

SOME UNPUBLISHED CORRESPONDENCE OF THE
 REV. RICHARD BAXTER AND THE REV. JOHN
 ELIOT, "THE APOSTLE TO THE AMERICAN
 INDIANS," 1656-1682.

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INTRODUCTORY.

AMONG the MSS. of Dr. Williams's Library is a series of sixteen or seventeen letters which passed between Baxter and Eliot from November, 1656, to May, 1682.

They lie scattered in one or other of several folio volumes and a conspactive view of them used to be difficult. But now rotographed facsimiles are available and these the Trustees have granted me the privilege of reading and transcribing at my leisure-a privilege all the greater because some passages in Eliot's letters are not easy to make out. He could write quite legibly if he gave himself sufficient time and space. Too often, however, his script is so hurried, so crowded and so abbreviated as to be almost undecipherable. One has to confess, further, that not a little turns out to be hardly worth deciphering; and so I have been content here and there with a brief summary or the quotation of a few salient sentences. It might be asked if the letters were worth transcribing at all. Perhaps not. The answer will depend on one's degree of interest in the writers. But for myself they reflect a light on certain aspects of the two men-on Eliot especially-which is welcome.

With one or two exceptions the time-sequence is easy to trace, but there are two wide gaps. Thus the letter of November 7, 1657, is followed by a gap of ten years, while we have a dozen letters for the next four years (1667-71). Then comes a second gap of eleven years, and no letters after May 30, 1682, the date of the last. But the gaps are only apparent. The last, *e.g.*, evidently presupposes a recent correspondence, and so do the two letters of 1663 which

Baxter reserved for publication in his autobiography (R.B. pt. ii. pp. 293-7). In fact, the probability may be said to amount to a certainty, that the friendship first revealed by Eliot in 1656 found expression, more or less continuously, through all the years down to Eliot's death in 1690, a year before Baxter's. It seems likely, then, that more letters have been lost than have come down to us; and, as all that have been preserved are among the Baxter MSS. in Dr. Williams's Library, it is clear that they owe their preservation to Baxter himself-which means that his own letters are copies made and kept according to his custom, while Eliot's are the originals.

If we wonder why so many have been lost, probably the explanation is that, with much else in his library, they were scattered or destroyed on such an occasion as the thorough-going distraint which took place in August, 1682. The marvel is that anything of his in the way of books and MSS. ever came into the possession of his friends. But I imagine that books or MSS. were treated as rubbish which his friends might take at their pleasure, so far as they had not been torn up, or burnt, or carted away.

OUTLINE OF ELIOT'S LIFE.

John Eliot, born in 1604, was eleven years older than Baxter. The exact date of his birth is not known, but its place was Widford in Hertfordshire near the borders of Essex, and the old register of the parish church of St. John has this record of his baptism: "John Eliot, the son of Bennett Eliot was baptised the 5th day of August in the year of our Lord, 1604."¹ His father was a landholder in four

¹ On May 21, 1894, a memorial window in the chancel of the church was dedicated to him-at the expense of his descendants in America. There are said to have been two branches of the Eliot stock. John's branch, which traced its origin to Sir William de Aliot, a Norman knight who came over with the Conqueror, and a Devonshire-Cornwall branch, which produced the famous patriot Sir John Eliot (1592-1632) and, nearly 300 years later, the no less famous President of Harvard, Dr. Charles W. Eliot (1834-1925). The family of Charles W. Eliot migrated to Massachusetts toward the end of the 1630-40 decennium; and have been settled there ever since. John's descendants-from whom came the memorial window-passed over, at an early date, to Connecticut. I am indebted for this information to Dr. H. H. Saunderson of Boston, the author of an excellent study of President Eliot (1928), who had it from the President's son, Dr. Samuel A. Eliot See also, "The Puritan as a Colonist and Reformer," by E. H. Byington (1899).

or five parishes of Hertfordshire, and, as his will shows, he had a large estate for those times. By that will he provided generously for the education of his son John at the University of Cambridge and, also, for that of his younger children. John was third in a family of seven. Before he was six years old the family had removed to Nasing in Essex—a place distinguished for the number of Puritans that went from it to New England. The next discernible facts are that John matriculated as a Pensioner in Jesus College, Cambridge, on March 20, 1618-19, and received the degree of B.A. in 1623. Nothing certain is known about his Cambridge life, but we are told that his bent was toward the study of languages, especially Greek and Hebrew, and that he was fond of philological enquiries. In the light of later evidence this seems very likely. The next few years are a blank, until about 1629, when he appears as usher in a school founded at Little Haddo, Chelmsford, by Rev. Thomas Hooker, preacher at Chelmsford.

Hooker had already drawn upon him the unfriendly notice of Laud, and in 1630 he was summoned before the High Commission. He fled to Holland; and in 1633, after brief periods of ministry at Amsterdam, Delft, and Rotterdam, withdrew to Cambridge in New England (1633), where he proved himself a great leader till his death in 1647. It was confessedly to him that Eliot owed his definite start in the Christian life. By him, too, he was led to take Orders in the English Church; and, no doubt, it was the treatment of Hooker that turned his face to the West. He reached Boston on November 4, 1631. Other passengers in the same ship, besides the wife and children of Governor Winthrop, were Eliot's three brothers and three sisters. It was a family migration. Almost at once on his arrival he took the place of the Rev. John Wilson, Teacher of the Charleston-Boston Church, who was on a visit to England, and it is a curious fact that Roger Williams, afterwards notorious for his advocacy of universal toleration, had just declined the same position because the Church owned the validity of Episcopal Orders. These he had, but thought nothing of then. He wanted to be properly ordained by the people!¹ Eliot felt no such scruple—a sign that he was not yet a strict separatist. He took the office of teacher in virtue of his standing as a minister of the Church of England. Moreover, he filled it so much to the

¹ Walker's "Creeds and Platforms of Congregationalism," p. 99 note.

satisfaction of the people that they wished to retain him after Mr. Wilson's return. "But he had engaged with a select number of his Christian friends in England that if they should come into these parts before he should be in the pastoral care of any other people, he would give himself to them and be for their service." Their arrival, therefore, in 1632, decided him. They "chose for their habitation the place they called Roxbury." He went with them and there "he shone as a star for near three score years." In September of the same year he was married to the lady, Hanna Mumford, to whom he had betrothed himself before leaving England. She had come out with his other friends, and their marriage was the first recorded in the Roxbury church-book. They lived together for fifty-seven years, and "God made her a rich blessing, not only to her family (of six children) but also to her neighbourhood." His own people were the young pastor's first care-perhaps his absorbing care. For little is heard of him till 1646, when on October 28 he preached his first sermon to the Indians in their own language. Then we learn that he had been hard at work on the language for two years and had long been in the habit of going to them and trying to win their confidence. So the call to work for their conversion became imperious. When the Colony afterwards took for its seal the figure of a poor Indian with a label in his mouth containing the words "Come over and help us," Increase Mather (1639-1723), the most prominent minister of the second generation, traced its adoption to the influence of Eliot. "Certainly it was the Holy Spirit," he wrote, "who inspired him to hear and obey that call." But at first not all his brethren by any means were sure of its divine origin. They were rather inclined to think that the Indians were wild beasts whom God called them to fear and fight. And there was suspicion and prejudice on the part of the Indians themselves.¹ Hence his progress was slow. But, from the outset, a few of the natives were disposed to listen, and by winning these he won others. His method was congregational. A church of genuine converts-of the few but fit-was his aim. Five years passed, and then (in 1651) his labours bore fruit in the first gathered church at Natick. Its members bound themselves first in a church-covenant, next they and their children were baptised, then the adults partook of

¹ See Letter 2 to Baxter, *infra*.

the Lord's Supper. This was not precisely Baxter's notion of a church; but to Eliot it was as truly a church as any in the New Testament.

To this church, and to others which grew up later, Eliot went to preach once a fortnight-regularly, it seems, until he was over eighty. After a while other English preachers assisted him. But for the management and upbuilding of his churches he looked mainly to the principle of self-help. As far as possible he trained converted Indians to become pastors and teachers. To these he joined other Indians, as ruling elders. And he made their appointment to depend on the counsel and choice of the people. Thus, in the accepted sense, each church was independent.

In 1674 the number of "praying Indians.. {the name for the converted) had increased to 3600. Then came the disaster known as King Philip's war-an uprising of the Indians against the settlers which lasted from June, 1675, to August, 1676, and threatened their extermination. "Of the 80 or 90 towns to be found in Plymouth and Massachusetts colonies in 1675, 10 or 12 were utterly destroyed,.. and 40 more partially burned, while "between 500 and 600 young and middle-aged men-a fourth of all of military age in the colonies-lost their lives,.. besides "scores of women and children who perished by the tomahawk and died amid the torments of the stake... The effect upon the Indian churches and Eliot's missionary work must have been devastating.¹ Yet in 1687 Increase Mather could report: "There are 6 churches of baptised Indians in New England and 18 assemblies of catechumens professing the name of Christ. Of the Indians there are four-and-twenty who are preachers of the word of God; and besides these there are 4 English ministers who preach the Gospel (to them?) in the English tongue... This was the evangelical aspect of his work; but the work was not merely evangelical. Eliot used to say that for a missionary it is " absolutely necessary to carry on civility ² with religion,.. and he acted on his own motto. A visitor to one of his Indian settlements would have noticed a considerable measure of self-government, and that provision was made " for industrial occupations, clearings, houses and clothes." Especially noticeable would have been his regard for education. Every

¹ Unfortunately any letters of Eliot to Baxter on the matter have not survived.

