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A
Sigh for Peace:

O R,
The cause of Division discovered, &c.



T is certainly an easie thing (though pernicious) to fill the Church of Christ with Questions; and such too, as may carry a shew of strength against the most important Articles of our Faith. But it is not so easie for those who are sick of Questions or demands, to receive satisfaction by any endeavour whatsoever. And as in

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other points of faith ; the Questions of some have been endless, even so now that humour hath been and is much at work , against that solemn service of prayer, with the imposition of hands for the promised Spirit of God, as a gift pertaining to the members of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ. As is too apparent by sundry papers extant, and among the rest, one entituled, *A Search for Schism*, containing no less than an hundred Demands (though 40. only be the number set down by the Demandants) which are the more prodigious for that divers of them have been answered, by divers hands, and no reply made by the enquirers. What the reason hereof should be is doubtful, unless the opposers of this truth intend to state the Controversie anew (for I was told that this Book of Demands is but a preparatory to a greater work) and thereby become (more effectually) the disturbers and obstructers of that measure of unity remaining, and peace pretend.

But as in this we shall be too solicitous, so, neither in our Answer, shall we need to be voluminous, by tracing their demands one by one. For though the number thereof be many, yet they are reducible to three Heads, touching which the truth being evinced, the whole Body of their demands are answered.

Now

Now the Heads to which their demands may be reduced are these :

The first, concerns the constitution of those Congregations of Baptized Disciples who reject that solemn service of prayer with imposition of hands for the promised Spirit : viz. Whether they be true Churches of Christ or not ?

The second, respecteth the matter of Communion between those Christians who religiously observe prayer with the imposition of hands, as a principle of Christs Doctrine, pertaining to the beginning of Christian men ; and these who reject and oppose it.

The third, is touching the service it self, in respect of its grounds and ends ; as also in respect of the persons concerned in the practice thereof at this day.

That I may with the more facility and clearness proceed in the consideration of these particulars, I shall begin with the last first ; touching which particular, I shall endeavour to make good this proposition, viz.

That as God hath promised to give the Spirit of his Son (or his holy Spirit) to all that are the called of the Lord : So he hath appointed a solemn way wherein his Servants and Handmaids, generally, are to wait upon him for the reception thereof, which way is the prayers of the Church (performed

by her Ministers) with the laying on of hands, and this as a principle of Christian Religion, belonging to them in the minority of their Christian state.

For explication of some parts of this Proposition, it is meet that we shew, first, what we mean by the holy Ghost, sith some now, (as well as heretofore *Acts* 19. —) either by reason of ignorance or some worse cause, seem not to know, whether there be any holy Ghost. As if they had forgotten unto what they were Baptized. *Matth.* 28. 19.

By the Holy Ghost then, we do not mean the Spirit of man in its most reformed and elevated state imaginable; neither any created Spirit whatsoever.

But by the Holy Ghost, we mean that Spirit, by whose operation the Creation of the world was brought forth, and formed. *Gen.* 1. 2. *Job* 26. 13. And which knoweth all things, even the deep things of God, *1 Cor.* 2. 10. And which is present every where, *Psal.* 139. 7, 8, 9. Which Spirit we therefore believe to be one with the Father in nature and essence, and therefore rightly said to be God, *Acts* 5. 3, 4, 9.

Secondly, when we speak of mens receiving this holy Spirit, we do not mean that he dwels in them essentially and personally; for

so they cannot contain him. But he dwells in them by manifestation and operation. By gifts, according to 1 Cor. 12. By fruits, according to 1 Cor. 13. 4, 5, 6, 7. Galat. 5. 22, 23.

And seeing the ground of this so much neglected truth, the fourth principle of Christs doctrine, lieth much in that great promise of the Spirit of God, as the right of all the Disciples of Christ. It behoveth that we open the nature of that glorious promise, that being affected with the excellency, and made sensible of the necessitie thereof, we may the more devoutly seek for it, not only in our private devotion, but also in that special and publick way assigned in the holy Scripture for the obtaining so great a benefit.

Let it therefore first be considered, that to be under the common influence and operation of the Spirit, in the Ministry of the Word, in order to conversion, is one thing; and the reception of the Holy Ghost, as a Seal and confirmation of the souls of Christians, as it is the earnest of their inheritance, is another.

It is certain, a person may be eminently under the operation of the Spirit, in the first consideration; and yet be a stranger to the reception of the Spirit in the other; as ap-

peared first in the Apostles themselves, who though they were the persons which received the first fruits of the promised Holy Spirit, yet were they for some time in the profession of the Gospel before they received it.

For they did not receive the Spirit of promise till after the Ascension of our Lord, *Act. 1. 4, 5.* — *But wait for the promise of the father which (saith he) ye have heard of me; for ye are truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many dayes hence. John 7. 39. The Spirit was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.* In like manner the Samaritans were converted from the errour of their way, by the preaching of the word, and became the Disciples of Christ, and yet the Spirit of promise was taln on none of them *Act 8. 12, 15, 16.* The Ephesians also believed in God after they heard the Gospel of their salvation; But were not sealed with the holy Spirit of promise till after ward, *Eph. 1. 13, 14.* Agreeable hereunto is that question of the Apostle, *Act 19. 2. Have ye received the Holy Ghost SINCE ye believed?* The persons to whom this question was put, were believers in Christ, yea Baptized believers. Whence we are to note, that Baptized Disciples have right to the promise of the Holy Ghost; and indeed hence it

was that *Peter* could so confidently and universally promise (in the word of the Lord) the gift of the Holy Ghost to every one that doth repent of their iniquities, and are baptized in the name of the Lord *Jesus Christ* for the remission of their sins. *Acts 2. 38.* It appeareth therefore, that persons may be under the operation of the spirit of God in the Ministerie of the Word, to their illumination and conversion, so far as to be brought into a certain state of *Christi nity*, (for those that may be called *Disciples* are called *Christians*, *Acts 11. 26.*) and yet be without the enjoyment of the sealing and confirming spirit or promise, in themselves, which is yet more evident, from *John 14. 16, 17.* *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter— even the Spirit of TRUTH— for he dwelleth WITH you, and SHALL be IN you.* Note well, this promise doth not respect the spirit, as it worketh *Miracles*, only; but also, and indeed much more, the Spirit as it is a *Leader into all Truth*, called therefore the *Spirit of Truth*, yea, 'tis the Spirit in such wise as should abide with, and in the *Saints for ever*; yea, it is the *Comforter*, or *Spirit of Comfort*, and is therefore that gift of the Spirit which pertaineth to *Christians generally*.

