

WORKS  
OF  
PRESIDENT EDWARDS,  
IN EIGHT VOLUMES.

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VOLUME III.

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*CONTAINING*

- I. A NARRATIVE OF MANY SURPRISING CONVERSIONS.
- II. THOUGHTS ON THE REVIVAL OF RELIGION IN NEW ENGLAND.
- III. AN HUMBLE ATTEMPT TO PROMOTE EXPLICIT AGREEMENT IN PRAYER.
- IV. LIFE OF REV. D. BRAINERD AND REFLECTIONS UPON IT.

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THOUGHTS  
ON THE  
REVIVAL OF RELIGION

IN  
NEW ENGLAND,

1740.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE occasion of the following treatise, will be seen, in part, in the preceding Narrative. The gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, with which Northampton was so abundantly enriched, and which spread through many towns in its vicinity, were soon followed with a very extensive revival over the land. An extraordinary zeal was excited in many gospel ministers. Itinerants travelled the country and preached daily. They addressed their crowded audiences, not in the dull monotony of a mere moral lecture, but in the demonstration of the Spirit, and with power. Their indefatigable labors were crowned with the most desirable success. Zion put on her robes of salvation. Converts to Jesus were multiplied as the drops of the morning dew. Religion became almost the only subject of concern. Many indulged the hope that the millennial glory was commencing. This glorious work had its opposers. Advantage was taken of the errors of some of its most zealous promoters to cry it down, and render it altogether suspicious. Mr. Edwards's design was to vindicate it, as undoubtedly a work of God, and among the most admirable of his triumphs over the hearts of his enemies; to correct errors which attended it, and to excite augmented efforts for its increase.

The scene which he describes is past. Let it live however in our memories. Let it excite our fervent gratitude, and call forth the devout aspirations of our souls for the spread of the victories of our glorious King in these days. Let the pertinent and instructive sentiments wrought into the treatise, the most of which are adapted to every condition in which the church and the individual believer can be placed, take deep hold of our hearts and be carried out in their proper effects in our lives.

This work had a second edition in Scotland, soon after it was first published in this country.

## THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

*IN the ensuing treatise, I condemn ministers assuming, or taking too much upon them, and appearing as though they supposed that they were the persons, to whom it especially belonged to dictate, direct, and determine; but perhaps shall be thought to be very guilty of it myself: And some, when they read this treatise, may be ready to say that I condemn this in others, that I may have the monopoly of it. I confess that I have taken a great deal of liberty freely to express my thoughts, concerning almost every thing appertaining to the wonderful work of God that has of late been carried on in the land, and to declare what has appeared to me to be the mind of God concerning the duty and obligations of all sorts of persons, and even those that are my superiors and fathers, ministers of the gospel, and civil rulers. But yet I hope the liberty I have taken is not greater than can be justified. In this nation, such liberty of the press is allowed, that every author takes leave, without offence, freely to speak his opinion concerning the management of public affairs, and the duty of the legislature, and those that are at the head of the administration, though vastly his superiors. As now at this day, private subjects offer their sentiments to the public, from the press, concerning the management of the war with Spain; freely declaring what they think to be the duty of the Parliament, and the principal ministers of state, &c. We in New England are at this day engaged in a more important war: And I am sure, if we consider the sad jangling and confusion that has attended it, we shall confess that it is highly requisite that some body should speak his mind, concerning the way in which it ought to be managed: And that not only a few of the many particulars, that are the matter of strife in the land, should be debated, on the one side and the other, in pamphlets; (as has of late been done with heat and fierceness enough) which does not tend to bring the contention in general to an end. but rather to inflame it, and increase the uproar. But that something should be published, to bring the affair in general, and the many things that attend it, that are the subjects of debate, under a particular consideration. And certainly it is high time that this was done. If private persons may speak their minds without arrogance; much more may a minister of the kingdom of Christ speak freely about things of this nature, which do so nearly concern the interest of the kingdom of his lord and master, at so important a juncture. If some elder minister had undertaken this, I acknowledge it would have been more proper; but I have heard of no such thing a doing, or like to be done. I hope therefore I shall be excused for undertaking such a piece of work. I think nothing that I have said can*

*justly be interpreted, as though I would impose my thoughts upon any, or did not suppose that others have equal right to think for themselves, with myself. We are not accountable one to another for our thoughts; but we must all give an account to him who searches our hearts, and has doubtless his eye especially upon us at such an extraordinary season as this. If I have well confirmed my opinion concerning this work, and the way in which it should be acknowledged and promoted, with Scripture and reason, I hope others that read it will receive it, as a manifestation of the mind and will of God. If others would hold forth further light to me in any of these particulars, I hope I should thankfully receive it. I think I have been made in some measure sensible, and much more of late than formerly, of my need of more wisdom than I have. I make it my rule to lay hold of light and embrace it, wherever I see it, though held forth by a child or an enemy. If I have assumed too much in the following discourse, and have spoken in a manner that savors of a spirit of pride, no wonder that others can better discern it than I myself. If it be so I ask pardon, and beg the prayers of every Christian reader, that I may have more light, humility and zeal; and that I may be favored with such measures of the divine Spirit, as a minister of the gospel stands in need of at such an extraordinary season.*

# REVIVAL OF RELIGION

IN

## NEW ENGLAND.

### PART I.

*Shewing that the extraordinary Work that has of late been going on in this Land, is a glorious Work of GOD.*

THE error of those who have had ill thoughts of the great religious operations on the minds of men, that have been carried on of late in New England (so far as the ground of such an error has been in the understanding, and not in the disposition) seems fundamentally to lie in three things;

First. In judging of this work *a priori*.

Secondly. In not taking the holy scriptures as an whole rule whereby to judge of such operations.

Thirdly. In not justly separating and distinguishing the good from the bad.

I. They have greatly erred in the way in which they have gone about to try this work, whether it be a work of the Spirit of God or no, viz. in judging of it *a priori*; from the way that it began, the instruments that have been employed, the means that have been made use of, and the methods that have been taken and succeeded, in carrying it on. Whereas, if we duly consider the matter, it will evidently appear that such a work is not to be judged of *a priori*, but *a posteriori*. We are to observe the effect wrought; and if, upon examination of it, it be found to be agreeable to the word of God, we are bound, without more ado, to rest in it as God's work; and shall be like to be rebuked for our arrogance, if we refuse so to do till God shall explain to us how he has brought this effect to pass, or why he has made use of such and such means in doing of it. Those texts are enough to cause us with trembling to forbear such a way of proceeding in judging of a work of God's Spirit, Isa. xl. 13, 14. "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom, took he counsel? And who instructed him, and who taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?" John iii. 8. "The wind bloweth where it listeth; and thou hearest the sound thereof; but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it

goeth.” We hear the sound, we perceive the effect, and from thence we judge that the wind does indeed blow; without waiting, before we pass this judgment, first to be satisfied what should be the cause of the wind’s blowing from such a part of the heavens, and how it should come to pass that it should blow in such a manner, at such a time. To judge *a priori*, is a wrong way of judging of any of the works of God. We are not to resolve that we will first be satisfied how God brought this or the other effect to pass, and why he hath made it thus, or why it has pleased him to take such a course, and to use such and such means, before we will acknowledge his work, and give him the glory of it. This is too much for the *clay* to take upon it with respect to the *Potter*. *God gives not account of his matters; His judgments are a great deep. He hath his way in the sea, and his path in the great waters, and his footsteps are not known; and who shall teach God knowledge, or enjoin him his way, or say unto him, what doest thou? We know not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child; even so we know not the works of God, who maketh all.* No wonder, therefore, if those that go this forbidden way to work, in judging of the present wonderful operation, are perplexed and confounded. We ought to take heed that we do not expose ourselves to the calamity of those who pried into the ark of God, when God mercifully returned it to Israel, after it had departed from them.

Indeed God has not taken that course, nor made use of those means, to begin and carry on this great work, which men in their wisdom, would have thought most advisable, if he had asked their counsel; but quite the contrary. But it appears to me that the great God has wrought like himself, in the manner of his carrying on this work; so as very much to show his own glory, and exalt his own sovereignty, power, and all sufficiency, and pour contempt on all that human strength, wisdom, prudence, and sufficiency that men have been wont to trust, and to glory in; and so as greatly to cross, rebuke, and chastise the pride and other corruptions of men; in a fulfilment of that, Isa. ii. 17. “And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.” God doth thus, in intermingling in his providence so many stumbling blocks with this work; in suffering so much of human weakness and infirmity to appear; and in ordering so many things that are mysterious to men’s wisdom; In pouring out his Spirit chiefly on the common people, and bestowing his greatest and highest favors upon them, admitting them nearer to himself than the great, the honorable, the rich, and the learned, agreeable to that prophecy, Zech. xii. 7. “The Lord also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of

David, and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, do not magnify themselves against Judah.” Those that dwelt in the tents of Judah were the common people, that dwelt in the country, and were of inferior rank. The inhabitants of Jerusalem were their citizens, their men of wealth and figure. And Jerusalem also was the chief place of the habitation or resort of their priests, and Levites, and their officers and judges; there sat the great Sanhedrim. The house of David were the highest rank of all, the royal family, and the great men that were round about the king. It is evident by the context that this prophecy has respect to something further than the saving the people out of the Babylonish captivity.

God in this work has begun at the lower end, and he has made use of the weak and foolish things of the world to carry on his work. The ministers that have been chiefly improved, some of them have been mere babes in age and standing, and some of them, such as have not been so high in reputation among their fellows as many others; and God has suffered their infirmities to appear in the sight of others, so as much to displease them; and at the same time it has pleased God to improve them, and greatly to succeed them, while he has not so succeeded others that are generally reputed vastly their superiors. Yea, there is reason to think that it has pleased God to make use of the infirmities and sins of some that he has improved and succeeded; as particularly their imprudent and rash zeal, and censorious spirit, to chastise the deadness, negligence, earthly mindedness, and vanity, that have been found among ministers, in the late times of general declension and deadness, wherein wise virgins and foolish, ministers and people have sunk into such a deep sleep. These things in ministers of the gospel, that go forth as the ambassadors of Christ, and have the care of immortal souls, are extremely abominable to God; vastly more hateful in his sight than all the imprudence, and intemperate heats, wildness, and distraction (as some call it) of these zealous preachers. A supine carelessness, and a vain, carnal, worldly spirit, in a minister of the gospel, is the worst madness and distraction in the sight of God. God may also make use at this day, of the unchristian censoriousness of some preachers, the more to humble and purify some of his own children and true servants, that have been wrongfully censured, to fit them for more eminent service, and future honor that he designs them for.

II. Another foundation error of those that do not acknowledge the divinity of this work, is not taking the Holy Scriptures as an *whole*, and in itself a sufficient rule to judge of such things by. They that have one certain consistent rule to judge by, are like to come to some clear determination; but they that have half a dozen different rules to make the



thing they would judge of agree to, no wonder that instead of justly and clearly determining, they do but perplex and darken themselves and others. They that would learn the true measure of any thing, and will have many different measures to try it by, and find in it a conformity to, have a task that they will not accomplish.

Those that I am speaking of will indeed make some use of scripture, so far as they think it serves their turn; but do not make use of it *alone*, as a rule sufficient by itself, but make as much, and a great deal more use of other things, diverse and wide from it, to judge of this work by. As particularly,

1. Some make philosophy, instead of the Holy Scriptures, their rule of judging of this work; particularly the philosophical notions they entertain of the nature of the soul, its faculties and affections. Some are ready to say, "There is but little sober, solid religion in this work. It is little else but flash and noise. Religion nowadays all runs out into transports and high flights of the passions and affections." In their philosophy, the affections of the soul are something diverse from the will, and not appertaining to the noblest part of the soul, but the meanest principles that it has, that belong to man, as partaking of animal nature, and what he has in common with the brute creation, rather than any thing whereby he is conformed to angels and pure spirits. And though they acknowledge that a good use may be made of the affections in religion, yet they suppose that the substantial part of religion does not consist in them, but that they are rather to be looked upon as something adventitious and accidental in Christianity.

But I cannot but think that these gentlemen labor under great mistakes, both in their philosophy and divinity. It is true distinction must be made in affections or passions. There is a great deal of difference in high and raised affections, which must be distinguished by the skill of the observer. Some are much more solid than others. There are many exercises of the affections that are very flashy, and little to be depended on; and oftentimes there is a great deal that appertains to them, or rather that is the effect of them, that has its seat in animal nature, and is very much owing to the constitution and frame of the body; and that which sometimes more especially obtains the name of passion, is nothing solid or substantial. But it is false philosophy to suppose this to be the case with all exercises of affection in the soul, or with all great and high affections; and false divinity to suppose that religious affections do not appertain to the substance and essence of Christianity. On the contrary, it seems to me that the very life and soul of all true religion consists in them.

