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## DECEMBER MEETING, 1884.

The monthly meeting was held on Thursday, the 11th instant. The President being absent, Dr. ELLIS took his place, and gave expression to the regret which was felt by all that Mr. Winthrop was detained at home by illness.

The Secretary read his notes of the previous meeting.

The Librarian mentioned the books which had been given to the Library.

The Corresponding Secretary announced that Messrs. William G. Russell and Edward J. Lowell had signified their acceptance of Resident Membership.

The Hon. GEORGE S. HALE then offered the following remarks:—

I ask leave to present to the Society, in behalf of Mrs. Mary Pratt Cooke Nash, the daughter of the late Josiah Parsons Cooke, long an honored and leading member of the Suffolk Bar, this "Lithographic Print" of the Instructions of the Town of Malden to their Representative in the General Court of Massachusetts in 1776, giving their assurance to that body that, if America should be declared "a Free and Independent Republic," they would "support and defend the measure to the last drop of their blood and the last farthing of their Treasure."

Chief Justice Marshall deemed this spirited paper of so much interest and importance, that he quotes it, in describing the advance of the desire and purpose of the colonies to separate from the mother country, in the first edition, published in 1804,<sup>1</sup> of his "Life of George Washington," in connection with like declarations by the city of Boston.

They deserve a prominent place as an early expression of these sentiments, although the controversy as to the exact order of the appearance of such declarations from different parts of the country does not seem to me of very great importance.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. ii. p. 407.

In the Massachusetts House of Representatives, on the 10th of May, 1776, it was "Resolved, as the Opinion of this Houfe that the Inhabitants of each Town in this Colony, ought in full meeting warned for that Purpose, to advise the Person or Persons who shall be chosen to Represent them in the next General Court, whether if the honorable Congress should, for the Safety of the said Colonies, declare them Independent of the Kingdom of Great-Britain, they the said Inhabitants will solemnly engage with their Lives and Fortunes to Support the Congress in the Measure."

These Instructions were adopted by the town of Malden on the 27th of May, 1776, and are quoted by Marshall from the "Gazette." Mr. Frothingham, in "The Rise of the Republic of the United States" (page 507), refers to these meetings, and says: "The instructions of Malden and Boston were the earliest I have found in the newspapers." The former, I may add, were adopted on the 27th, the latter on the 23d, of May, 1776. By whom they were prepared does not appear of record; but the following letter from D. P. Corey, Esq., who is now engaged in the preparation of a history of the town, gives some additional particulars in regard to them, and his sketch of the town of Malden, in Drake's "History of Middlesex" (page 127), attributes the authorship to Peter Thacher.

MALDEN, Oct. 21, 1884.

HON. GEO. S. HALE, Boston.

DEAR SIR,—I have your note of Friday. I understand that the lithograph of the "Instructions" was the result of a subscription obtained by the efforts of the late Rev. Sylvanus Cobb. Copies may now and then be found in the possession of old Malden families, although they are getting to be quite rare. One was recently presented to the Malden Public Library, and very appropriately hangs in its reading-room. The following extracts will give you some information:

In a warrant for a town-meeting, May 27, 1776, Art. 1, —

"To see if the Town will Choo a Committee to Advise the Person Chosen to Represent them in the next General Court whether that if the Honorable Congress Should for the Safety of the Coloneys Declare them Independent of the Kingdom of Great Britain they the Said Inhabitants will Solemnly Engage with their lives and fortains to Support them in the measure."

At the meeting: —

"The Town Resolved themselves into a Committee the Rev<sup>d</sup>. Mr

Willis was Chosen Chairman the Committee Proceeded to Consider the matter and Prepared the following Instructions."

Ezra Sargeant was the representative to the General Court that year. You will notice that the town resolved itself into a Committee. Considering this, I suspect that the Instructions were already prepared, and only awaited presentation and acceptance by the town. Mr. Willis, the chairman, was the pastor of the South Church. I have no evidence that he was possessed of the proper spirit or the ability required to produce the ringing sentences of the paper. There was only one other in Malden who could have written them, and he had both the ability and the will. He had already done good work in the cause of freedom, and his name stands high among the ablest ministers of the Revolution. I think Peter Thacher, then pastor of the North Parish, and afterwards of the Brattle Street Church, Boston, must have been the author. I wish I could give you more definite information.

Yours very truly,

D. P. COREY.

Mr. Thacher needs no introduction to the members of this Society. Whitefield esteemed him the ablest preacher in America, and his political influence and eloquence were not inferior to those exercised and displayed in the pulpit.

He was chairman of the committee which reported the Instructions of the Town to their Representative, adopted at their meeting on the 23d of September, 1774, the vigorous close of which resembles the Instructions of 1776. "We are," they said, "determined in the strength of our God that we will, in spite of open force and private treachery, live and die as becomes the descendants of such ancestors as ours, who sacrificed their all that they and their posterity might be free."

They are referred to in "An Historical Discourse delivered at Malden," Dec. 1, 1831, by S. Osgood Wright, and in an oration, delivered May 23, 1849, on the two hundredth anniversary of its incorporation, by James D. Green.

At this celebration, Gilbert Haven, Jr. (the late Bishop Gilbert Haven), delivered a poem, in which I find the following passage, apparently referring to Mr. Thacher and to the sentiments expressed in the Instructions of 1776:—

"In the same green retreat another lies,  
Who stripped, like him, all sin of its disguise;  
And, not through sermons only, was the truth  
Announced by him, which roused both age and youth.

His ardent feelings may be yet discerned  
 In thoughts that through his brain their passage burned ;  
 Closing his bold recital of great wrongs  
 In words not ill-becoming martial songs,  
 That they would spend for Justice' sake, with pleasure,  
 ' Their blood's last drop, — last farthing of their treasure.'  
 Honor to him who thus his flock inflamed  
 To win a cause, through earth's wide borders famed !  
 His name suggests the era when desire  
 For Independence wrapt their souls in fire."

In Mr. Haven's effort to keep the memory of Mr. Thacher alive, he has buried him in the wrong place, since he does not lie in " the same green retreat " in Malden, but in the burying-ground or cemetery of the town of Milton, where, on the tablet of Peter Oxenbridge Thacher's tomb is found the following inscription : —

" On the 22<sup>d</sup> February A D 1827 were deposited here the remains of the Rev<sup>d</sup> Peter Thacher D D Pastor of the Church in Brattle Square in Boston who died Dec<sup>r</sup> 16 1802 aet 51 & of Elizabeth his wife who died Jan'y 26 1816 aet 71 years." <sup>1</sup>

I am not aware that these Instructions have ever been printed in full, (unless in the " Gazette," where I have not yet found them,) except in Force's " American Archives," <sup>2</sup> and in the " Bi-Centennial Book " of Malden.

This copy comes from an old house, now standing in the town of Everett, formerly the parsonage house of the Rev. Mr. Eliakim Willis, for some fifty years a minister in the town of Malden, — a parsonage, which, during an unprosperous period, he was obliged to take for the arrears of his unpaid salary.