Secondly, That this sealing and confirming

Spirit of promise belongs to Christs Disciples generally, whether male or female, I conceive some necessity to demonstrate, because the *Searchers*, to the intent, that at the least they may exclude *women* from the benefit of prayer, with the laying on of Hands, will not have them included in the word *THEM*, Acts 8. 17. but if we prove, that *women* have right to the promise equally with *men*, we shall not at all fear the trifling demands of the *Searchers* in their 29 Querie, which only serves, to shew the weakness of their cause, for it seems if it be true, that *women* (as well as men) had Hands imposed on them with Prayer, by the Apostles, for the Holy Spirit; then their cavils against the universality of the practice of laying on of Hands is (at least) the less considerable. Now that the promise of the Spirit extends to *Christian women as well as men*, appeareth from the Prophets foresight of the extent thereof, Isa. 44. 3. *I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground, I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon their offspring.* Joel 2. *And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh — and upon the servants, and upon the Handmaid in those dayes, will I pour out of my Spirit.* Which glorious promise was first fulfilled to the Christians, soon after the Assen-
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tion of our Lord, *Act. 2.* And now is the time, as well as then, for Christians to reap the fruit of that promise, *Acts 5. 32.* — the holy Ghost which God hath given to them that obey him. Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts. *Gal. 4. 6.* In Jesus Christ, there is neither male nor female, but if ye be Christs then are ye Abrahams seed, and Heirs according to promise. It is the Spirit of promise which doth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. And again, He that stablisheth us in Christ, and hath anointed us is God, who also hath sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our Hearts. Yea this, even this Spirit, is one of the great and precious promises by which Christians are made partakers of the Divine Nature, according to *2 Pet. 1, 3, 4.* Thus we see that the Scriptures do evince, that the Handmaids as well as the servants of the Lord; that the Children of God without exception; that the Church of God without rejection of any true Member thereof, have a clear indubitable right to the gift of the holy Spirit. And it is also evident that the promise of the Spirit, consists not only, no, nor chiefly in those gifts, which some say are now ceased, to wit, of Miracles, Tongues, &c. (though they have no Scripture for it) But this promise chiefly consists in the sanctifying graces, and sustains

*establiſhing comforts thereof, yea in that which
 ſealeth a Chriſtian to the day of redemption,
 (which tongues and miracles will fail to do)
 and in the mean time is like water to him that is
 thirſty, as before we have ſeen. 'Tis that Un-
 ction which the holy one which Teacheth Chriſti-
 ans all things, or Leads them into all truth. In
 a word, it is that reception of the Spirit
 which is above all gifts of Tongues, Propheſies,
 &c. called Charity; and is branched into meek-
 neſs, temperance, goodneſs and faith, yea, 'tis
 that gift of the Spirit by which the Love of God
 is ſhed abroad in the hearts of Chriſtians, be-
 ing the Spirit of Love, power, and a ſound mind,
 in the exerciſe whereof (I mean this gift of
 the Spirit) a Chriſtian is both accepted of God,
 and approved of men. So then we have the glo-
 rious promiſe of the Spirit remaining for, and
 pertaining to the Handmaids and ſervants of
 the Lord, in the moſt excellent gifts thereof
 as much as ever, and conſequently are as much
 concerned to ſeek for it as ever any was, and
 this leads me to the ſecond branch of my Pro-
 poſition, viz. The dutiful obſervance of that way
 which is allowed and confirmed from Heaven for
 obtaining that heavenly donation.*

That God ſhould by his Prophets foretell of
 ſuch grace, and ſo often mention it as ſo great
 a promiſe; the reception whereof is ſo neceſſary,
 as

as without which Christians do want the lively evidence, seal & confirmation that they are the Sons of God, and heirs with Christ; & not assign some peculiar way, and special means, for all that are concern'd, to make use of in order to their obtaining it, seems not to be credible; which yet he hath not done, if prayer with imposition of Hands by the Church (or her delegates) be rejected; if otherwise, it were well if some body would assign us what peculiar way the word of God directs us to, as being that which God hath ratified from heaven, as a means peculiar for that end and purpose; which if any astay to shew us, Let them also consider why the Apostles took that way which is so much neglected by our Brethren, if there were any other particular means and way to be used for the end aforesaid? But if it be said that no special way or means is left us, but the general Ordinance of prayer &c. We must then say, it is not like the dealings of God in other cases; for ordinarily when it pleased God to promise or give some special favour or gift unto his Church, he therewithall ordered some solemn or service to keep in memory that his favour, and to be a means to partake of the fruit of his promise: Thus the Covenant which God made with *Abraham* and his seed, the deliverance which he wrought
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for them, the great things which he promised them, must be perpetuated, and waited for, in the use of such wayes, as in the wisdom of God, were thought fit for the memorial or reception of these favours respectively. And so must the remission of our sins by the death of Christ, be sought for, and signified, not only by the word and prayer, in general; but particularly, in the Baptisme of repentance, for the remission of our sins also. Nor must we only receive the flesh and blood of Christ, by the word preached, but particularly, in the solemn use of the Table of the Lord also. In like manner, we are not only to seek to God for his Spirit in the constant and ordinary course of Prayer, but also in a special and peculiar way of Prayer, allowed and confirmed from Heaven, for that very end and purpose, which is the point to be demonstrated according to what the Scriptures in that behalf doth teach us.

And first from that place, Acts 8. 14, 15, 16, 17. *Now when the Apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John who when they were come down prayed for them that they might receive the holy Ghost — then laid they their hands on them and they received the holy Ghost.* For the better understanding of this place, it is meet to consider that such as pray
to

to God, ought to know that the thing which they pray for is attainable; and that they know it is the will of God that they should ask of him that very thing which they pray for, especially when the prayer is made positively; I mean, without conditional expressions, as in the case before us the prayer is such, as indeed it ought to be without doubting, when we ask of God those gifts which he hath promised. *James* 1. 5, 6, 7. But if by the holy Ghost in this place, be meant only the extraordinarie gifts thereof, such as *Tongues, Miracles, &c.* Then certainly there was no ground from any promise of God, to pray that all those persons which were *Baptized in Samaria, should so receive the Spirit.* No, nor any ground from any promise of God to pray for so much as any one particular person among them all, sith the Promise of God in that case, is not made to this or that man or woman by name; and consequently here was no ground for the Apostles to pray absolutely and believingly, but rather doubtingly, for that very thing which they purposely prayed for. Seeing it is evident that not all the members of a Church, but rather very few (and them also unknown by name to any man, no not to the Apostles themselves. *1 Cor.* 12. 11, 29. *Acts* 1. 24.) are chosen to be Prophets, workers of miracles, &c. And therefore it followeth that there could be no such laying

laying on of hands at all practised here, as some imagine, namely a laying on of hands for the extraordinary gifts of the holy Ghost. For though it is true, that God did sometimes give such gifts of his Spirit in the way of Praier with laying on of Hands, yet that such gifts was the only proper end of that service, is confidently denied, because (as before) it was impossible to know (in any ordinarie way) for whom to pray, or on whom to impose Hands, whether on men or women, seeing neither sex is exempted from the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit.

