

speed no better. What side soever they be on, we desire able faithfull men, and desire the ejection of the insufficient and unfaithfull. And youth doth not alway prove insufficiency. Witness *Timothy*, whose youth was not to be despised. At what age *Origen* and many more of old began, is commonly known. *Vigilius* was Bishop at twenty years of age (the *Tridentine* Bishop). We will promise you that we will have none so young to be Parish Presbyters, as *Rome* hath had some Popes and Cardinals and Archbishops and Bishops. Nor shall any such ignorant insufficient men, I hope, be admitted, as were commonly admitted by the Prelates.

§. 22. Object. 5. *But the Apostles and Evangelists had a larger circuit then a Parish, and therefore so should their Successors have?* Answ. I grant you that they had a larger circuit, and that herein, and in their ordinary work they have successors: And we consent that you shall be their Successors. Gird up your loins, and travail about as far as you please, and preach the Gospel to as many as will receive you (and sure the Apostles forced none) and convert as many souls as you can, and direct them when you have done in the way of Church-communion, and do all the good that you can in the world, and try whether we will hinder you. Have you not liberty to do as the Apostles did? Be ye servants of all, and seek to save all, and take on you thus the care of all the Churches, and see who will forbid such an Episcopacy as this?

§. 23. Object. 6. *But it seems you would have none compelled to obey the Bishops, but they only that are willing should do it: and so men shall have liberty of conscience, and anarchy and parity and confusion will be brought into the Church.* Answ. 1. I would have none have liberty for any certain impiety or sin: And yet I would have no sin punished beyond the measure of its deserts. And I would not have preachers made no Preachers (unless the Church may spare them) because their judgements are against Diocesan Bishops: and therefore I would have none silenced, or suspended for this. 2. And what is it that you would have that better? Would you have men forced to acknowledge and submit to your Episcopacy? And how? Small penalties will not change mens judgements, nor consciences. Silencing or death would deprive the Church of their labours: and so we must

lose our Teachers lest they disobey the Bishops. If this be your cure, it disgraceth your cause. We desire not Prelacy at so dear a rate. Its a sad order that destroyes the duty ordered.

§. 24. Object. *But this is to take down all Church-Government, if all shall have what Government they list.* Answ. 1. Was there no Church-Government before the dayes of Constantine the Emperour? 2. Do you pretend to antiquity, and fly from the Antient Government as none? You shall have the same means as all the Bishops of the Church had for above three hundred years to bring men to your obedience: and is that nothing with you? Why is it commonly maintained by us all, that the Primitive state was that purest state, which after times should strive to imitate, if yet it was so defective as you imagine? 3. And why have you still pretended to such a power and excellent usefulness in the Prelatical Government, if now you confess that it is but anarchy, and as bad as nothing, without the inforcement of the Magistrate? What Magistrate forceth men to obey the Presbyteries now in *England, Scotland,* or many other places? 4. Yet it is our desire, that the Magistrate will do his duty, and maintain order in the Church, and hinder disorders, and all known sin: but so, as not to put his sword into the hand or use it at the pleasure of every party that would be lifted up. Let him prudently countenance that way of Government, that tendeth most to the good of the Churches under his care; but not so as to persecute, silence, or cast out, all such as are for a different form, in case where difference is tolerable. 5. And in good sadness, is it not more prudent for the Magistrate to keep the sword in his own hands if really it be the sword that must do the work? If Episcopal Government can do so little without the compulsion of the Magistrate, so that all the honour of the good effects belongeth to the sword, truly I think it prudence in him to do his part himself, and leave Bishops to their part, that so he may have the honour that, it seems, belongs unto his office, and the Bishop may not go away with it, nor the Presbyterie neither. Let the secular Bishop have the honour of all that Order and unity that ariseth from compulsion: and good reason, when he must have the labour, and run the hazzard if he do it amiss: and let the Ecclesiastical Bishops have the honour of all that order and unity that ariseth from their management

of the spiritual sword and Keyes. 6. And lastly I answer, that this is not the subject that you and we have to dispute of. It is Ecclesiastical Government by Ministers, and not secular by Magistrates that is our controversie. It is of the Power left by Christ to Pastors and not to Princes.

