

T 134 THOUGHTS  
105 On the  
Examination and Trials  
of  
CANDIDATES

For the  
SACRED MINISTRY.

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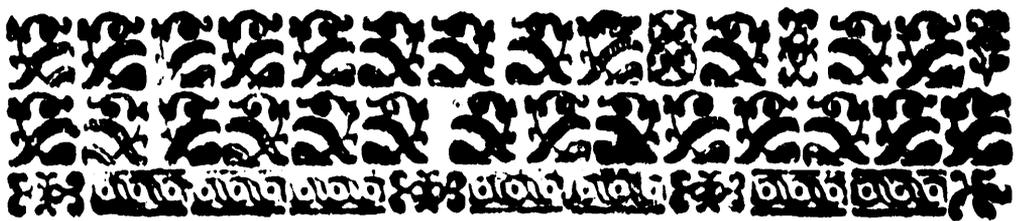
*Let these also first be proved- 1. Tim. 3, 10.  
Man looketh on the outward Appearance, but  
the LORD looketh on the Heart. 1. Sam. 16, 7.*

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*Vel Merito, quoniam in propria non pelle quiescent.*

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PARTHENOPOLI Typis Societatis. Anno Domini  
M V C C L X V I.



## INTRODUCTION.

**A** public ministry is one of the important gifts our ascending redeemer gave to his church. Eph. 4, 10. 12. The first extraordinary ministers of the gospel were called and ordained immediately by himself Mark. 3, 14. These were authorized to ordain ordinary standing Pastors, and these others, that a standing ministry may be still continued, to whom the Lord has promised his gracious presence to the end of the world. A. C. t. 14, 23. Tit. 1, 5. Matth. 28, 20. And so men ordain'd by such, as Christ has authorized, receive office really, tho' not immediately, from him, and are truly his ministers.

But the Lord has not left ordainers at liberty to introduce any they please; he has particularly described, what sort of persons they must be; and to introduce men destituted of the qualifications & characters prescrib'd, would be acting beyond commission, disobedience to him and highly dangerous to his churches.

Christians therefore of every denomination are equally oblig'd and concern'd to determine and use the properest ways of trying candidates for the sacred offices, in order to fulfil these directions. It

is publicly known, that the mode of trying some qualifications has been matter of disputation among the members of one denomination, some things have been printed and oft delivered in public sermons on the subject; but they have not fairly entered into the matter, nor afforded any satisfaction to considerate enquirers. Hence the following Thoughts on this subject are humbly proposed and submitted to the consideration of all. If any can clearly show, that the method here proposed is faulty; that different modes of tryal or any thing farther is required by the scripture directions, they should certainly endeavour to promote true scriptural sentiments and practice among christians in a matter of common concernment and great importance.

**T**HE character of such as may be employ'd in the gospel-ministry is more generally expressed in 2 Tim. 2, 2. *The same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others.* He must be faithful, honest in the trust and duties committed to him; as that word usually signifies. So Matth. 24, 45. 1 Cor. 4, 2. And he must have knowledge and utterance to teach others. But the qualifications required are more particularly declared in 1 Tim. 3, 2. ---A bishop then must be *blameless*, of a fair character; *the husband of one wife*, not having more than one, as many Jews and Grecks had; *vigilant*, attentive to his duties; *sober*, having a due government of his affections and Passions; *of good behaviour*, given to hospitality; *apt to teach*, not given

given to wine; no stricker; not quarrelsome; not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient under wrongs, &c. Much the same is that description in *Tit.* 1, 6. The general heads of christian duties are mentioned together in v. 8. *Just* towards men; *holy*, pious and devout towards God; *Temperate* in reference to himself, of a Godly righteous and sober life. Such are the qualifications requisite; the only inquiry now is, *how ordainers are to try and be satisfied, that a person is such, as here described.* Now in all these things we have only to consider *aptness to teach* and the several branches of a *religious character.*

*Aptness*, or fitness to teach, lies especially in two things. 1. A capacity to understand and conceive aright of the great things of religion, as they are taught in scripture. 2. A talent to express and represent these things justly and plainly to others, so as they may be led to apprehend and learn them. This Chrysostom and others have declared the chief character of a christian bishop; without this he can not be useful, nor answer the design of his office; ordainers therefore must very carefully trie, what apprehensions and understanding candidates have of the gospel doctrines, the method of our redemption and way of salvation revealed therein; how the holy Spirit usually deals with sinners in their conversion and sanctification; what knowledge and sense they have of the various exercises of grace and duties of religion; what capacity and skill to instruct and guide

others in the various cases of conscience and difficulties they may be in. They must try their acquaintance with the word of God, and such branches of learning as help to understand that sacred book, the explication, and right application of it being the whole business of their teaching. And also what gift of utterance they have to communicate their thoughts to others. Such tryal is to be made by questioning them fully on these matters, and observing how they answer, and speak of them. No other way can this tryal be made, and so there can be no doubt here.