It is certain that God gave the gift of Tongues, &c. in the Ministerie of the Word. *Act 10.* Yet it doth not follow thence, that such gifts are the only proper end of preaching the Word; but the undoubted end of the Lord, in that Ordinance is, *that men believe, and be saved* (though perhaps they never receive the gift of tongues, prophesie, &c.) and this is certainly that end which shall be attained by all that rightly accept that means of salvation. *John 20. 31.* These things are written that ye might believe, and in believing that ye may have life through his name.

Nor will *Acts 19. 6.* prove that there is, or ever was any such thing as laying on of Hands for the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit only, for
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still we must distinguish between an *effect onely*,
 and that which is *the undoubted end* of any ser-
 vice. The reasons even now urged, do for-
 bid us to say, that tongues, miracles, &c. was
 the undoubted or precise end of laying on of
 Hands, *Acts 19.* because the service was uni-
 versal; but extraordinarie gifts are particular
 only; And let it be seriously considered, that
 if *Paul* had found *twelve hundred* men instead
 of *twelve* who had not received the holy Ghost
 since they believed, ought he not to have done
 that to them all which he did to these? Doubt-
 less he ought; yet who can imagine, that such
 gifts as Tongues, Miracles, &c. should be gi-
 ven to each individual? This would be far
 from that order which God hath beautified his
 Church withall. *1 Cor. 12. 29, 30.* And where-
 as *Paul* in this place, and *Peter* and *John* in
Acts 8. is conceived by some of our opposites,
 to have imposed hands to work Miracles for
 confirmation of the Word, this is a very great
 mistake, for then there is no reason to imagine
 that the practice of laying on of hands should
 have been general (as doubtless it was.) For
 seeing that the healing of one Cripple *Acts*
4. 16. was sufficient to convince open enemies
 that the power of God was with his Apostles;
 Then surely it was not necessaric that all the
 Baptized should miraculously speak with
 tongues,

tongues, for to convince themselves or others that the Word which they had received was from heaven. But alas, men fall into this error, by their unwillingness to see the truth. for signes are not for them that believe; and Miracles had been wrought by *Philip* at *Samarria*, to confirm the word, before *Peter* and *John* came there. *Acts* 8. 6, 7. and all that we read of *Peter* and *John* in respect of confirming the Word, is only this, that they testified and preached it, and departed *vers.* 25.

Now that all the Disciples at *Samaria* had Hands imposed on them, cannot without absurdity be denied, for certainly *they imposed hands on all, in whose behalf they prayed*; but will anyman say that they prayed but for some of them only, that they might receive the promise of the Father, and that all the rest must be excluded both from the prayer, and the gift prayed for? Surely such a conceit would make *Peter* and *John* miserable comforters to those Disciples, whom they should thus neglect in their prayers for the holy Spirit; as all the women which were Baptized were so neglected, in the opinion of the Searchers, for they by their demands will needs suppose, that the Apostles did not impose hands on women, as if women had not as clear a right to the promised Spirit as men! They might as well
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have doubted whether *Peter* and *John* laid hands on men, seeing the Text sayes nothing particularly of them any more than of the women. But I say these imaginations are very irrational, sith (as before) it was not known to *Peter* or *John*, what persons by name should have extraordinary gifts, whether the *Servants* or *Handmaids* of the Lord, nor whether any of them should be Prophets or speakers with tongues. But this they knew, that the gift of the Holy Ghost belonged to them all (for so they had preached to others, Acts 2. 38.) and therefore certainly they prayed for all to whom the promise did belong; and then doubtless for whom they prayed, on them they laid their hands, and so it is evident they laid their hands on all. The same may be noted from *Pauls* question Acts 19. 2. *Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?* Where certainly he includeth the whole number of these certain Disciples, who (by their answer to the question) being all discovered, to be wanting in respect of that great gift of God; *Paul* must needs be very partial, if he had not the same care for all, that he had for some, and if his care was equally for them all, then reason tels us he would not be wanting to any of them in his endeavours, that they might receive that Spirit which as yet

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they

they had not received. So that still we see, laying on of Hands was practised as generally as Baptism, or any other Ordinance, where the practise of it is recorded, and that is an evidence that the end of that service was that gift of the Holy Ghost which is general, and consequently not for the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, otherwise then as they are included within the compass of that gracious promise.

That the laying on of Hands, *Acts 8. Acts 19.* was not the laying on of Hands for extraordinary gifts, but for the general donation of the Spirit to Disciples indifferently, is yet more manifest, because upon this only ground could *Paul* ask the Disciples, whether they had received the Holy Ghost since they believed; and upon this only ground may the Ministers of Christ ask this question of the Disciples at this day, I mean so to ask it, as thereby implying that they ought to have it, for so much *Paul's* question doth plainly imply, as appears by his endeavours that they (who had been so long without it) might now be made partakers of it, and that for them all indifferently. And upon this ground only could *Peter* and *John* use the means to obtain the Spirit for the Disciples at Samaria generally, namely because the promise of the Spirit was universal.

Again

Again from this consideration, that that laying on of Hands *Acts 8. Acts 19.* was a general practise, and the gift prayed for in that service, a general gift, it will follow that the Apostles performed this service of prayer with laying on of Hands, by vertue of their Ministerial Authoritie, and not by vertue of any particular power they had to give the Holy Ghost, as some do vainly imagine, otherwise it will follow, that by their gift of miracles they were bound to work a miracle for every Disciple at Samaria; and for every one of those certain disciples at Ephesus,

* which is absurd to imagine, or else that they did in this service more than they were bound to do either by vertue of gift or office, which is as ridiculous on the other hand; for though it is certain that they had no power to give the Spirit of God to any man; yet certainly they had power (or authoritie from God) to pray, with the laying on of their Hands, for the members of the bodie, that they might receive the Spirit of promise, as appeared by those heavenly confirmations which ensued upon their performance, inso-much as that it may be said, this service of

* And then why nor the like for all Disciples where ever they came, no man can render a good reason.

prayer with the laying on of hands is as much confirmed from heaven, to be a thing well pleasing to him, as any other ordinance whatsoever.

And forasmuch as the *UNIVERSALITY* of the practice of laying on of Hands, with prayer for the Holy Spirit, being evinced is a matter of that importance, that even thence it will follow, that it is no such thing as many imagine it to be (*viz. a temporary practice only fitted for the Apostles times, that some few having practised or submitted to it, It was to cease, being only performed for the gift of tongues and miracles, &c.*) I will therefore proceed a little further to demonstrate this service to be very universal.

