

MEMORABLE PROVIDENCES, RELATING TO WITCHCRAFTS AND POSSESSIONS (1689)

By Cotton Mather

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Ed. note: Cotton Mather, minister of the Old North Church in Boston, "found the study of witchcraft made to order for his neurotic and oversexed spirituality." Mather published a bestselling book on the subject, *Memorable Providences, Relating to Witchcrafts and Possessions*, in 1689 detailing an episode of supposed witchcraft a year earlier involving an Irish washerwoman named Goody Glover. Mather's account, describing the symptoms of witchcraft, was widely read and discussed throughout Puritan New England. The book was in the meager library of Samuel Parris, the Salem minister in whose house began the tragic events of 1692.

Memorable Providences, Relating to Witchcrafts and

Possessions. *A Faithful Account of many Wonderful and Surprising Things, that have befallen several Bewitched and Possessed Persons in New-England. Particularly, A Narrative of the marvellous Trouble and Releef Experienced by a pious Family in Boston, very lately and sadly molested with Evil Spirits.*

Whereunto is added, a Discourse delivered unto a Congregation in Boston, on the Occasion of that Illustrious Providence. As also a Discourse delivered unto the same Congregation; on the occasion of an horrible Self-Murder Committed in the Town. With an Appendix, in vindication of a Chapter in a late Book of Remarkable Providence, from the Columnies of a Quaker at Pen-sylvania.

Written by Cotton Mather, Minister of the Gospel, and Recommended by the Ministers of Boston, and Charleston. Printed at Boston in N. England by ;R.P. 1689. Sold by Joseph Brunning, at his Shop at the Corner of the Prison-Lane next the Exchange.

To the Honorable Wait Winthrop Esq;

Sr.

By the special Disposal and Providence of the Almighty God, there now comes abroad into the world a little History of several very astonishing Witchcrafts and Possessions, which partly my own Ocular Observation, and partly my undoubted Information, hath enabled me to offer unto the publick Notice of my Neighbours. It must be the Subject, and not the Manner or the Author of this Writing, that has made any people desire its Publication; For there are such obvious Defects in Both, as would render me very unreasonable, if I should wish about This or Any Composure of mine, O That it were printed in a book! But tho there want not Faults in this Discourse, to give me Discontent enough, my Displeasure at them will be recompensed by the Satisfaction I take in my Dedication of it; which I now no less properly than cheerfully make unto Your Self; whom I reckon among the Best of my Friends, and the Ablest of my readers. Your Knowledge has Qualified You to make those Reflections on the following Relations, which few can Think, and tis not fit that all should See. How far the Platonic Notions of Demons which were, it may be, much more espoused by those primitive Christians and Scholars that we call The Fathers, than they see countenanced in the ensuing Narratives, are to be allowed by a serious man, your Scriptural Divinity, join'd with Your most Rational Philosophy, will help You to Judge at an uncommon rate. Had I on the Occasion before me

handled the Doctrin of Demons, or launced forth into Speculations about magical Mysteries, I might have made some Ostentation, that I have read something and thought a little in my time; but it would neither have been Convenient for me, nor Profitable for those plain Folkes, whose Edification I have all along aimed at. I have therefore here but briefly touch't every thing with an American Pen; a Pen which your Desert likewise has further Entitled You to the utmost Expressions of Respect and Honor from. Though I have no Commission, yet I am sure I shall meet with no Crimination, if I here publicly wish You all manner of Happiness, in the Name of the great Multitudes whom you have laid under everlasting Obligations. Wherefore in the name of the many hundred Sick people, whom your charitable and skilful Hands have most freely dispens'd your no less generous than secret Medicines to; and in the name of Your whole Countrey, which hath long had cause to believe that you will succeed Your Honourable Father and Grandfather in successful Endeavours for our Welfare; I say, In their Name, I now do wish you all the Prosperity of them that love Jerusalem. And whereas it hath been sometimes observed, That the Genius of an Author is commonly Discovered in the Dedicatory Epistle, I shall be content if this Dedicatory Epistle of mine, have now discovered me to be,

(Sir) Your sincere and very humble Servant,

C. Mather.

The Introduction

It was once the Mistake of one gone to the Congregation of the Dead, concerning the Survivors, *if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.* The blessed God hath made some to come from the Damned, for the Conviction (may it also be for the Conversion) of us that are yet alive. The Devils themselves are by Compulsion come to confute the Atheism and Sadducism, and to reprove the Madness of ungodly men. Those condemned prisoners of our Atmosphere have not really sent Letthers of Thanks from Hell, to those that are on Earth, promoting of their Interest, yet they have been forced, as of old, To confess that Jesus was the Holy one of God, so of late, to declare that Sin and Vice are the things which they are delighted in. But should one of those hideous Wights appear visibly with fiery chains upon him, and utter audibly his roarings and his warnings in one of our Congregations, it would not produce new Hearts in those whom the Scriptures hadled in our Ministry do not effect. However, it becomes the Embassadors of the L. Jesus to leave no stroke untouch't that may conduce to bring men from the power of Satan unto God; and for this cause it, that I have permitted the ensuing Histories to be published. They contain Things of undoubted Certainty, and they suggest Things of Importance unconceivably. Indeed they are only one Head of Collections which in my little time of Observation I have made of Memorable Providences, with Reflections thereupon, to be reserved among other effects of my Diversion from my more state and more weary Studies. But I can with a Contentment beyond meer Patience give those rescinded Sheets unto the Stationer, when I see what pains Mr. Baxtrer, Mr. Glanvil, Dr. More, and several other Great Names have taken to publish Histories of Witchcrafts and Possessions unto the world. I said, Let me also run after them; and this with the more Alacrity because, I have tidings ready. Go then, my little Book, as a Lackey, to the more elaborate Essays of those learned men. Go tell Mankind, that there are Devils and Witches; and that tho those night-birds least appear where the Day-light of the Gospel comes, yet New-Engl. has had Examples of their Existence and Operation; and that no only the Wigwams of Indians, where the pagan Powaws often raise their masters, in the shapes of Bears and Snakes and Fires, but the House of Christians, wh ere our God has had his constant Worship, have undergone the Annoyance of Evil spirits. Go tell the world, What Prays can do beyond all Devils and Witches, and What it is that these Monsters love to do; and through the Demons in the Audience of several standers-by threatned much disgrace to thy Author, if he let thee come abroad, yet venture That, and in this way seek a just Revenge on Them for the Disturbance they have given to such as have called on the Name of God.

Witchcrafts and Possessions.

The First Exemple.