I humbly conceive that the affections of the soul are not properly



distinguished from the will, as though they were two faculties in the soul. All acts of the affections of the soul are in some sense acts of the will, and all acts of the will are acts of the affections. All exercises of the will are in some degree or other, exercises of the soul's appetite or aversion; or which is the same thing, of its love or hatred. The soul wills one thing rather than another, or chooses one thing rather than another, no otherwise than as it loves one thing more than another; but love and hatred are affections of the soul. And therefore all acts of the will are truly acts of the affections; though the exercises of the will do not obtain the name of passions, unless the will, either in its aversion or opposition, be exercised in a high degree, or in a vigorous and lively manner.

All will allow that true virtue or holiness has its seat chiefly in the heart, rather than in the head. It therefore follows, from what has been said already, that it consists chiefly in holy affections. The things of religion take place in men's hearts, no further than they are *affected* with them. The informing of the understanding is all vain, any farther than it *affects* the heart; or which is the same thing, has influence on the *affections*.

Those gentlemen that make light of these raised affections in religion, will doubtless allow that true religion and holiness, as it has its seat in the heart, is capable of very high degrees, and high exercises in the soul. As for instance; they will doubtless allow that the holiness of the heart or will, is capable of being raised to an hundred times as great a degree of strength as it is in the most eminent saint on earth, or to be exerted in an hundred times so strong and vigorous exercises of the heart; and yet be true religion or holiness still, but only in an high degree. Now therefore I would ask them, by what name they will call these high and vigorous exercises of the will or heart? Are they not high affections? What can they consist in, but in high acts of love; strong and vigorous exercises of benevolence and complacence; high, exalting and admiring thoughts of God and his perfections; strong desires after God, &c.? And now what are we come to but high and raised affections? Yea, those very same high and raised affections that before they objected against, or made light of, as worthy of little regard?

I suppose furthermore that all will allow that there is nothing but solid religion in heaven. But that there, religion and holiness of heart is raised to an exceeding great height, to strong, high, exalted exercises of heart. Now, what other kinds of such exceeding strong and high exercises of the heart, or of holiness, as it has its seat in their hearts, can we devise for them, but only holy affections, high degrees of actings of love to God, rejoicing in God, admiring of God, &c.? Therefore these

things in the saints and angels in heaven, are not to be despised and cashiered by the name of great heats and transports of the passions.

And it will doubtless be yet further allowed, that the more eminent the saints are on earth, and the stronger their grace is, and the higher its exercises are, the more they are like the Saints in heaven; i. e. (by what has been just now observed) the more they have of high or raised affections in religion.

Though there are false affections in religion, and affections that in some respects are raised high, that are flashy, yet undoubtedly there are also true, holy and solid affections; and the higher these are raised, the better. And if they are raised to an exceeding great height, they are not to be thought meanly of or suspected, merely because of their great degree, but, on the contrary, to be esteemed and rejoiced in. Charity or divine love, is in scripture represented as the sum of all the religion of the heart; but this is nothing but an holy *affection*. And therefore in proportion as this is firmly fixed in the soul, and raised to a great height, the more eminent a person is in holiness. Divine love or charity is represented as the sum of all the religion of heaven, and that wherein mainly the religion of the church in its more perfect state on earth shall consist, when knowledge and tongues, and prophesyings shall cease; and therefore the higher this holy affection is raised in the church of God, or in a gracious soul, the more excellent and perfect is the state of the church, or a particular soul.

If we take the scriptures for our rule then, the greater and higher are the exercises of love to God, delight and complacence in God, desires and longings after God, delight in the children of God, love to mankind, brokenness of heart, abhorrence of sin, and self abhorrence for sin; and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, and joy in the Holy Ghost, joy unspeakable and full of glory; admiring thoughts of God, exulting and glorying in God; so much the higher is Christ's religion, or that virtue which he and his apostles taught, raised in the soul.

It is a stumbling to some that religious affections should seem to be so powerful, or that they should be so violent (as they express it) in some persons. They are therefore ready to doubt whether it can be the Spirit of God, or whether this vehemence be not rather a sign of the operation of an evil spirit. But why should such a doubt arise from no other ground than this? What is represented in scripture, as more powerful in its effects, than the spirit of God?——Which is therefore called *the power of the Highest*, Luke i. 35. And its saving effect in the soul, called the *power of godliness*. So we read of the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power, 1 Cor. ii. 4. And it is said to operate in the

minds of men with the exceeding greatness of divine power, and according to the working of God's mighty power, Eph. i. 19. So we read of the effectual working of his power, Eph. iii. 7. And of the power that worketh in Christians v. 20. And of the glorious power of God in the operations of the spirit, Col. i. 11. And of the work of faith, its being wrought with power, 2 Thes. i. 11, and in 2 Tim. i. 7. The Spirit of God is called the spirit of power, and love, and of a sound mind. So the spirit is represented by a mighty wind, and by fire, things most powerful in their operation.

2. Many are guilty of not taking the holy scriptures as a sufficient and whole rule, whereby to judge of this work, whether it be the work of God, in that they judge by those things which the scripture does not give as any signs or marks whereby to judge one way or the other, and therefore do in no wise belong to the scripture rule of judging, viz. The effects that religious exercises and affections of mind have upon the body. Scripture rules respect the state of the mind, and persons' moral conduct, and voluntary behavior, and not the physical state of the body. The design of the Scripture is to teach us divinity, and not physic and anatomy. Ministers are made the watchmen of men's souls, and not of their bodies; and therefore the great rule which God has committed into their hands, is to make them divines, and not physicians. Christ knew what instructions and rules his church would stand in need of better than we do; and if he had seen it needful in order to the church's safety, he doubtless would have given ministers rules to judge of bodily effects, and would have told them how the pulse should beat under such and such religious exercises of mind; when men should look pale, and when they should shed tears; when they should tremble, and whether or no they should ever be faint or cry out; or whether the body should ever be put into convulsions. He probably would have put some book into their hands, that should have tended to make them excellent anatomists and physicians. But he has not done it, because he did not see it to be needful. He judged, that if ministers thoroughly did their duty as watchmen and overseers of the state and frame of men's souls, and of their voluntary conduct, according to the rules he had given, his church would be well provided for, as to its safety in these matters. And therefore those ministers of Christ and overseers of souls, that busy themselves, and are full of concern about the involuntary motions of the fluids and solids, of men's bodies, and from thence full of doubts and suspicions of the cause, when nothing appears but that the state and frame of their minds, and their voluntary behavior is good, and agreeable to God's word; I say, such ministers go out of the place that Christ has set them in, and leave their proper business, as much as if they

should undertake to tell who are under the influence of the Spirit by their looks, or their gait. I cannot see which way we are in danger, or how the devil is likely to get any notable advantage against us, if we do but thoroughly do our duty with respect to those two things, viz. The state of persons' minds, and their moral conduct, seeing to it that they be maintained in an agreeableness to the rules that Christ has given us. If things are but kept right in these respects, our fears and suspicions arising from extraordinary bodily effects seem wholly groundless.

The most specious thing that is alleged against these extraordinary effects on the body, is, that the body is impaired, and health wronged; and that it is hard to think that God, in the merciful influences of his Spirit on men, would wound their bodies and impair their health. But if it were so pretty commonly, or in multiplied instances, (which I do not suppose it is) that persons received a lasting wound to their health by extraordinary religious impressions made upon their minds, yet it is too much for us to determine that God shall never bring an outward calamity, in bestowing a vastly greater spiritual and eternal good.

Jacob, in doing his duty in wrestling with God for the blessing, and while God was striving with him, at the same time, that he received the blessing from God, suffered a great outward calamity from his hand; God impaired his body so that he never got over it as long as he lived. He gave him the blessing, but sent him away halting on his thigh, and he went lame all his life after. And yet this is not mentioned as if it were any diminution of the great mercy of God to him, when God blessed him and he received his name Israel, because as a Prince he had power with God, and had prevailed.

But, say some, the operations of the Spirit of God, are of a benign nature; nothing is of a more kind influence on human nature, than the merciful breathings of God's own Spirit. But it has been a thing generally supposed and allowed in the church of God, till now, that there is such a thing as being sick of love to Christ, or having the bodily strength weakened by strong and vigorous exercises of love to him. And however kind to human nature the influences of the Spirit of God are, yet nobody doubts but that divine and eternal things, as they may be discovered, would overpower the nature of man in its present weak state; and that therefore the body in its present weakness, is not fitted for the views, and pleasures, and employments of heaven. And that if God did discover but a little of that which is seen by the saints and angels in heaven, our frail natures would sink under it. Indeed I know not what persons may deny now, to defend themselves in a cause they have had their spirits long engaged in; but I know these things do not use to be denied or doubted of. Let us rationally consider what we profess to

believe of the infinite greatness of the things of God, the divine wrath, the divine glory, and the divine infinite love and grace in Jesus Christ, and the vastness and infinite importance of the things of eternity; and how reasonable is it to suppose, that if it pleases God a little to withdraw the veil and let in light into the soul, and give something of a view of the great things of another world in their transcendent and infinite greatness, that human nature, that is as the grass, a shaking leaf, a weak withering flower, should totter under such a discovery? Such a bubble is too weak to bear the weight of a view of things that are so vast. Alas! What is such dust and ashes, that it should support itself under the view of the awful wrath or infinite glory and love of Jehovah! No wonder therefore that it is said, no man can see me and live, and flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. That external glory and majesty of Christ which Daniel saw, when there remained no strength in him, and his comeliness was turned in him into corruption, Dan. x. 6, 7, 8. And which the apostle John saw, when he fell at his feet as dead, was but an image or shadow of that spiritual glory and majesty of Christ, which will be manifested in the souls of the saints in another world, and which is sometimes, in some degree, manifested to the soul in this world, by the influences of the Spirit of God. And if the beholding the image, and external representation of this spiritual majesty and glory, did so overpower human nature, is it unreasonable to suppose that a sight of the spiritual glory itself, which is the substance, of which that was but the shadow, should have as powerful an effect? The prophet Habakkuk, speaking of the awful manifestations God made of his majesty and wrath, at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness, and at Mount Sinai, where he gave the Law; and of the merciful influence, and strong impression God caused it to have upon him, to the end that he might be saved from that wrath, and rest in the day of trouble; says, Hab. iii. 16. "When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice, rottenness entered into my bones, I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble." Which is much such an effect as the discovery of the same majesty and wrath, in the same awful voice from Mount Sinai, has had upon many in these days; and to the same purposes, viz. to give them rest in the day of trouble, and save them from that wrath. The psalmist also speaks of very much such an effect as I have often seen on persons under religious affections of late, Psal. cxix. 131. "I opened my mouth and panted, for I longed for thy commandments."

God is pleased sometimes in dealing forth spiritual blessings to his people, in some respect to exceed the capacity of the vessel, in its present scantiness, so that he does not only fill it full, but he makes their

*cup to run over*; agreeable to Psalm xxiii. 5. And pours out a blessing sometimes, in such a manner and measure that there is not room enough to receive it, Mal. iii. 10, and gives them riches more than they can carry away; as he did to Jehoshaphat, and his people in a time of great favor, by the word of his prophet Jehaziel in answer to earnest prayer, when the people blessed the Lord in the valley of Berachah, 2 Chron. xx. 25, 26. It has been with the disciples of Christ, for a long time, a time of great emptiness upon spiritual accounts; they have gone hungry, and have been toiling in vain, during a dark season, a time of night with the church of God; as it was with the disciples of old, when they had toiled all night for something to eat, and caught nothing, Luke v. 5, and John xxi. 3. But now, the morning being come, Jesus appears to his disciples, and takes a compassionate notice of their wants, and says to them, *Children, have ye any meat?* And gives some of them such abundance of food, that they are not able to draw their net; yea, so that their net breaks, and their vessel is overloaded, and begins to sink; as it was with the disciples of old, Luke v. 6, 7, and John xxi. 6.