The *religious character* is the other subject of inquiry. The particulars mentioned by the apostle import in general, that there must be a good report, freedom from vicious conduct, as drinking, railing, contention, with a comely deportment, and the positive practice of religion in the several duties of piety, righteousness and sobriety. Now all these are evidently matters open to the view and observation of others: and as an evenly course of blameless, holy conversation is the best evidence can be had of the goodness of men's hearts and principles, so 'tis what others can see and know, & judge the agreement of this character with the apostle's description. Nothing is here committed to human judgment, but such matters as we see, observe, and judge of in others daily. And it is manifest, in the nature of the things, that the only means of knowing, and of judging such matters must be personal acquaintance and conversation,  
with

with the information and testimony of others.

What further and more particular answer may be necessary here, we are provided with already by the pious and judicious Mr. Durham on the Revelation, cap. 3 p. 184. where he shows, that these qualifications are necessary for a minister, viz. 1. *Gifts*, 2. *Learning*. 3. *Holiness*. But these are not equally necessary, and in the same respects; the two first are necessary *ad esse*, or to the very being of a minister; holiness only *ad bene esse*, to the well being. Then he proves the importance of holiness, and that both people choosing, and those who ordain a minister, should greatly respect this; and that it should be tried, tho' not by any extraordinary ways for knowing men's conversion; yet in such a way as conscience may be clear to determine, not about the person's state, but about concurring warrantably in ordaining. Here two questions may arise, viz.

1. What length may be attained, or is to be aimed at in trying sanctification by virtue of that precept 1 Tim. 5, 22?

Ans. 1. No infallibility is to be expected or pretended to in judging of this; for no such thing is possible; nor hath the Lord given such symptoms, or evidences as may found such a judgment of another's gracious estate. Nor is this to be tried, as if the validity of ordination depended on it, for this may be valid without it: but it is such a trial as is opposite to hastiness, or rashness, that may give quiet afterward; and the ground of that peace

## *de Examination*

of that thing, but (to say so) the such evidences, which are found tho' perhaps not sincere, [ that discovering and judging a man to that gives peace in ordaining him, but such signs of holiness in outward condu. scripture directions oblige ordain- ers to 100. or. ]

2. Negative evidence, that we know no harm of him, is not sufficient, positive qualifications are required.

3. We say then, something positive is attainable, which tho' nor infallibly convincing of his state, yet suffices to prevent challenges of rashness in proceeding, which in general may lie in three things. 1. That there be search in the external positives given in the word, which may be known. 2. some observations of a man's way, and tract of carriage, which may shew some thing of his equableness, singleness, and spirituality in such duties. 3. some discovery may be made of his universality in such duties, so qualified, by observing his carriage in reference to divers cases, conditions, sorts of persons, &c.

If it be farther urged, what are these positive evidences, which may be warrantably looked for? Answ. What satisfies in other cases, has place here. The scriptures have pitched on particular characters, 1 *Tim.* 3, 4, 5, 1. Faithfullness in private relations, --- his zeal, prudence, authority there. 2. Sober, meek, hospitable; and opposite temper

temper, unless grace prevails, forbides him, 3.

- A lover of good men. *Tit.* 1, 7. This implies some capacity to discern, and principle to like such. 4.
- Not a novice, but of some standing in Religion; not taking it up a little before with a view to the ministry. All this should be laid together, and a tract of life, not a month or two, compared, to see what may be gathered about the sincerity of their end, spirituality of their walk, &c. Testimony sometimes may be sufficient as to much of this. Thus far Mr. Durham. Now, in what he says, may be observed, 1. That he proposes no enquiry into any thing but what is outward and visible, and so can be certainly known. 2. That he understands the particulars in *1. Tim.* 3. and *Tit.* 1. to be characters of outward conduct, and visible holiness. 3. That it is not the reality of a man's piety that is tried, but whether he has the marks and conduct of a good man, which the scripture requires ordainers to look for; if they find these, they are safe, whether he be sincere or no; and otherwise, men could never be clear to ordain at all.