Section I. There dwells at this time, in the south part of Boston, a sober and pious man, whose Name is John Goodwin, whose Trade is that of a Mason, and whose Wife (to which a Good Report gives a share with him in all the Characters of Vertue) has made him the Father of six (now living) Children. Of these Children, all but the Eldest, who works with his Father at his Calling, and the Youngest, who lives yet upon the Breast of its mother, have laboured under the direful effects of a (no less palpable than) stupendous Witchcraft. Indeed that exempted Son had also, as was thought, some lighter touches of it, in unaccountable stabbs and pains now and then upon him; as indeed every person in the Family at some time or other had, except the godly Father, and the suckiii., Infant, who never felt any impressions of it. But these Four Children mentioned, were handled in so sad and stran(re a manner, as has given matter of Discourse and Wonder to all the Countrey, and of History not unworthy to be considered by more than all the serious or the curious Readers in this New-English World.

Sect. II. The four Children (whereof the Eldest was about Thirteen, and the youngest was perhaps about a third part so many years of age') had enjoyed a Religious Education, and answered it with a very towardly Ingenuity.' They had an observable Affection unto Divine and Sacred things; and those of them that were capable of it, seem'd to have such a Resentment, of their eternal Concernments as is not altogether usual. Their Parents also kept them to a continual Employnient, which did more than deliver them from the Temptations of Idleness, and as young as they were, they took a delight in it) it may be as much as they should have done.

In a word, Such was the whole Temper and Carriage of the Children, that there cannot easily be any thing more unreasonable, than to imagine that a Design to Dissemble could cause them to fall into any of their odd Fits; though there should not have happened, as there did, a thousand Things, wherein it was perfectly impossible for any Dissimulation of theirs to produce what scores of spectators were amazed at.

Sect. III. About Midsummer, in the year 1688, the Eldest of these Children, who is a Daughter, saw cause to examine their Washerwoman, upon their missing of some Linnen ' which twas fear'd she had stollen from them; and of what use this linnen might bee to serve the Witchcraft intended, the Theef's Tempter knows! This Laundress was the Daughter of an ignorant and a scandalous old Woman in the Neighbourhood; whose miserable Husband before he died, had sometimes complained of her, that she was undoubtedly a Witch, and that whenever his Head was laid, she would quickly arrive unto the punishments due to such an one. This Woman in her daughters Defence bestow'd very bad Language upon the Girl that put her to the Question; immediately upon which, the poor child became variously indisposed in her health, an visited with strange Fits, beyond those that attend an Epilepsy or a Catalepsy, or those that they call The Diseases of Astonishment.

Sect. IV. It was not long before one of her Sisters, an two of her Brothers, were seized, in Order one after another with Affects' like those that molested her. Within a fe weeks, they were all four tortured every where in a manner s very grievous, that it would have broke an heart of stone t have seen their Agonies. Skilful Physicians were consulted for their Help, and particularly our worthy and prudent Friend Dr. Thomas Oakes,' who found Iiimself so affronted by the Dist'empers of the children, that he concluded nothing but an hellish Witchcraft could be the Original of these Maladies. And that which yet more confirmed such Apprehension was, That for one good while, the children were tormented just in the same part of their bodies all at the same time together; and tho they saw and heard not one anothers complaints, tho likewise their pains and sprains were swift like Lightening, yet when (suppose) the Neck, or the Hand, or the Back of one was Rack't, so it was at that instant with t'other too.

Sect. V. The variety of their tortures increased continually; and tho about Nine or Ten at Night they alwaies had a Release from their miseries, and ate and slept all night for the most part indifferently well, yet in the day time they were handled with so many sorts of Ails, that it would require of us almost as much time to Relate them all, as it did of them to Endure them. Sometimes they would be Deaf, sometimes Dumb, and sometimes Blind, and often, all this at once. One while their Tongues would be drawn down their Throats; another-while they would be pull'd out upon their Chins, to a prodigious length. They would have their Mouths opened unto such a Wideness, that their Jaws went out of joint; and anon they would clap together again with a Force like that of a strong Spring-Lock. The same would happen to their Shoulder-Blades, and their Elbows, and Hand-wrists, and several of their joints. They would at times ly in a benumbed condition and be drawn together as those that are ty'd Neck and Heels;' and presently be stretched out, yea, drawn

Backwards, to such a degree that it was fear'd the very skin of their Bellies would have crack'd. They would make most pitteous out-cries, that they were cut with Knives, and struck with Blows that they could not bear. Their Necks would be broken, so that their Neck-bone would seem dissolved unto them that felt after it; and yet on the sudden, it would become, again so stiff that there was no stirring of their Heads; yea, their Heads would be twisted almost round; and if main Force at any time obstructed a dangerous motion which they seem'd to be upon, they would roar exceedingly. Thus they lay some weeks most pittiful Spectacles; and this while as a further Demonstration of Witchcraft in these horrid Effects, when I went to Prayer by one of them, that was very desirous to hear what I said, the Child utterly lost her Hearing till our Prayer was over.

Sect. VI. It was a Religious Family that these Afflictions happened unto; and none but a Religious Contrivance to obtain Releef, would have been welcome to them. Many superstitious proposals were made unto them, by persons that were I know not who, nor what, with Arguments fetch't from I know not how much Necessity and Experience; but the distressed Parents rejected all such counsils, with a gracious Resolution, to oppose Devils with no other weapons but Prayers and Tears, unto Him that has the Chaining of them; and to try first whether Graces were not the best things to encounter Witchcrafts with. Accordingly they requested the four Milliisters of Boston, with the Minister of Chai-Istown, to keep a Day of Prayer at their thus haunted house; which they did in the Company of some devout people there. Immediately upon this Day, the youngest of the four children was delivered, and never felt any trouble as afore. But there was yet a greater Effect of these our Applications unto our God!

Sect. VII. The Report of the Calamities of the Family for which we were thus concerned arrived now unto the ears of the Magistrates, who presently and prudent y apply'd themselves, with a just vigour, to enquire into the story. The Father of the Children complained of his Neighbour, the suspected ill woman, whose name was Glover; and she being sent for by the Justices, gave such a wretched Account of her self, that they saw cause to commit her unto the Gaolers Custody. Goodwin had no proof that could have done her any Hurt; but the Hag had not power to deny her interest in the Enchantment of the Children; and I when she was asked, Whether she believed there was a God? her Answer was too blasphemous and horrible for any Pen of mine to mention. An Experiment was made, Whether she could recite the Lords Prayer; and it was found, that tho clause after clause was most carefully repeated unto her, yet when she said it after them that prompted her, she could not Possibly avoid making Nonsense of it, with some ridiculous Depravations. This Experip ment I had the curiosity since to see made upon two more, and it had the same Event. Upon Commitment of this extraordinary Woman, all the Children had some present ease,; until one (related unto her) accidentally meeting one or two of them, entertained them with her Blessing, that is, Railing; upon which Three of them fell ill again, as they were before.

