

9-1670


The Life and Death of That Reverend Man of God, Richard Mather, Teacher of the Church in Dorchester in New-England. A facsimile Reprint with an introduction ...

Increase Mather

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LIFE AND DEATH
OF
RICHARD MATHER
(1670)

By
INCREASE MATHER

A Facsimile Reprint
with an introduction

by
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN V
and
WILLIAM K. BOTTORFF

Athens, Ohio

1966

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We most often turn to American Puritan prose to glean historical or biographical data. If we seek a biography that spans the evolution of American Puritanism from its nadir in England through its zenith in the New England of the 1630's to 1650's, and to the beginning of its decline as symbolized by the "Half-Way Covenant" in 1662, we may turn to Increase Mather's biography of his father, *The Life and Death of That Reverend Man of God, Mr. Richard Mather*. It includes the background for the elder Mather's decision to emigrate to New England (events leading to his suspension from his ministry for nonconformity), his arguments for leaving England (to go from ministerial bondage to freedom), and his account of the voyage to Boston (including the episode of a storm at sea in which his ship was saved by God's intervention). Increase also reflects on his father's parish in Dorchester (in which his plain style of preaching was precisely the style demanded by his congregation), and limns a vivid portrait of the old man on his death bed attempting to convince him, Increase, that the Half-Way Covenant would be in the best interest of Puritanism.

To be sure, the biography deals almost entirely with the elder Mather's involvement in his religion and it may be read as a historical document, but it is neither ponderous nor boring and it possesses, as Kenneth Murdock says, "a simple dignity that comes close to art" (*Increase Mather: The Foremost American Puritan*). The author's use of anecdote (Gillebrand's questioning of Richard Mather's name); of direct discourse (the dying Puritan's statement concerning the younger generation); and of excerpts from his father's diary and will all help the biography escape the ennui-producing sameness that characterizes other Puritan biographies (see Kenneth B. Murdock *Literature and Theology in Colonial New England*).

The tone of this biography, while eulogistic, is one of compassion, understanding, or sympathy--the result of a son's sincere appreciation of his father's life and heritage--and it is this that accounts for the ease with which it may be read today. The author's attitude leaves no room for the overt didacticism and pedantry and the overabundant use of religious allusions that are prevalent in many Puritan tracts, not the least ponderous of which are the biographical sketches in Cotton Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702). Increase Mather is peaceful and serene throughout, an unusual pose among Puritan writers whose works were influenced by the rebellious nature of their omnipresent religion. This biography shares with other Puritan biographies the trait of providing an impulse--through its description of a "visible saint"--for errant sinners to come to God, but it differs from most of them since its purpose is neither to defend the religion against its antagonists nor to castigate the heathens. Instead, it is a tender--but not sentimental--eulogy of a man who embodied the whole of American Puritanism.

The Life and Death of . . . Richard Mather has been published in its entirety only twice since its first appearance in 1670 (Collections of the Dorchester Antiquarian and Historical Society, 1850, 1874). A new edition of this biography--Increase Mather's first work published in New England and the first biography published in America--is now offered in facsimile, that the charm as well as the content of the original may be shared. (Also reproduced here is the first woodcut print produced in America, John Foster's *Richard Mather*, c. 1670.) This biography of Richard Mather does not constitute great literature, but there can be little doubt that it is, as Perry Miller says, "the finest of the New England biographies" (*The American Puritans: Their Prose and Poetry*).

Benjamin Franklin V

November 1966

William K. Bottorff

Athens, Ohio



R. ...

...

Johannes ...

LIFE and THE DEATH
OF

That Reverend Man of GOD;

Mr. RICHARD MATHER,

TEACHER of the CHURCH

IN

Dorchester

IN

NEW-ENGLAND.

Pfal. 112. 6. The Righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.

Heb. 13. 7. Remember them who have spoken to you the word of God.

Rev. 14. 13. Blessed are they who die in the Lord: they rest from their labours; and their works follow them.

Ministri vita censura & cynosura.

CAMBRIDGE:

Printed by S. G. and M. J. 1670.



TO THE
C H U R C H
AND
INHABITANTS
OF
DORCHESTER in N.E.

Grace unto you from God by Jesus Christ.

Beloved in the Lord Jesus,

You have here presented to your view, and for your Imitation in the Lord, the Life of him that was to many of you a Spiritual (as to me a Natural) Father: Inasmuch as the greatest part of his time in the Ministry he was a Labourer in the Lords Harvest amongst you; Also wish you did he finish his course. There is therefore special reason why what is here done should be directed to your selves.

The Composer of this ensuing Relation is not willing that his Name should be published. But it is done by one who hath had the viewing of my Fathers Manuscripts, from whence, as well as from personal and intimate Acquaintance of many years continuance, and other ways, he hath been truly furnished with the knowledge of what

is here reported. And indeed the greatest part of the Story is known unto sundry amongst your selves.

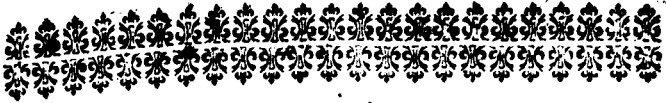
What remaineth then, Brethren and Beloved in the Lord, but that we should be mindfull of what is by the Lord required, when the Scripture saith, Remember them that have taught (and not onely them that do teach) the Word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. What that Doctrine of Faith is which your blessed Teacher did from the Lord instruct you in, I need not say; onely Remember it. Remember his Farewell Exhortation, which is now in many of your Houses, and Oh that it were in all your Hearts. And as for his Conversation, your selves know that God made him Exemplarily Faithfull, Zealous, Patient, Humble, Holy: Follow him as he followed Christ. So likewise pray that he may do who is.

Boston Septemb. 6.
N.E. 1670.

Yours in the Lord always,

Increase Mather.

T H E



THE
LIFE & DEATH
OF
Mr. Richard Mather.

THe Writing and Reading of *the Lives of Worthy Ones*, hath been by some accounted amongst the most profitable works of men under the Sun. The Labours of some Learned amongst the Gentiles this way have not been altogether without benefit, witness what is done by *Plutarch, Laertius, Philostratus, Eusebius, Pliny, &c.* albeit they are to be read with judgement. But especially the faithful Description of the *Lives of those who have been Eminent Teachers in the Church*, hath been to the great advantage of after-Ages. Many have reaped benefit by reading *Dorotheus* his Collection of the Lives of the Prophets, Apostles, and Seventy Disciples of Christ: And (not to speak of the Labours of *Gennadius, Epiphanius, Isidore, and Proctorus* of old) among later Writers, *Shoppinus* his *Academia Christi*, and *Tossanus* concerning *the Lives of the Fathers*, and *Melchior Adam* concerning *the Lives of all our Modern Divines*, as faire as he could by any means come to the knowledge thereof. The pains which *Mr. Clark* hath taken in publishing the Lives of many of our English Worthies, hath been profitable to not a few: And great pity it is that more should not be done that way. If the Lives of *Brightman, Parker, Ames, Burroughs, Hooker, &c.* were published to the World, it might be of generall advantage. Nor is it to be doubted but that there have been many famous in their Generations, whose Memories are

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buried in the dust, for want of some one to undertake this office, whereby their Names might have been perpetuated to Posterity.

*Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
Multi: Sed illa moribiles
Urgentur ignotiq; longa
Nocte; Carent quia vate Sacro.*

But it must needs be in it self a thing pleasing to God, that his grace towards and in his Servants, and the wonders of his Providence about them, should be kept in remembrance. Therefore some have written their own Lives: So did (not to mention *Josephus, Bellarmine, Cardan*) amongst our Worthies, *Junius, Collinsus, Buchanan*; and of our own Nation, *Bale, Burton, Hall, Bodly, &c.* And the like did this Reverend Man who is to be the Subject of the ensuing Discourse *Essay* to do; and proceeded therein to the 39th year of his Age, but finished not what he had purposed. It remaineth therefore that some other should do it, which we shall in following words of truth and plainness endeavour to do.

Here is in the Parish of *Wimpick* in the County of *Launcester*, a small Country Town or Village called *Lowson*: In which Village *Richard Mather* was born Anno 1596. His Parents *Thomas* and *Margarite Mather* were of Ancient Families in *Lowton* aforesaid, but by reason of some unhappy Mortgages they were reduced unto a low condition as to the World. Nevertheless, God so disposed their hearts, that they were willing to Educate this their Son in good Learning: Concerning which he (after that the Lord was pleased to bestow not onely Learning but Grace upon him) hath sometimes expressed himself, saying, *By what principles and motives my Parents were chiefly induced to keep me at School, I have not to say, nor do I certainly know: But this I must needs say, that this was the singular good Providence of God towards me, (who hath the hearts of all men in his hand) thus to incline the hearts of my Parents; for in this thing the Lord of Heaven blessed me* such

such favour, as had not been shewed to many my Predecessors and Contemporaries in that place.

