

Warwick against the Massachusetts, as namely, by Samuel Gorton and his complices, wherein were many strange allegations, but very far from truth, a thing little minded by the said Gorton, to which reply was made by the Court to vindicate their proceedings.<sup>1</sup>

This year the General Court of the Massachusetts voted to send a present, to the value of £500, for accommodation of his Majesty's navy, which was graciously accepted, as was said.

### CHAP. LXVII.<sup>2</sup>

#### *Ecclesiastical Affairs in New England, from the year 1661 to 1666.*

IN the beginning of this lustre some questions were raised amongst the churches and people of the Massachusetts; one was about the extent of Baptism, viz. whether the children of some parents might not be admitted to Baptism, though they themselves were never yet admitted to full communion with the church, at the Lord's table; about which case the country was strangely divided. The other was about the extent of communion, that ought to be between particular churches that are seated together, and live under the same civil government. For the discussing of both these questions the General Court of the Massachusetts, in their second session in the year 1661, did order and desire, that the churches within their jurisdiction would send their elders and messengers of the said churches, to meet at Boston the next spring, to determine those practical points of difference about church discipline. The elders and messengers of the said churches did assemble accordingly, in the year 1662, and delivered their determination to the Court, who ordered the result of the said Synod to be forthwith printed, and commended the practice thereof to all the churches in their jurisdiction.

An answer of the ministers, and other messengers of the churches, assembled at Boston, in the year 1662, to the questions propounded to them by order of the General Court.

#### Question 1. Who are the subjects of Baptism?

<sup>1</sup> The Commissioners drew up a narrative of their proceedings in New England, which is printed in Hutchinson's Coll. Papers, pp. 412-25.—H.

<sup>2</sup> LXVI in the MS.—H.

**Answer.** The answer may be given in the following propositions.

1. They that, according to Scripture, are members of the visible church are the subjects of Baptism.

2. The members of the visible church, according to Scripture, are confederate visible believers in particular churches, and their infant seed, i. e. children in minority, whose next parents are one or both in covenant.

3. The infant seed of confederate visible believers are members of the same church with their parents, and, when grown up, are personally under the watch, discipline, and government of that church.

4. Those adult persons are not therefore to be admitted to full communion, merely because they are and continue members, without such further qualifications as the Word of God requireth thereunto.

5. Such church members, who are admitted in minority, understanding the doctrine of faith, and publicly professing their assent thereunto, not scandalous in life, and solemnly owning the covenant before the church, wherein they give up themselves and their children to the Lord, and subject themselves to the government of Christ in the church, their children are to be baptized.

6. Such church members, who, either by death or some other extraordinary Providence, have been inevitably hindered from public acting as aforesaid, yet have given the church cause in judgment of charity to look at them as so qualified, and such as, had they been called thereunto, would have so acted, their children are to be baptized.

7. The members of orthodox churches, being sound in the faith, and not scandalous in life, and presenting due testimony thereof, these occasionally coming from one church to another, may have their children baptized in the church whither they come, by virtue of communion of churches; but if they remove their habitation, they ought orderly to covenant and subject themselves to the government of Christ in the church, where they settle their abode, and so their children to be baptized;

it being the churches' duty to receive such unto communion, so far as they are regularly fit for the same.

Qu. 2. Whether, according to the word of God, there ought to be a consociation of churches, and what should be the manner of it?

Ans. The answer may be briefly given in the propositions following.

1. Every church, or particular congregation of visible saints, in Gospel order, being furnished with a presbytery, at least with a teaching elder, and walking together in truth and peace, hath received from the Lord Jesus full power and authority, ecclesiastical within itself, regularly to administer all the ordinances of Christ, and is not under any other ecclesiastical jurisdiction whatsoever; for to such a church Christ hath given the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, that what they bind or loose on earth, shall be bound or loosed in Heaven. Matt. xvi. 19, &c. Matt. xviii. 17, 18. Acts xiv. 23. Tit. i. 5. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Acts vi. 4. 1 Cor. iv. 1, and v. 4, 12. Acts xx. 28. 1 Tim. v. 17, and iii. 5.

Hence it follows, that consociation of churches is not to hinder the exercise of this power, but, by counsel from the Word of God, to direct and strengthen the same upon all just occasions.