Sect. VIII. It was not long before the Witch thus in the Trap, was brought upon her Tryal; at which, thro' the Efficacy of a Charm, I suppose, used upon her, by one

or some of her Cruel the Court could receive Answers from her in one but the Irish, which was her Native Language; altho she under-stood the English very well, and had accustomed her whole Family to none but that Language in her former Conversation; and therefore the Communication between the Bench and the Bar,' was now chiefly convey'd by two honest and faithful men that were interpreters. It was long before she could with any direct Answers plead unto her Indictment and; when she did plead, it was with Confession rather than Denial of her Guilt. Order was given to search the old womans house, from whence there were brought into the Court, several small Images, or Puppets, or Babies, made of Raggs, and stuff't with Goat's hair, and other such Ingredients. When these were produced, the vile Woman acknowledged, that her way to torment the Objects of her malice, was by wetting of her Finger with her Spittle, and streaking of those little Images. The abused Children were then present, and the Woman still kept stooping and shrinking as one that was almost prest to Death with a mighty Weight upon her. But one of the Images being brought unto her, immediately she started up after an odd manner, and took it into her hand; but she had no sooner taken it, than one of the Children fell into sad Fits, before the whole Assembly. This the Judges bad their just Apprehensions at; and carefully causing the Repetition of the Experiment, found again the same event of it. They asked her, Whether she had any to stand by her: She replied, She had; and looking very pertly in the Air, she added, No, He's gone. And she then confessed, that she had One, who was her Prince, with whom she maintained, I know not what Communion. For which cause, the night after, she was heard expostulating with a Devil, for his thus deserting her; telling him that Because he had served her so basely and falsly, she had confessed all. However to make all clear, The Court appointed five or six Physicians one evening to examine her very strictly, whether she were not craz'd in her Intellectuals, and had not procured to her self by Folly and Madness the Reputation of a Witch. Diverse hours did they spend with her; and in all that while no Discourse came from her, but what was pertinent and agreeable: particularly, when they asked her, What she thought would become of her soul? she reply'd "You ask me, a very solemn Question, and I cannot well tell what to say to it." She own'd her self a Roman Catholick; and could recite her Pater Noster in Latin very readily; but there was one Clause or two alwaies too hard for her, whereof she said, " She could not repeat it, if she might have all the world." In the up-shot, the Doctors returned her Compos Mentis; and Sentence of Death was pass'd upon her.

Sect. IX. Diverse dayes were passed between her being Arraigned and Condemned. In this time one of her Neighbours had been giving in her Testimony of what another of her Neighbours had upon her Death related concerning her. It seems one Howen about Six years before, had been cruell bewitched to Death; but before she died, she called one Hughes unto her, Telling her that she laid her Death to the charge of Glover; That she had seen Glover sometimes come down her Chimney; That she should remember this, for within this Six years she might have Occasion to declare it. This Hughes now preparing her Testimony, immediately one of her children, a fine boy, well grown towards Youth, was taken ill, just in the same woful and surprising manner that Goodwins children were. One night particularly, The Boy said he saw a Black thing with a Blue Cap in the Room, Tormenting of

him; and he complained most bitterly of a Hand put into the Bed, to pull out his Bowels. The next day the mother of the boy went unto Glover, in the Prison, and asked her, Why she tortured her poor lad at such a wicked rate? This Witch replied, that she did it because of wrong done to her self and her daughter. Hughes denied (as well she might) that she had done her any wrong. "Well then," says Glover, "Let me see your child and he shall be well again." Glover went on, and told her of her own accord, "I was at your house last night." Says Hughes, "In what shape?" Says Glover, "As a black thing with a blue Cap." Says Hughes, "What did you do there?" Says Glover, "with my hand in the Bed I tryed to pull out the boyes Bowels, but I could not." They parted; but the next day Hughes appearing at Court, had her Boy with her; and Glover passing by the Boy, expressed her good wishes for him; tho' I suppose, his Parent had no design of any mighty Respect unto the Hag, by having him with her there. But the Boy had no more Indispositions after the Condemnation of the Woman

Sect. X. While the miserable old Woman was under Condemnation, I did my self twice give a visit unto her. She never denyed the guilt of the Witchcraft charg'd upon her; but she confessed very little about the Circumstances of her Confederacies with the Devils; only, she said, That she us'd to be at meetings, which her Prince and Four more were present at. As for those Four, She told who they were; and for her Prince, her account plainly was, that he was the Devil. She entertained me with nothing but Irish ', which Language I had not Learning enough to understand without an Interpreter; only one time, when I was representing unto her That and How her Prince had cheated her, as her self would quickly find; she reply'd, I think in English, and with passion too, "If it be so, I am sorry for that!" I offer'd many Questions unto her, unto which, after long silence, she told me, She would fain give me a full Answer, but they would not give her leave. It was demanded, "They! Who is that They ? " and she return'd, that They were her Spirits, or her Saints, (for they say, the same Word in Irish signifies both). And at another time, she included her two Mistresses, as she call'd them in that They, but when it was enquired, Who those two were, she fell into, a Rage, and would be no more urged. I sett before her the Necessity and Equity of her breaking her Covenant with Hell, and giving her self to the Lord Jesus Christ, by an everlasting Covenant; To which her Answer was, that I spoke a very Reasonable thing, but she could not do it. I asked her whether she would consent or desire to be pray'd for; To that she said, If Prayer would do her any good, shee could pray for her self. And when it was again propounded, she said, She could not unless her spirits (or angels) would give her leave. However, against her will I pray'd with her, which if it were a Fault it was in excess of Pitty. When I had done, shee thank'd me with many good Words; but I was no sooner out of her sight, than she took a stone, a long and slender stone, and with her Finger and Spittle fell to tormenting it; though whom or what she meant, I had the mercy never to understand.

Sect. XI. When this Witch was going to her Execution, she said, the Children should not be relieved by her Death, for others had a hand in it as well as she; and she named one among the rest, whom it might have been thought Natural Affection would have advised the Concealing of. It came to pass accordingly, That the Three

children continued in their Furnace as before, and it grew rather Seven times hotter than it was. All their former Ails pursued them still, with an addition of (tis not easy to tell how many) more, but such as gave more sensible Demonstrations of an Enchantment growing very far towards a Possession by Evil spirits.