§. 25. Object. *But at least those should be excommunicated that deny obedience to their Bishops: that is a Power that is left in the Bishops themselves, whether the Magistrate consent or not.*

Ans. 1. Excommunication is a sentence that should fall on none but for such gross and hainous sin, if not also obstinacy and impenitency in them, as is mentioned in Scripture: Using it in cases of controversie and tolerable differences, is but a tearing and dividing the Church. 2. We take it not for our duty to excommunicate you, because you are for Diocesan Prelacy: therefore you should not take it for yours to excommunicate others because they are against it. For 3. If your species of Episcopacy be such as I have proved it, you have more need to repent and amend, and ask forgiveness of God and men, then to excommunicate them that are not of your opinion, and for your sin. 4. But if you take this to be your duty, who hath hindered you from it these twelve years? You had liberty, for ought I know, to have discharged your consciences, and to have excommunicated us all. 5. But you might so easily see what was like to come of it, that it is no wonder that you forbore. If such a Ministry and such a people as are now your adherents (whose description I forbear) should execute your sentence, and cast us and our adherents out of their communion, what contempt would it bring upon you in England? The Ale-houses would be shut up for the most part, against us: But that and the rest, would be easily born: I think this is not your way.

§. 26. Object. 7. *But what need you form us a new sort of Episcopacy? were we not well enough before? Why did you pull down that which was well planted, and now pretend to commend a better to us? We were well if you had let us alone.*

§. 27. Ans. 1. But We were not well, because you would not let us alone. The Ministers that were silenced, and imprisoned, and banished, and the thousands of people that were fain to follow them, and all those that were undone by your prosecutions in England, were not well. But this is a small matter: The ignorant

notant Congregations that had ignorant and drunken guides, where Piety was scorned as Puritanism, and impiety made a thing of nothing, and where Satan was so commonly served; the many hundred Congregations in *England* that never knew what true Discipline meant, nor never saw in all their lives, a drunkard, oppressor, railer, blasphemer, either cast out, or penitently confess his sin, before the Church, all these were not well, though you were well. 2. Whether we were well before, I have shewed in my first Disputation, and thither I refer you. 3. And whether we have brought in a new Episcopacy, or only cast out a new one, and desire to bring in the Old, we are content to put it to an equal tryall. We all concur in offering you this motion. *Let the oldest stand, and the newest be cast out.*

§. 28. Object. 8. Judge now by the effects: *The Episcopacy which you blame, did keep up Order and Unity in the Church: It kept under those weeds of heresie and error that since sprung up: We had then no Quakers, nor Seekers, nor such other Sects as now abound: This swarm of Errors shews which Government is best.*

§. 29. Answ. This is a gross fallacy, a non causa pro causa: to which I return you my answer in these seven considerations. 1. You tell us of the good that you think you did: but you tell us not of the hurt. I hope I love Divisions or Heresies as little as ever a Bishop in *England*: and yet I must profess that I had rather an hundred times, have things continue as they are with all our swarms of heresies, then to be restored to their ancient pass. Our loss is as great as *Josephs* in being removed from the Prison to *Pharaohs* ungodly family: I mean in spirituals (of seculars anon.) I know not of an Anabaptist, Separatist, Quaker or any other Sectary in the Town that I live in, for all this noise; unless you will take a few Infidels for Sectaries, or a few ignorant Papists, or those of your own way. But on the other side, I hope there are many hundreds that truly fear God, that formerly were drowned in ignorance and ungodliness. The families that were wont to curse and swear and rail at Godliness, do now worship God, and set up holy instructions, and cast out sin: and this is our change: And in some measure, I have reason to believe that it is so in other places also.

§. 30. 2. The Errors of the times are many of them *your own*, and therefore you exclaim against *your selves*. It is of *your own selves*

selves that men arise, that write against Original sin, and for Liberty of Prophecy; (which is more then Liberty of Believing) and for a kind of Limbus Patrum and Infantum, and for humane Satisfaction for sin to God, and for the Primacy of the Pope, and that all our Protestant Churches are no Churches, or Ministers no Ministers, that have not Prelatical Ordination, yea and a Succession of it; with many the like (to say nothing of other Pelagian weeds.) It doth not therefore become you to reproach us with our swarms of Errors while you introduce them.

§. 31. 3. There were Heresies and Sects even in the dayes of Prelacy. Had you not then the Familists, the Grundletonians, (such as Hacker, and Coppinger, and Arthington) and the Anabaptists, and Separatists, and Antinomians, and Papists, and such like? besides the contentions between the Arminians and Antiarminians, and the contentions raised by Episcopacy it self, and the Ceremonies that it upheld? Who were they that rose up against the Bishops, and pulled them down, if there were Unity under them, as you pretend?