We cannot determine that God never shall give any person so much of a discovery of himself, not only as to weaken their bodies, but to take away their lives. It is supposed by very learned and judicious divines, that Moses's life was taken away after this manner; and this has also been supposed to be the case with some other saints. Yea, I do not see any solid sure grounds any have to determine, that God shall never make such strong impressions on the mind by his Spirit, that shall be an occasion of so impairing the frame of the body, and particularly that part of the body, the brain, that persons shall be deprived of the use of reason. As I said before, it is too much for us to determine, that God will not bring an outward calamity in bestowing spiritual and eternal blessings. So it is too much for us to determine, how great an outward calamity he will bring. If God gives a great increase of discoveries of himself, and of love to him, the benefit is infinitely greater than the calamity, though the life should presently after be taken away; yea though the soul should not immediately be taken to heaven, but should lie some years in a deep sleep, and then be taken to heaven. Or, which is much the same thing, if it be deprived of the use of its faculties, and be unactive and unserviceable, as if it lay in a deep sleep for some years, and then should pass into glory. We cannot determine how great a calamity distraction is, when considered with all its consequences, and all that might have been consequent, if the distraction had not happened; nor indeed whether, (thus considered) it be any calamity at all, or whether it be not a mercy, by preventing some great sin, or some more dreadful thing, if it had not been. It is a great fault in us to limit a



sovereign, allwise God, whose judgments are a great deep, and his ways past finding out, where he has not limited himself, and in things, concerning which, he has not told us what his way shall be. It is remarkable, considering in what multitudes of instances, and to how great a degree, the frame of the body has been overpowered of late, that persons' lives have notwithstanding been preserved, and that the instances of those that have been deprived of reason have been so very few, and those, perhaps, all of them, persons under the peculiar disadvantage of a weak, vapory habit of body. A merciful and careful divine hand is very manifest in it, that in so many instances where the ship has begun to sink, yet it has been upheld, and has not totally sunk. The instances of such as have been deprived of reason are so few, that certainly they are not enough to cause us to be in any fright, as though this work that has been carried on in the country, was like to be of baneful influence; unless we are disposed to gather up all that we can to darken it, and set it forth in frightful colors.

There is one particular kind of exercise and concern of mind, that many have been overpowered by, that has been especially stumbling to some; and that is, the deep concern and distress that they have been in for the souls of others. I am sorry that any put us to the trouble of doing that which seems so needless, as defending such a thing as this. It seems like mere trifling in so plain a case, to enter into a formal and particular debate, in order to determine whether there be any thing in the greatness and importance of the case that will answer, and bear a proportion to the greatness of the concern that some have manifested. Men may be allowed, from no higher a principle than common ingenuity and humanity, to be very deeply concerned, and greatly exercised in mind, at the seeing others in great danger, of no greater a calamity than drowning, or being burnt up in an house on fire. And if so, then doubtless it will be allowed to be equally reasonable, if they saw them in danger of a calamity ten times greater, to be still much more concerned; and so much more still, if the calamity was still vastly greater. And why then should it be thought unreasonable, and looked upon with a very suspicious eye, as if it must come from some bad cause, when persons are extremely concerned at seeing others in very great danger of suffering the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, to all eternity? And besides it will doubtless be allowed that those that have very great degrees of the Spirit of God, that is a spirit of love, may well be supposed to have vastly more of love and compassion to their fellow creatures, than those that are influenced only by common humanity. Why should it be thought strange that those that are full of the spirit of Christ, should be proportionably, in their love to souls, like to Christ?



Who had so strong a love to them and concern for them, as to be willing to drink the dregs of the cup of God's fury for them; and at the same time that he offered up his blood for souls, offered up also, as their high priest, strong crying and tears, with an extreme agony, wherein the soul of Christ was as it were in travail for the souls of the elect; and therefore in saving them he is said to see of the *travail* of his soul. As such a spirit of love to, and concern for souls was the spirit of Christ, so it is the spirit of the church; and therefore the church, in desiring and seeking that Christ might be brought forth in the world, and in the souls of men, is represented, Rev. xii. As a "Woman crying, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered," The Spirit of those that have been in distress for the souls of others, so far as I can discern, seems not to be different from that of the apostle, who travailed for souls, and was ready to wish himself accursed from Christ for others. And that of the Psalmist, Psal. cxix. 53. "Horror hath taken hold upon me, because of the wicked that forsake thy Law." And v. 136. "Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy Law." And that of the prophet Jeremiah. Jer. iv. 19. "My bowels! My bowels! I am pained at my very heart! My heart maketh a noise in me! I cannot hold my peace! Because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war!" And so chap. ix. I, and xiii. 17, and xiv. 17, and Isa. xxii. 4. We read of Mordecai, when he saw his people in danger of being destroyed with a temporal destruction, Esth. iv. 1. "That he rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and bitter cry. And why then should persons be thought to be distracted, when they cannot forbear crying out, at the consideration of the misery of those that are going to eternal destruction?

3. Another thing that some make their rule to judge of this work by, instead of the Holy Scriptures, is history, or former observation. Herein they err two ways; *First*, If there be any thing new and extraordinary in the circumstances of this work, that was not observed in former times, that is a rule with them to reject this work as not the work of God. Herein they make that their rule, that God has not given them for their rule; and limit God, where he has not limited himself. And this is especially unreasonable in this case. For whosoever has well weighed the wonderful and mysterious methods of divine wisdom, in carrying on the work of the new creation, or in the progress of the work of redemption, from the first promise of the seed of the woman to this time, may easily observe that it has all along been God's manner to open new scenes, and to bring forth to view things new and wonderful, such as eye had not seen, nor ear heard, nor entered into the heart of man or

angels, to the astonishment of heaven and earth, not only in the revelations he makes of his mind and will, but also in the works of his hands. As the old creation was carried on through six days, and appeared all complete, settled in a state of rest on the seventh; so the new creation, which is immensely the greatest and most glorious work, is carried on in a gradual progress, from the fall of man, to the consummation of all things, at the end of the world. And as in the progress of the old creation, there were still new things accomplished; new wonders appeared every day in the sight of the angels, the spectators of that work; while those morning stars sang together, new scenes were opened or things that they had not seen before, till the whole was finished; so it is in the progress of the new creation. So that that promise, Isa. lxiv. 4. "For since the beginning of the world, men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him." Though it had a glorious fulfilment in the days of Christ and the apostles, as the words are applied, 1 Cor. ii. 9. Yet it always remains to be fulfilled, in things that are yet behind, until the new creation is finished, at Christ's delivering up the kingdom to the Father. And we live in those latter days, wherein we may be especially warranted to expect that things will be accomplished, concerning which it will be said, *Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things?*

And besides, those things in this work that have been chiefly complained of as new, are not so new as has been generally imagined. Though they have been much more frequent lately, in proportion to the uncommon degree, extent and swiftness, and other extraordinary circumstances of the work, yet they are not new in their kind; but are things of the same nature as have been found and well approved of in the church of God before, from time to time.

We have a remarkable instance in Mr. Bolton, that noted minister of the church of England, who, being awakened by the preaching of the famous Mr. Perkins, minister of Christ in the University of Cambridge, was subject to such terrors as threw him to the ground, and caused him to roar with anguish; and the pangs of the new birth in him were such, that he lay pale and without sense, like one dead; as we have an account in the *fulfilling of the Scripture*, the 5th Edition, p. 103, 104.... We have an account in the same page of another, whose comforts under the sunshine of God's presence were so great, that he could not forbear crying out in a transport, and expressing in exclamations, the great sense he had of forgiving mercy and his assurance of God's love. And we have a remarkable instance in the life of Mr. George Trosse, written by himself (who, of a notoriously vicious, profligate liver, be-

came an eminent saint and minister of the gospel) of terrors occasioned by awakenings of conscience, so overpowering the body, as to deprive, for some time, of the use of reason.

Yea, such extraordinary external effects of inward impressions have not only been to be found in here and there a single person, but there have also before now been times wherein many have been thus affected, in some particular parts of the church of God; and such effects have appeared in congregations, in many at once. So it was in the year 1625, in the west of Scotland, in a time of great outpouring of the Spirit of God. It was then a frequent thing for many to be so extraordinarily seized with terror in the hearing of the word, by the Spirit of God convincing them of sin, that they fell down, and were carried out of the church, who afterwards proved most solid and lively Christians; as the author of the *Fulfilling of the Scripture* informs us, p. 185. The same author in the preceding page, informs of many in France that were so wonderfully affected with the preaching of the gospel, in the time of those famous divines, Farel and Viret, that for a time, they could not follow their secular business. And p. 186, of many in Ireland, in a time of great outpouring of the Spirit there, in the year 1628, that were so filled with divine comforts, and a sense of God, that they made but little use of either meat, drink or sleep, and professed that they did not feel the need thereof. The same author gives an account of very much such things in Mrs. Catherine Brettergh of Lancashire in England, (p. 391, 392) as have been complained of, here amongst us, as wild and distracted. How that after great distress, which very much affected her body, the sweat sometimes bursting out upon her, God did so break in upon her mind with light and discoveries of himself, that she was forced to burst out, crying, “O the Joys, the Joys, the Joys, that I feel in my soul! O they be wonderful, they be wonderful! The place where I now am is sweet and pleasant! How comfortable is the sweetness I feel, that delights my soul! The taste is precious; do you not feel it? Oh so sweet as it is!” And at other times, “O my sweet Saviour, shall I be one with thee, as thou art one with the Father? And dost thou so love me that am but dust, to make me partaker of glory with Christ? O how wonderful is thy love! And oh that my tongue and heart were able to sound forth thy praises as I ought.” At another time she burst forth thus; “Yea Lord, I feel thy mercy, and I am assured of thy love! And so certain am I thereof, as thou art that God of truth. Even so certainly do I know myself to be thine, O Lord my God; and this my soul knoweth right well!” Which last words she again doubled. To a grave minister, one Mr. Harrison, then with her, she said, “My soul hath been compassed with the terrors of death, the sorrows of hell were upon me,

and a wilderness of woe was in me; but blessed, blessed, blessed be the Lord my God! He hath brought me to a place of rest, even to the sweet running waters of Life. The way I now go in is a sweet and easy way, strewed with flowers; he hath brought me into a place more sweet than the garden of Eden. O the joy, the joy, the delights and joy that I feel! O how wonderful!”

Great outcries under awakenings were more frequently heard of in former times in the country than they have been of late, as some aged persons now living do testify. Particularly I think fit here to insert a testimony of my honored father, of what he remembers formerly to have heard.

“I well remember that one Mr. Alexander Allyn, a Scots gentleman of good credit, that dwelt formerly in this town, shewed me a letter that came from Scotland, that gave an account of a sermon preached in the city of Edinburgh, (as I remember) in the time of the sitting of the general assembly of divines in that kingdom, that so affected the people, that there was a great and loud cry made throughout the assembly. I have also been credibly informed, and how often I cannot now say, that it was a common thing, when the famous Mr. John Rogers of Dedham in England was preaching, for some of his hearers to cry out; and by what I have heard, I conclude that it was usual for many that heard that very awakening and rousing preacher of God’s word, to make a great cry in the congregation.”

TIMOTHY EDWARDS.

WINDSOR, *May 5, 1742.*

Mr. Flavel gives a remarkable instance of a man that he knew, that was so wonderfully overcome with divine comforts; which it is supposed he knew, as the apostle Paul knew the man that was caught up to the third heaven. He relates,

That “As the person was travelling alone, with his thoughts closely fixed on the great and astonishing things of another world, his thoughts began to swell higher and higher, like the water in Ezekiel’s vision, until at last they became an overflowing flood. Such was the intense-ness of his mind, such the ravishing tastes of heavenly joys, and such his full assurance of his interest therein, that he utterly lost all sight and sense of this world, and the concernments thereof; and for some hours, knew not where he was, nor what he was about. But having lost a great quantity of blood at the nose, he found himself so faint, that it brought him a little more to himself. And after he had washed himself at a spring, and drank of the water for his refreshment, he continued to the end of his journey, which was thirty miles; and all this while was

scarce sensible. And says he had several trances of considerable continuance. The same blessed frame was preserved all that night, and in a lower degree, great part of the next day. The night passed without one wink of sleep; and yet he declares he never had a sweeter night's rest in all his life. Still, *adds the story*, the joy of the Lord overflowed him, and he seemed to be an inhabitant of another world. And he used for many years after to call that day one of the days of heaven; and professed that he understood more of the life of heaven by it, than by all the books he ever read, or discourses he ever entertained about it."

There have been instances before now, of persons crying out in transports of divine joy in New England. We have an instance in Capt. Clap's memoirs, published by the Rev. Mr. Prince, not of a silly woman or child, but a man of solid understanding, that in a high transport of spiritual joy, was made to cry out aloud on his bed. His words p. 9, are "God's holy spirit did witness, (I do believe) together with my spirit; that I was a child of God, and did fill my heart and soul with such full assurance that Christ was mine, that it did so transport me, as to make me cry out upon my bed, with a loud voice, *He is come, He is come!*"

There has, before now, been both crying out and falling down, in this town under awakenings of conscience, and in the pangs of the new birth, and also in some of the neighboring towns. In one of them, more than seven years ago, was a great number together that cried out and fell down, under convictions; in most of which, by good information, was a hopeful and abiding good issue. And the Rev. Mr. Williams of Deerfield gave me an account of an aged man in that town, many years before that, that being awakened by his preaching, cried out aloud in the congregation. There have been many instances in this and some neighboring towns, before now, of persons fainting with joyful discoveries made to their souls. Once several together in this town. And there also formerly have been several instances here, of persons' flesh waxing cold and benumbed, and their hands clinched, yea their bodies being set into convulsions, being overpowered with a strong sense of the astonishingly great and excellent things of God and the eternal world.

