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A  
SEARCH  
FOR THE  
English Schismatick:

By the CASE and CHARACTERS,

I. Of the *Diocesan Cazoneers*.

II. Of the *Present Meer Nonconformists*.

Not as an *Accusation* of the former, but a Necessary  
*Defence* of the later, so far as they are wrongfully  
Accused and Persecuted by them.

---

By *Richard Baxter*, One of the Accused.

---

L O N D O N :

Printed for *Nevill Simmons*, at the Sign of the *Three  
Golden Cocks* at the West-end of *St. Pauls  
Church - Yard*. 1681.

A

# SEARCH

FOR THE

## English Schismatics:

By the CASE and CHARACTERS

I. Of the Diocesan Canoniers.

II. Of the Present Most Nonconformists.

Not as an Abrogation of the former, but a Necessary  
System of the later, so far as they are wrongfully  
Accused and Persecuted by them.

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By Richard Baxter, One of the Accused.

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Printed for Nevill Simmons, at the Sign of the Tree  
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Church-Yard. 1684.

# POSTSCRIPT.

**T**HE strivings of Parliaments since Archbishop Laud's Government, against Innovations, Popery and Arbitrary overtopping Law, and their jealousies of the designs and progress, while they themselves were of the Old Church of England, do call us to think what the difference was between the Old and New.

**H**E that would know what the Old Church of England is, let him read,

- I. *The 39 Articles.*
- II. *The Homilies.*
- III. *The Apology, with Jewels defence.*
- IV. *Nowell's Catechism.*
- V. *Deus & Rex (all owned by the Church).*
- VI. *Hookers Ecclesiastical Polity, in 8 Books.*
- VII. *Bishop Bilson of Christian Subjection.*
- VIII. *Bishop Downham de Antichristo.*
- IX. *The great Writers against Popery, as Dr. Whitaker, Dr. Reynolds, Dr. Willet, Dr. Sutliff, Dr. White, Dr. Airy, Dr. Humphrey, Dr. Fulk, Dr. Prideaux, Dr. R. Abbot, Dr. Crakenthorp, Dr. Challoner, Dr. Hall, Bishop Usher, Dr. Davenant, Bishop Carlton, Chillingworth, Bishop Morton, &c.*

**H**E that would know what is the New Church of England, since Bishop Laud differs from the Old, let him read,

- I. *Dr. Heylin's Writings, Dr. Pocklingtons, Mr. Dows, Sybthorps and Mainwarings.*
- II. *Heylin's Life of B. Laud, particularly his description of the designed reconciliation with the Papists.*
- III. *Mr. Thorndike's Just weights and measures, and forbearance of Penalties.*
- IV. *Archbishop Bramhall's book against me, explaining the new way in these particulars,*
  1. *To abhor Popery.*
  2. *That we all come under a Foreign Jurisdiction, obeying the Pope as the Western Patriarch, and also as the Principium unitatis to the universal Church, Governing by the Canons.*
  3. *That Dissenters from this be accounted Schismatics.*
  4. *That we yield to what the Greeks have yielded, and be*

X. *The Writings against Bishop Laud, viz. Bishop Hall's Epistle to D. L. Archbishop G. Abbots, and Bishop R. Abbot's judgment of him, and his Tryal, with what was there charged against him.*

XI. *The Harmony of Confessions, and the Synod of Dort.*

XII. *King James's Works.*

*of their Religion.* 5. *That Grotius was a Protestant for the Church of England.*

W. *Dr. Parkers Preface to that book, and Dr. Pierce's defence of Grotius.*

VI. *Grotius his Volume and Notes on Cassander, specially his Discussio Apologetica Rivetiani; in which he professeth, 1. That Rome is the Mistis-Church. 2. Sound in faith. 3. That he finds*

*Protestants can never unite, but by uniting with Rome. 4. He owns the Doctrine of the Councils, even that of Trent. 5. The Pope to govern by the Canons of the Councils, and not arbitrarily. 6. Nor must invade the rights of Kings or Bishops. 7. That if the curiosities of the School-men, and the ill lives of the Clergy be disowned and amended, this much is enough to sober men. 8. And he saith that the English Bishops were many of his mind, tho' the Separatists were not.*

VII. *The Earl of Clarendon's Defence of Dr. Stillingfleet, laying the nature of Popery in their injury to Princes.*

VIII. *Guil. Forbes, Bishop of Edenborough his Irenicon.*

IX. *Mr. Dodwell's book against Schism, and the same doctrine maintained by others who nullifie Ministry and Churches, whose Episcopal Ordination hath not come down from the Apostles uninterrupted.*

X. *The Bishops endeavours since 1660, to silence, fine, imprison, banish, and drive five miles from all Corporations, &c. all such as receive not the Impositions. Together with the rest of the true History of these last Twenty years.*

*The particulars are not now to be recited.*



( 1 )  
A  
S E A R C H  
FOR THE  
*ENGLISH SCHISMATICK:*


O R,  
The True Characters of the several  
Accused Parties, by which they  
may be discerned.

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CHAP. I.

*The Parties Accused.*

The Parties questioned are, I. *The Papists.*  
II. *The Diocesan-Militants, or Canoneers.* III. *The*  
*Passive peaceable Conformists.* IV. *The Meer Non-*  
*conformists.* V. *The Sectarian Church-Appropriators,*  
*and Causeless Separatists and Dividers.*

I.  HERE is no Sect of Christians  
which maketh so great use of their  
pretence to Unity, and crying  
down Heresie, Schism and Separation,  
as the Papists do; and yet  
are the greatest Schismaticks and  
Dividers, as thus appeareth.

i. They have a self-made humane universal Church,  
B feigning

feigning the Pope to be the rightful Head of all the Christian World.

2. They exclude all from Christs Church, who are not the Popes Subjects, though at the Antipodes, where he never came nor sent.

3. They presume to make universal Laws for all the World.

4. They Curse men from Christ by Excommunications, who refuse such subjection and obedience to these Laws.

5. They have introduced many new Articles of Faith, on pretence of declaring and expounding Faith.

6. They have multiplied corrupting additions in the Christian Worship.

7. Their regular objective Religion now consisteth in so great a number of the Decrees of Councils, as no Christians can well understand, while they accuse Gods Laws as unintelligible.

8. They can give us no certainty which of these Councils are obligatory to us, while they contradict each other.

9. They agree not of the Essence of Christianity, or necessary truths ; but resolve all into the uncertainty of [*sufficient Proposals*].

10. They damn men as Hereticks that deny not all humane sense, believing there is no Bread and Wine, when they see and taste them.

11. They burn such as Hereticks, and are for tormenting Inquisitions to destroy them.

12. They bind Temporal Lords to exterminate all such, and to swear to do it ; and this on pain of Excommunication, Deposition and Damnation : So that a Protestant Kingdom under a true Papist King, hath a King that is  
thus

thus bound to exterminate his Subjects, if he be able ; and professeth to do it on these three penalties, his Salvation lying on it.

13. They decree the giving of his Dominions to another, and absolving his Subjects from their Oaths of Fidelity, if he obey not.

14. They decree, that it's Heresie to hold that a King hath the power of Investing Bishops, and that he is not thus subject to the Pope.

15. They tolerate their chief Doctors to write, that a Heretick is no King, at least if Excommunicate, and may lawfully be killed.

16. Their Canons exempt the Clergy from being Governed and Taxed by Kings.

17. They forbid the reading of the Scriptures translated, without a License.

18. They say that we cannot well believe the Gospel, but on the credit of their Church: As if we must first know that the Pope and Council are authorized by Christ, before we believe in Christ himself.

19. They renounce Repentance by pretending to Infallibility.

20. They cherish a numerous Clergy and Sects, to carry on all this in the World, and perswade high and low, that to promote their Church and Cause, is meritorious of Salvation.

II. By the *Passive Conformist*, I mean both such as go on the grounds of Mr. *Sprint*, and think a Reformation very desirable, but Conformity lawful to escape silencing and ruine ; and such as like Conformity for it self, and wish all others did Conform, but like not uncharitable censures, or silencings, or violence against conscio-

nable Dissenters, nor the compulsions which have caused our Church-convulsions. Though the Nonconformists must needs judge these to *partake in Schism*, so far as they own the Schismatical dividing terms of Communion, which are the greatest hinderance of our Concord, and will be still inconsistent with it; yet as they reproach not Dissenters as Schismatics, so neither are they accounted *Schismatics* by the Dissenters, because they are found and peaceable brethren, and desire to live as such with others, and Schism is not their disposition nor predominant. We would live in greater Love and Concord with such as these, than the differing Conformists have with one another.

III. The names of *Sectaries* and *Separatists* are of no fixed signification, but vary according to the mind of the speaker. But I now use them for those, 1. Who *appropriate the Church* to some narrow *Sect* or *Party*, which denieth all others to be true Churches, or to have true Ministers and Sacraments. 2. And next to those, that though they own others as true Churches or Ministers, yet hold their Communion unlawful, when it is not so, and renounce Communion with them on these grounds.