It may appear to all indifferent men, that very many thousands were in the religious practise of this ministrations in the first Churches. And first from the state of the Church at *Samarit* in its plantation, where the number of Disciples was very great, in likelihood not less than an hundred thousand, as may be gathered from *Acts 8. vers. 14.* It is said, *Samarit had received the word;* and *vers. 8.* There was great joy in that City. Which expressions, that they include each individual, I will not affirm; for, if they import the generality of the inhabitants (as that will

will appear) it sufficeth for my purpose. This is evident , partly for that we hear not of so much as one person , who opposed himself against *Philip's* preaching in that City. No not so much as *Simon the Sorcerer* , for he consented to *Philip's* doctrine. And partly, for that there is the same reason to believe, that *the whole City* (or the generality thereof) *was converted by Philip* , as that they had been generally deceived by *Simon the Witch* (as that will not be denied) for as it is said *vers. 9.* He bewitched them , to wit , the people of *Samaria* ; which is interpreted of all , or the generality. *Vers. 11.* To him they had regard , from the least even to the greatest of them. So on the other hand it is said , *vers. 5.* That *Philip* went down to *Samaria* , and preached *Christ* to them , i. e. all , or the generality of them ; as it is rationally gathered from *vers. 6.* And the people **WITH ONE ACCORD** , gave heed to those things which *Philip* spake , bearing and seeing the miracles which he did.

Hence we may perceive , a very general (if not an universal) conversion of this City ; who , Like as in times past they gave regard to the *Sorcerer* , both the least and greatest of them ; But now , with **ONE ACCORD** , they gave heed to what *Philip* spake ; even so , *vers. 12.* it is said of the very

same people without exception, that when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized.

And that there might be no cause to doubt, whether the account given, be so general, as the terms already noted may imply, it is added by way of explication, both *Men and Women*. Yea further, as the *deceived City* is now recorded to be converted, so the very *deceiver* himself is brought in as *believing and baptized*, *vers. 13*. We have therefore not only a *general or indefinite* account of the Disciples at Samaria, but what is generally or indefinitely delivered in the words, *Samaria received the Word, &c.* is sufficiently defined to be meant of the people with one accord. Of the *Deceiver*, and them that had been deceived. Of the people of both *Sexes*, to wit, *both men and women*. And upon those very persons, it is said (without the least intimation of any exception of any person or persons whatsoever) the Apostles laid their hands, after they had prayed for them, that they might receive the holy Ghost, for as yet he was fallen on none of them. Note [on none of them] wherefore they prayed for them all. Therefore they imposed Hands on them all.

Now

Now, suppose that the City of Samaria, would afford but three hundred thousand inhabitants capable of instruction, if then I do allow two parts out of three, yet there remains 100000 Converts probably; however infallibly a great multitude. To whom we may well add (as a people owning the doctrine of imposition of Hands) the Church at Jerusalem, which consisted of many thousands, by whom Peter and John was sent to Samaria, and it were impious to think, that they would now innovate a service in the worship of God at Samaria, which was not before received, in the Church that sent them thither. But this service is numbred among the principles of the Hebrew Church, and found practised in the Church at Ephesus; whence it appears, this ministrations was as universal as other Ordinances in the primitive Churches. Ergo, it was for the general gift of the Spirit. Ergo, not for the extraordinary gifts only.

Nor doth that Text, *Dent. 34. 9.* alledged by the Searchers, prove the contrary; for it is not only said, that *Ioshua* was full of the Spirit of wisdom, for *Moses* had laid his hands on him, &c. which seems to be no more, then what *Timothy* received by the laying on of *Pau.'s* hands (*viz.*) the Spirit of — a sound minde or judgement, which may be received

where the miraculous gifts of the Spirit are wanting. Doubtless, it may be said without boasting, that some Christians in these days, are so endued with the Spirit of God (at least in comparison of many of the Lords servants) that, *they are full of the Spirit of wisdom*; yet the Searchers will not say, *they are full of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit*: seeing they have told us (though very untruly) that the end of laying on of Hands, *Acts 8. Acts 19.* is ceased, or not attainable; which they conceive *was only the miraculous gifts of the Spirit.* Which conceit of theirs is the more prodigious, when we consider that some of them did lately submit to laying on of Hands, with prayer to God. But I marvel with what conscience, if indeed he was of this minde, *that the end of that service was not attainable.*

It is worthy consideration, that there was a Church at Ephesus, long before *Paul* laid hands on those certain Disciples, which he found there, at his second coming to that City. *Acts 18. 19, 20, 26, 27.* So that the word of God had been confirmed there for many years; *Priscilla* and *Aquila* having been left there, who taught such as were ignorant, the way of the Lord more perfectly. *Apollos* also, mightily convinced the Jews by

by the Scriptures, that Jesus was the Christ; we cannot now reasonably think, that *Paul* would settle those certain Disciples *Acts 19.* in a Church distinct from the Church at *Ephesus* already, much less in a way or practise *contradistinct* from the Church; and if not, then it follows, that the Church at *Ephesus* were also in the practise of prayer, with the laying on of Hands, as well as those certain Disciples, who were now to be laid into the building with the rest; which yet is the more considerable, if we note that passage in *Ephesians 1. 13.* which was spoken of the whole Church at *Ephesus*, and shews plainly, that they had received the Holy Ghost or Spirit of Promise, after they believed the Gospel of their salvation; which fully agree with the order, wherein the certain Disciples also received the Spirit.

And here let us not omit that passage, *Acts 22. 10. & 9. 17.* Whence it is observable, that *Paul*, the elect vessel, must be sent to *Damascus*, to be taught the principles or rudiments of Religion by * *Ananias*, and particularly in the Doctrine of Baptism, and laying on of Hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, not only in respect of the

* And yet it is true, which *Paul* saith *Gal. 1. 11, 12, 15, 16.* for the substance of the Gospel was revealed to him, before *Ananias* came at him.

miraculous;

lous gifts of Tongues, &c. (For it is a doubt (among Christians) whether he spake with tongues, by vertue of any proper gift) or by means of his education.) But the spirit of love, power, and of a second mind, which he affirms God had given him, *2 Tim. 1. 7.* And though it is true, there was some variation in the order of things in *Paul's* case; that is no prejudice to the truth in general, there being an emergency which might occasion it, and a special allowance from heaven for it at that time. Nor may this variation be a precedent for us, to vary in things of this nature, having no such occasion for it, any more than the *Israelites* eating the Passover, without being cleansed, according to the purification of the Sanctuary; when an emergency called for it, and the Lord allowed it, gave them ground to do so again, when there was neither the one nor the other; nor is it material against ought that we have said, that *Ananias* was no officer in the Church, and therefore imposed Hands on *Paul* by vertue of his gift only. For unless we imagine the Church to have greater power than God, we cannot deny *Ananias* to have authority, for all that he said and did to *Saul*. Seeing he had immediate mission from heaven, which is equivalent to the

the Churches mission at least ; Nor is it reasonable to think , that power to act in Gospel Ordinances ; is so tied to the Church, as that God may not anticipate that Order when it pleaseth him.