Sect. XII. The Children in their Fits would still cry out upon They and Them as the Authors of all their Harm; but who that They and Them were, they were not able to declare. At last, the Boy obtain'd at some times a sight of some shapes in the room. There were Three or Four of 'em, the Names of which the child would pretend at certain seasons to tell; only the Name of One, who was counted a Sager Rag than the rest, he still so stammered at, that he was put upon some Periphrasis in describing her. A Blow at the place where the Boy beheld the Spectre was alwaies felt by the Boy himself in the part of his Body that answered what might be stricken at; and this tho his Back were turn'd; which was once and again so exactly tried, that there could be no Collusion in the Business. But as a Blow at the Apparition alwaies hurt him, so it alwaies help't him too; for after the Agonies, which a Push or Stab of That had put him to, were over, (as in a minute or 2 they would be) the Boy would have a respite from his Fits a considerable while ' and the Hobgoblins disappear. It is very credibly reported that a wound was this way given to an Obnoxious woman in the town, whose name I will not expose: for we should be tender in such Relations lest we wrong the Reputation of the Innocent by stories not enough enquired into.

Sect. XIII. The Fits of the Children yet more arriv'd unto such Motions as were beyond the Efficacy of any natural Distemper in the World. They would bark at one another like Dogs, and again purr like so many Cats. They would sometimes complain,, that they were in a Red-hot Oven, sweating and panting at the same time unreasonably: Anon they would say, Cold water was thrown upon them, at which they would shiver very much. They would cry out of dismal Blowes with great Cudgels laid upon them; and tho' we saw no cudgels nor blowes, yet we could see the Marks left by them in Red Streaks upon their bodies afterward. And one of them would be roasted on an invisible Spit, run into his Mouth, and out at his Foot, he lying, and rolling, and groaning as if it had been so in the most sensible manner in the world; and then he would shriek, that Knives were cutting of him. Sometimes also he would have his head so forcibly, tho not visibly, nail'd unto the Floor, that it was as much as a strong man could do to pull it up. One while they would all be so Limber, that it was judg'd every Bone of them could be bent. Another while they would be so stiff, that not a joint of them could be stir'd. They would sometimes be as though they were mad, and then they would climb over high Fences, beyond the Imagination of them that look'd after them. Yea, They would fly like Geese; and be carried with an incredible Swiftess thro the air, having but just their Toes now and then upon the ground, and their Arms waved like the W'ings of a Bird. One of them, in the House of a kind Neighbour and Gentleman (Mr. Willis) flew the length of the Room, anout 20 foot, and flew just into an Infants high armed Chair; (as tis affirmed) none seeing her feet all the way touch the floor.

Sect. XIV. Many wayes did the Devils take to make the children do mischief both to themselves and others; but thro the singular Providence of God, they always fail'd in the attempts. For they could never essay the doing of any harm, unless there were some-body at hand that might prevent it; and seldome without first shrieking out, "They say, I must do such a thing!" Diverse times they went to strike furious Blowes at their tenderest and dearest friends, or to fling them down staires when they had them at the Top, but the warnings from the mouths of the children themselves, would still anticipate what the Devils did intend. They diverse times were very near Burning, or Drowning of themselves, but the Children themselves by their own pitiiful and seasonable cries for Help, still procured their Deliverance: Which made me to Consider, Whether the Little, ones had not their Angels, in the plain sense of Our Saviours Intimation. Sometimes, When they were tying their own Neck-clothes, their compelled hands miserably strangled themselves, till perhaps, the standers-by gave some Relief unto them. But if any small Mischief happen'd to be done where they were. as the Tearing or Dirtying of a Garment, the Falling of a C'up, the breaking of a Glass or the like; they would rejoyce extremely, and fall into a pleasure and Laughter very extraordinary. All which things cornpar'd with the Temper of the Children, when they are themselves, may suggest some very peculiar Thoughts unto us.

Sect. XV. They were not in a constant Torture for some Weeks, but were a little quiet, unless upon some incidental provocations; upon which the Devils would handle them like Tigres, and wound them in a manner very horrible. Particularly, Upon the least Reproof of their Parents for any unfit thing they said or did, most grievous woful Heart-breaking Agonies would they fall into. If any useful thing were to be done to them, or by them, they would have all sorts of Troubles fall upon them. It would sometimes cost one of them an Hour or Two to be undrest in the evenin , or drest in the morning. For if any one went to unty a string, or undo a Button about them, or the contrary ' ; they would be twisted into such postures as made the thing impossible. And at Whiles, they would be so managed in their Beds, that no Bed-clothes could for an hour or two be laid upon them; nor could they go to wash their Hands, without having them clasp't so odly together, there was no doing of it. But when their Friends were near tired with Waiting, anon they might do what they would unto them. Whatever Work they were bid to do, they would be so snap't in the member which was to do it, that they with grief still desisted from it. If one ordered them to Rub a clean Table, they were able to do it without any disturbance; if to rub a dirty Table, presently they would with many Torrnents be made uncapable. And sometimes, tho but seldome, they were kept from eating their meals, by having their Teeth sett when they carried any thing unto their Mouthes.

Sect. XVI. But nothing in the World would so discompose them as a Religious Exercise. If there were anv Discourse of God, or Christ, or any of the things which are not seen qnd are eternal, they would be cast into intolerable Anguishes. Once, those two Worthy Ministers Mr. Fisk' and Mr. Thatcher,² bestowing some gracious Counsils on the Boy, whom they there found at a Neighbours house, he immediately lost his Hearing, so that he heard not one word, but just the last word of all they said. Much more, All Praying to God, and Reading of His word, would occasion a

very terrible Vexation to them: they would then stop their own Ears with their own Hands; and roar, and shriek; and holla, to drown the Voice of the Devotion. Yea, if any one in the Room took up a Bible to look into it, tho the Children could see nothing of it, as being in a croud of Spectators, or having their Faces another way, yet would they be in wonderful Miseries, till the Bible were laid aside. In short, No good thing must then be endured near those Children, Which (while they are themselves) do love every good thing in a measure that proclaims in them the Fear of God.