Such besides Papists, are too many Prelatists, that deny the Ministry, Sacraments and Communion of the Reformed Churches, which are not such as they; yea of all Churches that have not an Episcopacy by uninterrupted Succession of Episcopal Ordination from the Apostles, and that excommunicate all that do but say that there are any true Churches in *England* but their own. And such are some *Anabaptists*, some called *Brownists*, or *Separatists* heretofore, &c. And the *Seekers* are much worse, that deny all Churches; and the *Quakers* and *Ranters*, who

who revile the soundest ; and all true Hereticks, who separate by denying some Essential of Christianity. All these are Schismaticks in the judgment of all sound and sober Christians.

IV. By *Active Canonical Conformists*, I mean those that are for the present frame of Ecclesiastical Government, with the Liturgy and Canons, and the Laws which enforce them (who call usually for the Execution of those Laws).

V. By the *meer present Nonconformists*, I mean such as are guilty of no other punishable errors or sins, but such as the Act of Uniformity doth eject and silence us for ; and who declared openly their judgments about Doctrine, Worship and Discipline, in 1660, after a Common meeting at *Sion-Colledge*, and another at the *Savoy*, which is published in Print ; That is, the *Reconcilers*, or *Peacemakers*, who then laboured and beg'd for Peace and Unity in vain ; who tye themselves to the judgment of none called Nonconformists heretofore, Presbyterians, Independents, &c. but to the Word of God, and the example of the true Primitive Churches, and are not for Concord only with a Sect, or a dividing party, High or Low, but for that *Catholick Church* and *Communion of Saints*, which are in our Creed.

Schism being a culpable rending of Christians from each other, hath a great number of degrees (as it is by Apostasie from the Universal Church totally, or by denying a fundamental, by Heresie ; or as it is but by denying Integrals, or but Accidents ; as it is but from a particular Church, a Church of Gods forming, or of mans ; As it is from a Church, as if it were no Church, or a corrupt

rupt Church falsely said, or only a less desirable ; as it is from a Parish-Church, a Diocesan, a National, &c. As it is *total* or *partial*, or but in some *accidents* from that particular Church, holding Communion in all the rest ; As it is mental, or but causeless local ; As it is from a Church, or only from some persons in a Church-Pastor, or others ; As it is by driving men by sinful Impositions from a Church, or too easily departing ; with many the like differences elsewhere opened.) So that as all men have some degree of ignorance, pride, hypocrisie, &c. and yet are not to be denominated ignorant, proud hypocrites, where it is not predominant ; so all are defective in Love and Union, and few Churches on earth are no way guilty of Schism, and yet are not to be called Schismatics, where it is not predominant.

Almost all Churches on earth accuse each other of Schism ; the Papists so accuse the Greeks, Protestants, and all others ; the Greeks so accuse the Papists and Protestants (as the Patriarch *Jeremiah* shews us), and both the *Abassines*, *Jacobins*, *Nestorians*, &c. The *Lutherans* so call the *Calvinists*, and they many *Lutherans* ; the Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Independents so accuse each other : Sober and peaceable men must confess that most are guilty of some degree.

Laying by the rest, our Question now is of Two Parties here, the *Canoneer Diocesan Conformists*, and the *Present meer Conformists*, which are the **ENGLISH SCHISMATICKS**.

## CHAP. II.

### *The Case of the Diocesan-Canoneers, or Zealots for Imposition of Conformity.*

1. **T**hey agree not of the Essentiating Head of their own *National Church*; whether it be *Lay*, or *Clergy*, *King* or *Bishops* (and so are indeed of *divers Churches*), no nor whether it have *any constitutive Head*, or none.

2. Some hold *Bishops* necessary to the *Being* of a Church, and some only to the *well-being* of it; and so agree not neither what a particular Church is.

3. The *former* unchurch the *Parish-Churckes*, and make them only parts of a proper Church, the *Diocesan* being the lowest in a politick sense.

4. They make the *Parish-Priests*, but half *Priests* or *Pastors*, denying them the *Power of the Keys* over their flock, save in a little part.

5. These deny the *Reformed Churches*, which have no *Bishops*, to be true proper Churches, and their *Ministration* and *Sacraments* to be valid: But others of them hold the contrary, and so differ in their *Communion* with the *Protestant Churches*.

6. Some of them say, that none are *true Ministers* of Christ that have not *Episcopal Ordination* by *uninterrupted succession* from the *Apostles*: And that their flocks have *no title to Salvation*, because they have it not by *Gods Covenant sealed* by such a *Ministry* of the *Sacraments*.

7. They

7. They hold twice Ordination sinful ; and yet Reordain those who were ordained by meer Presbyters, or Rectors of Parish (City) Churches.

8. Some Leaders grant that there were no Subject-Presbyters in Scripture-times, nor Bishops that had more than one stated Assembly and Altar, which others are against.

9. They agree not of the sense of the words [*Presbyter* and *Bishops*] in the Scripture.

10. Some of them reproach the Reformation of other Churches, as the Papists do, as the effect of fury and rebellion ; and seek to render it odious as a crime.

11. Yea and the Reformation of *England* by K. H. 8. as the product of his filthy lust and cruelty : And reckon the death of K. *Edw.* 6. for a mercy. Insomuch, that out of Dr. *Heylin*, and some others, a Papist hath gathered *in terminis*, the most odious description of our Reformation, called *Historical Collections*.

12. They disagree about the points called *Arminian*. *Whitgift* the Mawl of the Nonconformists, with others, drawing up the high *Lambeth*-Articles for absolute Reprobation, &c. and others, with *Laud*, as hot against them.

13. These censure K. *James* for being against *Arminianism*, and sending men to that end to the Synod of *Dort*, though they were all moderating-men.

14. Though we had there six excellent Divines, some think we are not obliged by that Synod, and some that we are (when we had not so many in most General Councils).

15. Those that followed *Laud*, being few, durst not long commit their Cause to a Convocation : And *Heylin* tells us, that the Convocations of *England* and *Ireland* were



were against them: and the Convocations are called *The Representative-Church*.

16. These divided from the rest, strove who should prevail in Power: A. B. *Grindall* first, and A. B. *Abbot* next being cast out, and both reproached by Dr. *Heylin* (*Laud's* Pen-man) as the Heads of one Party in *England*, and B. *Uster* in *Ireland*: and Bishop *Laud* is praised as the Leader of the other side, Reforming the spoiled Reformation, which the Universities and Bishops had spoiled by *Calvinism*.

17. These two Parties differed in their Zeal against the Non-conformists: *Grindall* being for Love and Lenity, and Lecture-Exercises to breed up Preachers, and *Abbot* by *Heylin* made a Mischief to the Church for being popular: but *Laud's* Party being for more severity against them, which was exercised accordingly.

18. These two Parties also differed in their way and designs towards the Papists. A. B. G. *Abbot*, B. *Rob. Abbot*, *Hall* and others suspecting *Laud* as *Popish*, and being themselves against Toleration of Popery: But B. *Laud* (saith Dr. *Heylin*) attempting by alterations and abatements, and reconciling means to open our Church-door so wide, that we might again all joyn together, as in the beginning of Queen *Elizabeths* Reign.

19. These two Parties differed about Prerogative, Laws and Property; A. B. *Abbot* writeth, that he was cast down for denying to License *Sybothrop's* Book for the Kings Power to raise money, and the peoples obligation to pay it. And his Narrative (which you may read in *Rushworth*) intimateth that B. *Laud* was the chief means of this Imposition on him, to License *Sybothrop's* Book, and so of his Sufferings: The two greatest Writers for Prelacy and Conformity are Bishop *Bilson* and *Hooker* (to the reading of whom B. *Morley* referred me for instruction, when he forbid me Preaching in *Worcester* Diocess, and) whom we are usually challenged to answer. Bishop *Bilson* saith (*Chris. Subject*, pag. 520. [“If a Prince should go

“ about to subject his Kingdom to a Forreign Realm, or change  
 “ the form of the Common Wealth from Impery to Tyranny,  
 “ or neglect the Laws established by common consent of Prince  
 “ and People, to execute his own pleasure; In these and  
 “ other such cases which might be named, if the Nobles and  
 “ Commons joyn together to defend their ancient and accu-  
 “ stomed Liberty, Regiment and Laws, they may not well be  
 “ counted Rebels.] See more pag. 381, 382. *Grotius de jure*  
 “ *Belli* goeth much farther. *Ri. Hooker* saith [ That it is no  
 “ better than Tyranny for any Prince or Potentate of what  
 “ kind soever to exercise Law-making of himself, and not ei-  
 “ ther by exprefs Commission received immediately and per-  
 “ sonally from God, or else by authority derived at first from  
 “ their consent, upon whose persons they impose it, *Eccl. Pol.*  
 “ *l. 1. §. 10. p. 21.* And that in Kingdoms of this quality (as  
 “ ours) the Highest Governour hath indeed universal Domi-  
 “ nion, but with dependancy on that whole entire body over  
 “ the severall parts whereof he hath dominion: So that it  
 “ standeth for an axiom in this case, The King is *Singulis Ma-*  
 “ *ior, universis Minor*, Lib. 8. p. 193. and p. 194. [Neither  
 “ can any man with Reason think, but that the first institution  
 “ of Kings (a sufficient consideration, wherefore their power  
 “ should always depend on that from which it did always flow)  
 “ by original influence of power from the body into the King,  
 “ is the cause of Kings dependency in power on the body:  
 “ By dependancy we mean Subordination and Subjection.]  
 “ The Axioms of our Regal Government are these: *Lex facit*  
 “ *Regem—Rex nihil potest nisi quod jure potest—* Pag. 218, 221,  
 “ 223, 224. Against all equity it were that a man should suffer  
 “ detriment at the hands of men for not observing that which  
 “ he never did either by himself or others mediately or imme-  
 “ diately agree to—What Power the King hath, he hath it by  
 “ Law; the bounds and limits of it are known. The entire  
 “ Community giveth order, &c. as for them that exercise  
 “ power