Mr. Willis had a niece, Sarah Willis, who is said to have been a person of great beauty. She married the Rev. Nahum Sargeant, a nephew of Ezra Sargeant, to whom the Instructions were addressed, by whom she had two daughters, Martha Willis and Elizabeth Howse. Mrs. Sargeant inherited the parsonage from her uncle Willis, and resided there, with her daughters, until the time of her death. She married, for her second husband, Colonel Popkin, <sup>3</sup> a widower, who had three

<sup>1</sup> As Dr. Thacher was born March 21, 1752, he died in his fifty-first year within but little more than three months of its completion.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. vi. p. 602.

<sup>3</sup> *Ante*, pp. 76, 250, 251. — Eds.

sons. By him she had one child, Ebenezer Willis Popkin, who died in the parsonage, December, 1883, at a very advanced age.

One of the sons of Colonel Popkin by his first wife was the Rev. John Snelling Popkin, who was graduated at Harvard College in the class of 1792. He was appointed tutor in Greek in the College in 1795, University Professor of Greek in 1815, and Eliot Professor of Greek Literature in 1826. This chair he held until 1833. He received from the College the degree of S.T.D. in 1815. He was also a member of this Society.

I trust it will not be inconsistent with the dignity of our Proceedings to add that Colonel Popkin and his son Professor Popkin were contemporaneous lovers of the beautiful Sarah Willis Sargeant, and that the son never married.

The eager devotion of the citizens of Malden to their own freedom and independence was not thought inconsistent with the existence of slavery in their midst, although, perhaps, it was that feeling which, more or less unconsciously, elevated the slave to the familiarity of a freedman. The story is told of a worthy citizen, who pompously announced to an aged slave of seventy years: "You have been a faithful servant to me and my father before me. I have long been thinking what I should do to reward you for your services. I give you your freedom! You are your own master! You are your own man!" The prospective freeman, however, preferred to remain dependent, and not to sacrifice what was now his all, simply that he might become free, — free to take care of himself at his own expense. "No, no, massa!" said he, slyly; "you eat de meat, and now you must pick de bone."

Mr. GOODELL presented the following communication:<sup>1</sup> —

I rise to offer for publication in our Proceedings transcripts of certain manuscripts which have never to my knowledge been printed in full. These have a bearing upon the controversy between our accomplished Corresponding Member, Dr. Moore, and myself, respecting some incidents of the witch-trials of 1692, and the subsequent reversal of the attainders of the condemned.

<sup>1</sup> This paper was communicated by title at the October meeting, but its publication has been necessarily delayed. — Eds.

The first is a letter from Governor Phips to the Earl of Nottingham, copied for me from the archives of the Public Record Office in London by Mr. Sainsbury.<sup>1</sup>

The copious extracts from this letter, first given to the public in Palfrey's "History of New England,"<sup>2</sup> show that Phips accused the Lieutenant-Governor (Stoughton) of causing "the estates, goods and chattels of the executed to be seized and disposed of" without his consent. This is a sufficiently distinct, authoritative, and contemporaneous averment that forfeiture or escheat, or both, were not only supposed by the highest judicial authority of the province to properly follow attainder for witchcraft, but were actually enforced by legal process. Another clause, not printed by Dr. Palfrey, shows the Governor's commendable desire to have all proceedings in the court of oyer and terminer here, stayed, until advice could be obtained from the judges in England as to the practice there in trials for witchcraft: —

Boston in New England Feby 21<sup>st</sup>. 1693.

May it please yo<sup>r</sup> Lords<sup>hp</sup>

By the Cap<sup>n</sup> of y<sup>e</sup> Samuell & Henry I gave an account that att my arrivall here I found y<sup>e</sup> Prisons full of people comitted upon suspicion of witchcraft & that continuall complaints were made to me that many persons were grievously tormented by witches & that they cryed out upon severall persons by name, as y<sup>e</sup> cause of their torments y<sup>e</sup> number of these complaints increasing every day, by advice of y<sup>e</sup> Lieut Gov<sup>r</sup> & y<sup>e</sup> Councill I gave a Co<sup>m</sup>ission of Oyer and Terminer to try y<sup>e</sup> suspected witches & at that time the generality of y<sup>e</sup> People represented y<sup>e</sup> matter to me as reall witchcraft & gave very strange instances of the same The first in Co<sup>m</sup>ission was y<sup>e</sup> Lieut. Gov<sup>r</sup> & y<sup>e</sup> rest persons of y<sup>e</sup> best prudence & figure that could then be pitched upon & I depended upon y<sup>e</sup> Court, for a right method of proceeding in cases of witchcraft At that time I went to comãd the army at y<sup>e</sup> Eastern part of the Province for y<sup>e</sup> French and Indians had made an attack upon some of our Fronteer Towns, I continued there for some time but when I returned I found people much disatisfied at y<sup>e</sup> proceedings of y<sup>e</sup> Court for about Twenty persons were condemned & executed of which number some were thought by many persons to be innocent The Court still proceeded in y<sup>e</sup> same method of trying them which was by y<sup>e</sup> evidence of y<sup>e</sup> afflicted persons who when they were brought into

<sup>1</sup> America and West Indies, No. 591; also in Colonial Entry's Book, No. 62, p. 426.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. iv. p. 112, note.

y<sup>e</sup> Court as soon as the suspected witches looked upon them instantly fell to y<sup>e</sup> ground in strange agonies & grievous torments, but when touched by them upon y<sup>e</sup> arme or some other part of their flesh they immediately revived & came to themselves, upon<sup>1</sup> they made oath that y<sup>e</sup> Prisoner at y<sup>e</sup> Bar did afflict them & that they saw their shape or spectre come from their bodies which put them to such paines & torments: When I enquired into y<sup>e</sup> matter I was enformed by y<sup>e</sup> Judges that they begun with this, but had humane testimony against such as were condemned & undoubted proof of their being witches, but at length I found that the Devill did take upon him y<sup>e</sup> shape of Innocent persons & some were accused of whose innocency I was well assured & many considerable persons of unblameable life & conversation were cried out upon as witches & wizards The Deputy Gov<sup>r</sup> notwithstanding persisted vigorously in y<sup>e</sup> same method to y<sup>e</sup> great dissatisfaction & disturbance of y<sup>e</sup> people untill I put an end to y<sup>e</sup> Court & stopped y<sup>e</sup> proceedings which I did because I saw many innocent persons might otherwise perish & at that time I thought it my duty to give an account thereof that their Ma<sup>tes</sup> pleasure might be signified hoping that for the better ordering thereof y<sup>e</sup> Judges learned in the law in England might give such rules & directions as have been practized in England for proceedings in so difficult & so nice a point; When I put an end to y<sup>e</sup> Court there were at least fifty persons in prison in great misery by reason of the extream cold & their poverty most of them having only spectre evidence against them & their mittimusses being defective I caused some of them to be lett out upon bayle & put y<sup>e</sup> Judges upon considering of a way to reliefe others & prevent them from perishing in prison, upon which some of them were convinced & acknowledged that their former proceedings were too violent & not grounded upon a right foundation but that if they might sit againe, they would proceed after another method & whereas M<sup>r</sup> Increase Mathew<sup>2</sup> & severall other Divines did give it as their Judgment that y<sup>e</sup> Devill might afflict in y<sup>e</sup> shape of an innocent person & that y<sup>e</sup> look & y<sup>e</sup> touch of y<sup>e</sup> suspected persons was not sufficient prooffe against them, these things had not y<sup>e</sup> same stress layd upon them as before & upon this consideration I permitted a spetiall Superior Court to be held at Salem in y<sup>e</sup> County of Essex on y<sup>e</sup> third day of January y<sup>e</sup> Lieut Gov<sup>r</sup> being Chief Judge their method of proceeding being altered, all that were brought to tryall to y<sup>e</sup> number of fifty two, were cleared saving three & I was enformed by the Kings Attorney Generall that some of y<sup>e</sup> cleared and y<sup>e</sup> condemned were under y<sup>e</sup> same circumstances or that there was y<sup>e</sup> same reason to clear y<sup>e</sup> three condemned as y<sup>e</sup> rest a<sup>c</sup>ording to his Judgment The Deputy Gov<sup>r</sup> signed a Warrant for their speedy execu<sup>c</sup>on & also

<sup>1</sup> *Sic*: "which" omitted?