² *I.e.* social work.

church had its school, where reading in the native language was taught with other elementary subjects, and at length even elementary science.¹ In this respect he did for the Indians what he did for his own people at Roxbury, where he insisted on a grammar school at all costs. "God," we are told by Cotton Mather, writing after Eliot's death, "so blessed his endeavours that Roxbury has afforded more scholars for the College (Harvard), than any town of its bigness; or, if I mistake not, of twice its bigness in all New England. From the spring of the school at Roxbury, there has run a large number of streams which have made glad the whole city of God." Recalling Charles W. Eliot one would say that zeal for education was in the Eliot blood.

Eliot died in May, 1690, in his 86th year. His last words were "*Welcome Joy.*" "I think"--wrote Rev. Thomas Shepherd, his close friend and best helper--"that we can never love nor honour this man of God enough. The name of the Apostle to the Indians must always stand in distinguished brightness on that roll of the servants of the Most High whom New England delights, and ever will delight, to honour in the records of her Moral History."

In the year of his death a brief but beautiful memoir of Eliot was published by one who had known him from his own earliest years--Cotton Mather, son of Increase Mather.

A few sentences from it may be quoted.

"He was one who lived in heaven while he was on earth."
 "Every day was a sort of Sabbath to him, but the Sabbath-day was a taste of heaven with him."

"He laboured that he might, on this high day, have no words or thoughts but such as were agreeable thereunto, he then allowed in himself no actions but those of a raised soul." It was his habit to conduct two services at Roxbury on Sunday and a weekday fortnightly lecture; but, to feed his own soul he made weekly visits to lectures at Boston, Charlestown, Cambridge, and Dorchester--where he showed his "affection" for what he heard by "hands and eyes devoutly uplifted." In his preaching he gave the people "food and not froth." "His delivery was graceful and grateful." "He liked no preaching but what had been well studied for-BEATEN oil."

His personal habits verged on the ascetic.

¹ See letter 14, *infra*.

"We are all of us compounded of these two things, the man and the beast; but so powerful was the MAN in this holy person that it kept the beast ever tied with a short tether."

"The sleep that he allowed himself, cheated him not of his morning hours, but he reckoned the morning no less a friend to grace than to the Muses. He would call upon students, 'I pray look to it, that you be morning birds.'"

His diet was of the simplest. "One dish, and a plain one, was his dinner." "For a supper he had learned of his loved patron, Mr. Cotton, either wholly to omit it or to make a small sup or two the utmost of it." "Good clear water" was his usual drink: "Wine is a noble generous drink, but, as I remember, water was made before it." "When he thought the countenance of a minister ... looked as if he made much of himself he would go to him with the speech, 'Study mortification, brother I study mortification I'"

He had no pride of life. "His apparel was without any ornament and he wore a leathern girdle about his loins." "Seeing some scholars once whom he thought a little too gaudy in their clothes, '*Humiliamini, Iuvenes, Humiliamini,*' was his immediate compliment to them." His own deep humility was the secret of his eminence - it "made him higher by a head than the rest of the people," and was what gave weight to his admonitions.

Finally, "he was a great enemy to contention. When he heard any ministers complain that such and such in their flocks were too difficult for them, the strain of his answer to all was - 'Brother, learn the meaning of those three little words, Bear, forbear, forgive.'"

Baxter knew this little memoir. He received a copy of it from the writer's father (Dr. Increase Mather), and it was the occasion of a letter to the latter (dated August 3, 1691) - said to be the last he ever wrote. Dr. Mather was then in London on a mission from the colony to obtain a renewal of its charter.¹ He wrote, "I thought I

¹ Increase Mather fled from Boston in April, 1688, and had been resident in London since the following June - his chief business being to obtain a renewal of New England's charter. On June 4, 1688, he was received by James II. in the Long Gallery at Whitehall and presented a letter of thanks for the King's 'declaration of Indulgence' from some twenty New England congregations. On June 20 he called at Charterhouse Yard to see Mr. Baxter who led the majority of London ministers against the declaration - see p. 188 of Kenneth B. Murdock's "Life of Increase Mather," Harvard, 1929.

had been near dying at twelve o'clock in bed, but your book revived me. I lay reading it until between one and two. I knew much of Mr. Eliot's opinions by many letters which I had from him. There was no man on earth whom I honoured above him. It is his evangelical [i.e. his missionary] work that is the apostolical work I plead for I am now dying I hope as he did. It pleased me to read from him my case: 'my understanding faileth, my memory faileth, and my hand and pen fail, but my charity faileth not.' That word much comforted me."

The two men never met in the flesh, but, as Baxter said, many letters passed between them; and of these are the sixteen which follow.

SHORT OUTLINE OF CONTENTS.

- (1) October 16, 1656. Eliot writes to Baxter as a stranger to him by face but as a brother of the spirit—deeply indebted for help received from his "Saints' Everlasting Rest" in a time, not yet passed, of bodily pain "very heavy and bitter." His object in writing, is not only to thank him but specially to urge him to employ his peculiar gift for such work in composing manuals of meditation—to cover every aspect of Christian life and experience.
- (2) January 20, 1656/7. Baxter, after expressions of warm sympathy and concern, asks what Eliot finds to be the greatest hindrance in his work for the Indians; excuses himself from the (present) undertaking which Eliot suggests; and begs him to forward all he can the union of Presbyterians and Congregationalists in England.
- (3) October 7, 1657. Eliot ascribes the former paucity of converts from among the Indians chiefly to the unworthy conduct of nominally Christian people but reports a recent change for the better; meets Baxter's hesitant response to his suggestion with a practical proposal for carrying it out; and deals, at some length, with Baxter's motion about the furthering of union between English Presbyterians and Congregationalists.
- (4) End of 1667 Letter, undated and unaddressed, from Baxter to Eliot. It was called forth by a booklet which Eliot printed (not published) in 1665 at Cambridge (Boston). Only two copies are known to exist, one in a private library at Hartford (Connecticut)

and one in the Bodleian (Pamph. 122(8)). The title-from the Bodleian-begins: "Communion of Churches, or, the Divine Management of Gospel Churches by the ordinance of Councils, Constituted in order, according to the Scriptures. As also, the Way of bringing all Christian Parishes to be Particular Reforming Congregational Churches...." 8vo, Preface ii, 38 pp.

The little volume meant so much to its author and is so singular in its proposals, that it is worth while to indicate its drift.

There are eight short chapters, *viz.* :-

Chap. 1. *Prolegomena*, or things premised, *viz.*, that there must be-

- (a) A Church of believers and
- (b) A Council of Churches.

Chap. 2. A Council in the first instance, should consist of 12 local Churches, represented by at least 24 messengers, or a multiple of 12. The number 12 is the Gospel measuring reed.

Chap. 3. The constitution of Councils extends to four orders:--

- (a) District Councils = 24 messengers (at least) from 12 Churches. These to meet monthly.
- (b) Provincial Assemblies = 24 delegates from District Councils. These to meet quarterly.
- (c) National Synods = 24 delegates from 12 Provincial Assemblies. These to meet once a year.
- (d) OEcumenical Council = 24 delegates from 12 National Synods. This, when once attained, to be always in session.

Its seat (D.V.) will be Jerusalem. It will have no President or Pope, but be directly subject to Christ. It will be His holy breastplate-corresponding to the 24 elders before the Throne. Through it Christ will rule all the world-both of civil and ecclesiastical affairs-by the Word of His mouth delivered to His saints (i.e., I take it, the 24 elders) in the Hebrew language.

Chap. 4. The order of electing the Councils is fundamentally Congregational. The first choice of messengers is by the individual Church, and carries with it all the rest. " Hence it must be carefully and expressly put into the Vote of this first act of the Churches, that they (the messengers) are chosen to carry on the ordinance of Councils in all the orders of it both in Provincial, National and OEcumenical

Councils even unto the highest point," How often the choice of the individual churches is to be exercised is not clear, but apparently once a year, in order to keep the stream of delegates permanently fresh.

Chaps. 5 and 6 outline the work of the Councils in its general and special character. The object, in both respects, is to ensure right order or discipline; and the conclusion is notable:--

"Within the compass of one year the whole order of elders and discipline has its course... Moreover, once established it is compulsory. Such as defy discipline are "high disturbers and must be suppressed by civil power;" and if this should entail the death penalty, Eliot is inexorable. "It is a greater good to preserve order than to preserve the lives of the wilful and obstinate violators thereof." So he landed himself among the persecutors, Romish and others, by the same argument as theirs.

Chap. 7 is concerned with the way to bring "every Christian parished congregation to be an explicit reforming congregational church;" and

Chap. 8. Treats of the management of these councils--with no small reliance on the magistrates.

Such a scheme, emanating from a Congregationalist, was something uniquely curious, and could not be taken seriously. Respect for Eliot's character may have saved it from open ridicule; but nobody in New England seems to have noticed it. It "sank like lead in the mighty waters of oblivion" (Dexter). In the course of time, however, a copy came to Baxter who not merely noticed it, but also set down and sent to Eliot a number of "Animadversions" (or reflections), not by any means all critical. Indeed, he goes so far as to say that this Platform of Mr. Eliot's would have been gladly accepted by the "sober" of both parties (Presbyterian and Congregational) in England eight or nine years ago; ¹ and that even now they would rejoice if it were commonly owned by the brethren of the Congregational way. But the New England brethren knew better.

- (5) 10 December, 1667/8. Eliot's grateful acknowledgement of the "Animadversions" is remarkable (I) for his defence, on scriptural grounds, of the death penalty in the case of those who hold out pre-

1 *I. e.* in 1657/8 when Baxter's "Associations" were spreading.

sumptuously against the Established Church order. He had the Quakers particularly in mind. In Massachusetts from 1656 onwards "four Quakers were executed, excessive fines were imposed, and a system of frightfulness was put into operation in the shape of unmerciful whippings."¹ Eliot apologises for this under eight heads.