§. 32. 4. The truth is, it was the Magistrate and not Episcopacy that kept that Unity and Peace among us which we had; and that kept under Heresies so much as they were kept under. Take not therefore the Magistrates honour to your selves. Who would have attended your Courts, or submitted to your censures, had it not been for fear of the Secular power? I think but few. You know the Hereticks themselves obeyed you not for Conscience sake. Nor would they have regarded your Excommunication, if the Magistrate would have let them alone. If it was the spiritual sword in your hands that kept out Heresies, why did you not keep them out since, as well as then? You have the same power from Christ now as ever you had. And I hope the fears of persecution will not hinder you from your duty: especially when you can name so few that have suffered for exercising Church discipline by Episcopal power! at least this was no hinderance a few years ago. For my part, I heartily wish you free from persecution, if you are not. But again I tell you, that which I suppose you know; that as free a Toleration of Prelacy in England as there is of Presbyterie, were the likeliest way to bring you into perpetual contempt. For we cannot but know,

know, that besides a few Civil engaged Gentlemen, Ministers, and others, your main body would consist of those that for their notorious impiety, scandal or ignorance, are thought unmeet for Church-communion by others: and that when you came to exercise Discipline on them, they would hate you and fly from you as much as ever they did from Puritans: and if you did indulge them, and not reform them or cast them out, your Church would be the Contempt of the sober part of the world, and your own sober members would quickly relinquish it for shame. For [the Church of *England*] if you would needs be so called, would be taken for the sink of all the other Churches in *England*. This is a clear and certain truth that is easily discerned, without a Prophetick spirit: and the dishonour of all this would reflect upon your Prelacy.

§. 33. 5. And further, I answer your Objection; that it is not the insufficiency of other Church-government in comparison of Prelacy, that was the inlet of our Heresies and Divisions; but it was the Licentiousness of a time of war, when all evil spirits are turned loose, and the subtilty of the Papists that have taken advantage to spawn among us the Quakers, and Levellers, and Behemists, and other Paracelsians, and the Seekers to confound and dishonour us if they could, and to promote their cause. And in times of war, especially when such changes in the Civil state ensue, and so many adversaries are watching to sow tares, such things are common.

§. 34. 6. And you cannot say, that it comes from the insufficiency of other Government in comparison of yours, because you see no other Government settled instead of yours, so far as to be seconded by the sword or secular power; no nor so far as to have a word of command or perswasion to the people to obey it, (except an Ordinance that in most places was hindered from execution:) nor is there any one Government so much as owned alone by the Magistrate. Besides, that the Civil power it self restraineth not those that you speak of, as to the most of them.

§. 35. 7. Lastly, if you would compare your Prelacy with other Government, compare them where the case is equal. Hath not Presbyterie in *Scotland*, and in *France* (with much less help and countenance from the Magistrate,) kept out Heresies and

divisions,

divisions, as much at least, as ever Prelacy did? It is certain that it hath.

§. 36. And yet I must add, that the multitude of Sects and Heresies that sprung up in the first, and second, and third Ages, was no such dishonour to the form of Government then used in the Church, as should encourage any man to dislike or change it. If it was Prelacy that was used, then swarms of Sects and Heresies may come in notwithstanding Prelacy (even in better hands than yours.) But if it were not Prelacy that was then the Government, Heresies are no more a shame to that Government now.

§. 37. I know many Readers will think, that this writing that purposely comes for Peace, should not be guilty of repeating and remembering the faults of others, nor speak to them so plainly as is liker to exasperate than pacifie. But to these I say, 1. Their Objections which they insist on, cannot be answered but by this opening of the truth. And 2. The truth is, those men that own all the abuses and persecutions of the late Prelates, and are impenitent as to their guilt, and wish and would have the same again, are no fit materials for a concordant frame. If their business be destroying, they will never well joyn with us in building and in healing. Repentance is the best Ingredient in our Salve. We consent to the same conditions that we propose, and will thank them if they will help us to Repentance; especially of such sins as are destructive to the Churches peace.

§. 38. And the Godly Moderate Episcopal men do concur with us in the blaming of the abuses of their party. Saith that good and peaceable Bishop Hall in his modest offer to the Assembly, pag. 3. [*I should be a flatterer of the times past, if I should take upon me to justify or approve of all the carriages of some, that have been entrusted with the Keyes of Ecclesiastical Government: or to blanch over the corruptions of Consistorial Officers: in both these there was fault enough to ground both a Complaint and Reformation: and may that man never prosper, that desires not an happy reformation of whatsoever hath been, or is amiss in the Church of God.*]

§. 39. Object. 9. But it is not only the abuses of Episcopacy, but the thing it self that hath been Covenanted against in England, and opposed: nor is it only the English Prelacy, but all Episcopacy:

and therefore your motion for another species is like to find but small acceptance.

§. 40. *Answ.* It is not true that all Episcopacy hath been Covenanted against or taken down in *England*. Nor is it true of any of the sorts of Episcopacy which I have here mentioned. It was only that which was then existent that was taken down, and only the English frame of Arch-bishops, Bishops, Deans, and the rest, as here they Governed, that was Covenanted against. Of which I shall speak more anon in answer to the Objections of others.