<sup>2</sup> *Sic* in copy.



of five others who were condemned at y<sup>e</sup> former Court of Oyer & terminer but considering how y<sup>e</sup> matter had been managed I sent a reprieve whereby y<sup>e</sup> execuçon was stopped untill their Maj. pleasure be signified & declared the Lieut. Gov. upon this occasion was intraged & filled with passionate anger & refused to sitt upon y<sup>e</sup> bench in a Superior Court then held at Charles Towne & indeed hath from the beginning hurried on these matters with great precipitancy & by his warrant hath caused the estates, goods & chattles of y<sup>e</sup> executed to be seized & disposed of without my knowledge or consent, the stop put to y<sup>e</sup> first method of proceedings hath dissipated y<sup>e</sup> blak cloud that threatened this Province with destruccōn; for whereas this delusion of y<sup>e</sup> Devill did spread & its dismall effects touched y<sup>e</sup> lives & estates of many of their Ma<sup>tes</sup> Subjects & y<sup>e</sup> reputaçon of some of y<sup>e</sup> principall persons here & indeed unhappily clogged and interrupted their Ma<sup>tes</sup> affaires which hath been a great vexation to me! I have no new complaints but peoples minds before divided and distracted by differing opinions concerning this matter are now well composed

I am

Yo<sup>r</sup> Lordships most faithfull  
humble Servant

WILLIAM PHIPS

[Addressed] To the Rt. Hon<sup>ble</sup>  
the Earle of Nottingham  
att Whitehall  
London

[Indorsed] R [*i. e.*, received] May 24, 93  
ab! Witches

The second paper has a less obvious but not less important bearing upon the same subject. It is the petition of Elizabeth Proctor to the General Court at the May session of 1696:—

To the Honourable Generall Court Asembled at Boston may twenty seventh 1696

the Humble petetion of Elizabeth procter widow and Relect of John procter of Salem decesed Humbly Sheweth

that in the yere of our Lord 1692 when many persons in salem and in other towns ther about were accused by som euill disposed or strangely Influenced persons; as being witches or for being guilty of acting witchcraft my sd Husband John procter and my selfe were accused as such and we both: my sd Husband and my selfe were soe farr proceeded against that we were Condemned but in that sad time of darknes before my said husband was executed it is euident som body had Contriued awill and brought it to him to signe wher in his wholl estat is disposed of not hauing Regard to acontract in wrighting mad with me before mariag with him;

but soe it pleased god to order by his providenc that although the sentanc was executed on my dere husband yet through gods great goodnes to your petetioner I am yet aliue ; sinc my husbands death the sd will is proued and aproued by the Judg of probate and by that kind of desposall the wholl estat is disposed of; and although god hath Granted my life yet those that Claime my sd husbands estate by that which thay Call awill will not suffer me to haue one peny of the estat nither vpon the account of my husbands Contract with me before mariage nor yet vpon the account of the dower which as I humbly Coceiue doth belong or ought to belong to me by the law for thay say that I am dead in the law and ther fore my humble Request and petetion to this Honoured Generall Court is that by an act of this honoured Court as god hath Contenewed my life and through gods goodnes without feare of being put to death vpon that sentanc yow would be pleased to put me Into acapacity to mak vse of the law to Recouer that which of Right by law I ought to haue for my nessesary suple and support that as I your petetioner am one of his majestyes subjects I may haue the benefett of his laws soe Humbly prayeng that god would direct your honnours in all things to doe that which may be most pleasing to him I subscrib

your honnours humble petetioner

ELIZABETH PROCTER

widow

Read. 10<sup>th</sup> June. 1696. in Council.<sup>1</sup>

This petition was read in Council June 10, 1696, as appears by the above memorandum thereon. On the 28th of September the following entries appear in the legislative records of the Council:—

“Several Petitions were read and debated and Sent down to the House of Representatives.

“The Report of a Committee Appointed by the Board at the former Sessions of this Court upon Several petitions presented and lying under Consideration was read and Sent down.”<sup>2</sup>

Unfortunately the Representatives did not begin to print their journals until 1715. There is, however, no question that such records were kept from colonial times; but, not having been duplicated for the use of the Privy Council, probably all of them prior to 1715 perished irretrievably, with many other most valuable memorials of our early history, in the fire which destroyed the Court House in 1747. No clew, therefore, can

<sup>1</sup> Mass. State Archives, vol. cxxxv. p. 109.

<sup>2</sup> Legislative Records of the Council, vol. vi. p. 447.

be obtained from that source to aid us in tracing to their end the proceedings thus briefly minuted in the records of the Council, or in ascertaining the purport of either of the petitions which were thus recorded as having been sent down for the consideration of the Representatives.

Some light, however, may be obtained from another quarter. The will of John Proctor, the husband of the above petitioner, had been admitted to probate in the Probate Court of Essex County, March 22, 1694-5, upon the complaint of Thomas Very and Elizabeth, his wife (who was a daughter of the testator), against the executors; and a committee had reported to the court, April 15, 1695, a division of the estate according to the will. After this last proceeding, and before the executors had rendered their account, the widow made the above application to the General Court.

Now, it is more reasonable to suppose that the devisees under John Proctor's will had procured some legislative action annulling the effect of his attainder, before they proceeded to demand the probate of the will, than that the judge of probate should have admitted that instrument to probate, regardless of the known attainder of the testator and the consequent forfeiture and escheat of his lands.

This surmise is strongly corroborated by the circumstance that the widow presented the above petition to the General Court, as well as by the subsequent action of the judge of probate. If the husband's disability had been removed, the widow, upon her application for dower (which I will presently consider), would have had it assigned to her, unless prevented by some other cause. But it will be remembered that she too had been attainted, and that therefore it was not enough that her husband had been reinstated: it was also necessary for her to apply to be similarly restored; otherwise she was barred by her own attainder, and was — as she complains the claimants of her husband's estate charged her with being — “dead in the law.”

Keeping these facts in mind, let us now turn to the probate records of Essex County, in search of a clew which the records and files in the State Archives fail to furnish. Here we find what certainly seems a probable solution of the mystery which involves the doings of the legislature respecting the above-named petitions after they had been sent down from the

Council, and reasonably conclusive evidence that the prayer of the widow's petition to the legislature was granted.

