

An Arrow

A G A I N S T

Profane and Promiscuous:

DANCING

Drawn out of the Quiver of the

S C R I P T U R E S.

*By the Ministers of Christ at Boston
in New-England.*

*Judg. 6. 31. Will you plead for Baal? Let
him plead for himself.*

*Chorea est Circulus cujus Centrum est
Diabolus. Gulielm: Parisiensis.*

*Boston; Printed by Samuel Green, and
are to be Sold by Joseph Brunning.*

1684



An Arrow against Mixt

D A N C I N G.

CONCERNING the Controversy about *Dancing*, the Question is not, whether all *Dancing* be in it self sinful. It is granted, that *Pyrrhical* or *Polemical Saltation*: i. e. where men vault in their Armour, to shew their strength and activity, may be of use. Nor is the question, whether a sober and grave *Dancing* of Men with Men, or of Women with Women, be not allowable; we make no doubt of that, where it may be done without offence, in due season, and with moderation. The Prince of Philosophers has observed truly, that *Dancing* or *Leaping*, is a natural expression of joy: So that there is no more Sin in it, than in laughter, or any outward expression of inward Rejoycing.

But our question is concernig *Gynecandri-*
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2 *An Arrow against mixt Dancing.*

cal Dancing, or that which is commonly called *Mixt* or *Promiscuous Dancing*, viz. of Men and Women (be they elder or younger persons) together: Now this we affirm to be utterly unlawful, and that it cannot be tollerated in such a place as *New-England*, without great Sin. And that it may appear, that we are not transported by *Affection* without Judgment, let the following Arguments be weighed in the Ballance of the Sanctuary.

Arg. 1. *That which the Scripture condemns is sinful.* None but Atheists will deny this *Proposition*: But the Scripture condemns *Promiscuous Dancing*. This *Assumption* is proved, 1. *From the Seventh Commandment.* It is an Eternal Truth to be observed in expounding the Commandments, that whenever any sin is forbidden, not only the highest acts of that sin, but all degrees thereof, and all occasions leading thereto are prohibited. Now we cannot find one Orthodox and Judicious Divine, that writeth on the Commandments, but mentions *Promiscuous Dancing*, as a breach of the seventh Commandment, as
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being an occasion, and an incentive to that which is evil in the sight of God. Yea, this is so manifest as that the *Assembly* in the *larger Catechism*, do expressly take notice of *Dancings*, as a violation of the Commandments. It is sad, that when in times of Reformation, Children have been taught in their Cotechism, that such *Dancing* is against the Commandment of God, that now in *New-England* they should practically be learned the contrary. The unchast Touches and Gesticulations used by *Dancers*, have a palpable tendency to that which is evil. Whereas some object, that they are not sensible of any ill motions occasioned in them, by being Spectators or Actors in such *Saltations*; we are not bound to believe all which some pretend concerning their own Mortification. But suppose it were so, if there be other persons, who are by *Mixt Dancing* drawn into sin; that's enough against it. And that many are so, *Juvenal's Verses* are a sufficient proof

*Forſitan expectes ut [Gaditana] canoro
Incipiat prurire choro, plauſuq; probatæ.*

And that of *Horace*, *Motus doceri gaudet
Fonicoſa Matura Virgo, & Pingitur Acti-
bus, jam nunc & inceſtos amores, &c.*

2. Beſides the ſeventh Commandment,
*There are other Scriptures, which ſeem ex-
preſſly and particularly to condemn the Dan-
cing we plead againſt.* It is ſpoken of as
the great ſin of the Daughters of *Sion*, that
they did walk with ſtretched-out necks,
and with wanton eyes, *walking and min-
cing as they go, and making a tinkling with
their feet*, *Iſa. 3. 16.* Thoſe great Interpre-
ters *Junius*, and *Rivet*, and *Ravanellus*, con-
ceive, that Scripture hath a ſpecial reſpect to
thoſe artificial and proud carriages which
are learned in the *Dancing School*. And the
holy Apoſtle *Paul* condemns *Rioting* as a
vice, *Rom. 13. 13.* The original word *Cri-
tical* and *Accurate Expoſitors* Interpret,
as reflecting on *Petulant Dancings*. And ano-
ther Apoſtle ſpeaks not only of *Exceſs in*
Wine