§. 41. *Object.* 10. *You have covetously seized on the Revenues of the Bishops, and made your selves fat with their Possessions, and this was the prize that you aimed at in taking them down.* *Answ.* The world seeth the falshood of this slander, in the open light; and therefore for your credit sake, you were best recant it. *England* knoweth that the Bishops lands were sold, and given to the Souldiers, and not to the Presbyters. It maintained the Army, and not the Ministry. And that the Dean and Chapters lands is gone the same way, or the like, to pay the debts of the State. And that Presbyters have none of them all, save that here and there one that had about ten, or twenty, or thirty pound a year, have somewhat in Augmentation, that the Churches may not be left to Readers, and blind Guides, as they were in the Prelates days. I that have a fuller maintenance then most in all the Country where I live, do receive but about eighty pound and sometimes ninety pound *per annum*: and did I need to pull down Prelacy for this?

§. 42. **I** Come now to the Objections of the other side, who will be offended with me for consenting for peace, to so much as I here do? And 1. Some will say, that we are engaged against all Prelacy by Covenant, and therefore cannot yield to so much as you do, without the guilt of perjury.

§. 43. *Answ.* That this is utterly untrue, I thus demonstrate. 1. When the Covenant was presented to the Assembly, with the bare name of [Prelacy] joyned to Popery, many Grave and Reverend Divines desired that the word [Prelacy] might be explained, because it was not all Episcopacy that they were against.

against. And thereupon the following Concatenation in the parenthesis was given by way of explication: in these words, [that is, Church-government by Arch-bishops, Bishops, their Chancellors and Commissaries, Deans, Deans and Chapters, Archdeacons, and all other Ecclesiastical Officers, depending on that Hierarchy. ¶] By which it appeareth that it was only the English Hierarchy or frame, that was Covenanted against: and that which was then existent, that was taken down.

§. 44. 2. When the house of Lords took the Covenant, Mr. Thomas Coleman that gave it them, did so explain it and profess, that it was not their intent to Covenant against all Episcopacy: and upon this explication it was taken: and certainly the Parliament were most capable of giving us the due sense of it; because it was they that did impose it.

§. 45. 3. And it could not be all Episcopacy that was excluded, because a Parochial Episcopacy was at the same time used and approved commonly here in *England*.

§. 46. 4. And in *Scotland* they had used the help of Visitors for the Reformation of their Churches, committing the care of a County or large Circuit to some one man, which was as high a sort of Episcopacy at least, as any I am pleading for. Besides that they had Moderators in all their Synods, which were temporary Bishops.

§. 47. 5. Also the chief Divines of the late Assembly at *Westminster*, that recommended the Covenant to the Nations, have professed their own judgements for such a Moderate Episcopacy as I am here defending: and therefore they never intended the exclusion of this by the Covenant.

§. 48. Object. 2. By this we shall seem mutable, while we take down Episcopacy one year, and set it up again the next. *Ans.* We desire not the setting up of that which we have taken down: and therefore it is no mutability.

§. 49. Object. 3. But this will prepare for the restoration of the old Episcopacy. By such degrees it invaded the Church at first: and if we let in the preparatory degree, the rest in time is like to follow; all that we can do is little enough to keep it out.

§. 50. *Ans.* 1. If we had no other work to do, we would do this as violently as you desire: but we have the contrary extream to take heed of and avoid; and the Churches Peace, if it

may be, to procure. 2. As we must not take down the Ministry, lest it prepare men for Episcopacy, so neither must we be against any profitable exercise of the Ministry, or desirable Order among them, for fear of introducing Prelacy. 3. Nor is there any such danger of it, as is pretended: as long as the Magistrate puts not the sword into their hands, and no man can be subjected to them, but by his own Consent, what need we fear their encroachments on our liberties. 4. It is not in your power to hinder the *Species* of Episcopacy that is pleaded for, from being introduced: but only to withhold your own consent, and hinder peace and unity. For any Minister that will, can esteem another his superiour, and be ruled by him, and do nothing without his consent: These are the actions of his own free-will. 5. As long as you are free from violence, if you find an evil or danger, you may draw back.

§. 51. Object. 4. *Have we not smarted by them late enough already? shall we so soon be turning back to Egypt?* Answ. That which you have smarted by, we desire you not to turn back to; but that which is Apostolical, pure, and profitable to the Church, and thats not Egypt.