And as this chosen vessel was taught the rudiments of Christianity, so he instructed others in the same, as we have seen in part, and may see yet further, in his writing to *Timothy* ; who being under some fears and temptations, he labours to comfort him, from the consideration of the Spirit which God had given him ; which was the Spirit of love, power, and of a sound mind, which he reminds him of, by mentioning the means used for obtaining it, which was the putting on of *Paul's* hands. See and consider, *2 Tim.* 1. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

We are now come to the great Charter of the Church, for this point of Faith ; I mean, that Epistle which *Paul* wrote unto the *Hebrew* Church ; who, as he himself had learned and taught others, concerning the laying on of Hands, as we have seen before, so he puts the first of Gospel Churches in mind, of that which they (who were to be as a standard to the rest) had been taught, in respect of their principles as Christians. *Heb.* 5. 12. and particularly, concerning laying
on

on of Hands, *Heb. 6. 2.* Concerning which particular, as I shall have too much occasion to note the differing opinions among the Baptized Congregations, so I shall first set down those things wherein they do generally agree, or rather, that which is granted by the Searchers. And first,

They grant, that *the doctrine of the Holy Ghost* (I suppose they mean the Promise of the Holy Ghost) *was frequently taught as a principle of the Christian faith*; and they give us no reason, why it ought not with like frequency to be taught, as a principle of the same Faith now.

Secondly they grant, *That that laying on of hands, Heb. 6. 2. is a principle of the doctrine of Christ, and a part of the foundation* *.

* Which they said to me, they did alwayes grant, or else I had not mentioned it in this book. Now, either they must grant that these two, to wit, the promise of the Spirit, and laying on of Hands, with prayer to obtain it, makes but one principle of Christianity, or else they fall into that which they condemn; *viz.* the making seven principles. But to say the truth, they seem to make these two to be but one; yet so, as that they would destroy the practick part. For they demand, whether laying on of Hands, *Heb.*

6. 2. may not be figuratively understood, for the Holy Spirit which was given thereby? But the Answer is easie, and tells them plainly, that this is the way to have such a figurative foundation, as Babes in Christ could never understand; and then will come in a *figurative* Baptism only. Yea a *figurative* Resurrection too, would creep into the Church, at the heels of the other figures; till at last, the truth of all the principles would stand only for a Cipher.

But the instance, which the Searchers bring to strengthen this their *figurative* interpretation, very providentially overthrows it. For, though the Cup is taken for the Wine, and the Bread and Wine, for the Body and Blood of Christ; yet we know that the sign, and thing signified, do both remain; for the use and comfort of the Church; and why then should prayer, with the laying on of Hands (which is the sign) be made void by the promise of the Spirit, which is the substance. These things premised, the Searchers twenty fifth demand, and the discourse thereon depending is discerned to be frivolous. Because whatsoever they are pleased to write, it is certainly known that their opinion is contrary to that writing. Otherwise it were easie to shew, not only

only the Novelty of their conceit in the said Question, but the vanity of such an interpretation of the word foundation, as there they bring, might be discovered. For evident it is, that the same which is called, the first principles of the Oracles of God, and milk for Babes, *vers. 12.* is called the principles of the doctrine of Christ [which pertain to the beginning of Christian men] which now the Author would intermit; and the foundation, which he would not lay again; which foundation when he comes to set down in its parts; which principles, when he comes to enumerate, are thus set forth; of Repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God. Of the doctrine of Baptism, and of laying on of Hands. Of the Resurrection of the dead, and of Eternal judgement.

And what though it be said, that other foundations can no man lay, than that which is already laid, which is Jesus Christ; doth this prejudice that use of the word foundation, *Hel. 6. 1.* not at all. Or at least not any more than the Church, being called Christ, *1 Cor. 12. 12.* and the pillar and ground [or foundation] of the truth; *1 Tim. 3. 15.* doth prejudice the Son of God, his being called Christ, or the foundation. And are not the Prophets and Apostles called the foundation,

tion; *Ephes. 2. 20.* of which Christ in the same place is said to be the corner stone? And yet surely Christians of ordinary capacity do understand, that these sayings do not contradict, but agree very well with that saying of *Paul, other foundation can no man lay, &c.* So long as Christ is held to be the Head, the all, and in all, to the Church of God.

But sith the Searchers do grant (and say to my knowledge, that they did ever grant) that laying on of Hands, *Heb. 6. 2.* to be a principle of the doctrine of Christ, and a part of the foundation; *which I take to be a good basis for a happy composure of our unhappy difference;* It remaineth, that the only (or chief) point of difference lyeth in this, *what laying on of Hands it is, that is called a part of the foundation, Heb. 6. 2?* Whether laying on of Hands with prayer, for the Spirit of promise; or some other kinde of laying on of Hands. We affirm the first, they imagine the latter. But now, ask them what laying on of Hands they will assign to be meant, *Heb. 6. 2.* and then, they either answer nothing at all, or else so flatly contradictorily one to another, or with such hesitation in themselves, as it is to be admired; but more to be lamented, that such Leaders in Israel (as they pass for; and to give them their due, might well pass for such,

IF, &c.) should not be able to digest the milk which Babes must feed upon, nor can they assign to Babes their Portion therein. But instead of Milk, they sometimes set before them strong meat, even that imposition of Hands which pertains to Bishops in the Church; and this as one of the Babes principles, which is far from being fit nutriment for them. And now that the *Searchers* may sufficiently shew themselves to be in the dark, about that laying on of Hands which they confess to be a principle, &c. They number up six or seven sorts of laying on of Hands, and then puts it to the question, *Which of all these laying on of hands is intended Heb. 6. 2. and is that which we call a Doctrine of Christ?* By which unwary demand, no doubt they have led many a simple meaning Christian into a Maze, and there left him; nor can they possibly give him relief, sith they cannot extricate themselves from the same meander; and as an addition to their folly, they demand, *that seeing divers men are differently perswaded, concerning that laying on of hands, Heb. 6. 2. Whether this be not a sufficient ground for them to doubt, whether that laying on of hands practised by us be instituted by God?* Which if it be, then they have sufficient ground, to doubt of all things which they (as well as we) do hold for Gods institutions;

For

For certainly divers men are (notwithstanding their interest) diversly perswaded of most places of Scripture, on which they ground their faith and practise. But to leave them in this mist, till they being weary, shall desire to return to the Lord in this part of his will; I shall endeavour to shew plainly, what laying on of hands it is, which is called a principle of Christs doctrine, and a part of the foundation. And though the *Searchers* are pleased to trouble their Readers, with a large enumeration of layings on of hands; yet they seem at last to be content, That, that laying on of Hands *Heb. 6. 2.* should be *one out of two*; namely, either that which was for *healing the sick*, or else that which was for *the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit*: But they rather incline to the first, and as for the latter, we have shewed there is no such thing, nor ever was; being a thing out of the reach of mans understanding. to whom such gifts do belong, and consequently they know not on whom to impose their hands.