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Wine, but of Revelling, as a Sin which the Gentiles before their Conversion to Christ, were generally guilty of, 1 Pet. 4.3. The word translated *Revelling*, may be read *Dancing*. It is the same with that in the *Romans*, which our translation calls *Rioting*. The learned *Aretius* comments thus upon it; By $\kappa\alpha\mu\alpha\varsigma$, he intends wanton *Dancing*, and so it is fitly mentioned after that of Excess in Wine, because it was customary with the Gentiles, after they had been drinking to Excess, to fall to dancing and singing; and commonly their Songs were profane and obscene. Thus he, And indeed, as *Ravanelius* and *Voetius* have well observed: the Greek word $\kappa\alpha\mu\alpha\varsigma$ (which our Translators call *Rioting*, and in *Peter*, *Revelling*) is by the most learned in the Greek Tongue, judged to intend *Dancing*. Thus *Hesychius* saith, that it is $\epsilon\iota\delta\omicron\varsigma\ \sigma\epsilon\chi\eta\ \sigma\alpha\iota\varsigma$ And it is evident, that *Pindar*, the Greek Poet, doth so use the word. He saith, $\kappa\alpha\mu\alpha\zeta\epsilon\ \sigma\iota\upsilon\ \nu\ \mu\upsilon\upsilon$ i. e. *Salta cum Hymno*. Vid. *Zuinger. Theatr. Vol. 2. lib. 5. p. 389.*

The summe is, that according to the judgment of the most profound and accurate

Interpreters; the Scripture does expressly, and by name condemn *Dancing* as a vicious practice. The argument stands thus, *Kωμοι* are expressly condemned in the Scripture? But mixt *Dancings* are *Kωμοι*, Therefore they are expressly condemned in the Scripture.

Also under that of *Chambring, Wantoness, lascivousness* *Dancings* are implied.

3. *There are many other Scriptures which do implicitly condemn them as sinful.* How often does the Scripture commend unto Christians, *Gravity* and *Sobriety*, in their behaviour at all times; and condemn all *Levity* in Carriage. When as *Dancing* is (as some have expressed it) a *Regular Madness*. That wise Prince *Alphonsus*, after he had seen such things, the question being asked, What is the difference between a *Dancer* and a *Mad-man*? Replied; *There was no other difference, but only this; that the person who is really Phrentick, is mad all the day long; when as the Dancer is only mad an hour in a day perhaps.* *Lud. Vives* tells a pleasant story of certain men, who coming out of *Asia* into *Spain*, when they saw the *Spaniards* dance, they were so affrighted, as to run away, supposing them

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to be possessed with some Spirit, or mad at least. And truly such affected Levity, and Antick Behaviour, when persons skip and fling about like *Bedlams*, as they say, *Dancers* are wont to do; is no way becoming the Gravity of a Christian. Moreover, the Scripture saith, *Whatsoever things are of good report, think of these, Phil. 4. 8.* which implieth, that Christians ought to avoid things of evil report. But *Promiscuous Dancings* are so; & that not only amongst serious Christians, but even amongst the Gentiles. Their grave and wise men have branded that custom as vile, infamous, and abominable; whose words we shall hear anon. But therefore that Rule which saith, *meddle not with things of bad report, forbids Christians to have any concernment with Promiscuous Dancings.* Yet again the Scripture saith, *Give no offence, neither to the Jew, nor to the Gentile, nor to the Church of God, 1 Cor. 10. 32.* In indifferent things this precept takes place; but the impleaded *Dancing* is very offensive upon more accounts than one, as will afterwards appear.

Arg.

Arg. 2. If we consider, by whom this practice of Promiscuous Dancing was first invented by whom patronized, and by whom witnessed against, we may well conclude, that the admitting of it; in such a place as New-England, will be a thing pleasing to the Devil, but highly provoking to the Holy God.

We design to write as comprehensively as we can; and have therefore in this Argument put several things together, the particulars whereof we shall endeavour to clear.

