of Humane Decisions, or because he consents not to Humane Forms or Phrases: But then only is He to be censured, as *not holding the Faith necessary to Salvation*, when it appears that he contradicts, or refuses to own, the *plain and express Declarations of Holy Scripture*, in what is there made necessary to be believed, and in Matters

10th; ordering a Summons to be sent to every one of the Brethren who had withdrawn from us; which was accordingly done. We did particularly hope to have had their Help in the IVth Article; and to have calmly debated, every Sentence and Word in it. Some Changes we our selves have made from what it was, both in *Substance* and *Form*; and, tho' it looks to us, as it now stands, a very *Christian* and *reasonable Rule* of Conduct, yet we were not so set upon having our own Way, but we should have readily received any thing that had been clear and convincing, in order to have changed our Minds.

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there solely revealed. And we trust that All will treat the Servants of their common Lord, as they who expect the final Decision at his appearing.

V. We further advise, that Catechisms and other Summaries of Christianity, and Expositions of Scripture by wise and learned, tho' fallible Men, should be regarded as great Helps to understand the Mind of God in the Scriptures: And that all be allowed by common Consent, to support their own Sense of Scripture upon proper Occasions, with such Reasons as appear to them convincing, provided it be with Sobriety and Charity to those who differ from them. We also desire to secure the Evidence arising from Scripture Consequences; tho' no Man should be charged with holding those Consequences of his Opinion, which he expressly disclaims.

VI. That where any, either Ministers or other Christians, think themselves

B bound

bound in Conscience, to declare against such a Sense of Scripture, as the Body of that Christian Society to which they belong apprehend to be a Truth of great Importance, they should, after the proper Methods have been tried for mutual Satisfaction, rather quietly withdraw from it, and seek Communion, or Service, in some other Christian Society, than disturb the Peace of that Congregation: And that there be no censuring of the Person who withdraws, or of the Congregation that receives him.

VII. That Ministers, and People, both endeavour to know, maintain, and propagate the Truth in Love; insisting most on those things wherein Christians are generally agreed; more sparingly, and with great Modesty and Charity, on those in which good Men do, or may, differ.

VIII. If any Minister or Congregation shall differ as to the Expediency of these Methods, or shall think any other more
proper,

proper, we hope they will, as intending the same good End, still preserve Charity and Communion with those Ministers and Congregations that shall think fit to pursue these Advices.

To these Rules and Advices we have set our Hands.

<i>Josh. Oldfield, D. D. Moderator, p. t.</i>	
<i>John Sheffield,</i>	<i>Jeremiah Hunt,</i>
<i>John Billingsley,</i>	<i>Samuel Baker,</i>
<i>William Harris,</i>	<i>Thomas Petken,</i>
<i>Simon Brown,</i>	<i>John Gale, D. P.</i>
<i>John Evans,</i>	<i>Isaac Kimber,</i>
<i>John Hughes,</i>	<i>Clerk Oldsworth,</i>
<i>Thomas Sleigh,</i>	<i>Richard Rigby, M.D.</i>
<i>John Savage,</i>	<i>Thomas Kerby,</i>
<i>Samuel Wright,</i>	<i>Edward Bearne,</i>
<i>Benjamin Grosvenor,</i>	<i>Samuel Chandler,</i>
<i>John Ratcliff,</i>	<i>William Sheffield,</i>
<i>Samuel Roswell,</i>	<i>Nathaniel Hodges,</i>
<i>Joseph Jenkins,</i>	<i>Robert Billio,</i>
<i>Moses Lowman,</i>	<i>Thomas Slater,</i>
<i>Joseph Burroughs,</i>	<i>James Read,</i>
<i>John Ingram,</i>	<i>Henry Read,</i>
<i>Thomas Leavesly,</i>	<i>William Hocker, jun.</i>
<i>George Smyth,</i>	<i>Richard Biscoe,</i>
<i>Lewis Douglas,</i>	<i>Joseph Bennet,</i>

