

THE
S Y N O D
OF

NEW-YORK AND PHILADELPHIA
VINDICATED.

In a REPLY to Mr. *Samuel Harker's*
APPEAL to the CHRISTIAN WORLD.

By a MEMBER of the S Y N O D.

But there be some that trouble you, and wou'd pervert
the Gospel of Christ. *Gal. i. 7.*

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T H E
S Y N O D of N E W - Y O R K
and P H I L A D E L P H I A V i n d i c a t e d , & c .

MR. *Harker* makes so loud a Complaint, and sets the Synod's Treatment of him in so strange a point of Light in his *Appeal*, that the Christian World, to whom it is made, will, I doubt not, naturally expect to be inform'd, what is to be said in defence of the Synod's Conduct: And I hope they are so candid as to suspend their Judgment upon the Matter, until such Defence appear. I shall therefore attempt to lay it before them in the few following Pages.

I PRESUME it will appear to every one, at first View, that Mr. *Harker* wrote his Appeal, and particularly the Letter, which he sent into the Synod, under the Influence of *strong unbridled Passions*, and I think I may add, without breach of Charity, *much Pride*.

He reproaches the Synod with being "cruel and severe." He tells them, *Appeal. P. 16.* "Your Severities necessitate me to vindicate my own Character and Integrity, at the Expense of
" peace

“ pence of the Moderation, Justice, Christian
 “ Charity and Forbearance, which I shou’d ever
 “ delight to find in you.” By which he must
 mean, (if it be possible to affix any Meaning
 to the Expressions at all) either, that the Sy-
 nod’s Treatment of him is so very bad, as to
 justify him in laying aside those Virtues, or
 else to manifest that they themselves are desti-
 tute of them. Such is his Sense of his own *Im-
 portance*, and the Synod’s Severity, that he con-
 ceives “ they are in danger of losing the *Repu-
 “ tation* of their Body, and of being subjected
 “ to the Abhorrence and Contempt of Mankind.”
 Now, as “ hard Words will not alter Facts,” and
 these, and such like Reflections carry in them no
 Sort of Arguments, they can be no otherwise con-
 sidered than as the Eruptions of outrageous Passi-
 ons, and plain Intimations of his desire to have
 it so: But, I trust it will appear in the Sequel, that
 they are very unjust, and the Synod are in no
 great Danger of “ losing their Character and In-
 fluence” by their Conduct towards Him! Was the
 Christian World to form a Judgment from Mr.
H’s Representation, they wou’d indeed, think
 the Synod proceeded against him with the utmost
 irrational Violence. They wou’d be ready to im-
 agine, when he tells them *P.* 16. that “his and
 “ his Family’s Support; his good Name, and in a
 “ Manner his Life is at Stake; and insinuates that
 “ Ruin is one of their ecclesiastical Penalties *P.*
 27. that the Synod had “disqualified him for tak-
 “ ing any Method to provide for his, and Family’s
 “ temporal Sustainance.” (Surely he cannot think
 the

Ministry the only, or the most profitable Method, and that he shou'd be allowed the free Exercise of it as a Trade for this Purpose, at the Expence of the Church's Edification and Safety) or else that they had impos'd some heavy Fine upon him; slander'd him; and were maliciously attempting some Species of Murder. For who wou'd talk at this Rate, meerly for being censur'd, and in the apprehension of the Judicature, according to Demerit. The Synod have done all this two, it seems, without *Reason* and *Argument*, (owing I suppose, either to the badness of their Cause, or incapacity, or want of Candor and Temper,) for Mr. *H.* very plumply denies, *P.* 22, that the Synod, or any of it's Presbyteries, have, for several Years, us'd him in the tenderest Manner, or taken much Pains to convince him. He roundly asserts they never us'd Arguments to convince him. They "have (says he, with a very unbecoming Sneer, such as we might rather have expected from some of the Prophane) admonish'd, groan'd, sigh'd, pitied, and expell'd me; and have not been wanting in every other Method, except the one of *Reason and Argument*, which deserves the Attention of a rational Creature, or Christian." With what Face or Conscience Mr. *H.* could say this, the World must judge, when I inform them that when his peculiar Sentiments became the almost continual Subjects of his public Discourses, and were creating much uneasiness in those Parts, the Presbytery of *New-Brunswick* took the Matter under Consideration; and repeatedly spent much Time in reasoning with him,

one

one meeting of Presbytery after another; besides other Opportunities, taken by several Members, in their more private Capacities; that when they found they cou'd make no Impression upon him, they intrated him that he wou'd forbear insilting upon these Things, wherein he differed from his Brethren. But this he refused, telling them he cou'd not otherwise preach the Gospel.

THE Presbytery being very backward to proceed to Censure, till every other Step shou'd first be taken, refer'd the Matter to the Synod of *New-York*, Anno. Dom. 1758, who appointed a Committee to meet, and confer with Mr. *H.* upon the controverted Points. And at a Meeting of the united Synod in *May* following, said Committee reported, that they had accordingly met, examin'd Mr. *H.*'s Piece then in Manuscript; talk'd the Matter over with him at large, and in some Things obtained Satisfaction; but that he still continued to maintain the Errors he has since published in his Book.

THE Synod not having Time to enter into a full Examination of the Matter, and being desirous to take all due Pains with Mr. *H.* before they shou'd proceed in a judicial Way against him, appointed two other Committees, consisting of Members living in *Pennsylvania*, on Purpose to reason with him. The meeting of one of these Committees was providentially prevented; but one of the Members spent the most Part of two Days with him, in debating the Matters in Question. In his return he met with the other Committee in *Philadelphia*; who spent one Evening

Evening in reading his Manuscript, and settling the State of the principal Question; and then spent three successive Evenings in reasoning with him; but without Effect. The Synod at their next meeting declared their Disapprobation of his Sentiments, so far as they were informed of them by the Reports of the several Committees, and other Members: But as Mr. *H.* had signify'd his Design of printing, they left the Matter open for further Consideration. The Synod at their next Meeting, were so taken up about other important Affairs, that they had no Time to examine his Book, so that Matters stood till the last Synod; when a Committee, appointed for the Purpose, collected out of his Book, and laid before the Synod, a Number of Propositions, the Substance and Amount of which the Synod have compris'd in their Minute, (published by Mr. *H.*) and censur'd as said Minute declares.

FROM this Account, let the World judge, whether the Synod have dealt untenderly with him, and neglected to take *much Pains* in using the Method of REASON and ARGUMENT.

IT is true, it appears that Mr. *H.* is not convinced; but will that justify him in saying they never used *Arguments* to convince him? Or will it so much as prove the Arguments used to be weak and inconclusive, and so not calculated to convince?

