

A DIALOGUE

CONCERNING

WITCHES & WITCHCRAFTS,

BY GEORGE GIFFORD.

Reprinted from the Edition of 1603.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE PERCY SOCIETY.

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PREFACE.

GEORGE GIFFORD was a very noted preacher of his time. An account of him and his publications will be found in Wood's "Athenæ." At Maldon, in Essex, he was situated in the midst of a superstitious district, famous then and afterwards in the history of witchcraft. As early as 1587, Gifford published "A Discourse of the subtil Practises of Devilles by Witches and Sorcerers." Six years afterwards, in 1593, appeared the first edition of the present dialogue, of which a second edition was printed in 1603. This latter has been taken as the text of the present edition.

This dialogue was thought to merit reprinting, both as being an excellent specimen of the colloquial language of the reign of Elizabeth, and for the good sense with which the writer treats a subject on which so many people ran mad, and the curious

allusions which it contains to the superstitions of that age. It is remarkable that the second edition appeared in the opening year of the reign of a monarch, who published a treatise on witchcraft, as much distinguished by bigoted ignorance as the present is by enlightened views. Still even George Gifford was either not entirely free from the superstitious belief of his age, or he was afraid to state his opinions to their full extent, for many of his arguments against the operations of witches need to be carried out a very little way to disprove the existence of the witches themselves.

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A DIALOGUE
CONCERNING
WITCHES AND WITCHCRAFTS,

**IN WHICH IS LAYED OPEN HOW CRAFTILY THE DIVELL
DECEIVETH NOT ONELY THE WITCHES BUT MANY
OTHER, AND SO LEADETH THEM AWRIE
INTO MANIE GREAT ERROURS.**

BY GEORGE GIFFARD,
MINISTER OF GODS WORD IN MALDON.

LONDON :

**Printed by R. F. and F. K. and are to be sold by Arthur Iohnson,
at the Signe of the Flower-de-luce and Crowne
in Paules Church-yard.**

1603.

TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFVL MAISTER
ROBERT CLARKE, ONE OF HER MAIESTIES
BARONS OF HER HIGHNESSE COURT
OF ESCHEQUER.

CERTAINE yeres now past, right worshipfull, I published a small Treatise concerning Witches, to lay open some of Satans sleights and subtill practises, least the ignoranter sort should be caried awry and seduced more and more by them. The errours be farre more grosse, and the sinnes much greater, into which by meanes of witches he seduceth multitudes, then in common opinion they be esteemed. It falleth out in many places even of a sudden as it seemeth to me and no doubt by the heavie judgement of God, that the divels as it were let loose, do more prevaile then ever I have heard of. For when as men have set so light by the hearing of Gods voice to be instructed by him they are justly given over to be taught by the divels, and to learne their wayes. Satan is now heard speake and beleevd. He speaketh by conjurers, by soocerers, and by witches, and his word is taken. He deviseth a number of things to be done, and they are put in practise and followed. The high providence of God Almightye and soveraigne rule over

all, is set forth so unto us in the Scriptures as that without him a sparrow cannot fall to the ground. All the haire of our head are numbred. The diuels would hurt and destroy with bodily harmes both men and beasts, and other creatures, but all the diuels in hell are so chained up and brided by this high providence, that they cannot plucke the wing from one poore little wrenne, without speciall leave given them from the ruler of the whole earth. And yet the witches are made beleve that at their request, and to pleasure them by fulfilling their wrath, their spirits do lame and kill both men and beasts. And then to spread this opinion among the people, these subtill spirits bewray them, and will have them openly confesse that they have done such great things, which al the diuels at any mans request could never do. For if they could, they would not stay to be intreated. God giveth him power sometimes to afflict both men and beasts with bodily harmes. If he can, he will do it as intreated and sent by witches, but for us to imagine either that their sending doth give him power, or that he would not doe that which God hath given him leave to do, unlesse they should request and send him, is most absurd. There be many diseases in the bodies of men and beasts which he seeth will breake forth unto lameness, or unto death, he beareth the witches in hand he doth them. He worketh by his other sort of witches, whom the people call cunning men and wise women, to confirme all his matters, and by them teaching many remedies, that so he may be sought unto and honoured as God.

These things taking roote in the harts of the people, and so making them afraid of witches, and raising up suspitions and rumors of sundry innocent persons, many giltlesse are upon mens othes condemned to death, and much innocent bloud is shed. How subtilly he contriveth these matters, I have to my small skill laid open in this slender Treatise. I have done it in a way of a Dialogue, to make the fitter for the capacity of the simpler sort. I am bold to offer it unto your worship, not unto one as needeth to be taught in these things, being zealously affected to the Gospell, and so grounded in the faith of the high providence, that I have bene delighted to heare and see the wise and godly course used upon the seate of justice by your worship, when such have bene arraigned. I offer it therefore as a testimonie of a thankfull mind for favors and kindnes shewed towards me, and so intreat your worship to accept of it. If it may do good to any of the weaker sort in knowledge, I shall be glad. If I erre in any thing, being shewed it, I will be ready to correct it.

Your Worships in all duties to commaund,

GEORGE GIFFARD.

THE SPEAKERS.

*Samuel. Daniel. The wife of Samuel. M. B.
schoole-maister. The goodwife R.*

Sam. You are wel met, old acquaintance, I am glad to see you looke so well, how do all our good friends in your country ?

Dan. I trust they be all in good health : they were when I came from home, I am sory to se you look so pale : what have you bene sicke lately ?

Sam. Truly no, I thanke God I have had my health pretily well, but yet me thinke my meate doth me no good of late.

Dan. What is the matter, man, do you take thought and care for the world ? take heede of that, for the Scripture saith, worldly sorrow worketh death. (2 Cor. vii. 10.) It is a great sinne rising from unbeleefe, and distrust in Gods providence, when men be over pensive for the world.

Sam. Indeede my mind is troubled, but not for that which you say, for I hope in God I shall not want so long as I live.

Dan. Is it any trouble of conscience for sinne ? if it be, that may turne to good.

Sam. O no, no, I know no cause why.

Dan. Why what is it then, if I may be so bold, I pray you tell me. I thinke you take me for your friend.

Sam. Indeede I have alwayes found you my verie good friend, and I am sure you will give me the best counsell you can : truely we dwell here in a bad country, I thinke even one of the worst in England.

Dan. Is it so ! I thinke you dwell in a fine country, in a sweete wholesome aire, and fruitfull grounds.

Sam. Aire, man ! I find no fault with the aire, there be naughtie people.

Dan. Naughtie people ! where shall a man dwell, and not find them ? swearers, liers, railers, slaunderers, drunkards, adulterers, riotous, unthrifts, dicers, and proud high minded persons, are every where to be found in great plentie.

Sam. Nay, I do not meane them, I care not for them. These witches, these evill favoured old witches do trouble me.

Dan. What, do you take your selfe to be bewitched ?

Sam. No, no, I trust no evill spirit can hurt me, but I heare of much harme done by them, they lame men and kil their cattel, yea they destroy both men and children. They say there is scarce any towne or vil- lage in all this shire, but there is one or two witches at the least in it. In good sooth, I may tell it to you as to my friend, when I go but into my closes, I am afraid, for I see now and then a hare, which my conscience giveth me is a witch, or some witches spirit, she stareth so upon me. And sometime I see an ugly weasill

runne through my yard, and there is a foule great cat sometimes in my barne, which I have no liking unto.

Dan. You never had no hurt done yet, had you by any witch ?

Sam. Trust me I cannot tell, but I feare me I have; for there be two or three in our town which I like not, but especially an old woman. I have bene as careful to please her as ever I was to please mine own mother, and to give her ever and anon one thing or other, and yet methinkes she frownes at me now and then. And I had a hog which eate his meat with his fellows, and was very well to our thinking over night, and in the morning he was starke dead. My wife hath had five or sixe hens even of late dead. Some of my neighbours wish me to burne something alive, as a hen or a hog. Others will me in time to seeke help at the hands of some cunning man, before I have any further harme. I would be glad to do for the best.

Dan. Have you any cunning man thereabout, that doth helpe ?

Sam. There is one, they say, here a twentie miles off at T. B. which hath holpe many. And thus much I know, there was one of mine acquaintance but two miles hence, which had great losses; he lost two or three kine, sixe hogs, he would not have tooke fifteene shillings a hog for them, and a mare. He went to that same man, and told him he suspected an old woman in the parish. And I thinke he told me, that he shewed him her in a glasse, and told him she had three or foure impes, some call them puckerles, one like a grey cat,

another like a weasel, another like a mouse, a vengeance take them, it is a great pitie the country is not rid of them, and told him also what he should do: it is half a yeare ago, and he never had any hurt since. There is also a woman at R. H. five and twentie miles hence, that hath a great name, and great resort there is daily unto her. A neighbour of mine had his child taken lame, a girl of ten yeares old, and such a paine in her backe, that she could not sit upright. He went to that woman, she told him that he had some bad neighbour, the child was forespoken, as she suspected; marie, if he would go home, and bring her some of the clothes which the child lay in all night, she would tell him certainly. He went home, and put a table napkin about her necke all night, and in the morning tooke it with him, and she told him the girle was bewitched indeed, and so told him what he should do, and he had remedie: the girle is well at this day, and a pretie quicke girle. There was another of my neighbours had his wife much troubled, and he went to her, and she told him his wife was haunted with a fairie. I cannot tell what she bad him do, but the woman is merrie at this houre. I have heard, I dare not say it is so, that she weareth about her S. Johns Gospell, or some part of it.

Dan. If you have such cunning men and woman, what need you be so much afraid?

Sam. Alas, man, I could teeme it to go, and some counsell me to go to the man at T. B. and some to the woman at R. H. And between them both, I have linged the time, and feare I may be spoiled before I get

remedie. Some wish me to beate and claw the witch, untill I fetch bloud on her, and to threaten her that I will have her hanged. If I knew which were the best, I would do it.

Dan. I perceive your danger is betweene two stooles.

Sam. It is very true, if I had heard but of one, I should have gone ere this time, and I am glad that I met with you. I pray you let me have your best counsell; I trust you beare me good-will.

Dan. Truly, I will give you the best counsell I can, which I am sure shall do you good, if you will follow it, for indeed I pittie your case, it is most certaine you are bewitched.

Sam. Bewitched, do you thinke I am bewitched? I feele no harme in my bodie, you make me more afraid.

Dan. Nay, I do not thinke that the old woman hath bewitched you, or that your body is bewitched, but that the divell hath bewitched your mind with blindnesse and unbeleefe, to draw you from God, even to worship himselfe, by seeking help at the hands of divels. It is a lamentable case to see how the divel hath bewitched thousands at this day to runne after him, and even to offer sacrifice unto him.

Sam. I defie the divell: worship him? fie upon him, I hate him with all my heart. Do you thinke any seeke help at his hands? we seeke help against him. I thinke he never doth good, he hurteth, but he never helpeth any.

Dan. It is not in these matters to be taken as we imagine, but as the word of God teacheth. What though a man thinke he worshipping not divels, nor seeketh not help at their hands, as he is perswaded, nor hath any such intent, is he ever the nerre, when as yet it shall be found by God's word, that he doth worship them, and seeke unto them for help ?

Sam. Do you thinke, then, that there be no witches? Doth not God suffer wicked people to do harme ? Or do you thinke that the cunning men do helpe by the divell ? I would be glad to reason with you, but I have small knowledge in the Scriptures. We have a schoolemaister that is a good pretie scholler (they say) in the Latine tongue, one M. B., he is gone to my house even now, I pray you let me intreate you to go thither; you two may reason the matter, for you are learned.

Dan. I could be content, but it will aske some time, and I am going to such a place upon speciall businesse.

Sam. I pray you let me intreate you : foure or five houres is not so much.

Dan. Well, I will go with you.

Sam. Wife, I have brought an old friend of mine, I pray thee bid him welcome.

The Wife. He is verie welcome. But truly, man, I am angrie with you, and halfe out of patience, that you go not to seeke helpe against yonder same old beast ; I have another hen dead this night. Other men can seeke remedie. Here is M. B. tels me, that the good-wife R. all the last week could not make her butter

come. She never rested untill she had got her husband out to the woman at R. H.; and when he came home, they did but heate a spit red hot, and thrust into the creame, using certaine words, as she willed him, and it came as kindly as any butter that ever she made. I met the old filth this morning; Lord, how sowerly she looked upon me, and mumbled as she went, I heard part of her words. Ah, (quoth she) you have an honest man to your husband, I heare how he doth use me. In truth, husband, my stomacke did so rise against her, that I could have found in my heart to have flowne upon her, and scratched her, but that I feared she would be too strong for me. It is a lustie old queane. I wished that the good-wife R. had bene with me. I pray you, good husband, let me intreate you to go to that same good woman: you may ride thither in halfe a day.

Sam. Wife, I pray thee be content, I have intreated this mine old friend to reason with M. B., for he tels me that we be in a verie foul error.

M. B. I suppose, so farre as my learning and capacitie do extend, that small reasoning may serve. The word of God doth shew plainely that there be witches, and commaundeth they should be put to death. Experience hath taught too too many what harmes they do. And if any have the gift to minister help against them, shall we refuse it? Shall we not drinke when we are athirst? shall we not warme us when we are a cold? It is pitie that anie man should open his mouth any way to defend them, their impietie is so great.

Dan. For my part, I go not about to defend witches. I denie not but that the divell worketh by them. And that they ought to be put to death. We ought also to seeke remedy against them, but, as I told my friend, the devil doth bewitch men by meanes of these witches, and leade them from God, even to follow himselfe, to offer sacrifice unto him, to worship him, to obey his will, to commit many grievous sinnes, and be drowned in manifold errours.

M. B. If you have this meaning, that witches and sorcerers are bewitched by the devill, that they forsake God, and folow him, that they worship and obey him, and do sacrifice unto him, and commit many hainous sins, I agree with you, for I take it, they even vow themselves to the divell, or else he would not be so redie to do them service. But if you meane that such as seeke remedy against them, and would have them rooted out, be so seduced and mis-led by the divell, as you speake, I say your speech is rash and foolish, for they that be earnest against witches, be earnest against the divell, they defie the divell, they seeke to resist him, and to roote out his instruments. Now, if you were a man that had any learning, you should see, that contraries cannot be in the same subject, at one instant, in the same part, and in the same respect: how then can a man hate the divell, defie the divell and his works, and yet follow him at one time?

Dan. I know that witches and conjurers are seduced and become the vassals of Satan, they be his servants, and not he theirs, as you speake. But I meane

indeed that multitudes are seduced and led from God, to follow the divell, by meanes of witches and conjurers : yea I speake it of those, not which are caried of a godly zeale, but of a blind rage and mad furie against them. If I speake this rashly and foolishly, as you say, and your self learned as you boast, and I unlearned, I shall be the more easily overthrowne. But I speake so truly, and can so well justifie all that I have said by the word of God, that your learning and best skill shall not be able to disprovee the same. Your logicke at the first doth faile you. Not that contraries can be in the same subject at the same instant, in the same part, and in the same respect. But herein you are utterly blind and deceived, that you name contraries, and take it that the first of them, as namely to hate the divell, to defie him and his workes, are in them, when as indeede they are in them but in imagination. For if men say and think they defie the divel and his workes, and through blindnes and infidelitie, are even bewitched, and seduced to follow the devill, and to do his will, doth their speech and blind imagination make the things indeede to be in them ? What if a poore begger woman say and thinke that she is a queene : is she therefore no begger, begging still her bread ? or is she rid of her lice ?