Now his Parents being strongly bent in Spirit to have their Son a Scholar, they sent him to *Winwick* School, which was about four miles distant from his Fathers house. In the Winter season they boarded him at *Winwick*; but such was his desire after knowledge, that in the Summer he travelled every day thither. Whil't he was thus at School he met with no small discouragement, for that the Schoolmaster under whom he was, although he had an excellent faculty for teaching in Grammar-Learning, and many were trained up by him, so as to be sent unto *Oxford* and *Cambridge*, for Instruction in higher Studies; yet was he very severe and partial in his discipline. *Junius* was almost quite discouraged from his Studies, when being a School boy his Master would beat him eight times in a day whether in fault or in no fault: The like Magisterial harshness caused him of whom we write, earnestly desire that his Father would take him from School, and dispose of him to some other Calling. Himself afterwards, when he had waded through these Difficulties, would say, *God intended better for me, then I would have chosen for my self; and therefore my Father, though in other things indulgent enough, yes in this would never condescend to my request, but by putting me in hope that by his speaking to the Master, things would be amended, would still over-rule me to go on in my Studies; and good it was for me to be over-ruled by him, and his discretion, rather then to be left to my own affection and desire. But Oh that all Schoolmasters would learn wisdom, Moderation and Equity towards their Scholars, and seek rather to win the hearts of Children by righteous, loving, and courteous usage, then to alienate their mindes by partiality and undue severity, which had been my utter undoing, had not the good Providence of God, and the wisdom and Authority of my Father prevented.* But thus was that of the Poet, made good:

*Multa tulit fecitq; Puer sudavit & alsit
Qui capit optatam cursu contingere metam.*

After

The Life and Death of

After that he had spent sundry years in this School, some Popish Merchants coming out of *Wales* to *Warrington*, which is two miles from *Winwick*, were inquisitive whether there were not any pregnant Wits in that School whom they might procure for Apprentices. Presently *Richard Mather* was mentioned to them as a pregnant Youth; Whereupon application was made accordingly to his Father, who was inclineable to accept of this Motion; because now his Estate was so decayed, that he almost despaired of bringing up this his Son as he had intended. But here the Finger of Divine Providence was observable; for when his Father was ready thus to part with his Son, and the Child to go, the Lord raised up the heart of his Master, to be importunate with his Father still to keep him at School, professing that it was great pity that a Wit so prone to Learning should be taken from it, (as indeed it was) or that he should be undone by Popish Education. The Perswasions of the Master so farre prevailed, as that his Scholar was still continued under him, untill the fifteenth year of his Age.

It was a mercy to him, that whilst he was yet in his Minority, he enjoyed the publick Ministry of one Mr. *Palin*, then Preacher at *Leagh*; of whom he would say, that the remembrance of that man was Comfortable and Honourable in his thoughts, even in his old Age, though his Knowledge of him was in his Childhood: He then observed such a plain, powerfull, and piercing efficacy in Mr. *Palin's* Ministry, as was not to be seen in the common sort of Preachers in those dayes, by means whereof some Illumination, though not a through-Conversion, was wrought in him.

Having been thus long kept at School, he was called to leave his Fathers Family. The occasion whereof was this. At a place called *Toxteth Park* near *Liverpool*, there dwelt a wise and Religious People, who being desirous of the good of themselves and their Posterity, intended to erect a School amongst them, for the Education of their Children. It came into their mindes to send unto the Schoolmaster of *Winwick*, to enquire whether he had any of his Scholars whom he would recommend

recommend unto them for such a Service: who having received their desires, forthwith communicated the same to this his Scholar, and to his Father, to see if the Motion would stand with their acceptance. He was desirous rather to have gone to the University, but his Father closed with the Offer, whence it was in fine mutually embraced, so that he removed from his Fathers house to *Toxteth* (*Anno 1611.*) there to teach School. Nor is it any disparagement to his Worth that he was once a Schoolmaster, for very eminent Divines have been so, as of our own Nation Mr. Hieron, Mr. Whitaker, Mr. Vines, got to mention others, but rather an Eminency, the like seldome known, that one should be found fit to be a Schoolmaster at fifteen years of Age: Yet the Lord helped him in those his young years to carry it with such Wisdom and Love and Gravity amongst his Scholars as was to admiration, so as that he was by them both loved and feared, beyond what is usual, even where there are aged Masters.

His being thus employed was more wayes then one advantageous to him: for by this means he became a more accurate Grammarian then Divines usually are. Being also diligent in his Studies whilst he continued in this way of Employment, he became a Proficient in other Arts, as in *Logick*, *Rhetorick*, yea and in *Theology*. Moreover, it afterwards appeared to be of God, that he was Called to such a Work in such a place, for there the effectual Conversion of his Soul unto the Lord, was wrought in his tender years, even afore his going to *Oxford*; whence he was preserved from those Corruptions which undid many of his Contemporaries, through the Temptation which in the University they met with. The means of his Conversion was partly by seeing a strange difference between himself and sundry in that godly Family, where Divine Providence had cast his Lot in *Toxteth*, viz. the Family of Mr. *Edward Aspinwall*, who was a Learned and Religious Gentleman. Now he observed that the way and walking of that holy man, was such as himself had not as yet been accustomed unto, which caused sad fears to arise in his Soul, lest haply he might not be in the way which leadeth unto Eternal Salvation, Also

~~Mr. Harrison~~
Mr. Harrison; then a famous Minister at Hyson, Preaching up-
on Job. 3. concerning the necessity of Regeneration, and at
the same time reading a Book of Mr. Perkins his, shewing how
farre a Reprobate may go, God blessed these three things not
onely to Conviction, but to Conversion. This was Anno 1614.
The pangs of the New-birth were exceeding terrible to him,
inasmuch as many times when they were at Meals in the Family
where he sojourned, he would absent himself to retire under
hedges and other secret places, there to lament his misery be-
fore God. But after some time, the Lord revived his broken
heart, by sending the holy Spirit in the Ministry of the Word
to apply the Precious Promises of the Gospel to his Soul.

Being thus become a *New Creature*, he was the more emi-
nently a Blessing in the Family, and in the Calling which the
Lord had disposed of him in: And such notice was taken of
him, as that even from places remote Children were sent unto
him for Instruction and Education; and many were, by the
Lords blessing-upon his Endeavours, fitted for, and sent unto
the *University*. Some years having been past over in this way
of Employ, he resolved (*ad id*) to spend some time in one
of the *Universities*, as apprehending that there, by converse
with learned men, and other Advantages not elsewhere to be
had, he might gain more then by his private Studies in the
Country. Accordingly he went to *Oxford*, and continued for
some time there in *Brazen-Nose Colledge*. Being there, he was
variously affected: for it was a joy to him to finde many there
who had been his *quondam* Scholars. It was also a joy to him
that he had such leisure to follow his Studies, and by Disputa-
tions, Lectures, Books, Conferences with Learned men, &c.
marvellous Advantages to obtain a Treasure of Knowledge.
But his heart being afore this touched with the fear of God,
the great Superstition and Prophaness which he was forced
there to behold, was no small grief unto him.

Soon after his coming to *Oxford*, he came into Acquain-
tance with the Learned Doctor *Worall*, who was helpful to him
in directing him as to the course of his private Studies. A-
mongst other things, he advised to reade the Works of *Peter*
Ramus;

~~Repent~~, which could be attended, and for to cause to re-
 pent of his so doing. But before he had spent so much time
 in Oxford as he could have wished that he might have done ;
 the People in *Toxteth*, whose Children had been taught by
 him, sent to him, desiring that he would return unto them to
 instruct not so much their Children as themselves, and that not
 in meer Humane Literature, but in the things of God. This
 Call, after due Consideration, for weighty Reasons he accepted
 of. Being then returned to *Toxteth*, he Preached his first
 Sermon November 30. 1618. There was a very great Con-
 course of people to hear him, and his Labours were highly
 accepted of by the judicious : Such was the valnes of his Me-
 mory, as that the things which he had prepared and intended
 to deliver at once, contained no less then six long Sermons.
 The people having had some taste of his Gifts, were the more
 importunate in their desires that he might continue amongst
 them. And because that could not be without *Episcopal Or-*
ordination, they urged him to accept thereof : Not having at
 that time so thoroughly looked into that part of *Ceremonious*
Conformity as afterwards, he yielded unto the Motion ; and
 accordingly was *Ordained* (with many others on the same day)
 by Doctor *Morton* then Bishop of *Chester*, after the Mode of
 those Times. The Ordination being over, the Bishop singled
 out Mr. *Mather* from amongst the rest, saying, *I have some-*
thing to say to you betwixt you and me alone. Mr. *Mather* was
 then afraid lest some Informations might have been given in to
 the Bishop against him because of his *Puritanism*, thereby to
 prejudice him ; but it hapned to be otherwise : for when the
 Bishop had him alone, *I have* (saith he) *an earnest Request un-*
to you, and you must not deny me ; It is that you would pray for
me : for I know (said he) *the Prayers of men that fear God will*
avail much, and you I believe are such an one. Nevertheless, after
 that the Lord gave him to see the evil of the sin of *Conformity*
 in the whole latitude of it, (for as to the substance of *Confor-*
mity, even from his first entrance upon the Ministry he saw the
 evil thereof, and was by Divine Grace kept from being stained
 therewith) his *Conforming* (although it was at the desires of

his people) to accept of this Ordination from the Prelate, was no small grief of heart to him. Many years after, one of his Sons taking notice of a torn Parchment in his Fathers Study, enquired what it is; unto whom his Father replied, That he received that when he was Ordained By the Bishop: And (said he) I tore it, because I took no pleasure in keeping a monument of my sin and folly in submitting to that Superstition, the very remembrance whereof is grievous to me.