“ power altogether against order, though the kind of power  
 “ which they have may be of God, yet is their exercise there-  
 “ of against God, and therefore not of God, otherwise than by  
 “ permission, as all injustice is. Page 224. Usurpers of Power,  
 “ (whereby we do not mean them that by violence have aspi-  
 “ red to places of highest authority, but them that use more  
 “ authority than ever they did receive in form and manner  
 “ above-mentioned) such Usurpers thereof as in the exercise  
 “ of their power, do more than they have been authorized to  
 “ do, cannot in conscience bind any to obedience]: Thus  
 “ *Hooker*.

“ *Hollingshead* (a Minister) maketh Parliaments so mighty,  
 “ as to take down the greatest Kings.

“ Bishop *Jewel* defendeth the defensive arms of the *French*  
 “ Protestants, as *Bilson* and others do.

On the other side some held, that [*it is unlawful on any pre-  
 tence whatsoever to take Arms against the King, or any Commis-  
 sioned by him in pursuance of that Commission.*] And thus the  
 Clergy were then divided about such things, which prognos-  
 ticated much that followed.

20. The Laity, Lords and Commons were divided after  
 these two Parties: And the Parliaments still adhered to the  
 (then) major part against *Land's* Party, and insisted on Grievances,  
*viz.* 1. Increase and favour of Popery. 2. Arminianism. 3. About their Property and Liberty, Taxing and Imprisoning, &c. as *Rushworth* and *Heylin* shew at large of divers Parliaments.

21. By this unhappy breach Parliaments still harping on  
 the same, and the King dissolving them, and *Abbot*, and *Richard Hooker*,  
 and the most being for the one side, and Bishop *Laud*,  
*Neale*, *Howson*, *Corbet*, *Buckeridge* and *Montague* for the other;  
 the Court and Parliaments came to the unhappy jealousies and  
 distrusts, which at last broke out into a miserable War. In  
 which the A. B. of *Canterbury* (*Laud*) was on one side, and was

put to death (the History and Articles are known.) and the other A. B. (*Williams of York*) was on the other side, and became a Commander in *North-Wales* for the Parliament; and their Clergy were accordingly divided: one part of the Conformists adhering to the King, and the other to the Parliament; many of which made up the *Westminster-Synod*.

22. This War thus begun between the two Parties of the Episcopal Laity and Clergy (in *England*), after drew in the *Scots* to help the Parliament, and many Papists to help the King, neither of them being the first Parties, but Auxiliaries, (though in *Scotland* and *Ireland* it was other wise begun).

23. These Auxiliaries of the Parliament would not help them, but on the terms of the Covenant, and so Church-alterations came on; and the Parliament thought it was better have no Bishops, than such as did prevail against them.

24. When Wars and Misery had tired both sides, and made them long for reconciliation, and this endeavour had called home the King, and many Bishops and Doctors had promised to be for Concord upon necessary healing-terms, and the Lords, Knights and Gentlemen had printed many Protestations for Peace, and against Revenge; and the King had Commissioned us to treat with the Bishops for Concord, and told us, They should meet us, if we would come as near as we could to them; When the Kings Declaration seemed to have almost healed us, the Commissioned Bishops stood to it, that *no abatements were necessary*; and though we foretold them the impossibility of Common concord, without abating some things which did them no good, but harm, and the advantage which Schism, Contention and Popery would unavoidably get, which they might easily and cheaply prevent; we pleaded, we beg'd by a long Petition; but all in vain: nothing would move them, but when we only foretold them of the Divisions that must needs follow, when Thousands were forced against their Consciences, they took it as if we threatned Sedition, and turned

our Petitions and Arguments for the common peace and concord (as if it had been a crime) against both it and us.

25. And the Convocation cast away the Kings Declaration, and drew up the changes in the Liturgy, which added to our burden, and drew the Parliament to confirm it all; and in the Act of Uniformity much more unpracticable by us, is imposed, which made our breach what since it is.

26. No man now must be in *Trust* and *Office* in any *City* or *Corporation*, who will not declare, that [*there is no obligation on him, or any other person from the Covenant*] not excepting [*against Popery, Schism or Prophaneness*], though he would confess it unlawfully imposed and taken, and renounce all obligation to rebellion, or any evil.

27. No adult person or Infant must be admitted to Christendom by baptism, without the transient Image of a Cross, as a dedicating, engaging Covenanting-sign and symbol, or badg of Christianity.

28. No Infant must be Christened, without Godfathers, who are his Covenant-sureties, and undertake his pious education, though the Parents can get none that will seriously tell them they intend to perform it: The Parents being not allowed to speak one offering or Covenanting-word; nor must be urged to be present.

29. No person must be admitted to Sacramental Communion, who thinketh it a sin to receive it kneeling, lest it should be seeming compliance with Popish adoration.

30. No persons must be admitted to Communion, who have not Confirmation by Episcopal Imposition of hands, or are desirous of it; though they fear it is made a Popish Sacrament, by the addition [*Upon whom, after the example of the holy Apostles, we have now laid our hands, to certify them. BY THIS SIGN of thy favour and gracious goodness towards them.*]

31. Though they will not tell us what the Church of England is, that is, *Its Essentiating form and Head, Lay or Clergy,*

yet every man must be *ipso facto*, excommunicate who saith, *It is not an Apostolical Church as established by Law.*

32. Every one is excommunicate *ipso facto*, who saith, that [*the form of Worship established by Law, contained in the Book of Common-prayer, is corrupt, or unlawful, or containeth ANY THING in it that is repugnant to the Scriptures.*]

33. All are excommunicate *ipso facto*, who say, *That any of the 39 Articles are in any part, such as he may not with a good conscience subscribe to; though it be but that of the Churches power to impose Ceremonies: And yet divers Conformists are against the Doctrine about Free-well, Heathens damnation, &c.*

34. All are *ipso facto* excommunicate, who say that [*the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England are superstitious, or such as godly men may not with a good conscience approve, use, and on occasion subscribe.*] See *Can. 3, 4, 5, 6.* So that not only Ministers, but all men and women that differ but of the Lawfulness of any one of their Ceremonies, and say so, are *excommunicate* already *ipso facto*.

35. All are *ipso facto* excommunicate that say, that the *Government of the Church of England under his Majesty, by Archbishops, Bishops, Deans, Archdeacons, and THE REST that bear Office in the same, is repugnant to the word of God.*] So that if one were for Archbishops, Bishops, and Priests, and Deacons, and thought but *Deans* or *Archdeacons* unscriptural and sinful, he is excommunicate; yea or *Lay-Chancellours* decretive power of the Keys; for [*the rest that bear Office*] must needs include them: And yet many Bishops themselves are against them.

36. All are excommunicate *ipso facto*, who say that *the form and manner of making and Consecrating Bishops, Priests or Deacons, hath any thing repugnant to the word of God, C. 8.*

37. They are to be excommunicate that say, *Ministers refusing to subscribe, may truly take the name of another Church not established by Law, &c.* And yet the Church of Rome is said to be a true, though faulty Church, by many; and a faulty Church  
may

may be a Church : And (they say that) the *Dutch* and *French* Churches here, stand but by the Act of King and Council.

38. All are to be excommunicated that say, *that there are within this Realm other Congregations of the Kings born Subjects, than such as are allowed by Law, who may rightly take the name of true and lawful Churches.*] E. g. If *Gloucester*, that had a Papist Bishop, *Goodman*, had chosen themselves a Bishop, and called themselves a true Church, &c.

39. They Command all to *keep the Lords day, and other Holy-days, accordng to Gods holy Will in hearing the Word of God read and taught, in private and publick prayer*], and yet suspended and ruined many Conformable Ministers for not reading a book for dancing and playing on that day.

40. And where many thousands in a Parish cannot come within their Church-doors, nor have any Conformist elsewhere in the Parish to teach them, they forbid them on great penalties to hear Nonconformists; and call them Separatists and Schismaticks, unless they forbear like Savages all publick Learning and Worship of God, rather than hear and joyn with Nonconformists.

41. Yet they Swear the Church-Wardens to present all that come not to Church, and punish them for not coming, when some Parishes have 40000, some 30000, some 10000 that can have no room, and the Church-Wardens cannot know them.