*Secondly.* Another way that some err in making history and former observation their rule to judge of this work, instead of the holy scripture, is in comparing some external, accidental circumstances of this work, with what has appeared sometimes in enthusiasts; and as they find an agreement in some such things, so they reject the whole work, or at least the substance of it, concluding it to be enthusiasm. So, great use has been made to this purpose of many things that are found amongst the Quakers; however totally and essentially different in its nature this work is, and the principles it is built upon, from the whole

religion of the Quakers. So, to the same purpose, some external appearances that were found amongst the French prophets, and some other enthusiasts in former times, have been of late trumped up with great assurance and triumph.

4. I would propose it to be considered, whether or no, some, instead of making the scriptures their only rule to judge of this work, do not make their own experience the rule, and reject such and such things as are now professed and experienced, because they never felt them themselves. Are there not many, that chiefly on this ground, have entertained and vented suspicions, if not peremptory condemnations of those extreme terrors, and those great, sudden and extraordinary discoveries of the glorious perfections of God, and of the beauty and love of Christ; and such vehement affections, such high transports of love and joy, such pity and distress for the souls of others, and exercises of mind that have such great effects on persons bodies, merely, or chiefly, because they knew nothing about them by experience? Persons are very ready to be suspicious of what they have not felt themselves. It is to be feared many good men have been guilty of this error; which yet does not make it the less unreasonable. And perhaps there are some that upon this ground do not only reject these extraordinary things, but all such conviction of sin, and such discoveries of the glory of God, and excellency of Christ, and inward conviction of the truth of the gospel, by the immediate influence of the Spirit of God, that are now supposed to be necessary to salvation.

These persons that thus make their own experiences their rule of judgment, instead of bowing to the wisdom of God, and yielding to his word as an infallible rule, are guilty of casting a great reflection upon the understanding of the most High.

III. Another foundation error of those that reject this work, is their not duly distinguishing the good from the bad, and very unjustly judging of the whole by a part; and so rejecting the work in general, or in the main substance of it, for the sake of some things that are accidental to it, that are evil. They look for more in men that are divinely influenced, because subject to the operations of a good spirit, than is justly to be expected from them for that reason, in this imperfect state, and dark world, where so much blindness and corruption remain in the best. When any profess to have received light, and influence, and comforts from heaven, and to have had sensible communion with God, many are ready to expect that now they appear like angels, and not still like poor, feeble, blind and sinful worms of the dust. There being so much corruption left in the hearts of God's own children, and its pre-



vailing as it sometimes does, is indeed a mysterious thing, and always was a stumbling block to the world; but will not be so much wondered at by those that are well versed in, and duly mindful of, two things, viz. *First*, the word of God, which teaches us the state of true Christians in this world, and *Secondly*, their own hearts, at least if they have any grace, and have experience of its conflicts with corruption. They that are true saints are most inexcusable in making a great difficulty of a great deal of blindness, and many sinful errors in those that profess Godliness. If all our conduct, both open and secret, should be known, and our hearts laid open to the world, how should we be even ready to fly from the light of the sun, and hide ourselves from the view of mankind! And what great allowances would it be found that we should need, that others should make for us? Perhaps much greater than we are willing to make for others.

The great weakness of the bigger part of mankind, in any affair that is new and uncommon, appears in not distinguishing, but either approving or condemning all in the lump..... They that highly approve of the affair in general, cannot bear to have any thing at all found fault with; and on the other hand, those that fasten their eyes upon some things in the affair that are amiss, and appear very disagreeable to them, at once reject the whole. Both which errors oftentimes arise from want of persons' due acquaintance with themselves. It is rash and unjust when we proceed thus in judging either of a particular person, or a people, or of such an affair as the present wonderful influence on the minds of the people of this land. Many, if they see any thing very ill in a particular person, a minister or private professor, will at once brand him as an hypocrite. And if there be two or three of a people or society that behave themselves very irregularly, the whole must bear the blame of it. And if there be a few, though it may be not above one in an hundred, that professed, and had a shew of being the happy partakers of what are called the saving benefits of this work, that prove naught, and give the world just grounds to suspect them, the whole work must be rejected on their account; and those in general, that make the like profession must be condemned for their sakes.

So careful are some persons lest this work should be defended, that now they will hardly allow that the influences of the Spirit of God on the heart, can so much as indirectly, and accidentally be the occasion of the exercise of corruption, and commission of sin. Thus far is true, that the influence of the Spirit of God in his saving operations, will not be an occasion of the increase of the corruption of the heart in general, but on the contrary, of the weakening of it. But yet there is nothing unreasonable in supposing, that at the same time that it weakens corruption



in general, it may be an occasion of the turning what is left into a new channel, and so of there being more of some certain kinds of the exercise of corruption than there was before; as that which tends to hinder and stop the course of a stream, if it does not do it wholly, may give a new course to so much of the water as gets by the obstacle. The influences of the spirit, for instance, may be an occasion of new ways of the exercise of *Pride*, as has been acknowledged by orthodox divines in general. That spiritual discoveries and comforts may, through the corruption of the heart, be an occasion of the exercises of spiritual pride, did not use to be doubted of, until now it is found to be needful to maintain the war against this work.

They that will hardly allow that a work of the Spirit of God can be a remote occasion of any sinful behavior or unchristian conduct, I suppose will allow that the truly gracious influences of the Spirit of God, yea and an high degree of love to God, is consistent with these two things, viz. A considerable degree of remaining corruption, and also many errors in judgment in matters of religion, and in matters of practice. And this is all that need to be allowed, in order to its being most demonstratively evident, that a high degree of love to God may accidentally move a person to that which is very wrong, and contrary to the mind and will of God. For a high degree of love to God will strongly move a person to do that which he believes to be agreeable to God's will; and therefore, if he be mistaken, and be persuaded that that is agreeable to the will of God, which indeed is very contrary to it, then his love will accidentally, but strongly, incline him to that, which is indeed very contrary to the will of God.

They that are studied in logic have learned that the nature of the cause is not to be judged of by the nature of the effect, nor the nature of the effect from the nature of the cause, when the cause is only *causa sine qua non*, or an occasional cause; yea, that in such a case, oftentimes the nature of the effect is quite contrary to the nature of the cause.

True disciples of Christ may have a great deal of false zeal, such as the disciples had of old, when they would have fire called for from heaven to come down on the Samaritans, because they did not receive them. And even so eminently holy, and great, and divine a saint as Moses, who conversed with God from time to time, as a man speaks with his friend, and concerning whom God gives his testimony, that he *was very meek, above any man upon the face of the earth*, yet may be rash and sinful in his zeal, when his spirit is stirred by the hardheartedness and opposition of others, so as to speak very unadvisedly with his lips, and greatly to offend God, and shut himself out from the possession of

the good things that God is about to accomplish for his church on earth, as Moses was excluded Canaan, though he had brought the people out of Egypt, Psal. cvi, 32, 33. And men, even in those very things wherein they are influenced by a truly pious principle, yet, through error and want of due consideration and caution, may be very rash with their zeal. It was a truly good spirit that animated that excellent generation of Israel that was in Joshua's time, in that affair that we have an account of in the 22d chapter of Joshua; and yet they were rash and heady with their zeal, to go about to gather all Israel together to go up so furiously to war with their brethren of the two tribes and half, about their building the altar Ed, without first inquiring into the matter, or so much as sending a messenger to be informed. So the Christians that were of the circumcision, with warmth and contention condemned Peter for receiving Cornelius, as we have account, Acts xi. This their heat and censure was unjust, and Peter was wronged in it; but there is all appearance in the story that they acted from a real zeal and concern for the will and honor of God. So the primitive Christians, from their zeal for, and against unclean meats, censured and condemned one another. This was a bad effect, and yet the apostle bears them witness, or at least expresses his charity towards them, that both sides acted from a good principle, and true respect to the Lord, Rom. xiv. 6.... The zeal of the Corinthians with respect to the incestuous man, though the apostle highly commends it, yet at the same time saw that they needed a caution, lest they should carry it too far, to an undue severity, and so as to fail of Christian meekness and forgiveness, 2 Cor. ii. 6–11, and chap. vii. 11, to the end. Luther that great reformer had a great deal of bitterness with his zeal.

It surely cannot be wondered at by considerate persons, that at a time when multitudes all over the land have their affections greatly moved, that great numbers should run into many errors and mistakes with respect to their duty, and consequently into many acts and practices that are imprudent and irregular. I question whether there be a man in New England, of the strongest reason and greatest learning, but what would be put to it to keep master of himself, thoroughly to weigh his words, and consider all the consequences of his behavior, so as to behave himself in all respects prudently, if he were so strongly impressed with a sense of divine and eternal things, and his affections so exceedingly moved, as has been frequent of late among the common people. How little do they consider human nature, who look upon it so insuperable a stumbling block, when such multitudes of all kinds of capacities, natural tempers, educations, customs and manners of life, are so greatly and variously affected, that imprudences and irregularities of

conduct should abound; especially in a state of things so uncommon, and when the degree, extent, swiftness, and power of the operation is so very extraordinary, and so new, that there has not been time and experience enough to give birth to rules for people's conduct, and so unusual in times past, that the writings of divines do not afford rules to direct us in such a state of things?

A great deal of noise and tumult, confusion and uproar, and darkness mixed with light, and evil with good, is always to be expected in the beginning of something very extraordinary, and very glorious in the state of things in human society, or the church of God. As after nature has long been shut up in a cold dead state, in time of winter, when the sun returns in the spring, there is, together with the increase of the light and heat of the sun, very dirty and tempestuous weather, before all is settled calm, and serene, and all nature rejoices in its bloom and beauty. It is in the new creation as it was in the old, the Spirit of God first moved upon the face of the waters, which was an occasion of great uproar and tumult, and things were gradually brought to a settled state, until at length all stood forth in that beautiful, peaceful order, when the heavens and the earth were finished, and God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good. When God is about to bring to pass something great and glorious in the world, nature is in a ferment and struggle, and the world as it were in travail. As when God was about to introduce the Messiah into the world, and that new and glorious dispensation that he set up, He *shook the heavens and the earth, and shook all nations*. There is nothing that the church of God is in scripture more frequently represented by than vegetables; as a tree, a vine, corn, &c. which gradually bring forth their fruit, and are first green before they are ripe. A great revival of religion is expressly compared to this gradual production of vegetables, Isa. lxi. 11. "As the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations. The church is in a special manner compared to a palm tree, Cant. vii. 7, 8. Exod. xv. 27. 1 Kings, vi. 29. Psal. xcii. 12. Of which tree this peculiar thing is observed, that the fruit of it, though it be very sweet and good when it is ripe, yet before it has had time to ripen, has a mixture of poison.

The weakness of human nature has always appeared in times of great revival of religion, by a disposition to run to extremes and get into confusion; and especially in these three things, enthusiasm, superstition, and intemperate zeal. So it appeared in the time of the reformation, very remarkably; and also in the days of the apostles; many were then exceedingly disposed to lay weight on those things that were

very notional and chimerical, giving heed to fables and whimsies, as appears by 1 Tim. i. 4, and iv. 7. 2 Tim. ii. 16, and v. 23, and Tit. i. 14, and iii. 9. Many, as ecclesiastical history informs us, fell off into the most wild enthusiasm, and extravagant notions of spirituality, and extraordinary illumination from heaven beyond others; and many were prone to superstition, will worship and a voluntary humility, giving heed to the commandments of men, being fond of an unprofitable bodily exercise, as appears by many passages in the apostles writings. And what a proneness then appeared among professors to swerve from the path of duty, and the spirit of the gospel, in the exercises of a rash indiscreet zeal, censuring and condemning ministers and people; one saying, I am of Paul, another I of Apollos, another I of Cephas; judging one another for differences of opinion about smaller matters, unclean meats, holy days and holy places, and their different opinions and practices respecting civil intercourse and communication with their heathen neighbors? And how much did vain jangling and disputing and confusion prevail through undue heat of spirit, under the name of a religious zeal? 2 Tim. vi. 4, 5. 2 Tim. ii. 16, and Tit. iii. 9. And what a task had the apostles to keep them within bounds, and maintain good order in the churches? How often are they mentioning their irregularities? The prevailing of such like disorders seems to have been the special occasion of writing many of their Epistles. The church in that great effusion of the spirit that was then, and the strong impressions that God's people were then under, was under the care of infallible guides, that watched over them day and night; but yet so prone were they, through the weakness and corruption of human nature, to get out of the way, that irregularity and confusion rose in some churches, where there was an extraordinary outpouring of the spirit, to a very great height, even in the apostles' life time, and under their eye. And though some of the apostles lived long to settle the state of things, yet presently after they were dead, the Christian church ran into many superstitions and childish notions and practices, and in some respects into a great severity in their zeal. And let any wise person that has not, in the midst of the disputes of the present day, got beyond the calmness of consideration, impartially consider to what lengths, we may reasonably suppose, many of the primitive Christians, in their heat of zeal, and under their extraordinary impressions, would soon have gone, if they had had no inspired guides; and whether or no, it is not probable that the church of Corinth in particular, by an increase of their irregularities and contentions, would not in a little time have broke to pieces, and dissolved in a state of the utmost confusion? And yet this would have been no evidence that there had not been a most glorious and remarkable outpour-

ing of the spirit in that city. But, as for us, we have no infallible apostle to guide and direct us, to rectify disorders, and reclaim us when we are wandering; but every one does what is right in his own eyes; and they that err in judgment, and are got into a wrong path continue to wander, till experience of the mischievous issue convinces them of their error.