M. B. Nay, if you judge, I have done. If men be earnest against the divell, and defie him and all his workes, are you to judge of their conscience, and to say they defie him but in imagination, and follow him, and worship him indeed ? is not God alone the judge over

men's hearts? Againe, do you compare those that are in their right mind, with such as be mad, or out of their wits?

Dan. I know that God alone is the searcher of the heart, touching the things which lie hid in secret: but where things are open and manifest, the tree is knowne by the fruites, so farre we may go. As if a man professe the faith of Jesus Christ soundly, in all points according to the word of God, and doth frame his life thereafter in doing good workes: it is very wicked for any man to judge of him, that he is a hypocrite, and that he doth all of vaine-glorie. And yet it may be that the Lord, who discerneth the secret intents of the heart, seeth indeed that he is but an hypocrite. On the contrarie part, where a man professeth in words that he doth defie the divell and all his workes, and yet when it cometh to the triall of Gods word, he is found to be seduced, and wrapped in blind errors of the divell, in infidelitie, and evill workes, in which he fulfilleth the will of Satan, and honoureth him in the place of God, shall we say that this is a good man because of his words and imaginations, that he defieth the divell and his works? *Woe be to them that call good evill, and evill good,* Esa. v. We may say they are in a bad case, except they repent, and turne from following Satan. But yet I say, that a faithfull man may erre in some of these things through weakenesse of faith, and through ignorance. And therefore, here men may not be too rash in judgment. And now whereas you find fault, that I make comparison between such as

be mad and those that be in their right mind: it is your ignorance, which do not consider that there be two kinds of madnes, or being out of their right mind, the one for matters of this world, the other for things spirituall and heavenly. There be which are in their wits for this world, which touching spiritual things are as far awrie in their imaginations, as the poore beggar, which thinketh she is a goodly queene. Doth not the holy apostle say, that *because men receive not the love of the truth, God will send them strong delusion to beleve lies*, 2 Thes. ii. And what is that, but that Satan shall seduce, illude, and bewitch their minds, to make them beleve that they worship and follow God, when they worship and follow him ?

M. B. Do you take that to be St. Pauls meaning ? Doth Satan bewitch mens minds, and leade them into falshood and errour, making them beleve they worship God, when they worship divels ?

Dan. S. Paul speaketh there indeed of the comming of the great Antichrist in the power of the divell. Now those which are seduced and worship Antichrist, thinke they worship God, but marke what S. John saith, *All the world wondred, and followed the Beast, and worshipped the Dragon which gave power to the Beast: and they worshipped the Beast.* Revelat. xiii. And looke in the twelfth chapter of the Revelation, and you shall find that the Dragon, which the Poperie doth worship in stead of God, is the divell.

M. B. Truly I like your words well, I am persuaded the divell doth seduce and bewitch mens minds: but

touching those that seek help at the hands of cunning men and women against witches, I cannot thinke so hardly of them. I may be awrie, I see well : I will not be obstinate if the word of God shew me mine errour. Let us even friendly conferre of the matter. Be not offended with me, and for my part I will speake all that I know or thinke.

Dan. I must intreate you likewise to beare with my plaine speeches. And let us in the matters proceede from one point to another, standing onely upon that, wherein we shall be found to differ in judgement : and let Gods word be the judge betweene us.

Sam. I like this well : though I can say but litle, I will sit and heare you.

Dan. What is the first question that we shall handle ?

M. B. I heard you say, if I did not mistake your speech, that there be witches that worke by the divell. But yet I pray you tel me, do you thinke there be such ? I know some are of opinion there be none.

Dan. It is so evident by the Scriptures, and in all experience, that there be witches which worke by the divell, or rather, I may say, the divell worketh by them, that such as go about to proove the contrarie do shew themselves but cavillers.

M. B. I am glad we agree in that point, I hope we shall in the rest. What say you to this ? that the witches have their spirits, some hath one, some hath more, as two, three, foure, or five, some in one likenesse, and some in another, as like cats, weasils, toades, or

mise, whom they nourish with milke or with a chicken, or by letting them suck now and then a drop of blood: whom they call when they be offended with any, and send them to hurt them in their bodies, yea to kill them, and to kill their cattell ?

Dan. Here is great deceit, and great illusion ; here the divell leadeth the ignorant people into foule errors, by which he draweth them headlong into many grievous sinnes.

M. B. Nay, then, I see you are awrie, if you denie these things, and say they be but illusions. They have been proved, and proved againe, even by the manifold confessions of the witches themselves. I am out of all doubt in these, and could in many particulare lay open what hath fallen out. I did dwel in a village within these five yeares, where there was a man of good wealth, and sodainly within ten dayes space, he had three kine died, his gelding worth ten pounds fel lame, he was himself taken with a great paine in his back, and a child of seven yeeres old died. He sent to the woman at R. H. and she said he was plagued by a witch, adding moreover, that there were three women witches in that town, and one man witch: willing him to look whom he most suspected : he suspected one old woman, and caused her to be caried before a Justice of Peace and examined: with much ado at the last she confessed all : which was this in effect : that she had three spirits, one like a cat, which she called Lightfoot, another like a toade, which she called Lunch, the third like a weasill, which she called

Makeshift. This Lightfoote she said, one Mother Barlie, of W., sold her above sixteene yeares ago, for an oven cake, and told her the cat would do her good service, if she would, she might send her of her errand: this cat was with her but a while, but the weasil and the tode came and offred their service. The cat would kill kine, the weasil would kill horses, the toade would plague men in their bodies. She sent them all three (as she confessed) against this man. She was committed to the prison, and there she died before the assises. I could tell you of many such: I had no mind to dwell in that place any longer.

Dan. You mistake me, I do not meane that the things are not, but my meaning is, that the divell by such things doth beguile and seduce ignorant men, and lead them into errours and grievous sinnes. And let us examine every parcell of that which you set downe in your speech, and you shall see no lesse.

M. B. That is it which I would faine see. You confesse they have spirits, some one, some more, and in such likenesses: what errorr be the people led into by that?

Dan. First consider this, that there be multitudes and armies of divels, as we see in the Gospel, that many divels were entered into one man, and Christ saying *What is thy name?* answer is made, *Legion, for we are many.* Marke v. Now, although the divels be many, yet they be all caried with such hatred against God, with such desire to have him dishonored and blasphemed, and burne with such bloudie

malice and crueltie against men, that they bend their study al together, one helping and furthering another what they can in their worke: insomuch that the Scripture doth speake of them, as if they were but one divell: for St. Peter saith, *Your adversarie the divell goeth about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.* (1 Pet. v.) And in the Revelation, (chapter xii.) all the divells make that great red dragon, and our Saviour doth shew how close they joyne in one, when he saith, *If Satan be divided against Satan, or if Satan cast forth Satan, how shall his kingdome endure?* (Matth. xii.) Now then, whether the witch deale, as she supposeth, with one spirit, or with many, it commeth all to one effect, thus farre, that one dealeth not alone, but with the help of others. So that he or she that hath familiaritie with one divel, it is as much as if it were with an hundred. Moreover, the divells be spirits, they have no bodily shape or likenesse, but yet can make an appearance of a shape, as appeareth by the inchaunters before Pharao, when their rods were turned into serpents in shew. (Exod. vii.) And then one divel can seeme to be foure or five, and foure or five can seeme to be one: it is therefore but the craft of Satan, to make shew of more or lesse.

M. B. Do you not thinke then, that where the more divells be, there is the greater power of Satan?

Dan. Yes, but it cannot be discerned, be his appearing to the witch in shew of more or lesse, for one can seeme ten unto her, and ten can seeme one.

M. B. Well, I do not mislike all this, I pray you proceede forward.

Dan. Then further marke well how the holy Scriptures do paint out the divels to be mightie terrible spirits, full of power, rage, and crueltie, compared to a great fierie red dragon ; (Revel. xii.) to a greedie or hungrie lion, that roareth after the prey, (1 Pet. v.) and called by S. Paul principalities and powers, the rulers of the darknesse of this world : now when they take upon them the shapes of such paltrie vermin, as cats, mise, todes, and weasils, it is even of subiltie to cover and hide his mightie tyrannie and power, which he exerciseth over the hearts of the wicked. It is most necessarie for us all to know, what strong adversaries we have to encounter withall, that we may flie unto the Lord God, and seek to be armed with his power against them.

M. B. Well, what will you inferre upon this ? I can not denie but that the Scriptures do paint out the divels to be mightie terrible spirits, and so they may be. although they appeare but like cats or weasils.

Dan. I do not say that they be not mightie and terrible, because they appeare in such shapes : but I affirme, that their appearing so, is to cover and hide their mightinesse and effectual working, which they exercise in the dark hearts of men. And marke well, I pray you, the power of divels is in the hearts of men, as to harden the heart, to blind the eyes of the mind, and from the lustes and concupiscenses which are in them, to inflame them unto wrath, malice, envie, and cruell murders: to puffe them up in pride, arrogancie, and vaine glorie: to intice them unto wantonness and

whooredomes, and all uncleannesse. And about these things they work continually, and with such efficacy, that without the power of the glorious passion and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, which we have by faith, they cannot be withstood, and they will seeme to be but meane fellows, busied about making drinke that it shal not work in the fat, in keeping cheese from running, and butter from comming, in killing hens or hogs, or making men lame.

M. B. May they not do both the one and the other ?

Dan. Yea, but this is my meaning, that while they be occupied about the greatest things, as in stirring up tyrants and wicked men to persecute, to reproch, and blaspheme the Gospell, which pulleth them downe, to set division and wars betweene kingdoms and kings, hatred and discord betweene man and wife, and contention betweene brethren : yea, to set all in a broile and confusion : they would seeme to be busied about trifles, and about these they busie mens minds, that they may not observe and take heed of them in those other.

M. B. I perceive your meaning, but yet I do not conceive whereunto you chiefly tend : for do not they which looke upon these harmes done by witches, confesse that the divell doth all those things which you mention ?

Dan. The ignorant sort which are so terrified by witches, do in words after a sort confesse so much as you say, but when it commeth to the matter, they denie

it in effect. For marke this, the divels continually compasse the soule of man about, to shoote it full of their fierie darts, (Ephes. vi.) even to wound it to death with all wicked sinnes. *The divell goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.* (1 Pet. v.) And they by this craft which they use by meanes of the witches, make the blind people imagine that they never come nigh them, but when the witches are angrie and do send them, and that they are easily driven away when they do come, as by burning some quick thing, as hen, or hog, or by beating and drawing bloud upon the witch. Such people as can thus drive him away, or by thrusting a spit red hote into their creame, are farre from knowing the spirituall battell, in which we are to warre under the banner of Christ against the divell, much lesse do they know how to put on (as S. Paul willeth), the whole armour of God, to resist and overcome him. (Ephes. vi.) He may deale with their soules even as he listeth, when they take him not present but upon such sending, and where such hurt doth follow in their bodies or goods.

M. B. I do not denie, but that the divels seeke chiefly for to destroy the soules of men: but (as I take it) you confesse, that they being sent by the witches, do also those bodily harmes: and as yet I see no reason why they may not seeke remedie against such harmes, and drive him away by any good meanes; doth the word of God forbid us to use meanes? If I be sicke, shall I not take phisicke? If I be thirstie, shall I not drinke? Indeed, I am of your mind, though I did not

know so much before, that the divell dealeth subtilly in this, that by dealing in such small matters, he covereth himself in the greater, as though he came not neere, nor did not meddle but in such manner: but here standeth the case, I resist him in those greater, may I not also use those helpes which drive him away in the lesser? I will, if I can, drive him away in all things.

Dan. How the divels are sent by the witches, and how they do those bodily harmes, we are not yet come unto, and there lie two of the chiefest subtilities of the divell in them, by which he deceiveth the multitude. But by occasion we are fallen into the mention of remedy to drive them away. Because (I say), such as thus drive him away, know not the spiritual battel, much lesse how to put on the whole armour of God to overcome the divell: order doth require that we speake first of his sending, and then of those bodily harmes which he doth, afterward of these meanes which are used to repell him. Let us therefore step one step backe againe, if you agree to the rest which I have spoken.

M. B. With a good will: for so we shall omit no part. But I thought we had fully agreed in this, that the witches do send their spirits, and do many harmes both unto men and beasts: because we have it confirmed by daily experience: and unlesse you will denie that which is manifest, I doubt not but we shall accord in these.

Dan. I say the witches do send their spirits.

M. B. What shall we neede then to stand upon that point in which we are agreed?

Dan. Yes, though we agree that they send them, yet we may dissent in divers things about this sending. As first, tell me, whether do you thinke that the witch or the divell is the servant; which of them commaundeth, and which obeyeth?

M. B. How can I tell that? It is thought he becommeth her servant, and where she is displeas'd and would be revenged, she hireth him for to do it. The witches themselves have confessed thus much: and for my part, I thinke no man can disprove it.

Dan. They that do the will of God, are the children and servants of God. And they which fulfill the lustes of the divell, and obey him, are his children and his servants. (John viii. 44, Acts xiii. 10.) Are they not?

M. B. I grant all this.

Dan. The divels are the rulers of the darknesse of this world. (Ephes. vi. verse 12.)

M. B. The text is plaine.

Dan. The darknesse of this world, is not meant of the darknes of the night, which is but the shadow of the earth, but it is the spirituall darknesse, which consisteth in the ignorance of God, in infidelitie, and in sinne.

M. B. I am of your mind in this also.

Dan. And do you not thinke then that the divell hath his throne, his dominion, and kingdome in the hearts of ignorant blind infidels?

M. B. I must needes thinke he hath; the word of God doth force me thereunto, seeing he is the prince of darknesse.

Dan. And is there any greater infidelitie and darknesse in any, then in witches, conjurers, and such as have familiaritie with divels?

M. B. I take it they be deepest overwhelmed in darknesse and infidelitie of all other.

Dan. Lay all these things together which you confesse, and see whether it doth not follow upon the same, that the witch is the vassall of the divell, and not he her servant; he is lord and commaundeth, and she is his drudge and obeyeth.

M. B. Yea, although he be lord, yet he is content to serve her turne, and the witches confesse, they call them forth and send them, and that they hire them to hurt such in their bodies, and in their cattell, and they be displeased withall.

Dan. I am sorie you are so farre awrie: it is pitie any man should be in such errour, especially a man that hath learning, and should teach others knowledge.

M. B. Nay, I may returne this upon you; for, if you will denie this, it is but a folly to reason any further. I will never be driven from that which I know. There was one old mother W. of Great T. which had a spirit like a weasill: she was offended highly with one H. M.: home she went, and called forth her spirit, which lay in a pot of wooll under her bed, she willed him to go and plague the man: he required what she would give him, and he would kill H. M. She said she would give him a cocke, which she did, and he went, and the man fell sicke with a great paine in his belly, languished, and died: the witch was arraigned, condemned, and hanged, and did confesse all this.

Dan. I told you before that I do not deny these things, but you are deceived about the doing: you marke not the cunning sleights of the divell: tell me, is not this the truth which S. Peter speaketh, *that the divell goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devoure?* (1 *Pet.* 5.)

M. B. What then?

Dan. What then? can you be so simple as to imagine that the divell lieth in a pot of wooll, soft and warme, and stirreth not, but when he is hired and sent? The divells conspire together in their worke, they bestirre them, and never take rest night nor day: they are never wearie, they be not a cold, they care not for lying soft; these be fooleries, by which he deceiveth the witches, and bewitcheth the minds of many ignorant people: and whereas you say he is hired, it is but deceit: for, let me aske you two or three questions more if neede be.

M. B. What be your questions?

Dan. You say the witch commeth home angrie, who hath kindled this wrath in heart but the divell? Who inflameth her mind with malice, to be revenged, and to do mischief but the divell? doth he not rule in her heart? Tell me what you thinke of this.