(2) His implied reference to what was known in New England as the Half-way Covenant-agreed upon at the Synod of Boston in 1662-which affirmed the membership of the children of church members, and a right to baptism of *their* children if they do but express "an intellectual faith in the doctrines of the Church and sincere assent to its covenant." This was carried by 7 to 1. Eliot's name is not given. But if it be true that he had been moving towards the Half-way house since 1649¹ this letter may be taken to prove that he had arrived there-constrained chiefly by his regard for the young people. It reveals, however, a profound sense of misgiving.

The letter enclosed a little script (not extant) advocating "one great poynt" viz.: "that Magistrates should be chosen by the Churches to be members of the Councils."

22 January, 1667/8. An anxious enquiry about his last letter,
(6) and some slight corrections which Baxter is asked to make in *his* copy of the "Communion of Churches." A strange sentence near the end seems to compare the Puritans of England at one time (under Laud?) to Isaac "bound for sacrifice, throat open, sword drawn I" "There wanted only the word, and THAT God stayed." Hence we of New England ought to "receive all the godly in England" as by a resurrection.

27 March, 1668. Baxter to Eliot. Has thankfully received
(7) his corrected copy of the two letters. Is in general agreement with what he has written, but has been startled by "a truly great difference such as I thought had never been between you and me." Eliot's conception of Baptism as "a particular covenant" made for, or by, the candidate for church-membership, is the great difference. His own view of Baptism regards it as a universal covenant identical with the covenant of grace. This view has ever been the mind of the Church. Our very Christianity consists in it. Eliot's doctrine, on the other

¹"The Religious History of New England," p. 180, Harvard, 1917.

² Walker's "Creeds and Platforms of Congregationalism," p. 254.

hand, is strange-very strange. Nor is it that of the ENGLISH Congregationalists at least. "The congregational men here, of chief name" are "wholly of my mind." Under this wrong impression of Eliot's enormous singularity Baxter writes in an excited strain.

The rest of his letter is an emphatic assertion of his opinion that the people have no ruling voice in the admission of members to the church, nor in the judging of fellow-communicants.

- (8) 15 June, 1668. Eliot to Baxter. Takes up four points, but is mostly concerned to quiet his friend's fears as to that upon which he had expressed himself so vehemently. He reduces the real difference to a "tantillum."
- (9) 28 October, 1668. Eliot to Baxter. He has just discovered an objection of Baxter's to the seventh chapter of his book on communion of churches which he had overlooked. One much the same had been urged by another reverend and beloved friend and a kinsman of his own. To him Eliot had replied in a letter which he transcribes *verbatim* for Baxter, and sends in the hope that it may satisfy him as well. At the end he reports the death of his eldest son, "a good workman in the vineyard of Christ, my assistant in the Indian work. a staffe to my age."
- (10) 22 September, 1668. A reply to Eliot's of 15 June. Baxter is thankful for further light and for his friend's hearty breathings after unity and peace. There is nothing between them which need disturb their profound agreement of spirit and aim. "If we had here the same spirit we had been heard long ago." But alas I the absence of that spirit is more evident and mischievous than ever. He dwells on this in a striking passage. Then he proceeds to combat Eliot's claim for the people's right (the *vulgus*) to fill church-offices by a major vote, and to repudiate Eliot's application of the name "the spouse of Christ" to a particular church. Thirdly and chiefly he returns to the question of the Baptismal covenant, finds to his delight how Eliot has narrowed down the difference to almost nothing, and goes on to elucidate his own position under ten heads. Finally, he says that if Eliot could succeed in getting his conciliatory principles acted upon by the New England churches it might do much toward getting them practised here-"if ever our superiors allow opportunity"; and in a PS. he asks to be informed about the Indian language and the prospects of the Indian evangelistic work.

- (11) Spring) 1669. Baxter's next letter is undated and unfinished, but its references to the " objector " whom Eliot wrote about in October, 1668, point to an early month of 1669. Eliot had argued for the *Church-proper* as interior to the Parochial Church, and yet for the latter, as truly a church in some sense. Perhaps Baxter recognised the distinction before the end of his letter and did it justice, but as it stands the letter is merely a diatribe{most interesting) against separatism -in the light of his experience at Kidderminster and Acton. I am inclined to think that this letter was not posted. The abrupt finish and the unusual shape of the paper suggest as much; and a confirmatory fact is that in his next letter
- (12) 20 June, 1669, Eliot does not mention it. What he does is to acknowledge the receipt, in the Spring, of two letters-one of September, the other of January, 68/9. Eliot (1) takes up the points of Baxter's September letter and "ventilates" them (Baxter's word) one by one. It is the longest of his letters, and the most instructive, if one would see just how far his Independence extended, and what he expected of the magistrate when Independency ran wild. Some anabaptist fanatics at, or near, Boston had been forced to choose between banishment and imprisonment. They chose imprisonment, and when liberated, did not scruple to say that God had appeared on their behalf in the death of their leading opponent-and even in the death of Eliot's son-though the latter had " not the least finger in the matter." This might well seem to excuse strong measures. Eliot (2) then turns to Baxter's second letter-that of January-which can hardly be the aforesaid undated one, yet may possibly be one which he wrote instead of it. This is suggested by the fact that Eliot refers to something said by Baxter about the necessity of thorough Parochial visitation by ministers if the Church is to prosper, but it is rendered doubtful by the fact that he says not a word about Baxter's striking experiences at Acton and Kidderminster. The last part of the letter is an illuminating answer to Baxter's question (or questions) regarding the Indian dialects and mission. It ends with the remark that his son-in-law, Mr. Glover, and his youngest son have devoted themselves to the work, but that their continuance and progress in it depend upon the degree of support they get from the commissioners in London.
- (13) 5 February, 1670) Baxter's next letter is undated and unsigned and ends in the middle of a sentence, but is proved to be the

next by its contents-its reference, *e.g.*, to the case of Thomas Gold, and to what Eliot had said about the interference of the civil power. Baxter's remarks, under the latter head, are a particularly clear statement of his own opinion on the subject. The letter is interesting for two other reasons, (*a*) it seems to imply that Eliot had thought of giving himself up to missionary work entirely, and that his Roxbury Church or some of its members had claimed a monopoly of him. Baxter says, " Were I your neighbour and I did believe that forsaking your Church would enable you to do much more service to the poor Indians than your Church service cometh to, I should cast in my judgment that it were your duty so to do, and to be only the apostle to the Indians."

The early congregational view of ordination-that it was the seal of an indissoluble marriage between a man and a particular church--did sometimes induce this feeling of sole possession, and led to inconveniences which broke it down. What gradually took its place was Baxter's view of ordination as a man's setting apart by qualified ministers, or elders, to the *general ministry of the Church*-though occasioned, it might be, by the call of a *particular* church. (*b*) The letter is interesting also for its vivid account of his abhorrence of Separatism as distinct from Independency. It stops short at a point where he had begun to justify (once more) his view of Baptism. And the same subject is continued in what has been taken to be *another* letter, but which seems rather to be a later part of this (13)--with some connecting sentences or paragraphs missing. Two facts, besides identity of topic, tend to prove that the two are one:--

(1) The closing words, " I heartily thank you for your intelligence of the extent of the {Indian} language "--an acknowledgment to be expected in a reply to Eliot's letter of June 20, 1669.

(2) The Subscription, "Feby 5th, from my poore obscure recess where I have been since I came out of prison for preaching, and not taking the Oxford Oath."

The "recess," of course, was Totteridge nr. Barnet, whither he went in October, 1669, after his release from the New Prison or Clerkenwell-a poor place for the first months of winter but safely outside the range of the Five Mile Act. Baxter couldn't have written twice to Eliot between the receipt of his June letter and February 5,

1670. Mr. Black, the compiler of the B. MSS., reached the same conclusion, perhaps on the same grounds.

- (14) 27 June, 1671. Eliot to Baxter; after receipt of two books, not named but certainly "*A Cure of Church Divisions, or Directions for weak Christians to keep them from being Dividers or Troublers of the Church,*" and its sequel "*A Defence of the Principles of Love*" . . . addressed to "those Readers who . . . are offended " at the former-hooks that occasioned an extraordinary outburst of violent and even malignant resentment. Eliot writes to thank him " most kindly " for them, and says they had been heralded by reports which came with a noise not much beneath thunder. Being summer time, which is a time with him of much action and little reading, he has only dipped into them-but he has read enough to assure himself that they contain nothing hut what savoureth of " the still voyce." "Beloved Brother, God is teaching you patience and meekness, two eminent Gospel graces, and I rejoiced to see your proficiency in that school of Christ which seemeth to me to appear in your second book. . . . "

As to his own affairs, he had never before experienced " such violent opposition of Satan" in connection with his Indian work. He will defer the history of it till the end of the year and then lay it before the honourable corporation in London. Meanwhile, he has begun the difficult attempt to teach the Indians something of the Liberal Arts; and is organising an evangelistic enterprise of the Indian brethren to their unconverted neighbours. Apparently to help these neophytes, he has drawn up "a few instructive dialogues which are also partly historical." A copy of this and of his A.B.C. manual of instruction in the Arts, he has sent to his " worthy friend " Mr. Ashurst-from whom or from Mr. Bell, Baxter will get to see them.

- (15) 2 September, 1671. Baxter's answer begins-" Yours of the 21st (27th) of ye fourth month I recd this 2nd of the 7th (September) just as I was sealing up letters for New England." So he wrote on the instant that he might add it to those already written to other New England friends. Who were these The Mathers, father and son, Increase and Cotton Probably. And perhaps John Woodbridge, of Kenilworth (or Kenlurewoth, N.E.).¹

¹ See my "Life of Baxter," --vol. ii. pp. 46-48.