I cannot better show this than by giving, *verbatim*, as the third paper of this series, the record of the decree or "advice" of the judge of probate upon her petition for assignment of dower; only premising that Bartholomew Gedney, at that time Judge of Probate for Essex County, had been one of the justices of the court of oyer and terminer for the trial of the alleged witches, and that from the arrival of the charter until 1698 he was one of the Provincial Council,—the body which had considered the widow's petition to the General Court, and sent it down to the House for their action. In the absence of the record, there could be no better evidence than his personal knowledge, of the legislative proceedings of 1696. The probate record reads as follows:—

"April 19, 1697. Whereas Elizabeth Proctor, Relict, Widow of John Proctor Late of Salem dec<sup>d</sup> praying that a citation might go forth to the executors of the dec<sup>d</sup> to Render an accompt of their Executorship &c<sup>a</sup> who appear this day & say that their is no more or other Estate of the dec<sup>d</sup>s Come to their hands or possession more than what was given in p Inventory: & the said Widow being restored to the benefit of the law the Judge's advice to the Executors is that they Render the s<sup>d</sup> Widow her Dowry in the said Estate." <sup>1</sup>

Probably — it may be said, most likely — the legislature very soon began to relieve the embarrassments of courts, and of parties in judicial proceedings, and the distresses of heirs and others, caused by the judgments of the court of oyer and terminer. At all events, I think it will not be denied that the above extracts not only fairly establish the fact that Elizabeth Proctor had the relief she sought for, but furnish some reason for supposing that her husband's will was probated under a similar legislative proceeding, which, in the absence of more direct evidence, we are warranted in presuming to have taken place.

Neither should these facts be disregarded in forming a theory to explain why, after the disallowance of the "act setting forth general privileges," <sup>2</sup> corruption of blood, and escheats, as incidents to attainder for felony do not appear

<sup>1</sup> Essex Co. Probate Records, book 305, p. 252, new numbers.

<sup>2</sup> 1692-93, chap. 11.

to have been enforced by the courts throughout the subsequent history of the province. It is possible that the provisions of this act were revived and continued by a resolve, of which there is no existing record. Indeed, this resolve may have been a part of the legislation immediately following the petition of the widow Proctor, and by a common misfortune it may have shared the fate of the lost resolve which restored her forfeited rights. By that time information had been received from England of the disallowance of the "act setting forth general privileges"; and a prompt remedy may have been applied by way of resolve, which the Lieutenant-Governor, then acting as chief magistrate, would not be loath to approve, and which, if it did not clearly appear in the minutes of the Council, would escape the animadversions of the law officers of the crown. If the provisions of this act were not kept alive in some such way, it is difficult to account for the opinion which seems to have been held by the old lawyers of this State, that the act remained in force until it was superseded by similar provisions in the Constitution.<sup>1</sup>

The fourth paper offered is the following petition of John and Joseph Parker, which gives an instructive glimpse of the manner in which the sheriff proceeded against the "estates" of the attainted. It does not appear that Mary Parker was seized of any real estate at the time of her attainder; and this petition, therefore, may be of service to those who contend that the word "estates" was not used in a technical sense in any of the proceedings relative to witchcraft. To this point it may be properly said in reply, that this was the petition of persons evidently not skilled in the niceties of legal language, and therefore is not a standard for determining the intended significance of words used some fifteen years later in a formal act of legislation.

The declaration that the petitioners "know not of any law in force in this Province" by which the estate of their mother should be forfeited upon her condemnation, is evidently grounded upon the "act setting forth general privileges," which had become a law nearly one month before their petition was filed, and probably before some of the acts and demands complained of against the sheriff had been made and

<sup>1</sup> See Sullivan's History of Land Titles, p. 385; Ancient Laws and Charters (by Dane, Prescott, and Story), p. 214.

committed. By this act, as we have seen, all forfeitures and escheats, and all corruption of blood, except in cases of treason, had been abolished.

To his Excellency the Governo<sup>r</sup>, and Council and Representatives, now sitting in Boston

the humble Petition of John Parker, & Joseph Parker of Andover Sheweth,

That whereas our mother Mary Parker of Andover, was apprehended upon Suspition of Witchcraft, and being brought to a tryall at Salem Court, was condemned: Since her Death the Sherriff of Essex Sent an officer to seise on her estate. The said officer required us in their majestyes name to give him an Account of our mothers estate, pretending it was forfeited to y<sup>e</sup> King; we told him that our mother left no estate; (which we are able to make appear) notwithstanding which, he seised upon our Cattell, Corn & hay, to a considerable value: and ordered us to go down to Salem and make an agreement with y<sup>e</sup> Sherrife, otherwise the estate would be expos'd to Sale. We not knowing what advantage the Law might give him against us, and fearing we Should Sustain greater Dammage by y<sup>e</sup> loss of our estate, went to the Sherriff accordingly, who told us he might take away all that was seis'd, if he pleas'd but was willing to do us a kindness by giveing us an oportuntiy to redeem it. He at first demanded ten pounds of us, but at length was willing to take Six pounds, which he has oblig'd us by Bill to pay him within a moneth. Now if our Mother had left any estate, we know not of any Law in force in this Province, by which it Should be forfeited upon her condemnation; much less can we understand that there is any Justice or reason, for y<sup>e</sup> Sherriff to Seise upon our estate

And thô it is true ou' own act has obliged us to pay him a Summ of money, yet we declare that we were drawn to it partly by the officers great pretences of Law for what hedid, partly to prevent y<sup>e</sup> loss of our estate which we feard would be immediately Sold.

Now we humbly pray this Hon'ed Court to consider our case, and if it be judged that So much money ought not to have been demanded of us, upon the forementioned account: we pray that we may be discharg'd from that obligation, which the Sherriff, takeing advantage of our ignorance hath brought us under. And yo<sup>r</sup> Petition's as in duty bound shall ever pray &c. —

JOHN PARKER.

JOSEPH PARKER.

Dated at Andov<sup>r</sup>

7<sup>th</sup> Novemb. 1692.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mass. State Archives, vol. cxxxv. p. 65.

Lastly, I offer the following transcript and translation of the questions propounded by Joseph Dudley to the Dutch and French clergymen of New York, in October, 1692, on the subject of witchcraft, in order to procure better direction in future trials of the accused in Massachusetts. I have, in like manner, added the answers of the clergy to whom these questions were addressed. The Collections of the New York Historical Society for 1869 contain an imperfect abstract of these questions and answers, found among the papers of the Rev. John Miller, who was chaplain to the royal forces in New York from 1692 to 1695; but I do not know that they have ever been printed in full. These answers are important, as being, according to Cotton Mather, one of the causes which led Phips to first reprieve, and then pardon, many of the condemned.<sup>1</sup>

*De veneficio quæstiones Reuerendissimis e Belgio et gallia Theologis propositæ.*

Apud N. Ebor.

5<sup>o</sup> octob. 1692.

1. An concedatur quasdam per omnes ætates a primo hominis lapsu a Deo derelictas ita esse, vt se Dæmonis Seruitio (quo facilius malitiam aduersus sodales perpetrent) penitus dedissent, vulgo veneficæ appellatæ.