M. B. I must needs confesse he stirreth her up to wrath and malice.

Dan. Then he lieth not at home in his pot of wooll: nor he is not hired to this: hitherto she is his drudge, and obeyeth him, and not he her, being led by his suggestion. Then tell me, is not the divell like a red

or fierie dragon (*Revelat.* xii.) burning in malice against God, and with all bloudie and cruell hatred that may be against men? And is he not farre reddier unto all mischiefe, then any man or woman?

M. B. The divell is more fierce then any man or woman; none can denie this.

Dan. If none can denie this, and he be the worker of the wrath and malice in the heart of the witch, then what needeth he to be hired? he stirreth her up, and if he would, he could turne her mind from sending him, and must he be hired? doth he care for a cocke or a chicken? is he hungrie, or needeth he somewhat to eate?

M. B. Nay, but it is thought he taketh those things to wisse against the witch that she is his.

Dan. Let it be, there were somewhat in that which you speake, yet he hath a farre deeper reach, for the truth is, he would and doth perswade the blind people, that he medleth litle, but when he is even hired and sent, and that then his meddling is but in such matters: and hereupon all is on a broyle against old women, which can any wayes be suspected to be witches, as if they were the very plagues of the world, and as if all would be well, and safe from such harmes, if they were rooted out, and thus they fall a rooting out without all care: for it is thought that the witch which hath her spirits, is even like a man which hath curst dogges, which he may set upon other mens cattell, which yet in the nature of dogs would never stirre but when they are bidden: and so the harmes do come from the man

which owneth those dogs. They thinke that the country might be rid of such spirits, if there were none to hoister them, or to set them a work. They imagine that they and their cattel should then go safe. Alas, poore creatures, how they be deluded ! how litel do they understand the high providence of Almighty God, which is over all !

M. B. Do you thinke then that witches ought not to be rooted out ? or do you thinke it were not much safetie to the countrey from harmes, if it could be rid of them ?

Dan. For the rooting out of witches, the Scripture is plaine: *Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live:* but we are not yet come to that point. But whether they be to be rooted out that men may be safe from harmes, as the people in furie and blindnesse imagine, that is next.

M. B. Men feele the smart and the harmes which they do, and it is no marvell, though they be earnest to have them rooted out, and a good riddance it were if the whole land could be set free from them.

Sa. Truly, M. B., I am of your mind, I would they were all hanged up one against another: we should not (I hope) stand in such feare of their spirits. But I interrupt you too.

The Wife. They that would not have them hanged or burnt, I would they might even witch them unto hell. If I had but one fagot in the world, I would carie it a mile upon my shoulders to burne a witch.

Dan. Well, good woman, spare your fagot awile,

and ease your shoulders, and let us reason the matter a litle further. I pray you let me aske you this question, Doth the witch or the divell the harme unto men and cattell?

M. B. Why the divell doth it at their sending, though I confesse it must needes be as you said, that the divell worketh all in the mind of the witch, and mooveth her to send him.

Dan. The divell hath a kingdome, but it is in darke-nesse and corruption of sinne. He hath no right nor power over Gods creatures, no not so much as to kill one flie, or to take one eare of corne out of any mans barne, unlesse power be given him. You know when Christ cast the divels out of the man possessed, they aske leave for to go into the heard of swine. Then tell me, who giveth the divell this power then, when the witch sendeth him, to kill or to lame man or beast? doth the witch give it him? Do you thinke he had power to do harme, but no mind till she moved him? Or do you take it that her sending giveth him power which he had not?

M. B. It is a question indeed worth the asking: for doubtlesse the divell hath not power until it be given him, to touch any creature, to hurt or to destroy the body, but only to tempt and to lead into sin. I am also sure that the witch cannot give him power, but only God above.

Dan. Lay these two together then, that the divell onely hurteth, and that none can give him power, neither man nor woman, but only God, and tel me

whether the people be not wonderfully caried awry in a rage. For, when as they should consider, that the divell is the Lords executioner: and then finding that he hath any power given him to molest, to hurt and vexe them in their bodies or goods, to know certainly it cometh from the Lord, and then gather from thence (as the truth is), that the Lord is displeased with them for their offences, and so seeke unto him, humbly craving pardon and deliverance from this enemy seeking to be armed with the mighty power of faith, to cast him foorth and resist him, as the Lord willeth, (1 Pet. v.): here is no such matter, no looking so high among the people, but running deeper into error, and into sinne, as if the witches did it, and that it commeth from their anger, and not from their own sinnes and infidelity. Here is no repentance, no humbling themselves by fasting and prayer, but running for helpe unto divels, using meanes which those divels by the cunning men and women appoint, scratching and clawing, thirsting often after guiltlesse bloud, and raging against those whom they imagine to be witches, which many times are not, because they imagin, that if there were no witches, there should be no such plagues. As if they had no foule sins nor unbeleefe, or that there remained not a just revenging God to punish, or as if he had not the divels still the executioners of his wrath.

M. B. Truly, your words do make me affraid: for I am even guiltie of those things my selfe, if they be so grievous as you set them out: and by Gods grace I

wil consider better of the matter: for I have counselled many to seeke unto those cunning folks, and to use such helps as they prescribe: and you say it is to seeke helpe at divels. To see that point we shal come anone: now I would be resolved about somewhat in your last speech, as namely, do you cleare the witches, because God and not they giveth the divel power, and do you thinke that the divels should kill men and their cattell, if they were not sent by witches? Should the harmes still follow, if there were not witches?

Dan. That I say God alone, and not the witches, giveth power unto the divels to plague and torment: it is so evident as that I suppose a man shall hardly meete with any man so grosse but will confesse it. But this doth not cleare the witches at all; for their sinne is in dealing with divels, and that they imagine that their spirits do those harmes, requested and hired by them; when as indeed the Divel where he hath power given him to hurt, or where he knoweth death or grievous diseases will follow either in man or beast, setteth the witch in a rage, and moveth her to send him. Concerning your other question, I say, we shall find by the Scriptures, that if there were no witches at all, yet men shold be plagued by the divels in their bodies and goods. For, touching the godly, the Lord doth use Satan to afflict them in their bodies and in their goods, for to trie their faith and patience; as the example of holie Job doth testifie in ample manner. It were vile folly and brutish to affirme, that witches did set on the

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divels to kil his children, and to plague his body. And I hold it no small folly, for any man to thinke that the Lord doth not now scourge his children, at the least some of them, for their good, by the divel. There is no doubt, but the divel having power given him to afflict, useth all the craft he can, and will seeke to be sent by the witch, and so he will make it knowne, because it may seeme not to be from God, but from the anger of a poore woman. And now, touching the wicked, which provoke God by their wicked sinnes and unbeleefe, may we not read in the Scriptures that an evil spirit was sent of God unto king Saul, which did haunt and vexe him? Was this spirit sent by a witch? Or the divels in the Gospell, which entred into the herd of swine and drowned them: did the Lord give them power, and send them, and shall we be so sottish as to thinke, that he sendeth not the divel now against ungodly men, to plague and to destroy them? As I said before, here is the deepe craft of Sathan, that he will covet to be sent by witches, whereas, indeed, God hath set him, seeing none can send him but God. Againe, we must consider, that there be naturall causes in the bodies of men and beastes of grievous torments and diseases, yea even causes of death. Now they cannot be so secret, but the divell knoweth them, and even when they are like to take effect. Then doth he ply it with the witch, setteth her in a fury, she sendeth him; even upon this sending the man or the beast suddenly and strangely are tormented, fall lame, or dye. Then the witch is suspected, examined, and confesseth

that she killed such a man, or such a mans cattell, or made them lame. Here the people are set in a wonderfull maze and astonishment, as if witches could plague men in their wrath, by sending their spirits, because they confesse they did it, when their spirits do lye and had no power, but the torments came by naturall causes. And to drive the people into a deeper madnesse in this, and to make them beleeve, that strange and sudden torments and languishing diseases come by witches, he hath his other sort of witches, the cunning men and women, which tell even upon his word, which you know is to be trusted, that they be bewitched, that they be haunted with fairies, and that there be thus many witches thereabout, in every towne some.

M. B. That is most true, no doubt, which you speake, I do not for my part know how to gainesay any one point thereof. Only I wonder at the craftinesse of the divels in these things, that where they have power graunted unto them to hurt, they will be sent by the witches, as if they did it hired by them, and that you say where harmes do follow men upon natural causes, that they can make shew as though they did them. But are you of this mind, that there should be as many or all those harmes done by divels, if there were no witches, as there be now? Although I must needs confesse, that the witches can give the divell no power, nor can he take none by their sending: yet may it not be that God giveth them power oftener because of those witches dealing with them, then if there were no witches at all?

Dan. The craftinesse of divels is such, as without the light of Gods word, the wisest men under heaven must needs be deceived thereby. We see there be some men so deepe in subtilties, and can carry matters so close, that men cannot discern them: how much more the divels, which are exceedingly subtill, and crafty above the subtillest men? The question which you aske is (in my judgment) somewhat hard: but this is undoubted, that if the Lord God do give unto the divels oftener power to hurt because of the witches, I meane because the divels do deale by such instruments, it is in his heavy judgement against the wickednesse of the people, which despise the true and heavenly light of his word. As S. Paule (prophecyng of the coming of the great Antichrist) sheweth, that because men did not receive the love of the truth, God gave the divell power by Antichrist and his ministers, to seduce by lying signes and wonders. Indeed, I will not say that for the witch the divell hath power given him, but for the wickednesse of the people, which deserve that by witches the divell should have power to seduce them further. Here yet we must take heed of the common error which a multitude are carried so headlong withall, that they can by no meanes see, that God is provoked by their sinnes to give the divell such instruments to worke withall, but rage against the witch, even as if she could do all.

M. B. Surely, I should be a wretch to deny, that God giveth the divels power to plague and seduce because of mens wickednesse: but yet I would know,

whether a godly faithfull man or woman may not be bewitched? We see the divell had power given him over Job.

Dan. This example of Job is not fit to proove that a godly man may be bewitched, seeing the divell is not said to deal by witches against him; but it doth proove, that not only the godly, but even the most godly (as holy Job, who had none like him upon earth), may for their triall be given into the hands of Satan to be afflicted and tempted. And, as I said, where Satan hath power granted him of God, to strike with bodily plagues any of the godly, for the triall of their faith and patience, he will covet if he can bring it about, to be sent by some witch, and to have it knowne that he was sent. But the faithfull are to turne their eies from the witch, and to deale with God, for from him the matter cometh. When they be tried, the Lord in his good time will deliver them depending upon him, to their great praise and glory, even as valiant souldiers. It is therefore of no great force, whether Satan come from the witch against the godly, or whether he have no witch to deale by: overcome thou the Divell, and thou overcommest all. Indeed, among the more ignorant sort he prevaieth much, when he toucheth those which embrace the lively word as sent from a witch. For many nowe doe even quake and tremble, and their faith doth stagger. Hath he power (thinke they) over such as be cunning in the Scriptures, then what are they the better for their profession? the witch is on their bones as well as upon others. By this it might seeme, and

so they take it, that other helps and remedies are to be sought then by the Scriptures: and so they run and seeke helpe where they ought not.

M. B. Then I pray you, though I be already perswaded it is naught to seeke to these cunning men for helpe against witches, yet let us conferre a little of that. There be divers things which have perswaded me to think marvellous wel of them, and even as of such as God hath given wisdom and skill unto, even for to do much good. For we see many receive helpe by them, and are delivered from the plagues which come by divels. And first, I would know how they can be so earnest against witches: if they deale with the divel, and so be indeed witches themselves, how can they have any mind in charity to do good, to take pity upon such as be in misery? Or how will Satan drive forth Satan? for they no doubt, drive out divels out of some.

Dan. I would come to answer your questions touching the seeking helpe at the hands of cunning men or women: but tell me first, are you resolved touching the sending of the spirits, and touching the harmes that are done? Me thinke you slip too suddenly from these points?

M. B. I cannot tell whether I understand your meaning in every thing, but sure, I have been in error greatly, I must needs confesse. And if you please, we may stand somewhat longer in these questions.

Sam. Indeed, it is my desire that you would speake a little plainer of these points: for I have marked well

al your talke, and cannot well conceive of the last things you dealt in. With your leave, M. B., I would aske two or three questions of my friend. Here was, but seven miles hence, at W. H., one M., the man was of good wealth, and well accounted of among his neighbours. He pined away with sicknesse half a yeare, and at last died. After he was dead, his wife suspected ill dealing: she went to a cunning man, I know not where, and desired to know whereof her husband died. He told her that her husband died of witchery: he asked her if she did not suspect any thereabout. She sayd there was one woman which she did not like, one Mother W. ; her husband and she fell out, and he fell sicke within two dayes after, and never recovered againe. He shewed her the woman as plaine in a glasse, as we see one another, and in the very apparell she went in that houre, for she ware an old red cap with corners, such as women were wont to weare: and in that she appeared in the glasse. He taught her how she might bring her to confesse. Well, she followed his counsell, went home, caused her to be apprehended and carried before a justice of peace. He examined her so wisely, that in the end she confessed she killed the man. She was sent to prison, she was arraigned, condemned, and executed: and upon the ladder she seemed very penitent, desiring all the world to forgive her. She sayd she had a spirit in the likenesse of a yellow dun cat. This cat came unto her, as she sayd, as she sat by her fire, when she was fallen out with a neighbour of hers, and wished that the vengeance of

God might light upon him and his. The cat bad her not be afraid, she would do her no harme, she had served a dame five yeares in Kent, that was now dead, and if she would, she would be her servant. And wheras, sayd the cat, such a man hath misused thee, if thou wilt I will plague him in his cattell. She sent the cat ; she killed three hogs and one cow. The man suspecting, burnt a pig alive, and as she sayd, her cat would never go thither any more. Afterward she fell out with that M.: she sent her cat, who told her, that she had given him that which he should never recover : and indeed the man died. Now, do you not thinke the woman spake the truth in all this ? Would the woman accuse her selfe falsly at her death ? Did not the cat become her servant ? Did not she send her ? Did she not plague and kill both man and beast ? What should a man thinke of this ?

Dan. You propound a particular example, and let us examine every thing in it touching the witch, for the womans fact that went to the wise man, we are not yet come to that point. You say the cat came to her when she was in a great rage with one of her neighbours, and did curse, wishing the vengeance of God to fall upon him and his.

Sam. She sayd so, indeed ; I heard her with my owne eares, for I was at the execution.

Dan. Then tell me who set her in such a devilish rage, so to curse and ban, as to wish that the vengeance of God might light upon him and his ? Did not the cat ?

Sam. Truly, I think that the divell wrought that in her.

Dan. Very well, then you see the cat is the beginner of this play.

Sam. Call you it a play ? It was no play to some.

Dan. Indeed the witch at last had better have wrought hard, then, bene at her play. But I meane Satan did play the jugler: for doth he not offer his service? Doth he not move her to send him to plague the man? Tel me, is she so forward to send, as he is to be sent? Or do you not take it that he ruleth in her heart, and even wholly directeth it to this matter ?

Sam. I am fully perswaded he ruleth her heart.

Dan. Then was she his drudge, and not he her servant: he needeth not to be hired and intreated, for if her hart were to send him anywhere, unto such as he knoweth he cannot hurt, nor seeth how to make any shew that he hurteth them, he can quickly turne her from that. Wel, the cat goeth and killeth the man, certaine hogs, and a cow: how could she tell that the cat did it ?

Sam. How could she tell ? why he told her, man, and she saw and heard that he lost his cattell.