THE Design of Mr. *H.*'s *Appeal*, is to persuade the Christian World, that the Synod's Sentence against him shou'd be rejected, and that no Body shou'd pay any Regard to it; but ought to treat

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him

him and receive him, in the same Manner, as tho' such Sentence had never been passed. For this End, he tries a Variety of Methods.--- He wou'd have it believed to be a Violation of an Act of Synod *Ann. Dom.* 1729, which he calls *one of the great Articles of their Union*, and which he thought *sufficiently secured the Rights of private Judgment*; wherein it is provided, that *a Minister or Candidate shall be admitted, notwithstanding Scruples respecting Article or Articles the Synod or Presbytery shall judge not essential or necessary in DOCTRINE, WORSHIP and GOVERNMENT.* But in order to improve this to his Purpose, he takes the Words *Essential or Necessary* in a Sense, in which, it is plain from the Act itself, the Synod never intended they shou'd be taken. He wou'd have them to signify, what is essential to "Communion with Jesus Christ," or the Being of Grace in the Heart; and accordingly supposes, that no Error can be essential which is not of such Malignity, as to exclude the Advocate or Maintainer of it from Communion with Jesus Christ. But the Synod say essential in *Doctrine, Worship, and Government*, i. e. essential to the System of Doctrine contain'd in our *Westminster Confession of Faith*, consider'd as a System, and to the Mode of Worship, and plan of Government, contain'd in our *Directory*. Now, what unprejudiced Man of Sense is there who will not readily acknowledge, that a Point may be essential to a System of Doctrine as such, to our Mode of Worship, and to Presbyterian Government, which is not essential to a state of Grace? It wou'd be

uncharitable to say that none of those who hold some *Arminian* and *Astinomian* Tenets, can be in a State of Grace. So much of Truth is acknowledged by each, and it is so possible for them to annex more orthodox Ideas to their Heterodox and very dangerous Terms, to which Persons may, from the Prejudices of Education, be strongly attached, that it is very rational to suppose that some such may be in a State of Grace, and have Communion with Jesus Christ; yet wou'd it be Safe, or Proper, to admit into the Church as her Guides and Pastors, such as wou'd teach any of their very dangerous, and indeed very opposite Systems? Or wou'd it be reasonably expected that the *Presbyterian Church* shou'd receive, as her Ministers, those who wou'd not lead her Worship, nor exercise Government, in the Manner in which only the Consciences of her Members can acquiesce?

THAT, therefore, is an essential Error in the Synod's Sense, which is of such Malignity as to subvert, or greatly injure, the System of Doctrine, and Mode of Worship and Government, contained in the *Westminster Confession of Faith and Directory*. But in Mr. H's. Sense, and according to his Rule of distinguishing "the sufferable from the unsufferable Errors," I think none wou'd be excluded but *Arians*, *Socinians*, and perhaps with enough to do *Papists*. The Synod are far from denying Mr. H. the Right of private Judgment; but is that and his Right to Membership in their Body, as a Minister, (how opposite soever his Judgment may be to their's,) the same Thing?
And

And will he call that private Judgment only, the Propagation of which is the Object of his utmost Diligence, and greatest Zeal? 'Tis pity that common Sense shou'd be thus perverted.

Mr. *H.* seems to make no Distinction between ministerial and christian Communion; otherwise it had been nothing to his Purpose to tell us “ that the Union which Christians have in common with Jesus Christ is the Foundation of their Communion with one another. Moreover that he admits of no such Distinction is plain, from the very extraordinary Manner of his reasoning (if I may be indulg'd in calling it reasoning) in P. 35, 36, 37. “ for, says he, to admit me to “ stand well in Communion with the Christian “ Church, and at the same Time to expel, or exclude me Communion with the Synod, (as a “ Minister, I suppose he means) wou'd, in my “ Opinion, involve this Consequence, that the “ Synod were no Christians &c” i. e. the Synod must admit every one, (Male, and Female I suppose) into the Pulpit, whom they admit to the Lord's Table; for, in his Opinion, a Right to the highest Acts of christian Communion, does *clearly* imply a Right to all the lesser Acts of the like Communion; otherwise the Communion of Ministers as such, or in their Office, has nothing Christian in it, and Ministers are no Christians.

I AM so far from finding any Difficulty in “ avoiding this Consequence,” that (so dull is my Apprehension,) I cannot at all see how we are exposed to it. Tho' the Faith of private Christians and Ministers be the same in Kind, yet

yet in some it may be accompanied with so much Error, that it wou'd not be Safe for the Church to employ such as public Teachers; because they wou'd propagatē *such* Error instead of Truth, to the injury of others: But they may notwithstanding, attend upon the Lord's Table with Advantage to their Souls, and without endangering the Purity of the Christian Faith. Therefore the Synod do not exclude Mr. *H.* from the Communion of the Church as a Christian, (perhaps his Logic will hence infer the unhappy Conclusion, that a Minister is no Christian) yet they do object to his "sufficient Ability to perform the Duties of the ministerial Office," to the Edification of the Church; for they judge his present Errors render him incapable of explaining, and treating sundry important Truths respecting the Covenant of Grace, in a proper Manner.

Mr. *H.* represents the Synod's Sentence against him, as unintelligible: "Something that neither they themselves, nor perhaps any Body else can tell what:" It wou'd be difficult for him to conform himself to it, because "the Meaning of it is very obscure and doubtful." *P.* 32. But it wou'd have been intelligible if the Synod had *1st* selected Propositions which are in his Book. *2^{ly}* voted them Errors in essential *Articles* of Faith, and *3^{dly}* have voted him incapable of Communion with them. Thus Mr. *H.* himself has given us a Key, wherewith to open all the Intricacies of this strangely obscure and doubtful Sentence, and render it at once intelligible.

For

For the Synod's Minute here by him publish'd, more than hints that all the above Particulars have been substantially done. I suppose the Formality of a Vote in each Particular, where there is no Opposition, or diversity of Sentiments to render it necessary, is not very material; as I can't think that wou'd much help Peoples Understandings.---A Committee was appointed. (as the Minute declares) to select from his Book some of the most exceptionable Passages and Propositions; which accordingly they did, and laid them before the Synod. They, in order to throw the Matter into the Form of a Minute, compris'd and summ'd up the Substance and Amount of the several Propositions, extracted from said Book, in the Manner in which they appear in the printed Copy. P. 9. The Synod then without the Necessity of a formal Vote, (because there was no diversity of Sentiment) declared " that these Principles are of a hurtful, " and dangerous Tendency; giving a false View " of the Covenant of Grace; perverting it into " a new modell'd Covenant of Works," (which, I think looks very like Error in *essential Articles of Faith*, in the Synod's Sense of the *Word ESSENTIAL*) and that " they misrepresent the Doctrine " of the Divine Decrees, as held by the best reformed Churches; and in fine, are contrary to the " Word of God, and our approved Standards of " Doctrine." And 3^{dly} the Synod judge, " that " the said Mr. *Samuel Harker*, cannot consistently " be continued a Member of this Body, and " accordingly declare him disqualified for preach-
ing

“ing, or ... sing his Ministry, in any Congre-
 “gation, or Vacancy under our Care, &c.” Surely
 this was the same Thing with voting him inca-
 pable of ministerial Communion with them.

THO’ Mr. H. declares the Synod’s Sentence
 wou’d have been render’d intelligible by these three
 Things, (obviously enough contain’d in it) yet
 still, even after their Explanation of it, he finds
 the Matter left “as uncertain as before,” and
 the Synod themselves, it seems, “did not un-
 “derstand, nor cou’d at all agree, in the Mean-
 “ing of their own Sentence.” To make this ap-
 pear, he relates at *second hand*, “a very extraordi-
 nary Affair,” viz. the Synod’s private Reason-
 ing, as *he was informed*, upon a Question he put.
 A poor Shift indeed! “The Force and Connection
 “of the Words, according to what he thought the
 “most natural Construction” led him with all *his*
Penetration, to apprehend the Sentence might
 virtually include or imply a Suspension, or perhaps
 Deposition; and therefore enquired whether the
 Synod intended either of these? He sets their Con-
 duct, on this Occasion, according to his Infor-
 mation, in a very odd Point of Light indeed.
 He represents them as, thro’ the Ignorance of
 the Person who drew up their Sentence, (to which
 Draught however it seems, poor weak Men,
 they were confined) “involv’d in many Difficul-
 “ties in putting any tollerable Construction up-
 “on it;” and perplex’d with many Questions
 started, “in which they were never like to agree;”
 that upon voting “the Sentence included a Sus-
 “pension only.” Difficulties from the Nature of

a Suspension were warmly urged, which were not easy to be got over. And upon the whole, “ after debating till late, they concluded to sit—
“ fle their Vote, and break up without doing
“ more.”