42. Yet if they go to other Parishes oft for Communion, they must not be admitted, but forbidden and sent home.

43. No Minister in regard of Preaching, or any other respect may diminish Orders, Rites, Ceremonies or Prayers, nor add any thing in the matter or form, C. 14.

44. Though many melancholy persons dare not communicate in the Sacrament, and many other are secretly conscious of Atheism, Infidelity, or wickedness, they must be compelled to receive thrice a year.

45. The Minister is to be suspended who giveth the Sacrament.

ment to any that kneel not, or that speak against the book of Common-prayer, Ceremonies, &c.

46. No one may be made a Minister, or permitted to exercise that Office, who will not subscribe, that the book of Common-prayer and Ordination containeth in it *nothing contrary to the word of God, and that he will use that form and no other.* And that will not declare publickly in the Church his [*unfeigned Assent and Consent to All and every thing contained and prescribed in and by that book.*]

47. He must be cast out and silenced that doth not Assent that [*It is certain by Gods Word, that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved*]; not excepting those whose Parents are Jews, Infidels, Heathens, or Atheists, and whose Godfathers are Atheists, Hobbists or Impious.

48. They must Assent, Consent to, and Practise, signing Infants at Baptism with the Cross, to dedicate them by that badge to his service, whose benefits bestowed on them in baptism, the name of the Cross doth represent, in token that he shall not be ashamed to profess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner, &c. which seemeth to us to be thus made a Sacrament.

49. They must deny to Christen all that refuse this.

50. They must consent to deny baptism to all that have not such undertaking Godfathers, as aforesaid, though the Parents would enter them into the Covenant, who are forbidden to be Godfathers, or speak a Covenanting-word.

51. They must profess Consent to deny the Sacrament to all that dare not take it kneeling: I speak all this as imposed on Ministers, and before as on the people.

52. They must profess, consent and practise to pronounce all that they bury to be *taken to God in mercy, where we hope to come, &c.* (except only the excommunicate, unbaptized and self-murderers) were they Atheists or profane.

53. They



53. They must declare Assent to a false rule for finding *Easter*-day, and consent to keep two *Easters* often, yea though it be confessed false.

54. They must consent to read [the *first Lesson*] out of *Tobit*, *Judith*, *Bel and the Dragon*, and other Apocryphal-books for most of two months.

55. None must be suffered to Preach, that will not subscribe [*That it is not lawful on any pretence whatsoever to take Arms against those that are Commissionated by the King*] while we understand not, whether the Law be not above his Commission, and in some cases allow not the Sheriff to resist it, and whether that be his Commission which is contrary to Law, if it have his Seal; and so the keeper of the Seal may Commission men to seize on his strength and treasure, and to let in an enemy, or consequently depose the King: No words can more exclude exceptions, than the exclusion of [*any pretence whatsoever.*]

56. None must preach that subscribeth not, that [*There lieth no obligation from the Oath, called the Covenant, on him or ANY OTHER person to endeavour any change or alteration of Church-Government*: Though many Hundred thousands took that Oath, whom we know not, nor their sense; and many Parliament-men that imposed it: And so all Reformation of Church-Government is made unlawful and impossible, though vowed.

57. This Church Government by Decretive Excommunication and Absolution is exercised by *Lay-Chancellors*; and all must subscribe against all endeavours, though vowed to amend it, though some Bishops confess it to be evil.

58. The Parishes, as is aforesaid, are made by many *no true Churches*, but parts of the lowest Church: And Parish-discipline is excluded: The Priest hath no Power of the exterior Keys, but to execute the decrees of the Bishop or Chancellor.

59. Some Diocesses have above 1000 Parishes, some many  
D
hundreds;

hundreds; by which Christs true Discipline described, *Mat.* 18.15. *1 Cor.* 5.1. *1 Theff.* 5.12,13. *Heb.* 13.7,24. *1 Tim.* 5.25, 26. *Tit.* 3.10, &c. is as impossible as for one Schoolmaster to be the sole Governour of many score or hundreds of Schools, having Teachers only under him. And none that Vow'd it may endeavour to mend this, and render true Church-discipline again a possible thing.

60. The Souls of men have great need of Pastors near them, and able to resolve their Cases of Conscience, and comfort them and help them in manifold straits: And many Parishes are so great, that the Priests cannot do such Offices for one of many hundred; nor do they do it; nor know the people: And other Parishes (too many) have Priests that are raw unskilful men, utterly unfit for such Pastoral helps: And the Bishop is far off, and must have hundreds with him at once, should he do that work: so that it is mostly undone. And yet those are punished that chuse Pastors to do it in such need.

61. If a Parish have a Priest so drunken, that his own family can scarce live with him; or so insufficient, that he never preacheth, because he cannot, or will not, and the people scruple encouraging such a one in his ill undertaking of the Ministry, and dare not take him for their Pastoral Guide, they are forbidden to go from him, and to communicate in the next Parish; and the Minister that receiveth them, or baptizeth their Children, though conformable, is suspended, C. 57.

62. No Minister must Preach in a private house, save in times of necessity, through sickness; nor may they on any occasion of sickness, or the like, keep any Fast. in their Churches, or in any private house, nor be present at them, which are not appointed by Authority, C. 61, 62. Nor may they hold meetings for Sermons or Exercises.

63. Ordination enableth no man to preach without farther license.

64. They Excommunicate all Ministers that voluntarily

relinquish their callings, and use themselves as Lay-men. And yet thousands must do both, if the Bishops silence them.

65. He that preacheth to more than four, not of his family, if he conform not, must be fined 40 *l.* a Sermon (and he that owneth the ground 20 *l.*) and the Preacher Imprisoned Six months in the Common Jayl: and the Hearers fined. And if he swears not *never to endeavour any alteration* (or amendment) of their Government, he must be banished Five miles from Cities, Corporations, and all places where he lately preached; or lie Six months in Jayl if he come nearer; though the Law say that the Parish must keep him in his want.

66. The Parish-Priest must publish Excommunications, though against his conscience, against godly men for not Conforming, &c. while thousands that never come to Church or Sacraments, and Swearers and Atheists, Hobbists and wicked men are members of their Church, from year to year continued.

67. The Canon 139 excommunicateth all that say, that the *Synod of this Nation, in the name of Christ, and by the Kings authority assembled, is not the true Church of England by representation.* By which they seem to make the King no part of the Church, nor any of the Laity, or else that they represent King and Laity: and they intimate that all the Clergy is the Church-real, and the Synod the Representative.

68. They brought in new Canons, and the *et cætera* Oath in 1640, without the Parliament, which were condemned.

69. From the beginning of Queen *Elizabeth*, till now, they have prosecuted and silenced Protestants that durst not conform: even their fellow Exiles in Queen *Maries* days were silenced, and multitudes after in King *James's* days, and even Conformists suspended about the Dancing-book, and troubled about Altars, Bowing, Afternoon-Sermons and Lectures, which were forbidden; and about 2000 ejected and silenced at once 1662: And multitudes of Families driven to *Holland* and *New-England*. Though we offer them our Oaths, that we will gladly

conform, if by any study we can but see that it will not involve us in the guilt of *Lying, owing the Perjury of multitudes unknown to us, corrupting the Church and Gods Worship, Covenanting deliberately against needful Reformation of the Church-Government by Lay Chancellours and uncapable Dioceſans*, and many other crimes, with dreadful aggravations recited in our first *Plea for Peace*.

70. They separate from us and our Congregations as unlawful to be joyned with.

71. Though it was the judgment of the ancient Churches, exprest in many Canons, that he was *no Bishop* that had not the peoples election or consent, they make it Schism not to obey such, and allow the people no such power.

72. They suppose that God hath entrusted the King to chuse for all his Subjects whom they shall commit the conduct of their Souls to as their Pastors and Bishops; though he be not trusted to chuse our Physicians, our Wives, our Dyet, &c. And so they would make the King answerable for all ill-chosen Pastors. And if a Papist, Heretick, or a hater of Pastoral holiness should ever be King, in how sad a case are the peoples souls.

73. Yea, they hold that Patrons, be they never so ignorant or *ungodly*, must chuse all that shall have the Parochial trust of Souls (As to the possession of Temples and Tythes, we yield it); they say, The people must have no other, than what the Patrons chuse and impose on them.

74. Excommunication of Dissenters seemeth little to them, but they by the writ *de Excommunicato Capiendo*, lay them in Jayl till death, unless they change their Judgment, which it is not in their power to do.

75. Though we publish our abhorrence of all Doctrines of Rebellion, and disown even so much popularity, as their *Richard Hooker*, and most Politicks own, many of them go on to charge Nonconformists with suspicions of Rebellion, and to provoke the King against them, as disloyal.

76. They

76. They print and preach to provoke Magistrates to execute the foresaid severe Laws, to silence and ruine them, and accuse them for not doing it.

77. They stir up the people to take them for intollerable seditious Schismatics, to the destruction of Christian Love, and causing men to hate each other.

78. By these means families are distracted; Husbands against Wives, Parents against Children; some casting them out, if they do but hear a Nonconformist Preacher, while sensuality corrupteth youth, and needeth more restraint.