Being as hath been related, settled in the Ministry at *Toxteth*; he resolved to change his single condition: And accordingly he became a Suitor to Mrs. *Katharine Houl*t, Daughter to *Edmund Houl*t Esq; of *Fury* in *Lancashire*. She had (and that deservedly) the repute of a very godly and prudent Maid: The Motion for several years met with Obstructions, by reason of her Fathers not being affected towards Non-conformable Puritans: But at last he gave his Consent that Mr. *Mather* should marry his Daughter; the Match therefore was Consummated *Septemb. 29. 1624*. God made her to become a rich Blessing to him, continuing them together for the space of above 30 years. By her God gave him six Sons; four whereof (*viz. Samuel, Timothy, Nathaniel and Joseph*) were born in *England*, and two (*viz. Eleazar and Increase*) in *New-England*. After his Marriage he removed his Habitation three miles from *Toxteth*, to *Much-Woolton*, having there purchased an House of his own; yet he was wont constantly Summer and Winter to Preach the Word at *Toxteth* upon the Lords-dayes. During his abode there, he was abundant in Labours in the Gospel: For every Lords-day he Preached twice at *Toxteth*, and once in a Fortnight on the Third day of the Week he kept a *Lecture* at the Town of *Prescot*. Also, faithful and powerful Preaching being then rare in those parts, he did frequently Preach upon the *Holy d. yes* (as they are called) being often thereunto desired by godly Christians of other Parishes in that Country: And this he did, not as thinking that there was any Holiness in those times (or in any other day besides the Lords-day) beyond what belongs to every day; but because then there would be an opportunity of great Assemblies,

blies, and it is good casting the Net where there is much Fish: for which cause it might be that the Apostles Preached mostly in Populous Towns and Cities, and also (which suiteth with what we are speaking) on the *Jewish Sabbaths* after their abrogation as to any Religious tye upon Conscience for their observation. Yea and besides all this, he often Preached at *Funerals*. It is true that *Cartwright*, *Sherwood*, *Hilderßam*, and many other Renowned Non-Conformists, have scrupled Preaching *Funerall Sermons*; Also in some Reformed Churches that practice is wholly omitted, yea and Decrees of Councils have sometimes been against it; but that hath been chiefly upon account of that Custome of *Praising the dead* upon such occasions, and that many times untruly: Which *Custome* (as many Learned men have observed) is *Ethnicall*, having its rise from the Funeral Orations of the Heathen. *Publicola* made an excellent Oration in Praise of *Brutus*, which the People were so taken with, that it became a Custome that Famous men dying should be so praised, and when (as *Plutarch* saith in the Life of *Camillus*) the Women amongst the *Romans* parted with their Golden Ornaments for the Publick Good, the Senate decreed, That it should be lawful to make Funeral Orations for them also. *Hinc mortuos laudandi mos fluxit quem nos hodie servamus. Pol. Verg. de Rer. Invent. lib. 3. cap. 10.* Nor indeed was this Rite practised in the Church afore the *Apostacy* began. *Vide Magd. Cens. 4. Cap. 6.* wherefore this faithful Servant of the Lord avoided that practice, his speech at Funerals being taken up not with Praising the Dead, but with *Instructing the Living*, concerning Death, the Resurrection, the Judgement to come, and the like seasonable Truths. Thus did he Preach the Word, being instant in season and out of season, reproving, rebuking, exhorting, with all long-suffering and doctrine. In his publick Ministry in *England* he went over 2 *Samuel*, *Chap. 24.* *Psalms 4.* and *Psalms 16.* *Proverbs*, *Chap. 1.* *Isaiah*, *Chap. 1.* and *Chap. 6.* *Luke*, *22* and *23 Chapters.* *Romans*, *Chap. 8.* 2 *Epist. to Timothy*; 2 *Epist. of John*; and the *Epistle of Jude*.

After that he had thus painfully and faithfully spent fifteen years

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years in the Work of the Ministry, He that holds the Stars in his right hand, had more work for him to do elsewhere; and therefore the rage of Satan and wrath of men must be suffered to break forth, untill this choice Instrument had his mouth stopped in unrighteousness. The *Lecture* which he kept at *Preston* caused him to be much taken notice of, and so was the more unto the Adversaries of the Truth an object of Envy. *Magnam famam & magnam quietem eodem tempore nemo potest acquirere.* Quint. Wherefore Complaints being made against him for Non-Conformity to the Ceremonies, he was by the *Prelates* suspended. This was in *August*, Anno 1633. Under this Suspension he continued untill *November* following: But then, by means of the Intercession of some Gentlemen in *Lancashire*, and by the influence of *Simon Byby* (a near Alliance of the Bishops) he was restored again to his Publick Ministry. After his Restauration he more fully searched into, and also in his Ministry handled the Points of *Church-Discipline*. And God gave him in those dayes not onely to see, but also to instruct others in the Substance of the *Congregational-way*, which came to pass by his much reading of the holy Scriptures, and his being very conversant in the Writings of *Cartwright*, *Parker*, *Baynes*, and *Ames*. But this restored Liberty continued not long; for Anno 1634. Bishop *Neal* (he who was sometimes by King *Janes* pleasantly admonished of his Preaching Popery, because by his carriage he taught the people to pray for a blessing upon his dead Predecessor) being now become Archbishop of *York*, sent his Visitors into *Lancashire*; of whom Doctor *Consins* (whose *Cozening Devotions* Mr. *Pryn* hath made notorious to the world) was one: These Visitors being come into the Country *μὴ πολλὰς οὐρασίας*, kept their Courts at *Wigan*; where, amongst many other unrighteous proceedings, having Mr. *Mather* convened before them, they passed a Sentence of *Suspension* against him, meerly for his Non-Conformity to the Inventions of men in the Worship of God. It was marvellous to see how God was with him, causing a Spirit of Courage and of Glory to rest upon him, and filling him with wisdom when he stood before those Judges,

Judges, who were not willing that he should speak for himself, or declare the Reasons which convinced his Conscience of the unlawfulness of that *Conformity* which they required. Concerning the Lords presence with him at that time, himself doth in a Manuscript left in his Study thus express it: *In the passages of that day, I have this to bless the Name of God for, that the terror of their threatenings words, of their Pursuivants, and of the rife of their Pomp, did not so terrifie my minde, but that I could stand before them without being daunted in the least measure, but answered for my self such words of truth and soberness as the Lord put into my mouth, not being afraid of their faces at all: which supporting and comforting presence of the Lord I count not much less mercy, then if I had been altogether preserved out of their hands.*

Being thus silenced from Publick Preaching the Word, means was again used by Mr. *Mathers* friends to obtain his Liberty; but all in vain. The Visitor asked how long he had been a Minister? Answer was made, That he had been in the Ministry fifteen years. And (said he) how often hath he worn the Surplices? Answer was returned, That he had never worn it. *What* (said the Visitor, swearing as he spake it) *preach Fifteen years and never wear a Surplice? It had been better for him that he had gotten Seven Buffards.* This was a Visitors judgement.

Wherefore the case being thus, he betook himself to a private life: and no hope being left of enjoying Liberty again in his Native Land; foreseeing also (*Sapiens Divinat*) the approaching Calamities of *England*, he meditated a Removall into *New-England*. The principall Arguments whereby he was convinced that he had a Divine Call to engage in so great and hazardous a Design, he drew up together, and put them into form. Which because they are of weight, and because Posterity may thereby see what were the swaying Motives which prevailed with the First-fathers of *N. E.* to venture upon that unparalleld Undertaking, even to Transport themselves, their Wives and Little ones, over the rude Waves of the vast Ocean, into a Land which was not sown; We shall therefore here insert them.

“ Arguments

The Life and Death of

“ Arguments tending to prove the Removing from
 “ *Old-England to New, or to some such like place,*
 “ to be not onely lawful, but also necessary for
 “ them that are not otherwise tyed, but free.

ARGUMENT I.

Propof. **T**O remove from a corrupt Church to a purer,
 “ is necessary for them that are not otherwise
 “ tyed, but free: as appears,

“ 1. If a purer Church be a better gift then a corrupter
 “ Church, the aforesaid Removing mentioned in the Propo-
 “ sition, is necessary.

“ The reason of the Consequence is, Because we are com-
 “ manded to choose the best gifts, 1 Cor. 12. 31.

“ But a purer Church is a better gift then a Church more
 “ corrupt. Ergo.

“ 2. If we should not unnecessarily endanger our selves to
 “ be corrupted, then the Removing mentioned in the Propo-
 “ sition, is necessary.