Such was the judgment, and agreeable to this the practice of former christians. But latter times have produced some very different notions and practice in this matter, unthought of for ages in the church: viz. " That a man's having the several branches of a religious character mentioned in scripture, or visible holiness, should not satisfy; but ordainers should trie the spiritua

“ state, and, as a proper mean of discovering it,  
 “ require a narrative of men’s conversion and re-  
 “ ligious exercises; and according as they are jud-  
 “ ged gracious or not, they are to be admitted or  
 “ rejected. ” It may therefore be necessary to re-  
 fute here this dangerous and unwarrantable opi-  
 nion by a few arguments.

The first is taken from the nature of the vi-  
 sible church, and the authority of her judicatures.  
 A distinction has been commonly allowed bet-  
 ween the visible and invisible church; between  
 apparent & real holiness. The former being visible  
 is known & judged of by men; the latter is known  
 to God only, which is the ground of distincti-  
 on. To the visible church belong all the visible  
 ordinances and means of salvation. And as men,  
 who cannot know the hearts of others, are entrus-  
 ted to give or refuse communion in these; the  
 ground upon which they are allowed to admit to  
 this, and men may claim it, is a professed belief  
 of the gospel, with an answerable outward religi-  
 ous practice, which come under human view, &  
 can be judged by men. But true faith and holi-  
 ness are necessary to the enjoyment of the other  
 saving benefits promised; and as God only knows  
 this, so he only dispenses the special blessings,  
 and has never committed them to the disposal of  
 men, as no doubt he would, if he had entrusted  
 them to try and judge the spiritual state. Men  
 shou’d therefore content themselves with judging  
 visible things, while they admit only to visible

ordinances and offices; or if they will judge of real holiness, should confer the saving blessings promised to it. So the visible church has only human judicatures obliged by the laws of God to proceed only on the testimony of a sufficient number of qualified witnesses; and nothing but what can be proved, belongs to their judgment, and so not the *secret spiritual state of others*. If this could be any way made *known and visible* to men, as some speak, the distinction between the visible and invisible church might cease.

If it be alledged here, that when the scripture says: a bishop must be *just holy &c.* he should certainly be so in reality, and not in appearance only; and that real sanctification is necessary to his acceptable performance of his duties. It may be answered: every professor is obliged to be really holy, and can do no duty acceptably without this. But the question now is not what men ought to be, or what is necessary to their own salvation and acceptance in duty; but what belongs to the judgment of the visible church, and upon what grounds she is to admit to ordinances and offices, which is only such a profession and practice as men certainly can know, and are competent judges of. This may be further cleared and confirmed by the following arguments from the Rev. Mr. Durham on scandal.

1. From the difference between the *key of doctrine* and *key of discipline*. The object of the *key of doctrine* is the spiritual state; and as this can

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not be known to men, its sentence is always conditional only; as, if thou believest, thou shalt be saved. The object of the key of discipline is the outward man, professed principles and visible practice; and as these can be known and proved, so its sentences are absolute; you are admitted; or you are rejected. Now all such sentences must be founded on sufficient evidence and proof, which human courts may admit. How ridiculous would it be in judges to say, --- we can not prove what we alledge against you, but yet we condemn you! Yet this must ever be the case, if any are rejected as wanting grace, when no sufficient evidence of it in visible conduct has been proved. Again,

2. God has given no rules to judge the state of the conscience by, and so *its sincerity or goodness is not subjected to human search or judgment.*

3. If men's spiritual state is judged, and they think the sentence wrong, yet they have no means to convince the judges, so no redress.

4. If any rejected on this ground should appeal to a higher judicature, how will the first judges prove there, that the spiritual state was as they judged? Nay how prove they really thought it so, and did not act from prejudice or disaffection? Yet the ground of their proceeding must be proved certain and sufficient, or the higher judicature cannot confirm their sentence.

5. If it be said, that a charitable judgment only is the ground of proceeding; it is evident different tempers, connections, prepossessions lead

men

men to judge exceeding differently. Then what division may this cause in judicatures? how unwarrantable upon such uncertain guesses to pass absolute sentences. In this way argues he.

