

**AN ARROW AGAINST PROFANE AND PROMISCUOUS DANCING**  
**DRAWN OUT OF THE QUIVER OF THE SCRIPTURES.**

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

[believed to be written by Increase Mather.]  
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CONCERNING the Controversy about Dancing, the Question is not, whether all Dancing be in itself 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 concerning Gynecandrical 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 Commandment, 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 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 expresly take notice of Dancing, as a violation of the Commandments. It is sad, that when in times of Reformations, Children have been taught in their Catechism, 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; probatae.

And that of Horace, Motus doceri gaudet Jonicos Matura Virgo, & Fingitur Actibus, jam nunc & incestos amores, &c.

2. Besides the seventh Commandment, There are other Scriptures, which seem expresly and particularly to condemn the Dancing 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 mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet, Isa. 3:16. Those great Interpreters Junius, and Rivet, and Ravanellus, conceive, 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 Critical and Accurate Expositors Interpret as reflecting on Putulant Dancings. And another Apostle speaks not only of Excess in 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 *kwmoV*, 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 Ravanellus and Voetius have well observed: the Greek word *kwmoV* (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 *eidoV 'orchsewV*. And it is evident, that Pindar, the Greek Poet, doth so use the word. He saith, *kwmaze sun umnw* i.e. Salta cum Hymno. Vid. Zuinger. Theatr. Vol. 2. lib.5. p. 389.

The summe is, that according to the judgment of most profound and accurate Interpreters; the Scripture does expresly, and by name condemn Dancing as a vicious practice. The arguments stands thus, *kwmoi* are expresly condemned in the Scripture? But mixt Dancings are *kwmoi*, Therefore they are expresly condemned in the Scripture. Also under that of Chambring, Wantonness, lasciviousness 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 Madman? 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

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. 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 wherof we shall endeavour to clear.

I. 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 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 *QeoV coreioV*; 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 *KwmoV* which (as before was shewed) does from thence signify 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 fourth to honour it. This is enough to make Christians, not only deride, but detest such Vanities; especially considering that the Scripture saith, Learn not the way of the Heathen. Jer. 10:2. And that the Lord's 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 notice of them; he thus expresseth himself. The entering into the Processions of Dances, hinders 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 Poms; but when they enter into the Dance, they go in the Pompous 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 unbraid 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 the wisest, and the learnedest, and the holiest men in the world have disliked it. The Ancient Doctors, (Fathers as they are called) have thundred against this Sin. Chrysostom 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 this is a Petulant Dance, the Devil is one of the Company. And Arnobius does vehemently reprehend the Gentiles, because of their lascivious Dances. Austin [Augustine] 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 Poms 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 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 divers wayes; as in his Pace, for all his steps are numbered; 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, Danaeus, Tilenus, Polanus, Zepperus; all condemn it as utterly unlawful. Peter Martyr and Aretius in their common places, do elaborately discourse about 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 Commandment, and ought not to be tolerated in any Christian Common-wealth. The great Voetius 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 *Histrion 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 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 Ancient Romans skil in Dancing was reputed an infamous thing. Scipio Africanus complains that some in his time would go 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 Muraena 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 Muraena, 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 Gabinius and Antonius that they must needs be vicious persons, because they were Dancers. Seneca bewails it, that in his time young Ones were corrupted with Obscene Dances; and that Dancing-schools were tolerated in the City, and that some when they were inflamed at the Dance, went from the Dancing-school to the Brothel house. Priamus severly reprov'd his sons because he understood they were 'orchstaii.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 were good & what evil; condemn Petulant dancings? 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 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 Gunecandrical Dance. It is a high degree of profaneness, and 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, 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 it self 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, Eccl. 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 God 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 wailing, 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 word 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 Jigs and Galiards! 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. 21:10. Blessed Mr. Cotton, tho he be dead (and hath been for 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. 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. 1:18? 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 Dinah 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. Beard's 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 Writer 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. I. We Read in the Scripture of Dances. Miriam Danced, and David Danced.

Answ. I. 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 Music in their worship, but such as have so in these dayes Judaize more than Christians ought to do, we should divert into another Question, should we speak to that.

2. Neither were those 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 Poyse and Composure of Body is not unlawful, provided it be done without a provocation to Uncleaness, 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 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 Isaiah 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 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 Papists, 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 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 Christian 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 lawful! 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, 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 shewed 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 frequent 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 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 practiced 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 brandished against such Offenders, as Voetius testifieth (In Disput, de exelsis 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 Admonished 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 Synod,

and the said Synod and Conferences are exhorted to take heed of and warn those 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 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 ease 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 will give you understanding in all things.