79. When the Kings Clemency Licensed our Meetings, they grudged at it, and neverthels separated from us, though they describe Separation to be Meetings held against authority; and thereby shewed that it is somewhat else than the Kings authority that they contend for, and something more than our want of License which causeth their fervent opposition.

80. Though we beg of them in vain to prevent the Papists advantage by our divisions; and though they seem resolved to let Popery it self come in, rather than either restore us or tolerate us, and abate what we count sin, and they call Indifferent; yet do they perswade people that we are bringing in Popery, if we obey not all their Impositions; and talk as if either no *Dissenters* were tollerable (when all men differ, and they among themselves in as great matters as from us) or All were tollerable: both which are abominable: And as if he that were unwilling to be destroyed by Prelatist; were introducing Popery: Should a man chuse rather to be saved by a Papist, than hanged by a Prelatist, who were more to be suspected of Popery, He that made that choice, or he that put it upon him.

81. Besides the reconciling treaty with the Papists, asserted by Dr. *Heylin*; some chief Doctors profess that they would have the Church in the same state, as when the *Greeks* and *Latine* did divide, and grant what the *Greeks* grant; not denying  
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the Pope to be *Principium unitatis*, and pleading for *Grotius* as a Protestant of our Churches mind, who was for the Council of *Trent*, and all the rest; desiring no more for our Concord with the Church of *Rome*, but that as by the Mistis Church they may rule by the Canons, and not absolutely, securing the Rights of Kings and Bishops, and reforming Scholastick curiosities, and the Clergies lives.

82. Under all the new Impositions, we were never allowed to speak for our selves, nor durst once Petition the Parliament that ejected us, or any since, for relief or audience, lest such boldness should more incense our afflicters.

83. There is no surer way to destroy their own Church-pomp and grandure, and root out Episcopacy more than we desire, than to use it for Satan against faithful Ministers, and against the Souls of men, and against the honour and innocency of Princes, and against the property and liberty of Subjects, even against God and man, and so to make it odious to mankind, by making it intollerable: Till they that cannot tolerate a differing-word do weary the world by their intollerable pride, and cast down themselves, and then blame others.

84. To this day, while they accuse those of Schism that dare not subscribe, declare, swear, and do the things aforesaid, and plead against the enduring of them, to preach or solemnly worship God, they disagree in Doctrines, and many great matters among themselves, and take not themselves for Schismatics: Of which see our 2d Plea, pag. 158, 159.

85. Some of them are for Original sin, according to the subscribed Articles: Bishop *Jer. Taylor* and others were against it; and Bishop *Warner* hath writ against him.

86. Some of them preach for the Imputation of Christs Righteousness: Mr. *Thorndike*, Mr. *Sherlock* and others differ; and many of them sharply accuse and preach against each other thereabout; yea with high accusations, as heretical.

87. Some of them preach up Gods Eternal Decrees of Election

tion and Derelection, or Reprobation, in that sort, as others of them preach against as blasphemy against God, and destructive to the piety and peace of man.

88. Some of them preach for universal Redemption as a necessary point of faith, which others cry down as *Arminianism*.

89. Some of them make Justifying faith to contain Obedience, and others cry it down as *Popery* and *Socinianism*.

90. Some of them say that God hath given to all men sufficient grace to salvation (yea say some, and efficient), which others call *Arminianism*.

91. Some of them say that it is Gods Grace that maketh the faithful to differ from others, and others say it is their own Wills: And about the parts of Grace and Free-will they preach and write against each other.

92. Some of them preach that all the justified persevere. And others preach it down as a dangerous error. I have tried to reconcile all these, but they go on.

93. Some of them are only for *Bidding prayer* in the Pulpit, as if all other were forbidden by the Canon (as *Heylin*): others use prayer there.

94. Some there pray in their own words, and some only in the words of the Liturgy: some use the same words, and others vary them.

95. Their Cathedral Worship much differeth from the Parochial, and some Churches use Organs, and others have none.

96. One writeth for the Religious use of *Lent* (as Bishop *Guning*), others as Bishop *Taylor* (and Dr. *More*), &c. are against their principles and use: yea and against many other things of Church-Government and significant Ceremonies which the other party hold. See *Taylor* cited 2d Plea for Peace.

97. Some of them are for the Divine right of the Lords Day, and the Morality of the fourth Commandment: which *Heylin* and many others vehemently deny.

98. One is for Altars, and Rails, and others against them, and others for indifferency.

99. In

99. In preaching they use very different Methods: And some Churches of them begin to use new Versions of the singing Psalms.

100. Some following *Grotius de Jure Belli*: and Dr. *Taylor's Ductor Dubitantium* are for *useful lying*, which injureth not others (and therefore no doubt for doubtful Conformity). But others are against it.

101. But they no-where more differ, than in their Conformity it self, one taking the words in one sense, and another in another; so that their Conformity is not the same thing, though the Letters and sound of voice be the same. One by his *Assent and Consent to all things in the three books* meaneth plainly; and another meaneth, but that he may and will use *so much as concerneth him*: One by [*Not resisting by Arms any Commissioned by the King*] meaneth as he speaketh. Another limiteth it to [*Lawfully Commissioned*]; One by [*on any pretence whatsoever*] meaneth as he saith: Another excepteth as *Bilson* aforesaid, and such cases as King *Johns*, who gave up his Kingdom to the Pope, and would have done to the *Morecco-Mahometan*; and many other such instances (as Killing the Parliaments, City, &c.) One that subscribeth never to endeavour any Alteration of Church-Government, meaneth as he speaketh: Another excepteth Lay-Chancellours use of the Keys, Deans and Chapters, Archdeacons, &c. if the King would change them. One by [*any endeavour*] meaneth as he saith: Another meaneth only [*unlawful endeavour*], one by [*nothing contrary to Gods word*] in *Can. 36.* meaneth plainly: Another meaneth [*nothing which maketh Communion unlawful*]: One taketh all the imposed subscriptions to be but a promise of submission and peace, which others abhor, and are for the Truth of all that they subscribe assent to. In a word, some are for the common Rule of *taking all the words in the usual sense*, except the Imposers declare a different sense: And others are for necessary supposing, that the Imposers meant well, whatever they said, and there-



therefore our Charity and honouring them bindeth us to put no sense on their words which is contrary to Gods Law, the Law of the Land, or Common Right ; and supposing them true and good, whatever they are, who can doubt but they may be sworn or subscribed.

102. Dr. *Hammond* and his party thought that it doth not appear that there were any subject Presbyters in Scripture-times, and so that every single Congregation had a Bishop present in worshipping God. But Dr. *Stillingfleet* saith p. 269. *While the Apostles lived, it is probable there were no fixed Bishops, or but few.* And so the world had but 12 or 13 indefinite Bishops, who are not proved to have any peculiar determinate Diocesses.

103. Mr. *Dodwell*, and I think most of them, take the Church of *England* to be a Political society, and many think we overthrow Church and Order, if we deny Churches to be formed by a Constitutive Government. But Dr. *Stillingfleet* not only holdeth that the Church of *England* is but the Pastors and people consenting by Parliaments to live under the same Laws about Religion, without any Constitutive Church-Head (one or many) ; but also peremptorily concludeth, that to maintain such a Constitutive Supreme Church-power will necessarily infer Popery ; and so maketh all the Conformists necessarily to lead in Popery, who are for such Political Churches, and Constitutive Governours.

104. Mr. *Cheny* saith, That to make Churches by Covenants, confederacies or consent, besides baptism, is to be guilty of blasphemy, impiety, irreligiousness, infidelity ; and one should rather die than yield to it. But Dr. *Stillingfleet* saith the Church of *England* is one Church, made by such consent.

But such Schisms among themselves are too many to be here numbered. And no wonder when they differ so much as they do with their own Sentiments, in one and the same book, saying and unsaying, as the argument in hand requireth.

E. g. Dr. *Stillingsfleet* thinketh that the seven Churches of *Asia*, being Metropolitan, prove Diocesan or Metropolitan-Bishops, then in being: And yet, that while the Apostles lived, it's probable there were no fixed Bishops, or but few. And so either seven Apostles were the Angels of the seven Churches of *Asia*, reprov'd so much for their sin and back-sliding, or the Angels signified not the Bishops.

While we are all Schismaticks for disobeying, say some, and holding Nonconforming Assemblies, say others, from the Church of *England*; yet this Church is no proper Political Church, and hath no Constitutive chief Government, saith Dr. *St.* and therefore hath no authority to make Canons to command us.

He no less than threatneth us with damnation (not in the retracted *Irenicum*, but in his late book against *Papish Idolatry*) if we chuse not the *purest Church*: and the Papist granteth it, and saith as he; And yet it is the substance of his *unreasonable* books to prove us Schismaticks, if we depart from their Church, or so much as preach to other Assemblies, on the account of *purer worship*, and *greater edification*, &c. And he had the wit to pass by this citation in the Epistle of a book against him.

As for Mr. *Cheny*, and divers other such, another book openeth their Contradictions.