“ The Reason of the Consequence is, Because by staying
 “ voluntarily in places corrupt, we do endanger our selves to
 “ be corrupted, 1 Cor. 5. 6. Eccles. 9. 18.

“ But that is forbidden by the sixth Commandment. Ergo.

“ 3. If we ought not to behold evil voluntarily, then the
 “ Removing mentioned in the Proposition, is necessary.

“ The Reason of the Consequence is, Because by staying
 “ voluntarily in corrupt places, when we are free to remove,
 “ we do behold evil voluntarily.

“ But that we ought not, Psal. 119. 37. Ergo.

Assumption. “ *But to remove from England to N. E.*
 “ *or some such like place, is to remove from a corrupter*
 “ *Church to a purer.* Ergo.

ARGUM.

ARGUMENT II.

Propos. "To remove from a place where the Truth and the Professors of it are persecuted, unto a place of more quietness and safety, is necessary for them that are free.

This appears by these Arguments; viz.

" 1. That which hath a Divine Commandment for it, is necessary.

" But so it is here, *Matth.* 10. 23.

" 2. That which hath the imitable and commended Example of Christ, and other faithful Servants of God for it, is necessary, *Mat.* 11. 29. *1 Pet.* 2. 21. *1 Joh.* 2. 6. *Phil.* 3. 17.

" But to remove from Persecution hath the imitable Example of Christ, *Matth.* 2. 14. & 12. 15. *Luke* 4. 10. *Joh.* 8. 59. & 10. 39. And of other faithful Servants of God, viz. of *Elias*, *1 Kings* 19. 3. *Moses*, *Exod.* 2. 15. *Paul*, *Acts* 9. 25. *Ergo.*

" 3. If not removing from Persecution when a man is not otherwise tyed, but free, be a Tempting of God, an exposing of ones self to unnecessary danger, and so against the sixth Commandment; Then the removing mentioned in the Proposition of this second Argument, is necessary.

" But the former is true. *Ergo.*

" 4. If not removing from Persecution when a man is free, be a wrong to the Church, then the Proposition is true.

" The Reason of the Consequence is, Because we ought not to wrong, but to seek the benefit and salvation of the Church and Elect of God, as far as is in us, *1 Cor.* 10. 33. *2 Tim.* 2. 10.

" But not removing as aforesaid is a wrong to the Church, because it depriveth the Church of the benefit of such a mans life and pains, as might if he had peace and liberty, be profitable to the Church; whereas a voluntary staying in places of Persecution, &c. doth hinder profit and benefit which the Church might receive by such a man,

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“ 5. Because a mans frailty is oft-times more then he know-
 “ eth of, and in a time of triall will utter it self, as appears by
 “ the Professors revolted in the *Palatinate*. This infirmity of
 “ mans Nature made *Ridley* to counsel those that were not
 “ taken to avoid the Realm; and *Mr. Bradford* on the same
 “ ground giveth the same counsel to *Erkinald Rawlins* and his
 “ Wife. *Acts & Mon. Vol. 3. pag. 518. & pag. 319.*

Assumpt. “ *But to remove from Old England to New,*
 “ *is to remove from a place where the Truth and Profes-*
 “ *sors of it are persecuted, to a place of more quiet-*
 “ *ness.* Ergo.

ARGUMENT III.

Propos. “ *To remove from a place where we cannot enjoy*
 “ *all the Ordinances of God, needful to the well-being of*
 “ *Churches and particular Christians in regard of their*
 “ *Spiritual estate, unto a place where we may, is neces-*
 “ *sary for them that are free.*

“ 1. Because we are commanded to seek all Spiritual blef-
 “ sings, with all the means of the same, *Matth. 6. 33. Job. 6.*
 “ *27. Col. 3. 1.*

“ 2. Because the Spouse of Christ will rest seeking her
 “ Beloved, till she finde him in the fullest means, *Cant. 1. 7.*
 “ *& 3. 1, 2, 3.*

“ 3. Because there is none of the Ordinances of God, but
 “ they are needful and profitable for the preservation and
 “ growth of Churches and Christians in grace. To think any
 “ of them not needful, or not profitable, were to disparage
 “ the Wisdome of him that appointed them.

“ 4. Because if it be necessary to remove for the enjoying
 “ of some of Gods Ordinances, it is necessary to remove for
 “ the enjoying of all, and in the want of any one.

“ The Reason of the Consequence is, Because it cannot be
 “ shewed from Scripture, at what Ordinance a man is set at
 “ liberty

“ liberty from seeking any further by removing. And another Reason is, Because as some are not of necessity to the being and estate of a true Church, or a true Christian, no more are any: And as some are necessary to the well-being of a true Church and a true Christian, even so are all.

Assumpt. “ But that the Removal is necessary for the enjoyment of some of Gods Ordinances, as for Preaching of the Word, will not be denied. Ergo.

ARGUMENT IV.

Propos. “ To remove from a Church where the Discipline of Christ is wanting, to a Church where it may be enjoyed, is necessary to them that are free.

“ 1. If Discipline be an Ordinance of Christ, then the Removing mentioned in the fourth Argument, is necessary.

“ The Reason of the Consequence is, Because the voluntary wanting any Ordinance of Christ is sinful.

“ Besides the third Argument shewed, That Removal for the enjoying of all Gods Ordinances, is necessary to them that are free.

“ But Discipline is an Ordinance of Christ, *Matth. 16. 19. & 18. 17. Ergo.*

“ 2. If Discipline be a part of Christs Kingdome, and a necessary and effectual means for preserving the Church, and the other Ordinances from corruption; then the removing mentioned in the Proposition is necessary.

“ The Reason of the Consequence is, Because the voluntary wanting any part of Christs Kingdome, any necessary and effectual means to preserve the Church from Corruption, is sinful, *Luke 19. 14, 27. Psal. 2. 3. Second Petition in the Lords Prayer.*

“ But Discipline is a part of Christs Kingdome, a necessary and effectual means, &c. *Isa. 9. 6. 1 Cor. 15. 24. Ergo.*

“ 3. If removing from a Family where is no Government

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“ or good order for suppressing of sin and wickedness, to another where is, be necessary for one that is free; then the removing mentioned in the Proposition of this fourth Argument is necessary.

“ The Reason of the Consequence is, Because there is one and the same Reason for both.

“ But removing from such a Family is necessary for one that is free, Because a voluntary staying in places of danger is a Tempting of God. Ergo.

Assumpt. “ *But to remove from Old England to New, is to remove from a Church where the Discipline of Christ is wanting, to a Church where it may be enjoyed. Ergo.*

ARGUMENT V.

Propos. “ *To remove from a place where the Ministers of God are unjustly inhibited from the execution of their Functions, to a place where they may more freely execute the same, is necessary to them that are not otherwise ayed, but free.*

“ 1. God hath sometimes commanded removing in such a case as this, *Mic. 2. 6, 10. Acts 22. 18.*

“ 2. The godly have practised a removal in such a case, *2 Chron. 11. 14, 16. Acts 13. 46.*

“ 3. The Ministers gifts and talents should not be idle, but be employed for the Churches profit, *1 Cor. 12. 7. 1 Pet. 4. 10.*

“ 4. The sin of inhibiting the Lords Ministers, is a forerunner of some sudden and grievous Judgement, *Isa. 30. 10, 13.* when it is for no cause, or for trifles, *Isa. 29. 31.*

Assumpt. “ *But to remove from Old England to New, is to remove from a place where the Ministers of God are unjustly inhibited, to a place where they may more freely execute their Functions. Ergo.*

ARGUMENT VI.

Propos. "To remove from a place where are fearful signs
 "of Desolation, to a place where one may have well-
 "grounded hope of preservation, and of Gods protection,
 "is necessary to them that are free.

" 1. Because it is the property of a wise man to foresee the
 "plague, and to hide himself, *Prov.* 22.3.

" 2. Because God hath commanded to remove in such case,
 "*Mic.* 2.10. So *Lot* was commanded to go out of *Sodom*, be-
 "fore the destruction thereof, *Gen.* 19.

" 3. Because there are commended Examples of them
 "that have done this; as of *Noah* retiring into the
 "Ark, *Lot* leaving *Sodom*, The godly leaving *Jerusalem*, a
 "little before the last destruction thereof by the *Romans*, and
 "going forth to *Pella*. See *Brinsley* in *True Watch*, Part 3.
 "pag. 76. 118. *Cartwright* on *Prov.* 22. 3. and *Junius* on
 "*Revel.* 12. 14.

" 4. Because Nature teacheth to seek ones own preserva-
 "tion.

" 5. Because the sixth Commandment teacheth the same,
 "and maketh voluntary staying in places of danger to be a
 "degree of Self-murther.

Assumpt: "But to remove from Old England to New,
 "is to remove from a place where are signs of fearful
 "Desolation, to a place where one may have well-grounded
 "hope of Gods protection.

" This Assumption is made good by the proof of two things:
 "First, That in *Old England* there are many signs of fearful
 "Desolation. Now signs of Desolation are such as these, and
 "whether they be found in *England*, let it be considered.