2. Vbi vera et formalis veneficii natura (qva data aut subla) [sublata] veneficium denominatur vere consistit.

3. An ad veneficii conuictionem Diabolicis et præternaturalibus in cruciatis actionibus, malitia, inimicitia, et maledictio præuia fit probanda, an rationabiliter tantum vt plurimum expectanda.

4. An phantasma Seu apparitio cuiusdam cruciatis vim et Injuriam Instanter ferentis absque malitia et minis præuiis ipsum illud Spectrum afflictorum oculis aut Imaginationi propositum, fit justa veneficæ conuictio.

5. An cum Sacrosancto Dei omnipotentis mundi regimine fistere possit Diabolo veniam dare innocentium formas et figuras cruciatorum oculis aut imaginationi proponere veluti authores et Instrumenta passionum.

6. an talis etiam exinde apparitio fit justa veneficii conuictio necne.

7. Num contra longam Seriem justæ christianæ et charitatis plenæ vitæ apud homines approbatam valeat grauis afflictorum criminatio veneficium euincere, præsertim vbi nulla præuia malitia innotescit.

8. An huiusmodi cruciati continua pœna lacerati, convulsi et multis miseriis pluribus menfibus contriti diluantur, minuuntur, avt etiam mag-

<sup>1</sup> See Mather's *Life of Phips*, 1697, p. 79; and again in "The Magnalia," Hartford edition, 1820, vol. i. bk. ii. p. 191.

nam naturalium Spirituum tum corporis, tum animæ consumptionem luant necne. Finaliter grauem fuspicionis causam præbeat etiam afflictis ignorantibus Dæmonis illufionem Inftare.

*Ad præcedentes quæftiones breuis refponfo.*

Respondetur ad primam quæftionem, plurimos, qui negativam partem amplexi funt, extitiffe; inter quos Plinius ille Mysteriorum naturæ Indagator, sed eximius mendax primum obtinuit locum. sed quid mirum? cum fuerint et Sint adhuc Impii qui Deum esse negent, etsi natura rerum, omnium populorum confensus, ipsa Improborum conscientia et variæ Divinæ reuelationes aduersus Impium dogma Invictiffime militent.

Verum maxima pars virorum doctorum Sanio rem mentem habentes contrariam Iniere Sententiam. Et reuera qui potest in dubium vocari quin sint, qui cum Diabolo immediatum commercium habeant, nisi prius lex et Evangelium Dei meræ existimentur fabulæ, omnium populorum consensus ut pura puta Stultitia deiciatur, et ratio humana prorfus explodatur.

Nam Si Diabolum esse Supponas (quod nisi fieri velis Impius supponere debes) eumque creaturam summè miserā, Invidam, astutam et potentem, nullum lapidem ad explendam Invidiam, et miseriam propriam quodam modo miserorū confortio subleuandam mouere non debet, tentabit homines et in castra Sva trahere conabitur, ut exinde in idem Barathrum fecum protrudat. In hunc finem mendaciis, præstigiis, promissionibus, voluptatibus aut fictis aut veris, honoribus, diuitiis aliisque innumeris vtetur illecebris. quid! eruntne tot et tantæ tentationes Semper irritæ? præsertim in homines carnales et Sensuum voluptatibus deditos! in eos Imprimis, qui nihil nisi præsentia curant. hoc verisimile non est. igitur pro hominum moribus et astutia potentiaque Diaboli, esse homines qui cum Diabolo commercium immediatum habeant concludere possumus. Astipulatur rationi confensus omnium populorum. quid? an verum non est quod omnes gentes verum esse testantur. meritiffimo iure credimus esse Deum, quia nullus fuit Inquam populus qui Deum esse fassus non fuerit. verum præsumi debet, quod a Duobus vel tribus dicitur esse verum, multo magis quod vnanimi consensu populorum asferitur. Jam autem si hoc non fuit populorum sententia inter homines esse quosdam qui cum Diabolo immediate communicent, cur Singulæ gentes quædam nomina propria et aptata ad tales homines Indicandos habuere? veluti אַרְבַּךְ inter hebræos, Πυθων, vel Φαρμακογυννη [sic] inter græcos, Sage et venefica Inter Romanos &c. eruntne mera nomina et voces absque fundamento factæ? sed accedit quod leges aduersus tales homines latæ fuerint, ut ipse plinius refert de quodam Cresino, qui coactus est ut se veneficii crimine purgaret, coram Iudicibus comparere. Plin. lib. 18. 6.



Jn promptu efset multorum exempla narrare, qvi arte Diabolica fibi famam compararunt, vt mulieris illius, qvæ vt ait Aeron, carminibus et herbis mala hominibus accessere vel pellere dicebatur, et ejus iterum, quæ Juxta Apul. poterat cælum deponere, terram suspendere, fontes durare, montes diluere, manes Sublimare, Deos Jnfirmare; fed qvis efset narrandi finis. Consensum populorum excipiunt lex et Euangelium. tempore Mosis veneficos fuifse nemo negavit, siquidem, Mose ipso referente, præstigiatrices et Spiritum Pythonis habente[s] mandato Dei morte plecti deberent; Exo. 22. Deu. 20 [*sic*]. — Erant etiam certe tempore Saulis, cum et ipse Pythoniffã confuluerit, Quid! nonne patet Scriptis Prophetarum Ægyptios, chananæos, Philistæos, Sydonios, Tyrios, Moabitas, Ammonitas, Jdumæos et ipsos Jsraëlitas præstigiis et præstigiatoribus fuifse deditos? certe illi præstigiatores et Spiritum Pythonis habentes aut nihil erant præter ficta nomina, aut commercium Jmmediatū cum diabolo habebant. Jdem narrāonibus Euangelicis euincitur. tempore christi et Apostolorum præstigiatores erant et Pythonissæ. hoc tam clarē patet euangelistarum et Apostolorum acta et Scripta legentibus, vt locis indicandis operam nauandam non existimen.

Possemus etiam, si liberet æui nostri de fagis et præstigiatoribus historias narrare, fed nullvs efset narrandi finis; legantur hemmingivs de Magia, et Danæus de fortiariis.

ad 2<sup>m</sup> quæs<sup>t</sup>

Respondetur rationem formalem venefici [*sic*] in confæderaōne cum Diabolo consistere. Jn eo Scilicet quod homo Jmperium Dei creatoris nostri ac supremi Regis, cui ratione dependentiæ nostræ in omnibus obedire, et cujus gloriam pro virili aduersvs ejus hostes tueri tenemur, [deserit] in Jn [*sic*] Castra Diaboli aduersvs Deum militaturus transit, vt Jmperium Diaboli quantum in se est ampliet et Stabiliat. Jn cujus defectionis compensationem, ad implendas libidines fvas opem Diabolus illi vicissim promittit. Jtaq ex una parte homo Jugum Dei excutit præceptis ejus et promissionibus valedicens, vt totum se Diabolo mancipet eumque Loco Dei habeat; et ex altera parte, unam hominis libidinem aut plures aut omnes Se expleturum Diabolus Spondet.

ad 3<sup>m</sup> quæs<sup>t</sup>.