§. 52. Object. 5. *You do all this for Peace with Episcopal Divines: and where is there any of them that is worthy so studious a Pacification? Do they not commonly own their former impieties and persecutions? Are they not meer formalists and enemies to practical Godliness? Would they not ruine the Church, and do as they have done, if they had power? Hath God brought them down for their own wickedness, and shall we set them up again?*

§. 53. Answ. 1. All are not such as you describe: Many of them are godly able men, that desire and endeavour the good of the Church. 2. If there were none in this age worthy of our communion, yet, if we will have a lasting peace, we must extend the terms of it so far as to comprehend all that are fit for Communion. And such we may easily know, there will be of this opinion throughout all ages. 3. And most of the Churches in the world being already for a higher Prelacy then this, we should agree with them as far as well we may.

§. 54. Object. 6. *But the Parliament have enacted in the settlement of the Civil Government, that Popery and Prelacy shall not be tolerated.* Answ. That is, the English Prelacy excluded by the Covenant,

venant, and that, as it would be exercised by violence, and forced upon dissenters. Its known what Prelacy was in *England*; and they cannot rationally be interpreted to speak against any but what was among us, and taken notice of under that name. You see the same Power allow a *Parochial Episcopacy*, and also *Approvers* of all that are admitted to publick preaching; and you see they allow an *Itinerant Ministry* in *Wales*: and they join *Magistrates and Ministers* for the ejecting of the insufficient Minister: and they never forbid or hindered a *stated Presidency*, or any thing that I have pleaded for: yea they continued a *Moderator* of the Assembly at *Westminster* for many years, even to his death. And what fuller evidence would you have that it is not any such Episcopacy whose liberty they exclude, under the name of Prelacy? Only they would not have the *Hierarchy by Law-Chancellors* to govern the Church, and that by force of the secular power annexed unto theirs: and so they deny them Liberty to deprive all other men of their liberty. But this is nothing to the matter in hand.

§. 55. To conclude, let it be noted, in answer to all other objections, that the Presidency, or preheminance pleaded for, doth enable no man to do harm; but only give themselves advantage to do good. They can hinder no man from preaching, or praying or holy living, or improving his abilities to the good of the Church: Nor can they Govern any man further then they have his own Consent. All which being well considered, I may conclude that this much may be granted in order to the healing and Re-forming of the Churches.

CHAP. VI.

*The sum of the foregoing Propositions,
and the Consistency of them with the
Principles of each party, and so their
aptitude to Reconcile.*

§. 1.



HE summ of all that I have propounded is, that though we cannot, we may not embrace the Government by Prelacy, as lately exercised here in *England* (how confidently soever some appropriate the title of the Church of *England* to the adherents of that frame,) yet would we not have the Church ungoverned, nor worse governed, nor will we refuse for peace such a kind of Episcopacy as is tolerable in the Church. And there are four sorts of Exercise of the Ministry, which if you please, you may call *Episcopacy*, which we shall not refuse when it may conduce to Peace.

1. Parochial
Bishops.

§. 2. I. We shall consent that the *Ancient Parochial Episcopacy* be restored: that is, that in every Parish that hath a particular Church, there may be a Pastor or Bishop settled to govern it, according to the word of God: And that he may be the chief among the Presbyters of that Church, if there be any: And may assume fit men to be assisting Presbyters to him, if there be such to be had. If not, he may be content with Deacons. And these Parochial Bishops are most antient, and have the Power of Ordination.

§. 3.

§. 3. Yet do we not so tye a Church to a Parish, but that in places where the ignorance, infidelity, or impiety of the people, or the smalness of the Parishes is such, as that there are not fit persons enough in a Parish to make a convenient particular Church, it may be fit for two, or three, or four (in necessity) Neighbour Parishes to joyn together, and to be formed into one particular Church. The several Ministers keeping their stations, for the teaching of the rest as *Catechumens*, but joyning as one Presbyterie, for Governing of that one particular Church, that is Congregate among them. And having one President, without whom nothing should be done in matters left to humane determination. Yet so, that the Presbyters be not forced to this, but do it freely.

§. 4. II. We shall consent that these Parish Churches be *Associate*, and that in every Marker Town (or such convenient places as shall be agreed on) there may be frequent meetings of the Pastors, for Communion and Correspondency; and that one among them be their *standing Moderator durante vita*, or their *President* (for so I would call him rather than Bishop, though we would leave men to use what name they please) And to him should be committed the Communicating of times and places of meeting, and other busineses and Correspondencies. And the Moderating of the debates and disputations.

§. 5. And for my part, I would consent for peace that *de facto* no Ordination be made in either of the foresaid Presbyteries, without the President, but in cases of Necessity: so be it 1. That none be compelled to own any other Principle of this Practice, then a *Love of Peace*; and none be compelled to profess that he holdeth the President to have *de jure* a Negative voice: yea that all have liberty to write down on what other Principles they thus yeild, that the *Practice* only may suffice for Peace.