<i>Benja. Avery, L.L.D.</i>	<i>Richard Parkes,</i>
<i>Joseph Baker,</i>	<i>Samuel Oldfield,</i>
<i>Ben. Andrews Atkinson</i>	<i>John Cambden,</i>
<i>Gabriel Barber,</i>	<i>Nathaniel Foxwell,</i>
<i>Nathaniel Lardner,</i>	<i>John Conder,</i>
<i>William Jacomb,</i>	<i>Thomas Simmons,</i>
<i>Samuel Savage,</i>	<i>David Jennings,</i>
<i>Samuel Highmore,</i>	<i>John Eaton,</i>
<i>Robert Lamb,</i>	<i>Obadiah Hughes,</i>
<i>Amos Harrison,</i>	<i>Arthur Shallet,</i>
<i>John Bradley,</i>	<i>Richard Tuddeman,</i>
<i>Samuel Clark,</i>	<i>E. Roscoe,</i>
<i>Daniel Burgess,</i>	<i>James Richardson,</i>
<i>John Cornish,</i>	<i>Matthew Randal,</i>
<i>Thomas Newman,</i>	<i>William Bush,</i>
<i>Quintus Naylor,</i>	<i>Christopher Taylor,</i>
<i>John Sherman,</i>	<i>Thomas Caiton.</i>

There are several of our Brethren consenting with us in these Advices, who desire we would signify so much to the World, tho' they have not here subscribed their Names.





II. *The LETTER sent with
the Advices to EXETER.*

London, March 17, 1718-19.

Gentlemen, Fathers and Brethren,

Honoured and Beloved in our Lord!



AVING heard with great
‘ Concern of the Divisions
‘ amongst you, we take the
‘ Leave you have been
‘ pleased to give us, hum-
‘ bly to present you with a few general
‘ Advices, which we judge proper to use
‘ our selves, and would recommend to
‘ all, on such Occasions.

‘ We are satisfy’d, that things of this
‘ Nature are well known to you, and
‘ hope

‘ hope they will not be ill received, or
 ‘ unsuccessful. We shall be glad to re-
 ‘ ceive from you, the valuable Improve-
 ‘ ments we promise our selves you will
 ‘ make upon them, or any thing with Re-
 ‘ ference to them that you shall think fit
 ‘ to communicate.

‘ We allow not our selves to form a
 ‘ Judgment of your Affairs, upon so distant
 ‘ and imperfect a View as Rumours and
 ‘ Representations, on either Hand or both,
 ‘ can give us, whilst the whole is not
 ‘ before us: Your Prudence and Good-
 ‘ ness assure us, that we may depend upon
 ‘ the like from you.

‘ We can truly say, the Advices we
 ‘ send you are the Result of serious Prayer,
 ‘ as well as long and mature Delibera-
 ‘ tion. They have taken their Rise from
 ‘ no Party-Views, and aim at nothing but
 ‘ the common Good: We have so cal-
 ‘ culated them for Peace, as to secure
 ‘ Truth together with it: And for Sub-
 ‘ stance

‘ stance, they have the Approbation of a
 ‘ great Number of our principal Gentle-
 ‘ men and Citizens, as appears in a Paper
 ‘ subscrib’d by them, and laid before our
 ‘ Committee of the Three Denomina-
 ‘ tions.

‘ We add our earnest Supplications,
 ‘ that God would accompany them with
 ‘ his Blessing to establish Peace and Truth
 ‘ amongst us : And freely declare, that
 ‘ we utterly disown the *Arian* Doctrine,
 ‘ and sincerely believe the Doctrine of
 ‘ the Blessed Trinity, and the proper
 ‘ Divinity * of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 ‘ which we apprehend to be clearly re-
 ‘ vealed in the Holy Scriptures ; But
 ‘ are far from condemning any who ap-

*N. B. The human Words [*Trinity* and *proper Di-
 vinity*] in this Declaration of our Faith, are used
 only to notify the things we speak of ; and we do
 not presume, in the Way of *Test*, to go into any
 particular Explications of those things, either in our
own, or *other Mens Words* : But for that we refer
 to the *Holy Scriptures* ; whence it may appear, that
 we take the Scripture-Account of those things to be
 the *best* and *fittest* we can use on such an Occasion.

‘ pear

‘pear to be with us in the Main, tho’
‘they should chuse not to declare them-
‘selves in other than Scripture-Terms,
‘or not in Ours.

‘ May the Great and Good G O D
‘ pour out of his Holy Spirit abundantly
‘ upon us all; and the Prayers of you
‘ all be continually for us, that we may
‘ increase in Grace, and in the Know-
‘ ledge of our Lord and Saviour. We
‘ are

*Your Affectionate Brethren and Servants
in our common Lord,*

The Ministers in and about London.