1. *Who were the Inventors of Petulant Dancings?* They had not their original amongst the People of God, but amongst the Heathen. Learned men have well observed, that the Devil was the first inventor of the impleaded Dances, and the Gentiles; who worshiped him, the first Practitioners in this Art. They did honour the Devils, whom they served in this way; their Festivals being for the most part spent in Play and Dances. And from them did the Apostatizing Idolatrous *Israelites* learn to behave themselves, as they did, when they worship-

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worshipped the Golden Calf. They sat down, to eat and drink, and rose up to play, or to dance. 1 Cor. 7. 10. Hence amongst the Greeks, Bacchus, was stiled Δεὸς χορείας the God that loved Dancing. Their manner was, that a Company of Young Men and Women, with Musical Instruments, would Dance and Sing together, in honour of Bacchus; whom also they called by the name of Κούρος which (as before was shewed) does from thence signifie Dancing. vid. *Alting Theol. Problem. Loc. 10. p. 510.* Nor is it to be wondred that those miserably deluded Souls; who thought and taught, that their Gods were Adulterers, did suppose that they would be delighted with such Dances; as had a tendency that way, yea, the Gentiles took such pleasure in Dancing, that they learned some irrational Creatures that foolish Art. In special (as *Strabo in lib. 13.* relates) they taught Apes to Dance. When Diana's Festival was celebrated, Dancing Apes were brought forth to honour it. This is enough to make Christians, not only deride, but detest such Vanities; especially considering that the Scrip-
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ture faith, *Learn not the way of the Heathen.* Jer. 10. 2. And that the Lords People may *not do after their manners*, nor imitate their Heathenish Customes, Lev. 20. 23. And that Christ came to redeem Believers from their *vain Conversation*, 1 Pet. 1. 18. And that they should not *be conformed to this world*, Rom. 12. 2.

A practice in use, only amongst the Heathen, but never known among the people of God, except in times of degeneracy, ought not to be taken up. But this is true of that practice, which we now testify against.

2. *By whom have Promiscuous Dances been patronized?* Truly, by the worst of the Heathen. *Caligula, Nero*, and such like Atheists and Epicures were delighted in them. *Lucius* (that infamous Apostate) hath written an Oration, in defence of profane and Promiscuous Dancings. Amongst the Papists, some of their more grave Writers, decry such a practice as a great Immorality. *Alexander Fabritius*, a Learned Man, though Popishly affected, was indeed clearly convinced of the great sin which is therein. His words are worthy our taking

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king notice of them ; he thus expresseth himself. *The entering into the Processions of Dances, binders men from ingress into the heavenly Procession ; and those who Dance, offend against the Sacraments of the Church. First, against Baptism ; They break the Covenant which they made with God in Baptism ; wherein they promised, to renounce the Devil and his Pomps ; but when they enter into the Dance, they go in the Pomps Procession of the Devil.* Thus that Author : But generally, Popish Casuists justify it, as they do many other moral evils ; so *Cajetan Azorius, Silvester,* and other Papists : The corrupt Schoolmen makes a light matter of it, calling it a *Venial Sin*. And therefore *Lavater* does justly upbraid the Popish Religion, in that their Writers do generally maintain the lawfulness of *Promiscuous Dancings*. So that the Patrons of this Practice are men not sound in the Faith.

3. *Who are they that have faithfully testified against this practice?* Ignorant and Profane Men say, no body is against it, but a few silly Precisians, who are more precise than wise. But we certainly know, that

that the wisest, and the learnedest, and the holiest men in the world have disliked it. *The Antient Doctors*, (Fathers as they are called) have thundred against this Sin. *Chrysestom* in his Sermons on *Genesis*, treating on *Jacob's Marriage*; *Here* (saith he) *We read of a Wedding, but not a word of Dancing there.* . Yea, he sticks not to call *Dancing a Diabolical Practice.* And in another of his Sermons; He saith, that *Wherever there is a Petulant Dance, the Devil is one of the Company.* . And *Arnobius* does vehemently reprehend the *Gentiles*, because of their lascivious Dances. *Austin* doth severely tax this vice. *Ambrose* doth advise all Godly Parents, that would not have the Souls of their Children corrupted and ruined, not to send them to the *Dancing-School.* And how often do the Fathers call the *Dance a Work of Satan,* one of his *Pomps and Vanities,* which all baptized persons are bound to renounce? And not only Fathers, but whole *Councils* have born witness against them. So did the *Oecumenical Synod at Constantinople.* Also the *Synod which met at Laodicea,* and several

several others, absolutely prohibit all Promiscuous Dancings, not allowing them so much, as at Weddings. Thus it was with Christians, before the World did degenerate again into Paganish, Heathenish Customs. We have now heard the ordinance of Antiquity discharged against the impleaded Dancers. A Shower of Arrows are yet behind.