" 1. Abundance of sin and sinners, *Hos.* 4. 1, 2. *Jer.* 5. 9.

" 2. Impunity of sin and sinners.

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“ 3. General Security, *1 Thess. 5. 2, 3. Matth. 24. 38. Luke*
 “ *17. 28, 29. Zeph. 1. 12.*

“ 4. The taking away of Gods dear and faithful Servants,
 “ *Isa. 57. 1.*

“ 5. Not profiting by former Judgements, *Amos 4. 6,*
 “ *7, &c.*

“ 6. Warnings by the Lords Ministers, *Amos 3. 7. Isai.*
 “ *44. 26.*

“ 7. Examples of Gods wrathful Judgements on others
 “ no worser sinners, *Jer. 7. 12. Rom. 11.* Mr. *Brinsley* sheweth
 “ at large, That the same sins which brought the Captivity of
 “ 70 years on *Judah*, do as much abound in *England* as ever
 “ they did in *Judah*; and that therefore we may certainly expect
 “ desolation for our sins, unless course were taken speedily by
 “ general Repentance and Reformation to pacifie the Lords
 “ wrath. In *3d Part of True Watch*, throughout the whole
 “ Book, and more especially in *pag. 493. & 503, &c.*

“ The other thing to make good the Assumption, is, That in
 “ *New-England* one may have well-grounded hope of Gods
 “ protection, and for that there are these Reasons :

“ 1. The Promise of God to preserve Churches and Chri-
 “ stians which purely observe his Word and Ordinances, faith-
 “ fully execute Justice and Judgement, &c. For which, see
 “ these places; *Isa. 4. 5, 6. 2 Cor. 15. 2. Revel. 3. 8, 9, 10. Isa.*
 “ *52. 17. & 54. 17.*

“ 2. The Example of Gods protecting and preserving such
 “ in former time, as *2 Chron. 17. 3, 4, 9, 10.* As long as *Israell*
 “ kept and walked in Gods ways, no Enemy was able to pre-
 “ vail against them, &c.

“ 3. No instance can be given to the contrary, when God
 “ ever suffered any people to perish that did purely observe his
 “ Ordinances, and execute Justice and Judgement, untill by
 “ their defection and sin they had forfeited their happiness,
 “ and made themselves naked, and caused their Shield to de-
 “ part from them. *Ergo, &c.*

An Argument concerning Ministers onely.

“ **T**O remove from such a place where the Pastors of the
 “ Congregation cannot exercise the Lords Discipline
 “ by Ruling and Governing their own Flocks by Cen-
 “ suring those that ought to be Censured, &c. to a
 “ place where they may do it, is necessary for them that
 “ are free.

“ 1. Because they are commanded to fulfill their Ministry
 “ and to perform all the parts of their Pastoral Office, *Coloss.*
 “ 4.17. *2 Tim.* 4.5. And this of Administring the Keyes of
 “ Discipline is one, *Matth.* 16.19.

“ 2. Because Christ hath no where dispensed with them in
 “ any part thereof.

“ 3. Because God hath reprov'd them that have failed to
 “ do this, *Rev.* 2.20.

“ 4. Because Parents and Masters are bound to remove if
 “ they were in such Commonwealths, where they might not
 “ be suffered to Rule and Govern their own Children and Ser-
 “ vants. The Reason whereof is, Because they are bound to
 “ preserve their Children and Servants from being over-
 “ thrown, if it be in their power; but wheré such restraint is,
 “ they are in danger to be overthrown.

“ Now the Consequence of the Reason is, That then Mini-
 “ sters being free, are bound to remove, if they be in such
 “ place where they may not govern their own Flocks.

“ The Reason of which Consequence is, Because of Parents
 “ and Masters over their Children and Servants; and of Pa-
 “ stors over their Congregations, there is *par Ratio*, That if
 “ one be bound in case aforesaid to remove, the other are
 “ bound in the like case to remove also.

These Arguments were thus presented to the Consideration
 of some godly Ministers, and other Christians in *Lancashire*, a
 several Meetings for that end. Nothing was satisfactorily said

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to take off the strength of these Reasons: But many were thereby perswaded that his Call to *New-England* was clear, yea even his own people at *Toxeteb*, who did so dearly love his Person, and highly prize his Ministry, yet thought he was now Called of God to leave them. And hereunto he was the more inclined, by some Letters of Mr. *Cottons* and Mr. *Hookers* who were lately arrived in *New-England*, and wrote (as then there was cause) very encouragingly unto godly people to come after them. Mr. *Hooker* in one of his Letters had this Expression; *In a word (saith he) if I may speak my own thoughts fully and freely, though there are very many places where men may receive and expect more Earthly Commodities, yet I do believe there is no place this day upon the face of the Earth, where a gracious heart and a judicious head may receive more spiritual good to himself, and do more temporal and spiritual good to others.*

Being then fully satisfied concerning the clearness of his Call for *New-England*, after many Prayers, and extraordinary seekings unto God, he engaged upon the Transportation of himself and Family thither. His parting with his People and other Friends in *Lancashire*, was like *Paul's* taking his leave of *Ephesus*, with much sorrow, many tears being shed by those who expected to see his face no more in this world. This Journey was begun in *April* 1635. when he travelled to *Bristol* in order to taking Ship there. In this Journey he was forced (as sometime *Brennius* was) to change his outward Habit that he might travel *incognito*, because Purservants were designed to Apprehend him; but by this means he escaped them. From *Bristol* he set Sail for *New-England* *May* 23. 1635. The Lord, after manifold Trials of Faith and Patience, brought him in safety to the desired Haven. It is seldome known, that a man designed in Gods Eternal Counsel to special Service for his Name, doth not at one time or other experience *Eminent Deliverances of Providence*: So it was with this Servant of the Lord not once nor twice. Sundry eminent Salvations from deadly Dangers did the Lord vouchsafe unto him in his Childhood, which he would speak of in his
old

old Age: But the most remarkable and memorable of all other, was that which hapned to him on the mighty Waters, where he that sits upon the Floods, and stilleth the raging of the Sea when the Waves thereof roar, and whom the Winds obey, shewed himself wonderful in goodnes: for when the Vessel was upon the Coasts of New-England, there arose a fearful Storm (which the *Americans* are wont to call an *Hiracano*) by means whereof they were in no small danger; And had not the Lord strangely turned the Wind in an instant, they had all perished upon the Rocks which were just before, and wihin sight of them in the Ship. The Relation of this observable Providence we shall here set down in Mr. *Mathers* own words, left written by himself in his *Journall* from *Lancashire* to *New-England*. Thus he writeth concerning it.

August 15. 1635. *The Lord had not yet done with us, nor had he let us see all his Power and Goodness which he would have us take the knowledge of: And therefore about break of day, he sent a most terrible Storm of Rain and Easterly Wind, whereby we were in as much danger, as I think ever people were. When we came to Land, we found many mighty Trees rent in pieces in the midst of the Bole, and others turned up by the Roots, by the fierceness thereof. We lost in that Morning three Anchors and Cables, one having never been in the water before; two were broken by the violence of the Storm, and the third cut by the Seamen in extremity of distress, to save the Ship and their own Lives. And when our Cables and Anchors were all lost, we had no outward means of Deliverance but by hoysing Sail, if so be we might get to Sea, from amongst the Islands and Rocks where we had Anchored: But the Lord let us see that our Sails could not save us neither, no more then the Cables and Anchors; for by the force of the Wind and Storm the Sails were rent asunder, and split in pieces as if they had been but rotten Rags, so that of divers of them there was scarce left as much as an hand-breadth, that was not rent in pieces, or blown away into the Sea: So that at that time all hope that we should be saved, in regard of our outward appearance, was utterly taken away; and the reason,*

D

because

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because we seemed to drive with full force of Wind directly upon a mighty Rock standing out in sight above water, so that we did but continually wait when we should hear and feel the doleful crashing of the Ship upon the Rock. In this extremity and appearance of Death, as distress and distraction would suffer us, we cried to the Lord, and he was pleased to have compassion upon us: for by his over-ruling Providence, and his own immediate good hand, he guided the Ship past the Rock, asswaged the violence of the Sea and of the Wind. It was a day much to be remembered, because on that day the Lord granted us as wonderful a deliverance, as I think ever any people had felt. The Seamen confessed they never knew the like. The Lord so imprint the memory of it in our hearts, that we may be the better for it, and be careful to please him, and to walk uprightly before him as long as we live. And I hope we shall not forget the passages of that morning untill our dying day. In all this grievous Storm my fear was the less, when I considered the clearness of my Calling from God this way. And in some measure (the Lords holy Name be blessed for it) he gave us hearts contented and willing that he should do with us and ours what he pleased, and what might be most for the glory of his Name, and in that we rested our selves. But when news was brought us into the Gun-room that the danger was past, Oh how our hearts did then relent, and melt within us! we burst out into tears of joy amongst our selves in love unto our gracious God, and admiration of his kindness, in granting to his poor Servants such an Extraordinary and Miraculous Deliverance. His holy Name be blessed for ever!