§. 6. III. We shall consent also, that one in a Deanry or Hundred, or other convenient space, may by the Magistrate be chosen a *Visitor of the Churches and Countrey* about him; having Power only to take notice of the state of things, and gravely to admonish the Pastors where they are negligent, and exhort the people, and provoke them to Holiness, Reformation and Unity, only by perswasions from the Word of God. Which is no more then any Minister may do that hath opportunity: only we desire the

2. The stated Presidents of Associated Pastors.

3. A Visitor of the neighbour Churches, and Countrey.

the Magistrate to design a particular person to do it (requiring Ministers and people to give him the meeting,) because that which is every mans work is not so well done, as that which is specially committed to some. And we desire that he may acquaint the Magistrate how things are.

These two to
be in one
man.

§. 7. And to avoid the inconveniences of dividing these works, we are desirous that these two last may meet in one man : and so he that is chosen by the Pastors, the President of their Association, may be chosen his Visitor by the Magistrate, and do both ; which may be done by one in every Market-town (which is truly a City in the ancient sense) and the circumjacent Villages. Yet this we cannot make a standing Rule (that one man do both) because the *Pastors* must choose their *President*, and the *Magistrate* his *Visitor*; and its possible they may not alwayes concur. But if the Magistrate will not choose such a Visitor, the Pastors may. But then they can *compel* none to *meet him or hear him*.

4. General
unfix'd Mini-
sters.

§. 8. I V. Besides these three (or two, whether you will) before mentioned, we shall consent that there be a general sort of Ministers, such as the Apostles, Evangelists, and others in those times were, that shall have no special charge, but go up and down to preach the Gospel, and gather Churches where there are none, and contribute the best assistance of their Abilities, Interest and Authority for the reforming, confirming, and right ordering of Churches. And if by the Magistrates Command, or Ministers consent there be one of these assigned to each County, and so their Provinces prudentially distinguished and limited, we shall not dissent. Yet we would have such but where there is need.

* So *Constantine* calls himself a Bishop. *Euseb. vii. Const. l. 4. c. 24.*

§. 9. V. Besides these four sorts of Bishops, we are all agreed on two sorts more ; 1. The *Episcopi gregis*, or Pastors of every Congregation, whether they have any assistant Presbyters or no, or being themselves but such assistant Presbyters. 2. The Magistrate, who is * a secular Bishop, or a Governor of the Church by force. And we desire the Magistrate to be a nursing

And he made his Court a Church, and assembling the people, did use to take, the holy Scripture, and deliver Divine contemplations out of it, or else he would read the Common-Prayers to the whole Congregation, *cap. 17.* And it is plain that it was *Constantine* that kept the Churches in Unity and Peace, when the Bishops else would have broken them to peices. And the Emperours frequently took down and set up Bishops at their pleasure, especially in the Patriarchial Seats as *Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria.*

Father

Father to the Church, and do his duty, and to keep the sword in his own hand; and for forcible deposing Ministers, or any punishment on body or estate, we desire no Bishops nor other Ministers may be authorized thereto: But if Pastors exclude an unworthy Pastor from their Communion, let the *Magistrate* only deprive him *forcibly* of his place and maintenance, if he see cause. When the Council of *Antioch* had deposed *Paulus Samosatenus*, he would not go out of the house: And all the Bishops in the Council could not force him out, but were fain to procure the Heathen Emperor *Aurelian* to do it. It lyeth as a blot on *Cyris* of *Alexandria* that he was the first man that arrogated and exercised there a secular Coercive Power, under the name of a Bishop of the Church.

§. 10. There is enough in this much to satisfie any moderate honest men for Church-government, and for the healing of our Divisions thereabout: And there is nothing in this that is inconsistent with the Principles of the moderate of any Party.

§. 11. 1. That a Church organized, called by some *Ecclesia prima*, should be no greater then I have mentioned, is not contradictory to the Principles of the Episcopall, Presbyterian, Congregationall or Erastian. Indeed the two first say, that it may be bigger: but none of them say, It must be bigger. The Presbyterians instances of the Church of *Jerusalem* (which I scrue to the highest, cannot be proved neer half so great as some of our Parishes) and such other Churches, are but for the may be, and not for the must be. And therefore if they be peaceable, this will make no breach.

§. 12. 2. That Parochial Churches and Associations have fixed Presidents, is nothing contrary to any of their Principles, as far as I am able to discern them.

§. 13. 3. That Pastors may be lawfully appointed to visit and help the Country and the neighbour Churches, and exhort them to their duty, and give the Magistrate information of their state, is a thing that none can justly blame, any more then preaching a Lecture among them. Nor do I know any party that is against it, (of these four.)