This letter should be carefully read by any one who may wish to see the situation in England, as it appeared to Baxter, during the months which immediately preceded the King's Declaration of Indulgence (March, 1672). To him the state of the Nonconformists was deplorable. Under sufferings they had been drawn together and "seemed peaceable and calm,.. but the comparative ease due to the King's connivance had relaxed their unity and let loose their bad tempers both amongst themselves and against the prelatie party. There is less chance than ever of bringing them to confess "terms of universal concord... In one place, he has a sentence, broken by a dash and followed by two dotted lines, which half conceals and half reveals the charge that 2 or 3 (3 or 4) leaders (ministers) have been doing their utmost to influence Nonconformist opinion against peace and charity. He has watched them at it "for 15 yeares."

So he envies Eliot, notwithstanding his troubles. "Though you must begin low Oh I how much higher and nobler a work is it than our fierce contentions about we know not what ourselves I..

He ends with a word of advice that Eliot would so reframe his "good motion for Stated Synods"--which he hears is neglected--as to free them from the least suggestion of "tyranny." If you would do this " and bring them but to the practice, you would I think do much to your common strength and safety."

- (16) 30 May, 1682. A letter from Eliot after eleven years--though many letters have been written on both sides during this period and later. The occasion of it was two-fold : (1) the receipt of Baxter's funeral sermon for Mr. Henry Ashurst, preached in December, 1680, and sent to him by his eldest son." I did reade it wth much mixture of affection both of sorrow and joy... He notes, with special thanks, Baxter's recital of what Mr. Ashurst had done to protect and serve the London Corporation (in 1660), upon whose support Eliot's Indian work depended. And this leads him (2) to beg Baxter that he will use all his powers of persuasion with the Corporation to supply the money required to print a revised impression of the Old Testament in the Indian tongue. "We have done the New Testament and Psalms but canot get leave to print the Old Testament, web the Indians do earnestly cry for." I suppose he means that his own, and others, influence with the corporation has failed. Mr. Dudley, "one of our (two) public agents,.. is on his way to London

and will put the case strongly. Eliot is sure too that he will commend himself to Baxter as a delightful personality.

THE LETTERS.

I. October 16, 1656.¹

REV'ND AND VERY MUCH RESPECTED IN CHRIST,

Though I am a stranger to you by face, yet in neere bonds by faith, and we dayly meet at the throne of graice, though (to my h(u)mbling) the wing of your faith in holy Meditation caryeth you thither oftener yn my dull and unreddy spirit can be hailed up unto. Sr, the Lord hath, of late, laide his hand upon me in his fathrly visitation, wch, in respect of bodyly paines, hath beene very heavy and bitter, but the Lord, by the precious Visitation of his Spirit, hath made them very sweet, I blesse his holy name; and one meanes wch the Lord used to sweeten the cuppe was a booke wh the good Spirit of the Lord assisted you to write, and much of it, in your sicknesse, if not all in much bodyly infinnity--the booke you title the Sts Everlasting Rest Oh wt a sweet refreshing did the Lord make it to be unto me! and especially when I came at the bottom, that blessed poynt and patterne of holy meditation.² Now, resp(ec)ted and deare Sr, the sense and savor web the Lord hath impressd on my spirit by these your holy labors, doth imbolden me to make a motion to you, and a request, yt you would spend the rest of your life in writing practical meditations. The world is full of polemical books and doctrinall, and yourselfe I p(er)ceive have done a good share, but (if I mistake not) there is no poynt more usefull than practical meditation, and no poynt lesse insisted on. If I should guesse at the reason by the glasse of my owne heart, it is because it is too little used, or indeed exp(er)imentally known. Besides, it is a rare gift, especially to follow a meditation to the bottom, and bring it to an issue, and to set it forth for a patterne. Now, it seemeth to me yt the Lord hath eminently both indowed you with yt gift and exercised you in yt grace, and, therefore, it seemeth to me yt the Lord hath fited and called you to be serviceable to the faith of the Church in yt kind of service, wherein so few have labored. Give me leave, revnd Sr, to take the boldnesse to p(ro)pound yet more p(ar)ticularly:

¹ Dr. Williams's Library, London: Baxter's Letters, Toi. 3, 7a.

² Part iv. of the S.E.R

1. What if you should write a practical meditation upon all the chief steps and operations of spirit through the whole work of conversion?

2. What if you sh'ld write practical meditations upon all the severall great acts of faith and grace in union and comunion wth Jesus Christ, through the chief acts of vivification?

3. What if you should write practical meditations upon the chiefe -and most common-conflicts of Christians in the sp(iritu)al war agst world, flesh, and devil, even all kind of temptations, I meane the more obvious?

4. Wt if you should write practical meditations for the Sab(bath) both p(re)pa(rit)ory-for morning, when goeing to meetinge, when sitting there after the worshipe, for the vacancys in administrations, of sacraments¹ especially, yt (of) the b(a)p(tiz)ing. Meditations at returne, at home. A meditation for a minister when his work is done, etc.?

5. Wt if you should ad meditations in family go(vern)ment and in following or callings?

Sr, I feare I have beene too bold, but your love I know will take it at the best, and your wisdo will see my meaning and aime. I scribe these lines as I ly on my bed and in great paine. I know you know how to pittie in yt case. Thus comiting you and all your holy labours to the Lord, and beging your prayers, I rest.

Your unworthy fellow labourer
in or Lords Vineyard

JOHN ELIOT.

Roxbury this 16th of the 8th. 56.

Endorsed—'To the reverend his very much respected friend and
brothr Mr. Baxter minister of God's word at Kederminster
in Worcestershire These present.'

II. January 20, 1656/7.¹

MOST DEARE AND HONORED BROTHER,

I was not so glad to receive a Letter from yor hand, as sad when I saw ye contents of it : yt ye Lord by his visitation should take you off yt blessed worke of Preaching to ye Indians, wch you have beene long engaged in. I know no worke in all ye world yt I thinke

¹ Dr. **Williams's** Library, London: Baxter's Letters, Toi. iii. 9a.

more highly and honorably of yn yors; and consequently no p'son whom I more honor for his works sake; and therefore none whose loss or disablement would be more greivous to me; especially hearinge yt there is no man left yt is so well able to manage yt worke (for want of ye Indian language) if God should call you off. But we hope ye Church's Prayers shall prevaile for yor continuance and enablement. It is a sad and strange thinge to or consideration here, yt so few of ye Indians should be wonne to Christ from ye first plantation to this day. And I should be glad to heare what it is yt you find ye greatest stop. As to my wrightings, yt anythinge of mine should be usefull to you is matter of thankfullnes to God; but it is as *his* and not as *mine*. And for ye wrightings you invite me to, I know not a man whose invitation would have more authority on my mind: and how far God may lead me to obey you, I canot tell. But indeed my worke is all cutt out to my hands by Providence and necessity: the neerest objects worke most strongly, and the neerest worke is so strictly mine, yt I canot so oft looke further as I desire. The p(ar)ticular charge I have is great, and my strength small ; and I may allmost say, for such kind of worke as wrightinge and Preachinge, yt I doe as much as I can, and am not able to doe more yn I doe. Though I hope I am past controversyes, yet I have begun more practicall Treatises yn I am like to finish, and therefore doe not see any p(ro)bability yt ever I should reach ye worke you sett me! But I much approve of it, and heartily thanke you for ye motion; and should most gladly attempt it, if it would please ye Lord to p(ro)tract my dayes so long, and not force me off it, by puttinge more unavoidable worke into my hands. Though I doubt some will enforce those Arguments agt such formes of meditation web are coiiionly used agt formes of Prayer: And I must confess yt I apprehend so small a difference in ye cases, yt I marvaile yt they yt are so offended wth ye one, are not yet, yt I can heare of, offended at ye other: I thinke it is but bec(aus)e, ye scruple is not yet putt into their heads. And, deare Sir, were it not an excellent worke for ye Pastors of yor Chh to joyne in an earnest p(er)swasive to union, to ye Presbyterian and Congregationall Brethren in England, and to p(ro)pound ye termes in certaine Propositions.? Sure it might doe abundance of good. Yor Authority is yet great with ye godly of both Partyes: If it prevailed not with all, it would with many. What hath ye Church and Christian cause suffered by or breach! And wt

a pretious mercy would or healinge be! For my p(ar)t I thinke it not hard to find Reconciling Principles, if we could hut bringe men to Reconcilinge dispositions and attempts. And this, Perswasion and Interest and Authority must doe with most; even more yn arguments. I have oft brought divers so far together yt in practicall points they sticke on nothings but this, whether they should, or should not, take members p(ro)miscuously out of all Parishes; And for ye Country they yielded to the negative: And for ye Citty how easy were it to p(ro)-pound some termes, on wch it might in certaine cases, and after certaine meanes, be done, to ye quiettinge of both p(ar)tyes. Pardon this boldness, and accept this returne, from him yt heartily prayes for yor Recovery, and remaines

Yor unworthy Brother.

RICH. BAXTER

Jan. 20 1656/7.