FROM this Representation, one wou'd imagine, the Synod were all by the Ears, and in the utmost Perplexity and Confusion; so involved were they with the Sentence they had pass'd!

WERE it not that this *Appeal* is not in Mr. H's. Stile, and he has acknowledged, as I am creditably inform'd, it was corrected by another Hand, I cou'd not have believed there was a Member in the Synod who had so little Candor and Honesty, as to represent Matters in such a View as this, but wou'd have ascribed the injurious Air of this Narrative to his own low Art. However, if he had such Assistant, or Assistants, it was grateful in Mr. H. to compliment him, or them, as the *most learned and judicious of the Body*; a small enough Recompence for such Disingenuity! Yet after all, what is it to his Purpose? It is not with the private Reasonings of the Synod he has to do, but the public Issue. It is that only the public (to whom he makes his Appeal) can judge of. If the final Determination can stand the Test, no Matter what the private Reasonings of the Members were. But a simple Narrative of his Matter, strip'd of these artificial colourings, will give a very different View of it.

WHEN the Synod had considered, and judg'd Mr. H's. Principles, as above, they found it too late to enter upon the Determination of the
Censure

Censure to be inflicted upon him, in Consequence thereof; but appointed a Committee to prepare an Overture on that Head, to be brought in at next Sederunt: Said Committee apprehending it wou'd be in vain for the Synod, after the Pains already used, to make any further Attempts to reclaim Mr. *H.* thought it wou'd be sufficient to exclude him from Membership in the Body as a Minister, and so from the Exercise of his Ministry in the Bounds of the Synod; and in this View drew up the Sentence, which being approved, became a Minute of Synod, and is now by Mr. *H.* published to the World.

THE Question Mr. *H.* put, occasioned a more distinct Consideration of the Extent of said Censure, than had been before apprehended to be necessary; whereupon it did appear, it was somewhat differently consider'd by the Members, when they approv'd the Minute. Upon this the Roll was called, not to vote what Answer shou'd be return'd to Mr. *H.* but that each Member might more distinctly express his own View of the Case. Some thought the Sentence, virtually (tho' not formally) included, or was equal to a Deposition: But the Majority looked upon it as including a Suspension only. Such as consider'd it only as an Exclusion from ministerial Communion with the Synod, did not think it so simple an Exclusion as not to suspend him from the Exercise of his Ministry in their Bounds, or to leave him on the same Footing with "an *In-*

“ Principles, or Persuasions from them,” as Mr. *H.* insinuates, *P.* 34. (for tho’ an *Independent* cou’d not, by reason of his Principles about Church Government, be a Member of the Synod, yet any Member might consistently enough invite him occasionally to his Pulpit; but it wou’d not be consistent with this Sentence, thus to treat Mr. *H.*) So that there was no such very material Difference between *these*, and *those* who included the Idea of a Suspension.

As to the Remarks, which Mr. *H.* represents as so warmly urg’d, they only tended to shew, that as by the Sentence Mr. *H.* was excluded from Membership, it cou’d not be called a Suspension in the ordinary judicial Sense of that Word, whereby a Person is supposed to be continued under the Inspection of the Body, as a Member in order to further dealing with him; nor had any alledged it cou’d in that strict Sense, so that I see nothing here very difficult to be got over.

THE Synod still had it in their Power to have reversed, or quite chang’d their Censure, if, on review, they had seen sufficient Reason for it; and consequently they had equal Power to extend, or restrain (as far as cou’d be consistent with the Terms used) the Sense in which they wou’d have it to be taken; nor were they at all fetter’d by the aforesaid Vote, since it was not a Vote to fix a Judgment, but meerly to collect the Synod’s Sense. And therefore the Synod were so far from being “ unable to agree *at all* in the reversing of their own Sentence,” that with-

out any “stalling” in the Case, they determin’d said Sentence shou’d be taken in a Sense in which they cou’d all agree, and drew it up in the Answer they gave as the final Result to Mr. *H.*

Now, when he knows this was the Result of whatsoever Reasonings might have been, with what Integrity he gravely tells us, the Synod “finally concluded to stifle their Vote, and “to break up (as tho’ in the utmost Confusion “and Perplexity) without doing more,” let the World judge. They finally gave the Answer to his Question which he has here publish’d, and then, (to use his Phrase) broke up as they usually did, when they finished their Business, or concluded a *Sedertunt*; without doing more, it is true, for they had no more on that Head to do: But the Misfortune is, it seems, the Explanation the Synod gave in this Answer, “still left the Matter “as uncertain as before.” However, I will venture to appeal to the impartial World, whether they do not easily understand it to convey this Idea, viz. that tho’ the Synod have not in Terms deposed, or in usual Form suspended Mr. *H.* but have excluded him from their Body, and forbidden him the Exercise of his Ministry within their Bounds, as not expecting their Sentence cou’d authoritatively operate farther; yet they cannot but judge, that the same erroneous Sentiments, which disqualify him for exercising any Part of his ministerial Office, in any of the Congregations, or Vacancies under their Care, do equally in the Nature of Things, disqualify him
for

for exercising it any where, while they are retained. But if any other Church see meet, notwithstanding, to receive him as a Minister, they leave them to judge for themselves. Is not this the plain Sense of the Words? Do not the Terms of the Sentence in Question easily bear this Sense? Is not this very intelligible? How then is the Matter still uncertain?

Mr. *H.* endeavours to intimidate the Synod with the dread Prospect of *Abhorrence* and *Contemp* of Mankind, by telling them, *P.* 26. "these Things are known to be done without
" the Concurrence of the MOST LEARNED AND
" JUDICIOUS of their own Body." Or if he could not make the Synod shrink (of which, I suppose, he had no great Hopes, but wrote his Letter to them with an Expectation of making it public) he thought he wou'd greatly depreciate their Sentence with the People. But how, and to whom this is *known*, I profess I cannot tell. For my Part, I do not know any such Thing. I can assure the Public, there was the utmost Unanimity in the Censure pass'd upon Mr. *H.*'s Principles. And as to the Censure upon Mr. *H.* himself, there were some Members indeed voted *non liquet*, i. e. they were not fully clear on either Side, but there was not more than one, (and I don't certainly remember whether so much as one) who voted against his Exclusion. How then was it without the Concurrence of the *most learned and judicious* of their Body.

BUT Mr. *H.* himself implicitly acknowledges the Sentence of the Synod will appear to be valid,
if

if three Things be found true. 1st. " That the said Propositions (centured by the Synod) be Errors. 2^d. That these Errors be his Errors. 3^d. That they be disqualifying Errors." P. 30. Here I will join Issue with Mr. *H.* and grant, " if either of these fail, the Synod's Sentence loses its Force and Validity." As to the first, tho' I freely own the Testimony of our *Heterodox* Confession of Faith, is no Argument to prove the Truth of the Doctrines it contains, or that the contrary is Error; yet it must be allowed, that while the Synod believe that System to contain the Doctrines reveal'd in the sacred Scriptures, they are consistent with themselves in censuring these opposite Propositions, collected from Mr. *H.*'s Book as Heterodox. Nor will it be a Matter of Doubt, with the Members of the Church under the Synod's Care, (who only can be supposed to be particularly interested) whether his Sentiments be erroneous until they shall see Reason to recede from our approved Standards of Doctrine, as Mr. *H.* has done: Till then, I must take it for granted they believe that " this effectual Call is of God's free and special Grace alone, not from *any Thing at all foreseen in Man,* who is altogether passive therein, until being quickened and renewed by the holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this Call, and embrace the Grace offer'd and convey'd in it". Conf. Ch. 10th Part II. Consequently this effectual Call is not from any foreseen Improvement, of *common Assistance and Influence of the Spirit,* by unregenerate Men.