That the laying on of Hands, *Heb. 6. 2.* should be that on the sick, is no way congruous to truth or reason: For, how should this be one of the first principles of the Oracles of God, and Milk for Babes; seeing it is more blessed to believe without a miracle, than with

one, (but it is not more blessed to be without a principle of Christs Doctrine, than to have it) and those who would not believe unless they saw them, are upbraided for the hardness of their hearts. Certain it is, That that laying on of hands to heal the sick, if necessary, yet is prerequisite to faith, signifying for them which do not believe; and not for them that do. But the laying on of hands, *Heb. 6.2.* is subsequent to Faith, yea it follows Baptism; and that as it is a principle of the Oracles of God, therefore it cannot be that which was for the working of miracles. Again, laying on of hands on the sick, is most proper (if not only proper) for those that are without, and therefore not milk for Babes in the Church, and consequently not that laying on of Hands, *Heb. 6. 2.* As for sick persons in the Church of God, they are not bid to have hands laid on them, but are bid to send for the Elders of the Church, that they may pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord, &c. And they have a promise, that the prayer of faith shall save the sick.

And what though the healing of the woman, *Luke 3. 17.* and the diseased people, of the Island, *Acts 28. 9, 10.* may be teaching to all, yet this doth not prove, that it is a principle appertaining to the beginning of a Christian,

fian and to follow his Baptifin. Nor do I
 fee, that it is properly teaching to a Believer
 as fuch; for what doth it add to the Faith of
 a Christian, *who believeth already, that Chrifft
 hath done far greater things than the healing of a
 difeafe?* For he believeth, that he hath over-
 come death, and brought life and immortality
 to light, by the Gofpel. Indeed, to thofe that
 doubt whether Chrifft be the Son of God, fuch
 a fight may be fome way convincing to them.
 But ftill this is for the begetting of Faith, and
 fo not the fourth principle of a Christian. We
 fee then, that laying on of Hands on perfons
 which are without, to work miracles, can
 with no fhew of truth, be faid to be that lay-
 ing on of hands *Hel. 6. 2.* Efppecially if we
 confider, how it is joyned with the cafting out
 of Devils, *Mark 16. 17.* Which is therefore
 a further evidence, that it is not in any wife
 to be recounted as milk for Babes, in the
 Church of Chrifft. I will end this point, with an
 argument from our Brethrens opinion; which
 is, *that laying on of Hands for working miracles is
 ceafed;* whence I argue,

All the principles of Chriffts doctrine do re-
 main, of which principles, *Laying on of Hands*
is one.

But Laying on of Hands for working miracles
(fay our Brethren) is ceafed; Ergo, laying on

of Hands for working miracles, is not that which is called a principle of the doctrine of Christ. *Ergo*, Laying on of Hands to heal the sick, is not that which is called a principle of the doctrine of Christ. That the laying on of Hands, *Acts 8. Acts 19.* is the very same that is mentioned, *Heb. 6. 2.* appeareth thus, That in *Heb. 6. 2.* is a principle of the Doctrine of Christ, a part of the Foundation. But why so? Not simply as a bare Ceremony, or Act done by man; but rather in respect of some divine thing signified, and obtainable, in the religious observation of it, as the proper undoubted end of that service, and *that for Babes in Christ.* That laying on of Hands *Acts 8. Acts 19.* doth agree with these considerations, being dispensed to Babes in Christ, religiously performed with prayer to God; and signified a spiritual benediction, and was useful for the obtaining of it, even the spirit of promise; and was therefore fundamental to their Christian state. Again, that laying on of Hands *Heb. 6 2.* doth immediately follow Baptism, as its proper place; and so doth that laying on of Hands, *Acts 8.* and *Acts 19.* which cannot be said of any other laying on of Hands whatsoever.

The due consideration of the place of this laying on of Hands, is very material for our
infor-

information, what particular laying on of Hands, is intended *Hel. 6. 2.* Yea, it is necessary in any case, that the order of the truths of Christ be maintained, otherwise we shall be very preposterous in Religion; Let us then reflect upon that order, in which the principles of Christianity are proposed to us, *Hel. 6. 1, 2.* Here that faith which justifieth, must needs follow brokenness of heart, as not only Scripture, but Christians experience doth witness. And the promise of the holy Spirit doth follow the Baptism of repentance, for remission of sins, *Acts 2. 38.* And so doth the means which God hath provided for the obtaining that gift or promise; and so doth the Resurrection precede the eternal judgement. Nor can I imagine how our dissenting Brethren can satisfie their consciences, touching the place of that laying on of Hands, which they imagine to be a principle of Christs doctrine. For let those that say, it is laying on of hands upon the sick, tell me where they will place it in the order of their principles; and why it may not as well precede Faith, as follow Baptism? And how can those that will have it to be laying on of hands on Officers, make it the fourth principle, or fundamental to Christianity, sith in reason the Church must be founded, before

the ordain her Officers. As for those which say, the laying on of hands *Heb. 6. 2.* is wicked mens laying wicked hands on the Saints, I say a more prodigious dream was scarce ever heard of: For how can that be the fourth principle of Christs, which neither he, nor none by his appointment, ever taught at all. And though it is true he speaks of such a thing, and fore-tels it, yet that proves it not his doctrine, for then it will follow, that *Judas* his treason, and all the impious acts fore-told in the Scripture, are the doctrines of Christ.

Nor shall we intermit *D. Ebor Hammond's* conceit, as if the laying on of Hands, *Heb. 6. 2.* should belong to those who fall after Baptism; which conceit our brethren do seem very highly to approve of; as if any thing but truth in this case were acceptable to them, though it overthrow their own opinion. For whiles they lean to the Doctor, they have quite forgotten, that laying on of Hands, *Heb. 6. 2.* is a principle of Christs doctrine, and a part of the foundation; yea milk for Babes in Christ. But what shall we say, do none attain to all the principles, nor to every part of the foundation, but such as fall after Baptism? Again, are they only Babes which fall so, as to need the indulgence of reconciliation; or do not some-
times

times strong men fall, when Babes hold on their way? It is not forgotten, that the chief Author of this Search, did so fall, as to need the indulgence of reconciliation; from whence I conclude, that he either is a Babe, or else strong men may fall; If the latter, then I further conclude, that if there be any such laying on of hands as the Doctor supposes; but proves not (though our brethren unwarily say that he doth) yet it cannot be that which is mentioned, *Heb. 6. 2.* for the reasons aforesaid. As also, for that it would follow from this conceit, that one and the same person, must have hands imposed on him 70 times and seven, if he fall so often after his Baptism, and require the indulgence of reconciliation.