Endorsed-- 'to my Reverend and much honored Brother Mr John Eliot, Pastor of the Church at Roxbury in New England.
This present

III. October 7, 1657.¹

REVEREND AND MUCH ESTEEMED IN THE LORD,

I have received your christian and very loving letter wherein your deepe sense of my infirmity and eminent acceptance of my poore labours among the Indians, doth minister to my spirit matter of great humbling yt such a worme as I, should be, by my gracious father, set about such a work as should find so great acceptance am'g the saints. The Lord chose an unmeet vessel in the ey(e) of men, when he chose me, that all the glory might ascend to him, finding nothing in the instru-(men)tto reflect upon; and, furth(e)r, such acceptance of my poore labors doth minister to me great argumete, both of love and thankfullnesse to yourselfe and other of the saints, and especially faithfullnesse in the work-that it may indeed be found, at last, real and effectual, and such as may, in some measure, answer the joys and expectations and acclamations of the holy saints. Next, you desire to know why so few of the Indians are brought in, in so long a time. In the Lord's time what is done is accomplished. For many years together when

¹Dr. Williams's Library, London: Baxter's Letters, vol. ii. 274a.

the Indians resorted to houses of godly people, they saw their manner of life and wor(shi)p in families and in public also; where sometimes they would see and observe what they did, but liked not of it--yea, so disliked, that if any began to speak of God and heaven and hell and relig[ion] unto them they would presently be gone. So y^t it was a received and knowne thing to all English y^t if they were burdensome, and you would have them gone, speak of relig(ion) and you were pr(e)sently rid of them; and hence they oft frequented the houses of loose and carnal p(er)sons who did nev(er) speak of relig(ion) to them. But when the Lord put me upon the work, himselfe had g(athe)red a few pore ones against I came, as you may gather out of their confessions; and when the Lord had bowed the hearts of some he (was) pleased to send his spirit so am(on)g them as y^t more about us did quickly bow and come in, and such as bowed not fled farth(e)r off; and then this change was eminently observed by the godly, that they oft frequented and loved ye righteous and godly families and would set religious discourse on foot by their (questions?), and forsooke the frequenting of loose families. And this course the generality of all the natives in 20 miles space, doe hold to this day, save that of late (by the Apostasy, in p(ar)t, of a Sachem) some are grown worse.

Your loving acceptance of my motion about the poynt of *meditation*: I thank you for it. I am very sensible of your Apologie for a present delay, yet let me be bold to urge a little further.

I know assuredly y^t the heaps of your labours doe not take off, but quicken, your p(er)sonal communion with God. Now what if you should task yourselfe, and charge your owne spirit wth meditation work in such ord(e)r as eith(e)r your judg(me)nt or emergent occasions should put you on; and when you have beene with God--before your heart be either cooled or div(er)ted--bestow one quarter of an hour in a day to write what passed y^t evening betweene the Lord and your spirit, hereby in a short time you would find y^t this work would (furtim) be accomplished afore you are aware. P(ar)don, I pray, my boldnesse and foolishnesse, thus to talk.

For exceptions agst forms of meditation (as of prayer), though this giddy age is lyable to p(ro)duce monsters, yet such conceits are not likely: bec(ause) sett and stinted forms of public prayers was the exception of the godly, not all *formes-here* some fly out agst all'.¹

¹ Interlined.

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Besides, meditation is p(er)sonal not social work, and I have not heard (that I know of) exceptions agst set formes in secret ; but this is obvious. Your fellow motion about p(ro)positions of mediation betwixt Presbyterians and Independents is a weighty and good matter, but hard to be done by us at this distance. They yt are neare the mark may better tell how to aime at, and hit, the spirit of the times.

The pith of what follows is this:--

(a) undoubtedly good will to cooperation and union is the chief need--' the burden of the work lyeth in calming and composing of spirits.'

(b) Eliot is of the same opinion as Baxter that the 'separatist' way of forming a Church by calling out ' the choicest persons of sundry parishes is wrong.

" I cannot approve of it. I would not be so dealt by, that if I have one or two or a few jewels in my interest another should come and rob me of them." The better way is to let them remain in the parochial assemblies and act as salt on their neighbours. This has been his own way with his Indian converts. He has encouraged them not to come out and "joyne to English churches." "No, rather let them keepe Sabbath and worship together, and the strong help the weak."

(2) Nevertheless it is necessary "to enjoy Christ in his pure ordinances" and, to that end, to keep away from the sacrament " the ignorant and prophane and scandalous." But this is not to be so done as unduly to offend and alienate the latter. Let " the godly saints attend to both these works together," i.e. let them "attend the work of Christ in reforming parochial assemblies "; and, at the same time, let them meet with their minister, as in church covenant, and hold communion together--they and their families--and so enjoy the seals and censures (as need is) together. Apparently such select fellowship of kindred souls is not to take the place of that parochial communion to which all the baptized may come. Eliot speaks of it as something which he had met with before he left England; and mentions Dr. Thomas Goodwin and Mr. Philip Nye--leaders of the Independents--as if, in a preface they had written to Mr. Hooker's work touching conversion they agreed with him. This passage is important:

"I have known before I came to N.E. in the BBs times, a company of Christians who held frequent comunion together, used the

censure of admonition, yea and of excommunication, wth much presence of Christ, only they had not officers, nor the sacraments; and, notwithstanding this their liberty together, they held publik Parochial communion so far as avoyded offence, and interested themselves in all good means for the publik good of the p(ar)ish where they lived. Dr. Goodwin and Mr. Nye have put a pr(eti)ous Epistle before Mr. Hooker's worke touching conversion, where they shew how a comon p(ro)fession accepted for Christianity will soone cause conversion, that necessary saving work. Now, in this way of Christians injoying a twofold comunion, and that w(it)hout offence, may not p(ar)ochial comunion be upheld so as to keepe the whole heape of chaff and come together, only excluding the ignorant and prophane and scandalous fro(m) the sac(rament) and other pr(i)viledges by the imp(ro)ving the discipline of Christ.

"And, besides this, may not the holy Saints, who are called higher by the grace of Christ, injoy together a more strickt and select comunion, unto wch they may gath(e)r together fro many p(ar)ts of the C(oun)try or City?

"But I am called off. I shall no further trouble you at p(re)sent but com.ending you and all your holy labours unto the Lord, I rest

Your unworthy brother in the
Lord's Vinyard

JOHN ELIOT

Roxbury this 7th of the 8th. 57

Endorsed-" To the reverend his much respected friend and brother
Mr Baxter minister of God's word at Kederminster." These
present.

III. Towards the end of 1667.¹

ANIMADVERSIONS ON MR. ELIOT'S BOOK FOR STATED COUNSELLS.

- P. 1. [*with one heart*] should not be in the definition of a visible church.
P. 2. [They have power to call officers], they have power to *choose* those to be *their officers* who were before . . . officers indeterminately. But more fully and properly the officers have power to call them to be a church. . . . The people never give that

¹ Dr. Williams's Library, London: Baxter's Letters, vol. vi, 183a.

authority which constituteth an officer of Christ... Yet it is indifferent whether he first calls them to be *his pal-ticular* flocke, or whether they first call him to be *their particular* pastor, as long as there is a mutuall consent, for this appropriation.

P. 4, § 6. [*civil & publicke*] can meane no more but their extrinsick respect to the Magistrates call, and to the Civill state.

Ib., § 7. The members constituent of a Councill are ye *Pastors of ye Churches*, whether *messengers* or not, together with *brethren*, acting only as brethren, if need be....

P 5, § 9. I much agree with you yt ye *great end of Councillis is counsel!* for the concord of many Churches. So BP Usher said to me, yt in Councillis Bps were not properly to governe the Church but to maintaine a comunion of churches. . . . but I must adde yt though congregating in a Councill do give Pastors no authority over one another, or over any absent Pastors, nor any new power over other mens flockes, yet I see not but yt the Pastors there congregated, retaining still their governing power over their severall flockes, may exercise it *there*, by convenient acts." Acts, e.g., which concern the ordering of public worship, or an act which decrees " ye common excommunication," say of an Arian, etc. Such acts agreed upon by the Pastors in Council for the good of the Churches fall within its scope--to promote communion or concord--and should meet with obedience. "Concerning the numbers 12 and 24 and the *whole method* here presented" Baxter doubts if the Scriptures cited will amount to a proof that these are of divine appointment; but he thinks that reason combines quite well with Scripture to " present the frame as very handsome and convenient where it may be had, and such as would greatly tend to concord and edification " . . .

P. 33, § 8. The Law of Moses was the Civill Law of ye Jewes Republicke and ye priest himselfe had p(ar)t of ye Civill power. But Christ's Ecclesiasticall Lawes are not our Civill Lawes, nor have Councillis as such any civill power. I therefore firmly hold (1) yt no Magistrate is to cut off or punish any man simply because he disobeyeth a Councill.... But he must first himself heare and try the cause, and judge accordingly. In some cases a Councill is to be disobeyed."

(2) " yt Magistrates may take cognisance of offences comitted agt ye Church or the interest of Christ, before they come to a Nationall

Assembly. I see no reason but (that) in every church it would do well to have some Church-Justice or Magistrate to keepe peace and order, and to secure ye civill interest, and punish vice."

(3) "And when a Nationall Council is sinfully disobeyed, and ye magistrate too, yet Death may be too great a punishment. The faults against them may be various and require various degrees of punishment. And it will be thought scarce congruous to say yt *Councils are only for advise*, and yet yt *those should be suppressed who rest not in their advise-unlesse* ye Magistrate have tryed ye cause and found that ye advice was so necessary as to aggravate ye offence to such deserts. The *Supream power* in England hath determined of many points of conformity by the advice of a Nationall Assembly, and yet few thinke yt Nonconformity deserveth death. Its safer doing too little than too much in such cases. But I suppose Mr Eliot speaketh onely of what may be done in such great and necessary cases."