As for the great Reformers of Religion, and Opposers of Antichristianism, none have gone beyond them, in an Holy Zeal against Profane and Promiscuous Dancing. Let us in the first place, cite the *Waldenses*: They are in the Scripture, honoured with the name of *Saints*, Rev. 13. 7. These *Saints of God*, and *Martyrs of Jesus*, were haters of Mixt Dances. Because their words are Pathetical; we shall here transcribe and insert them, as we find them mentioned by *Perrin*, in his History of the Doctrine and Discipline of the *Waldenses*, p. 63. They thus testify: A Dance is the Devils Procession. He that enters into a Dance, enters into his Possession. The Devil is the Guide, the middle and the end of the Dance. A man sinneth in

Dancing

Dancing drives wayes; as in his Pace, for all his steps are numbred; in his Touch, in his Ornaments, in his Hearing, sight, Speech, and other Vanities. We will prove first from Scripture, and then by other Reasons, how wicked a thing it is to Dance.---He that Danceth, maintaineth the Devil's Pomp, and singeth his Mass. Again, In a Dance, a man breaks the Ten Commandments of God. The very motion of the Body, which is used in Dancing, giveth Testimony enough of evil. Austin saith, The miserable Dancer knoweth not, that as many Paces, as he makes in Dancing, so many steps he makes to Hell. Thus (and much more to this purpose) do those faithful Witnesses of Christ, declare against this Profane Practice. Moreover, the Ministers of the Reformed Churches in France, did above an hundred years ago, (viz. Anno 1581.) concur in writing, and publishing a Book, against the vice we are impleading. Also Venerable Calvin, Marlorat, Lavater, Danæus, Tilenus, Polanus, Zeppe-rus; all condemn it as utterly unlwawful. Peter Martyr and Aretius in their common places, do elaborately discourse a-
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bout mixed Dancing, and prove it to be an unlawful Recreation. The Judicious *Rivet* saith, that such Dancings as teach wantonness in looks, or pride in behaviour, as he thinks almost all the *Saltations* do, which are now adayes Artificially learned in the *Dancing-Schools*, are breaches of the seventh Commanment, and ought not to be tolerated in any Christian Common-wealth. The great *Vœtius* hath lately, and (according to his wonted manner) with very much learning and strength of reason, proved that such Exercises are very sinful. The like has been done by the Excellent *Altingius*. Amongst our *English* Divines there is a cloud of *Witnesses*. There are three *Bishops* who have written against Promiscuous Dancing as unlawful; so *Dr. Downham*, *Babington* and *Andrews*, and one *Arch-Bishop* (tho we confess a Puritanical one) viz. the incomparable *Usher*, hath given his Testimony against Vanities of this kind. Besides these *Dr. Rainold*, *Dr. Ames*, *Mr. Perkins*, *Mr. Dod*, *Mr. Elton*, *Mr. Bolton*, *Mr. Brinsley*, *Mr. Durham* and others have abundantly proved it to be unlawful. Also *Mr. Prin*

has in his *Hystrio Mastix*, a large discourse on this subject. Whoso shall please to read him, will find that good men have been very severe in their censure on *Dancers*. He will there see it affirmed, that *mixed Dancing is a Recreation fitter for Pagans & whores & Drunkards than for Christians*: And that the Gate of Heaven is too strait for a *Chore* of impure *Dancers* to enter in thereat: & that such *Capring Goats* will not be found amongst *Sheep* at the last Day, with many the like severe expressions. So odious was this practice Practice in former times, when *Debauchery* and *Atheism* had not obtained that Credit which this *Adulterous Generation* has put upon it.