THEY believe that “ Works done by a
 “ regenerate Men, altho’ for the Matter of
 “ them they may be Things which God com-
 “ mands, and of good Use both to themselves and
 “ others; yet, because they proceed not from an
 “ Heart purified by Faith, nor are done
 “ in a right Manner, according to the Word,
 “ nor to a right End, the Glory of God, they
 “ are therefore *sinful, and cannot please God, or*
 “ make a Man meet to receive the Grace of
 “ God.” *Confess.* Cap. 16th P. 7. therefore
 they must believe that Doctrine, which makes an
 infalible Connection between them and saving
 Grace, to be false; nor can they admit that God
 has bound himself by Promise to such Works.
 They further believe that altho’ God knows
 whatsoever “ may, or can come to pass, upon all
 “ supposed Conditions; yet hath He not decreed
 “ any Thing because he *foresew* it as future, or
 “ as what *wou’d come to pass* on such Conditions,
 “ that those of Mankind that are predestinated
 “ unto eternal Life, God, before the Foundati-
 “ on of the World was laid, according to his eter-
 “ nal, immutable Purpose, and the secret Coun-
 “ cil and good Pleasure of his Will, hath cho-
 “ sen in Christ, unto everlasting Glory, out of
 “ meer free Grace and Love, without any fore-
 “ sight of Faith, or good Works, or Perseve-
 “ rance in either of them, or any other Thing
 “ in the Creature, as *Conditions* or Causes mov-
 “ ing him thereunto, and all to the Praise
 “ of his glorious Grace.” *Confess.* Cap. 3.
 Par. II. 5. and therefore must believe the
 contrary

contrary to be Error. With these therefore, who are of our Body, our Judgment on this Head will have Weight.

THE Synod have suggested an Argument against Mr. *H*'s Principles, on the leading and most material Point, *viz.* that they
 “ give a false View of the Covenant of Grace,
 “ perverting it into a new modell'd Covenant
 “ of Works.”

MR. *H.* may talk what he will about excluding all Merit from any Place in the second Covenant; but upon Examination, I think we shall find a Place (according to his Notion) for the same Kind of Merit in it, that was in the first Covenant. In the Covenant of Works God promised Life upon Condition of perfect Obedience. “ When God created Man and An-
 “ gels, in Knowledge, Righteousness, and true
 “ Holiness, capable to serve, and honour him
 “ perfectly, it was but fit or suitable to dis-
 “ play his Glory and Perfections to them,
 “ and promise them the full Enjoyment of
 “ himself in an eternal heavenly State, cor-
 “ respondent to their serving him perfectly
 “ as Probationers for a Time.” By which perfect Obedience, Man wou'd have deserved Life “ by Way of Congruity or Fitness.” See his Book *P.* 2. Now, Mr. *H.* will acknowledge, this Merit is not in the Nature of the Work, but from the Promise in the Covenant, which made a Connection between it and the promised Blessing; for perfect Obedience was naturally due from a moral Agent to the
 supreme

Supreme Lord: and might have been justly required by a Law, without any Promise of a superadded Reward.

Now, according to Mr. *H's* View of the
 “ second Covenant, “ the Thing required in
 “ the Covenant of Grace, as a Term, or Con-
 “ dition of obtaining the Salvation promised
 “ in it, must be constituted in such a Manner,
 “ as to be possible for all those of whom it
 “ is required to Comply with said Term, or
 “ else it is no Condition.” *Tracting*, which
 “ under certain Circumstances, they are in.”
 B. P. 43. “ in the Spot where this Faith and
 the Covenant of Grace find him, (the unregenerate Man) and the Promise apprehends him, there is not more required of him than he is able to do”, “ and that which in
 “ *these Circumstances he is able to do*, is the pro-
 “ per Endeavour of an unregenerate Man,
 “ to which superadded Assistance is directly
 “ promised, and regenerating Grace remotely.”
 P. 50. The Conditions are remote and direct.
 To the remote “ Conditions there are remote
 “ Promises of superadded Assistances to ena-
 “ ble to the Performance of the direct Condi-
 “ tion.” The remote Conditions are Faith,
 (personally profess'd, if adult, or by Parents, if
 in Infancy at Baptism) Mourning, Prayer, the
 “ Use of the Means appointed for his Help;
 “ such as fasting, Meditation, Self-examina-
 “ on, attending on all the publick Means of
 “ Grace, coming to the Lord's Table, tak-
 “ ing Care not to quench the Strivings of
 God's

“ God’s Spirit, labouring to be holy in all
 “ Manner of Conversation; taking Care by
 “ all Means, that they do not rest in their
 “ moral Virtues, or Reformation of Life;
 “ labouring to obtain a deep and just Sense
 “ of an unquainted perishing Condition, weak-
 “ ness and inability to help themselves, and
 “ under that Sense to cry mightily to God,”
 Etc. to these “Regenerating Grace is promis’d
 “ remotely. In Consequence of this Improve-
 “ ment of more remote, and general Af-
 “ flictance; the direct Condition is the
 “ Soul’s crying under a deep and just Sense
 “ of an unjustified State, press’d down with
 “ a heavy Burthen of Guilt; owning he de-
 “ serves no Mercy at the Hands of a holy
 “ God; yet pleading for Mercy for Christ’s
 “ Mercies Sake. To such Men God has bound
 “ himself by Promise to give regenerating Grace.
 “ For the covenanting Parties are bound to
 “ abide by the sacredly stipulated Terms
 “ of the Covenant of Grace. *B. P.* 49, 50,
 “ 51, 52, and 54,” and we are sure, from all
 “ the Nature, and Force of Covenant-obli-
 “ gations, that when that Condition is complied
 “ with, God has bound himself by a most gra-
 “ cious and Solemn Promise, to bestow that
 “ most valuable and necessary Grace of Sal-
 “ vation, Regeneration and what can be
 “ more reasonable than for God to promise
 “ regenerating Grace to such proper Endea-
 “ vours as above described.” *P.* 56. and
 upon these Terms all the unregenerate Gos-
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pel World are "Probationers for Regeneration." P. 43, &c.

Now, what is the Amount of all these Observations but this, viz. that Jesus Christ if I may be allow'd to supply what Mr. P. has not distinctly mention'd has, by his Mediation, open'd the Way for a new Covenant, adapted to the State of Weakness and Imperfection, into which Mankind were and procure such general Influence of the Holy Spirit as will enable them, if they will improve it, to do what will entitle them by the Terms of the Covenant, to supernatural Assistance, and by a further Exertion of their own Power in improving these, (for it seems, spiritually dead as they are, they have some Power to qualify themselves for Grace, which only needs Assistance, they can fulfil the stipulated Terms and Conditions of the Covenant; to which tho' they cannot merit Justification because of the "Deficiencies, Imperfections and Iniquity that cleaves to our best Services, which Imperfections deserve eternal Damnation." B. P. 2) yet it is most reasonable and highly congruous God shou'd promise regenerating Grace: "and highly congruous he shou'd confer it," And accordingly upon such Fulfilment of these Stipulated Conditions, he is "bound to bestow this most valuable Grace of Salvation Regeneration." Now, what is this Short of Merit of Congruity?