If we look over this affair, and seriously weigh it in its circumstances, it will appear a matter of no great difficulty to account for the errors that have been gone into, supposing the work in general to be from a very great outpouring of the Spirit of God. It may easily be accounted for, that many have run into great errors, and into just such errors as they have. It is known, that some that have been improved as great instruments to promote this work, have been very young; and how natural is it for such as are themselves newly awaked out of sleep, and brought out of that state of darkness, insensibility and spiritual death, which they had been in ever since they were born; and have a new and wonderful scene opened to them; and have in view the reality, the vastness, and infinite importance, and nearness of spiritual and eternal things; and at the same time are surprised to see the world asleep about them; and have not the advantage of age and experience, and have had but little opportunity to study divinity, or to converse with aged experienced Christians and divines; I say, how natural it is for such to fall into many errors with respect to the state of mankind, with which they are so surprised, and with respect to the means and methods of their relief? Is it any wonder that they have not at once learned how to make all the allowances that are to be made, and that they do not at once find out that method of dealing with the world, that is adapted to the mysterious state and nature of mankind? Is it any wonder that they cannot at once foresee what the consequences of things will be, what evils are to be guarded against, and what difficulties are like to arise, that are to be provided for?

We have long been in a strange stupor; the influences of the Spirit of God upon the heart have been but little felt, and the nature of them but little taught; so that they are in many respects new to great numbers of those that have lately fallen under them. And is it any wonder that they that never before had experience of the supernatural influence of the divine spirit upon their souls, and never were instructed in the nature of these influences, do not so well know how to distinguish one extraordinary new impression from another, and so (to themselves insensibly) run into enthusiasm, taking every strong impulse or impression to be divine? How natural is it to suppose, that among the multitudes of illiterate people (most of which are in their youth) that find themselves so wonderfully changed, and brought into such new, and

before (to them) almost unheard of circumstances, that many should pass wrong, and very strange judgments of both persons and things that are about them; and that now they behold them in such a new light, they in their surprise should go further from the judgment that they were wont to make of them than they ought, and in their great change of sentiments, should pass from one extreme to another? And why should it be thought strange, that those that scarce ever heard of any such thing as an outpouring of the Spirit of God before; or if they did, had no notion of it; do not know how to behave themselves in such a new and strange state of things? And is it any wonder that they are ready to hearken to those that have instructed them, that have been the means of delivering them from such a state of death and misery as they were in before, or have a name for being the happy instruments of promoting the same work among others? Is it unaccountable that persons in these circumstances are ready to receive every thing they say, and to drink down error as well as truth from them. And why should there be all indignation and no compassion towards those that are thus misled?

When these persons are extraordinarily affected with a new sense, and recent discovery they have received, of the greatness and excellency of the divine being, the certainty and infinite importance of eternal things, the preciousness of souls, and the dreadful danger and madness of mankind, together with a great sense of God's distinguishing kindness and love to them; no wonder that now they think they must exert themselves, and do something extraordinary for the honor of God and the good of the souls of their fellow creatures, and know not how to sit still, and forbear speaking and acting with uncommon earnestness and vigor. And in these circumstances, if they be not persons of more than common steadiness and discretion, or have not some person of wisdom to direct them, it is a wonder if they do not proceed without due caution, and do things that are irregular, and that will, in the issue, do much more hurt than good.

Censuring others is the worst disease with which this affair has been attended. But yet such a time as this is indeed a time of great temptation to this sinful error. When there has been such a time of great and long continued deadness, and many are brought out of a state of nature into a state of grace, in so extraordinary a manner, and filled with such uncommon degrees of light, it is natural for such to form their notions of a state of grace wholly from what they experience; many of them know no other way; for they never have been taught much about a state of grace, and the different degrees of grace, and the degrees of darkness and corruption that grace is consistent with, nor



concerning the manner of the influences of the spirit in converting a soul, and the variety of the manner of his operations. They therefore forming their idea of a state of grace only by their own experience, no wonder that it appears an insuperable difficulty to them to reconcile such a state, of which they have this idea, with what they observe in professors that are about them. It is indeed in itself a very great mystery, that grace should be consistent with so much and such kind of corruption as sometimes prevails in the truly godly; and no wonder that it especially appears so to uninstructed new converts, that have been converted in an extraordinary manner.

Though censoriousness be a thing that is very sinful, and is most commonly found in hypocrites and persons of a pharisaical spirit, yet it is not so inconsistent with true Godliness as some imagine. We have remarkable instances of it in those holy men that we have an account of in the book of Job. Not only were Job's three friends, that seem to have been eminently holy men, guilty of it in very unreasonably censuring the best man on earth, very positively determining that he was an unconverted man; but Job himself, that was not only a man of true piety, but excelled all men in piety, and particularly excelled in a humble, meek and patient spirit, was guilty of bitterly censuring his three friends, as wicked, vile hypocrites. Job; xvi. 9, 10, 11. "He teareth me in his wrath who hateth me, he gnasheth upon me with his teeth; mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me. They have gaped upon me with their mouth. God hath delivered me to the ungodly and turned me over into the hands of the wicked." So he is very positive in it that they are hypocrites, and shall be miserably destroyed as such, in the next chapter, ver. 2, 3, 4. "Are there not mockers with me? And doth not mine eye continue in their provocation? Lay down now, put me in surety with thee; who is he that will strike hands with me? For thou hast hid their heart from understanding. Therefore shalt thou not exalt them." And again, ver. 8, 9, 10. "Upright men shall be astonished at this, and the innocent shall stir up himself against the hypocrite. The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger. But as for you all, do you return and come now; For I cannot find one wise man (i. e. one good man) among you."

Thus I think the errors and irregularities that attend this work, may be accounted for, from the consideration of the infirmity and weakness and common corruption of mankind, together with the circumstances of the work, though we should suppose it to be the work of God. And it would not be a just objection in any to say, if these powerful impressions and great affections are from the Spirit of God, why does not the same spirit give strength of understanding and capacity in proportion,



to those persons that are the subjects of them; so that strong affections may not, through their error, drive them to an irregular and sinful conduct? For I do not know that God has anywhere obliged himself to do it. The end of the influences of God's Spirit is to make men spiritually knowing, wise to salvation, which is the most excellent wisdom; and he has also appointed means for our gaining such degrees of other knowledge as we need, to conduct ourselves regularly, which means should be carefully used. But the end of the influence of the Spirit of God is not to increase men's natural capacities, nor has God obliged himself immediately to increase civil prudence in proportion to the degrees of spiritual light.

If we consider the errors that attend this work, not only as from man, and his infirmity, but also as from God, and by his permission and disposal, they are not strange, upon the supposition of its being, as to the substance of it, a work of God. If God intends this great revival of religion to be the dawning, or a forerunner of an happy state of his church on earth, it may be an instance of the divine wisdom, in the beginning of it, to suffer so many irregularities and errors in conduct, to which he knew men, in their present weak state, were most exposed, under great religious affections, and when animated with great zeal. For it will be very likely to be of excellent benefit to his church, in the continuance and progress of the work afterwards. Their experience in the first setting out, of the mischievous consequences of these errors, and smarting for them in the beginning, may be an happy defence to them afterwards, for many generations, from these errors, which otherwise they might continually be exposed to. As when David and all Israel went about to bring back the ark into the midst of the land, after it had been long absent, first in the land of the Philistines, and then in Kirjathjearim, in the utmost borders of the land; they at first sought not the Lord after the due order, and they smarted for their error; but this put them upon studying the law, and more thoroughly acquainting themselves with the mind and will of God, and seeking and serving him with greater circumspection; and the consequence was glorious, viz. their seeking God in such a manner as was accepted of him; and the ark of God's ascending into the heights of Zion, with those great and extraordinary rejoicings of the king and all the people, without any frown or rebuke from God intermixed; and God's dwelling thenceforward in the midst of the people, to those glorious purposes that are expressed in the 68th Psalm.

And it is very analogous to the manner of God's dealing with his people, to permit a great deal of error, and suffer the infirmity of his people much to appear, in the beginning of a glorious work of his grace

for their felicity, to teach them what they be, to humble them, and fit them for that glorious prosperity he is about to advance them to, and the more to secure to himself the honor of such a glorious work. For by man's exceeding weakness appearing in the beginning of it, it is evident that God does not lay the foundation of it in man's strength or wisdom.

And as we need not wonder at the errors that attend this work, if we look at the hand of men that are guilty of them, and the hand of God in permitting them, so neither shall we see cause to wonder at them, if we consider them with regard to the hand that Satan has in them. For as the work is much greater than any other outpouring of the spirit that ever has been in New England, so no wonder that the devil is more alarmed and enraged, and exerts himself more vigorously against it, and does more powerfully endeavor to tempt and mislead those that are the subjects of it, or are its promoters.

Whatever imprudences there have been, and whatever sinful irregularities; whatever vehemence of the passions, and heats of the imagination, transports and ecstasies; and whatever error in judgment, and indiscreet zeal; and whatever outcries, and faintings, and agitations of body; yet it is manifest and notorious, that there has been of late a very uncommon influence upon the minds of a very great part of the inhabitants of New England, from one end of the land to the other, that has been attended with the following effects, viz. a great increase of a spirit of seriousness, and sober consideration of the things of the eternal world; a disposition to hearken to any thing that is said of things of this nature, with attention and affection; a disposition to treat matters of religion with solemnity, and as matters of great importance; a disposition to make these things the subject of conversation; and a great disposition to hear the word of God preached, and to take all opportunities in order to it; and to attend on the public worship of God, and all external duties of religion in a more solemn and decent manner; so that there is a remarkable and general alteration in the face of New England in these respects. Multitudes in all parts of the land, of vain, thoughtless, regardless persons are quite changed, and become serious and considerate. There is a vast increase of concern for the salvation of the precious soul, and of that inquiry, *What shall I do to be saved?* The hearts of multitudes have been greatly taken off from the things of the world, its profits, pleasures and honors; and there has been a great increase of sensibleness and tenderness of conscience. Multitudes in all parts have had their consciences awakened, and have been made sensible of the pernicious nature and consequences of sin, and what a dreadful thing it is to lie under guilt and the displeasure of God, and to live

without peace and reconciliation with him. They have also been awakened to a sense of the shortness and uncertainty of life, and the reality of another world and future judgment, and of the necessity of an interest in Christ. They are more afraid of sin, more careful and inquisitive that they may know what is contrary to the mind and will of God, that they may avoid it, and what he requires of them that they may do it; more careful to guard against temptations, more watchful over their own hearts, earnestly desirous of being informed what are the means that God has directed to, for their salvation, and diligent in the use of the means that God has appointed in his word, in order to it.... Many very stupid, senseless sinners, and persons of a vain mind, have been greatly awakened. There is a strange alteration almost all over New England amongst young people. By a powerful, invisible influence on their minds, they have been brought to forsake those things in a general way, as it were at once, that they were extremely fond of, and greatly addicted to, and that they seemed to place the happiness of their lives in, and that nothing before could induce them to forsake; as their frolicking, vain company keeping, night walking, their mirth and jollity, their impure language, and lewd songs. In vain did ministers preach against those things before, and in vain were laws made to restrain them, and in vain was all the vigilance of magistrates and civil officers; but now they have almost everywhere dropped them as it were of themselves. And there is a great alteration amongst old and young as to drinking, tavern haunting, profane speaking, and extravagance in apparel. Many notoriously vicious persons have been reformed, and become externally quite new creatures. Some that are wealthy, and of a fashionable, gay education; some great beaux and fine ladies, that seemed to have their minds swallowed up with nothing but the vain shews and pleasures of the world, have been wonderfully altered, and have relinquished these vanities, and are become serious, mortified and humble in their conversation. It is astonishing to see the alteration that is in some towns, where before was but little appearance of religion, or any thing but vice and vanity. And so remote was all that was to be seen or heard amongst them from any thing that savored of vital piety or serious religion, or that had any relation to it, that, one would have thought, if they had judged only by what appeared in them, that they had been some other species from the serious and religious, which had no concern with another world, and whose natures were not made capable of those things that appertain to Christian experience, and pious conversation; especially was it thus among young persons. And now they are transformed into another sort of people; their former vain, worldly and vicious conversation and dispositions seem to be forsaken,

and they are as it were, gone over to a new world. Their thoughts, and their talk, and their concern, affections, and inquiries, are now about the favor of God, an interest in Christ, a renewed sanctified heart, and a spiritual blessedness, and acceptance and happiness in a future world. And through the greater part of New England, the Holy Bible is in much greater esteem and use than it used to be; the great things that are contained in it are much more regarded, as things of the greatest consequence, and are much more the subjects of meditation and conversation; and other books of piety that have long been of established reputation, as the most excellent, and most tending to promote true godliness, have been abundantly more in use. The Lord's day is more religiously and strictly observed. And abundance has been lately done at making up differences, and confessing faults one to another, and making restitution; probably more within these two years, than was done in thirty years before. It has been so undoubtedly in many places. And surprising has been the power of that spirit that has been poured out on the land, in many instances, to destroy old grudges, and make up long continued breaches, and to bring those that seemed to be in a confirmed irreconcilable alienation, to embrace each other in a sincere and entire amity.