Dan. The cat would lye, would she not ? for they say such cats are lyers.

Sam. I do not trust the cats words, but because the thing fell out so.

Dan. Because the hogs and the cow died, are you sure the cat did kill them ? might they not die of some naturall causes, as you see both men and beasts are well, and die suddenly ?

Sam. That were strange, if they should die of naturall causes, and fall out so fit at the time after he was sent.

Dan. It is not strange at all, as marke what I tell you, and you shall easily see. There be naturall causes of tortures and grieffe, of lamenesse, and of death in the bodies of men and of beastes, which lie so hid and secret, that the learnedest physitians cannot espie them, but the divell seeth them, and can conjecture very neare the time when they will take effect. Then doeth he plie it, to bring the matter about that it may seeme he did it. If he have anie witch to deale by, he stirreth up some occasion to set her in a rage with that party: and then he wil be sent, and telleth her he doth it. If he have no witch to deale by, yet he will set debate betweene the partie and some other, whom he may bring into suspition, as his greatest desire is to have innocent bloud shed.

Sam. Here is a matter brought about indeed: how could the cat do all this?

Dan. I told you before, that the divels worke together, and can speedily and most craftily compasse things, which are farre beyond the reach of mans capacitie. But sometime the divell hath power given him to plague and doth the harme. Admit he had power given him, and did kill the cattell of this man: let us come now to that, who thinke you gave him the power for to strike and kill? Did the witch give him the power, or the Lord God?

Sam. Nay, surely the witch cannot give him power.

Dan. Did he receive power after she sent him ?

Sam. That cannot I tell.

Dan. Then marke a litle: he hath power given him to plague this man in his goods: he will do it, but he will do it craftily. The Lord gave him power over the goods of holy Job: he worketh by instruments, for he stirreth up the Sabeis, and they take away his oxen and his asses: he raiseth up also the Chaldeis, and they cary away his camels. (Job i.) Even so, having power to strike, he will be sent by a witch, he could do it without her, but he gaineth much that way, as we shall see when we come to speake of the remedies which men seeke.

Sam. I wonder then that the man never had more hurt after he had burnt his pig alive.

Dan. O man, the divell can abide no roast meate, nor no fire, he is afraid, if they fall a roasting, that they will rost him. If they run at him with a spit red hote, they gaster him so sore, that his dame shall go her selfe, if she will, he will come no more there. But of these things we are to speake afterwards in their place.

Sam. You make the divell wonderfull subtill.

Dan. He is so subtill and full of craft and sleight, that no earthly creature can escape from being seduced by him, without the light of Gods heavenly word. But let us come now to the other man, whom the witch confessed she killed by her cat.

Sam. Yea, that me thinketh is more than the other: the woman was told by the cunning man that her husband was killed by witchery. The witch confessed so

much at her death. The cat told the witch that she killed him.

Dan. Here be a company of credible persons to be beleaved: the cunning man saith the man was bewitched to death. Who told him that?

Sam. His spirit that maketh the witch appeare in the glasse.

Dan. That same spirit, what do you take him to be, an angell or a divell?

Sam. Some of the cunning men say, they have Moses or Elias, or the spirit of some holy man.

Dan. The divell can turne himselfe into the likeness of an angell of light. For they that do think the cunning men and women deale with any other spirit then Satan, have no understanding. Satan saith, the man was witched to death.

Sam. Satan saith so, he is not to be beleaved, but the witch confesseth it was so.

Dan. Who told the witch?

Sam. Her cat that she sent.

Dan. What is the cat, a divell? then remember the proverbe, Aske his fellow if he be a theefe. All the matter resteth upon the testimony of divels, and they not put to their oath. We will not ground upon mans testimonie without an oath, and must we beleave the bare word of divels?

Sam. Do you thinke then that the man was not killed by witcherie?

Dan. It may be the Lord had given Satan power to plague the man in his bodie, and then he under a co-

lour would be sent by a witch. But it is most like that his body did languish and pine of naturall causes, which the divell did know, and so would be sent, and seeme to do all, when as indeed he had no power to touch him. For although the Lord give the divell power to strike some in their bodies, for their haynous sinnes, yet the most which the witches thinke their spirits do kill at their request, do die of naturall diseases.

Sam. Then it seemeth the witches are deceived and mocked, when he maketh them beleve he doth kill and plague when he doth not. And againe in this, where he hath power given him of God, to strike man or beast, hee could do it, and would without the witch, and so useth the witch for a colour to draw on worse matters.

Dan. I am glad you take my meaning so right: for thinke deepely of the matters, and you shall see it must needs be so.

Sam. I interrupted M. B. I pray you go forward now to the rest.

Dan. Our matter which we come unto now, is the helpe and remedie that is sought for against witches at the hands of cunning men. And now if it please you to propound your questions, I will answer to them the best I can.

M. B. Nay truly, I see alreadie all is naught, but yet I will object those things which have carried me awry. I take it a man is to seeke remedy against evils, and I thought it was even a gift that God gave

unto those whom we call cunning men, that they did very much good by. When a thing is lost, when a thing is stolen, many go to them, and they helpe them to it. I did know where the communion cup was stolen: the churchwardens rode to a wise man, he gave them direction what night, and where they should stand, and the party that had stolen it should come thither, and confesse he had it: and certainly they had it againe. I did know one that had a child of five years old, a girle, it was taken pitiously: the father was in great heavinesse, and knew not what to do: some gave him counsel to go to a woman which dwelt ten miles from him, and to cary some of the clothes which the child lay in: he did so, the woman told him that his child was bewitched, and if he did not seeke remedie in time, the child would be lost: she bad him take some old clothes, and let the child lye in them all night, and then take and burne them: and he should see by the burning, for if they did burne black, that shewed the child was bewitched: and she said further, that doubtlesse the witch would come thither. He followed her advice, and sure as we be here, there came an old woman in, which he suspected, even while they were burning, and made an errand: the man made no more ado, but even laid his clowches upon her and clawed her until the blood ran downe her cheeks, and the child was well within two days after. I could tell you of a stranger thing, but I have it but by report, but yet indeed by very credible report. There was a butcher by his trade that had a boy to his sonne, his name was John,

grievous sores did breake forth upon him: they layed salves, and none would cleave for to drawe or to ease them. The father making his moane to a friend of his, he told him whither he should goe to a very skilfull man: he did go, and being demaunded whome he suspected, she was shewed him in a glasse, an old woman that dwelt not far from him in an house alone: he told the cunning man, that the woman had shut up her doore, and was gone from home out of the shire, and so he could not tell how to come by her: he told him a way how he should fetch her home. Cut off the haire (said he) of the boyes head, and put in a cloth and burne it, and I warrant you she wil come home with all the speed she can. Burne it abroad, burne it not in a chimney, for if you do, it will makę you all afraid. The man went home and did this. The woman came home with all speed, came to his house, came to the boy, and said: John, scratch me; he scratched her untill the bloud followed, and whereas before nothing would draw his sores, they healed of themselves. What should a man thinke of such things?

Dan. You tell of some which have received helpe from the hands of cunning men: and no doubt there may infinit examples be brought. Some have lost, some have things stolen from them, some are vexed in their bodies: they come by the things again which were lost or stolen, they are taught to do certaine things, and are eased from their griefes. But this we must first know, they receive their helpe, if it deserve the name to be called helpe, from the divell. And do you

thinke a man may lawfully seeke helpe at the hands of the divell?

M. B. Some are perswaded that they do not seeke helpe at the hand of divels, when they go to the wise men : but that it is a gift which God hath given them, even to do good withall.

Dan. I do verily thinke that many of the people are so perswaded : but what reason is there for it? Doth God by his Spirit tell where the thing is which is lost or stolen? Is it an angell from heaven, or the soule of some man that is dead, which appeareth in the christall, or in the glasse, and sheweth the image of the partie which hath stolen, or that is a witch.

M. B. I had rather heare what you thinke touching these things, then shew what I have thought.

Dan. The divels did make the heathen people believe that they were goddes, and so procured that they should worship them with divine worship. Through their craftines they had many waies to establish this : they conveyed themselves into images, and out of them gave answers, when they were demanded, herein they used great craft, for whereas they could not tell what should fall out, they framed the oracle in such sort as it was doubtfull, and might be taken both waies : and so looke which part it fell out on, that seemed and was taken to be the meaning of the gods. If they did know how things should fall out indeed, as they did know sundry things touching the kingdoms and monarchies of the world by the writings of the prophets, and divers things by conjectures, as the divell could tell Saul he should

be blaine, because he saw God had cast him off, and the hearts of the Israelites fainted, and the Philistines were full of courage, those they would tell plainely. Also they did convey themselves into the bodies of men and women, and utter things which seemed very divine, such (as I am persuaded) were the prophetisses the Sibylles among the heathen. Such was the maide at Philippos, which is mentioned in the Actes of the Apostles, which brought great gaine unto her masters by divining, out of whom Paul cast the divell. This maid could tell of things lost, of things stolen, and such like, and great resort there was unto her, as men had neede, or desired to see the strangenesse of the matter.

M. B. Let me interrupt you a litle : The divell cannot be in all places at once : how could he then, remaining in the maide, tell what was done in places farre off? how can the divell tell where the thing lost or stolen is, which is not only farre off but hidden? how can he shew the image of the theefe or witch? Can he sit and behold all things a farre off, and in secret?

Dan. We may not ascribe unto divels that they can be in all places at once, or sit in one place and behold all things done a farre off. But they joyne together in this speciall worke, to set up their kingdome, and to draw the people after them, to seeke helpe at their handes, and so to worship them. Some of them be in one place, and some in another, and from all places do stirre up the faithlesse people to run for helpe to those cunning men, and then they make the relation, for they go thither also; they know the theefe whom they

mooved to the theft, and can make resemblance of his face and apparell: they can tell where things be that are hid, having had a finger in the matter. And thus one spirit (as it doth seeme) telleth things spoken and done far off, but it is otherwise, there be many that do it, which resort from all the places where the things are done.

M. B. I am satisfied touching this point. You were shewing how the divels did deale among the heathen out of the idols, and out of men and women.

Dan. Yea, and they have subtillie wound themselves in againe among Christians. For using witches as their instruments, they make them beleeve that they do many harms sent by them which they do not; and whereas they have power given them by God to afflict, they will seeme to do it at the wrath and displeasure of the witch. She must send him. The matter must one way or other appeare, either he will seeme even compelled by force of such as do adjure him, to confesse that such a woman or such a man sent him, or els the witch must confesse so much. Then the people devise how they may be safe against the witch: there is running to the wizards to learne what they should do, to withstand the fury of the witch, that she send not to them, or if she have sent, how they may expell her spirit, and keepe her from sending him again: this is it which the divell would have: for now he uttereth all his wares: he teacheth by these cunning men and women many horrible abominations, and foule abuses of the name of God, by which they are made beleeve, that they have remedy

against the divels sent by the witches, and that they are cured from their harmes.

M. B. I do not see how any man can indeed justifie, or maintain, that the spirits which appeare unto them in the christall, or in the glasse, or water, or that any way do speake, and shew matters unto them, be holy angels, or the soules of excellent men, as of Moses, Samuel, David, and others, though I have heard that the cunning men take them to be such, and thinke they deale by them against divels.

Dan. It is no matter what Satan's vassals are made to beleeve by his subtill sleights: it is most abhominable for any Christian man, ever to let it enter into his thought, that they do anything by the power or wisdom of the Holy Ghost, by any angell or good spirit, or that they do any thing against the divell, which worke by the intelligence which they have from evill spirits: therefore hold this, that they seeke unto divels, which run unto those soothsayers.

M. B. I am perswaded indeed that they seeke unto divels, but I would see some reason for it out of Gods word.

Dan. Touching all spirituall matters, as to be armed with power against divels, and to know how to avoide the daungers which they bring, we are no where to seeke and to learne but of our most blessed Lord God. And of him we cannot learne, but by his holy word, for in it he hath opened unto us all his whole will. And therefore where the Lord commaundeth the people of Israell by Moses, (Deut. xviii.) that they should not when

they came into the land, learne to do according to the abominations of those heathen, reckoning up sundrie kinds of such as were Satans instruments which he used to seduce the multitude, by devinations, by observing of times, by augurie by juglings with the helpe of the devill, by using familiar spirits, spirits of devination, and seeking to the dead: he setteth down also the remedie, shewing first, that he would cast out those nations because they hearkened unto the southsayers and deviners, pronouncing that everie one which doth those things is an abomination to the Lord, willing his people that they should not hearken to such, but that they should hearken unto him: and then Moses saith, *A Prophet shall the Lord thy God raise up unto thee from among you of thy brethren like unto me, him shall ye heare.*

M. B. Then you proove by that place, that we must seeke onely to God, and not such as worke by meanes beside his wordes.

Dan. If you reade that place (Deut. xviii.) and marke everie thing well, you shall see it doth not onely proove that they seeke unto divels, which runne to these cunning men and women: because the prophets which God hath raised up to declare the Lords will commaund us not to do such things: but also declareth that they be an abomination to the Lord that use them, or that seeke unto them.

M. B. I see then it is not onely a sinne, but a most horrible sinne, to seeke unto them. Alas, many do not thinke that they seeke unto divels, when they go for helpe unto them for things stolne, or for helpe and remedie against witches.

Dan. No doubt many refuse to heare the voice of God, to be instructed by him: they despise his word, and therefore they be given up to hearken unto divels. Such as have sought unto any of these that work by the divel, and now come to see their offence, ought to shew repentance for the same, not as for a light sinne. It is no small abhominacion to go for helpe unto the divel: it is to set him in Gods place, and to honour him as God. It riseth of infidelitie and distrust of help from God, as we may see in the example of king Saule, who finding no answer nor comfort from God, whom he had so wickedly disobeyed, went to a witch. The heathen man said, *Flectere si nequeo Superos, Acheronta movebo.* *If I cannot intreat the gods, I will downe among the divels.*

M. B. Nay doubtlesse there can be no defence made for such seeking helpe at their hands, which deale with familiar spirits: but I muse at diverse things, as this for one, how the cunning men, if they deale by the power of the divell, should use such good words, and will them that come unto them to do all in the name of Christ, teaching them to use words and sentences of the Scriptures.

Dan. O sir, here lyeth the deepe subtilty of Satan: how should the people be seduced to follow him, if he should not use great cunning to cover matters, as if divels were driven out, and harmes cured that are done by them, even through the name and mighty power of God. Herein also lyeth a more foule abhominacion, and that is the abusing and horrible prophaning of the most

blessed name of God, and the Holy Scriptures unto witcheries, charmes, and conjurations, and unto all diuellish arts. Such an one is haunted with a fayrie, or a sprit: he must learne a charme compounded of some strange speeches, and the names of God intermingled, or weare some part of S. Johns Gospell or such like. So against the theefe, against the diuell sent by the witch, the like is practised. What can Satan desire more, then that holy things should be thus abused? There is ado to get him into the glasse, to get him into the chrystall, to get him into the basin of water: there is ado to bind him as it were by the name and power of Christ to tel this thing or that thing. The conjurer he bindeth him with the names of God, and by the vertue of Christs passion and resurrection, and so maketh him serve his turne: and all his owne worke, for he is not constrained nor bound, but seeketh thus to have God blasphemed. O (sayth the simple man) this is a good woman, she speaketh of God and of Christ, and doth all in his name: they be good words which she hath taught me to use: and what hurt can there be in using good words? Alas, poore man, what case are they in which must learne good words of the diuell? It is not the speaking of good words, or the wearing of some part of the Scriptures, that defendeth from diuels, therein lieth the craft of Satan, to have those holy things so fouly abused, and that men may put trust in words and sentences pronounced; but the diuels are withstood only by the power of faith, where the holy Scriptures are written in the heart,

and the soule armed with the power of them. From this Satan draweth men by his soothsayers, teaching them other helpe: For the naming of God, or the sentences of Scriptures bindeth not Satan, when we reade he can utter them.