Arg. 3. *That Practice which the Graver sort of Heathen have condemned as unlawful, Christians may well look upon as Sinful*, Rom. 2. 14, 15. *But this is true concerning mixed Dancing*; as shall by *Testimony* be made to appear.

Macrobius informs us, that amongst the *Antient Romans* skil in *Dancing* was reputed an infamous thing. *Scipio Africanus* complains that some in his time would go
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with *impudent Dancers* (as he calls them) and learn to sing with them, Which practice their Ancestors looked upon as a disgrace to Gentlemen: He therefore speaks of it as a great degeneracy of that Age, that some being Persons of Quality, sent their Children to a Dancing-school, and that he had himself seen at one of their Schools, a Boy of twelve years old Dancing, which he thought was a fitter employment for a lewd and foolish serving-boy, than for the Son of a Gentleman. And *Salust* (that brave Roman Historian) layeth it as a Brand of Infamy upon *Sempronia*, that she had been taught to *Dance*, which he says was a sign of dishonesty; such a practice being *the instrument of Luxury*. And *Cicero* in his Oration *Pro Muræna* saith, that if a Man be a *Dancer*, he is doubtless either a Drunkard or a mad man. *Nemo saltat sobrius nisi forte insaniat*. He blames *Cato* for having such hard thoughts of *Muræna*, as to suppose him guilty of *Dancing*. For (saith he) if he be a *Dancer*, without doubt he is a bad man indeed, since that Vice never goeth alone. He saith of *Gabinus* and *Antonius* that they

must needs be vicious persons, because they were *Dancers*. *Senecca* bewails it, that in his time young Ones were corrupted with *Obscene Dances*; and that *Dancing-schools* were to be had in the City, and that some when they were inflamed at the *Dance*, went from the *Dancing-school* to the *Brothel house*. *Priamus* severely reprov'd his sons because he understood they were *χορηγοί* i. e. *Dancers*, *Plutarch* in his Description of a Vertuous Woman, mentions this as a Negative qualification, that she must not be a *Dancer*. Understand him and the other Authors cited, as speaking of Promiscuous *Dances*. The Emperor *Tiberius* banished *Dancers*, not only from his Court, but out of the City of *Rome*.

Now then, shall the *Gentiles*, who had only the dark Light of Nature to shew them what things are good & what evil; condemn *Petulant dancing*? And shall Christians who have the Scriptures and the Glorious Light of the Gospel to illuminate them, practise or plead for such works of Darkness? And shall that *Abomination* be set up in *New-England* (the place where the Light of the Gospel

Gospel has shined so Gloriously) which *Moral Heathen* have detested? The Lord lay not this great sin to the charge of any, who have at all been guilty of it.

Arg. 4. *The practice which is not sanctified by Prayer, but is an Enemy to Religious Exercises, is surely an evil Practice. But this is true concerning mixt dancing.* It is a good Rule which *Practical and Casuistical Divines* are wont to give, *That work which a Man cannot pray over, let him not meddle with.*

A Christian should do nothing wherein he cannot exercise Grace, or put a respect of Obedience to God on what he does. This in lawful Recreations may be done. *1 Cor. 10. 31*

But who can seriously pray to the Holy God to be with him when he is going to a *Promiscuous dance*? It is that which hinders Religious Exercises, especially for persons to go immediately from hearing a Sermon to a *Gynecandrical Dance*. It is an high degree of profaneness, an impudent contempt put upon the Gospel. The Devil thereby catcheth away the good seed of the Word, and the former Religious Exercise is rendered ineffectual. Some that write against

dances

dances, observe, that many young persons who seemed to be hopeful, and to have some good beginnings of Piety in them, by falling into acquaintance with that unlawful Recreation, have in a little time utterly left all favour of good; it being just with God, when they have forsaken him to follow the Devils Poms and Vanities, to withdraw his Holy Spirit from them, and judicially give them up to mind nothing else but Folly. The Lord grant that none amongst our Selves may find the observation true.