Respondetur cum inimicitia aut malitia præuia indicium certum ad aliquem veneficii conuincendum minime præbeat; siquidem et vir bonus Jn inimicitiam aduersvs proximum concipere possit, et nocendi Studium fouere, et homo malus et Diabolicus artem pefsimum sub amicitia et benevolentia ficta occultare; nihil efse inquirendum de malitia prævia in eo, qvi arte Diabolica et actionibus præternaturalibus hominibus mala accessere legitime conuinci potest. Nam in tali homine nocendi Studium tanquam in mancipio Diaboli supponendum est, quibuscunq

modis prauitatem Suam occultare conetur. hæc enim est ars Diaboli et mancipiorum ejus vt quantum fieri potest animum et oculos perspicacium fallant et omnem amoueat Suspicionem.

ad 4<sup>am</sup> quæs.

Respondetur ad conuictionem venefici aut veneficæ nullo modo Sufficere Phantasma feu apparitionem cujusdam vim et Injuriam cruciatis instanter facientis, etiam si Inimicitia et minæ præceserint. ratio est quia Diabolus viri boni Speciem potest Induere et illam cruciatorum oculis tanquam principium afflictionum, quas patiuntur, intentare. si enim oculis Saulis viri Dei demortui Samuelis objicere potuit, quidni viri Dei viuentis figuram oculis eorum, quos Immediate vexat intentare poterit, vt odium, mærorem, vincula, et etiam mortem accersat illis; nec ad inimicitiam præuiam vel minas attendendum est, quia hæc pariter in virum probum et improbum cadere possunt.

ad 5<sup>am</sup> quæs.

Respondetur minime aduersari Sanctissimo Dei regimini quod vexare aliquem induta viri cujusdam boni imagine Diabolo permittat. vt Deus est Supremus mundi Monarcha et summum jus habet in creaturas, hæc pariter illi licent et creaturam affligere, et ad id quibuslibet Instrumentis vti, præsertim cum malum in bonum mutandi calleat artem peritissime. et quidquid agit propter bonos fines agat. Jobum virum sanctum mirum in modum vexandi Diabolo licentiam dedit, et per tentationis euentum gloriam suam illustrauit, patientiam et virtutem ferui Sui manifestauit, et Satanam confudit. cum Diabolus Dominum nostrum I. C. in deserto tentauit oculis ejus Jdeam et imaginem totius mundi Imperiorū ostentauit. hoc nullam aspersit labem regimini Dei, qui passus est vt inimicus Infensissimus in dilectum suum imagine mundi abuteretur, cur igitur aduersaretur ejus Imperio Sanctissimo si viri boni imagine diabolū abuti patiatur? Verum dices, Deo ita permittente, virum bonum in odium et vitæ discrimen immerito venturum; quid! tum post ea? an non licebit Deo virum peccatorem etfi fidelem et pium in hoc calamitosum vitæ gens detrudere, ad tentendam ejus pietatem et virtutem? nonne Job vir Sanctissimus ab amicis Suis propter calamitosam conditionem Suam et contemptus et Lacefsitus fuit? Certe talem tantam calamitatem vir pius et Sanctus nullo modo meruerat. Jtaque si Semel Deum posse creaturam immerentem affligere concesseris, vt illi liceat quibusuis instrumentis vti illico concedas oportet. hic autem creaturam immerentem voco, non quæ ab omni labe prorsus Sit immunis; nulla enim talis est inter homines, sed quæ patitur ob injustâ et falsam accusationem, talem autem creaturam affligi Deus pati potest pro Summo Sui Jure etfi talem afflictionis speciem, habito hominum respectu non fit commerita.

ad 6<sup>m</sup> qvæsti.

Respondetur quum nihil impediât qvin Diabolus Jmpostor et præstigiator oculos et phantasiâ hominum fascinare valeat, et imaginem viri boni iis quos ipse immediate vexat, intentare, vt supra obseruatum est; maxime Jmprudentiâ foret talem hominem vt veneficum condemnare propter hanc raõnem, qvòd ejus imago cruciatis, dum patiuntur, obuersetur. Jn hoc casu Judices perspicaces et cauti esse debent, ne confilio et astutiâ Dæmonis Jmprudentes faueant; nam dvo simul Jntendere potest, Scilicet vnum vexare ad alterius imaginis presentiam, et illum cujus imaginem protendit in malam famam et vitæ discrimen conjicere, est enim et mendax, et tortor, et homicida.

ad 7<sup>m</sup>

Respondetur linguam [*sic*] vitæ probæ et charitatis plenæ feriem et modum vivendi omnibus probatum à veneficii accusatis cruciatorum testimonio, criminis Jntentati suspicionem probabiliter amouere; vix enim fieri potest vt qvi in Diaboli castris militat, Speciem militis christi diu valeat effingere. verum tamen hoc indicium certum et indubitatum falsæ criminationis esse non existimem; qvia non video, cur homo astutus artes Diabolicas sub bonæ vitæ Specie, vt suspicionem et justam condemnationem effugiat occultare non possit. ipse Diabolus verum aliquando dicit, et bonum morale concionatur vt facilius et cautius fallat.

ad 8<sup>m</sup> qvæst.

Respondetur fieri posse vt qvi reuera a Diabolo cruciantur, conveluntur et multis miseris per plures menses affliguntur nullam corporis diminutionem, nullamque Spirituum debilitatem patiantur. ratio est quia Stomacha nullam læsionem patiente nutritio potest esse perfecta; Jmo Diabolo Sic procurante Stomachus cruciatorum validior factus majorem alimenterum copiam appetet et deglutiet qvam antea Solebat, et ea perfecte deqvoquendo et digerendo omne damnum per cruciatus illatum facili negotio refarciet. Deinde dubitandum non est quin Diabolus, Deo ita permittente, Spirituum naturalium dissipationem Jmpedire valeat. Ego alias me hominem mania affectum vidisse testor, qvi Singulis menfibus cir[c]a plenilunium per octo dies per montes et campos vagabatur nullum alimentum per id tempus deglutiens præter aquam, qvi tamen nec corporis, nec roboris, nec faciei coloris diminutionem aut mutationem patiabatur. Spiritus naturales non solum inedia non frangebantur, sed vi morbi in Statu et conditione nativa retinebantur. qvòd autem causa qvòdam modo naturalis præstat, Diabolū præstare posse non dubito, cum et actiuus passiva et passivis activa adaptare bene novit.

finis

has præcedentes Solutiones ad quæstiones propofitas vt veras no<sup>o</sup> Jnfra Scripti approbamus.

in nostro  
congressu  
ecclesiasti[c]o  
11 Octob. 1692.

HENRICUS SELIJNS }  
PETRUS PEIRETUS } Miniftri Neo-Eborenfes.  
GODEFRIDUS DELLIUS  
Belg. Ecclæ. Neo Alb<sup>o</sup> Miñ:  
RUDOLPHUS VARICH  
Miñ in Midwoort

*Questions concerning Witchcraft, laid before the most reverend clergy from Belgium and France.*

At New York  
Oct. 5, 1692.

1. Whether it is indisputable that in all ages, since the first fall of man, some women, commonly called witches, have been so abandoned by God, that they have given themselves wholly to the service of the Devil, in order the more easily to exercise their malice against their fellow-men?