M. B. Then how can the divell beare such a pittifull mind, as to helpe those that be in misery? For many have helpe by these cunning men. The divell is cruell and bent wholly to do hurt, and that is it that perswadeth many that things are done even by the power of God.

Dan. The divels be as pitifull as a greedy hungrie lyon that roareth after his pray, and as a fierce dragon all burning with wrath and bloody malice: they make shew of doing good unto men, only of a most cruell and murtherous purpose, even to draw men deeper into the pit of hell with them. For if they can helpe the body a litle, it is to win both body and soule unto eternall damnation. Where Satan offereth his helpe, it is more to be feared, then when he manifestly impugneeth and seeketh apparantly to hurt.

M. B. But this then is more straunge, if they do not deal by the power of God, but by the power of the divell, when they drive out divels from hurting, how one divell should drive out another. Our Saviour saith, that Satan doth not drive out Satan, for then his kingdom should be divided and could not stand.

Dan. It is most certaine that Satan doth not drive out Satan: for our Saviour hath shewed the reason of the contrary. One divell is ready to further the worke

of another: but in no wise to expell or to hinder one another.

M. B. There is it which maketh me to muse: we see the divell driven out, and doth not return againe, and if it be not wrought by the power of divells, as you say it cannot, then must it needs be by the power of God.

Dan. The divell is driven out, neither by the power of the divell, nor yet by the power of God, in these that are healed by cunning men.

M. B. I like this worst of all the speech which I heard you utter yet: for if Satan be not driven out neither by the power of Satan, nor by the power of God, what other power is there to drive him out? If you can shew a third power to expell him, it is more than ever I heard of.

Dan. There needeth not a third power to expell him, for he is not driven out at all.

M. B. I told you before, if you deny that to be, which all experience doth shew, then is it no reasoning. There be examples in many places, and daily it is seene, that the divell is driven out of some possessed, that where he did vexe and torment men in their bodies and in their cattell, they have remedy against him.

Dan. I do not denie but that some which are possessed and tormented by Satan, have release: but yet the divell is not cast forth by those meanes, but ceaseth willingly even to establish men in errour, and in most wicked prophaning of the name of God, and worshiping of himself and so entreth deeper into them.

M. B. I beseech you let me heare how that is, that you say he ceaseth of his owne accord. Will he let go his hold willingly and of his owne accord, where he hath it upon any man? Doth he not desire to do hurt?

Dan. He doeth not let go his hold which he hath upon any man, but indeed taketh faster hold when he seemeth to be cast forth, and doth greater hurt: for tell me whose devise is the conjuration?

M. B. I am out of doubt that conjuration is the device of the divell.

Dan. Then tell me, hath the divell devised and taught a way to bind himselfe or to cast forth himselfe?

M. B. That I suppose he would never do.

Dan. Indeede if we will imagine that the divell is become an old foole, we may thinke he would teach that which should bind and cast forth himselfe: but the Scripture calleth him the old serpent: he devised and taught conjuration, therefore conjuration doth not cast him forth. Yet he seemeth to be bound by the conjurer, yea even by the name of God, and by the power of the passion of Christ. The conjurer seemeth by the same power to drive him out of the man possessed, whose bodie he doth vexe and torment. And he ceaseth willingly to torment the bodie, to establish conjuration, and to draw men quite from God, even to worship and to follow himselfe, and seeke all helpes at his hands. Even so when men are tormented in their bodies, or plagued in their cattell by the divell, and seeke unto the cunning men and women, following the way that they prescribe unto them, and have ease in their bodies,

and no more harme among their cattell, Satan doth not give place as forced, but ceaseth to do those bodily harmes, that he may fully win unto himself both body and soule. If they should not seeme to be expelled, how should men be drawne to seeke helpe at their hands which deale by him? how should witches and conjurers be drawne on most horribly to pollute and blaspheme the glorious name of God?

M. B. Then I see they buy their helpe deere which have it at the hands of these cunning men.

Dan. Yea, what can be bought more deere than that which is with the losse of soule and body for ever, by running from God after divels?

M. B. What should a man thinke then touching all other which deale not with the divell, and yet have certaine wayes to find out witches, and to unwitch that which they have done?

Dan. Although they deale not directly by the divell, I meane they have no familiar spirits that speake unto them, yet they deale by divellish devices, which are also an abomination to the Lord. For all those severall sorts of witches which the Lord rehearseth (Deut. xviii) did not deale directly with divels. For some were observers of times, which had their lucky dayes and their unlucky dayes, and so their houres. If they go to buy or sell, they chuse their hower to set forth in. Some dealt by the intrailles of beasts, and by the flying of birds, by meeting with an hare or foxe, and on which hand, and a thousand such like. Some deale with the sive and a paire of sheeres, useing certaine words:

some use a charme for the toothach, another for the ague, and for stopping the bleeding at the nose, also their spell for the theefe, and a thousand such like, when butter will not come, when cheese will not runne, nor ale worke in the fat: these would seeme of all others to have witches in the greatest detestation, and in the meane time worke by the divell themselves, and may be termed witches.

M. B. We doe count them witches which have their spirits, we doe not take them to be witches which doe but use those things which the cunning men have taught. For they doe not meane to doe any thing by the divell. Me thinketh therefore it is hard to call them witches.

Dan. Take the name of witchcraft for all that deal-eth by the power and devices of the divell. No doubt some are more horrible than other of the severall sortes of witches, yet the lightest of them be abominations before the Lord, as we are taught (Deut. xviii.) and the ignorance doeth not excuse. For what though the witch suppose it is the soule of Moses which appeareth in his chrystall, is he not therefore a witch? your neighbour, whose butter would not come, which heat a spit red hoat and thrust into the creame, using certaine wordes, doth thinke she did by the power of God fray away the devill; is she not therefore a witch, dealing with that which the divel and not God hath taught? is she not a witch also in seeking helpe at devils? they which did burne the cloths which their child lay in, to know by the burning blacke whether it were bewitched,

and to bring the witch thither, dealt altogether by the power and direction of the devill, and so in scratching, for God hath taught no such things; then are they not witches? by whose instruction and by whose power was the witch fetched home at the burning of the haire of the butchers sonne you spake of? was not all done by the power of Satan and by his instruction? are not they then which practize these things the disciples of witches, and so indeede very witches? those which have their charmes and their night spels, what can they be but witches? I might reckon up her that dealeth with the sieve and the sheares, and a number of such trumperies, in all which the most holie name of God is polluted, and if any thing be done, it is done wholly by the effectuall working of Satan. God hath given naturall helps, and those we may use, as from his hande against naturall diseases, but things besides nature he hath not appointed, especiallie they bee ridiculous to drive away devilles and diseases.

M. B. Now you speake of naturall things, we see there be great secretes in nature: the adamant draweth iron unto it. And why may there not be some force in these naturall things then?

Dan. No doubt there be great secrets in nature, which the skilfull phisitions and naturall philosophers do find out. As the hanging of some thing about the necke, may have force to drive away an ague, the wearing of something may have such vertu to deliver from the cramp, and such like. And from these Satan doeth take occasion to bring in his trumperies and

curious devises. As because there be secrets in nature, a ring is curiouslie framed according to the signes in the firmament, this is tied to a thread, and let downe into a basin or cup of water, and wil show great things. Because there be secrets in nature, a horsshoo must be heat red hot, and then put into a kettle seething upon the fire to drive away the witches spirit. Also he that hath his cattle bewitched, burneth some live thing, as hogge or henne, to drive out the divell. Can these naturall thinges expell devils? Nay, they play the rancke witches, which burne anything for to expell devils: for hath God taught to doe anie such thing? Doe they burne the thing to God, or is it as a verie burnt sacrifice to the devill? In the time of the law burnt sacrifices were offred to God: the devill among the heathen drewe the like to himself: And now by his sleight he doth after some sort procure the same at their hands, which professe to be Christians, and thus worshipping him, he ceaseth from hurting their bodies, or their cattell, as gaining a greater matter.

M. B. If it be so (as I am not able to gainsay it), then be there multitudes in all places which are guiltie of sorcerie and witchcraft. For I see many deale in matters by the helpe and power of the devill, which are perswaded otherwise. But I mervaile much at divers things touching the helpe which men have by devils. Let us conferre a little about them. The devill doeth know things past, and things present, but God onelie doth know what shall be done in the time to come. If these cunning men doe deale with no further power,

than the power of the divell, how can they tell so right what shall come to passe?

Dan. It is peculiar to God alone, to know what shall come to passe hereafter. But the Lord God hath revealed by his prophets and apostles many things that after should be fulfilled. Satan can give a neere conjecture when these come to be fulfilled. He is a most subtill observer of thinges, and will guess at many, but especially where he hath power given him to work and to bring any matter about, he can and will tell it aforehand. Finally, God in his just judgment giveth him power to seduce the wicked.

M. B. I pray you open your meaning more fully.

Dan. Very well: In which have you any doubt.

M. B. I take the devill gesseth at things which are prophecied, and is a sharpe observer of causes. But you said he telleth what shall be, where he worketh that which he foretelleth: give some example for this.

Dan. There needeth no better example, than that which you tolde of the churchwardens, that went to the cunning man, to knowe the theefe which had stolen their communion cuppe. It may be sayd, where the cunning man bad them to go to such a place, such a night, and at such an hower, and thither shall come he that stole the cup, how could the divell tell, if it were a night or two after, that he should come to that place, and at that hower? You must note what power the divell hath in the mind of a theefe. He stirred him up to steale the cup. He stirred up the churchwardens to seeke the cunning witch. He nameth the place and

the time, whether and when he would move the heart of the theefe to come : and at the time appointed he bringeth him thither ; for he that could move him to steale, could also, by secret suggestion, moove him to goe thither. The diuel told that the witch shuld come home with speed that had bewitched the butchers son : he that had power in her heart to make her become a witch, did know he should have power to make her with haste to come home. One carieth somewhat which a sick person hath lien in to the cunning man. He can tell, it seemeth, by the smell of the cloath, whether the diuell hath been in it (if it smell like his diuel), and so telleth the partie is bewitched. Take the cloathes which the sicke partie hath lien in, and burne them; if they burne blacke, then may you see it is so, and the witch shall come in while they be a burning. Now, if the Lord gave him power, and he hath striken and tormented the bodie of the sicke person ; and if hee have colourably stirred up a witch to send him ; is it not an easie matter for him to make the fire burne blacke, and to moove the witch to come at that present : or if he have power for to torment, and hath no witch to send him, his great desire being to have men guiltie of innocent bloud, is it not as easie by the permission of God, which in his just judgement giveth him power to seduce such people as will hearken unto divels, for him to make the fire burne blacke, or at least to seeme so to them, and to moove some forward suspected woman or other to come in, though she be no witch ? A thousand such things he worketh in, and as a cunning juggler can compasse and bring them about.

M. B. Indeed, an innocent person may come in at such a time : but I have heard, I cannot tell how true it is, that therefore there is a further thing which they observe. And that is this, the cunning man biddeth set on a posnet, or some pan with nayles, and seeth them, and the witch shal come in while they be in seething, and within a few daies after her face will be all bescratched with the nayles. And I have heard that some olde woman comming in, her face hath indeed been as it were scratched within a few dayes after, for the shingles or such like brake forth.

Dan. O, the depth of Satans illusions, to make blinde people become witches, and to deale by him. He doth know the corrupted humours in the bodie, which will breake out into the small pockes, or such like, and if he can procure one to come in which is even ready to have them, what a show doth he make, as if the nailes did it ?

M. B. This were great subiltie of Satan.

Dan. Nay, we are not able to imagine the depth of his sleights, neither can we see the secret force where-with he moveth the minds of ignorant people, and so bringeth about his enterprises. There doth not lie the greatest cunning of Satan.

M. B. Indeed it seemeth strange and incredible, that the divell should so move the minds of men, and leade them unto this thing and that thing, and in the meane time they doe not know it, but thinke they goe against the divell. But now I have a further doubt. I confesse it is an easie thing for the divell to tell where a

thing is that is lost or stollen, but what power hath he to heale that which is sicke or sore? Out of question they be innumerable which receive helpe by going to the cunning men. You say, he helpeth the bodie that he may destroy the soule. He helpeth that men may seeke unto him, and so set him, as it were, in the place of God. Me thinketh it should not be in the power of divels for to helpe.

Dan. Indeed that is well mooved, there lieth a great sleight of the divell in it. You say that innumerable doe receive help by going unto cunning men. I warrant you not so many as you are perswaded.

M. B. O very many: there be a number which doe never make it knowne, because it is misliked by some.

Dan. Yea, and there be many which come home againe with a flea in their eare, they receive an answer as good as a flim flam.

M. B. It may be they come too late, the matter is over farre spent, and if they had come sooner they could have holpen them.

Dan. Yea, a number of such cosoning answers the devill maketh, which satisfie ignorant people, which are ready to beleve all that he telleth, and to dance after his pipe. One cometh to him for his childe; if he know the disease be deadly, hee will say it is bewitched, but so farre spent, that there is no help, the childe will hardlie live two daies: the father commeth home and findeth his child deade, or it dieth within two or three dayes after; here the devill getteth credit. Another is sicke and grievously tormented, hee sendeth:

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Satan doth see (for he sendeth them), that the disease is even spent, and that the cause of it begins to fail, and so that the partie in a few dayes will recover, here he prescribeth one paltrie or other, they use it, the man is recovered, and so should have bene without the divels medicine, but now Satan hath gotten further credite. Another is sicke and languisheth, his neighbours tell him he may bee bewitched, it is good to send, and then he shal know. He sendeth, the devill doth not know whether the sicke man can escape and recover, or not. He saith, it is like he is bewitched: and teacheth what to doe, if there bee any helpe at all, but doubteth, and so whether the man live or die, Satan saveth his credite whole and sound. And many of these answeres he giveth. Againe, we must note that mans imagination is of great force, either to continue a disease, or to diminish and take away some diseases. And in this also Satan deludeth some, for his medicine seemeth to do somewhat when it is but the parties conceit.

M. B. These be sleightes indeede: but mee thinketh you goe farre in the last. I do not see how a mans conceit can helpe him.

Dan. Imagination is a strong thing to hurt, all men doe finde, and why should it not then be strong also to help, when the parties mind is cheared, by beleeving fully that he receiveth ease?

M. B. But yet it is hard to shewe that ever anie such cure hath beene wrought.

Dan. It is not hard to shew, for that which men doe, it is presumed the divell can doe the like. And I have

heard of a mery companion that wrought such a cure. There was one in London (as report goeth), which was acquainted with Feats. Now this Feats had a blacke dogge, whome he called Bomelius. This partie afterward had a conceit that Bomelius was a devill, and that hee felt him within him. He was in heavinesse, and made his moane to one of his acquaintance, who had a merie head, hee tolde him hee had a friend could remoove Bomelius. Hee bad him prepare a breakfast, and he would bring him. Then this was the cure: he made him be stripped naked and stand by a good fire, and though he were fatte ynough of himselfe, basted him all over with butter against the fire, and made him weare a sleeke stone next his skin under his bellie, and the man had present remedie, and gave him afterward greate thanks.

M. B. I know men have many foolish imaginations: but though one imagination may drive out another, which is not the curing of any disease in deed, but of an imagination: yet it doth not followe, that where there is an apparant griefe, that a mans conceit can help to cure it.

