

their own profession, viz. in opposition to Infant Baptism, have said that they could not but look upon their way to be evil, and such as could not be justified. It hath possibly also been observed by some, that though slow-bellied Cretians, as Paul speaks to Titus, are to be rebuked sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, yet men of a grave and serious spirit and of sober conversations, as Thomas Gold and some of the rest were said to be, would easier, in all likelihood, have been reclaimed from the error of their judgments by gentler means of persuasion and long suffering, than by the corrosives of severity and sharp censures of the church, which, if it were granted, yet that can give no color to their irregular and hasty casting themselves into the mould of a particular church, under the specious varnish of a church in Gospel order, consisting only of a few giddy sectaries, that fondly conceit themselves to be an orderly church, when their very coalition is explicitly not only without, but against, the consent of all the rest of the churches in the place, as well as the order of the civil authority.

I shall conclude with the last words of the late Synod: *
 “Inasmuch as a thorough and hearty reformation is necessary in order to obtaining peace with God, and all outward means will be ineffectual unto that end, except the Lord pour down his Spirit from on high, it doth therefore concern us to cry mightily unto God, both in ordinary and extraordinary manner, that he would be pleased to rain down righteousness upon us;” and that the north wind would awake, and the south come and blow, that the spices thereof may flow out, that the whole Church of Christ in these deserts of America may be found unto her beloved, as an orchard of pomegranates with all pleasant fruits.

CHAP. LXXIII.¹

*Memorable accidents during this lustre of years, from
 1671 to 1676.*

Much hurt [was] done by thunder and lightning about these times. To those mentioned before may be added

* Reforming Synod, A. D. 1679. Ed.

¹ LXXII in the MS.—H.

several awful strokes of thunder and lightning within the bounds of Ipswich, viz. the great oak in that called Scott's Lane, which on a Saturday night in August, Anno 1668, (or 1667,) was broken all apieces, and some logs rent off from it, as much and more than a man could lift, were flung several rods from the place. A man in the house next to the place was struck down with the crack of thunder, but had no other hurt.

In the year 1670 the barn of one Edward Allin, in Ipswich, was fired with lightning in the time of harvest, with sixteen¹ loads of barley newly carried thereinto. Several of the harvest-men were but newly gone out of the barn into the dwelling-house, and so their destruction was prevented thereby.

May 18, 1671, the house of Sergeant Perkins in Ipswich, was smitten with lightning, while many were met together at the repetition of the sermon that day preached, it being the Lord's day; several breaches were made in the timber work, and some persons were struck down therewith, yet came to life again. Sergeant Perkins himself had his waistcoat pierced with many holes like goose shot, yet had no other considerable harm, only beaten down, as if he had been dead for the present.

In the year 1671 a whirlwind at Cape Anne passed through the neck of land that makes one side of the harbor towards the main sea; its space or breadth was about forty foot from the sea to the harbor, but it went with such violence that it bore away whatever it met in the way, both small and great trees, and the boughs of trees, that on each side hung over that glade, were broken off and carried away therewith. A great rock that stood up in the harbor, as it passed along, was scarce able to withstand the fury of it, without being turned over.

About that time, or not many years before, some of the inhabitants of Ipswich, on the northwest side of the river, in a thunder storm, saw a sheet of fire, as they imagined, fall down just before the house of Mr. W. H.;² but it reached not the house, only rent the body of an oak that stood not far from it.

¹ Sixty, says Felt's Ipswich, p. 200.—H.

² William Hubbard, our author. Ibid. p. 201.—H.