Arg. 5. *For Persons to Dance at a Time when God calls them to mourn, is certainly unlawful. But such is the case at this Day.* If the thing were in itself lawful (which the Arguments insisted on prove that it is not) yet to set upon such a practice at such a time, must needs be a great provocation to the sight of God. *Dancers* are wont to alledge that Scripture, *Ecccl. 3. 4. There is a Time to Dance,* (though that does not speak a syllable for the Justification of such *Dancing* as we are writing against, nor indeed for any other *Dancing*, since the meaning of the place is not that there is a *lawful time*, but only a *limited time to Dance.*) But they should consider that *There is a Time to mourn.* Now to set up *Dances* at a Time when Gods calls to mourn, is most certainly a provocation. There was a Time when God by his Prophet said, *Hear the Word of the Lord, O ye Women, and teach your daughters wai*

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ing, Jer. 9. 20. And so does he speak by his providence at this day: But at a Time when God saith, Teach your Daughters wailing, shall we say no, We will teach them Dancing? There is a wo pronounced upon them that are at ease in Sion, and who at a season when they should be grieved for the Affliction of Joseph, are Chanting to the sound of the Viol, Amos 6. 5. Every body knows that it is a time of much Affliction with the Church of God in the World. They that begin a Dance now, give but a poor evidence of their belonging to the Mystical Body of Christ, when they do no more sympathize with its sorrow. Is this a Time for Figs and Galliards! Let us recommend to such persons the serious Consideration of that Scripture, Isa. 22. 12, 13, 14. In that Day did the Lord God of Hosts call to weeping and to mourning. And behold Joy and Gladness, Let us Eat and Drink, for to morrow we shall Die. It was revealed in mine Ears by the Lord of Hosts, surely this Iniquity shall not be purged from you till you Die, saith the Lord of Hosts. The Judgments of God are abroad in the World, and hanging over our own heads too. Should we then make Mirth? Ezek. 21. 16. Blessed Mr. Cotton, tho he be^d dead (and hath been so 33. years) yet speaketh. He hath left behind him this Testimony (in his Book on Eccl. 3. 4.) To Dance though at Marriages is unmeet, especially in N. E. And at such a Time as this, when the Churches are in Distress.

Distress. Should he rise out of his Tomb (which is here amongst us) how would his Holy Soul be grieved to behold such Degeneracy in this *Boston.*

Arg. 6. *That Practice against which the wrath of God hath been revealed from Heaven, may well be dreaded as unrighteous.* Rom. I. 18. *But this is sadly true concerning mixt Dancings.* The Fruits and Effects thereof have been Tragical & Dismal. No doubt but that the *Promiscuous Dances* (for at their Sacrifices the Heathen used to do so) between the *Moabites* and the *Midianitish Woman*, proved a snare to the Children of *Israel*. But how terrible a Plague followed? *Rivet, Ravanellus* and others conclude that *Dinab* went to see a *Dance* among the *Shechemites*; if her good Father had not indulged her that liberty, he had saved her from Ruine, and himself and Family from great Reproach. *Salome*, the Daughter of *Herodias* was notable at *Dancing*! But what end did she come to? *Nicephorus* relates that falling under the Ice, her feet *Capered* under the water; and her Head being cut off by the Ice, it danced above water. The Story of that Bishop is famous, who having a Mixed Dance in his House, he and the female in his hand hapned to be crush'd to Death. Also in the City of *Magdeburg*. 24 Persons (Men and Women) were struck dead with the Lightnings as they were *Promiscuously Dancing*. See *Dr Bear*:

Theater of Judgments, Chap. 36. Hereby may we understand that such Men have provoked the Lord, *Numb.* 16. 30. Histories have many other tragical stories confirming this Argument, which we forbear to mention. It is known from their own Confessions that amongst the *Indians* in this *America*, oftentimes at their Dances the Devil appears in bodily shape, and takes away one of them alive. In some places of this Wilderness there are great heaps of Stones, which the *Indians* have laid together, as an horrid Remembrance of so hideous a fruit of their *Satanical Dances*. The *Water of Magica de Spectris*, observes, That there was hardly any meeting betwixt the Devil and Witches wherein there was no *Dancing*.