Sect. XVII. My Employments were such, that I could not visit this afflicted Family so often as I would; Wherefore, that I might show them what kindness I could, as also that I might have a full opportunity to observe the extraordinary Circumstances of the Children, and that I might be furnished with Evidence and Argument as a Critical Eye-Witness to confute the Saducism of this debauched Age; I took the Eldest of them home to my House. The young Woman continued well at our house, for diverse dayes, and apply'd her self to such Actions not only of Industry, but of Piety, as she had been no stranger to. But on the Twentieth of November in the Fore-noon, she cry'd out, "Ah, They have found me out! I thought it would be so!" and immediately she fell into her fits again. I shall now confine my Story chiefly to Her, from whose Case the Reader may shape some Conjecture at the Accidents of the Rest.

Sect. XVIII. Variety of Tortures now siez'd upon the Girl; in which besides the forementioned Ails returning upon her, she often would cough up a Ball as big as a small Egg, into the side of her Wind-pipe, that would near choak her, till by Stroking and by Drinking it was carried down again. At the beginning of her Fits usually she kept odly Looking up the Chimney, but could not say what she saw. When I bad her Cry to the Lord Jesus for Help, her Teeth were instantly sett; upon which I added, "Yet, child, Look unto Him," and then her Eyes were presently pulled into her head, so farr, that one might have fear'd she should never have us'd them more. When I prayed in the Room, first her Arms were with a strong, tho not seen Force clap't upon her ears; and when her hands were with violence pull'd away, she crted out, " They make such a noise, I cannot hear a word!" She likewise complain'd, that Goody Glover's Chain was upon her- Leg, and when she essay'd to go, her postures were exactly sluch as the chained Witch had before she died. But the manner still was, that her Tortures in a small while would pass over, and Frolick succeed; in which she would continue many hours, nay, whole days, talking perhaps never wickedly, but alwaies wittily, beyond her self; and at certain provocations, her Tortures would renew upon her, till we had left off to give them. But she frequently told us, that if she might but steal, or be drunk, she should be well immediately.

Sect. XIX. In her ludicrous Fits, one while she would be for Flying; and she would be carried hither and thither, tho not long from the ground, yet so long as to exceed the ordinary power of Nature in our Opinion of it: another-while she would be for Diving, and use the Actions of it towards the Floor, on which, if we had not held her, she would have throwrn her self. Being at this exercise she told us, That They said, stie must go down to the Bottom of our Well, for there was Plate there,

and They said, They would bring her safely up again. This did she tell us, tho she had never heard of any Plate there! and we ourselves who had newly bought the house, hardly knew of any; but the former Owner of the House just then coming in, told us there had been Plate for many Years at the Bottom of the Well. She had once a great mind to have eaten a roasted Apple, but whenever she attempted to eat it, her Teeth would be sett, and sometimes, if she went to take it up her Arm would be made so stiff, that she could not possibly bring heir hand to her Mouth: at last she said, " Now They say, I shall eat it, if I eat it quickly "; and she nimbly eat it all up. Moreover, There was one very singular passion that frequently attended her. An Invisible Chain would be clapt about her, and shee, in much pain and Fear, cry out, When They began to put it on. Once I did with my own hand knock it; off as it began to be fastned about her. But ordinarily) Wlien 'it was on, shee'd be pull'd out of her seat with such violence towards the Fire, that it has been as much as one or two of us could do to keep her out. Her Eyes were not brought to be perpendicular to her feet, when she rose out of her Seat, as the Mechanism of a Humane' Body requires in them that rise, but she was one dragg'd wholly by other Hands: and once, When I gave a stamp on the Hearth, just between her and the Fire, she scream'd out, (tho I think she saw me not) that I Jarr'd the Chain, and hurt her Back.

Sect. XX. While she was in her Frolicks I was willing to try, Whether she could read or no; and I found, not only That If she went to read the Bible her Eyes would be strangely twisted and blinded, and her Neck presently broken, but also that if any one else did read the Bible in the Room, tho it were wholly out of her sight, and without the least voice or noise of it, she would be cast into very terrible Agonies. Yet once Falling into her Maladies a little time after she had read the 59th Psalm, I said unto the standers by, "Poor child! she can't now read the Psalm she readd a little while ago," she listened her self unto something that none of us could hear and made us be silent for some few Seconds of a minute. Whereupon she said, " But I can read it, they say I shall! " So I show'd her the Psalm, and she readd it all over to us. Then said I, "Child, say Amen to it:" but that she could not do. I added, 'Read the next: " but no where else in the Bible could she read a word. I brought her a Quakers Book; and That she could quietly read whole pages of; only the Name of God and Christ she still skip't over, being unable to pronounce it, except sometimes with stammering a minute or two or more upon it. When we urged her to tell what the word was that she missed, shee'd say, "I must not speak it; They say I must not, you know what it is, it's G and O and D; " so shee'd spell the Name unto us. I brought her again one that I thought was a Good Book; and presently she was handled with intolerable Torments. But when I show'd her a JestBook, as, The Oxford Jests, or the Cambridge Jests, she could read them without any Disturbance ' and have witty Descants upon them too. I entertained her with a Book that pretends to prove, That there are no Witches; and that she could read very well, only the Name Devils, and Witches, could not be uttered by her without extraordinary Difficulty. I produced a Book to her that proves, That there are Witches, and that she had not power to read. When I readd in the Room the Story of Ann Cole,' in my Fathers Remarkable Providences, and came to the Exclamation which the Narrative saies the Demons made upon her, " Ah she runs to the Rock!"

it cast her into inexpressible Agonies; and shee'd fall into them whenever I had the Expression of, "Running to the Rock)" afterwards. A popish Book also she could endure very well; but it would kill her to look into any Book, that (in my Opinion) it might have bin profitable and edifying for her to be reading of. These Experiments were often enough repeated, and still with the same Success, before Witnesses not a few. The good Books that were found so mortal to her were chiefly such as lay ever at hand in the Room. One was the Guid to Heaven from the Word, which I had given her. Another of them was Mr. Willard's little (but precious) Treatise of Justification. Diverse Books published by my Father I also tried upon her; particlularly, his Mystery of Christ; and another small Book of his about Faith and Repentance, and the day of Judgement. Once being very merrily talking by a Table that had this last Book upon it, she just opened the Book, and was immediately struck backwards as dead upon the floor. I hope I have not spoil'd the credit of the Books, By telling how much the Devils hated them. I shall therefore add, That my Grandfather Cottons Catechism called Milk for Babes, and The Assemblies Catechism, would bring hideous Convulsions on the Child if she look't into them; tho she had once learn't them with all the love that could be.