Cap. I. § i. p. 35. "He is too p(ar)ticular and strict in describing ye Qualification of churches or church-members. For he would hereby shut out allmost all ye congregational Churches in England (yt I have knowne) by imposing upon them a promise [*to be guided in ye comon concernments of religion by y holy advice of y forenamed orders and councils*] : for such stated Councils as he describeth are agt their Judgmt. And though I much rejoyce in Mr Eliot's reconciling designe and frame, yet I cannot be so much for it, as to shutt out all p(er)sons or churches from our Com.union, or from the honor of *Reforming-churches* who consent not, so long as they consent to all things which are of true Necessity." He then goes on to say that "we that have justly blamed ye Congregationall men for shutting out others by too strict conditions, must not comit ye fault agt them which we have blamed them for." We ought to be content with "the Doctrine of Christ and ye concordant practice of all ye primitive Churches," viz. that nothing is required for Church membership but " ye profession of repentance for sins past, and of assent and consent to ye baptismall covenant." He follows this oft-repeated statement with some of his oft-repeated implications of it (to the number of ten)-familiar to any reader of Baxter-and winds up with the no less familiar assertion that the exacting of stricter terms has been and still is a prime cause of the heart-burning strife which divides Church from Church and makes peace impossible. After all, however, he found much more to

approve than to criticise in his friend's scheme of proposals. In fact, "as those called Presbyterians in England 8 or 9 years ago and more would gladly". on his terms have united for communion of Churches "with ye sober and moderate of the congregational way," "so do they now exceedingly rejoice to find many healing concessions from New England as are in ye propositions of your Synod ;¹ but much more would they rejoice, and take our union as almost accomplished if this platform of Mr Eliot's were commonly owned by the brethren of ye congregational way."

The letter is signed " I rest yor brother Ri. Baxter,.. but is neither endorsed nor dated.

V. 10 January, 1667/8.⁹

REVER(E)ND BROTHr AND DEARELY BELOVED IN CHRIST,

"By a friend I did thankfully receive your animadversions upon that pore little script of mine, the comunion of Churches wherein my poynt is not to dispute men to my opinion-I have no faculty yt way--but to propose such moderate wayes of mutual condescension of yt by (which) we might come to such a compliance as to walk together in unity, love, and peace, and be one in o(u)r comunion of Churches, wch onenesse is (so) desireable in the eyes of Christ as yt he hath prayed for it 4 times in a few lines of yt mediatorial prayer J(ohn) 17 ... give me leave reverend and dearly beloved brother ... to request of God and you yt both my heart and yours may act in this case, not like litigants standing on a sea of glass mingled with fire, but like overcomers yt handle the glasse but leave out and lay by all the fire...

Two points stand out in this letter:--

(1) As against Baxter's judgment, he defends the extreme penalty in the case of persons who obstinately refuse submission to the ecclesiastical and Civil Authority-relying on Deul 17. 11, 12.

"Upon this poynt the Quakers were put to death here in N.E. --wch I shall expresse in yese 8 p(ro)positions.

1. Ye w(er)e not w(it)hin the reach of any eccle'siasticall p(ro)cesse, though we used, *charitative*, wt ecclesiastical helpe we

¹ The Synod held at Boston in 1662. See Walker's "Creeds and Platforms of Congregationalism," p. 313 ff.

² Dr. Williams's Library, London: Baxter's Letters, vol. ii. 276a.

could but no censure. W(ha)t have we to doe to gudg ym
yt are w(it)hout?

2. Ye first fell under civile p(ro)cesse who determined nothing about ye opinions but determined the persons to peace and order.
3. Ye refused and were irreclaimable, even to the shaking of our all, through the infirmity of the multitude and badness of the times.
4. Ye p(er)sisted so to doe, til it came to ye sup(r)eme civile authority.
5. The sup(r)eme power tooke much pains wth ym, wth long patience, and p(r)oceeeded by sundry steps and degrees against ym.
6. The final sentence of the supreme civile authority was, yt ye should returne to yr owne place, out of or Jurisdiction in peace; and if ye returned hither againe, and make disturbance ye should be put to death.
7. After a season, ye did returne againe and make disturbance as formerly ye had done, for wch ye w(er)e apprehended and condemned to dy, upon the former sentence, according to the law of God. Deut. 17. 12 : the man that will doe p(re)sumptuously and will not harken unto the Judg, even that man shall dy.
8. After condemnation a p(ar)don was offered ym upon yr submission, but (the)y w{er)e pr(es)umptuously obstinate, and so dyed.

(2) He begs for a kindly acceptance of this, his own opinion; and, further, of what he has to say with reference to the terms of admission to full Church-membership-" the almost only difference " of any moment between them I That these terms demand the visible seal of Baptism, annexed unto a visible covenant, is certainly what he believes and practises. That is a principle which he dare not surrender. It marks the essential difference between the visible Catholic Church and the visible Particular Church. Baptism alone admits to the one, a covenant of heartfelt dedication *to* Christ admits to the other. "And, yrfore, our praying Indians first combined into a church covenant and yn I did by virtue of my mission unto ye service of Christ wch I have fro the Church wroff I am an officer,

baptize ym." "In like manner all yt give up ym/selves to Christ, and make a lively confession of him, we first admit ym into the fellowship of the Church and yn baptize ym," As to the question, who should judge of the candidate's sincerity and knowledge, Eliot both agreed and disagreed with Baxter, who reserved the right of judgment to the officers alone, whereas Eliot, while granting this to be the ordinary rule, reminded him that "believers are not like ordinary people, they are kings and priests and princes in all lands." "No man on earth is (so) fitt ecclesiastically to judge, according to his measure and manner, in a spiritual cause, as a believer." "God and man will have more respect to the judgment of a sound believer yn of an ungodly officer." Thus to give its place to the spiritual judgment of the Church is not to make Church government a democracy. The normal authority of its officers remains untouched. But their authority is not absolute. Church government is by no means an oligarchy. In another paragraph Eliot yields a general assent to Baxter's view of what should be a sufficient "qualification of the communicants." "We doe practise in or Church upon as low termes as you doe expresse." This--he seems to say--was partly induced by consideration for the young people. "We yt have lived to bury the most of the good old generation of p(ro)fessors doe by experience see yt our youth canot fill the roums of yr farthers, and yet are such as are to be encouraged and received in the Lord. We ourselves were onc(e) young and greene, and it was a wise saying of him yt s(ai)d --*patres tequum esse sentiunt, nos jam jam a pueris illis co-nasci sumus*. We find use of yt notion in or ecclesiastical societys and comunion. The care and wise management of the lambs of the flock, is one 3rd p't of the charge of the ministry, and in some respects the difficultyst. Sure enough it is the busyest p't of the work, to do it well and faithfully."

So much for easing access to the sacraments with a view to ultimate full Church-membership. But he ends on a note of 'no compromise' in the matter of a pure Church. "In our last Synod we agreed to allow degrees of communion... and I find it my chiefe difficulty so to argue my heart to be true to Christ and faithfull to the soules of the flock in my condescending to such a latitude; and I find great reason to beare with, and excuse, ym yt are most strikt in yt poynt, and rather encourage yn discourage such, because the streame and multitude are

pr(o)ne to run into such latitude, and ye be but few yt have zeale and courage to stand up for the striknesse of the rule. It is a great wisdom and mercy of Christ that there be some to ballance yt end of the scale, and stand up to beare witnessse unto yse poynts. It is an unspeakable grace yt Christ hath dispensed in these times to raise up so many Congregationall Churches to beare witnessse in yt poynt." "I have now done, and together wth y⁵ paper am bold to p(r)esent you wth another of my little scripts, corrected, and wth some small additon, and one great point aded, wch I only p(ro)pose, viz., yt magistrates should be chosen by the Churches to be members of the Councils . . . beloved Sr, as I doe acknowledge myselfe much obliged to you for your animadversions, I request you to oblige me further, to object still, and let me know how it is reputed among God's people. I have beene over bold wth you. I shall cease to give you further trouble at pr(es)ent. I beg prayers and comit you and yours, and all your holy labors to the Lord, and rest

Your unworthy fellow labourer
in our Lord's Vinyard ¹
JOHN ELIOT.

Roxbury this 10th of the 10th. 67.

VI. 22 January, 1667/8.²

REVEREND BROTHER,

I did very lately write unto you, wrin I expressed my thankfullnesse for your animadvers(ion)s on my pore script, and made some retume unto such poynts as you w(er)e pleased to touch. I hope you have received it and yt I shall not need to send a duplicate.

I also sent you another of the same booke corrected, and in it a Schedule³ aded in the page 5, in wch Schedule in the first pag(e) of it--lin(e) 37--I desire you to blot out these words (be mixt, &). Enough is said wthout these words and these words are lyable to an objection beyond my intent and meaning--wch is better p(r)esented if any beside yourselfe should have the sight of it.*

¹ This letter runs to three closely written and obscure folio pages.

² Dr. Williams's Library, London: Baxter's Letters, vol. ii. 229a.

³ This schedule is not in the Bodleian copy.

* also pag. 24 l(i)n(e) 11, after [contributions] put in, [for pious and charitable uses]. Bodleian copy adds: 'to spread and propagate the Gospel to all the world.'

Sr, I desire to be a doeing in the Lords work though I am but a lit(t)le one and can doe but lit(t)le. If I may but stir up and p(ro)voke others to be at work, I account yt I have done some good. The great want is, the uniting of Gods servants, w(hi)ch, were it attained, you would soone heare that p(ro)mised great voyce saying Come up hither: for the resurrection of the saints is now past (Heb. xi. 19)-As Abra received Isaak fro(m) the dead, so doe, and ought, we to receive all the godly in Engl(an)d who were bound, th(ei)r throat open, the sword drawen. There wanted only the word, and yt God alone stayed. Our Indian work yet liveth in these dark times, though it is still a day of small things. Christ is am{on}g us and there are yearely aded unto the Church, and also unto the numb(e)r of p(ro)fessing praying Indians. We greatly need your prayers and doe crave ym; and thus comiting your holy labors, and all yours, unto the Lord, I rest

Your unworthy brother
in or Lord Jesus
JOHN ELIOT.