But let us hear what the Patrons of Dances have to plead. *Produce your Cause, and bring forth your strong Reasons, saith the Lord. Say all that you have to say.*

Plea. 1. *We Read in the Scripture of Dances: Miriam Danced, and David Danced.*

Ans. 1. Those Instances are not at all to the purpose; for they were Religious *Dances* accommodated to the State of the Old Testament-Church. They had also Musick in the worship, but such as have so in these dayes I daize more than *Christians* ought to do, should divert into another *Question*, should speak to that.

2. Neither were thole mentioned, *Mixed dancings*: It is said of *Miriam*, *The Woman went out after her with Dances*, *Exod. 15. 20.* But not that Men went out with them: Nor did *David* take a Woman by the hand to *Dance* with him before the Ark. In one Word, there is not so much as one Example in the whole Book of God concerning *mixt dancing*, except it be the Instance of that accursed and damned Harlot the Daughter of *Herodias*.

Plea. 2. *The Design of Dancing is only to teach Children good Behaviour and decent Carriage.*

Ans. Religion is no Enemy to good Manners, to learn a due Poise and Composure of Body is not unlawful, provided it be done without a provocation to Uncleanness, and be not a Nurse of Pride and Vanity. If therefore any be disposed to have their Children instructed in that which may be truly Ornamental; or a desirable Accomplishment in these respects, they may send them not to a Blasphemer, but to some Grave Person that will teach them Decency of Behaviour, not *Promiscuously*, but each Sex by themselves; so neither God nor Man will be offended.

This notwithstanding, Every thing is not *Good Carriage*; which Light and Vain Persons shall call so. Why should *Pantomimical Gestures* be named good Carriage. There is a behaviour which

which Light Persons look upon as an accomplishment ; but such as are grave and solid, and wise (whose esteem is most to be valued) have other thoughts of it.. If the Holy Prophet *Isaiab* were alive in these dayes, he would not call a *stretched forth neck, and wanton eye, a Mincing as they go,* by the name of good carriage. It is one of the Devil's Wiles to Guild over corrupt Practices with Golden Names, that men may the more easily swallow them. In this debauched Age ; frequent *Osculations* amongst those that are not in any Conjugal Relation, is called good Breeding, Gentile behaviour, and the like. But Christians ought to hate such tendencies to *Nicolaitism*, for Christ hates them, *Rev. 2. 6.*

Plea 3. *Children are much pleased with this Exercise.* Ans. That we believe : But if it suit with their corrupt natures, that's a sign it is evil. No doubt but that if a Stage play were set up, many Children would be as much pleased with it, as now they are with the Dance. If a Blasphemer shall tell them, There's as good Divinity to be learned by a Play as by the Scripture it self, perhaps they may be debauched into the belief of it, if ever they should see Scripture-stories acted in a Play, which indeed is a profane Practice common amongst the Papiests, but prohibited in Reformed Churches under pain of the highest censure. The Lord saith, *Seek not after your own heart and your own wayes,* after which

which you use to go an whoring; *Numb.* 15. 35.

Plea. 4. *Such dancing is now become customary amongst Christians.* *Ans.* Which cannot be thought on without horror. A great and Learned Divine takes notice of it as a very sad thing, that all the profane Dances in use amongst the Lascivious Greeks of Old, have of late years been revived in the Christian World; yea, and in Places where the Reformed Religion has taught men better. But shall Christians follow the course of the World? They ought to swim against the stream, and to keep themselves pure from the sins of the Times of which this of *mixed dancing* is none of the least.

Plea. 5. *Some good men think it is lawfu!* *Ans.* We are not to walk by the Opinion of this or that good Man, but by the Scriptures. *To the Law and to the Testimony, if they speak not according to that there is no light in them.* Fearful Judgments have befallen a Professing People for doing such things as some good Men through error of Judgment have approved of. We dare not deny, that there have been some good Men in the world, who have been so far misled as to justify Profanations of the Lords Day. And Lutherans have pleaded for Graven Images, contrary to the second Commandment. But should such things be tolerated in N. E. we have reason to believe that the hot displeasure of God would soon burn against us. besides,
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It is more than we know, if one good man hath written in defence of mixt Dancings. One that hath written against Dancers, giveth his Book this Title, *The Church of ungodly Men and Women whose King is Lucifer.* But we cannot call to mind one Protestant Author who has been real for the interest of Reformation, that has set his Pen on work to plead for a practice so vile and infamous. This Objection turns upon Dancers thus, That practice with Holy Men in all ages have abhorred may well be suspected to be an evil practice: But it was shew'd that this is true of promiscuous Dancing. We shall then conclude this Discourse with a double Corollary.