Great numbers under this influence have been brought to a deep sense of their own sinfulness and vileness; the sinfulness of their lives, the heinousness of their disregard of the authority of the great God, and the heinousness of their living, in contempt of a Saviour. They have lamented their former negligence of their souls, and neglecting and losing precious time. Their sins of life have been extraordinarily set before them; and they have also had a great sense of their sins of heart; their hardness of heart, and enmity against that which is good, and proneness to all evil; and also of the worthlessness of their own religious performances, how unworthy their prayers, praises, and all that they did in religion, was to be regarded of God. And it has been a common thing that persons have had such a sense of their own sinfulness, that they have thought themselves to be the worst of all, and that none ever was so vile as they. And many seem to have been greatly convinced that they were utterly unworthy of any mercy at the hands of God, however miserable they were, and though they stood in extreme necessity of mercy; and that they deserved nothing but eternal burnings. And have been sensible that God would be altogether just and righteous in inflicting endless damnation upon them, at the same time that they have had an exceeding affecting sense of the dreadfulness of such endless torments, and have apprehended themselves to be greatly in danger of them. And many have been deeply affected with a sense of

their own ignorance and blindness, and exceeding helplessness, and so of their extreme need of the divine pity and help. And so far as we are worthy to be credited one by another, in what we say, (and persons of good understanding and sound mind, and known and experienced probity, have a right to be believed by their neighbors, when they speak of things that fall under their observation and experience) multitudes in *New England* have lately been brought to a new and great conviction of the truth and certainty of the things of the gospel; to a firm persuasion that Christ Jesus is the son of God, and the great and only Saviour of the world; and that the great doctrines of the gospel touching reconciliation by his blood, and acceptance in his righteousness, and eternal life and salvation through him, are matters of undoubted truth; together with a most affecting sense of the excellency and sufficiency of this Saviour, and the glorious wisdom and grace of God shining in this way of salvation; and of the wonders of Christ's dying love, and the sincerity of Christ in the invitations of the gospel, and a consequent affiance and sweet rest of soul in Christ, as a glorious Saviour, a strong rock and high tower, accompanied with an admiring and exalting apprehension of the glory of the divine perfections, God's majesty, holiness, sovereign grace, &c. with a sensible, strong and sweet love to God, and delight in him, far surpassing all temporal delights, or earthly pleasures; and a rest of soul in him as a portion and the fountain of all good, attended with an abhorrence of sin, and self-loathing for it, and earnest longings of soul after more holiness and conformity to God, with a sense of the great need of God's help in order to holiness of life; together with a most dear love to all that are supposed to be the children of God, and a love to mankind in general, and a most sensible and tender compassion for the souls of sinners, and earnest desires of the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world. And these things have appeared to be in many of them abiding, now for many months, yea, more than a year and half; with an abiding concern to live an holy life, and great complaints of remaining corruption, longing to be more free from the body of sin and death. And not only do these effects appear in new converts, but great numbers of those that were formerly esteemed the most sober and pious people, have, under the influence of this work, been greatly quickened, and their hearts renewed with greater degrees of light, renewed repentance and humiliation, and more lively exercises of faith, love and joy in the Lord. Many, as I am well knowing, have of late been remarkably engaged to watch, and strive, and fight against sin, and cast out every idol, and sell all for Christ, and give up themselves entirely to God, and make a sacrifice of every worldly and carnal thing to the welfare and prosperity of their souls.

And there has of late appeared in some places an unusual disposition to bind themselves to it in a solemn covenant with God. And now instead of meetings at taverns and drinking houses, and meetings of young people in frolics and vain company, the country is full of meetings of all sorts and ages of persons, young and old, men, women and little children, to read and pray, and sing praises, and to converse of the things of God and another world. In very many places the main of the conversation in all companies turns on religion, and things of a spiritual nature. Instead of vain mirth amongst young people, there is now either mourning under a sense of the guilt of sin, or holy rejoicing in Christ Jesus; and instead of their lewd songs, are now to be heard from them, songs of praise to God, and the Lamb that was slain to redeem them by his blood. And there has been this alteration abiding on multitudes all over the land, for a year and an half, without any appearance of a disposition to return to former vice and vanity. And under the influences of this work, there have been many of the remains of those wretched people and dregs of mankind, the poor Indians, that seemed to be next to a state of brutality, and with whom, till now, it seemed to be to little more purpose to use endeavors for their instruction and awakening, than with the beasts; whose minds have now been strangely opened to receive instruction, and have been deeply affected with the concerns of their precious souls, and have reformed their lives, and forsaken their former stupid, barbarous and brutish way of living; and particularly that sin to which they have been so exceedingly addicted, their drunkenness; and are become devout and serious persons; and many of them to appearance brought truly and greatly to delight in the things of God, and to have their souls very much engaged and entertained with the great things of the gospel. And many of the poor negroes also have been in like manner wrought upon and changed. And the souls of very many little children have been remarkably enlightened, and their hearts wonderfully affected and enlarged, and their mouths opened, expressing themselves in a manner far beyond their years, and to the just astonishment of those that have heard them; and some of them from time to time, for many months, greatly and delightfully affected with the glory of divine things, and the excellency and love of the Redeemer, with their hearts greatly filled with love to and joy in him, and have continued to be serious and pious in their behavior.

The divine power of this work has marvelously appeared in some instances I have been acquainted with, in supporting and fortifying the heart under great trials, such as the death of children, and extreme pain of body; wonderfully maintaining the serenity, calmness and joy of the



soul, in an immoveable rest in God, and sweet resignation to him. There also have been instances of some that have been the subjects of this work, that under the blessed influences of it, have, in such a calm, bright and joyful frame of mind, been carried through the valley of the shadow of death.

And now let us consider. . . . . Is it not strange that in a Christian, orthodox country, and such a land of light as this is, there should be many at a loss whose work this is, whether the work of God or the work of the devil? Is it not a shame to New England that such a work should be much doubted of here? Need we look over the histories of all past times, to see if there be not some circumstances and external appearances that attend this work, that have been formerly found amongst enthusiasts? Whether the Montanists had not great transports of joy, and whether the French Prophets had not agitations of body? Blessed be God! He does not put us to the toil of such inquiries. We need not say, who shall ascend into heaven, to bring us down something whereby to judge of this work? Nor does God send us beyond the seas, nor into past ages, to obtain a rule that shall determine and satisfy us. But we have a rule near at hand, a sacred book that God himself has put into our hands, with clear and infallible marks, sufficient to resolve us in things of this nature; which book I think we must reject, not only in some particular passages, but in the substance of it, if we reject such a work as has now been described, as not being the work of God. The whole tenor of the gospel proves it; all the notion of religion that the Scripture gives us confirms it.

I suppose there is scarcely a minister in this land, but from sabbath to sabbath used to pray that God would pour out his spirit, and work a reformation and revival of religion in the country, and turn us from our intemperance, profaneness, uncleanness, worldliness and other sins; and we have kept from year to year days of public fasting and prayer to God, to acknowledge our backslidings, and humble ourselves for our sins, and to seek of God forgiveness and reformation. And now when so great and extensive a reformation is so suddenly and wonderfully accomplished, in those very things that we have sought to God for, shall we not acknowledge it? Or when we do, do it with great coldness, caution and reserve, and scarcely take any notice of it in our public prayers and praises, or mention it but slightly and cursorily, and in such a manner as carries an appearance as though we would contrive to say as little of it as ever we could, and were glad to pass from it? And that because, (although, indeed there be such a work attended with all these glorious effects, yet) the work is attended with a mixture of error, imprudences, darkness and sin; because some persons are carried away



with impressions, and are indiscreet, and too censorious with their zeal; and because there are high transports of religious affection; and because of some effects on persons bodies that we do not understand the reason of?

I have been particularly acquainted with many persons that have been the subjects of the high and extraordinary transports of the present day; and in the highest transports of any of the instances that I have been acquainted with, and where the affections of admiration, love and joy, so far as another could judge, have been raised to a higher pitch than in any other instances I have observed or been informed of, the following things have been united, viz. a very frequent dwelling for some considerable time together, in such views of the glory of the divine perfections, and Christ's excellencies, that the soul in the mean time has been as it were perfectly overwhelmed, and swallowed up with light and love, and a sweet solace, rest and joy of soul, that was altogether unspeakable; and more than once continuing for five or six hours together, without any interruption, in that clear and lively view or sense of the infinite beauty and amiableness of Christ's person, and the heavenly sweetness of his excellent and transcendent love; so that (to use the person's own expressions) the soul remained in a kind of heavenly elysium, and did as it were swim in the rays of Christ's love, like a little mote swimming in the beams of the sun, or streams of his light that come in at a window; and the heart was swallowed up in a kind of glow of Christ's love, coming down from Christ's heart in heaven, as a constant stream of sweet light, at the same time the soul all flowing out in love to him; so that there seemed to be a constant flowing and reflowing from heart to heart. The soul dwelt on high, and was lost in God, and seemed almost to leave the body; dwelling in a pure delight that fed and satisfied the soul; enjoying pleasure without the least sting, or any interruption; a sweetness that the soul was lost in; so that (so far as the judgment, and word of a person of discretion may be taken, speaking upon the most deliberate consideration) what was enjoyed in each single minute of the whole space, which was many hours, was undoubtedly worth more than all the outward comfort and pleasure of the whole life put together; and this without being in any trance, or being at all deprived of the exercise of the bodily senses. And the like heavenly delight and unspeakable joy of soul, enjoyed from time to time, for years together; though not frequently so long together, to such an height. Extraordinary views of divine things, and religious affections, being frequently attended with very great effects on the body, nature often sinking under the weight of divine discoveries, the strength of the body taken away, so as to deprive of all ability

to stand or speak; sometimes the hands clinched, and the flesh cold, but senses still remaining; animal nature often in a great emotion and agitation, and the soul very often, of late, so overcome with great admiration, and a kind of omnipotent joy, as to cause the person (wholly unavoidably) to leap with all the might, with joy and mighty exultation of soul; the soul at the same time being so strongly drawn towards God and Christ in heaven, that it seemed to the person as though soul and body would, as it were of themselves, of necessity mount up, leave the earth and ascend thither. These effects on the body did not begin now in this wonderful season, that they should be owing to the influence of the example of the times, but about seven years ago; and began in a much higher degree, and greater frequency, near three years ago, when there was no such enthusiastical season, as many account this, but it was a very dead time through the land. They arose from no distemper caught from Mr. Whitefield, or Mr. Tennent, because they began before either of them came into the country; they began as I said, near three years ago, in a great increase, upon an extraordinary self dedication, and renunciation of the world, and resignation of all to God, made in a great view of God's excellency, and high exercise of love to him, and rest and joy in him; since which time they have been very frequent; and began in a yet higher degree, and greater frequency, about a year and an half ago, upon another new resignation of all to God, with a yet greater fervency and delight of soul; since which time the body has been very often fainting, with the love of Christ; and began in a much higher degree still, the last winter, upon another resignation and acceptance of God, as the only portion and happiness of the soul, wherein the whole world, with the dearest enjoyments in it, were renounced as dirt and dung, and all that is pleasant and glorious, and all that is terrible in this world, seemed perfectly to vanish into nothing, and nothing to be left but God, in whom the soul was perfectly swallowed up, as in an infinite ocean of blessedness. Since which time there have often been great agitations of body, and an unavoidable leaping for joy; and the soul as it were dwelling almost without interruption, in a kind of paradise; and very often, in high transports, disposed to speak of those great and glorious things of God and Christ, and the eternal world, that are in view, to others that are present, in a most earnest manner, and with a loud voice, so that it is next to impossible to avoid it. These effects on the body not arising from any bodily distemper or weakness, because the greatest of all have been in a good state of health. This great rejoicing has been a rejoicing with trembling, i. e. attended with a deep and lively sense of the greatness and majesty of God, and the person's own exceeding littleness and vileness. Spiritual joys in this per-