2. Where[in] does the exact and formal nature of Witchcraft (that which, whether given or tendered, is called witchcraft) truly consist?

3. Whether in order to convict of Witchcraft by Diabolical and preternatural acts towards the tormented, it is necessary to prove previous malice enmity and cursing, or whether these are to be reasonably presumed, [as] in most cases?

4. Whether the spectre or apparition of one who has previously neither shown malice nor made threats, put before the eye or imagination of the afflicted, as immediately exercising force and injury upon them, is sufficient for a just conviction of a witch?

5. Whether giving the Devil permission to place before the eyes or the imagination of the afflicted the forms and figures of innocent persons, as the authors and instruments of their sufferings, is consistent with the holy government of the world by Almighty God?

6. Further, whether or not such an apparition is of itself sufficient for a just conviction of witchcraft?

7. Whether a serious accusation by the afflicted is sufficient to prove witchcraft, against a long continued consistent, just, Christian life, full of charity, and approved by mankind, where no previous malice is made known?

8. Whether or not those who are, in such manner, tortured by continual pains, wounded, convulsed and threatened with many miseries, through several months, are worn out, wasted or suffer even a great loss of their natural spirits, bodily, as well as mental? Finally, whether this does not furnish grave cause for suspicion that the Devil has exhibited an illusion, without the knowledge of the afflicted?

*A Short Answer to the foregoing Questions.*

It is replied to the first question, that there have been many who have maintained the negative, among whom Pliny, the famous investigator of the mysteries of nature (although an extremely mendacious one), stands first. This is not to be wondered at, since there have been, and still are, impious men who even deny the existence of a God, although nature, the consent of all nations, the very consciences of the wicked, and various divine revelations, militate most triumphantly against this impious dogma. But the majority of the learned, possessing sounder minds, have adopted the contrary opinion. And, indeed, how can it be doubted that there are persons who have immediate commerce with the Devil, unless the divine law and gospel be considered as mere fables, the concurrent opinion of all nations be rejected as pure stupidity, and human reason totally exploded? For, if you suppose the existence of a Devil (which must be supposed unless you intend to become impious), and that he is a most miserable, envious, cunning and powerful creature, he is one who will leave no stone unturned to gratify his envy, and alleviate his own misery in some manner, by consorting with other wretches; he will tempt men, and try to drag them into his camp, in order that thereafter he may thrust them into his own abyss. To this end, he makes use of lies, miracles, promises, fictitious or real sensual indulgences, honors, riches, and other innumerable allurements. Can it be supposed that so many and great temptations will be ineffectual, especially with carnal men, given to sensual pleasures? and, above all, with those who care for nothing but the present? This is not probable; therefore, in view of the common conduct of mankind, and the cunning and power of the Devil, we may conclude that there are people who have immediate commerce with the Devil.

To this reasonable conclusion all nations consent; and can it be supposed that that is not true, to the truth of which all nations testify? We have the best right to believe that there is a God, because, I affirm, there never was a nation which has not acknowledged his existence. What is affirmed by two or three is presumed to be true; how much more certain is that which is unanimously asserted by all nations! But even if it had not been the judgment of all nations that there are those among men who associate immediately with the Devil, why has every nation had certain peculiar and fitting names to denote such people? — as, for instance, אַנִּי with the Hebrews, Πυθων or Φαρμακογυνη with the Greeks, *saga* and *venefica* with the Romans, etc. Are these mere names, made up without any real foundation? But it must be added that laws have been made against such people; as Pliny himself reports of a certain Cresinus, who was compelled to appear before the

judges, in order to clear himself from the charge of witchcraft: Plin. 18. 6. It would be easy to relate many instances of persons who have acquired a reputation for devilish arts, as the woman mentioned by Acron, who was said to inflict upon people, or expel from them, evils by means of incantations and herbs; and, again, of her, in Apulia, who could call down the sky, suspend the earth, render the springs solid, and the rocks liquid, raise the spirits of the dead, and deprive the gods of their power: but where shall this narrative end?

After the consensus of all nations, come the law and the gospel. That witches existed in the time of Moses, no one has denied. Moses himself declares that witches, and those that had the spirit of a python, were, by commandment of God, to be punished with death: Exod. 22; Deut. 20 [18]. Moreover, there were such in the time of Saul, since he himself consulted a pythouess. And is it not plain from the writings of the prophets, that the Egyptians, Canaanites, Philistines, Sidonians, Tyrians, Moabites, Ammonites, Idumeans, and the Israelites themselves, were given to miracles and miracle-working? Assuredly, those wizards, and persons having the spirit of a python, were either nothing but fictitious names, or they had immediate intercourse with the Devil.

The Gospel narratives also prove the same thing. In the days of Christ and the Apostles there were miracle-workers, and women who were soothsayers. This is so clearly evident to every reader of the Acts, and the writings of the Evangelists and Apostles that I do not think it worth while to quote the passages.

We might also, if we chose, recount the history of witches and wizards in our own age; but there would be no end of narrating. Let those who desire this information, read Hemming, "*De Magia*," and Daneau, "*De Sortiariis*."<sup>1</sup>

To the second question it is replied, that the formal essence of witchcraft consists in an alliance with the Devil; that is to say, in that men [desert] the realm of God our Creator and Supreme King—whom all are bound to obey in everything by reason of our dependence upon him, and whose glory every one, to the extent of his ability, is bound to maintain against his enemies—and go over to the camp of the Devil, in order to fight against God, so as to increase and strengthen, as

<sup>1</sup> I gratefully acknowledge the service done me by Professor Henry W. Haynes, not only in carefully collating the above copy with the original manuscript, and in critically revising the translation, but in ascertaining for me the full titles of the works here referred to, and the names of their obscure authors, as follows:—

Hemming, Nicolas: *Admonitio de superstitionibus magicis vitandis*. Hafn., 1578. 8vo.

Daneau, Lambert: *De veneficio, quos olim sortilegos, nunc autem vulgo sortiarios vocant, dialogus*. Genev., 1573. 8vo.

much as they can, the kingdom of the Devil. In return for this defection, the Devil, on his part, promises them his aid to gratify their lusts. Thus man, on the one part, throws off the yoke of God, bidding farewell to His precepts and promises, in order to belong wholly to the Devil, whom he holds in the place of God; and, on the other part, the Devil engages to satisfy one or all or most of the lusts of the man.

To the third question it is replied, that — since previous enmity or malice by no means offers certain evidence for conviction of witchcraft (it being possible for even a good man to conceive enmity against his neighbor, and to foster a desire to injure him; and for a bad and devilish man to be able to conceal the very worst practices under the appearance of friendship and benevolence) — no inquiry concerning previous malice is necessary, in the case of one whom it is possible lawfully to convict of having afflicted others with evils by devilish arts, and supernatural actions; for the desire to do harm must be presumed in such a man, (as being a slave of the Devil) though he may attempt to cover his wickedness by what means soever. For such is the cunning of the Devil, and his servants, that they deceive, as much as possible, the eyes and minds of the discerning, and remove all suspicion.