If such a judgment of the spiritual state may be the ground of sentence, a way is opened for the most horrid tyranny. If judges have a pique, or some different interests to serve, 'tis but contrive puzzling questions about conversion and experiences, and then shrug the shoulder, and say: we are not satisfied you have grace; so the man is rejected, without their being obliged to prove any fault, or reason for it: rejected as graceless, which must ruin his character, while no witnesses, nothing he can do will clear him. Would a righteous God, who sometimes condescends to appeal to the reason of men as to the equity of his own ways, *Ezeck. 18. 25.* would he subject the rights and characters of men to such arbitrary humours, and unaccountable tyranny!

7. A religious life is the only scripture evidence of our faith to others, *Jam, 2, 8. I will show thee my faith by my works.* By these we are directed to judge, *Matth, 7, 20.* by their fruits ye shall know them, that is, the false prophets he warns against, who would come in sheeps clothing, that is, in the garb of a prophet, which was a rough garment, *Zach. 13, 4.* So Elija had a sheep-skin mantle *1. King. 19. 13.* and *2. King. 2, 13.* So to come in sheeps clothing is not with a shew of piety, but to pretend to be a Prophet, and  
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sent by God, while their fruits, their corrupt doctrine & practices would prove this false. By this rule our Lord desires the Jews to judge of his own mission; *John 10, 32.* & blames them for judging ill of him, when they could prove none of his doctrines or works were evil. But our modern judges would have answered more boldly than the old, and told the Lord, they would not judge him by outward things, but by *internals*, so he pleaded his doctrines and good works in vain. How unscriptural and criminal, then, must this way of judging be!

The scripture always teach, that to search & know men's hearts is God's unalienable prerogative. *Rev. 2, 23. 1. King 8, 39.* He declares *1. Sam. 16, 7.* how men judge and how differently he judgeth. Men judgeth according to outward appearance but the Lord judges the heart. Hence he forbids the servants to gather the tares out of the wheat, because incapable to distinguish them, *Mat. 13, 29.* Is it not just cause of wonder, as well as grief? that considerate, serious men should not see this plain truth, that to make a judgment form'd of the spiritual state the ground and rule of treating others, is an impious usurpation of the throne and office of God! How justly may candidates answer such daring judges) as the apostle does his *1. Cor. 4, 3-5.* with me it is a small thing to be judged of you, or of men's judgment: he that judgeth me is the Lord. Men's forming rash uncertain judgments of others, and then treating  
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them as if really such, is the spring of much evil daily; but for judicatures to do so, who should go on certain proof, is shocking; 1. Cor. 4; 5. Jam. 4, 12.

Many other arguments might yet be added, but these are more than sufficient to show, that all judging of men's spiritual state in order to treat them judicially according to it; and so making that judgment the ground and rule of admitting, or rejecting, is absurd, unscriptural, and impious, whatever good men under delusion, or such as can do any thing to serve a turn, may plead in its favour. And if any, without answering such arguments to the satisfaction of an unprejudic'd conscience, & producing sufficient scripture grounds for this practice, should yet insist upon it, they must be chargeable with blaming the wisdom of Christ; the provision he has made for the churches safety, and refusing to acquiesce in his institutions. All this indeed is comprehended in every addition men make to the directions and ordinances of Zion's King. Sure the arguments, that have yet been offered for this practice cannot satisfy any calm, considerate mind, for they are chiefly such weak pleas as these.

Some say they pretend not to judge the heart; or, they form no absolute judgment, but only a judgment of charity:

Ans. Tho' they have no objection as to external religion, this will not satisfy, and what else remains to be judged but the heart? nay the very  
thing

thing pleaded for is, to form a judgment by narratives of internals, whether the person be gracious, and to make their judgment of his state the ground of admitting or rejecting. They judge some thing which they cannot judge positively, but charitably, and is not this the spiritual state? to say, then, they judge not the heart, is plainly contrary to fact: they are for forming a judgment of the secret state, & dealing with men according to this, & not according to outward appearance, & therefore to such judges may still justly be apply'd 2. *Thess.* 2, 4. as gods they sit in the temple of God, shewing themselves that they are gods. Is any papal remission of sins a greater usurpation of Divine prerogatives?