Roxb(ury) this 22n of the 11th. 67.

Endorsed-- " for his reverend brother Mr Richard Baxter these present"

VI. 27 March. 1668.¹

REVEREND AND MUCH HONOURED BROTHER.

" I have thankfully received yr corrected copy with ye two letters. I shall passe by the most of yors in this returne, because it containeth not matter of disagreement but of concord; and therefore requireth only my professed gladnes both for your zeale for unity in times when the common juvenile zeale doth worke all towards exasperations and divisions; and, also, for those moderate principles web are the congruous meanes to so good an end. But these few things in web our judgmts yet stand at the greatest distance I shall select to give you these briefe animadversions on."

1. They are agreed, it seems, in thinking that the work of a minister is first, on the world (to convert and baptize) and next on the Church (to edify and guide) ; they are agreed, too, that" neither the Call of the Infidell World nor of the private members of any Church is necessary ... to make a minister, but only to appropriate him in speciall

¹ Dr. Williams's Library, London: Baxter's Letters, vol. iii. 74a.

relation to themselves." But Eliot says that the (New England?) churches dissent from this. That is, I suppose, they hold that no man can be a minister, though he may be a preacher, unless he has been called by a Church, whether at home or abroad. But, says Baxter, "I fully agree wth you that persons differing in this point may yet hold brotherly comunion in the same Church."

2. The second point of difference concerns the power resident in Councils, as to which it is enough to say that Baxter would reserve to them full right to discuss and decide all matters affecting the government of the churches in virtue of the fact that the Councils consist of Pastors and Elders who are never mere delegates of the people. What the people can do is to send occasional representatives when the business in hand is of special interest to them, or they can instruct and desire their pastor to speak for them. Such action of the people through a representative may carry great weight, but it must not be allowed, or be expected, to dictate a decision. Eliot, however, while consenting to this view so far as to exclude the people from arbitrary interference with the administrative power of the Council, urged that the people are the *source* of the Council's power, and ought to be consulted freely, if not constantly, on its exercise.

3. But "passing over many gratefull concessions of yrs wch tend to our much desired concord, I come next to yt truly-great difference such as I thought had never been betweene you and me. I beseech you pardon me while I speake freely of the Cause. While I highly honour yr person, I confesse I read yr words wth admiration" (i.e. amazement) "as speaking very strange doctrine to me (wch I must gladly tell you ye congregational men here, of chiefe name, are utterly against and are wholly of my mind). Do you indeed think yt the Catholike Visible Church is not united by a covenant, or that there is no covenant by wch men are not entered into it? Why, dear Sr, all the Christian World from the Apostles dayes till now, hath taken our very Christianity to consist in yt covenant wch here you seem to deny I The Covenant of grace and the Baptismall Covenant is one Christianity itselfe. . . . Deare Sr, my head and heart do scarce differ more from my little finger than the Christian Covenant of Baptisme differeth from a particular Church-making Covenant. Indeed, they may both be sometime joined together, but yt maketh them not one. A man may at one time be admitted into the Catholike Church

and into a particular Church by this conjunction of both Consents or Covenants. But a particular Church making a Covenant as such never made a Christian, but supposeth ym made. And Baptisme as such did never make any a member of a particular Church. The Church-making covenant is nothing but the consent of Pastors and People to their mutuall relations and the exercise thereof wth particular respect to one another One cause of our fractions is that the unity of the Catholike Church and the nature and necessity of Catholike Comunion is not well understood by the people ; but their narrow minds do looke allmost only to those little societies where they are p(re)sent. Nay, moreover, ye Church-making covenant itself doth not need to be exprest at all except *ad mel£us esse*. No more is required to particular-church-Comunion but mutuall consent of pastors and people any way signified, though there were never any expresste covent. If it be but by actuall meeting and communicating, it is as much expression of consent as is of necessity . . . deare brother, I crave your pardon while I'am the more earnest with you in this point because, as I honour yr worke above (any?) man's, so it more concerneth you yt preach to Heathens and Infidels than any man that I know of . . . (lastly) the Relation of a particular church member may twenty times cease ; but Apostacy *only* endeth ye relation of the Baptized. They yt live in a countray (of wch there are too many) where allmost all ye ministers are ignorant, or prophane or scandalous, and do therefore scruple stated comunion wth any of them, may yet be baptized Christians for all yt."

4. "As.to the point of the Bretherens Judging," in which Eliot took the congregational view, Baxter sums up-after distinguishing between "Judicium publicum et privatum, or, (1) the governing Judgment of a Judge by office, (2) the temporary decisive Judgment of a chosen Arbitrator, (3) the Voting Judgm(en)t of a meere comunity, only in order to concord and consent, (4) the discerning Judgm(en)t of every Rationall Subject" as follows: "The people have no Ruling power in the Admission of members nor in Judging of fellow Comunicants. Nor are they obliged to take any p(ar)ticular cognizance of the satisfactorynes of mens professions and qualifications. Because the keyes are put by Christ into other hands and never into theirs at all. To have the keyes is to be the Governors. Never did any Apostle or other minister of Christ in Scripture (that I know of) aske the consent of the people

before they baptized any. Nor did they ever examine any before they were admitted into their particular comunions, nor was the case opened to them for their consent ; but when the key-bearers let any in, ye people comunicated with ym. But if the pastors notoriously abuse their trust and goe agst ye Word of God, in doctrine or discipline, the people must use their 'Judicium discretionis,' both for their Innocency and their Concord, and may maintaine them both agt such pastors.

This seemeth to me so plain a truth yt I shall not tire you wth ye needles proofes of it, or wth a more tedious answering of all other objections agst what is here said. These foure are all in yr paper wch I shall trouble you with any opposition of, and gladly receive ye expressions of yr healing disposition and principles in the rest. And I am far from thinking yt even these are such as should keep the Church in any state of separation from each other. It is the great weaknes of our Judgmts and our Love wch caused, and continueth, our divisions. But I hope smarting experience at last will drive us together, and further our cure. Againe I intreat your pardon of the freedome of my expressions.

That the Lord would blesse your labours {above any mans I know) is the hearty and dayly prayer of

Yor unworthy Brother
Ri. Baxter.

Acton neere London,
Mar. 27, 1668.

Endorsed.--'To the Reverend and much honoured Brother Mr John Eliot, Pastor of the Church at Roxbury in New England.'

VIII. 15 June, 1668.¹

REVEREND AND DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER, MUCH HONORED
IN THE LORD JESUS,

Your professed good acceptation of my pore lines and p(ro)posals for a Christian and brotherly compliance, and peaceable walking together in the way of the Gospel so far as we have attained, I have with gladnesse received, and hereby I retume my acknowledgments of your love with all thankfulnessse. And why may not these and all the rest of or differences be transacted with such a spirit?

¹ Dr. Williams's Library, London: Baxter's Letters, vol. ii. 17a.

The time is coming wñ the sea of glasse shall be handled w(i)thout such intermixtures of fire by such as are overcomers (Rev. XL 2). Oh wñ shall we be overcomers I Oh yt the p(re)sent fires of God's furnace might so mollifie and melt yt juvenile ardor of inconsiderate zeale (of wch you give a gentle touch) yt it may no longer be blowne up into such paroxismes as are so prejudicial to peace, so scandalous to the Gospel of peace and love and so contrary to the Spirit of Jesus Christ I This, this is one of the great *remora'es* why Christ delayeth that brightnesse of his coming web shall shine downe Anti-Christ into destruction-though withall the very sweet savor of the crosse, the spreadinge of the grace of Christ, the raisinge and exertinge of the faith and patience of the saints, and the multiplications of Gods Israel under these p(re)sent pressures and calamities are no small beame of yt glorious coming of Christ according to his owne Word " then shall ye see the Son of Man coming in power and great glory." The saints' taking of their liberty is a greater effect of the power and glory of Christ yn if it were given them. We stand by in a corner of the world, and admire at the grace of Christ web is so illustriously powered forth upon the Saints, and we see the word of Christ accomplished, (so) yt the adversary standeth and beholdeth it wth amazement and know not how to hinder il

The poynts you please to bring under p(re)sent animadversion, as remaining under some (appearance at least of) difference are 4. And by yt time I have done I believe ye will be of very little consideration, yea, nothing as to hinderance of brotherly comunion either in the same Church or in the comunion of churches."

The four points are:--

1. "Touching our ministeriall office of weh I formerly had said that if one thinketh yt a minister is so made in generall by the P(res)bytery, afore he be called by any p(art)icular church, and, another holdeth yt ministeriall office and relation is essentially founded in the call of a p(ar)ticular church, where he doth administer, I see not yt this difference of opinion should hinder such Christians from any act of ecclesiastical communion. . . .

2. You p(ro)pose as a stated qn, viz., whether the members of Councils are only delegates of Churches w(her)in, though you are pleased to say yt we more differ, yet I discern very little difference at all. . . .

4. The 4th and last poynt you animadvert upon is about brethren's Judg(in)g, as you expr(es)s it. Wch poynt being thus st(at)ed and limited, (1) yt only such as are duely manifested to be believers be admitted to the exercise of yt power ; (2) yt they doe not act as rulers but as ruled, in an obediential app(roba)tion of and concurrence wth the sense of the rulers, I doe not see any difference. . . .