I doubt not, but that our dissenting Brethren would easily grant, that the laying on of Hands, *Heb. 6. 2.* is the very same that is mentioned, *Acts 8. Act. 19.* provided we did not urge the continuance of the practice in the Church of God. But then I would know, how we can rightly own that principle, if we destroy the practick part? And here let me seriously ask our Brethren, what manner of instruction they give young Disciples, concerning this matter? or how they principle them in it, or build them upon it? Their

conscience is witness, (I speak what I know, for I also was as they are) that they either wholly pass by that principle in silence, not instructing them at all concerning it; or else, if any thing be said about it; it is rather to make the matter doubtful, than to clear their understandings in it. And indeed it's impossible they should do otherwise (as the case stands) for seeing they know not what it is, are therefore such (I speak it confidently, yet I trust humbly) as (notwithstanding their largeness in the knowledge of many things) have need to be taught this principle of the Oracles of God. Let it not offend them, though I plainly tell them, that in this point of Faith, they are too much like the *Athenians* in another case, for as they by their inscription to the *unknown God*, declared plainly, that they ignorantly worshipped him whom they knew not; Even so our Brethren, whiles they grant (and all men must grant) laying on of Hands, *Heb. 6. 2.* to be a principle of Christs doctrine, and yet cannot determine what laying on of Hands that is; they do little less than subscribe, to the **UNKNOWN PRINCIPLE**; or the **UNKNOWN PART OF THE FOUNDATION**. If otherwise, let them determine positively concerning this principle, what it is; and let their

their diligence appear, in teaching it; together with the rest of the principles: which yet (to use their own dialect) I despair ever to see them perform either the one, or the other; at least, so long as they carry themselves towards those who shew them that which they so ignorantly pretend to own, so much like the *Athenians*, as to account of those to be *setters forth of strange Principles*, as they accounted *Paul*, a *setter forth of strange gods*. And though you (as they) seem to be very desirous to hear what in this case we have to say; yet when we have told you the truth, then, as they thought it a thing incredible, that God should raise the dead; so you think it incredible, that we should receive any blessing, in the way of prayer with the laying on of Hands; as evidently appears by your demand, in these words.

How doth your practise of laying on of hands, agree with theirs, (meaning the Apostles) Acts 8. Acts 19. having no such blessing to communicate, as they had?

In which demand, you seem to lye under two very great mistakes; as first, that the Apostles had the blessing of the gifts of the Spirit, to communicate to others; as if, they could give the gift of prophesie, tongues, miracle, &c! Secondly, that on whomsoever they

they laid their hands, the same received such a blessing; to wit, the miraculous gifts of the Spirit. Which blinde conceits you never learned of *Simon Peter*, for they are the errors of *Simon Magus*, Acts 8. Whose blindness was rebuked by *Peter*, affirming, that that blessing was the gift of God. Yea, it is written, and the Scripture cannot be broken, that every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights, &c. Yea the Spirit it self is free, blowing where it listeth, and is therefore not to be communicated by any man whatsoever. We conclude therefore, that the Apostles had no blessing to communicate to those, on whom they laid their hands; but could only beg it at the hands of God, as the very words of the Text doth shew, Acts 8. They prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost, not that they might receive the gift of tongues, miracles, &c. but only that they might receive the Holy Ghost. From the Text thus considered, I argue; *He did communicate the blessing only, to whom the prayer was made for it. But the prayer was only made to God, therefore he only did communicate the blessing.* Again, *They that beg a blessing for themselves, or for others, do not communicate that blessing to themselves, or to others; But, the Apostles*

postles did only beg the blessing of the Spirit, &c. therefore they did not communicate it, &c.

Let it further be considered, that if that which they ask be *obtainable*, and obtained by those that now wait upon God in prayer, with the laying on of Hands, then our practise doth agree very well with theirs; now what did they ask? The gift of tongues? &c. No, they only asked the *Holy Ghost*, and surely the *Holy Ghost* is now *obtainable* and attained, even there, where tongues are not attained; Otherwise it will follow, that the greater part of the Saints in the primitive times, as well as the Saints in these dayes, have not received the *Holy Ghost*; which is not only foolish, but very pernicious to imagine. For *Acts* 13. 32. its said, the Disciples were filled with joy, and with the *Holy Ghost*; and the Church is exhorted to be filled with the Spirit. All which may be attained to now, although the miraculous gifts of the Spirit be not attained, nor indeed are they necessary in order thereunto; as the places last quoted do shew.

Now that there is an agreement between the laying on of hands, *Acts* 8. *Acts* 19. *Heb.* 6. 2. and that which we practise, will further appear by this parallel: *The Apostles performed laying on of Hands, with prayer to the Lord,*

Lord, and so do we; They performed this service on Disciples, as such, whether male or female, and so do we; It was practised by them in order to the receiving the Holy Ghost, and so it is by us; They placed laying on of Hands, in the fourth place of Christian principles, and so do we; They asked not Tongues, and Miraculous gifts, no more do we: The effects of that service depended not on them, no more it doth on us; But that was according to the will of the Father then, and so it is to us.

Justly might we return our Brethren demand upon themselves, in their practises of prayer and preaching, when we consider how God gave the Spirit in the likeness of fiery tongues, to the hundred and twenty Disciples, who prayed with one accord, in one place: The like to which effect, never followed the most serious prayer, that ever proceeded from our Brethren. Must we then conclude, that there is no agreement between their prayer, and the prayer of the Church in those dayes? This is the way to make void the wayes of God, unless he give us the like effect at all times, which he ever gave to any, at any time. The like may be said of preaching; For when Peter preached, Acts 10. the Holy Ghost fell on all that heard the word, so as that they spake with tongues. Would it not

not be absurd now to say, that *Peter* did communicate the blessing of tongues here? And thence to conclude, that none may preach unless they have the blessing of tongues to communicate to those to whom they preach.

Nor may we say, that the like effect did alwayes follow the preaching of *Peter* himself; no nor his laying on of Hands neither. For there is no mention that those Disciples at *Samarina* received the gift of tongues; but only that they received the Holy Ghost: For we have shewed, that the Holy Ghost may be received so, as that persons may be known, and said by others to be full of the Holy Ghost, and yet the miraculous gifts of the Spirit may be absent. Nor is it to be doubted, but that *Simon Magus* had hands imposed on him, in common with the rest, sith he was a Believer, and Baptized, and shewed as much zeal as the rest (if not more) for its said he continued with *Philip*, and wondered, beholding the miracles which were done, &c. Nor was the deceit of his heart perceived, till after the service of laying on of Hands was performed, *Acts 8*. And yet certainly his receivings in respect of Spiritual blessings, was not so great, but that it may be safely presumed, that many Christians in these dayes, do receive the Holy Ghost as much as *Simon Magus* did. And
though

though *Peter* said to him, thou hast no part or lot in this matter, yet the words [this matter] cannot refer to *Simons* desire of subjection to laying on of Hands; but to his ambitious and avaritious desire, to be a Minister to dispence that ordinance to others, for carnal advantage.