They often tell us of the Nullity of the Ministry, or Power which is not received from Episcopal Superiors; Especially Bishop *Gunning* and Mr. *Dodwell*, hence draw dismal degrading and unchurching Consequences. And yet thus they condemn both the *English*, and *Roman*, and *Universal Church*. If Church-power be given by Inferiors, the Independents are not to be confuted: If from equals, as Generation is, as men generate men, and Physicians make Physicians, &c. then Presbyters may make Presbyters. If it must be by Superior Power, then who maketh *Archbishops* in *England*, or  
Popes

*Popes at Rome*, who have no Superiors, and so (by them) no authority? So much for the Historical Characters of the Canonical Conformists.

But after all this, we grant, that there is some tye and union among them; They all own Archbishops, Bishops, Deans and Chapters, Archdeacons, with an *Et cætera*; the *rest* as the Canon speaketh: They all agree to declare and subscribe the words imposed, and promise or Covenant accordingly, and swear Obedience to their Ordinaries. *E. g.* Though such as *Mr. Bull* and *Dr. Tully* write against each other, of Justification as by Faith or Works; though many are very much against the Doctrine of *Mr. Thorndike*, *Mr. Parker*, *Mr. Sherlock*, and such other; yet they all subscribe the same Articles about Justification, Free-will, Predestination. And I doubt not but there are very many not only Learned, but Pious men among them, who yet by strong prejudice and passion, through education, converse, cross interests, and unacquaintedness with Dissenters, and the many scandals that have risen, and the extremes which many have run into, are possess'd with a conceit, that the ruine, imprisonment, banishment or silencing of Non-conformists, is necessary to the prosperity of their party, called by them *The Church*.

And to do the Papists right, they agree to be members of *one Church*, and to be for the Dignities, Wealth and Power of their Clergy, and take the same Oaths, and are under the same Canons, &c. though they differ about the Supremacy it self, as between the Pope and the Prelates in General Councils; and about swearing, forswearing, lying, murder, deposing and killing Kings, fornication, and many such as the *Jansenists* have opened at large: All these differences they can bear with, and the many different Sects of

Eryers, fitted to the several humours of men, as long as they are for one Common society and interest : And doubtless many of strict lives do think it a service to the Church, and so to God, to kill, burn and destroy others that are against them, as they do.

There is some one (with what mind I know not) that hath written a book called *The Catholick Hierarchy*, pleading like an Independent against humane *Impositions* : But in a Digression so diligently labouring to prove, that the *Diocesans* Subordination of Churches will unavoidably infer a Pope or Universal Head, that I take it to be a dangerous book ; while it stalleth the said *Diocesans*, whether imprudently or fraudulently as a Prevaricator, I know not ; he saith more for a Pope, without any antidote, than is ordinarily to be elsewhere found, and then most heads are able to answer ; though the main conclusion is fully confuted in my last book against *Johnson*, alias *Terret*, the Papist.

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## C H A P. III.

*The Meer Nonconformist.*

1. **B**Y the present Meer Nonconformists, we mean those that 1660, by the Kings Concession made their proposals for Reformation and Concord, and as are of the Judgment then by them professed. I meddle not with others unknown.

2. Their profest Religion is *Meer Christianity*, essentially contained in the Sacramental Covenant, explained in the Creed, Lords-prayer and Decalogue, and integrally in the sacred Scripture.

3. Yet as Christians are accidentally called *Protestants*, because they renounce Popery; so we are *Catholicks*, as renouncing all Schismatical Sects; and *Nonconformists*, because we dare not Conform to all that is imposed on us.

4. We hold that all Christians should Love each other as themselves, and do them all the good they can, and no hurt.

5. We hold that all baptized in Infancy should solemnly at age renew and own that Covenant, as adult members:

6. And that all that do so, not nullifying their profession by inconsistent heresie or sin, should be received in Communion.

7. That such as renew it not, or are proved to forsake it, or heinously sin against it, should be reprov'd; and after sufficient admonition, if impenitent, be declared unfit for Church-Communion, and accordingly avoided.

8. That God hath appointed that there be stated Assemblies of Christians, especially on the Lords-days, where he shall be worshipp'd, Men instructed, and Communion exercised.

9. That these Congregations should have known stated  
Pastors,

Pastors, to be their Teachers and Guides in worship and holy living.

10. That these Pastors by Office have the power of the Church-keys, to judge whom to take in by Baptism, and whom to admonish as Criminal, to reject as impenitent, and to absolve and receive again as penitent in their proper charge.

11. That Baptism and the Eucharist being a Gift of a sealed pardon, and of Christ, and life, no unbelieving nor unwilling person is capable of them: Therefore none but *believing Converters*, or *Volunteers* and their Infants, should be baptized, and Volunteers only admitted to the Lords-Supper.

12. And though Magistrates should promote the sacred Work, and Rule the Churches, and keep peace and order by the Sword, and see that all have competent Teachers, and hinder the intollerable; yet may they not invade the Pastors office, or peoples right, nor force men to trust their Souls to the Pastoral Care of unable or untrusty men, nor hinder them from chusing better for themselves, any more than they may confine them to untrusty Physicians, Servants or Wives.

13. That because the Pastoral Office cannot be exercised either by, or on the unwilling; mutual consent is necessary to the Relation of Pastor and Flock.

14. That it is part of the Pastors Office to word his own Sermons and Prayers: But yet if to avoid discord or errour some common forms be agreed on, not overthrowing the Pastors office, they may be fitly used, till by accident they do more hurt than good.

15. The Laws of Magistrates *Circa Sacra*, and the consent and custom of Churches should not in lawful things be crossed by humorous dividing Singularity.

16. No one Liturgy was imposed on any National Church, or any Patriarchate for many hundred years after the Apostles days (yea and after *Constantine*): But every Bishop or

Pastor was the chuser of his Words and Practice.

17. Christians should all live in Love, and walk peaceably by the Divine Scripture-Rule, so far as they have attained, so waiting for increase of grace.

18. We must receive the weak in the faith, and such as differ tolerably from us, even as Christ receiveth us; and no Christian should be excommunicated, but for impenitency in sins, subverting faith, or holy living.

19. Nor must Christs Ministers be forbid to preach the Gospel, because of tollerable differences.

20. And those that through differences and scruples cannot comfortably worship God under one Pastor, or in the Words or Ceremonies of one Church, should have leave to do it in another, keeping sound Doctrine, Love and Peace.

21. The number and need of the people must determine whether a particular Church shall have one Pastor or more.

22. If one for Concord be President to the rest, and the Senior Pastors be guides to the younger, we are not against it.

23. Nor yet if the Magistrate or Churches by consent appoint some of the Graver to be visitors of many Churches, and to instruct and keep the younger in peace.

24. Nor will we quarrel against the Names of Bishops, or Archbishops, or their Wealth and Honour, while Faith, Worship, Discipline and Love are preserved.

25. If by a National Church, they mean either a *Christian Kingdom* or [*all the Churches of a Nation as under one Prince*] or [*as associated for Concord*] we deny none such.

26. For we hold that all Christians should live in as much Concord as they can, and that Synods are useful to that end.

27. We must honour our Rulers, though they afflict us.

28. We hold that we must separate from no Church or Christian farther than they separate from Christ, though we must not sin against God for communion with any. We take it for a great sin for any party to appropriate the Church only

only to themselves: We own no Church but as part of the Catholick (or universal) Church, and we hold all our Assemblies as in union and communion with All the true Churches on earth, and put up our prayers and praises as in conjunction with theirs, not owning their failings (or our own) but their duties: And we will be members of no particular Church, which alloweth us not occasional Communion with others; but take such for Sectaries.

29. The welfare of Souls is of so great concernment, that we cannot think any Christian should be indifferent to whom as a Pastor he committeth the care and conduct of his Soul, any more than what Physician he chuseth for his body. And the difference between the ignorant and the wise, and wicked and the godly, the negligent and the faithful, is of grand importance.

30. We think that all Christians should prefer a faithful Pastor, before an unfaithful or insufficient one; and a purer Church before a more corrupt, as far as they are free, without doing more hurt than good. But we will hold occasional communion with more faulty Churches, so they compel us not to sin.

31. We take not all the faults of the Pastor, flock or service, to be made ours meerly by our presence: Nor do we think that all faults (or many and great ones consistent with the necessaries to communion) will allow us to separate, that is, either from a true Church, as none, or from lawful communion as unlawful: For Natural distance is not Moral Separation.

32. We take the Magisterial imposing of unnecessary Oaths, Professions, Subscriptions, Practices, much more sinful ones, as necessary terms of communion, and silencing and casting out Christs faithful Servants that obey them not, to be the grand and common causes of Schism, which have, through the pride of a Domineering-Clergy, broken most of the Churches on Earth for above 1000 years.



33. We hate the spirit of pride and envy in Preachers, who cannot endure to see others, at least that differ from them, preferred before them; and if any do but go from them, to others, or worship God in another place, or in other words or circumstances, do frighten the people by their loud alarm and cry of Schism; as if all were of a different Religion or species of Communion, that differ from their book in Word or Ceremonies; And by that blinding name of *Different Communions*, alienate the hearts of the ignorant, and make them think of the *Dutch, French*, and others that only differ from them in accidents, as the Papists do of us that are called by them Hereticks.