Corol. I. *It is the Duty of Churches to exercise the Discipline of Christ towards such of their Members as shall offend in this matter.* The Rule is clear and written with the Beams of the Sun, *2 Thes. 3. 6. We command you, Brethren, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw your selves from every Brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the Tradition which he received from us.* Now they that frequen. Promiscuous Dancings, or that send their Children thereunto, walk disorderly, and contrary to the Apostles Doctrine. It has been proved that such a practice is a *Scandalous Immorality*, and therefore to be removed out of Churches by Discipline, which is the Broom of Christ, whereby he keeps his Churches clean. Zepperus and others
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observe that it was by this means, that Churches in the Primitive times were preserved from this corruption. And thus it hath been in the Reformed Churches. The National Synod held at Dort, Anno 1578. thus express themselves, *Because Dances are for the most part attended with a Levity unbecoming Christians, and are an offence to the Godly, especially when practised in a time of common Danger and Calamity, they that go to Dances, shall be reprov'd, and if after divers Admonitions they persist therein, they are to be excluded from Communion.* And several Provincial Assemblies in *Holland*, have declared that the sword of Discipline ought to be brandish'd against such Offenders, as *Voetius* testifieth (*In Disput, de excelsis mundi*, p.346, 347.) And the Reforming Synods in *Poland* above an hundred years ago, did absolutely prohibit these Dances, and prescribe the use of Discipline against that evil: Once more in the printed Discipline of the Reformed Churches in *France*, p.45. They have this Article, *Dancing is to be suppressed, and those that take the liberty or custom to Dance after they have been several times Admonish'd shall be Excommunicated, when they shew themselves obstinate in their Rebellion.* And the Consistories are exhorted well to put this Article into Execution, and to read the same publickly in the Name of God, and in the Authority of the Synods, and the said Synods and Conferences are exhorted to take heed of and warn those

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these Consistories that therein do not their Duties, to censure the Offenders for it.

And shall Churches in N. E. who have had a Name to be stricter and purer than other Churches, suffer such a scandalous evil amongst them? if all that are under Discipline be made sensible of this matter, we shall not be much or long infested with a *Choreutical Demon*.

Corol. 2. Such Church-Members in N. E. as have sent their Children to be Practitioners or Spectators of mixt Dancing between young Men and Maidens, have cause to be deeply humbled. But stand still a while! what a word is here! Church-Members and their Children in N. E. at mixt Dances! Be astonished O ye Heavens! without doubt Abraham is ignorant of us, and Israel knoweth us not. If our Fathers should rise out of their Graves, they would not own such Children. It has been observed by several learned & holy Men that Job giveth it as the Description and Character of ungodly ones: They send forth their little ones like a Flock, and their Children Dance, they take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoyce at the sound of the Organs, Job 21. 11, 12. Mr. Caryl's note on those words is, That worldly men breed their Children vainly. This is all their Religion. The Catechism which Wicked men teach their Children is to Dance and to Sing. Not that Dancing, or Musick, or Singing are in themselves sinful: but if the Dancing Master be wicked

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they are commonly abused to lasciviousness, and that makes them to become abominable. But will you that are Professors of Religion have your Children to be thus taught? the Lord expects that you should give the Children who are Baptized into his Name another kind of Education, that you should bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: And do you not hear the Lord Expostulating the case with you, and saying, you have taken my Children, the Children that were given unto me; the Children that were solemnly engaged to renounce the Poms of Satan; but is this a light matter that you have taken these my Children, and initiated them in the Poms and Vanities of the Wicked one, contrary to your Covenant? What will you say in the day of the Lords pleading with you? we have that charity for you as to believe that you have erred through Ignorance, and not wickedly: and we have therefore accounted it our Duty to inform you in the Truth. If you resolve not on Reformation, you will be left inexcusable. However it shall be, we have now given our Testimony and delivered our own Souls. *Consider what we say, and the Lord give you understanding in all things.*

F I N I S.