THE Principal Things in which this dif-
fer

fers from the first Covenant are these: That required perfect Obedience, performed by that Strength alone which God gave Man at his first Creation, as the Condition of it; this admits of imperfect Obedience, performed by the Assistance of the Spirit, as it's Condition. To fulfil the Condition of THAT, immediately founded a Title to eternal Life in the heavenly State: Of THIS, only to saving Grace, whereby the Soul is united to Christ in order to Justification. This also requires a Mediator to procure the Terms of it; the common Assistance of the Spirit, by our Improvement of which we can fulfil said Terms; and Justification, viz. the Remission of Sin, and thereupon a Title to Heaven.

BUT notwithstanding these Distinctions, is not Mr. H's second Covenant (in Part at least) a Covenant of Works as well as the former? Does not the Fitness, and Reasonableness of promising saving Grace, and consequently of his bestowing it upon the Performance of these Conditions, place a Merit of Congruity in complying with them, as well as there wou'd have been, in complying with the Conditions of the first Covenant? To say the best of Mr. H's Covenant of Grace, it blends Works and Grace together, and according to it Salvation is partly of Grace, and partly of Debt. In one Word, his Notions of the Covenant of Grace appear to me not a whit more evangelical, than those of the judaizing Teach-

ers, whom the Apostle charges with having fallen from Grace, and seeking Life *as it were* by the Works of the Law. Upon his Plan, the Believer may say, he has made himself to differ. And Mr. *H.* admits he may say to another, “if you had done as I have done, you wou’d have been saved as well as I.” *P.* 62. yet if his Assertion will settle the Point, this is no boasting.

WITH Respect to the Decrees of God, Mr. *H.*’s Mode of reasoning seems to suppose, there wou’d have been some System of Beings, and some Course of Things. if there had been no divine Decree at all; for the Reason of Decrees is that “God, beholding by
 “one View of his All-comprehensive Wisdom
 “and Knowledge from Eternity to Eternity,
 “all Things that are, shall be, or possibly can
 “be, and having them in his Power, cannot
 “be an idle Spectator, but must behave to-
 “wards them as we wou’d do with respect to
 “all that will be done in the next Century,
 “if we cou’d foresee them, and had sufficient
 “Wisdom to determine what wou’d be best, and
 “Power to manage them.” *P.* 76.---But
 “God’s Decrees have no Influence on the di-
 “vine Conduct. They are only Indications,
 “and Expressions of the certainty of Events,
 “but no Cause of their Certainty.” *P.* 77.
 i.e. of their certain Futurition. But pray to whom are they Indications or Expressions of the certainty of Events? Surely not to God, for all Events are ever present to his All-comprehending

ing Mind: Not to Creatures, for their own Existence is among those Events; and the Decrees of God are immanent Acts, known to Creatures only by their Execution. The Reason Mr. *H.* gives why God's Decrees have no influence on the Futurition of Events, or on his Conduct about them, is a little extraordinary, *viz.* " he saw sufficient Reason to dispose him to decree;" for either he means that there must be some Reason or Fitness appearing to the divine Mind, previous to any supposed System of Beings, and course of Things, whereby God was induced to decree the Production, and Disposal of them: But can he tell us whence that Reason and Fitness cou'd possibly arise? Or he means that previous to, and independent on any Decree, there must be a Prescience of some System of Beings and Events, concerning the Management of which, the Apprehension of what will be best, determin'd and induc'd him to make the Decree. (which Mr. *H.* has given up in his *Appeal.*) Or that God has decreed with Wisdom and Reason, or as an infinitely wise intelligent Being: Therefore, his wise reasonable Decrees are no Reasons of their Execution. *i. e.* because God's Decrees are wise and reasonable, (and not blind Fate) they have no Influence on his administration and Conduct. I wou'd ask Mr. *H.* whether there wou'd have been any System of created Beings, or any Events at all, if there had been no Decree? If not, how is the Reason and
Fit.

Fitness of Things alone, without the Consideration of the Decree, a Reason of the divine Conduct? Could there be any Reason or Fitness of Things at all independent upon, or exclusive of the divine Decree? According to Mr. H. God's Decrees (with Reverence be it said) are the most wisest and the Things imaginable. They have no Influence at all upon the divine Conduct; or Futurition of Events: They are only Indications, or Expressions of the certainty of Events: But this they cannot be to God: For the certainty of Events (if upon this Plan we could imagine whence such Certainty could arise) must be present to the All-comprehending Mind without such Expressions; so that the great God has no need of such Indications. Nor can they be such to Creatures; for as they lye in the Mind of God, they are a profound Secret. Events wou'd be Indications of Decrees, were it not that according to this Notion, they have no manner of Connection; but Decrees can be no Indication of Events. Therefore, upon the whole, the Decrees of God (*hærendum dictu*) are of no Use at all. Is not this then, a most gross Misrepresentation of them?

BUT the Scriptural Views of the divine Decrees is that they are the eternal immutable Purposes of God concerning the Government of the World. The Execution of which is the Business of Providence. They are the Plan or Rule of divine Operations. This Plan God, who in one infinite View comprehends all Possi-

Possibility has laid with the most exact Wisdom and Contrivance in his Decrees. Hence the divine Preference; hence writes the Reasons and Effects of Things, and in some Sense or other, the certain Determination of Events. This View of the Decree, both Scripture and Reason will support, as I could easily show if I had Time, and it would comport with my present Business to enlarge. But Mr. *H*'s Account of them is contrary to both. A farther Remark or two on this Subject will fall in the Way in another Place.

Lead us on, therefore to the second Particular, upon which it is confess'd, the Validity of the Synod's Sentence depends, viz. to enquire whether the Errors, censured by the Synod, be Mr. *H*'s Errors. Here Mr. *H*. makes loud Complaint of great Injury done him. He intimates that the Synod have charg'd him with Consequences, which they have drawn from his Positions, and not with his very Principles themselves, as he himself defines them.

He does not hesitate to say, " the Propositions which the Synod have imputed to him, and condemned, are not advanced by him; they are Propositions of their own making" *Apolog.* P. 17. What does Mr. *H*. mean by all this? Can he really think the World, when they read the Synod's Minutes, his Book, his own Acknowledgment in his Letter to the Synod, in the very Place where he makes these Complaints, and Charge all together,

together, will believe him? They are not Consequences, but the very Matter of the Propositions contain'd in his Book, which the Synod have express'd in their Minute. When they had collected these Propositions from his Book, Mr. *H.* was called in, and they were propos'd to him one by one by the Moderator, by way of Enquiry, whether he still adher'd to them. He answered in the Affirmative, except in one Particular, (of which presently,) only he excepted to the Word *Mora!*, which the Synod changed, and instead of moral, say *sufficient Ability*, &c.