Sigh’d by Me in their Name,
and by their Appointment,

J O S H. O L D F I E L D, *Moderator.*

‘ P. S. This L E T T E R is to all
‘ whom it may concern; and there-
‘ fore it is desired, that it be com-
‘ municated to all such with the Ad-
‘ vices. III: REAS



III. REASONS for not Subscri-
bing the PAPER offered at
Salters-Hall, March the Third,
1718-19.

THE many *Mistakes* spread a-
broad concerning this Matter;
and the *Prejudices* which we
find some have endeavoured
to fix in Peoples Minds against us, and
the *ill Use* which the *Enemies* of our
common Interest are endeavouring to
make of our not Subscribing on the Oc-
casion mention'd, lay a Necessity upon
us, to give the World the Reasons of
our Conduct; Which are as follow,

I. We could not subscribe the *Paper of-
fered us*, because our doing it *then*, would
have been a manifest *Breach of Order*.

The Case stood thus,

On February 19, 1718-19. the *Body of*

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Protestant Dissenting Ministers in, and about, *London*, were called together, to consider of a Paper, containing *Advices for promoting Peace*, &c. Which Paper was recommended to them by their *Committee of Three Denominations*; and thereupon, in a very numerous *Assembly of Ministers*, it was voted and resolved, to proceed in considering it *Paragraph by Paragraph*; and this without any Division, or any considerable Appearance of Hands to the contrary. On *February 24*, was a *second Meeting*; at which Time the Names of all present were set down, and then called over one by one; each *Denomination* being to approve or disapprove of such as were reputed to belong to them; and *Exceptions* were allow'd to be made against any, whose Presence with us might be objected to. After this, Matters were debated for several Hours, and at last, a *Question* was agreed to be put, for the Decision of which a Division was found necessary; and then it was carried by the *Majority*, that a *Declaration concerning the Trinity* should not
be

be inserted in the Paper of Advices. But, notwithstanding these Resolutions, several of our Brethren, at a Meeting on the 3d of *March*, renewed a Debate, to the same Purpose with that, which before was agreed should be *laid aside* 'till we had gone through the Advices; and would not acquiesce in the Determinations of a Majority, even in the Method of Proceeding. Instead of this, they withdrew from our Assembly, and went by themselves, to subscribe their Names to a certain Roll of Paper, wherein was contain'd (as we were told) the first Article of the Church of England, and the 5th and 6th Answers in the Assembly's Catechism.

This Management, we could not but interpret, as having a direct Tendency to overthrow the Great Rule necessary to be observed in all Societies and Assemblies, to prevent their being tumultuary and insignificant: And to a Violation of this Rule we must impute whatever then happened that was disorderly. We also look'd upon this as tending to prevent our future Assembling in a United Body of the Three De-

nominations ; which yet we take to be *useful*, for preserving a mutual *Friendship* among us, and sometimes *necessary* for our *common Interest*.

We took it to be yet a further Breach of Order, That, after our Brethren shew'd they were resolv'd to act contrary to the former Agreement of the *Majority*, they would not so much as allow us the proper Question should be put, *Whether we should proceed, or not proceed?* before any other Matter was entered upon.

BUT that which carried the Breach of Order to such an Height as to make an unhappy Difference, was, Their *withdrawing* and *subscribing* as a-bovemention'd.

OUR Brethren being thus separated from us, leaving the *Moderator* in the Chair, and us to act as we thought fit; we then went on with our Advices according to Agreement, accounting ourselves properly *The Body*, and not thinking ourselves at all concerned with what our Brethren were doing, out of *Place, Time, and Order*.

II. WE could not fall in with the Subscription propos'd, because we observed that the *insisting upon it at that Time*, was, to *delay* our considering the Paper of *Advices* before us, and if it might be, to set it *wholly aside*. Some were so free as to make open Acknowledgment of this. And *this* we thought a very good Reason why we could not go about Subscribing; seeing the *Advices* we were summon'd to consider, did not (as we apprehended) deserve to be in such a manner rejected, but were every Way worthy of the Consideration of such a *Body of Christian Divines*. We were exceedingly pleas'd with the great and noble *End* propos'd; *viz.* *A promoting Peace and Charity among Christians*; without which, *had we all Faith, so that we could remove Mountains*, (1 Cor. xiii. 2.) we should *be nothing*: And we thought the *Paper before us*, which we had heard read once and again, might be made very serviceable to answer the *End* it propos'd, and at the same *Time* to promote *Truth* and *Holiness*.