By a judgment of charity seems usually meant such a good opinion as christian love disposes to form of others appearing to be godly; and when our acquaintance with any furnishes good ground to hope they are saints, it is a very delightful thought. But it is still only a private opinion, no ways determining the rights or priviledges of others. But can any thing be more absurd than a judge's forming a judicial judgment of charity, which shall positively decide a man's fate, shall "*a think so*" be the ground of judicial acquitting or condemning men? And to say there is no positive judgment formed of the state is still the same, when yet it is made the foundation of a positive judicial sentence of acceptance or rejection. But it is plain the sentence is positive, and if it has not

a positive ground, it must be rash and iniquitous

Some plead for this the command to *be always ready to render a reason of the hope, that is in us* 2. *Petr.* 3, 15. There the apostle directs christians how to answer persecuting infidels, and to must intend only the reasons, why they believed christianity, and hop'd to be saved in that way. The ancient apologists, who gave the grounds of their faith, and defended it, did what is here meant: but had they related their experiences to infidels, as the reasons of their hope, they might have been probably laughed at.

The example of Paul declaring his conversion has been used. Whereas Paul only relates the miraculous vision he had, part of which was seen and proveable by his company; and then says in general, he was not disobedient. Not one word of his case and exercises of soul between this and his baptism, nor of his experiences afterward. So 'tis manifestly false to say, he gave any such narrative in court, as is now in question.

It is said, christians on other occasions communicate their experiences in religion for mutual edification: it is part of the communion of saints; the psalmist invites the godly to come & hear his *Psal.* 66, 16. Whoever reads this psalm, especially from v. 9. must see it celebrates a public and glorious deliverance wrought for Israel: that the psalmist speaks in the name of the church, and proposes to publish to the Divine honour what was done for her, and not any personal experience,

To apply this to the case argues ignorance, or willful perversion of it. It is no doubt a common thing among christians to tell experiences: probably all christians do so on some occasions: it is often duty in order to direct, warn or encourage others. But this is a voluntary freedom, used as they think expedient. And if any shou'd authoritatively require it in order to form an opinion of their state, and according to which they shall be treated in the visible church, they may think it their important duty to refuse it, as what judges have no right to demand or use for that end.

Some weakly enough say, it can do no hurt, and if it afford more satisfaction to any, why may it not be used; it is no harm to break over God's directions, to assume his prerogative, and form an unscriptural rule of admitting into the visible church, beyond the sphere of any created capacity! no, let such inform their judgments better, and learn to be satisfied with God's way.

It is urged, that as carnal ministers are a plague to the church, every mean shou'd be used that may help to discover, whether men be godly, before they are admitted; and trial of conversion and exercise may help to judge; & therefore shou'd be used.

It wou'd scarce be expected men seriously regarding scripture, wou'd spake thus. When a general end is commanded, but the means of accomplishing it left to christian prudence, there is room to consider of fit and expedient means; but when all is directed, that is to be done, there is no room for  
human

human invention; and such is the case in question; besides the mean proposed is unlawful in its nature, as has been shown. Scripture directions, the nature of the thing, the office and capacity of human courts, all determine and limit what is to be done in order to have a qualified ministry. The mean pleaded for, is not useful; for 'tis evident he who can satisfy in such an examination of his fitness to teach, as mentioned p. 5. who can justly represent the exercises of religion, and speak to various cases of conscience; can certainly, if he please, give such a narrative of conversion and exercises, and so answer any questions about these, as will satisfy his judges, whether be his real state. Now, if he has not that fitness to teach, he can be rejected on certain grounds: if he has, then his narratives afford not the least further light or certainty. Ungodly men are the only persons, that may hypocrise in the case, and if they can satisfy in other examinations, they can in this; and so may all come into office still, if they please, notwithstanding this mean, which is therefore as useless as unlawful. What the scripture requires the church to look for, and men can know, even as blameless religious conversation, is still the most satisfying ground to go on. It must be the surest way to follow Christ's directions, and look to him to make them effectual for the churches safety. If real grace be the ground of receiving office, doubting christians can never be in; but all skillful hypocrites may, which tends little to the churches safety. Nor is it likely that many grace-

less man shou'd be in office, if the church is faithful in admitting, and retaining none but such as are apt and skillful to teach the matters of religion; of pious livés, and diligent in their duties. Nor while men are such can they so greatly injure the church, as the common out-cry imports; and when errors, loose practices, or neglect of duty, which wou'd do hurt; are found, they shou'd be censur'd, or cast out, and so danger will be provided against sufficiently, by Christ's means.