Dan. Yes, the conceit doth much, even where there is an apparant disease. A man feareth hee is bewitched, it troubleth all the powers of his mind, and that dis-tempereth his bodie, maketh great alterations in it, and bringeth sundrie griefes. Now, when his mind is freed from such imaginations, his bodily griefe which grew from the same is eased. And a multitude of Satans cures are but such.

M. B. Nay, there bee also evils which be apparant in the bodie, and bee cured, which come not of anie feare or imagination: how can these be cured by any conceit? There is great reason that such griefes may bee cured indeede by quieting the minde, as did growe from the disturbance of the same.

Dan. Yea, and that falleth out sometimes in griefes of the body, which doth not growe from imagination, but from some other passions. As I can give you an example, which is written and reported by a very reverend learned physitian. The cure was done by a lewde cosening knave in Germanie. A woman had bleare eies that were watery. The knave lodging there, promised for certaintie that hee would heale them: hee did hang a little writing about her necke, charging strictly that it should not be taken from thence, nor read, nor opened: for if any of these were done, she could have no helpe at all by it. The woman had such a confidence in the thing, and was so merrie and glad, that she left weeping (for her often weeping and teares had spoiled her eyes), and so by little and little, the moys-ture stayed, and her eyes were whole. It fell out that shee lost the writing, whereat she was in such griefe and sorrowe and weeping, that her eyes were sore againe. Another found the writing, opened it, and read it. It was written in the Germane tongue, to this effect, translated into English:—*The divell pluck out thine eyes, and fill their holes with his dung.* Was not this, thinke you, a proper salve for to cure her eyes? If this medicine had taken effect, her eyes should not

have bin healed, but plucked quite out. We may not think but that Satan hath mo cousening tricks then al men in the world, for men are but his schollers. Againe, where men faile, he can worke somewhat in the affections of the parties mindes. And you shall heare them say, when any charme is used, you must beleeeve it will helpe, or else it will do you no good at all. Thus, if it were well seene into, the greatest part of your innumerable cures come to bee meere cousonages.

M. B. Well, let all this be true as you have sayd: yet there be many things wherein the divels doe helpe. What say you to the boy which healed within few daies after he had scratched the witch, whereas his sores were most grievous before, and could not be cured? What say you to that which they doe, when butter will not come, or when drink will not worke in the fat? What say you to the burning of some live thing, as hogge or henne, and the harme ceassing? And, finally, what say you to the helping of them where the divell is, and doth torment their bodies?

Dan. All these are answered in few words, that where he hath power to hurt either man or beast, drink or butter, he helpeth only by giving place, and ceasing to hurt, which, as I shewed you before, he doth most willingly, to bring to pass that men may seeke to him, and become even very witches. If a man be vexed and tormented by a divel, and men seeke by fasting and praier to cast him foorth, even instantly intreating the Lord, then he goeth out with much adoe, and unwillingly, as overcome and expelled by the power of God.

But when he hurteth, as you say he did the butchers sonne, and they seeke to him, and will follow his prescriptions, as to draw bloud of the witch, he goeth out willingly, I meane he ceaseth from hurting the bodie : for he goeth not out indeede, but rather goeth further in, and seateth himselfe deeper in the soule. And so is it in all the rest. How gladly will he cease to hurt the hennes, so that to please him, a henne may be burnt alive ? his helping is no more but a ceasing from doing harme, if he had power given him to hurt.

Sam. This is a strange thing, if it be so. There be thousands in the land deceived. The woman at R. H. by report hath some weeke fourtie come unto her, and many of them not of the meaner sort. But I doe but hinder, I pray you goe forward.

Dan. The divell can deceive thousand thousands, and even the wisest of this world : for when they will not bee taught of God, but despise his doctrine, then are they justly given over to be the disciples of the divell.

M. B. If there be such deceit in all these things, and that the witches do not kill nor hurt, but the divell craftily seemeth to kill and to hurt when the diseases be natural, and maketh the witch beleve that hee hath done all at her request Or where God hath given him power, he stirreth her up to send him, as if either he could not, or would not meddle, unles he had been sent. Seeing all lieth upon Satan, it should seeme, there is no reason that witches should be put to death ; but the Scripture doth command that they should be put to death.

Dan. The holy Scriptures doe command that witches should be put to death: therein you say right: but if you did take it, that the word of God commaundeth they shall not be suffered to live, because they kill men and beasts, or because they send their spirits which possesse men, and torment their bodies, you are much deceived. For you shal never finde, of all that have been tormented and plagued by evill spirits, that the Holie Ghost layeth it upon the witches. The causes why they should be put to death are, that they have familiaritie with divels, which are the blasphemous enemies of God: and that they seduce the people into errour, to runne after divels, and divelish practises, and that they have such wicked mindes. Although they never mind to kill or to hurt any, but to doe them good, as they imagine; yet if they deale with divels they ought to dye for it.

M. B. Then you take it, that these cunning men and women, unto whom so many runne for helpe, which are thought to do very much good, and no hurt at all, ought to be rooted out, and destroyed. Let us know what Scripture there is for it.

Dan. Yea, of all other they ought to dye, because they doe the greatest harme. Other witches that have spirits are thought to doe harme, because the divell at the appointment of God doth harme, and he beareth in hand hce doth it at the request of the witch: but these that seeme to doe good, doe harme indeed, and that many waies, as every one that light in him may easily see. And for the Scriptures which shew that they

ought to dye, reade first in the 22 chapter of Exodus, verse 18, and there it is said, *Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.*

M. B. That place we take to be meant of those witches which send their spirits to do harme: the other be not called witches.

Dan. It is that witch that is there commanded to bee put to death, that is called Mecasthephah: such were they and so called, which before Pharaoh did withstand Moses, and made in shew rods turned into serpents. So that in one kinde the Lord doth include all such as worke by the divell. For there be divers other sorts named in Deut. xviii., and they be all called an abomination to the Lord: and no abomination is to bee suffered to remaine among the Lords people. Also in the same place, when hee saith, Let there not be found in thee any such or such, as he there reckoneth them up: it is not alone to will that none should practise such things, but also that they should bee rooted out.

M. B. I must needs agree unto that which the word of God doth set downe. But this is the hardest matter of all, how they shall be convicted.

Dan. Why doe you take it to bee the hardest matter, how a witch shall be convicted? how is a thief or a murtherer convicted but by prooffe? If there be vehement suspicion, and the partie upon examination confesse the fact, that is a sufficient prooffe. If the partie doe denie, and two or three of credit doe testifie upon their knowledge with a solemne oath, that he is guiltie of the fact, that is also a sufficient prooffe. And touch-

ing this, God commanded by Moses, that none should dye, unlesse the matter were prooved against them by two witnesses at the least. (Deutronom. xix., vers. 15.)

M. B. I graunt, if the partie doe denie, and especially, if the matter touch life, that there ought, by the word of God, to be due prooffe by two witnesses at the least. This may be for murtherers, this may be for theeves: but for witches I see not how. They deale so secretly with their spirits, that very seldome they can be convinced by flat testimonies of men, as to say directly they have heard or seen them send their spirits. And againe, it is a rare thing to have a witch confesse. For it is generally thought the divel hath such power over them, that he will not suffer them to confesse.

Dan. O then, I perceive why you account it the hardest matter of all to convict a witch, if both testimony and confession doe faile; but what would you have further?

M. B. I have been of this opinion, that if there were any likelihood, and suspition, and common fame, that it was even prooffe enough, and the best deede that could be done was for to hang them up, and so ridde the countrey of them.

Dan. Then you thought that their spirits were hanged with them, and so the countrie being rid of the witches and their spirits, mens bodies and their cattell should bee safe.

M. B. I had a little more wit then to thinke so: but in truth it was but a little more. For I thought if al the witches were hanged, that then their spirits should not

have any to hire them, nor to send them to hurt either man or beast : but I see mine owne follie, and that onely God giveth the power unto the divells to afflict and trie the godly, and to vexe, torment, and plague the wicked, and that they shall do this though al the witches in the world were hanged. I know they neede none to cherish them, or to set them a worke.

Dan. But did you not feare, if all suspected should bee hanged, then some guiltles persons might be put to death : as you see many that have been executed as witches, have taken it upon their death that they were innocent.

M. B. I will tell you my thought touching that poynt, which was this. The witches raise tempestes, and hurt corne and fruites upon the trees, the witches bring the pestilence among men, and murraine among cattell : the witches send their spirits and make men lame, kill their children and their cattell : their spirits cannot bee taken heede of, nor kept out with doores and wals, as theeves and murtherers, but come in when they be sent, and doe so many harmes : for this cause I thought it a marveilous good worke to put all suspected to death, though some of them were innocent, that so sure work might bee made to have not one left.

Dan. Did you not thinke it a fearfull thing to shead innocent bloud ?

M. B. Yea, but I thought it much better that some should bee put to death wrongfully, then to leave any one witch, which might kill and destroy many.

Dan. Then I perceive that this was the reason

which did perswade you that it was very good to put all to death that were suspected, (although it might fall out that some of them were innocent), to avoyde greater inconvenience, and that is, if some few witches should escape, which might plague and kill many. Better a few should be put wrongfully to death, then many should be tormented and killed, or lamed by the divels. But are you still of that mind?

M. B. No, verily. For you have put me in minde that the wicked spirits receive their power to plague both men and beasts only from God. They seeke about, they watch when and where hee will give them leave to touch; where God will trie the faith and patience of the just by him, as he did in Job, he sendeth him, if he will be sent by a witch, it is but under a colour, shee giveth him not the power, hee would touch though she were not. Where God wil strike and plague the wicked by him, he giveth him leave, it is not the anger of the witch that bringeth it, but their owne wickednes, whereby they have provoked God to displeasure, and so give this enemy power over them.

Dan. Then so long as thesetwo things stand, that God by Satan will afflict in some sort and trie his children (as you alleage hee did Job), and that hee will use him as his executioner, to plague and torment the wicked, as he sent an evill spirite to vex king Saule: so long the harmes done by wicked spirites shall not cease, although all the witches and conjurers in the worlde were hanged up. Looke then to the causes, if wee will remooove the effects. As if thou feare God, and Satan afflict

thee, stand fast in faith and patience, and waite upon God for thy deliverance. If thou endure temptation, thou art blessed, and shalt be crowned. (Jam. i. ver. 12). If thy sinnes have provoked God, and the enemie doth touch thy bodie or thy goods, fall downe and humble thy selfe with fasting and prayer, intreate the Lord to turne away his displeasure: looke not upon the witch, lay not the cause where it is not, seeke not helpe at the hands of devils, be not a disciple of witches, to commit thinges abhominable, by polluting the name of God, and honouring Satan, nor thirst not after the blood which is innocent, as it falleth out in many.

M. B. I do assent unto al this: and surely it is a great fault to shead innocent blood.

Dan. We may learne in the holie Scriptures, that the sheading of innocent blood is a verie horrible thing in the eies of Almightye God: and a very grievous thing it is to have a land polluted with innocent blood: and that is one speciall cause why Satan dealeth by witches: for he laboureth to wrap in many guiltlesse persons upon suspitions, hee suggesteth by his helping witches, that there be many hurting witches in all townes and villages, that so he may set the multitude in a rage, and to suspect upon every likelihood that hee can devise or make shew of. And thus whole juries must become guiltie of innocent blood, by condemning as guiltie, and that upon their solemne oath, such as be suspected upon vaine surmises, and imaginations and illusions, rising from blindnes and infidelitie, and feare of Satan which is in the ignorant sort.

M. B. If you take it that this is one craft of Satan, to bring many to be guiltie of innocent blood, and even upon their oathes, which is horrible, what would you have the judges and juries to doe, when any are arraigned of suspition to be witches?

Dan. What would I have them doe? I would wish them to bee most warie and circumspect that they bee not guiltie of innocent blood. And that is, to condemne none but upon sure ground, and infallible proofe, because presumptions shall not warrant or excuse them before God, if guiltlesse blood be shed.

M. B. It falleth out sometimes when a thief is arraigned, or a murtherer, that direct evidence faileth, and yet such circumstances are brought, as doe even enforce the jurie in their conscience to finde them guiltie. It seemeth that this holdeth chiefly about witches, because their dealing is close and secret, and it is also thought that the divell hath so great power over them, that he will not suffer them to confesse.

Dan. You bring two reasons to proove that in convicting witches, likelihoods and presumptions ought to be of force more then about theeves or murtherers, The first, because their dealing is secret: the other, because the divell will not let them confesse. Indeede men imagining that witches doe worke strange mischiefes, burne in desire to have them hanged, as hoping then to be free, and then upon such perswasions as you mention, they suppose it is a verie good worke to put to death all which are suspected. But, touching theeves and murtherers, let men take heede how they

deale upon presumptions, unles they be very strong : for we see that juries sometimes doe condemne such as be guiltlesse, which is an hard thing, especially being upon their oath. And in witches, above all other, the proofes had need to be strong, because there is greater sleight of Satan to pursue the guiltles unto death, than in the other. Here is special care and wisdome to be used. And so likewise for their confessing, Satan doth gaine more by their confession than by their deniall, and therefore rather bewrayeth them himselfe, and forceth them to confession, oftner than unto deniall.

M. B. These things are beyond my reach, I cannot conceive of them. I pray you open it so that I may perceive your meaning, and see some ground of reason for that which you shall affirme.

Dan. Then is it requisite to stand upon them more at large. And let us begin with the latter.

M. B. If you goe first to the latter, then shew some reason or experience that Satan bewrayeth the witches, and draweth them to confesse, and to disclose themselves, rather then to conceale and hide their doings. I can tell you this before hand, that the common opinion is otherwise, which seemeth to be grounded both upon reason and experience.

Dan. I know the common opinion is as you say : but I do much marveile at it, seeing reason and experience doe prove the contrarie, as I will shew. As first, touching reason, you will graunt that the divels dealing altogether by sleight and subtillties, do that which doth most further their purposes and desires.

M. B. That is the verie reason why the divell would by no meanes have the witches bewrayed, as it is thought, because he would lurke secretly to doe mischief.

Dan. Indeed it were a good reason to prove that part, if Satan received his power from the witch, or could doe nothing but by her sending, or needed to bee harboured by her, or had no minde to meddle, but as it were hired to satisfie her wrath. But seeing all these be absurd, and he useth the witch and conjurer but under a colour to bring in further evils, it must needes followe, that the disclosing is fitter for his purpose than the keeping secret, for if they should be kept secrete: how should he make men think that he doth so many harmes at the request of the witch? howe should he drawe so many to runne after devils, to seek help at their hands? how should he procure so many to use wicked and blasphemous charms and sorceries, and in so horrible manner to abuse the blessed name of God, and his most sacred word? Or how should he draw the people into manifold errours, and to thirst even in rage after innocent blood? All these, and a number such like hee procureth and furthereth, by disclosing witches.

M. B. But how shall this reason be confirmed by experience? No doubt in shew he is loathe to have his dame (as some speake) disclosed.

Dan. You say well, that in shew he is loath to have the witch bewrayed: for indeede it is onely in shew, seeing he would make her and others also beleeve, even

when he doth bewray her by one meanes or other, that it is sore against his liking.

M. B. I pray you make that evident.

Dan. When one feeleth himselfe plagued any way, and doeth take it to be by Satan, admit it be so: he goeth to a cunning man, and he sheweth him in a glasse or in a chrystall the shape of the witch. Who now bewrayeth her?

M. B. That is the cunning mans spirite which bewrayeth her, and not her spirit which she dealeth withall.

Dan. You are not sure of that: for it may bee the same devill that she dealeth withall, that resembleth her in the glasse: none can doe it better.