34. We take him not to have the Wisdom and Love of a sound Christian, who cannot love and bear with his fellow Christians, who differ but in such tollerable things.

35. Yet we think not that all should preach and gather Churches that will, and that the intollerable must be tolerated, and that it must be All or none: And the Magistrate is Judg whom he will tolerate: but he must judg aright.

36. We hold the Parish-Divisions to be of great convenience; Not taking all in the Parish for the Church, but confining Ministers to their proper bounds.

37. And whatever differing Churches the Magistrate tolerateth, he must force them to live peaceably, and modestly towards others.

38. Were every Church reduced to such a number, as that all might in season have local, personal communion, like great Parishes that have Chappels; and *E.g.* every Church of 6000 Souls have six Pastors conjunct, or every Corporation or Market-Town (of old called Cities) with the Neighbour-Villages, be one Church; and one among these Pastors to be a President Bishop, we should think it most like the ancient Government. But we can live in peace, where we cannot have all which we justly wish for.

39. Though some preach not Christ sincerely, but in envy and strife to add to our affliction, we rejoyce that Christ is preached.

40. We hold all, that for the power of Kings, the obedience of the Subjects, and against rebellion, which the Scripture speaketh, and which the Christian Churches, Politicks, Lawyers, as far as we know them, commonly hold; and more than divers chief Conformists: (Bishop *Bilsons* book of *Subjection*, and *Grotius de Imperio Sum. Pat.* fulliest speak my thoughts in the greatest part.)

41. As these are the meer Nonconformists principles, so their practice is accordingly: They pray for the King, and all in authority; not for preferment, but that we may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty: And they pray and seek for the publick safety, and live peaceably towards others.

42. They sought reconciliation with the *Diocesans* before the Kings return, and associating upon uniting terms.

43. What the Nonconformists in City, Countrey, *Monks* Army, and the next Parliament did for the Kings restoration, is known.

44. They offered but Bishop *Ushers* form of Primitive Government (or Episcopacy) for reconciliation and concord with the Bishops.

45. They gave publick thanks for the Kings Declaration about Ecclesiastical affairs, which had healed us, had it not been cast away: In which he declareth their moderation.

46. They never made one motion for Presbytery, Lay-Elders, Independency: Nor against Parish-Churches, nor against the Bishops Lordships, or place in Parliament, or Wealth; Though, I confess, they desired better than they saw fit to ask.

47. They did as much with the Bishops, as if it had been for their lives, by Condescension, Reason and Petition, to have

have prevented the foreseen divisions, and were the seekers of Peace.

48. The Liturgy which they offered, had not one word of exception returned by the Bishops; nor were their *Reply* or *Petition* answered by them to this day.

49. They offered their solemnest Protestation or Oaths, that it was to avoid sin that they refused Conformity; and yet many reported that we held all for indifferent, except renouncing the Covenant.

50. The New Liturgy came out of the Press so near the penal *Bartholomew*-day, that in almost all Counties of *England*, they were turned out for not declaring Assent to a book which they never saw, or could see; and the Conformers there owned it before they saw it.

51. The Nonconformists knowing that the Magistrate hath the power of the Temples and Tythes, never pretended any right to them when they were cast out: But knowing that they were justly possessed of their Pastoral relation to their flocks, they believed not that the meer will of the Magistrate disobligeth them. Yet they believe that when the continuance will do more hurt than good, they and the flock should part by consent.

52. We never heard that any of the 2000 ejected Ministers were cast out for any crime or false doctrine, but meerly for not Conforming by Declaration, Subscription and Practice.

53. Nor have we heard that any, or many in all these times of tryal have been convicted of heresie or drunkenness, swearing, cursing, deceiving, fornication, or any such immorality.

54. I am sure they have oft requested that Laws may be made to Constrain them to live peaceably, to abuse none, and to punish them as much as others, if any of them be found guilty of any such crime; and that such Laws may bring it

to the tryal, who they be that are of scandalous lives.

55. They have been thankful for bare connivence and opportunity to preach for nothing; save what they receive from the hearers charity, these 18 years: Some that could live without it have preached freely; and the rest, could they have lived and their families without bread, had rather have been no burden to any; They are naturally no more in love with a beggarly sordid life than others: The Conformists would be loth to live on Charity: Many hundreds have long had nothing, or next to nothing of their own, and Wives and many Children to maintain, House-rent to pay, Meat, Drink, Cloaths, &c. to buy: and nothing but mens Charity to defray all this: And in the Countreys Money is scarce, Charity too cold, and most of the Rich are taught by the Clergy to condemn them: And if they come to great Towns, the Clergy reproach them.

56. Many have dyed in prison; many catcht their death there; many had their goods and books taken away; and many endured long imprisonments, and the prosecution goeth on.

57. The Magistrates of *London*, and other places, have been vexed, and sued by Informers for not prosecuting them.

58. They preached mostly privately to few about *London*, for fear of giving offence, till the people in the dreadful Plague, which killed about 100000 were left as sheep without shepherds, crouding into another world, and the Nonconformists durst not forbear to teach them: And God so greatly blest their labours, that the People and Preachers, who had been thus awakened by devouring death, resolved no more for fear of man to neglect the care and interest of Souls. O. who could be silent when thousands that lookt for speedy death did croud for help in their necessary preparation. This first drew the *London* Nonconformists into more open exercise of their office, which encouraged those

in the Countrey to imitation. And it is not their judgment that they are bound to preach, when by opposing violence, or the offending of Rulers it is like to do more hurt than good, and once preaching to deprive them of all the usefulness of their lives: The spirit of the Prophets is subject to the Prophets (to Reason and Prudence in the use of gifts, as *Dr. Hammond* expoundeth it): But whatever it cost them, when there is true Necessity and Opportunity, making the good like to be greater than the hurt, they judg that they must use the Ministry which they are vowed and ordained to.

59. When the Plague was over, some thought once again to retire; and the fire burning down the Churches, and the people being destitute; constrained them (though forbidden) to go on. O what is man! What were the Clergy that took upon them the Charge of Souls, that they durst be against such mens Preaching of the Gospel in such a City, when such a Plague, and such flames had declared the necessity.

60. Even when the Plague was raging, and the Court and Parliament fled from it to *Oxford*, they there were making the *Oxford-Oath*, and Act of Confinement, to banish the Non-conformists from the desolate City, and all Corporations, &c. And they that before purposed to come to the Parish-Churches, durst not come, lest the Congregation being witness of their being in the City, &c. they should be sent to the Jayl.

61. Most that we hear of in the Countreys, and some about *London*, preach not at the time of publick worship, but go themselves to the publick Churches, when they have honest tolerable men: I and others here, do ordinary hear and communicate in our Parish-Churches (when even the last *Whitsunday* I do not think there were above 100 Communicants in a Parish; that its thought hath 20000 Souls; and yet all the rest are not hunted as Schismatics). And so our Schism is not for withdrawing from the Parish-Churches, but for communicating also with others (which we avow): As if it

were greater Schism to *separate from none*, than to *separate from all* save the *Diocesan Conformists*, who appropriate the Church to themselves.

62. We take it to be our duty to do our best to keep up the reputation of honest peaceable Conformists, lest our Concord and the peoples edification be hindered.

63. When we thought it a service to the Conformists, to help them in teaching some of their Parishes, which are exceedingly too great to hear them, and to enjoy all their Pastoral helps, and we preach, as they confess, the same doctrine as they, yet we never asked or expected the least part of their maintenance (much less Preferments, Prebends, Deaneries or Bishopricks), but would have been thankful to have leave to be their helpers for nothing; but cannot have their consent.

64. Those of us that preach at the hours of publick worship, do it for the most part, where their hearers knowing that they cannot have the just benefit of the Parish-Pastors office in publick and private, find it necessary staidly to chuse other helps; and other hours would greatly disorder their family-duties: Besides the Independents that have long had their gathered Churches.

65. Though our judgment be against Pluralities and Non-residences, we say little against it, lest we should be thought to desire part of the prey, or to envy their riches.

66. Though we feared, that if we conformed to the Professions, Subscriptions, Oaths, Covenants and Practices before-named; and this deliberately, and on pretence of keeping our Liberty to preach against the sins of others, we should be guilty of all the sin and its aggravations, which we named in the first *Plea for Peace*; yet knowing how various representations make mens judgments to differ; we became not herein Accusers of the Conformists, but disavowed it, leaving them to their proper judg, and meddling with no mens matters but our own.

67. And lest it should seem to reflect on them as guilty, or exasperate our afflictors, we have mostly forborn these 17 or 18 years, so much as to open the matters and reasons of our Nonconformity, and silently undergone reproach.

68. Yea when great Bishops have told our Superiors, that we judged nothing but renouncing the Covenant unlawful, and have called to us, and set Parliament-men to call out, [*What it is that we would have*], and never would give us leave to tell them; we have patiently been silent: And when great Bishops have told me that our Rulers took us as not sincere, for not giving our reasons, and that they would Petition that we might no longer be suffered to keep up a Schism, and give no reason for it: I have offered them to beg it on my knees, if there were any hope to obtain liberty but once to render our reasons of not conforming.