III. WE

III. WE did not think fit to subscribe, because we thought *no sufficient Reasons* were offered, for our subscribing.

WE were prest to it, that we might *clear ourselves* from the *Suspensions* of *Arianism*. But, as we knew no just Ground of Suspicion, much less of any Charge against us, we thought it would ill become us so far to indulge an *unreasonable Jealousy*, as to take a Step of this Nature for removing it; especially since doing so would have been inconsistent with *one* of the *Advices* which we thought necessary to be given, and which was founded upon an *Apostolical Rule*. And we see no End of such Jealousies: For, if we may be suspected of *Arianism* without having taught any Thing like it, and tho' we have taken all proper Occasions to offer our Reasons against it, and that not only from the *Pulpit* but some of us from the *Press*; We say, if we must be suspected, merely because we would not subscribe what our Brethren would have us; why may we not be suspected of *Hypocrisy* after

we have done it? And then pass in the World for *Arians*, and *Cheats* into the Bargain. We never yet thought *Jealousy* and *Suspicion* to be such good-natured Things as to be satisfied with a *few Good Words*.

It was also urged, That to subscribe as they would have us, would give the *greater Weight* to our *Advices*, in Case we should send them to *Exeter*. On the contrary we could not but think, that tho' they might be regarded by *One Party*, because they would interpret what we did so as to justify their own Conduct; yet they could be taken by the *other side* in no other Sense, but making ourselves a Party *against them*, which we thought would no Way suit with *Advices* intended to make *Peace*, as well as to secure *Truth*. And we had Ground to hope that our *Advices* would be received by all *impartial Men* on Account of what was contain'd in them, as far as they carried Reason and Evidence along with them.

THERE was another Thing offered, That, if we subscribed it would prevent the

the *spreading of Erroneous Opinions* amongst Those whom our Names might be supposed to Influence; whereas if we refused, They might be in Danger from a *wrong Apprehension* of our Sentiments. But we could not think ourselves answerable for any Arguments drawn by others from groundless *Suspensions* concerning us; nor that those Suspensions were a just Reason for our coming into such a Subscription: We thought we had sufficiently guarded against them in the *Course of our publick Ministrations*; And we are still fully persuaded, that a Faith built upon our Authority is a vain Thing in *itself*. We think ourselves obliged often to inculcate this Principle upon our Hearers; “ That they ought not to form their
 “ Judgment in Matters necessary to Sal-
 “ vation, by the private Sentiments of
 “ their *Ministers* any farther than they
 “ are supported by the *Word of God*. ”
 And we assure ourselves that a tender and scrupulous Regard for *the Word of God alone*, will never be thought either dangerous, or inconvenient, to the *Body of Protestant Dissenters*. IV. W^E

IV. WE saw *no* Reason to think, That a Declaration in *other Words* than those of *Scripture*, would serve the Cause of *Peace* and *Truth*; but rather be the Occasion of *greater Confusions* and *Disorders*: We have found it always so in *History*; And in *Reason*, the *Words* of *Men* appear to us more liable to *different Interpretations*, than the *Words* of *Scripture*: Since all may fairly think themselves *more at Liberty*, to put their own Sense upon *Humane Forms*, than upon the *Words* of the *Holy Ghost*. And in this Case, what Assurance could we have that all who subscribed meant precisely the *same Sense*, any more than if they had made a Declaration in *express Words* of *Scripture*?

V. THE Subscription insisted on, Was *beyond even what the Legislature itself* requires of us. For the Legislature has thought fit to require only our *once subscribing*; and this being made a necessary Condition of exercising our Ministry, we should be highly blameable to neglect
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that Work, by refusing to comply with what is required of us, when we can do it with a safe Conscience: But we have always thought that *such Humane Declarations of Faith,* were far from being eligible on their *own Account*; since they tend to *narrow* the Foundations of Christianity, and to restrain that *Latitude of Expression* in which our great *Legislator* has seen fit to deliver his Will to us.

VI. WE did not think fit, to pay such a new and unwarrantable Regard to the *Catechism of the Assembly of Divines*: It being what they themselves, have in Effect, declared against; and we fear, many pious Christians will be less ready to make the proper Use of this *Compendium*, when they see such Colour given for its standing in the Place of the *Word of God*.