If at any time the Lord for some wise ends allows unregenerate men to get into office, and uses the gifts and talents he has given them in his service, he will still over-rule and order all this for good. Tho' the church ought never to admit such, when they are known, yet the Lord sometimes suffers such to deceive the church, and it may be, themselves too as to their state; for the angel of Laodicea thought himself rich: and he may use such men to promote his own cause; yea, it appears from *Matth. 7, 23.* and other places, that he may endow some with even miraculous gifts for this end, who yet want grace; for he has not suspended the success of his ordinances on the piety of dispensers. And when the Lord orders thus, if the church has done what belong'd to her in the case, she will be blameless and safe. Here it may deserve to be just observed, how false & profane a very common assertion is, that men after proper trials regularly ordain'd, yet if they want grace, are no ministers of Christ; they are but the ministers of men; they will not be own'd  
by

by Christ. Mr. Durham observes, the angels of Sardis and Laodicea are own'd and call'd angels. That, he himself employ'd Judas, and such as those in *Matth. 7. 23*. And so to be regard'd by others as his apostle and ministers. That altho' men shou'd not take peace in such way of doing duties, yet Christ's ordinance shou'd not suffer derogation in whatever hands it be; as not grace but commission entitles to the charge. Thus he. And unless this be allow'd, then, until the church is furnished with certain means of discerning, who are gracious, and who not, she must be for ever uncertain, whether she has any ministers, or who they are. None cou'd know they were right in receiving ordinances from any. And wou'd not all ordinances administr'd by graceless men be null and void? if any of them discovered afterward what state they had been in, shou'd not such as they baptized, be baptized again, &c. Yea if Christ does not look on them as in office, can their neglect or superficial performance of the duties, which he does not require of them, be any sin? yet such horrid notions must often pass for signs of religion and affection to the cause of Christ.

No other plea for the practice in question has occur'd that deserves notice, unless it be the unreasonable way of interpreting in its favour, what is said in the West-Minster directory of *enquiring touching the grace of God in the soul*. Now let it be noted here, that 'tis agreed on all hands there must be trial of the person's holiness, and

what ground there is for the church to esteem & treat him as gracious: and the question only is, whether an evenly course of visible piety, apparent fruits of grace found in the conversation, shou'd satisfy; or is the secret exercises and state of the soul to be tried? Now is it possible or supposable that this last shou'd be intended in the directory, when Mr. Durham, as appears even from what has been quoted here; Mr. Ferguson, and other eminent men of that time, all maintain opposite principles? Mr. Rutherford, who was one composer of the directory, has done so in his disputes with Independents, &c. None of these were ever charged with contradicting the directory. So we may conclude, *the enquiry touching grace* which they meant, was the scriptural way, allow'd and pleaded for here, and that we understand and practise the directory in the same sense as they.

The Protector indeed appointed *Triers*, as they were called, who used some thing of this heart-searching. But it is well known this was intended as much for politick, as religious ends. And so men who were known to live godly, and to be well affected to the Protector's goverment, were little examined farther about conversion. Mr. Fuller was ask'd no more, than, whether he made conscience of his thoughts. But when they know they dealt with enemies to the goverment, they used abstruse puzzling questions to find ground for rejecting them, And after all, historians of them times defy those who blame the triers, to produce

to produce one instance of a man rejected, without being convicted of errors, immoralities, or disaffection to the government. And many judicious and godly men then condemn'd the practice as unwarrantable and tyrannical. It is true, as far as we can find, that the notions and practice blam'd had their origin among the distractions and enthusiasms of that time, but not from sober men in the West-Minster assembly.

Here it is not amiss to mention the judgment of the church of *Scotland*, (collections and observations methodized &c. book 4. chap. 1. page 61. ) enquiring what shou'd be satisfying, &c. for removing of scandals, it is said : on the other hand church-officers ought not to delay the removing of an offence, til' they be satisfied, that the offender is sincerely and graciously penitent for that would engage church-judicatures to decide as to the state of some souls, which is hold for them judicially to dive into, and when all is done, impossible to arrive at any certainty about it.

#### POSTSCRIPT.

Some have thought this trial of the spiritual state equally necessary before admission to the Lords table; and have called the neglect of it *manifest and horrid unfaithfulness*. See two papers presented to synod in 1740. Yet some of these upon reading Mr. Stoddard's sermon on the subject, and fuller consideration, were convinced this was wrong. How this happened without  
being

being convinced it is so in the other case, hard to guess, unless the one point was attentively considered, but not the other; for Mr. Stoddard's arguments determine one as much as the other. He proves that visible holiness entitles to any ordinance or *office* in the visible church. So his authority and arguments are in favour of what has been said; and we cou'd wish such are yet otherwise minded as to the trial of candidates; wou'd read and carefully weigh what he, and others have wrote, and then perhaps they may come to be convinced in this point also.

F I N I S .