69. And when the Act ceased which restrained the Press, we still forbore, till they gave out, [*That now it was clear, that for our baffled cause we had no defence, but went on to sin against our consciences*], which constrained me at last to open somewhat of our case, at which yet they are displeas'd.

70. Though multitudes of Books have been written against us, charging us with Schism, and calling for execution of the Law against us, yea perswading King and People, as the Plotters do, that we are cherishing principles of rebellion; we thought it best to imitate Christ, and silently to bear all, and let our Lives and Works, rather than our Apologies, answer for us; till constrained, I published a full account of our Principles of Government and Obedience; lest continued silence pass for guilt.

71. Their constant last accusation is about the late Wars: When-as 1. not one of very many of the present Nonconformists ever medled with them. 2. And we offer them thanks to silence only the guilty. 3. And many Conformists (and one Archbishop) were in Arms for the Parliament. 4. And we have

have not requited them till of late, with telling them that it was the Conformists here that began the War.

72. When some say that they requite us for casting out the Conformists heretofore; we offer them a thousand thanks if they will cast out none but those that cast out them. I confess I took it for a great mercy to have grossly ignorant, drunken Readers and Priests cast out, of what opinion soever, and better put in: But I and others wrote against putting out any worthy and tolerable man for being against the Parliament, or for Prelacy.

73. Whereas some cheat the ignorant, by telling them, that [We would have every Minister be a Pope in his own Parish].

1. A Pope is one that arrogateth the Government over all other Pastors, even of the whole world: Whereas we would govern no Pastors at all, nor any people, but our particular flocks. 2. And these we would have only to be Volunteers: And is not he liker to a Tyrant, that will be a Pastor to thousands against their wills, than he that will take charge of none but Consenters? 3. Specially the Independents, who are accused as giving the power to the people, and depending on their charity, do not like tyrants compel any to obey them.

74. Some are taught to make the Presbyterians odious, by the rigor of their Discipline, and the stool of Repentance, which the licentious fear. But 1. our judgment is, that none but willing Consenters should be Church-members, and as such come under Discipline. 2. And that none be excommunicate for any sins (ordinarily) unless after due warning and patience he refuse to repent. 3. And God hath made Repentance necessary to comforting-absolution, pardon and salvation. 4. And it's a thousand pities that any should be so mad in sin, as to think Repentance too dear for pardon.

75. Some say that we are for *Excommunicating Kings*: What other men have been, is nothing to us: We take not our judgments on trust from any party; but the Scripture is



our Rule, and the Primitive Church our pattern. Some of us have written against the lawfulness of dishonouring Princes and Rulers by proper excommunications, as being against the fifth Command; and Rituals give place to Morals: And some of the greatest Church-men that have cast us out, have been for Rulers Excommunication: We are not insensible what Treasons and Domination not only the Pope but the Councils of Bishops (even without the Pope as in the case of *Ludovicus Pius*, and others) have exercised over Princes and Kingdoms by excommunications, and cursed cursing men from Christ.

76. We find that when in the contentions between the Popes and the Emperours, the Clergy familiarly swore on both sides as interest moved them; and as *Abbas Urspergensis* saith, *Perjury was the common brand of Priest and people*, it was far from prooving a cure of Schism, though it was pretended for that use.

77. As the Law forbiddeth us, so we profess to intend nothing here written as an accusation of the Government, Laws, Liturgy, or Conformists, but only as a description of the reasons of our own Nonconformity. But if it should prove true that Cities, Corporations, Bishops and Priests are guilty but of half the evil against God, Truth, Conscience, the Gospel, the Church, the souls of men, the good of the King and Subjects, which we fear we should be guilty of if we did conform, I had rather be a slave than that Clergyman that should encourage them in it.

78. And if it should prove that any of them are under such guilt, in the end it will prove but an uneffectual defence, to accuse the innocent and reprovers, and so to divert them, by keeping them on the defensive part; while they are accused of odious sin for not sinning, and called intollerable for refusing to concur in wickedness.

79. Ever since we were cast out and silenced, we have thankfully accepted all motions and overtures for concord. We have been several times since the first Treaty, called to new Treaties, in one Dr. *Manton* and others offered thankfully to accept leave to preach for nothing in the Parish Churches

where the Ministers desire it, and when the Common-Prayer is used. Another time being called by the Lord Keeper *Bridgman* we agreed with Bishop *Wilkins* and Dr. *Burton*, and it was drawn up in an Act of Concord by Judge *Hale*, but voted by the Commons not to be brought in. Since then we were invited to treat with Dr. *Tillotson* and Dr. *Stillingsfleet*, who seemed to consent to the terms of the form of an healing Act which we offered them; but they found that the Bishops would not consent. By all which we have still shewed, that we have never ceased to seek for peace.

80. We have never shunned to read or hear all that can be said, to prove that we need not fear all the guilt of Lying, Perjury, false Covenanting against duty, and all the other sins, with their many and heinous aggravations, which we fear being guilty of, if we should conform: Nor did we ever refuse to give the reason of our fears, to the Learned'st man that doth accuse us.

81. As is aforesaid, we never to this day put up our Petition to any Parliament, since we were silenced for relief, compassion, or to be heard; which may seem strange to those that know our long accusations and sufferings.

82. So far are we from loving Schism, that we take Unity to be essential to the universal and particular Churches; and that division is destruction, though every difference is not such division. And the chief of my studies and labours in the world is, How to reconcile and unite divided Christians. And having fully proved in a Treatise of the *only terms of common concord*, that it will never be attained but on the terms of Primitive simplicity, prescribed by Christ, and practised by the first Churches; it is because our Conformity is inconsistent with such terms of common concord, and such as we think but Sectarian schism, that we are Nonconformists. Let him that is for dividing the child, be taken for no true mother of it.

83. We are not against all Litanies; our Litany hath not less but more than theirs: We heartily say, *From Atheism, Infidelity and Popery, from prophaneness, persecution and oppression*

pression, from all sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion, from false doctrine, heresie and schism; from an ignorant, proud, and worldly domineering Clergy, from malignant hatred of Gods holy Image and servants, and serious worship, and from contempt of his word and commandments, Good Lord deliver us.

Jam. 3. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. *Who is a wise man and endued with knowledg among you, let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts (much more silencing persecution) glory not, and lye not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion, and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easie to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisie. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. 1 Thel. 2. 15, 16. Who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own Prophets, and have persecuted us. And they please not God, and are contrary to all men, forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sin always. For the wrath is come upon them to the utmost.*

I determine not in all this; *Who is the Schismatick*, but make a pair of Spectacles for the purblind to discern it.

But, Reader, I must earnestly intreat thee, as thou lovest thy Soul, to remember, that as toys, and plays, and lust, and pride, and drunkenness, and gluttony, and ambition, and covetousness, are the Devils nets by which he taketh the most of the world; so he hath a second sort for those that are above these things, and that is, the delights of wit in the vain unprofitable part of Learning: And for those that yet are above this, one of his last snares is *Religious wrangling*; turning faith and godliness into *opinions, sidings, formalities* and *perverse disputings*, especially with men of corrupt minds, that take gain for Godliness, and think that *Reputation* and *Money* will coin any thing that is for them, into *Truth* and *Goodness*.

I conclude therefore, That if thou would'st escape that

*Schism* and *Dangerous sin*, which Contenders charge on one another, the way is short and plain.

I. Understand, and stand to thy Baptismal-Vow, and see that thy *Belief, Love* and *Practice* of known Christianity, according to our Creed, Lords-Prayer and Decalogue, in Love to God, thy Soul and thy Neighbour, in Godliness, Charity, Justice and Sobriety, be serious and sincere; and then thou art certainly of that Catholick Church, which Christ is the Head of, and will save.

II. Love all Christians as such, according to the measures of their goodness; and remembering thy own weakness, pity and bear with the infirmities of the weak; and when others wrangle against them, and abuse them, study thou to do them good.

III. Look on all particular Churches as members of the universal afore described; and chuse the best thou canst for thy *ordinary communion* and good, so it be not to a greater hurt by accident: But deny not *occasional communion* with any (though accused by others) further than they force thee to sin, or than they separate from Christ: Thy presence maketh thee not guilty of the tolerable faults which thou canst not amend. Take them for *Sectaries* and *Separatists*, who forbid thee communion with all that are not of their mind and way in tolerable differences.

IV. Take heed of neglecting any truth or duty, or living in any sin, which all good Christians, even the Contenders are agreed about: And in these thou wilt find enough for peace of Conscience and Salvation.

V. Be sure that thou approve thy self to God, and take his Law for thy Rule, and his Love and the heavenly Glory for thy portion, hope and All; and let not the flesh, nor worldly interest cheat thee into justly suspected sin; nor the *Threats*, or *Flatteries*, or *Bribes* of men, either *Drive, Allure* or *Hire* thee to be false to thy Conscience, thy Saviour and God; nor prophane thyself *with Esau*, to sell thy Birthright for a morsel, or hazard thy part in Heaven for a transitory befooling dream and shadow of profit, honour or delight.