Now because the Synod have not transcribed the Propositions from his Book Word for Word, but have compriz'd them so as to be better adapted to the Form of a Minute, are they therefore drawing Consequences? He grants they "may admit of a Construction in his Sense." We are surely much oblig'd to him for this Concession! However for my Part, I know not what "quite different Construction" they will admit. Have the Synod put any Glois upon them, or given any View of them, different from that which Mr. *H.* himself here does? *Ap. P. 17, 18, and 20.*

ARE not the Propositions expressed by the Synod in their Minute, the very same with the Quotations I have made from his Book, under the preceding Article? But perhaps I have only been drawing Consequences, and not giving "his very Principles themselves" because I
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have not transcribed the whole of the Pages whence I have made the Quotations, or rather the whole Book; and for Forms Sake have sometimes changed a Pronoun, as *His*, instead of *My*, &c. He charges the Synod too with being so "illnatured, unchristian and unjust as to publish a Censure, grounded upon a Proposition (*viz.* that God's Prescience is previous to, and not dependent on his Decrees) which he gave up in the Face of the whole Synod, and publickly retracted before them all." If this was a fair Representation of the Case, I wou'd not say a Word in the Synod's Favour. Mr. *H.* did, indeed, tell the Synod he was a good deal shaken about that Article, by some Conversation he had with one of the Members, and was not certain about it. But was this giving it up, and publickly retracting it? How many are there, who are brought to waver about some of their Opinions, by contrary Arguments, and yet afterwards recover themselves and become as fix'd as ever? He accuses the Synod of *dressing* out another Article *Arminian like* against him; "while in *their Words*, they represent him as advancing that the Foresight of Faith was the Ground of the divine Decree of Election." *Ap.* P. 20, 21. But pray like what has Mr. *H.* dress'd it out? Has he given it any other Dress? Either he artfully changes the Question and instead of the Decree of Election, he talks of the Way in which God has purpos'd to save those he has elected, or the Foundation of

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their actual Admission to Glory, which is (not their Faith as he insinuates but) the Righteousness of Christ apprehended by Faith; or else, having never fairly understood any System of Divinity, he blends Things which should be distinguish'd, viz. the End and the Means, and has, (tho' in other more indistinct and confused Language,) Substantially said, the same Thing with the above Proposition he complains of. Reduce it to a logical Argument it will stand thus,

WHEN God chose any, or decreed and pre-determin'd their Admission to Glory, he was induced to it, considering them in their whole Character, by the same Reasons which will induce him, when they shall appear in that Character before his Tribunal, actually to admit them to Glory. But their having embraced Jesus Christ by a Gospel Faith, is the Reason which will induce God actually to admit them to Glory; Therefore the Consideration, or Foresight of this Faith, was the Reason which induced God to elect them, or decree their Admission to Glory, and I think this looks very *Arminian* like.

BUT let this article look never so *Arminian* like, what else cou'd the Synod make of the Language of his Book. P. 87. "There is no
 " Body (that I know of) disputes, but the
 " Elect shall surely come to Christ; for it
 " was upon the certain Foreknowledge of
 " THAT, they were elected. The Fore-
 knowledge

" knowledge of their coming (to Christ) will
 " surely make it certain; for God can ne-
 " ver foresee a Thing that will never be: He
 " may foresee Things that wou'd be, if they
 " were not prevented, but then he cannot
 " foresee them as having a Being, which he
 " foresees will be prevented from Being:
 " Therefore, whatever God foresees as a real
 " Being, is a Certainty. And as God from
 " Eternity foresaw the Elect wou'd come to
 " Christ, so he decreed their Salvation." If
 this is not making the Foresight of Faith
 the Ground of Election, pray what is? Tho'
 what will come of this favourite Notion, now
 he has given up the Doctrine of Pre-science
 previous to, and independent of the Decrees,
 I know not.

BUT if Mr. *H.* shou'd find his set of No-
 tions about the Decrees require him to re-
 call his Retraction, (as I think they will,
 unless he new modell them) I wou'd then be
 glad he wou'd explain how the Certainty of
 Things arises from this Foreknowledge, while
 yet they are independent of any Decree, and
 their certainty is previous to this Foreknow-
 ledge. "For God (he says) can never foresee
 a Thing that will never be," and therefore the
 Certainty of it's Being is that which renders
 it the Object of Foreknowledge. It is not
 certain because Foreknown, but Foreknown be-
 cause Certain; tho, I wou'd be glad, he
 wou'd tell me how.

WHAT does Mr. *H.* mean, then, by tel-
 ling

ling us, that “*all Things that God hath decreed, shall surely come to pass?*” for according to him, the Decree does nothing at all towards that Certainty. He shou’d only have said, what God foreknows will surely come to pass. And yet even that wou’d have been to talk without Ideas. For attend his Reasoning, (or rather talking,) throughout, and it will come to this, Whatsoever will certainly be, will surely come to pass, and therefore God certainly foresees it; “for God can never foresee a Thing that never will be: Therefore, whatever he foresees as a real Being, is a Certainty,” or whatever is a Certainty, God foresees as a real Being. For I think the Proposition must be convertible. He will never get out of this Labyrinth, until he learns, that the certain futurition of Events, and the divine Prescience depend upon the Decrees of God, not by way of physical Influence, but as they are the plan of divine Operations and Conduct, which God has laid in his eternal Councils. But to return from this Digression, which seemed to fall naturally in my Way here. I think it is evident, beyond all Doubt, that these Errors the Synod have censured, are Mr. *H*’s Errors. It remains to be enquired 3dly. Whether they are such as indeed justly disqualify him for being continued in the Exercise of his Ministry, as a Member of the Body.

MR. *H*. says, the Synod “have no where declared or certified the said Errors to be
Errors

Errors in the *essential Articles of Faith*," and, "on the whole, "have declared him to be "disqualified for all ministerial Office, "such Things as are either not true *in Fact*, "or if true, not in their Nature disqualify- "ing Things." But surely if Mr. H's Prin- ciples "give a false View of the Covenant of Grace, perverting it into a new modelled Cove- nant of Works, &c." they are Errors in essential Articles of Faith in the Synod's Sense, as I have already observed. He endeavours to persuade us, indeed, that the Difference between his Sentiments, and ours, is very trifling and in- considerable. To this Purpose he uses as soft- ening Language as he can in expressing his own Sentiments, and strong heightened Ex- pressions in representing those of the Synod, and such as they never use. P. 17, 18. He says "unregenerate Men by the Assistance "of such Operations of the divine Spirit as "are never (instead of which, he shou'd "have said *never can be*) deny'd, may com- "ply with the Covenant of Grace." If he does say, God has bound himself by Promise to give Success to the sincere and persevering Endeavours of unregenerate Men, and never can break his Promise to such: "He alledges we do not fall much short of him, while, (ac- cording to him) we say, God has given great Encouragement to the same Endeavours and never will deny Success; never will dis- appoint them of the Encouragement he has given them; so that they ought to persevere in

In seeking with the highest Courage and Boldness, and without any diffidence." We say, indeed, Sinners ought earnestly, and perseveringly to seek the Grace of God, in the diligent Use of the appointed Means, as the only probable Way, of obtaining it; that the Consideration of the Certainty that they will perish in a Course of Negligence and carnal Security, on the one Hand; on the other, the *Peradventure*, the *may-be* (*Amos* v. 15, *Joel* ii. 14,) that the Lord will be gracious; and the ordinary Course of his gracious Dealings with such as thus, with continued vehement Importunity lie at his Feet, afford sufficient Argument and Encouragement to awaken Sinners to persevere in waiting upon God. But yet, all this infers no Obligation upon the blessed God; if he should after all, reject them he would be Righteous, and his Throne guiltless: If he confer Grace it will be Matter of his gracious Sovereignty, and not Obligation; for they are Creatures lying altogether at Mercy.