M. B. I doe not thinke that hee departeth away from her.

Dan. Yea, but you must remember, that she which dealeth with a spirit, dealeth not with a devill, but with devils: for manie doe joyn together. When one of them departeth, and carieth the matter to the cunning man, they do not all depart. But what if it be as you said, that som other spirits do bewray, doe you thinke he doeth it against the liking of the witches spirite? Is Satan devided against Satan? Will Satan bewray Satan to his hindrance? Remember what our Saviour hath taught touching that.

M. B. Then if it be so, doe you not take it a sufficient prooffe against a witch, even for a jurie to finde guilty upon their oath, if a cunning man by his spirite do bewray anie.

Dan. It is the most insufficient prooffe that can be, for although he doe tell true in bewraying many, as their owne confessions do witnes, yet he doeth it of an evill purpose, he is a lyer, and the father of lies, he desireth chiefly to accuse the innocent, that he may bring men to bee guilty of innocent blood, to make the people beleeve there be multitudes of witches, to set them a worke to learne charmes and sorceries, and chiefly, that they may be brought to seeke unto him, as the bewrayer even in pitie of such bad people. Now because he craftily bewrayeth some, to get credite, shall mens verdict by oath, even unto blood, be grounded upon his testimony? If a divel should come in unto a jurie, and say the partie about whom you enquire is a witch, should they beleeve him, or wold they say, let him be sworne, and witness upon his oath? If not, why should they beleeve that which he hath spoken to the cunning man?

M. B. Surely I am out of doubt hee doth all in craft unto a most bad purpose, and that no credit out to bee given unto his testimony, when it is voluntary. But what say you to his testimonie, when it is even charged and forced in the name and power of God to tell the truth? It seemeth then he would conceale, but cannot.

Dan. The conjurer which supposeth that hee doeth bind by the name and power of God to tell him the truth, is utterlie deluded. For he is not bound, but is glad that the most glorious name of God is so horrible

abused, and that he can drawe men into such a gulfe of all abhominacion.

M. B. Nay, I doe not meane the conjurer, but when such as be godlie go about to cast him forth by prayer.

Dan. This I take to bee your meaning, a man or a woman is possessed with a divell: put case it bee so indeede (to distinguish them from so many counterfaits, as have bene), and men assemble together where the possessed is, and call upon God, and then charge Satan in the name of Christ, to tell how hee came there and who sent him.

M. B. I meane so indeede. And some being possessed, the divell being charged to tell who sent him, he hath confessed, that such a man did conjure him in thither, or such a witch did send him. Shall not this be of force to convince?

Dan. When any is possessed by the fiend, mens compassion, their love and pity are to be shewed, even to helpe what they can in such a distresse. They ought with all instant suit to intreat the Lord to shew mercy, and to expell him. The doctrin of the holy Scriptures doth warrant this: but for men to talke and question with him, I see no warrant at all by Gods word, much lesse to commaund and adjure him to depart. He is the Lords executioner, he hath sent him; wee may intreat the Lord to remoove him, but what authority have we to command him to depart, where God hath sent him?

M. B. Men have no authority, I grant, but they

command and adjure him in the name and power of the Lord for to depart.

Dan. That I take ought not to be, for mark this comparison: the prince is displeas'd with a subject for some disloyaltie: an officer is sent from the prince to attach and imprison him: shall hee or any other charge this officer in the princes name to let him alone, and not to meddle? Is not their way only to pacifie the prince, and so the prince wil command the officer to cease? Even so, where God sendeth Satan his executioner, the only way is to intreat the Lord to be pacified, for then shall the tormentor no longer remaine.

M. B. How doeth this which you speake agree with that which we read in the Acts of the Apostles, how Sainte Paule commaunded the divell to come out of a mayde at Philippos?

Dan. The holy apostles and others in the primitive Church, had an extraordinary power given them to caste fourth divels, and to heale diseases, and they did execute the same power by the direction and instinct of the Holy Ghost. We may not draw a patterne from that.

M. B. We see that divels are sometimes expelled.

Dan. They are when the Lord is intreated, otherwise they but seeme to be bound by adjuration and expelled. But how can it be proved that the father of lies may be bound, and forced through charge and adjuration in the name and power of God to tell the truth? And what warrant have wee to learne any trueth from his mouth? As to say, wee command thee in the name of

God, that thou tel us who sent thee. Who sent thee? who sent thee? Mother Joan, mother Joan, saith he. Also we command thee to tell us, who sent thee? L. B. conjured me in hither (saith hee). Shall wee thinke he doeth this even compelled? Or shall we ground upon it for certaine that he telleth no lie?

M. B. The devill in a partie possessed hath said, such a man conjured me in hither. The conjurer hath bene put to death for it, and hath confessed so much. The divell in another hath said, such a woman sent me: it hath likewise bin confessed by the woman.

Dan. All this maketh for that which I affirme. The Lord giveth him power to possesse a man He under a colour will be sent by a conjurer, or by a witch: and the one thinketh the devill entreth at her intreaty: the other supposeth he doeth even bind him thereto, whereas he ruleth both their mindes, and setteth them a worke. Then doeth hee willingly bewray them, even for many subtell purposes: but chiefly that he may establish conjurations, witchcrafts, and charmes, that hee may be sought unto, that he may set the people a worke in their calamities to be troubled about witches and conjurers, as though they could plague, and never looke to God, and that bewraying some witches and conjurers, hee may winne credite, and bee beleaved, even when he accuseth falslie, that he may bring innocent blood upon the land. Let all men take heed how upon their oath they give a verdict, especially touching life, upon his word, howsoever he seeme to be forced thereunto: al is most deepe craft and subtilty in him.

Sam. I pray you give me leave to speake a little. You say the devil willinglie bewrayeth witches and conjurers, and that for many subtile purposes. I have heard of divers things done of late which seeme quite contrarie, and that he taketh it grievously when they doe confesse and bewray matters.

Dan. Hee will seeme to take it in evill part, but let us heare the matters, and you shall see plainly that hee juggleth and maketh shewe of that which is contrary to his practise.

Sam. Well, I have heard very credibly, that a woman of late, suspected another woman to be a witch, and that she had hurt her some way. She procured a gentleman to send for the partie suspected, and charging her in his presence, she left her to the gentleman, who taking her aside, and walking alone with her, began to admonish and perswade her to renounce the divell, and to forsake such wicked waies. While he was thus perswading, and she denying stifly that she was any such woman, suddenly there appeared some distance from them, a weasill or lobsterre looking even upon them. Looke (said the gentleman) yonder same is thy spirit. Ah, master (said she) that is a vermine, there be many of them every where. Well, as they went towards it, it was vanished out of sight: by and by it appeared againe, and looked upon them. Surely (said the gentleman) it is thy spirit: but she still denied, and with that her mouth was drawne awrie. Then hee pressed her further, and she confessed all. She confessed she had hurt and killed by sending her spirit.

The gentleman being no justice, let her goe home, and did minde to open the matter unto some justice. When she was come home, another witch meeteth her, and saith: Ah thou beast, what hast thou done? thou hast bewrayed us all. What remedie now (said she): what remedie? said the other, send thy spirit and touch him: she sent her spirit, and of a suddaine the gentleman had as it were a flash of fire about him: he lifted up his hart to God, and felt no hurt. The spirit returneth, and tolde he coulde not hurt him, because he had faith: what then, said the other witch, hath he nothing that thou maist touch? he hath a childe, said the other. Send thy spirit, said she, and touch the child: she sent her spirit, the childe was in great paine and died. The witches were hanged and confessed.

Dan. What is the chiefe thing which you alleadge this for?

Sam. To shew how unwilling the divell was that the witch should confesse and bewray things. No doubt it should seeme, that when the gentleman was talking with her, he appeared to call her away, for feare least she should confesse: and when she would not come away, he drew her mouth awry: and when she had confessed, the divell complained unto the other witch, and made her chide her.

Dan. The thing is as cleere as may be, that he willinglie bewrayed them: and will you imagine the contrarie? Why did he appeare in a likenesse, but even to enforce her for to confesse, both by abashing, and giving the gentleman evident notice, especially, when

he drew her mouth awrie? And why did he set on the other witch to moove her that had confessed to send her spirit, but that he would have the matter more open, and bring them both to light?

Sam. What should moove him to bewray the witches? what could he gaine by it?

Dan. Nay, what almost doth he not gaine by it? Now all the countrie rings of the matter. As if the witches set on their spirits to lame and to kill: and that they do not meddle, but sent by them. He did know what power he had from God to afflict any, he will deale by witches: hee maketh others afraide of them, that so they may accuse them. He findeth meanes to have all disclosed. Hee mooveth the witches to send him against the gentleman: hee knoweth what he can doe: he returneth and saith there is faith. As though God did not give him power sometimes to afflict the faithfull? Or as if he could touch all that have no faith? If he could, the greatest part of the world should be destroyed by him. For they be very few in the world in comparison which have the true faith. Then must he be sent to the child that hath no faith: doth not the faith of the parents holde Gods protection over their infants as over themselves? Here is Satans craft: either hee did know by things breeding in the bodie of the child that it would at such time fall sicke and die: and he would be taken to be the killer of the child, to beare in hand that he hath such power and will doe when hee is requested. Or els he had power given him of God, and would bring it about this way. If hee did strike

the child, do you imagine he doth it at her pleasure? Or doe you thinke he would never have thought of any such thing, but moved by her. Doe not all the armies of divels goe about continually, seeking whom they may devour? Do they not waite where God will give them power to strike? Shal we still be so simple as to thinke that women neede to hire or to intreat them to doe harme. Looke unto God, for those wicked spirits play all parts in the play, and delude both the witches and others.

Sam. I will tell you another thing which was done of late. A woman being suspected to be a witch, and to have done some hurt among the cattell, was examined, and confessed indeed, that she had a spirit which did abide in a hollow tree, where there was an hole, out of which hee spake unto her. And ever when she was offended with any, she went to that tree, and sent him to kill their cattell. She was perswaded to confesse her fault openly, and to promise that she would utterly forsake such ungodly waies: after she had made this open confession, the spirit came unto her being alone. Ah, said he, thou hast confessed and bewrayed all, I could teeme it to rend thee in peeces: with that she was afraid, and wound away, and got her into companie. Within some few weekes after, she fell out greatly into anger against one man. Towards the tree she goeth, and before she came at it, Ah, said the spirit, wherefore comest thou? who hath angred thee? Such a man, said the witch. And what wouldest thou have me doe? said the spirit. Hee hath (saith she) two horses

going yonder, touch them, or one of them. Well, I think even that night one of the horses died, and the other was little better. Indeed they recovered that one again which was not dead, but in very evill case. Here me thinketh it is plaine : he was angrie that she had bewrayed all. And yet when she came to the tree, he let goe all displeasure and went readily.

Dan. Doe you thinke all is plaine here? Indeede here is that plaine dealing which divels doe use. First, doe you thinke Satan lodgeth in an hollow tree? Is hee become so lazie and idle? hath he left off to be as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour? hath he put off the bloodie and cruell nature of the firie dragon, so that hee mindeth no harme, but when an angrie woman intreate him to goe kill a cow or a horse? Is he become so doting with age, that men shall espie his craft: yea, be found craftier then he is? Alas, may there not be deep subiltie in these things?

Sam. Doe you thinke there is nothing but subiltie in these things?

Dan. Doe I thinke there is nothing but subiltie? Tell me what you thinke. What other end can there be but subiltie?

Sam. He may have this purpose (as I thinke the divels studie nothing els) to doe harme.

Dan. I doe not denie that: for all his craft tendeth unto harme. But what harme meane you?

Sam. You see here he killed mens cattell.

Dan. It may be he did: but how know you that?

Sam. You see he went at her request and killed one horse, and almost killed the other.

Dan. I would be loth to adventure my hand upon that : for who told you that he killed the one, and almost killed the other ?

Sam. The witch her selfe hath confessed the whole matter.

Dan. Who told the witch so ?

Sam. Her spirit told her that he did it at her request.

Dan. He is a credible person, and kind he was unto her as it seemeth.

Sam. Nay, but we see all things fell out according as she confessed.

Dan. How doe you meane ?

Sam. Why, she confessed her fault, the spirit was angrie with her ; afterward she fel out with that man, and upon this his horse died ; she confessed she sent the spirit, how could all things fall out so fit ?

Dan. The spirit when she came towards the tree, asked her, wherefore comest thou ? who hath angered thee ?

Sam. He did so.

Dan. And doe you imagine that the divell did lie there, and knew nothing untill she came and told him ?

Sam. Why needed he to aske her if he did know ?

Dan. Because he is subtile : for hee wrought in her heart, and kindled her wrath, and procured the falling out betweene her and that man : hee did know either that the horses at that time had some what in them which would bring death, or els that the Lord had given him power for to strike them : he moved and

wrought in her heart to have her come againe to the tree: he seemed to be angrie that she had confessed before, but was not, but sought to have things knowne. If he had not knowne that the horse should dye, either by some naturall cause, which would then breake forth, or by some power given to him, he would not at this time have mooved her heart to goe to the tree. And if her wrath had without his suggestion caried her so farre, hee could quickly have turned her: for great is the efficacie of Satans working in the hearts of such.

Sam. But I marked one thing which you said before, as that it might bee that God giveth sometimes power to the divell, even at the sending of the witch.

Dan. I say that God in justice giveth power unto Satan to delude, because men refuse to love his trueth: but that maketh not that the divell obtaineth any power to hurt because the witch sendeth, but the fault is in men, the sinnes of the people give power to the divell: for God is offended, and sendeth (as S. Paul saith) strong delusion. But have you any moe examples to proove that the divell is not willing to have witches bewrayed?

Sam. I have heard of many such like, but you say all is but craft, and that he would have men thinke hee doth all harmes that are done,

Dan. The divell would have men beleeve that hee doth all, if he could bring it about: and therefore it is for his advantage if he doe hurt, to have it not kept secret, but openly to be made knowne.

M. B. What say you then unto this: a witch is apprehended upon vehement suspition, and caried before

a justice : he handleth the matter in such sort that she confesseth, as I heard of one not long since : her confession was to this effect : She had two spirits, one like a weasill, the other like a mouse. These, she said, did many things for her. Now, she accused a woman about ten or twelve miles off, whom (it may be) she did not know, and yet could name, and not onely that, but said the woman had, as it were, a little bigge in her mouth, where the spirit did sucke blood.

Dan. It is a most easie thing for the divell to tell witches, that such a man or such a woman is a witch, and hath this or that secret mark upon them. And within these few yeares hee hath by witches and cunning men, accused such as were very religious and godly. Men must beware that they proceed not upon his testimony : he is not to be medled withall, nor any meddling which he useth, is to be taken in good part, seeing he doth all in deepe subtilties.

M. B. I doe take it, that the testimonie of the divell ought not of itselfe to have any force with a jurie, unles it can be proved by some other firme proofes. But what say you unto this : a witch is condemned, and telleth at the gallows not only what she hath done, but also of whom she first had her spirit. She doth this in repentance, and even readie to depart out of the world. It is to bee presumed that she will not in this case lie, nor accuse falsly. Let it be some woman in another towne, whom she saith, brought her the spirit. This woman is also suspected by some of her neighbours, apprehended and brought to

judgement, and stily denieth that she is any witch, or that she ever delivered any spirit unto the other which accused her. Now here is the question: Is not the testimonie of the woman upon her death, a sufficient warrant for a jurie to find this woman guiltie? Here they have now the testimonie not of the divell to proceede by, but of a woman, and though not upon her oath, yet upon her death, which is no lesse.

Dan. This testimonie may seeme to be sufficient even to warrant a jurie to finde guiltie, though it touch life: but if we looke well into it, we shall see it is not.