son never were attended, either formerly or lately, with the least appearance of any laughter or lightness of countenance, or manner of speaking; but with a peculiar abhorrence of such appearances in spiritual rejoicings, especially since joys have been greatest of all. These high transports when they have been past, have had abiding effects in the increase of the sweetness, rest and humility that they have left upon the soul; and a new engagedness of heart to live to God's honor, and watch and fight against sin. And these things not in one that is in the giddy age of youth, nor in a new convert, and unexperienced Christian, but in one that was converted above twentyseven years ago; and neither converted, nor educated in that enthusiastical town of Northampton, (as some may be ready to call it) but in a town and family that none that I know of suspected of enthusiasm; and in a Christian that has been long, in an uncommon manner, growing in grace, and rising, by very sensible degrees, to higher love to God, and weanedness from the world, and mastery over sin and temptation, through great trials and conflicts, and long continued struggling and fighting with sin, and earnest and constant prayer and labor in religion, and engagedness of mind in the use of all means, attended with a great exactness of life. Which growth has been attended, not only with a great increase of religious affections, but with a wonderful alteration of outward behavior, in many things, visible to those who are most intimately acquainted, so as lately to have become as it were a new person; and particularly in living so much more above the world, and in a greater degree of steadfastness and strength in the way of duty and self denial, maintaining the Christian conflict against temptations, and conquering from time to time under great trials; persisting in an unmoved, untouched calm and rest, under the changes and accidents of time. The person had formerly in lower degrees of grace, been subject to unsteadiness, and many ups and downs, in the frame of mind; the mind being under great disadvantages, through a vapory habit of body, and often subject to melancholy, and at times almost overborn with it, it having been so even from early youth. But strength of grace, and divine light has of a long time, wholly conquered these disadvantages, and carried the mind in a constant manner, quite above all such effects of vapors. Since that resignation spoken of before, made near three years ago, every thing of that nature seems to be overcome and crushed by the power of faith and trust in God, and resignation to him; the person has remained in a constant uninterrupted rest, and humble joy in God, and assurance of his favor, without one hours melancholy or darkness, from that day to this; vapors have had great effects on the body, such as they used to have before, but the soul has been always out of their reach. And this

stedfastness and constancy has remained through great outward changes and trials; such as times of the most extreme pain, and apparent hazard of immediate death. What has been felt in late great transports is known to be nothing new in kind, but to be of the same nature with what was felt formerly, when a little child of about five or six years of age; but only in a vastly higher degree. These transporting views and rapturous affections are not attended with any enthusiastic disposition, to follow impulses, or any supposed prophetic revelations; nor have they been observed to be attended with any appearance of spiritual pride, but very much of a contrary disposition, an increase of a spirit of humility and meekness, and a disposition in honor to prefer others. And it is worthy to be remarked, that at a time remarkably distinguished from all others, wherein discoveries and holy affections were evidently at the greatest height that ever happened, the greatness and clearness of divine light being overwhelming, and the strength and sweetness of divine love altogether overpowering, which began early in the morning of the holy sabbath, and lasted for days together, melting all down in the deepest humility and poverty of spirit, reverence and resignation, and the sweetest meekness, and universal benevolence; I say, it is worthy to be observed, that there were these two things in a remarkable manner felt at that time, viz. a peculiar sensible aversion to a judging of others that were professing Christians of good standing in the visible church, that they were not converted, or with respect to their degrees of grace; or at all intermeddling with that matter, so much as to determine against and condemn others in the thought of the heart; it appearing hateful, as not agreeing with that lamblike humility, meekness, gentleness and charity, which the soul then, above other times, saw the beauty of, and felt a disposition to. The disposition that was then felt was, on the contrary to prefer others to self, and to hope that they saw more of God and loved him better; though before, under smaller discoveries, and feebler exercises of divine affection, there had been felt a disposition to censure and condemn others. And another thing that was felt at that time, was a very great sense of the importance of moral social duties, and how great a part of religion lay in them. There was such a new sense and conviction of this, beyond what had been before, that it seemed to be as it were a clear discovery then made to the soul. But in general, there has been a very great increase of a sense of these two things, as divine views and divine love have increased.

The things already mentioned have been attended also with the following things, viz. an extraordinary sense of the awful majesty and greatness of God, so as oftentimes to take away the bodily strength; a

sense of the holiness of God, as of a flame infinitely pure and bright, so as sometimes to overwhelm soul and body; a sense of the piercing all-seeing eye of God, so as sometimes to take away the bodily strength; and an extraordinary view of the infinite terribleness of the wrath of God, which has very frequently been strongly impressed on the mind, together with a sense of the ineffable misery of sinners that are exposed to this wrath, that has been overbearing. Sometimes the exceeding pollution of the person's own heart, as a sink of all manner of abomination, and a nest of vipers, and the dreadfulness of an eternal hell of God's wrath, opened to view both together; with a clear view of a desert of that misery, without the least degree of divine pity, and, that by the pollution of the best duties; yea, only by the pollution and irreverence, and want of humility that attended once speaking of the holy name of God, when done in the best manner that ever it was done; the strength of the body very often taken away with a deep mourning for sin, as committed against so holy and good a God, sometimes with an affecting sense of actual sin, sometimes especially indwelling sin, sometimes the consideration of the sin of the heart as appearing in a particular thing, as for instance, in that there was no greater forwardness and readiness to self-denial for God and Christ, that had so denied himself for us; yea, sometimes the consideration of sin that was in only speaking one word concerning the infinitely great and holy God, has been so affecting as to overcome the strength of nature. A very great sense of the certain truth of the great things revealed in the gospel; an overwhelming sense of the glory of the work of redemption, and the way of salvation by Jesus Christ; the glorious harmony of the divine attributes appearing therein, as that wherein mercy and truth are met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other; a sight of the fulness and glorious sufficiency of Christ, that has been so affecting as to overcome the body. A constant immoveable trust in God through Christ, with a great sense of his strength and faithfulness, the sureness of his covenant, and the immutability of his promises, so that the everlasting mountains and perpetual hills have appeared as mere shadows to these things. Sometimes the sufficiency and faithfulness of God as the covenant God of his people, appearing in these words, I AM THAT I AM, in so affecting a manner as to overcome the body. A sense of the glorious, unsearchable, unerring wisdom of God in his works, both of creation and providence, so as to swallow up the soul, and overcome the strength of the body. A sweet rejoicing of soul at the thoughts of God's being infinitely and unchangeably happy, and an exulting gladness of heart that God is self-sufficient, and infinitely above all dependence, and reigns over all, and does his will with absolute and un-

controllable power and sovereignty; a sense of the glory of the Holy Spirit, as the great comforter, so as to overwhelm both soul and body; only mentioning the word the Comforter, has immediately taken away all strength; that word, as the person expressed it, seemed great enough to fill heaven and earth. A most vehement and passionate desire of the honor and glory of God's name; a sensible, clear and constant preference of it, not only to the person's own temporal interest, but spiritual comfort in this world; and a willingness to suffer the hidings of God's face, and to live and die in darkness and horror if God's honor should require it, and to have no other reward for it but that God's name should be glorified, although so much of the sweetness of the light of God's countenance had been experienced. A great lamenting of ingratitude, and the lowness of the degree of love to God, so as to deprive of bodily strength; and very often vehement longings and faintings after more love to Christ, and greater conformity to him; especially longing after these two things, viz. to be more perfect in humility, and adoration; the flesh and heart, seems often to cry out for a lying low before God, and adoring him with greater love and humility. The thoughts of the perfect humility with which the saints in heaven worship God, and fall down before his throne, have often overcome the body, and set it into a great agitation. A great delight in singing praises to God and Jesus Christ, and longing that this present life may be, as it were, one continued song of praise to God; longing, as the person expressed it, to set and sing this life away; and an overcoming pleasure in the thoughts of spending an eternity in that exercise; a living by faith to a great degree; a constant and extraordinary distrust of our own strength and wisdom; a great dependence on God for his help, in order to the performance of anything to God's acceptance, and being restrained from the most horrid sins, and running upon God, even on his neck, and on the thick bosses of his bucklers. Such a sense of the black ingratitude of true saints' coldness and deadness in religion, and their setting their hearts on the things of this world, as to overcome the bodily frame. A great longing that all the children of God might be lively in religion, fervent in their love, and active in the service of God; and when there have been appearances of it in others, rejoicing so in beholding the pleasing sight, that the joy of soul has been too great for the body. Taking pleasure in the thoughts of watching and striving against sin, and fighting through the way to heaven, and filling up this life with hard labor, and bearing the cross for Christ, as an opportunity to give God honor; not desiring to rest from labors till arrived in heaven, but abhorring the thoughts of it, and seeming astonished that God's own children should be backward to strive and deny themselves for God. Earnest



longings that all God's people might be clothed with humility and meekness, like the Lamb of God, and feel nothing in their hearts but love and compassion to all mankind; and great grief when anything to the contrary seems to appear in any of the children of God, as any bitterness or fierceness of zeal, or censoriousness, or reflecting uncharitably on others, or disputing with any appearance of heat of spirit; a deep concern for the good of others' souls; a melting compassion to those that looked on themselves as in a state of nature, and to saints under darkness, so as to cause the body to faint. An universal benevolence to mankind, with a longing as it were to embrace the whole world in the arms of pity and love; ideas of suffering from enemies, the utmost conceivable rage and cruelty, with a disposition felt to fervent love and pity in such a case, so far as it could be realized in thought; fainting with pity to the world that lies in ignorance and wick-

edness; sometimes a disposition felt to a life given up to mourning alone in a wilderness over a lost and miserable world; compassion towards them being often to that degree, that would allow of no support or rest, but in going to God, and pouring out the soul in prayer for them; earnest desires that the work of God, that is now in the land, may be carried on, and that with greater purity, and freedom from all bitter zeal, censoriousness, spiritual pride, hot disputes, &c . . . a vehement and constant desire for the setting up of Christ's kingdom through the earth, as a kingdom of holiness, purity, love, peace and happiness to mankind. The soul often entertained with unspeakable delight, and bodily strength overborn, at the thoughts of heaven, as a world of love, where love shall be the saints eternal food, and they shall dwell in the light of love, and swim in an ocean of love, and where the very air and breath will be nothing but love; love to the people of God, or God's true saints, as such that have the image of Christ, and as those that will in a very little time shine in his perfect image that has been attended with that endearment and oneness of heart, and that sweetness and raving of soul, that has been altogether inexpressible; the strength very often taken away with longings that others might love God more, and serve God better, and have more of his comfortable presence, than the person that was the subject of these longings, desiring to follow the whole world to heaven, or that every one should go before, and be higher in grace and happiness, not by this person's diminution, but by others' increase. A delight in conversing of things of religion, and in seeing Christians together, talking of the most spiritual and heavenly things in religion, in a lively and feeling manner, and very frequently overcome with the pleasure of such conversation. A great sense often

expressed, of the importance of the duty of charity to the poor, and how much the generality of Christians come short in the practice of it. A great sense of the need God's ministers have of much of the spirit of God, at this day especially; and most earnest longings and wrestlings with God for them, so as to take away the bodily strength. The greatest, fullest, longest continued, and most constant assurance of the favor of God, and of a title to future glory, that ever I saw any appearance of in any person, enjoying, especially of late, (to use the person's own expression) *The riche, of full assurance*. Formerly longing to die with something of impatience, but lately, since that resignation fore-mentioned about three years ago, an uninterrupted entire resignation to God with respect to life or death, sickness or health, ease or pain, which has remained unchanged and unshaken, when actually under extreme and violent pains, and in times of threatenings of immediate death; but though there be this patience and submission, yet the thoughts of death and the day of judgment are always exceeding sweet to the soul. This resignation is also attended with a constant resignation of the lives of dearest-earthly friends, and sometimes when some of their lives have been imminently threatened; often expressing the sweetness of the liberty of having wholly left the world, and renounced all for God, and having nothing but God, in whom is an infinite fullness. These things have been attended with a constant sweet peace and calm and serenity of soul, without any cloud to interrupt it; a continual rejoicing in all the works of God's hands, the works of nature, and God's daily works of providence, all appearing with a sweet smile upon them; a wonderful access to God by prayer, as it were seeing him, and sensibly immediately conversing with him, as much oftentimes, (to use the person's own expressions) as if Christ were here on earth, sitting on a visible throne, to be approached to and conversed with; frequent, plain, sensible and immediate answers of prayer; all tears wiped away; all former troubles and sorrows of life forgotten, and all sorrow and sighing fled away, excepting grief for past sins, and for remaining corruption, and that Christ is loved no more, and that God is no more honored in the world, and a compassionate grief towards fellow creatures; a daily sensible doing and suffering every thing for God, for a long time past, eating for God, and working for God, and sleeping for God, and bearing pain and trouble for God, and doing all as the service of love, and so doing it with a continual uninterrupted cheerfulness, peace and joy. Oh how good, said the person once, is it to work for God in the day time, and at night to lie down under his smiles! High experiences and religious affections in this person have not been attended with any disposition at all to neglect the necessary business of a