Thus farre is Mr. Mathers Relation of this signal Providence, as left written with his own hand. And this is the more to be taken notice of, because the lives of several Choice Instruments of Gods Glory, were then saved: For not onely Mr. Mather himself, but two of his Sons, who are now faithfull Ministers of God, were in that Vessel; and so likewise was that Worthy Minister of Christ Mr. Jonathan Mitchell, Faithful and Famous Pastor of the Church of Cambridge in New-England, he being then a Child of Eleven years of Age.

Age. Also this Deliverance is the more remarkable, in that several Vessels were cast away in that Storm. A Ship called the *Angel Gabriel*, which set out from *Bristol* with the Vessel wherein Mr. *Mather* was, being then at Anchor at *Pemequid*, was broke in pieces; and the very same strange and sudden turn of Wind which saved the Vessel wherein Mr. *Mather* was, ruined the other which came from *England* at the same time. Also there was then a Ship, going between *Piscataqua* and the *Bay*, which was cast away in this Storm, and all the people therein lost, except two that were spared to report the News. And amongst others in that Vessel which then perished, there was a precious Minister of the Gospel, viz. Mr. *Avery*, who with his Wife and five Children all perished. This Minister (though it be a *Digression*, yet the Story being so worthy of remembrance, let it here be recorded) every moment expecting that the next Wave would be a Wave of Death, lifted up his eyes to Heaven, saying, *Lord, I cannot challenge a Promise of the preservation of my life, but according to thy Covenant I challenge Heaven*: Which he had no sooner spoken, but a Wave immediately came and swept him away, and so waisted him to Heaven indeed. And by the way let it further be noted, That this which hath been mentioned is the onely Vessel which miscarried with Passengers from *Old England* to *New*; so signally did the Lord in his Providence own the Plantation of *New-England*.

But (to digress no further) this Storm being allayed, the Lord brought them safe to an Anchor before *Boston*, August 17. 1635. Mr. *Mather* abode with his Family for some Moneths in *Boston*; and both he and his gracious Confort joyned to the Church there.

Being thus by a mighty hand and an out-stretched Arm brought into *New-England*, Motions from sundry Towns were soon presented to him, desiring that he would employ the Talent which the Lord had enriched him with, for the work of the Ministry amongst them. At the same time he was desired at *Plimouth*, *Dorchester*, and *Roxbury*. Being in a great strait in his own minde which of these *Invitations* to accept

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of, Considering that in difficult cases Counsel is an Ordinance of God, whereby he is wont to discover his will, he therefore referred himself to the Advice of some judicious Friends; amongst whom, Mr. Cotton and Mr. Hooker were chief, who met to Consult of this weighty Affair; And their Advice was, That he should accept of the Motion from *Dorchester*. Which being accordingly accepted of by him, he did (by the help of Christ) set upon that great Work of *Gathering a Church*; the Church which was first planted in that place being removed with the Reverend Mr. Warham to *Comellicot*. There was an *Essay* towards *Gathering a Church* April 1. 1636. but by reason that the Messengers of Neighbour-Churches were not satisfied, concerning some that were intended Members of that Foundation, the Work was deferred untill August 23. when a Church was Constituted in *Dorchester* according to the Order of the Gospel, by Confession and Profession of Faith; and Mr. Mather was chosen *Teacher* of that Church.

Being thus again settled in the Lords Work, he therein continued unto his dying day; the Lord making him an Eminent Blessing not onely to *Dorchester*, but to all the Churches and Plantations round about, for the space of near upon Four and thirty years.

It is a true Observation which many from *Luther* have taken up, viz. That three things make an able Divine.

1. *Meditatio*; Study. Such an one must give himself to Reading and Meditation.

2. *Oratio*; Prayer. A Man of God must be a man of Prayer, even ever & anon upon his knees before God: And bene *Orasse est bene Studuisse*. *Bradford* the Martyr and *Cartwright*, the Confessor, studied kneeling.

3. *Tentatio*; Temptation. As when Christ was to enter upon his Public Ministry he was grievously *tempted*; so it is wont to be with his Servants, and so it was with this good man. The Lord having great Service for him to do, he must undergo great Temptations, that he might be the better fitted for that whereunto he was called.

Wherefore before, and for some years after his accepting
Office.

Office-Relation in Dorchester, he was in much Spiritual distress by reason of uncertainties concerning his own Eternal estate. He did (as in wisdom he was bound to) keep these troubles secret from men, onely he revealed the distress of his Soul to that great Divine Mr. Norton, then Teacher to the Church in Ipswich, unto whom (under Christ) God gave the tongue of the Learned to speak a word in season, whereby his Soul was Comforted; the Lord giving him to see that he was walking to Heaven in the same way that *David, Asaph, Heman, &c.* had gone before him.

During the time of his Pilgrimage in *New-England* he under-went not so many Changes, as before that he had done; for he never removed his Habitation out of *Dorchester*, albeit he had once serious thoughts that way, by reason that his old people in *Toxteth*, after that the *Hierarchy* was deposed in *England*, sent to him, desiring his return to them: But *Dorchester* was in no wise willing to forgoe their interest in him, therefore he left them not. Nevertheless, he did in *New-England* (as in a Wilderness might be expected) experience many Trials of his Faith and Patience. That which of outward Afflictions did most agrieve him, was the Death of his dear Wife, who had been for so many years the greatest outward Comfort and Blessing which he did enjoy: Which Affliction was the more grievous, in that she being a Woman of singular Prudence for the Management of Affairs, had taken off from her Husband all Secular Cares, so that he wholly devoted himself to his Study, and to Sacred Employments. After he had continued in the state of Widowhood a year and half, he again changed his Condition, and was Married to the pious Widow of that deservedly Famous Man of God Mr. *John Cotton*; and her did God make a Blessing and a Comfort to him during the remainder of his dayes.

Old Age now being come upon him, he was sensible of the Infirmities thereof, being in his latter years something thick of Hearing: Also (as it was with great *Zachy*) the sight in one of his Eyes failed, seven years before his Death. Yet God gave him Health of Body and Vigour of Spirit in a won-

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derful measure, so as that in fifty years together, he was not by Sicknes detained so much as one Lords-day from Publick Labours. Which continued Health (as to Natural causes) proceeded partly from his strong Constitution of Body, and partly from his accustoming himself to a plain and wholesome Diet. *Bonâ Diata est potior quovis Hippocrate.* He never made use of any Physician, nor was he ever in all his life sick of any acute Disease. Onely the two last years of his *Life* he was sorely afflicted with that Disease which some have called *Flagellum Studioforum*, viz. *The Stone*, which at last brought him to an end of all his Labours and Sorrows.

Concerning the Time and Manner of his Sicknes and Death, thus it was. There being some Differences in *Boston*, Counsel from Neighbour-Churches was by some desired, to direct them in the Lord what should be done: Accordingly the Churches sent their Messengers; and *Dorchester* Church, amongst others, sent Mr. *Mather* their aged *Teacher*, who Assembled in *Boston*, *April 13. 1669.* He was, because of his Age, Gravity, Grace and Wisdome wherewith the Lord had endowed and adorned him, chosen the *Moderator* in that *Reverend Assembly.* For divers dayes after his being thus in *Consultation*, he enjoyed his Health as formerly, or rather better then for some time of late. But as *Luther* when Assembled in a *Synod* was surprized with a violent Fit of the Stone, whence he was forced to return home, his Friends having little hopes of his life; so it was with this holy man. For *April 16. 1669.* he was in the night, being then in his Sons house in *Boston*, taken exceeding ill through a totall stoppage of his Urine. The next morning he therefore returned home to *Dorchester.* Great was the favour of God towards him, that he should be found about such a *blessed Work* as then he was engaged in, for the Lord found him sincerely and earnestly endeavouring to be a Peace-maker. His being thus taken when at a *Synod*, brings to minde that of the *German Phoenix*;

Viximus in Synodis, & jam moriemur in illis.

Now

Now as usually Providence so ordereth, that they who have been speaking all their lives long, shall not say much when they come to die: Blessed *Hocker* in his last Sickness, when Friends would have had him answered to some Enquiries which might have made for their Edification after he was gone, he referred them wholly to the things which he had taught them in his health, because then he had enough to do to grapple with his own bodily weakness, &c. Neither did this good man speak much in his last Sickness either to Friends or to his Children. Onely his Son who is now *Teacher* of a Church in *Boston*, coming to visit his Father, and perceiving the Symptomes of Death to be upon him, said unto him, *Sir, if there be any speciall thing which you would recommend unto me to do, in case the Lord should spare me upon the Earth, after you are in Heaven, I would intreat you to express it.* At the which, his Father making a little pause, and lifting up his eyes and hands to Heaven, replied, *A speciall thing which I would commend to you, is, Care concerning the Rising Generation in this Country, that they be brought under the Government of Christ in his Church; and that when grown up and qualified, they have Baptism for their Children. I must confess I have been defective as to practise, yet I have publicly declared my judgement, and manifested my desires to practise that which I think ought to be attended, but the Dissenting of some in our Church discouraged me. I have thought that persons might have Right to Baptism, and yet not to the Lords Supper; and I see no cause to alter my judgement as to that particular. And I still think that persons qualified according to the Fifth Proposition of the late Synod-Book, have Right to Baptism for their Children.*

His bodily Pains continued upon him untill *April 22.* when in the Morning his Son aforementioned, coming to visit him, asked his Father if he knew him; to whom he Replied that he did, but was not able to speak any more to him: Whereupon his Son saying, *Now you will speedily be in the joy of your Lord;* His Father lifted up his hands, but could not speak. Not long after his Son again spoke to him, say-
ing,

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ing, *You will quickly see Jesus Christ, and that will make a-mends for all your pains and sorrows:* At which words his Fa-ther again lifted up his hands; but after that he took notice of no person or thing, but continuing speechless untill about 10 h. P. M. he quietly breathed forth his last. Thus did that Light that had been shining in the Church above Fifty years, Expire.