Sect. XXI. I was not unsensible that this Girls Capacity or incapacity to read, was no Test for Truth to be determined by, and therefore I did not proceed much further in this fanciful Business, not knowing What snares the Devils might lay for us in the Tryals. A few further Tryals, I confess, I did make; but what the event of 'em was, I shall not relate, because I would not offend. But that which most made me to wonder was, That one bringing to her a certain Prayer-Book, she not only could Read it very well, but also did read a large part of it over, and calling it Her Bible, she took in it a delight and put on it a Respect more than Ordinary. If she were going into her tortures, at the offer of this Book, she, would come out of her fits and read; and her Attendants were almost under a Temptation to use it as a Charm, to make and keep her quiet. Only, When she came to the Lords Prayer, (now and then occurring in this Book) she would have her eyes put out, so that she must turn over a new leaf, and then she could read again. Whereas also there are Scriptures in that Book, she could read them there, but if I shew'd her the very same Scriptures in the Bible, she should sooner Dy than read them. And she was likewise made unable to read the Psalms in an ancient meeter, which this prayer-book had in the same volumne with it. There were, I think I may say, no less than Multitudes of Witnesses to this odd thing; and I should not have been a faithful and honest Historian, if I had withheld from the World this part of my History: But I make no Reflections on it. Those inconsiderable men that are provoked at it (if any shall be of so little Sense as to be provoked) must be angry at the Devils, and not at me; their Malice, and not my Writing, deserves the Blame of any Aspersions which a true History may seem to cast on a Book that some have enough manifested their Concernment for.

Sect. XXII. There was another most unaccountable Circumstance which now attended her; and until she came to our House, I think, she never had Experience of it. Ever now and then, an Invisible Horse would be brought unto her, by those whom she only called, "them," and, "Her Company": upon the Approach of Which, her eyes would be still closed up; for (said she) "They say, I am a Tell-Tale, and

therefore they will not let me see them." Upon this would she give a Spring as one mounting an Horse, and Settling her self in a RidingPosture -she would in her Chair be agitated as one sometimes Ambleing, sometimes Trotting, and sometimes Galloping very furiously. In these motions we could not perceive that she was stirred by the stress of her feet, upon the ground; for often she touch't it not; but she mostly continued in her Chair, though sometimes in her hard Trott we doubted she would have been tossed over the Back of it. Once being angry at his Dulness, When she said, she would cut off his head if she had a knife, I gave her my Sheath, wherewith she suddenly gave her self a stroke on the Neck, but complained, it would not cut. When she had rode a minute or two or three, shee'd pretend to be at a Rendezvous with Them, that were Her Company; there shee'd maintain a Discourse with them, and asking many Questions concerning her self, (for we gave her none of ours) shee'd Listen much, and Received Answers from them that indeed none but her self perceived. Then would she return and inform us, how They did intend to handle her for a day or two afterwards, besides some other things that she enquired of them. Her Horse would sometimes throw her, with much Violence; but she would mount again; and one of the Standers -by once imagining them that were Her Company, to be before her (for she call'd unto them to stay for her) he struck with his Cane in the Air where he thought they were, and tho her eyes were wholly shutt, yet she cry'd out, that he struck her. Her Fantastic Journeyes were mostly performed in her Chair without removing from it; but sometimes would she ride from her Chair, and be carried oddly on the Floor, from one part of the Room to another, in the postures of a Riding Woman. If any of us asked her, Who her Company were? She generally replied, I don't know. But If we were instant in our Demand, she would with some witty Flout or other turn it off. Once I said, "Child, if you can't tell their Names, pray tell me what Clothes they have on;" and the Words were no sooner out of my mouth, but she was laid for dead upon the Floor.

Sect. XXIII. One of the Spectators once ask'd her, Whether she could not ride up stairs; unto which her Answer was, That she believe'd she could, for her Horse could do very notable things. Accordingly, when her Horse came to her again, to our Admiration she Rode (that is, was tossed as one that rode) up the stairs: there then stood open the Study of one belonging to the Family, into which entring, she stood immediately upon her Feet, and cry'd out, "They are gone; they are gone! They say, that they cannot, -God won't let 'em come here! " She also added a Reason for it, which the Owner of the Study thought more kind than true. And she presently and perfectly came to her self, so that her whole Discourse and Carriage was altered unto the greatest measure of Sobriety, and she satt Reading of the Bible and Good Books, for a good part of the Afternoon. Her Affairs calling her anon to go down again, the Daemons were in a quarter of a minute as bad upon her as before, and her Horse was Waiting for her. I understanding of it, immediately would have her up to the study of the young man where she had been at ease before; meerly to try Whether there had not been a Fallacy in what had newly happened: but she was now so twisted and writhen, that it gave me much trouble to get her into my Arms, and much more to drag her up the stairs. She was pulled out of my hands, and when I recovered my Hold, she was thrust so hard upon me, that I had almost fallen backwards, and her own breast was sore afterwards, by their Compressions to

detain her; she seem'd heavier indeed than three of her self. With incredible Forcing (tho she kept Screaming, "They say I must not go in!") at length we pull'd her in; where she was no sooner come, but she could stand on her Feet, and with an altered tone, could thank me, saying, "now I am well." At first shee'd be somewhat faint, and say, She felt something go out of her; but in a minute or two, she could attend any Devotion or Business as well as ever in her Life; and both spoke and did as became a person of good Discretion. I was loth to make a Charm of the Room; yet some strangers that came to visit us, the Week after, desiring to see the Experiment made, I permitted more than two or three Repetitions of it; and it still succeeded as I have declared. Once when I was assisting 'em in carrying of her up, she was torn out of all our hands; and to my self, she cry'd out, "Mr. M., One of them is going to push you down the stairs, have a care." I remember not that I felt any Thrust or Blow; but I think I was unaccountably made to step down backward two or three stairs, and within a few hours she told me by whom it was.