2. The churches of Christ do stand in a sisterly relation each to other, Cant. viii. 8, being united in the same faith and order, Eph. iv. 5, Col. ii. 5, to walk by the same rule, Phil. iii. 16, in the exercise of the same ordinances for the same ends, Eph. iv. 11, 12, 13, 1 Cor. xvi. 1, under one and the same political head, the Lord Jesus Christ, Eph. i. 22, 23, Eph. iv. 5, Rev. ii. 1, which union infers a communion suitable thereunto.

3. Communion of churches is the faithful improvement of the gifts of Christ, bestowed upon them for his service and glory, and their mutual good and edification, according to capacity and opportunity, i. e. to seek and accept of help one from another, by prayer, counsel, and advice, &c.

4. Consociation of Churches is their mutual and solemn agreement to exercise communion in such acts as

aforesaid amongst themselves, with special reference to those churches, which by Providence are planted in a convenient vicinity, though with liberty reserved without offence to make use of others, as the nature of the case, or the advantage of opportunity, may lead thereunto.

5. The churches of Christ in New England, having so fair an opportunity for it, it is meet to be commended to them as their duty thus to consociate.

6. The manner of the churches' agreement herein, or entering into this consociation, may be by each church's open consenting unto the things here declared, in answer to this second question.

7. The manner of exercising and practising that communion, which this consent or agreement especially tendeth unto, may be by making use occasionally of elders or able brethren of other churches, or by the more solemn meetings of both elders and messengers in lesser or greater councils, as the matter shall require.

These propositions, by way of answer to the two questions, were assented unto by the greater part by far of the Assembly. Some few did manifest their dissent, and afterward in print opposed it, viz. the answer to the first question, as Mr. Chauncy, the President of the College, in his *Anti-Synodalia*, and the Rev. Mr. Davenport. The first was replied unto by Mr. Allen, the second by the Rev. Mr. Richard Mather. Some think that Mr. Davenport's book hath overthrown the propositions of the Synod, according to their own principles; although they approve not his judgment in the case, who are for a larger latitude about Baptism, as Dr. Owen and Dr. Goodwin, in whose account the seed of the faithful are the subject of Baptism, whether their parents are confederate in particular churches or not; but that is not as yet clearly evinced to satisfaction.

But as some were studying how Baptism might be enlarged and extended to the seed of the faithful in their several generations, there were others as studious to deprive all inadult children thereof, and restrain the privilege only to adult believers. A society of that persua-

sion had taken upon them to join themselves together in a particular company by themselves, and did administer all ordinances amongst themselves in a schismatical way: yea, though some, that had taken upon them the power of such administrations, were themselves under the sentence of excommunication from other churches, which formerly they belonged unto. This company, continuing their assembling together, after they had been warned by the Court to forbear, were sentenced by the Court to be disfranchised if they were freemen, and, if they obstinately continued in their practice, to be committed to prison upon conviction before one magistrate, or the County Court, until the General Court should take further order. By this severity it was expected they should have been restrained, but it proved otherwise. The bent of all men's natures makes it true, *nitimur in vetitum*, and like waters that are pent up, they swell the more, so came it to pass with these persons who would not forbear, unless the laws had been sharpened to a greater degree of severity than the authority of the place were willing to execute on that account.<sup>1</sup>

CHAP. LXVIII.<sup>2</sup>

*The General affairs of New England, from the year 1666 to 1671.*

DURING this lustre of years there was little alteration in the government of the Massachusetts; Mr. Bellingham holding the first place of government, as Mr. Willoughby did the second, to the end thereof. Nor was there any matters of great moment that happened, besides granting of liberty for several townships, unless the reverting of the Province of Maine to the government of the Massachusetts as heretofore; the occasion and manner thereof shall presently be related.

In the year 1667 liberty was granted for erecting a new plantation or township, at a place about thirty or forty miles west from Roxbury, called Mendon, and peopled by some that removed from thence.<sup>3</sup> There was another

<sup>1</sup> The first prosecution of the Anabaptists, according to Hutchinson, was in 1665. See Hist. Mass., i. 208; Coll. Papers, pp. 399-401.—H.

<sup>2</sup> LXVII in the MS.—H. <sup>3</sup> The Plantation was "granted in answer to Brantry petition" Oct. 18, 1660, and was incorporated by its present name, May 15, 1667.—H.