VII. WE take it to be an inverting the Great Rule of *deciding Controversies among Protestants*: Making the Explications and Words of *Men* determine the Sense of
Script-

Scripture, instead of making the *Scriptures* to determine how far the *Words of Men* are to be regarded. We therefore, could not give our Hands to do that, which in present Circumstances, would be like to mislead others to set up Humane Explanations for the *Decisive Rule* of Faith. We then did, and do now judge it our Duty to remonstrate against such a Precedent, as opening a Way to (what we dread) the most fatal *Breaches on Gospel Liberty*.

VIII. THO' we would not charge our Brethren that requir'd our Subscription, with a Design which any of them do disclaim, yet to us it appeared, and does still appear to have the *Nature of Imposition*; which has been the great Engine of Division among Christians from the Beginning, and has done unspeakable Mischiefs to the *Christian Church*.

IX. WE thought it would be a Reproach upon us, to do any Thing that look'd like *giving up our Christian Liberty*,
 D 2 when

when *others* with so great *Strength* of Argument are pleading for it.

X. WE foresaw the Subscription insisted on would occasion *Reflections*, and become a *Mark of Distinction* set on those who should not subscribe: And we knew that several, who had the *same* Faith and Opinions concerning the TRINITY, with *ourselves* and our *Brethren*, yet could not be satisfy'd to come into any Humane Explications.

XI. WE could not but think it would highly reflect on *those among ourselves*, who had been known often to declare against every Thing of this Nature.

XII. WE observed the *Enemies* of the *Protestant Dissenters* to be great Encouragers and Approvers of such kind of Proceedings; and we have seen how many Ways they are ready to take Advantage of our Brethrens Subscription since.

To add but one Thing more, We did not think it proper to subscribe, because

cause if this Humour was *once* complied with, we could not tell *where it would stop.*

FINIS.



POST-



P O S T S C R I P T.



WE desire it may be more particularly remarked, That in Our declining the *Subscription* propos'd to Us, we apprehend, We have taken a *more effectual* Course to prevent the Growth of *Errors* concerning the *Doctrine of the Trinity*, (Whether those of *Arius*, or any other,) then even Our Brethren who so earnestly insisted on it. May not the Method they have taken, tempt Men to question, Whether the Scriptures be so *perfect a Rule of Faith*, as Protestants have all along represented them to be? and to conclude there must be something wanting in *Scripture* Argument and Evidence, when We betake Ourselves to *Humane Declarations*, and dare not depend upon *Those* which are Unquestionably *Divine*? Will it not give great *Advantage* to the *Adversaries* of the Scripture Doctrine, when

when We are obliged to defend not only the Doctrine *itself*, but the *Humane Words* made necessary to explain it? It cannot be but new Questions will be started, and New Points arise to be defended; all which would be Difficulties needlessly brought upon Ourselves, and create Disputes among those who embrace the Truth, and might join in supporting it.

WE would not treat the *Laws of God* with less Respect than is paid to Those of Our *Country*. When any *Form of Words* is prescribed by the *Legislature* as a *Test* or Declaration, no Men, or Number of Men, were ever allowed to put an *Explanation* of Their own or Others, either instead of those Words, or together with them; nor do any presume to do it. Can the Words of *Humane Declarations* be trusted to answer the Purposes of *Civil Government*; and not those of *God* to answer *His*? especially where the *Importance* is so vastly disproportionate?

WE cannot consent to what, in our Apprehension, has such a Tendency, especially in present Circumstances, to narrow the
Christian

Christian and Protestant *Liberty* of the People; and to divert them from attending to *Practical Religion*. In some Points and some Cases we may no doubt submit to *Legal Demands*, when yet we ought by no Means to countenance it where there is no *Pretence* of Authority: But If we will bind Ourselves, to *Humane Decisions*, in the deepest Points of *Revelation*, as if *They* were absolutely necessary to Communion; will not the natural Consequence be, the lessening of Peoples Regards to the *Words of God*, and placing an undue Regard to the *Words of Men*. Nor should Men be led into *curious Enquiries* about those Things, in which even *Superior Capacities* lose themselves, and by which the Minds of People will be taken off from the plainer Truths and Duties of Religion. And what will *Truth* itself avail if it be not improved into *Höliness*; or if it be made Instrumental to destroy or abate that *Charity* which is the *Bond of Perfection* and the *fulfilling of the Law*.

F I N I S.