As some of the Lords precious ones have had a reall ap-prehension and præ sense of their approaching Dissolution imprinted on their Spirits; so it is noted of *Ambrose* and of *Gorgenia* of old; and of *Gesner*, *Melancthon*, and *Sanford* among Modern Divines: Thus it was with this holy man some time afore his departure. The last Text which he taught from, and insisted long thereon, was that *2 Timothy 4. 6, 7, 8.* *I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand; I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the Faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge will give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.* And the portion of Scripture which before that he had insisted upon, was *Job 14. 14.* *All the dayes of my appointed time, will I wait till my change come.* The Lord found his blessed Servant so doing. Also the last private Conference-Meeting which he was at in *Manchester*, he had prepared to speak from those words, *2 Cor. 5. 1.* *For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens:* But bodily pains prevented him from speaking what was in his heart to have expressed; the Lord intending that he should no more speak of, but see that place which he had so much and so often thought on, and long prayed and longed to enjoy.

He was, especially in his last Sicknes, a *Pattern of Patience.* For although extremity of pain, without any acute Disease, was that which brought him to his Grave, yet he did never so much as once cry out from first to last; and it was very rare to hear him so much as groan (but never grumble) under his

his dolorous Grievs. In this Sickness, whereof he died, he was much delighted in reading Doctor Goodwins Discourse about *Patience*, in which Book he read till the very day of his Death. Once in his Sickness, his Son saying to him, that inasmuch as several small Stones were come from him in his Urine, now possible he might have some ease; his Father answered with an affecting earnestness of expression, *As for that matter, the Will of the Lord be done.* Such was his grace and patience. And at the same time his Son saying to him, *God hath shewed his great faithfulness unto you, having upheld you now for the space of more then Fifty years in his Service, and employed you therein without ceasing, which can be said of very few men upon the face of the whole Earth.* His Father replied, *You say true; I must acknowledge the mercy of God hath been great towards me all my dayes; but I must also acknowledge, that I have had many failings, and the thought of them abaseth me, and worketh patience in me.* When any one asked him how he did; his usual Answer was, *Far from well, yet far better then my iniquities deserve.* Thus did he (like old *Austin* who died reading the Penitential Psalms) keep up a spirit of Repentance to the last.

As he was a man faithful and fearing God above many, so the Lord shewed great faithfulness unto him, both in making him serviceable unto the last, yea and continuing the vigour of his Spirit, and power of his Ministry. Few men, though young, are known to Preach with such vigour as he did but ten dayes before his death. Also the Lord was faithful and gracious to him, in respect of his Children. It was a special token of Divine favour unto some of the Ancients, that their Sons after them succeeded in the Ministry; so was it with the Fathers of *Gregory Nazianzen, Gregory Nyssen, Basil, Hilary, &c.* And the Lord cheered the heart of this his Servant in his old Age, by giving him to see most of his Sons employed in the Ministry many years before their precious Father's decease. He left four Sons in that Work; one of whom, viz. *Mr. Eleazar Mather*, late Pastor of the Church at *Northampton* in *New-England*, went to his rest about three Moneths

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after his Father, with him to found forth the praises of God amongst the Spirits of just men made perfect. The other three are yet surviving, viz. Mr. *Samuel Mather*, Teacher of a Church in *Dublin*; Mr. *Nathaniel Mather*, late Minister of *Barnstable* in *Devon*, and since in *Rotterdam* in *Holland*; and *Increase Mather* of *Boston* in *New-England*.

Concerning his Judgement. Touching matters of *Faith and Doctrine*, his large *Catechism* which contains the Summe of the Body of Divinity, doth sufficiently manifest his *Orthodoxy* to the World. Indeed he was a strenuous opposer of the Errours of the Times. Touching *Worship and Discipline*, he was for the true Congregational-Way, in opposition to both the Extremes of *Brownism* on the one hand, and *Presbyterianism* on the other hand. As for *Brownism*, he was of the same apprehension with Mr. *Dod* and Mr. *Cotton*, That God is not wont to make choice of men infamous for gross Vices (as that *Brown* and *Barrow* were) to be the Discoverers of momentous Truths. And to manifest that he was farre from the Errour of that Way, he hath left a judicious Manuscript, proving that although *Power*, i. e. *Priviledge* and *Liberty* doth belong to the *Fraternity*, yet that *Rule* is proper to the *Presbytery* of the Church. As for *Presbyterianism*, his Printed Books in Answer to Mr. *Herle* and Mr. *Rutherford*, shew how farre he was distant from that Perswasion. Also some years before his Death, he prepared for the Press an Elaborate Discourse, Entituled, *A Plea for the Churches of New-England*; divided into Two Parts: *The former being an Answer to Mr. Rathbands Narration of Church-Courses in New-England*; *The other containing Positive Grounds from Scripture and Reason, for the Justification of the Way of the Churches in New-England*: Not many weeks before his death a Friend acquainting him, that some reported that he had declared himself to be a Presbyterian; He replied, *You tell me a strange thing: I have written Books in Defence of the Congregationall-Way, as differing from the Presbyterian, and doth any one say I declared my self for that Perswasion? It is nothing so.* At the same time it being said to him, that he had
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the principal hand in the *Platform of Discipline*, and had he not changed his judgement from that? His Answer was, *No, not in any one particular that I know of.*

His way of Preaching was plain, aiming to shoot his Arrows not over his peoples heads, but into their Hearts and Consciences. Whence he studiously avoided obscure phrases, Exotick words, or an unnecessary citation of Latine Sentences, which some men addict themselves to the use of. Mr. Dod was wont to say, That *so much Latine was so much flesh in a Sermon*: So did this humble man look upon the affectation of such things in a *Popular Auditory* to favour of Carnal wisdom. The Lord gave him an excellent faculty in making abstruse things plain, that in handling the deepest Mysteries he would accommodate himself to Vulgar Capacities, that even the meanest might learn something. He knew how to express *κατὰ κοινὸν ἔ; κατὰ κατὰ κοινὸν*. He would often use that Saying, *Artis est celare Artem*. And much approved that of *Austin*; If (said he) *I preach Learnedly, then onely the Learned and not the Unlearned can understand and profit by me; but if I preach plainly, then Learned and Unlearned both can understand, so I may profit all.* He was *Mighty in the Scriptures*: Whence Mr. Hooker would say of him, *My Brother Mather is a mighty man*. Also his usuall way of Delivery was very Powerful, Awakening, and Zealous; especially in his younger years, there being few men of so great strength of body as he, which together with his natural fervour of Spirit, being sanctified, made his Ministry the more powerful. And the Lord went forth with his Labours to the Conversion of many, both in *England* and in *New-England*. Yet though his way of Preaching was plain and zealous, it was moreover Substantial and very Judicious. Even in his beginning times, Mr. Gillebrand was Minister in *Launceashire*; and the more famous, for though he did exceedingly Stammer in his ordinary discourse, he would Pray and Preach as fluently as any man; once having heard him Preach, asked what his Name might be? And answer being made that his Name was *Mather*; Nay (said Mr. Gillebrand) call him *Matter*, for believe it this man

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bath Substance in him. Yea, such was his *Solidity of Judgment*, that some who were his Opposites, yet did therefore greatly respect and honour him. Doctor Parr (then Bishop in the Isle of *Man*) having heard Mr. Mather was Silenced, lamented it, saying, *If Mather be Silenced I am sorry for it, for he was a solid man, and the Church of God hath then a great loss.*