Now does not this Mode of addressing Sinners tend to awaken them to the utmost Diligence, and yet cut off a legal Self-dependence? And is there not a wide Difference between this, and telling them, that upon using the Faith and best Endeavours they, (by improving the common Assistance of the Spirit,) are capable of, may justly claim the Grace of God as their Due, by covenant Obligation? Does not this plainly gratify the
Pride

Pride of Men, and tend to fix them in high Apprehensions of the Importance of, and in Dependence upon, their own Endeavours? All Mr. H's Scheme tends to support such legal Pride, for according to him, there must be a general Assistance of the Spirit, afforded to all among whom the Covenant of Grace is administer'd, to put them in a Capacity of working out their Salvation, if they will. Without this, they are not capable of being treated with in a Covenant way; because without such general Assistance they cannot perform any Conditions; and what is not somehow in their own Power to do, cannot be the Condition of a Covenant. But this general Assistance being given to all, they can, if they will, so improve it, as to be entitled to further Assistance, by the Improvement of which, they can perform such Conditions, as will give them a Title to saving Grace. This must be what he means by laying "there must be Life or
 " no Covenant. All the Seed of *Adam* were
 " federally holy until they were disinherited
 " by breach of Covenant; so it must follow
 " that they were all Parties concerned, and
 " that the Covenant of Grace contained Life
 " and Salvation for them." B. P. 16. For it is true, these Words may, abstractly taken, admit another Construction; yet taken as they stand here in Connection with the several Parts of his Scheme, the above must be their Design; in order to point out this general Assistance of the Spirit, and thereupon this
 Power

Power in Man to Perform Conditions, as the Basis of all Proposals of a Covenant, and of treating with him about Salvation. Hence the Possibility of Conditions to all, i.e. "a Term " must be constituted in such a Manner, as to " be possible for all those of whom it is re- " quired to comply with said Term; or else it is no Condition." P. 43. According to all this then, Sinners have a Power which only needs assistance, to do what will entitle them to further Assistance; and by the same Power, thus further assisted, they can do what will entitle them to saving Grace. And each one has it in his Power either to obtain Regeneration, or to resist all Operations of the Spirit, and finally perish: So that it is at the Pleasure of Men, whether the Lord *shall have a Seed to serve him*, or the Redeemer shall *see the Travel of his Soul and be satisfi'd*, or not. For as to an irresistible Call before justifying Faith, (he says) " there is no such Thing." B. P. 65. i.e. in order to produce it, I suppose. (for no body that I know of, imagines any can be effectually called without justifying Faith, as his strange Mode of Expression wou'd seem to insinuate: For it is to a saving Faith in Christ, and turning to God, they are effectually called) Hence their own Works are the Foundation of God's gracious dealings with them: Therefore they can do something upon which they may depend, and which they may plead before God: For they can do that, to which saving Grace be-

comes

becomes due. It will not help the Matter to say it is due by Promise only; for so wou'd the Reward have become due in the first Covenant, and I think Mr. *H*'s Covenant, is as plainly a Covenant of Works, as the Covenant with *Adam* was; and they who seek spiritual Life by the Works of the Law, are as really fallen from Grace, as they who seek Justification in that Way. *Gal.* v. 4. This Doctrin naturally leads Sinners to such an Apprehension of their own Ability, as directly tends to prevent their obtaining right Views of the Grace of God, and to fix them in a Dependance upon themselves; apprehending they have it in their own Power to improve the common Assurances of the Spirit, so as to ensure to themselves Life and Salvation, they will be for delaying the Matter, till, as they think, a more convenient Season.

PRESUMPTIONS of this Sort, destroy Multitudes. Of what dangerous Tendency is it then to the Souls of Men, when a public Teacher labours to persuade them, that they have such Ability, and the Security of a divine Promise for Success, when they shall use it! Nor is it merely a speculative Error with Mr. *H*. He looks upon it to be of so much Importance in order to promote Religion, that he is at great Pains, to induce Men (as tho' not of themselves thro' their native Pride, prone enough) to believe it. He has not only labour'd the Point in his Book, (which might be supposed to be done in Self-defence,) but he seems to spend the strength of his Zeal upon it in the Course of his Ministry. He cannot. (if we may believe himself)

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preach

Preach the Gospel without it. He designs it as a Foundation Principle in all his Addresses to Sinners, which he wou'd have them keep in View, in order to persuade them to turn to God. It was therefore highly necessary, one who thus troubles the Church, and perverts the Gospel of Christ, shou'd be cut off. *Gal. v. 12.* Indeed, the more I consider his Scheme, the more I am inclined to think he shou'd have been deposed, until he wou'd renounce his Errors.

VERY opposite to all this is what I take to be the Scripture Representation of the Matter, viz. That the blessed God, in his infinite Prescience, foreseeing from Eternity Man's Apostacy, in Consequence of the divine Permission, into a most helpless ruined Condition, purposed the Recovery and Salvation of a Number of them.

THAT the whole plan of this Salvation was settled between the Father and his co-equal Son Christ Jesus, in the Covenant of Redemption, in which the ever blessed Son of God was constituted a Mediator, to bring in everlasting Righteousness, and make an Atonement for Sin. And as a Reward of his Undertaking, the Father gave him a Number of fallen Men, whom he shou'd see as *the travel of his Soul and be satisfied* and have as a *Sced to serve Him.* And to accomplish this it was provided, that the holy Spirit shou'd go forth, by a divine Agency, to convince and convert Sinners, and bestow all Grace upon them. That as they were rational Beings, in whose Favour this Design was laid,

laid, they were to be dealt with in a Way suited to their Nature, therefore this Scheme of Salvation was to be laid open, in a Revelation from Heaven, as the great Medium of all further Influence, and dealings with them, which was accomplished by a gradual Progression, until the sacred Canon of Scripture was compleated.

THAT in this Revelation, Salvation and all spiritual Blessings, are exhibited by way of Overture in the Form of a gracious Covenant; wherein are contained great and precious Promises of Life and Salvation, for the Sake of Christ's Righteousness.

THAT an Interest in the Covenant, and the Blessings contained in it, is suspended upon Faith in Christ as the Condition, without which it is not obtained; it being that Grace of the Spirit, which receives the Righteousness of Christ; for it wou'd be absurd to suppose the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness to any who reject it, and do not consent to be saved by it alone.

THAT therefore, the Obligation of divine Promises in the new Covenant depends, not upon Faith considered as our Act, but upon the Righteousness of Christ as thus received by Faith. *For in Him all the Promises are Yea and in him Amen, to the Glory of God.* 2. Cor. i. 20. and in this Sense alone, the Covenant of Grace is conditional.

THAT it is a saving vital Faith whereby a Person is united to Christ and justified; which

which thus has the suspending Nature of a Condition.

THAT all who profess Faith in Christ and Obedience to him, and partake of the Sacraments of the New Testament, or either of them, stand in a real visible Covenant Relation to God; are acknowledged by him as the Members of his visible Kingdom; enjoy the external Privileges of the Covenant, such as the Means of Grace, the Care and Conduct of divine Providence about the Church, &c; and are under deep Obligations to cleave to God, and embrace the Redeemer. But while unregenerate, and destitute of saving Faith, they have no special Interest in the Promises of saving Blessings; nor are there any Promises ensuing, by way of Obligation, the Vouchsafement of saving Grace on Condition of their Endeavours. And that the Promises of Grace, *a new Heart*, &c. are not made to individual unregenerate Sinners, upon any whatsoever Conditions to be performed by them; but to the Church as such, (in which are always a Number of true Saints, who are the better Part from whom the visible Church is denominated, and thro' whose Faith, the Covenant between the blessed God, and his Church subsists,) thereby assuring Her of the divine Presence, and Influence for the Conversion of Sinners from Time to Time.