secular calling, to spend the time in reading and prayer, and other exercises of devotion; but worldly business has been attended with great alacrity, as part of the service of God. The person declaring that it being done thus, it is found to be as good as prayer. These things have been accompanied with an exceeding concern and zeal for moral duties, and that all professors may with them adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour; and an uncommon care to perform relative and social duties, and a noted eminence in them; a great inoffensiveness of life and conversation in the sight of others; a great meekness, gentleness, and benevolence of spirit and behavior; and a great alteration in those things that formerly used to be the person's failings; seeming to be much overcome and swallowed up by the late great increase of grace, to the observation of those that are most conversant and most intimately acquainted. In times of the brightest light and highest flights of love and joy, finding no disposition to any opinion of being now perfectly free from sin (agreeable to the notion of the Wesleys and their followers, and some other high pretenders to spirituality in these days) but exceedingly the contrary. At such times especially, seeing how loathsome and polluted the soul is, soul and body and every act and word appearing like rottenness and corruption in that pure and holy light of God's glory; not slighting instruction or means of grace any more for having had great discoveries; on the contrary, never more sensible of the need of instruction than now. And one thing more may be added, viz. that these things have been attended with a particular dislike of placing religion much in dress, and spending much zeal about those things that in themselves are matters of indifference, or an affecting to shew humility and devotion by a mean habit, or a demure and melancholy countenance, or any thing singular and superstitious.

Now if such things are enthusiasm, and the fruits of a distempered brain, let my brain be evermore possessed of that happy distemper! If this be distraction, I pray God that the world of mankind may be all seized with this benign, meek, beneficent, beatifical, glorious distraction! If agitations of body were found in the French prophets, and ten thousand prophets more, it is little to their purpose who bring it as an objection against such a work as this, unless their purpose be to disprove the whole of the Christian religion. The great affections and high transports that others have lately been under, are in general of the same kind with those in the instance that has been given, though not to so high a degree, and many of them, not so pure and unmixed, and so well regulated. I have had opportunity to observe many instances here and elsewhere; and though there are some instances of great affections in which there has been a great mixture of nature with grace, and in some,

a sad degenerating of religious affections; yet there is that uniformity observable, that it is easy to be seen that in general it is the same spirit from whence the work in all parts of the land has originated. And what notions have they of religion, that reject what has been described as not true religion? What shall we find to answer those expressions in scripture, *The peace of God that passes all understanding; Rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory, in believing in and loving an unseen Saviour; All joy and peace in believing; God's shining into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, and being changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. Having the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost given to us; Having the Spirit of God, and of glory, rest upon us; A Being called out of darkness into marvellous light; and having the day star arise in our hearts;* I say, if those things that have been mentioned, does not answer these expressions, what else can we find out that does answer them? Those that do not think such things as these to be the fruits of the true spirit, would do well to consider what kind of spirit they are waiting and praying for, and what sort of fruits they expect he should produce when he comes. I suppose it will generally be allowed that there is such a thing as a glorious outpouring of the Spirit of God to be expected, to introduce very joyful and glorious times upon religious accounts; times wherein holy love and joy will be raised to a great height in true Christians. But if those things that have been mentioned be rejected, what is left that we can find wherewith to patch up a notion, or form an idea, of the high blessed, joyful religion of these times? What is that any have a notion of, that is very sweet, excellent and joyful, of a religious nature, that is entirely of a different nature from these things?

Those that are waiting for the fruits in order to determine whether this be the work of God or no, would do well to consider two things; 1. What they are waiting for. Whether it be not this; to have this wonderful religious influence that is on the minds of people over and past, and then to see how they will behave themselves? That is, to have grace subside, and the actings of it in a great measure to cease, and to have persons grow cold and dead, and then to see whether after that they will behave themselves with that exactness and brightness of conversation, that is to be expected of lively Christians, or those that are in the vigorous exercises of grace . . . . There are many that will not be satisfied with any exactness or laboriousness in religion now, while persons have their minds much moved, and their affections are high; for they lay it to their flash of affection, and heat of zeal, as they call it; they are

waiting to see whether they will carry themselves as well when these affections are over. That is, they are waiting to have persons sicken and lose their strength, that they may see whether they will then behave themselves like healthy strong men. I would desire that they would also consider whether they be not waiting for more than is reasonably to be expected, supposing this to be really a great work of God, and much more than has been found in former great outpourings of the Spirit of God, that have been universally acknowledged in the Christian church? Do not they expect fewer instances of apostacy, and evidences of hypocrisy in professors, and those that for the present seem to be under the influences of the spirit, than were after that great outpouring of the spirit in the apostles days, or that which was in the time of the reformation? And do not they stand prepared to make a mighty argument of it against this work, if there should be *half* so many? And 2. They would do well to consider how *long* they will wait to see the good fruit of this work, before they will determine in favor of it. Is not their waiting unlimited? The visible fruit that is to be expected of a pouring out of the Spirit of God on a country, is a visible reformation in that country. What reformation has lately been brought to pass in New England, by this work, has been before observed. And has it not continued long enough already, to give reasonable satisfaction? If God cannot work on the hearts of a people after such a manner, as to shew his hand so plainly, as reasonably to expect it should be acknowledged in a year and an half, or two years time; yet surely it is unreasonable, that our expectations and demands should be unlimited, and our waiting without any bounds.

As there is the clearest evidence, from those things that have been observed, that this is the work of God, so it is evident that it is a very great and wonderful, and exceeding glorious work of God. This is certain that it is a great and wonderful event, a strange revolution, an unexpected, surprising overturning of things, suddenly brought to pass; such as never has been seen in New England, and scarce ever has been heard of in any land. Who that saw the state of things in New England a few years ago, the state that it was settled in, and the way that we had been so long going on in, would have thought that in so little a time there would be such a change? This is undoubtedly either a very great work of God, or a great work of the devil, as to the main substance of it. For though undoubtedly, God and the devil may work together at the same time, and in the same land; and when God is at work, especially if he be very remarkably at work, Satan will to his utmost endeavor intrude, and by intermingling his work, darken and hinder God's work; yet God and the devil do not work together in producing the same

event, and in effecting the same change in the hearts and lives of men; But it is apparent that there are some things wherein the main substance of this work consists, a certain effect that is produced, and alteration that is made in the apprehensions, affections, dispositions and behavior of men, in which there is a likeness and agreement every where. Now this I say, is either a wonderful work of God, or a mighty work of the devil; and so is either a most happy event, greatly to be admired and rejoiced in, or a most awful calamity. Therefore if what has been said before, be sufficient to determine it to be as to the main, the work of God, then it must be acknowledged to be a very wonderful and glorious work of God.

Such a work is in its nature and kind, the most glorious of any work of God whatsoever; and is always so spoken of in scripture. It is the work of redemption, (the great end of all other works of God, and of which the work of creation was but a shadow) in the event, success and end of it. It is the work of new creation, that is infinitely more glorious than the old. I am bold to say, that the work of God in the conversion of one soul, considered together with the source, foundation and purchase of it, and also the benefit, end and eternal issue of it, is a more glorious work of God than the creation of the whole material universe. It is the most glorious of God's works, as it above all others manifests the glory of God. It is spoken of in scripture as that which shews *the exceeding greatness of God's power*, and *the glory and riches of divine grace*, and wherein Christ has the most glorious triumph over his enemies, and wherein God is mightily exalted. And it is a work above all others glorious, as it concerns the happiness of mankind; more happiness, and a greater benefit to man, is the fruit of each single drop of such a shower, than all the temporal good of the most happy revolution in a land or nation amounts to, or all that a people could gain by the conquest of the world.

And as this work is very glorious in its nature, so it is in its degree and circumstances. It will appear very glorious if we consider the unworthiness of the people that are the subjects of it; what obligations God has laid us under by the special privileges we have enjoyed for our souls' good, and the great things God did for us at our first settlement in the land; and how he has followed us with his goodness to this day, and how we have abused his goodness; how long we have been revolting more and more, (as all confess) and how very corrupt we were become at last; in how great a degree we had cast off God, and forsaken the fountain of living waters. How obstinate we have been under all manner of means that God has used with us to reclaim us; how often we have mocked God with hypocritical pretenses of humiliation, as in



our annual days of public fasting, and other things, while instead of reformings we only grew worse and worse; how dead a time it was everywhere before this work began. If we consider these things, we shall be most stupidly ungrateful, if we do not acknowledge God's visiting of us as he has done, as an instance of the glorious triumph of free and sovereign grace.

The work is very glorious if we consider the extent of it; being in this respect vastly beyond any former outpouring of the Spirit that ever was known in New England. There has formerly sometimes been a remarkable awakening and success of the means of grace, in some particular congregation; and this used to be much taken notice of, and acknowledged to be glorious, though the towns and congregations round about continued dead. But now God has brought to pass a new thing, he has wrought a great work of this nature, that has extended from one end of the land to the other, besides what has been wrought in other British colonies in America.

The work is very glorious in the great numbers that have to appearance, been turned from sin to God, and so delivered from a wretched captivity to sin and satan, saved from everlasting burnings, and made heirs of eternal glory. How high an honor, and great reward of their labors, have some eminent persons of note in the church of God, signified that they should esteem it, if they should be made the instruments of the conversion and eternal salvation of but *one* soul? And no greater event than that is thought worthy of great notice in heaven among the hosts of glorious angels, who rejoice and sing on such an occasion. And when there are many thousands of souls thus converted and saved, shall it be esteemed worth but little notice, and be mentioned with coldness and indifference here on earth, by those among whom such a work is wrought?

The work has been very glorious and wonderful in many circumstances and events of it, that have been extraordinary, wherein God has, in an uncommon manner, made his hand visible, and his power conspicuous; as in the extraordinary degrees of awakening, the suddenness of conversions in innumerable instances, in which, though the work was quick, yet the thing wrought is manifestly durable. How common a thing has it been for great part of a congregation to be at once moved, by a mighty invisible power; and for six, eight, or ten souls to be converted to God, (to all appearance) in an exercise, in whom the visible change still continues? How great an alteration has been made in some towns; yea, some populous towns; the change still abiding? And how many very vicious persons have been wrought upon, so as to become visibly new creatures? God has also made his hand

very visible, and his work glorious, in the multitudes of little children that have been wrought upon. I suppose there have been some hundreds of instances of this nature of late, any one of which formerly would have been looked upon so remarkable, as to be worthy to be recorded, and published through the land. The work is very glorious in its influences and effects on many that have been very ignorant and barbarous, as I before observed of the Indians and Negroes.

The work is also exceeding glorious in the high attainments of Christians, in the extraordinary degrees of light, love, and spiritual joy, that God has bestowed upon great multitudes. In this respect also, the land in all parts has abounded with such instances, any one of which if they had happened formerly, would have been thought worthy to be taken notice of by God's people, throughout the British dominions. The New Jerusalem in this respect has begun to come down from heaven, and perhaps never were more of the prelibations of heaven's glory given upon earth.

There being a great many errors and sinful irregularities mixed with this work of God, arising from our weakness, darkness and corruption, does not hinder this work of God's power and grace from being very glorious. Our follies and sins that we mix, do in some respects manifest the glory of it. The glory of divine power and grace is set off with the greater lustre, by what appears at the same time of the weakness of the earthen vessel. It is God's pleasure that there should be something remarkably to manifest the weakness and unworthiness of the subject, at the same time that he displays the excellency of his power and riches of his grace . . . . And I doubt not but some of those things that make some of us here on earth to be out of humor, and to look on this work with a sour, displeased countenance, do heighten the songs of the angels, when they praise God and the Lamb for what they see of the glory of God's allsufficiency, and the efficacy of Christ's redemption. And how unreasonable is it that we should be backward to acknowledge the glory of what God has done, because withal, the devil, and we, in hearkening to him, have done a great deal of mischief.