And whereas it is much doubted, whether laying on of Hands, was ever taught or commanded by authority from heaven, me thinks this should not be hard to be understood. Unless we can be so void of reason, as to dream that *Peter* and *John*, when they came among the Disciples, went preposterously, from person to person, praying and putting their hands upon them, and that without telling them what they meant by it. Which to do, were enough to amaze the Spectators, and is contrary to the glory and gravity of Gospel-performances; which as they must be acts (or subjections) of Faith, if they do please God; so the faith of such acts (or subjections) must come by hearing, with understanding what they must do, or to what they must submit, and to what end. And this hearing must be from the Word of God, else there is no ground for Faith, or practice in matters of Religion, so as to please God. But God was well pleased with the Apostles acting, and
the

the Samaritans submission, in the case of prayer with laying on of Hands, and bore witness from heaven that he approved it; Therefore their obedience was of Faith; Therefore they heard with understanding, that what they did was their duty; & therefore the Lord taught them both concerning the duty, and the end thereof.

That the Apostles should practise with such frequency, this service of prayer with the laying on of Hands, upon Disciples generally; That it should be recorded among the chief of their Acts, in promoting the Gospel, and settling of Churches, that it should be placed among the principles of Religion, and all this without authority from heaven, is unworthy the followers of Christ or his Apostles to imagine.

But forasmuch as divers have laboured to satisfie the contrary minded in this point, whose works are extant & unanswered, I shall not insist farther; save that I do briefly shew that our Brethren, are not consistent with themselves in this particular. For they do that themselves, which they will not allow themselves to do; for they practice laying on of Hands on Officers, for which there is a little by way of precept as for the laying Hands on Disciples, or rather less. For since they

they do now acquit that Text, 1 *Tim.* 5. 22. as not having any thing to do with the business of Ordination; and to strengthen a contrary interpretation, do bring the Suffrages of *Dr. Hammond, V. Etor, Cyprian*, and the Council of Carthage; sure I am they have no Text which hath so much as the face of a precept [I mean in so many words] for laying hands upon Officers; although it is beyond doubt with me, that that way was ordained of God, to depute his servants in the Ministry to their works respectively; wherefore I will conclude this discourse, with this Enthememe.

There is sufficient ground in Scripture for laying on of Hands on Officers in the Church. *Ergo*, there is sufficient ground in Scripture for laying hands on Members of the Church. And whereas our Brethren do make a shew (by their actions out of some ancient Authors, as well as Modern) as if Antiquity were on their part in this Controversie; I will therefore put in something by way of evidence to the contrary, as I finde them; partly from the Authors themselves, and partly from such as have gathered certain sentences out of the works of the Ancients concerning this matter.

Tertullian to this effect; That like Tertul. de
 as in Baptism the flesh is washed, that therefor. c.
 soul may be made clean; so in laying on^s.
 of Hands the flesh is overshadowed, that
 the soul may be illuminated by the Holy
 Spirit.

In the Constitutions of Clemens,
 there is said to be this passage, viz:
 We must all hasten to be born again to
 God (meaning by Baptism) and at
 length to be signed by the Bishop, that
 is, to receive the seven fold grace of
 the Spirit, otherwise a person cannot
 perfectly be a Christian, if carelessly
 and willingly (and not of necessity) be
 remain without it.

Cyprian, speaking of the Samari-^{Cip. ep.}
 tans receiving the Holy Ghost, by ^{ad Jubi.}
 laying on of Hands; saith —
 which also is done with us, that they
 which are baptized in the Church,
 must be presented to those who are set
 over the Church, that by prayer and
 laying on of Hands, may obtain the
 Holy Ghost.

Jerom. ad Lucif. *Jerom* (according to *Andreas Willet*) touching laying on of Hands, hath these words; viz. *It hath ever been the Custom of the Church.*

Euseb. l. 6. c. 42. *Eusebius*, hath a passage concerning *Novatus* (who lived about the middle of the third Century) how he slighted the imposition of Hands; these are his words (after mention made of his being baptized, he saith) *He obtained not — — that which he should have done, according to the Canon (or rule) of the Church; to wit, Confirmation by the hands of the Bishop. Inasmuch then he obtained not that, how came he by the Holy Ghost? See also to the same effect, the seventh book of Eusebius, c. 2.*

For Modern Writers, *Erasmus* (in my opinion) as he is most clear without mixture in most of his Expositions, and particularly in this point he is most clear.

These are his words upon the principles, *Heb. 6. 1, 2.*

The first degree unto Christianity, is *Erasmus*.
 to be repentant of our former life, and to paraph. in
 forsake sin; Next of all it is required, *Heb. 6. 2.*
 that we be taught that true innocency, and
 soul-health, is to be hoped for of God: Then
 forthwith, that we be purged by Holy
 Baptism, from the filthiness of our sins,
 and restored again to the state of inno-
 cency: then that we receive the Holy
 Ghost, by laying on of Hands; and be-
 lieve the resurrection of the dead to come;
 and also that last judgement, that shall
 award some to eternal felicity, and other
 some, to everlasting pains and damna-
 tion.

Diode hath these words; Laying *Diode*
 on of Hands, was a Ceremony joyned *Annot. on*
 to Baptism, for a sign of Blessing and Con- *Heb. 6. 2.*
 secration to God. And he calls these
 principles, the first grounds of Christian
 Catechism, and the heads of Christian
 Doctrine.

As in Baptism, the outward Mini- *Tindale*
 stery or mystical washing doth regene- *in 2 Tim.*
 rate, wash away sins, cleanse and purge *1. 6.*
 us from our filthiness; so doth the im-

stitution or Laying on of Hands, give us
 the gift of the Holy Ghost: but the out-
 ward and mystical washing, doth onely
 represent unto us, that in Christ's Blood
 our sins are clean washed away, &c.

From these Testimonies it appear-
 eth, that what the Churches of Christ
 now contend for, touching the pra-
 ctice, and the subjects, and the end
 of prayer, with Laying on of Hands,
 is no *novel* thing; but as the institu-
 tion of that Ordinance is found in
 Holy Writ (as we have shewed) so
 it hath continued in use as necessary,
 in place, the next to holy Baptism, a-
 mong Christians generally.

AN