Sect. XXIV. One of those that had bin concerned for her Welfare, had newly implored the great God that the young woman might be able to declare whom she apprehended her self troubled by. Presently upon this her Horse returned, only it pestered her with such ugly paces, that she fell out with her Company, and threatned now to tell all, for their so abusing her. I was going abroad, and she said unto them that were about her, "Mr. M. is gone abroad, my horse won't come back, till he come home; and then I believe" (said she softly,) "I shall tell him all." I staid abroad an hour or two, and then Returning, When I was just come to my Gate, before I had given the least Sign or Noise of my being there, she said, "My Horse is come!" and intimated, that I was at the Door. When I came in, I found her mounted after her fashion, upon her Aerial Steed; which carried her Fancy to the Journeys end. There (or rather then) she maintained a considerable Discourse with Her Company, Listening very attentively when she had propounded any Question, and receiving the Answers with impressions made upon her mind. She said; "Well what do you say? How many Fits more am I to have?—pray, can ye tell how long it shall be before you are hang'd for what you have done?—You are filthy Witches to my knowledge, I shall see some of you go after your sister; You would have killd me; but you can't, I don't fear you.—You would have thrown Mr Mather down stairs, but you could not.—Well! How shall I be To morrow? I Pray, What do you think of Tomorrow? Fare ye well.—You have brought me such an ugly Horse, I am angry at you; I could find in my heart to tell all." So she began her homeward-paces; but when she had gone a little way, (that is a little while) she said, 'O I have forgot one Question, I must go back again; " and back she rides. She had that day been diverse times warning us, that they had been contriving to do some harm to 'my Wife, by a Fall or a Blow, or the like; and when she came out of her mysterious Journeys, she would still be careful concerning Her. Accordingly she now calls to her Company again, "Hark you, One thing more before we part! What hurt is it you will do to Mrs. Mather? will you do her any hurt? "Here she list'ned some time; and then clapping her hands, cry'd out, "O, I am glad on't, they can do Mrs. Mather no hurt: they try, but they say they can't." So she returns and at once, Dismissing her Horse, and opening her eyes, she call'd me to her, "Now Sir," (said she) 'I'll tell you all. I have learn'd who they are that are the cause of my trouble, there's three of them,"

(and she named who) " if they were out of the way, I should be well. They say, they can tell now how long I shall be troubled, But they won't. Only they seem to think, their power will be broke this Week. They seem also to say, that I shall be very ill To morrow, but they are themselves terribly afraid of to morrow; They fear, that to morrow we shall be delivered. They say too, that they can't hurt Mrs. Mather, which I am glad of. But they said, they would kill me to night, if I went to bed before ten a clock, if I told a word." And other things did she say, not now to be recited.

Sect. XXV. The Day following, which was, I think, about the twenty seventh of November, Mr. Morton of Charlestown, and Mr. Allen, Mr. Moody, Mr. Willard, and my self, of Boston, with some devout Neighbours, kept another Day of Prayer, at John Goodwin's house; and we had all the Children present with us there. The children were miserably tortured, while we laboured in our Prayers; but our good God was nigh unto us, in what we call'd upon Him for. From this day the power of the Enemy was broken; and the children, though Assaults after this were made upon them, yet were not so cruelly handled as before. The Liberty of the Children encreased daily more and more, and their Vexation abated by degrees; till within a little while they arrived to Perfect Ease, which for some weeks or months they cheerfully enjoyed. Thus Good it is for us to draw near to God.

Sect. XXVI. Within a day or two after the Fast, the young Woman had two remarkable Attempts made upon her, by her invisible Adversaries. Once, they were Dragging her into the Oven that was then heating, while there was none in the Room to help her. She clap't her hands on the Mantletree' to save her self; but they were beaten off; and she had been burned, if at her Out-cryes one had not come in from abroad for her Relief. Another time, they putt an unseen Rope with a cruel Noose about her Neck, Whereby she was choaked, until she was black in the Face; and though it was taken off before it had kill'd her, yet there were the red Marks of it, and of a Finger and a Thumb near it, remaining to be seen for a while afterwards.

Sect. XXVII. This was the last Molestation that they gave her for a While; and she dwelt at my house the rest of the Winter, having by an obliging and vertuous Conversation, made her self enough Welcome to the Family. But within about a Fortnight, she was visited with two dayes of as Extraordinary Obsessions as any we had been the Spectators of. I thought it convenient for me to entertain my Congregation with a Sermon upon the memorable Providences which these Children had been concerned in. When I had begun to study my Sermon, her Tormentors 'again seiz'd upon her; and all Fryday and Saturday, did they manage her with a special Design, as was plain, to disturb me in what I was about. In the worst of her extravagancies formerly, she was more dutiful to my self, than I had reason to Expect, but now her whole carriage to me was with a Sauciness that I had not been us'd to be treated with. She would knock at my Study Door, affirming, That some below would be glad to see me; when there was none that ask't for me. She would call to me with multiplyed Impertinencies, and throw small things at me wherewith she could not give me any hurt. . Shee'd Hector me at a strange rate for the work I was at, and threaten me with I know not what mischief for it. She got a History that I had Written of this Witchcraft, and tho she had before this readd it

over and over, yet now she could not read (I believe) one entire Sentence of it; but she made of it the most ridiculous Travesty in the World, with such a Patness and excess of Fancy, to supply the sense that she put upon it, as I was amazed at. And she particularly told me, That I should quickly come to disgrace by that History.

Sect. XXVIII. But there were many other Wonders beheld by us before these two dayes were out. Few tortures attended her, but such as were provoked; her Frolicks being the things that had most possession of her. I was in Latin telling some young Gentlemen of the Colledge, That if I should bid her Look to God, her Eyes would be put out, upon which her eyes were presently served so. I was in some surprize, When I saw that her Troublers understood Latin, and it made me willing to try a little more of their Capacity. We continually found, that if an English Bible were in any part of the Room seriously look'd into, though she saw and heard nothing of it, she would immediately be in very dismal Agonies. We now made a Tryal more than once or twice, of the Greek New Testament, and the Hebrew Old Testament; and We still found, That if one should go to read in it never so secretly and silently, it would procure her that Anguish, Which there was no enduring of. But I thought, at length, I fell upon one inferior Language which the Daemons did not seem so well to understand.

Sect. XXIX. Devotion was now, as formerly, the terriblest of all the provocations that could be given her. I could by no means bring her to own, That she desired the mercies of God, and the prayers of good men. I would have obtained a Sign of such a Desire, by her Lifting up of her hand; but she stirr'd it not: I then lifted up her hand my self, and though the standers-by thought a more insignificant thing could not be propounded, I said, " Child, If you desire those things, let your hand fall, when I take mine away: " I took my hand away, and liers continued strangely and stifiy stretched out, so that for some time, she could not take it down. During these two dayes we had Prayers oftener in our Family than at other times; and this was her usual Behavior at them. The man that prayed, usually began with Reading the Word of Cod; which once as he was going to do, she call'd to him, "Read of Mary Magdelen, out of whom the Lord cast seven Devils." During the time of Reading, she would be laid as one fast asleep; but when Prayer was begun, the Devils would still throw her on the Floor, at the feet of him that prayed. There would she lye and Whistle and sing and roar, to drown the voice of the Prayer; but that being a little too audible for Them, they would shutt close her Mouth and her cars, and yet make such odd noises in her Throat as that she her self could not hear our Cries to God for her. Shee'd also fetch very terrible Blowes with her Fist, and Kicks with her Foot at the man that prayed; but still (for he had bid that none should hinder her) hei, Fist and Foot would alwaies recoil, when they came within a few hairs breadths of him just as if Rebounding against a Wall; so that she touch'd him not, but then would beg hard of other people to strike him, and particularly she entreated them to take the Tongs and smite him; Which not being done, she cryed out of him, "He has wounded me in the Head." But before Prayer was out, she would be laid for Dead, wholly senseless and (unless to a severe Trial) Breathless; with her Belly swelled like a Drum, and sometimes with croaking Noises in it; thus would she ly, most exactly with the stiffness and posture of one that had been two Days laid out for Dead. Once