Because he was esteemed eminently *Judicious*, therefore amongst the Reverend Elders in *New-England*, he was much improved in Managing the Controversies then under Debate about Church-Government. The Discourse about the *Church-Covenant*, and the Answer to the XXXII. *Questions*, both written Anno 1639. although they pass under the Name of the Elders of *New-England*, Mr. Mather was the sole Author of, as Mr. Cotton in his Answer to *Baily*, pag. 70. and Answer to *Williams*, pag. 63. and Mr. Nathaniel Mather in his Epistle to the XXI. *Questions* concerning Church-members and their Children, have truly related. And when there was a Synod called to Convene at *Cambridge*, Anno 1647. that Reverend Assembly desired three Elders to draw up *A Modell of Church Government* against the next Session, viz. Mr. Cotton, Mr. Mather, and Mr. Partrich. The Printed Platform of Discipline is for the substance of it the same with that which was Composed by Mr. Mather. It might be said of him, as was said of that blessed *Martyr*, that he was *sparing in his Day, sparing in his Speech, most sparing of all of his Time.* He was very diligent both as to duties of general and particular Calling, which are indeed the two Pillars upon which Religion stands. As to his general Calling; He was much in Prayer, especially in his Study, where he oft-times spent whole dayes with God in suing for a Blessing upon himself and Children, and upon the people to whom he was related; and upon the whole Country where he lived. The Requests which upon such occasions he put up to God in Jesus Christ, and also how his heart was moved to believe that God heard him, he set (many of them) in writing amongst his private Papers, *Expressing* that so himself might have recourse unto those *Experiences*.

periences in a time of darkness and Temptation; also that his Sons after him might see by their Fathers Example, what it is to walk before God. Now what a loss is it to the world when such a Righteous man is taken away! Well might *Philo* and *Jerôme* weep bitterly, when they heard of the death of any such men, because it portended evil to the places where they had lived, and served God. As he was much in Prayer, so he was very frequent in *Hearing the Word*. It was his manner to attend several Lectures in Neighbour-Congregations, untill his Disease made him unable to ride; yea and usually even to his old Age (as did Mr. *Hilaersham*) he took Notes from those whom he heard, professing that he found profit in it.

As to his particular Calling, he was even from his youth a hard Student. Yea his minde was so intent upon his Work and Studies, that the very morning before he died, he importuned those Friends that watched with him to help him into his Study: They urging that he was not able to go so farrè, he desired them to help him and try; which they did: but ere he was come to the door of his Lodging-room, *I see* (saith he) *I am not able, yet I have not been in my Study several days, and is it not a lamentable thing that I should lose so much time?* After his entrance upon the Ministry, he was not onely in *England* (as hath been said) but in *New-England* abundant in Labours: for except when he had an Assistant with him (which was seldome) he Preached twice every Lords-day; and a Lecture once a fortnight, besides many occasionall Sermons both in Publick and in Private. Also he was much exercised in answering many practical Cases of Conscience, and in Polemical, especially Disciplinary Discourses. In his Publick Ministry in *Dorchester* he went over *The Book of Genesis* to Chap. 38. *Psalms* 16. *The whole Book of the Prophet Zechariah*. *Matthews Gospel*, to Chap. 15. 1 *Epist.* to *Thess.* Chap. 5: And the whole *Second Epistle of Peter*; his Notes whereon he reviewed, and Transcribed for the Press, not many years before his decease.

Notwithstanding those rare Gifts and Graces wherewith the

Lord had adorned him, he was exceeding low and little in his own eyes. Some have thought that his greatest error was, that he did not magnifie his Office, as he might and sometimes should have done. If a man must erre, it is good erring on that hand. *Humble enough, and good enough,* was the frequent Saying of a great Divine. And another observeth, *That every man hath just as much and no more true worth in him, as he hath Humility.* *Austine* being asked which was the most excellent grace, answered, *Humility*; and which was the next, answered, *Humility*; and which was the third, replied again, *Humility.* That indeed is *Comprehensively All,* being of great price in the sight of God: And if so, *Mt. Mather* was a man of much Reall Worth.

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It hath been the manner of some, in writing Lives to insert the *Wills* of those whose Lives and Death they have described. The last *Will and Testament* of him, whose Life and Death hath thus been related, breathing forth a most humble, holy, and gracious Spirit, we shall here subjoyn the Preface and Conclusion of it. It was written with his own hand *Octob.* 16. 1661. And beginneth as followeth.

I Richard Mather, *considering the certainty of death, and the uncertainty of the time thereof; and withall knowing it to be the will of God that a man should set his House in order before he depart this life, Do make this my last Will and Testament in manner following. First of all, I acknowledge the rich and wonderful Grace and Mercy of Almighty God, whose hands have made me and fashioned me, and who took me out of my Mothers Womb, that having made me a Man, who might have made me a Beast or other Creature; He hath also by his good Providence preserved the being and comfort of my life all the dayes of my Pilgrimage untill now, even for the space of these Sixty five years: During all which time, he hath not suffered me to want either food or raiment, or the service of any creature,*

creature, which hath been requisite for my comfortable subsisting in this World; which I acknowledge to be the bounteous gift of Him who is Lord of all Creatures, and the High Possessor of Heaven and Earth. Next of all, and more especially I am bound to give Thanks and Praise to Him whilst I have any being, that I being a Childe of Wrath by Nature as well as others, and being born in a place of much Profaneness and Popery, he hath of his abundant grace vouchsafed to draw me out of that woful estate of Sin and Ignorance wherein I lay, and to make himself and his Christ known unto me by the Gospel, of which grace I was most unworthy; and in his great patience and mercy to bear with my manifold and great offences, both before and since the time of his gracious Calling of me, though for my unworthy walking in many particulars, I might justly have been for ever rejected of him. Yea and such hath been his rich grace, that he hath vouchsafed to put me an unworthy creature into the Ministry of the Gospel of his Son, that I should not onely know and profess the same (which is unspeakable mercy) but be also a Preacher of it unto others. In which employment if any thing hath been done which hath been pleasing unto him, or any way beneficiall to any Childe of his, it hath not been that have done the same, but the grace of God which was with me. For I must needs acknowledge to the praise of his Patience and Grace, That in my poor Ministration for the space of these Forty two years and upwards, I have been much defective in Wisdome and Watchfulness over the peoples Souls, in Purity, in Faithfulness, in Uprightness, Meekness, Humility and Zeal: And because of these, and
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many other my defects and offences against the Lord, I stand in much need this day of mercy and forgiveness through his Christ, and have no cause to look for any acceptance either in this or in another World, for any Righteousness of my own, either as touching my Ministry or otherwise, but disclaiming all thought of that kinde, my onely trust and hope is to be accepted of him, and (when this life shall end) to be saved in his Heavenly Kingdome mee-ly by his Free-grace, and the Obedience and precious Passion and Intercession of his dear Son. And concerning Death, as I do believe it is appointed for all men once to die; so, because I see a great deal of unprofitableness in my own life, and because God hath also let me see such vanity and emptiness even in the best of those Comforts which this life can afford, that I think I may truly say, That I have seen an end of all perfection: Therefore if it were the will of God, I should be glad to be removed hence, where the best that is to be had doth yield so little satisfaction to my Soul, and to be brought into his presence in glory, that there I might finde (for there I know it is to be had) that satisfying and All-sufficient contentment in him, which under the Sun is not to be enjoyed. In the mean time I desire to stay the Lords leisure. But thou, O Lord, how long! Now concerning my Outward Estate, sith the Earth is the Lords and the fulness thereof, the habitable World, and all that is therein; to him therefore belongs the praise of all that I possess in this kinde: And for the portion thereof which he hath given unto me, it is my minde and will, if so it please his Highness, that after my decease the same may be disposed of as followeth, &c.

Having

Having thus graciously expressed himself, he proceeds to the disposal of his Temporal Estate; which being of private Concernment, we shall not here trouble the World therewith. But after the disposal of that, he concludeth with a most Solemn Charge to his Children; with the rehearfall whereof we shall finish. It is in words following.

Concerning my Son Timothy, with all the rest of my Beloved Sons, as I hope God hath already made them partakers, at least sundry of them, of his saving grace in Christ, for which I and they have cause to be endlessly thankful; so I think it not amiss, for the furtherance of their Spiritual good, to lay upon them this serious and solemn Charge of a Dying Father, That none of them presume after my decease to walk in any way of sin and wickedness in one kinde or another, or in a careless neglect of God, and the things of God, and of their own Salvation by Christ: for if they shall so do (which God forbid) Then and in such case I hereby testifie unto them, That their Father which begat them, and their Mother which bare them, with all the Prayers which they have made, and Tears which they have shed for them, their Example, their Admonitions and Exhortations which they have administred to them, together with this my last Will and Solemn Charge; All these will rise up against them as so many Testimonies for their Condemnation at the last day. But I have better hopes of them; And do hereby declare unto them, That if they shall seriously repent of their sins, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and by his grace walk in all the wayes of God, and as becometh the Gospel of Christ; as this will be to the Honour and

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glory of Him that made them, so it will redound to their own unspeakable comfort and benefit in this and in another World: and their Father that now speaketh unto them, with their dear Mother now with God, shall exceedingly rejoyce in the day of Christ, when we shall receive our Children unto those Everlasting Habitations; and shall see not our selves alone, but those also that have proceeded and come forth out of our own bowels, to have their part and portion in that Eternall Glory. In desire and hope that it may be so, I commend them all to the Lord of Heaven's Blessing: And let the Blessing of God in Jesus Christ, be poured out and remain upon them all for evermore. Amen.

F I N I S.