§. 14. And 4. That there may be more General Ministers to gather, and take care of many Churches, I think none of them will deny. Sure the Itinerant Ministers in *Wales* will not: Nor yet

yet that these may have their Provinces distinguished. If I could imagine which of all these sorts would be denied, I would more fully prove it, yea and prove it consistent with the Principles of each party; but till then its vain.

§. 15. The only point that I remember, like to be questioned, is, *the consenting to forbear Ordination in several Presbyteries, till the President be one, except in case of Necessity*: And nothing is here questionable, that I observe, but only *Whether it be consistent with the Principles of the Congregational party*, seeing they would have all Ordination to be by the Elders of their own Church, and where there are none, that it be done by the people without Elders. To which I answer, 1. That we here grant them that a Congregational Presbyterie with their President may ordain an Elder for that Congregation. 2. The Moderate Congregational men do grant us that the Elders or Pastors of other Churches may lawfully be called to assist them in Ordination, though they think it be not necessary. It is not therefore against their Principles to do so. For sure they may do a Lawful thing, especially when the Churches Peace doth lie so much upon it as here it doth.

§. 16. I conclude therefore that here are healing Principles brought to your hands, if you have but healing inclinations to receive them. Here is a sufficient remedy for our Divisions, upon the account of Church-government, if you have but hearts to entertain them, and apply them. But if some on one side will adhere to all their former excesses and abuses, and continue impenitent, unchurching the best of the Protestant Churches that are not Prelatical (while they unchurch not the Church of Rome:) And if others on the other side will stiffly refuse to yield in things that cannot be denied to be lawfull, yea and convenient for the Churches, and set more by all their own conceits then by the Peace of Brethren, and consequently the prosperity of the Church, we must leave the care of all to God, and content ourselves that we have done our duty.

CHAP. VII.

*Some instances to prove that moderate men
will agree upon the foregoing terms.*

§. 1.



EST any think that it is a hopeless work that I have motioned, and the parties will not agree upon these terms, I shall shall next prove to you that the godly and moderate of each party, are agreed already (at least the Episcopal and Presbyterians, and I think the rest:) and that its in Practice more then Principles that we disagree.

§. 2. I. I will begin with the *Episcopal Divines*, of whom there are two parties, differing much more from one another, then the one of them doth from the Presbyterians. The ancient Bishops and the moderate of late, did maintain the Validity of Ordination by Presbyters, and own the Reformed Churches that had other, supposing their Episcopacy usefull to the perfection or well being of a Church, but not necessary to the being of it. And this sort of men (who also agree with us in doctrine) we could quickly be reconciled with. But of late years there are many Episcopal Divines sprung up, that embracing the Doctrine called Arminianism, do withal deny the Being of the Ministry and Churches that want Prelatical ordination: and with these there is no hope of concord, because they will have it on no other terms then renouncing our Churches and Ministry, and being again ordained by them, and thus coming wholly over to them. These separate from us, and pretend that our Churches have no true Worship (wonderful audacity,) and our Ministers are no true Ministers, and call the Church into private houses (as D. Hide expressly in his [Christ and his Church] in the beginning of the Preface; and many others.) Of whom I spoke before.

§. 3. That the ancient English Bishops that hold to the doctrine of the Church of *England*, and are peaceable men, are easily

agreed with us, I first prove from the example of Reverend Bishop Hall. In his *Peace-maker* he hath these words, [Pag. 46, 47, 48, 49. *The Divisions of the Church are either General betwixt our Church and the other Reformed; or special with those within the bosome of our own Church; both which require severall considerations. For the former, blessed be God, there is no difference in any essential matter betwixt the Church of England and her Sisters of the Reformation: We accord in every point of Christian Doctrine without least the variation. (N.B.) Their publike Confessions and ours, are sufficient convictions to the world, of our full and absolute agreement; the only difference is in the form of outward administration: Wherein also we are so far agreed, as that we all profess this form not to be essential to the being of a Church (N.B.) though much importing the well or better being of it, according to our severall apprehensions thereof; and that we do all retain a reverent and loving opinion of each other in our own severall wayes: not seeing any reason why so poor a diversity should work any alienation of affection in us, one towards another: But withall, nothing hinders but that we may come yet closer to one another, if both may resolve to meet in that Primitive Government (whereby it is meet we should both be regulated) universally agreed on by all antiquity; wherein all things were ordered and transacted by the Consent of the Presbyterie, moderated by one constant President thereof: the Primacy and perpetual practice whereof no man can doubt of that hath but seen the writings of Clemens and Ignatius, and hath gone along with the History of those primitive times — We may well rest in the judgement of Mr. John Camero, the Learnedst Divine, be it spoke without envy, that the Church of Scotland hath afforded in this last age: | Nullus est dubitandi, locus, &c. There is no doubt at all, saith he, but that Timothy was chosen by the Colledge of the Presbyters, to be the President of them, and that not without some authority over the rest, but yet such as have the due bounds and limits] And that this was a leading case, and common to other Churches, was never denied by any author. Words may not break square, where the things are agreed. If the name of a Bishop displease, let them call this man a Moderator, a President, a Superintendent, an Overseer; Only for the fixedness or change of this person, let the ancient and universall practice of Gods Church be thought worthy to oversway. And if in this one point (N.B.) (wherein the distance is so narrow, we could condescend to each other,*