3. This is the point which you call "the truly great difference such as you thought should never have been betwixt us," and well you might so say of it if my opinion were indeed such as you here rep(re)sent it. . . . " When I say the Catholik visible Church are not united by a covenant, and therefore a member thereof is not a subject of the seale of the covenant, but a particular visible Church is united by a covenant ... you collect these two poynts (*a*) yt I hold yt the Catholik Church is not united to the Father, Son, and Ho(ly) Ghost by the covenant of grace ; (*b*) that the nature and use of Baptism is not to seale up or faith and Christianity, but only to seale up the particular Church making covenant. Against these two poynts you do very plentifully and strongly argue, and yet wth a sweetnesse of candor toward me, w(ho)m you take to be entangled in these two errors or rocks.

1. I doe most kindly accept your Godly fervor, and shall (according to my pore model) briefly declare my faith in these poynts. I believe the Catholik Church is united to Christ by faith. They are in covenant wth the Father, Son, and holy sp(ir)it by the covenant of grace ; that this theire covenant estate is made visible by theire professed and visible obedience to the rules of the Gospel; that the use of Baptism is to seale up this interest. It is the seale of a righteousnesse by faith, and therefore are we baptized into the name of the Father, of the Son and of the holy ghost, and nothing but apostasy cutteth us off from our baptismal interest in the covenant of grace. I fully concur with you in all this, etc. But the question (as I conceive) is not about the nature, use and end of Baptism but about the visible order of dispensing of Baptism, in wt order and station the dispenser is in; and in wt order and station the subject to w(ho)m it is dispenced standeth.

Againe, touching the covenant (1) there is the invisible covenant of faith, whereby we are all united to Christ; by w(hic)h we are invisibly united together, also, in the mystical body of Christ, and this state is made visible by our visible p(ro)feesion of relig(ion) and confession.

(2) There is a visible political Church-making covenant by wch we are visibly united into gospel Church-order; and this is sometimes (viz. in more reformed Churches) more explicit, but in more dark and apostate times more implicite, and app(ear)ing only in some actes of public comunion. This visible political covenant may sometimes be made afore the dispensation of Baptism, sometimes together w(i)th Baptism at the dispensation thereof as it was wont to be (and it is like, is still) in the administration of Baptism in England wh(er)e an explicit covenant is expressed at the administration. And (as you truly say) Baptism doth not make the party baptized a member of a p(ar)ticular Church, yea, it presupposeth him to be both a member of the Catholik Church (as you say) and of a p(ar)ticular church too (as I conceive). That the dispensor must be a lawfull minister of the Gospel is agreed on all hands. But in w(ha)t ecclesiastical estate the recipient is to be in, is the only question. . . . whatever the nature, use, and end of Baptism is, yet in respect of its visible and orderly dispensation, it is a Political ordinance, and as the dispensor, so the party to whom it is dispensed must be in politicall order, web is only found in visible Church state, not in Catholik Church state. Here I acknowledg is some difference but not such as should hinder or comunion, either in or church administrations or our comunion of churches." It is a mere *tantillum*. " Oh yt the Lord would at last p(er)suade the heart of his servants to meeknesse and patience toward such as differ fro us...."

"Thus, rev{er}end and dearely beloved brother, I have finished (my compliances I call ym rather yn replys) unto your judicious and loving animadversions; and the God of love and peace be wth you, and blesse all your holy labours, so prayeth

your unworthy broth(e)r and fellow labourer,

JOHN ELIOT."

Roxbury this 15th of the 4th. 68.

Endorsed--"For the Rev(er)end Mr. Richard Baxter, minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ"

IX. October 28, 1668.¹

REV(ER)END Sr, MUCH HONOURED AND BELOVED IN CHRIST,

"Overlooking my let(te)rs, I find yt in one place you saide you could not consent to the 7th chapter, as being too p(ar)ticular but said not in wt respects: for w(hic)h cause I returned no answer thereunto.

¹ Dr. Williams's Library, London: Baxter's Letters, vol i. 55a.

But because another faithfull and beloved brother, of the Congregationall p(er)swasion hath strongly objected against yt chap(ter), I thought it might not be amisse to give you so much trouble, among the multitudes of your holy and more weighty labours, as to read ov(er) what I returned in answer thereunto, which is as followeth.

" Reverend and beloved broth(er) in the Lord and kinsman after the flesh. Your Godly expostulations touching the 7th chap of my comunion of Churches, prop(os)ed w(it)h so much love, faithfullnesse and humility, does oblige me to be very thankfull to you, for your labour of love to me, and especially to the cause of Christ. I account myselfe engaged to a very considerate returne unto so great and weighty questions as you have p(ro)posed." His kinsman's objection is to Eliot's too strict method of sifting the wheat from the chaff, or the regenerate from the unregenerate, and making the Church to consist only of the former. If " you insist on this then, few parishes will afford a competent number to become a church: it may be one or two or three in a parish.... But, in such cases, what is to become of these twos or threes; and for such parishes who are to choose the delegates to your Councils? To Eliot's mind the matter resolved itself into a question of the right relation of parishes and churches to each other. It turned, too, on a stricter and looser conception of the Church.

He puts his answer into six propositions which do indeed clear up his position:--

"pp 1. The Parishes are Churches allready. However corrupted both in matter and forme, etc., there is some accepted matter, and some accepted forme, in their Sab(bath) assemblings to worship God, and in the ministry of the word, and in the ministration of the sac(rament)s, and prayere. This principle we in N(ew) E(ngland) have allways owned and dare not to this day deny it. Hence the work of Christ in Engl(an)d (and otherwhere also) is Church reformation out of the Antich(ris)tian apostasy.

"pp 2. There be many parishes in Engl(an)d, yea thousands through grace, that are capable of a pr(e)sent reformation, especially considering the great light that of late hath broak forth, both by the ministry and by the patterne of Congregationall Churches and by the present pressures. By all which meanes, Christ hath greatly in-lightened and prepared the people for church reformation.

"pp 3. If the Supr(ea)m powers comand the Parishes to be reformed in their Church estate and ordered into comunion of Churches,

there would presently be Councils in order, enough to cherish and traine up all the rest, in due order and season, into the proposed frame and order.

"pp 4. If there be a Godly minister, a godly ruling elder and a godly deakon, a good representative, though all the rest be generally weake as to the males ; there may be godly women who are accepted matter of the Church though silent and not vocal matter, and godly youth and servants also.

" pp 5. The orders of Councils, whose care it is to cherish up Parishes into a more reformed rule must transplant and remove (in a way of advice and p(er)swasion) godly and fit instruments fro(m) one parish to another where {th)ey may be of use to reforme the parish into a Church state. Churches ought to deny ym|selves, to let their choyse members who are not in office among ym|selves to be removed to other places where ey may be of publik service in the Kingd(om) of Christ. And upon this consideration, I believe yt there be saints in England, holy and well qualified, enough to bespangle all the Kingd(om) over, and to raise every parish in the whole nation to become a reforming Congregation.

" pp 6. The first act of a Parish in giving ym|selves up unto the Lord in the way of reformation and submitting to be ordered by the councils, doth bring all the members into a state of confirmation, or confirmed members of the Church ; whereby the dore is opened for the free passage of Baptism to their seed (Gen. 17. 7) but they are not yet hereby admitted into a state of full comunion, till some further fit manifestation of a worke in their hearts be p(er)formed. And though ey doe, by the guidance of Councils, elect officers, yet upon a strikt debate, only the duely manifested Godly do put forth a fraternal power of voting: the rest doe only consent and app(ro)ve, and what is defective is helped by the guidance of Councils. In these 6 p(ro)positions is conteined (in my pore understanding) a plaine and cleare answer and settlement of {so) much of the cause as is conteined and couched in your juditious p(ro)position... ."

The Parish to be regarded as in some real sense a Church--an inner Church in the full sense consisting of those few or many who gave evidence of a change of heart, or conversion--the use of these under the guidance of the Church council for the further reformation not only of their own parish but also of other parishes to which they might transfer themselves--this in brief was what Eliot advocated--to

which he added in a later paragraph that the Church Council presupposes the inner Church—the Church proper—as its "efficient cause." In other words, it is a creation of the inner Church, and yet says he (surely with some inconsistency) "seeing the Parishes are Churches I object not if their first act be to choose a Council." Eliot expresses high regard for the Congregational Churches of England. They have been "dispensations of grace of exceeding great use and benefit to all." They came into existence when the "supream authority," or the State, failed of its duty to reform the Parishes. Their origin was lawful and inevitable. But they must not be self-centred. Their chief end should be less their own edification than to convert the Parishes. He calls them to a universal home-missionary enterprise. The Church Councils he recommends are mainly to inspire and direct this. Let the Churches set them up and be guided by them spontaneously, or if the State should take the initiative let not the Churches be offended or slow to obey. And he is sure that the more sincerely Christian they are the quicker will be their obedient response. This is why he would narrow the entrance to the inner Church somewhat strictly. But if some plead for "greater latitude of charity"—so be it. *That* need not be any "impediment of communion of Churches." The thing is for all to unite in the work of furthering parochial and so national reformation. Such I think is a fair presentment of Eliot's views as described in the letter which he embodied in his own to Baxter on Nov. 25th, 1668. His last words were laden with sorrow : " Revnd Sr, I shall give you no further trouble at present, and but beg your prayers for me, who am greatly afflicted by the hand of the Lord in the death of my eldest son, a good workman in the vineyard of Christ, my assistant in the Indian work, a staffe to my age. He is in glory, I am still in the body, where I much need the Lord's special help, to whose grace and guidance I comit you, and rest

" Your unworthy brothr
in the Lord's work
"John Eliot."

"Roxb(ury) this 28th of the 8th, 68."

Endorsed-- " For the Rev(e)rend Mr Richard Baxter these present."

(To be concluded in the next issue.)