lying thus, as he that was praying was alluding to the words of the Canaanitess, and saying, "Lord, have mercy on a Daughter vexed with a Devil; " there came a big, but low voice from her, saying, "There's Two or Three of them " (or us!) and the standers-by were under that Apprehension, as that they cannot relate whether her mouth mov'd in speaking of it. When Prayer was ended, she would Revive in a minute or two, and continue as Frolicksome as before. She thus continued until Saturday towards the Evening; when, after this man had been at Prayer, I charged all my Family to admit of no Diversion by her Frolicks, from such exercises as it was proper to begin the Sabbath with. They took the Counsel; and tho she essayed, with as witty and as nimble and as various an Application to each of them successively as ever I saw, to make them laugh, yet they kept close to their good Books which then called for their Attention. When she saw that, immediately she fell asleep; and in two or three hours, she waked perfectly her self; weeping bitterly to remember (for as one come out of a dream she could remember) what had befallen her.

Sect. XXX. After this, we had no more such entertainments. The Demons it may be would once or twice in a Week trouble her for a few minutes with perhaps a twisting and a twinkling of her eyes, or a certain Cough which did seem to be more than ordinary. Moreover, Both she at my house, and her Sister at home, at the time which they call Christmas, were by the Daemons made very drunk, though they had no strong Drink (as we are fully sure) to make them so. When she began to feel her self thus drunk, she complain'd, "O they say they will have me to keep Christmas with them! They will disgrace me when they can do nothing else! " And immediately the Ridiculous Behaviours of one drunk were with a wonderful exactness represented in her Speaking, and Reeling, and Spewing, and anon Sleeping, till she was well again. But the Vexations of the Children otherwise abated continually. They first came to be alwaies Quiet, unless upon Provocations. Then they got Liberty to work, but not to read: then further on, to read, but not aloud, at last they were wholly delivered; and for many Weeks remained so.

Sect. XXXI. I was not unsensible, that it might be an easie thing to be too bold, and go too far, in making of Experiments: Nor was I so unphilosophical as not to discern many opportunities of Giving and Solving many Problemes which the pneumatic Discipline' is concerned in. I confess I have Learn't much more than I sought, and I have bin informed of some things relating to the invisible World, which as I did not think it lawful to ask, so I do not think it proper to tell; yet I will give a Touch upon one Problem commonly Discoursed of; that is, Whether the Devils know our Thoughts, or no? I will not give the Reader my Opinion of it, but only my Experiment. That they do not, was conjectured from this: We could cheat them when we spoke one thing, and mean't another. This was found when the Children were to be undressed. The Devils would still in wayes beyond the Force of any Imposture, wonderfully twist the part that was to be undress't, so that there was no coming at it. But, if we said, untye his neckcloth, and the parties bidden, at the same time, understood our intent to be, unty his Shooe! The Neckcloth, and not the shooe, has been made strangely inaccessible. But on the other side, That they do, may be conjectured from This. I called the young Woman at my House by her Name, intending to mention unto her some Religious Expedient whereby she might,

as I thought, much relieve her self; presently her Neck was broke, and I continued watching my Opportunity to say what I designed. I could not get her to come out of her Fit, until I had laid aside my purpose of speaking what I thought, and then she reviv'd immediately. Moreover a young Gentleman visiting of me at my Study to ask my advice about curing the Atheism and Blasphemy which he complained his Thoughts were more than ordinarily then infested with; after some Discourse I carried him down to see this Girl who was then molested with her unseen Fiends; but when he came, she treated him very coursly and rudely, asking him What he came to the house for? and seemed very ang' at his being there, urging him to be gone with a very impetuous Importunity. Perhaps all Devils are not alike sagacious.

Sect. XXXII, The Last Fit that the young Woman had, was very peculiar. The Daemons having once again seiz'd her, they made her pretend to be Dying; and Dying truly we fear'd at last she was: She lay, she tossed, she pull'd just like one Dying, and urged hard for some one to dy with her, seeming loth to dy alone. She argued concerning Death, in strains that quite amazed us; and concluded, That though she was loth to dy, yet if God said she must, she must; adding something about the state of the Countrey, which we wondred at. Anon, the Fit went over; and as I guessed it would be, it was the last Fit she had at our House. But all my Library never afforded me any Commentary on those Paragraphs of the Gospels, which speak of Demoniacs, equal to that which the passions of this Child have given me.

Sect. XXXIII. This is the Story of Goodwins Children, a Story all made up of Wonders! I have related nothing but what I judge to be true. I was my self an Eye-witness to a large part of what I tell; and I hope my neighbours have long thought, That I have otherwise learned Christ, than to ly unto the World. Yea, there is, I believe, scarce any one particular, in this Narrative, which more than one credible Witness will not be ready to make Oath unto. The things of most Concernment in it were before many Critical Observers and the Whole happened in the Metropolis of the English America, unto a religious and industrious Family which was visited by all sorts of Persons, that had a mind to satisfy themselves. I do now likewise publish the History, While the thing is yet fresh and New; and I challenge all men to detect so much as one designed Falshood, yea, or so much as one important Mistake, from the Egg to the Apple of it. I have Writ as plainly as becomes an Historian, as truly as becomes a Christian, tho perhaps not so profitably as became a Divine. But I am resolv'd after this, never to use but just one grain of patience with any man that shall go to impose upon me a Denial of Devils, or of Witches. I shall count that man Ignorant who shall suspect, but I shall count him down-right Impudent if he Assert the Non-Existence of things which we have had such palpable. Convictions of. I am sure he cannot be a Civil, (and some will question whether he can be an honest man) that shall go to, deride the Being of things which a whole Countrey has now beheld an house of pious people suffering not a few Vexations by. But if the Sadducee, or the Atheist, have no right Impressions by these Memorable Providences made upon his mind; yet I hope those that know what it is to be sober will not repent any pains that they may have taken in perusing what Records of these Witchcrafts and Possessions, I thus leave unto Posterity.'