either, all other circumstances and appendances of varying practices or opinions, might without any difficulty be accorded. But if there must be a difference of judgement in these matters of outward Policy, why should not our hearts be still one? why should such a diversity be of Power to endanger the dissolving of the bond of brotherhood? May we have the grace but to follow the truth in Love, we shall in these several tracts overtake her happily in the end, and find her embracing of Peace, and crowning us with blessedness.] So far Bishop Hall; so that you see that only the fixing of the Moderator or President will satisfie such as he: and so with him and such as he, for my part I am fully agreed already.

§. 4. And here by the way, because there are so many Episcopal separatists of late, that hazzard the souls of their partial followers, and because the right habituating of the mind with Peace is an excellent help to a sound understanding, and the escaping the errors and hainous sins that Faction engageth too many in, I therefore make it my request to all that read these lines, but soberly to read over that one Book of Bishop Halls, called the *Peacemaker*, once or twice: which if I could procure, I think I should do much to the Peace of these Churches, and to the good of many endangered souls, that by passionate and factious leaders are misguided.

* And Mr.
Burroughs
Irenicon.

§. 5. The same Reverend man in his Humble Remonstrance hath these words, Pag. 29, 30, 31. [The second is intended to raise envy against us, as the uncharitable censurers and condemners of those Reformed Churches abroad, which differ from our Government: wherein we do justly complain of a slanderous aspersion cast upon us: We love and honour those Sister Churches, as the dear Spouse of Christ: we bless God for them; and we do heartily wish unto them that happiness in the Partnership of our administration, which I doubt not but they do no less heartily wish unto themselves, Good words you will perhaps say; but what is all this fair complement, if our act condemn them? For if Episcopacy stand by Divine right, what becomes of these Churches that want it? Malice and ignorance are met together in this unjust aggravation: 1. Our position is only affirmative, implying the justifiableness and holiness of an Episcopat calling, without any further implication: Next, when we speak of Divine right, we mean not an express Law

of God requiring it upon the absolute Necessity of the Being of a Church (what hinderances soever may interpose) but a Divine institution warranting it where it is, and requiring it where it may be had. Every Church therefore which is capable of this form of Government, both may and ought to affect it — but those particular Churches to whom this power and faculty is denied, lose nothing of the true essence of a Church, though they miss some thing of their glory and perfection — And page 32. [Our form of Government — differs little from their own, save in the perpetuity of their (πρεσβυτερία or) Moderatorship, and the exclusion of that Lay-Presbyterie which never till this age had footing in the Christian Church.] — And Page 41, 42. [Alas my Brethren, while we do fully agree in all these, and all other Doctrinal and Practical points of Religion, why will you be so uncharitable, as by these frivolous and causeless Divisions to rend the seamless coat of Christ? Is it a Title, or a Retinue, or a Ceremony, a Garment, or a Colour, or an Organ Pipe, that can make us a different Church, while we preach and profess the same saving truth, while we desire (as you profess to do) to walk conscientiously with our God according to that one Rule of the Royall Law of our Maker, while we oppose one and the same common enemy, while we unfeignedly endeavour to hold the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of Peace? — For us, we make no difference at all (in the right and interest of the Church) betwixt Clergy and Laity, betwixt the Clergy and Laity of one part and of another: we are all your true Brethren; we are one with you, both in heart and brain, and hope to meet you in the same heaven: but if ye will needs be otherwise minded, we can but bewail the Churches misery and your sin. —] You hear how this good Bishop was far from a separation.

§. 6. How contrary to this, is the foresaid writing of Dr. Hide (which I instance in, because it is come new to my hand) who stigmatizeth the front of his book with the brand of separation, and that of one of the most rigid and unreasonable kinds. Thus he begins, [“ When Conscientious Ministers cannot associate in the Church, and Conscientious Christians cannot go to Church; and Customary Christians go thither, either to little purpose, because to no true worship, or to great shame, because to no true Ministers, tis fit the Church should come to private houses] —

Doth