To the fourth question it is replied, that the spectre or apparition of one who immediately works violence and injury upon the afflicted, is by no means sufficient to convict a wizard or a witch, although preceded by enmity and threats. The reason is, because the Devil can assume the shape of a good man, and present this shape before the eyes of the afflicted, as the source of the afflictions which they suffer. For, if he was able to place the shape of the dead man of God, Samuel, before the eyes of Saul, why can he not be able to exhibit the shape of a living man of God to the eyes of those whom he presently afflicts, in order that he may bring hatred, afflictions, fetters, and even death upon them? Nor is any attention to be paid to previous enmity or threats; because such may befall a just man equally with a wicked man.

To the fifth question it is replied, that it is by no means repugnant to God's most holy government, that he permits the Devil in the shape of a good man, to annoy any one. As God is the supreme monarch of the world, and has a sovereign right over his creatures he is at liberty equally to afflict his creatures and to make use of any instrument he may choose for this end, — especially as he is most skilful in turning evil into good. Whatever he does he may do for a good purpose. He permitted the Devil to marvellously vex the holy man, Job, and by the event of the temptation, illustrated his own glory, manifested the patience and virtue of his servant, and confounded Satan. When the Devil tempted our Lord Jesus Christ in the wilderness, he spread before his eyes the idea and image of the empires of the whole world. It did not affix a stain on the government of God, to suffer his most malign

nant enemy to abuse the image of the world against his Beloved One ; why, therefore, should it be deemed repugnant to his most sacred authority, for him to allow the Devil to abuse the spectre of a good man ?

But you will say, If God thus permits, a good man will incur undeserved hatred, and stand trial for life or death. What then ? Shall not God be allowed to thrust a sinful, though faithful and pious man into such calamitous experience in order to try his piety and virtue ? Was not the most holy man, Job, despised as well as reviled by his friends because of his miserable condition ? That pious and holy man had certainly in no way merited his calamities. If, therefore, you once concede that God can afflict an innocent creature, you must further admit that he is at liberty to make use of whatever instruments he pleases. By "an innocent creature" however, I mean here, not one who is entirely spotless (for such an one does not exist among men), but one who suffers by reason of an unjust and false accusation. But God, in accordance with his supreme right, can suffer such a creature to be afflicted although, from a human standpoint, it has not deserved such a kind of affliction.

To the sixth question it is replied : although nothing hinders the Devil, as an impostor and juggler, from exercising the power to bewitch the eyes and fancy of men, and to present the spectre of a good man to those whom he himself is vexing, as is above observed, still to condemn such a man as a wizard, for the reason that his spectre is presented to the afflicted while they are suffering, would be the greatest imprudence. In such case, the judges must be astute and cautious lest they rashly favor the purpose and cunning of the Devil ; for he may intend two things at once ; namely, to vex the one, while he exhibits the spectre of the other, and so to bring the latter, whose image he is simulating, into bad repute and danger of his life — for he is a liar as well as a tormentor and murderer.

To the seventh question it is replied, that an honest and charitable life and conduct, of long continuance, such as meets with universal approbation, probably removes the suspicion of criminal intent from those who are accused of witchcraft by the testimony of the afflicted ; for it can hardly be that he who fights in the camp of the Devil should have the power, for a great while, to put on the appearance of a soldier of Christ. Nevertheless, I should not believe this to be sure and indubitable evidence of false accusation, because I do not see why a cunning man may not conceal his devilish practices under the semblance of a good life, in order to escape suspicion and righteous condemnation. The Devil himself sometimes tells the truth, and proclaims good morals, in order the more easily and insidiously to deceive.

To the eighth question it is replied, that it is possible for those who



are really tortured, convulsed and afflicted by the Devil with many miseries, during several months, to suffer no wasting of the body, and no weakening of their spirits. The reason is, that nutrition is perfect — the stomach suffering no injury. On the contrary, if the Devil so procure it, the stomach of the tortured, having become stronger, will crave and swallow greater quantities of nourishment than before, and will easily repair all the injury caused by the tortures, by perfectly digesting and assimilating its supply of food. Hence it is not to be doubted that the Devil (God permitting it), has power to prevent the impairment of the natural spirits. I testify that I have seen elsewhere, a man affected with mania who every month about the time of the full moon wandered in the mountains and through the fields, for eight days, taking no nourishment but water during that time, who, nevertheless, suffered no diminution or change either of body, vigor, or color. His natural spirits were not only not broken by his fasting, but were preserved in their normal state and condition by the power of his malady. That the Devil can produce that which is produced by a kind of natural cause I do not doubt, since he well knows how to balance liabilities with assets and assets with liabilities <sup>1</sup>

The End.

We the undersigned affirm the above-written solutions of the questions propounded, to be true.

In our  
church  
congress,

HENRY SELIJNS }  
PETER PEIRETUS. } Ministers of New York.  
GODFREY DELLIUS, Minister of the Dutch  
Church at New Albany.

11 October, 1692.

RUDOLPH VARICH,  
Minister at Flatbush.

Mr. YOUNG presented to the Society, from Mr. T. Fales Gray, of Boston, a book of manuscript sermons of the Rev. Dr. Samuel Stillman, who, born in Philadelphia in 1737, was for more than forty years pastor of the First Baptist Church in this city, and was a most eloquent and popular preacher. He was one of the founders of Brown University, and he belonged

<sup>1</sup> From two or three conjectural translations of this passage, neither of which was very certain, I have adopted the above upon the authority of a friend whose long familiarity with Latin authors, ancient and modern, had conclusive weight with me on a point of such difficulty that the learned gentleman for whose careful revision of these pages I have above acknowledged my obligation would not attempt to decide what was the precise idea intended to be conveyed by this phrase.

also to the Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, the Relief of Free Negroes unlawfully held in Bondage, and for improving the Condition of the African Race; and his certificate of membership in that Society was also presented.

Edward Channing, Ph.D., of Cambridge, was elected a Resident Member of the Society.

Mr. DEANE, from the Committee on the Trumbull Papers, reported that a volume of them would shortly be ready for distribution. This volume will consist of papers relating to the Narragansett country, and of letters of Dr. William Samuel Johnson to the governors of Connecticut, from 1767 to 1771. He was sent to London as the agent of that State to look after the celebrated Mohegan case before the Privy Council. While there, he attended the sittings of Parliament during the interesting period which followed the repeal of the Stamp Act, and in his letters he reported many speeches and detailed the gossip of the time. These letters are written with great freedom and elegance; and it was proposed to publish them soon after they were obtained by this Society in 1795, but the consent of the writer, who was then President of Columbia College, could not be obtained.

Dr. ELLIS expressed great satisfaction that a volume from the Trumbull Papers, which had been long in possession of the Society, was to be printed; and he hoped that other volumes from this large collection of historical material would soon follow.

Dr. E. E. HALE remarked that the report of one of the most brilliant of Chatham's speeches was due to the pen of Dr. Johnson. He said, also, that the official account of the battle of Bunker Hill was written by the Rev. Peter Thacher, when he was twenty-three years of age, and as he saw it from the Malden side of the river, and that the variations in the British account are to be explained by the fact that it was written from the opposite side.

Many interesting anecdotes and personal reminiscences were given by various members at this meeting.