I would observe here, that Mr. H's charging us with the old Distinction between being REALLY, and VISIbLY in Covenant,

B. P. 10. is one Instance out of many, whereby it appears that he is either so uncandid, as with Design to misrepresent the Sentiments of others, for the Sake of getting a seeming Advantage; or else does not understand the usual plain Distinctions in Divinity. We do, indeed, distinguish between being inwardly, and only visibly and externally in Covenant with God. But wou'd any Logic besides Mr. *H's* hence infer, that a visible Covenant Relation to God has no Reality in it? yet he takes considerable Pains to combat this Man of Straw of his own making.

It is not easy to determine what Ideas Mr. *H.* affixes to his Terms, when he calls *Adam* the foederal Father of his Posterity. If he only means that his Children were taken into a visible external Covenant Relation to God, together with Himself, as the Children of all Believers are, and so enjoyed the Administration and Overtures of the New Covenant, this is no more than may be said of every christian Parent. For by Virtue of their Covenant Relation to God, their Children are born in the Church, and so enjoy the Privilege of visible Membership. As *Adam's* immediate Descendants were taken into Covenant, so in like manner their Children, thro' them, were Members of the visible Church, and thus all the Families of the Earth wou'd have been included, had not some apostatized. All this will be readily granted without any Advantage to Mr. *H's* Cause; but then

then why should He be called a foederal Father, more than *Sath* or *Engs*, &c? Or what peculiar Relation does he bear to his Posterity? They are therefore Words without distinct, or indeed any proper Ideas at all. Yet his Mode of talking on this Head, tends to mislead People into an apprehension that *Adam* stood in some such Relation to his Posterity in the second Covenant, as he did in the first; in order to repair, in some Measure, the Injuries he had done them.

MR. H. is at great Pains, B. P. 93 and Seq. to shew that the Regenerate are not in a state of Probation for Heaven. And, indeed, I grant that neither they, nor yet the Unregenerate are Probationers in his Sense of a probationary State. For he plainly means that the Unregenerate are Probationers in nearly the same Sense that *Adam* was in the first Covenant. i. e. that obtaining Regeneration is suspended upon their so and so improving the general Assistances of the Spirit, so that it depends upon their own Management whether they will be regenerated or not. But I think I have already sufficiently exposed any such Notion as this. God does not deal with Man since the Fall upon any Stock put into his Hand. *It is not of him that willetb, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth Mercy.* Rom. ix. 15, 16.

By a Probationary State under the Gospel, I understand a state of Tryal, not to see whether Sinners will exert themselves in the
 | Improvement

Improvement of such and such Advantages, so as to perform such *Conditions* as will entitle them to saving Grace; but in order to the Discovery of their Hearts, that they may know themselves, and the State of their Case Godward, as a Means to influence and engage their Hearts to seek the Lord; to detect Hypocrites; and to train up and prepare Christians for Glory.

THE Lord tries Professors by his Word, which is sharper than a two-edged Sword, and is a discerner of the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart; *Heb. iv. 12.* and by his Providence. Thus our Lord is said to have his Fan in his Hand, and He will thoroughly purge his Floor, and gather the Wheat into his Garner, and burn up the Chaff (thus separated) with unquenchable Fire. *Mat. iii. 12* He is like a Refiner's Fire, and as Fuller's Soap; and he shall sit as a Refiner and Purifier of Silver, *Mal. iii. 2, 3.* Thus He put *Jab's* Uprightness to the Tryal. Thro' many Tribulations God's People must enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. By these, their Iniquity is purged, and it is all their Fruit to take away their Sin. We read of the Tryal of Christians Faith, which is more precious than that of Silver and Gold; that it may be found unto Praise, and Honour, and Glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ. *1. Pet. i. 7.* and true Grace is represented under the Metaphor of Gold TRIED in the Fire. *Rev. iii. 18.* Thus the strivings of the Spirit by the Word,
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to awaken Sinners to a Sense of their present Condition; give them an Opportunity of seeking Salvation through the Redemption of Christ; or leave them without Excuse. For tho' they cannot deserve Grace by any Merit of theirs, as Conditions of obtaining it, yet they may provoke the holy Spirit to withdraw, and so lose the Opportunity put into their Hands of seeking Salvation: By these various Trials Hypocrites are often detected, and being offended fall off like Leaves in Autumn, and the Graces of God's People are discovered and strengthened. But, I think, the sacred Scriptures speak nothing of a *probationary State* since the Fall, in any other Sense.

It wou'd be almost endless to attempt remarking upon all that is exceptionable in Mr. H's Book. He calls Conviction Grace. P. 67. and vehemently insists that it is the very same Kind with regenerating Grace. He makes the absurdity, and bad Tendency of the contrary Opinion appear, as clearly as a Torrent of unintelligible Words can do it; yet Persons have not saving Grace, till they are regenerated. Thus it seems Persons may be in a gracious State, and not in it, at the same Time. They may have the same kind of Grace with that of Regeneration, yet not be regenerated. One may go to Hell with Grace of the very same Kind with that of another who goes to Heaven. Now, what Self-contradictions are these! This Notion however,

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tends to deceive and destroy poor Sinners, by leading them to conclude they have got Grace whenever they are convicted of Sin, in any Measure: For they are hereby taught this strange Paradox; that being convinced they are in a bad and graceless State, is Grace of the very same Kind with regenerating Grace, and an Evidence, therefore, of their being gracious. And tho' he tells them, they are yet notwithstanding Unregenerate; they will scarcely know how to believe him; or if they do, they will be apt to conclude, that only a gradual Difference between them, and those he calls Regenerate, will not be so important as to exclude from Heaven. With like Consistency Mr. *H.* attributes a saving justifying Faith to the Unregenerate tho' he denies it to be such. For he represents his unregenerate Sinner, as giving up all Hopes of Salvation by the Law, and pleading Christ's Righteousness ALONE; but, yet he very gravely tells us, that this Person has not Light and Strength enough to venture his eternal *All* on the Righteousness of Christ. P. 61. Who can forbear smiling at such barfaced Contradictions?

BUT I can't spare Time to pursue all his crude indigested Notions. If Mr. *H.*'s Book make any Impressions on the Minds of any, I am persuaded it will be, because the Scheme itself happens to please them, and not from any Accuracy, or Appearance of Strength in his Reasonings in support of it. And there-

ate, as I think, I have laid what is sufficient to shew that his Scheme is indefensible, and consequently to vindicate the Synod's Conduct towards him, I shall therewith content myself at present. For whoever shall apprehend Weight in my Remarks, sufficient for this Purpose, will not be much puzzled with all that Mr. H. has said.

FROM my Apprehension of Mr. H's Temper, I suppose he will have the last Word, and boast of that as Victory: And I can assure him, that unless he offers Something more like intelligible Argument, than he yet appeared, I shall never think it worth while to spoil him of the Triumph.

Now, having thus offered what, I think, a sufficient Defence of the Synod, I leave it with the impartial World to judge of the Weight of Mr. H's Appeal, and the Validity of the Synod's Censure upon him, according as the true Force of Argument shall determine: And may the Lord preserve weak Minds from being, like Children, toss'd to and fro, with every Wind of Doctrine, and settle his Churches in Truth and Peace for Christ's Sake. *Amen.*

F I N I S.

P A G E 7. Line the 8. for and in, read *and that in.*
and l. 10, for two, r. *too*, p. 8. l. 5, for in-
treated, r. *intreated*. p. 30. l. 27, for Views r. *Views.*