M. B. It may be you take it to be infirme, because it is the testimonie but of one.

Dan. Nay, not onely in respect that it is the testimonie but of one, but that it is the testimonie of such a one.

M. B. I put the case of such an one as doth shew repentance, who though she had been bad, yet now may bee beleaved.

Dan. I doe not meane in that respect, as to say she was a witch, and therefore not to be credited: but if she repent never so much, yet her testimonie in this is weake, because she may be utterly deceived, and think she telleth the truth, when it was nothing so, but she utterly deluded.

M. B. Doe you meane, that he may make the other woman thinke, that such a woman delivered her the spirit, and never so much matter?

Dan. Yea, that is my meaning.

M. B. It is farre beyond my reach to see how that can be.

Dan. You must consider that the divell doth many waies delude witches, and make them beleeve things which are nothing so. In Germany and other countries, the divels have so deluded the witches, as to make them beleeve that they raise tempests of lightnings and thunders. For the divels do know when these things be comming, tempests of winds, and thunders, and faine would they make the blinde world beleeve that those great works of God, be not Gods but his: and that is the cause why he coveteth to appeare in them. These divels make the witches beleeve, that at their request they kill both men and beasts, and many waies afflict, when as many of the things fal out naturally, which they would seeme to doe, and the rest in which they have power given to worke, they stirre up the witch but under a colour for to send them. These divels make the witches in some places beleeve, that they are turned into the likenesse of wolves, that they rend and teare sheepe, that they meet together and banquet, that sometimes they flie or ride in the ayre, which things indeede are nothing so, but they strongly delude the fantasies of the witches. Even so the divell can delude a poore woman with the likenesse of another woman delivering a mouse or a cat unto her, by appearing in such a likenes. Or he can set a strong fantasie in the minde that is oppressed with melancholie, that such or such a matter was, which indeed was never so. Men must be wise in these causes, or els may they soone be circumvented by the crafts of Satan and drawne into great sinne.

M. B. If it be thus, then how should a jurie condemne by their verdict any witch? For she hath not killed, nor the devill at her request, but maketh her beleieve he did it at her request.

Dan. A witch by the word of God ought to die the death, not because she killeth men, for that she cannot (unless it be those witches which kill by poyson, which either they receive from the divell, or hee teacheth them to make) but because she dealeth with divels. And so if a jurie doe finde prooffe that she hath dealt with divels, they may and ought to finde them guiltie of witchcraft.

M. B. If they finde them guiltie to have dealt with divels, and cannot say they have murdered men, the law doth not put them to death.

Dan. It were to be wished that the law were more perfect in that respect, even to cut off all such abominations. These cunning men and women which deale with spirites and charmes seeming to doe good, and draw the people into manifold impieties, with all other which have familiarity with divels, or use conjurations, ought to bee rooted out, that others might see and feare.

M. B. You will not have the testimony of devils to be of any credit with a jury, what say you then unto men, there be some which die, and take it upon their death, that they are bewitched, and will say precisely such or such have done it. For that is in the other point touching likelihoods.

Dan. They are bewitched indeed, for the devill

doth delude their minds : for you shall finde them able to render no reason but onelie this, in their conscience the partie is naught and they are out of doubt it is so.

M. B. That may bee as you say in some, but I have knowne a woman my selfe which many have counted to be a witch, and many things have fallen out where she hath taken displeasure. Do you not thinke that is a firm prooffe? She denieth, but the things which fall out doe manifest her to be naught.

Dan. You must shew the things, and thereby it will appear.

M. B. She fell out, or els at the least seemed to be displeased with one, and he had an hogge died suddainlie. Another thought she was displeased with him, and his horse fell sicke. And a third could not sit upon his stoole at worke. And within nine or ten yeares space divers others. One saw the divell bigger than a cat with great eies. An other was haunted with a spirite. An other brewing, the drinke would not worke in the fatte. An other sawe a thing in her house as big as lambe, playing in the window. An other in her grievous torment saw the woman stand by her all the night, whom she suspected to bewitch her, and divers such like, which were too long to reckon up. If she were not a witch, how should all these fall out so fit?

Dan. I have shewed alreadie, that where Satan hath a witch to deale by, hee bringeth it about, that in all such things as he hath power given him of God, he will seeme to do nothing but requested and sent by the

witch. In those things which fall out in sicknesses, lamenes, and death, upon naturall causes, he worketh in such sort, as that he maketh the witch beleve she doeth them. And this he coveteth to have breake forth by hir confession. Now, where he hath no witch to deale by, he gaineth exceedingly, if he can worke in the minds of any a strong suspition of any man or woman. For if it bee once begun, he pursueth it with all his power and cunning. If one be visited with grievous torment of sicknes, and be so ignorant, and voyde of the faith in Gods providence, that he imagine the divell doeth it at the sending by a witch, the divell will delude him, and make him beleve that the witch standeth by him. The man or woman suspected cannot come there: who then worketh that illusion but Satan? Another is affraide of the divell to be sent unto him, by that partie whom he suspecteth to be a witch: and thus through want of faith in God, giveth the devill the more power over him, either to hurt or to appeare unto him. For Sathan haunteth all men continually, seeking all occasions, and needeth not to be sent by man or woman. They be exceeding blind which will reason thus: an evill spirit came and appeared unto me, after I had angred such a woman, therefore she sent him. Satan, if he have power to doe harme, or knowe where somewhat will follow, is he not cunning to make the partie which shall receive the harme, to fall out with some that he may suspect, and so the harme may seeme to come from that partie? Againe, in feare, in the darke, men take some little cat

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or dog to be an uglie devill. As not long since a rugged water spaniell having a chaine, came to a mans doore that had a saut bitch, and some espied him in the darke, and said it was a thing as bigge as a colt, and had eyes as great as saucers. Hereupon some came to charge to him, and did charge him in the name of the Father, the Sonne, and the Holy Ghost, to tell what he was. The dogge at the last told them, for he spake in his language, and said, bowgh, and thereby they did know what he was. If hee doe know where harmes doe follow upon naturall causes in men or beasts, hee laboureth either to make them offended, and to fall out with the partie that is suspected, or at the least to perswade them of such displeasure conceived, that the harms may seeme to come from the same. If he do torment indeede, having power to possesse the bodie, hee will not sticke to lie, and to say such a woman sent him.

M. B. And doth it not fall out sometimes, that as hee saith such a woman sent him, so the woman upon examination confesseth so much.

Dan. Yea, but I speak where he hath no witch to deale by, but pursueth the innocent with suspition upon suspition, that men may bee guiltie of innocent blood. Hee telleth the truth sometimes, to the end he may be credited when he doth lie. For let no man be so simple as to thinke, that he will ever tell truth but for some wicked purpose.

M. B. Yet this of all the rest seemeth most strange unto me, how so many things should fall out, as it

seemeth, after the displeasure of a suspected person, and some of them such as apparantly are done by Sathan, as in drinke not working, or in creame, when butter will not come, and yet the partie suspected is not a witch.

Dan. Oh sir, the sleights of Satan in compassing such matters bee marveilous. I know it is taken (as they say) to bee dead sure that the partie is a witch, if sundrie such shewes of matters doe concurre. But how easie a thing is it for craftie divels to compasse such matters?

M. B. Then you doe not thinke that common fame is sufficient to warrant the conscience of the juror, to condemne any.

Dan. Experience doth teach how headie much people are in judging men or women to bee witches upon every surmise. And the power imagined to be in witches, which breedeth a feare in many, causeth them to be credulous. Many goe so farre, that if they can intice children to accuse their parents, they thinke it a good worke.

M. B. You say the testimonie of the divell is not to bee taken, although it be manifest that he doth many times tell the truth, because when he speaketh the truth, he doth it of a bad purpose. And you hold it the testimonie of the divell, not onely which he speaketh when any charge him, but also which the cunning men and women give, in as much as they can say nothing but upon his word. Moreover, unles I mistake you, the testimony of a witch in many things at her death

is not (as you say) any other then the testimonie of the divell, because the divell hath deceived her, and made her beleeve things which were nothing so. Besides al this, you wil have likelihoods and suspitions to be of no waight, nor common fame and opinion to move the conscience of a jurie, because Sathan is exceeding sub-till in all these. Then how shall a jurie finde a witch? What proofes will you have?

Dan. Men are upon their oath to deale, and it doth touch life, if they doe finde any guiltie of witchcraft. This is a most waightie matter, whereupon it followeth, that there must be either due prooffe by sufficient witnessses, or els the confession of the witch. For if the testimony be such as may be false, as all that commeth from divels is to be suspected: or if it be but upon rumours, and likelihoods, in which there may be exceeding sleights of Sathan, as for the most part there be: how can that jurie answeare before God, which upon their oath are not sure, but that so proceeding they may condemne the innocent as often it commeth to passe.

M. B. You mistake one point, for the finding of a witch guilty by a jury doeth not in all causes touch blood.

Dan. I am not deceived, for where the jurie having but likelihoods doth find a man or a woman guilty but for killing a beast, it casteth them into prison, setteth them upon the pillorie, and not only diffameth them for ever, but also if suspition follow againe and arraignment, it is death; you see then how neere a way they

have made unto blood. But if it touch not blood, but the party escape with the imprisonment and pillory, and never againe fall into suspition, how grievous an infamie is it, to have been condemned by jury to be a witch? I speake it where it is onely upon suspition, or such testimonie as is onelie from Satan, and the partie may be cleere.

M. B. It falleth out sometimes that upon suspition and common fame they hitte right, and the partie which would not confesse any witchery upon examination, and arraignment, being condemned doth confesse it.

Dan. Let it be graunted that the jury upon Satans testimony, or suspitions and common fame, sometimes hitteth right, which yet I feare is very seldome, that is no warrant before God for men that are sworne, for are they sworne to indiet upon likelihoods, or upon knowledge in the which upon sound testimony or confession they shall finde? If the party be a witch which is suspected, and yet no prooffe, the jury doeth more rightly in acquitting, than in condemning, for what warrant have they upon their oath to goe by gesse, or to find that which they know not?

M. B. I doe take it men offend grievously, if upon insufficient prooffe they condemne the innocent, and especially, because they are solemnly sworne: but if they hit right, though it be only by conjectures and likelihoods, I cannot see how they should therein offend: they condemne not the innocent, they doe the party no wrong.

Dan. I doe not say they are to bee charged with any innocent blood, or wrong to the partie: but I aske what warrant they have before God upon oath to touch blood by suspitions? Admit one be arraigned upon felony, the likelihoods are great that he is guiltie of the same, but yet it may be hee is cleere. What is a jurie nowe to do? Are they to venture upon the life of a man by their oath by suspitions. Let it be he is one that God knoweth to bee guiltie, but no man can disclose the same, and therefore they cleare him, doe they commit anie offence? Are they bound to find that which they cannot know? What innocent person then may not be condemned.

Sam. I pray you give me leave a little. I do not well conceive this matter about finding out and condemning of witches. It is somewhat strange unto me which you speak: I have my selfe sundry times beene of the jurie when witches have beene arraigned, we have found them guilty upon common fame, upon likelihoods, and upon such testimonie as you disallow. They have indeed taken it upon their deaths that they were innocent, but that never made me to doubt but that they were witches: for it is sayde, the devill hath such power over them, that he will not suffer them to confesse.

Dan. What should moove you to thinke that the devill will not have them to confesse? you see some doe confesse when they be examined, and when they be executed: the devill hath power over the most desperat theeves and murtherers?

Sam. Yea, but he careth not so much though the theeves and the murtherers doe confesse, it maketh not so much against him, as when witches bewray all.

D n. What, doe you take it hee is loath to be dif-famed or hardly thought off? Otherwise what should it make against him when witches confesse? It is some step to repentance when theeves and murtherers acknowledge their sinnes, and if he can hinder them, or holde them desperate from confessing, he will. It is apparant that hee coveteth to have witches to confesse, it maketh so much for him. He would have men judge that there bee an hundred folde more witches then there be. He discloseth by his cunning men and women, and otherwise. He coveteth greatly to have it thought that hee doth all, in tempests, in straunge plagues and diseases which light upon man or beast. And for this cause hee maketh the witch beleeve and confesse more then all, that is, that at her request he did that which he never did nor could doe: unlesse we will denie the soveraigntie and providence of God over all.

Sam. If Satan gaine so much by disclosing them, what should be the reason that men are generally perswaded, that he coveteth to have the things kept secret, and so will not let the witch confesse.

Dan. It ariseth from false perswasions, and from a false feare that witches doe so many harmes, and that at their sending and request the spirits worke all. If Sathan be so kind and serviceable to the witch, how is it that he doth not fetch her some money? for hee

knoweth where it is lost, or where it lieth in mens houses. Hee telleth the witch he can make a man lame. Hee saith hee can kill an horse. Yea, at sometime he will say he can and will (if she will have it so) kill a man. As if it were in his power to doe many great things, and will not but requested. Let us see if all the divels can fetch one penny out of a mans house whose horse or cow they say they have killed. The conjurer, saith he, can conjure him into a man, or out of a man: let him conjure him but into a mans chest if he can, to fetch somewhat from thence. If the divels cannot doe these things, then be assured that either they make but a shew of killing and laming, as they do in the most of such harmes, or else where they do hurt, it is upon speciall leave from God, and not from the witches pleasure. And to what purpose then should all such jugglings and shewes serve, if they should be kept close and not confessed.

Sam. Yet for my better satisfaction give me leave without offence to lay open some particulars which I have seen. I was of a jurie not many yeares past, when there was an old woman arraigned for a witch. There came in eight or ten which gave evidence against her. I doe not remember every particular; but the chiefe, for some things were of small value. One woman came in and testified upon her oath, that her husband upon his death-bed, took it upon his death, that he was bewitched, for he pined a long time. And hee sayd further, hee was sure that woman had bewitched him. He tooke her to be naught, and thought

she was angry with him, because she would have borrowed five shillings of him, and he denied to lend it her. The woman tooke her oath also, that she thought in her conscience that the old woman was a witch, and that she killed her husband. There came in a man that halted, he tolde a shrewde tale. I once, sayd he, had both my legges sound. This old woman and I fell out and did chide. She sayd she would be even with me. Within three daies after I had such a paine in my knee that I could not stand. And ever since I goe hauling of it, and now and then feele some paine. There came in another, a little fellow that was very earnest, me thinkes I see him yet. He tooke his oath directly that she was a witch: I did once anger her (sayd he) but I did repent me: for I looked somewhat would follow. And the next night I saw the ugliest sight that ever I saw: I awaked suddenly out of my sleepe, and there was me thought a great face, as bigge as they use to set up in the signe of the Saracens head, looked full in my face. I was scarce mine owne man two dayes after. Another came in, a woman, and her child dyed with grievous paine, and she tooke her oath, that in her conscience she killed her child. Then followed a man, and he sayd hee could not tell, but he thought she was once angry with him because she came to begge a few pot-herbes, and he denied her: and presently after he heard a thing as he thought to whisper in his eare, thou shalt be bewitched. The next day he had such a paine in his backe, that he could not sit upright: he said hee sent to a cunning

woman, she tolde hee was bewitched, and by a woman that came for pot-herbes. But she said he should recour of it, and so he said hee did within some tenne daies. Then came in two or three grave honest men, which testified that she was by common fame accounted a witch. Wee found her guiltie, for what could we doe lesse, she was condemned and executed: and upon the ladder she made her prayer, and took it upon her death she was innocent and free from all such dealings. Do you think we did not well?

Dan. Nay, what thinke you? Are you sure she was a witch? May it not be she was innocent, and you upon your oathes shed innocent blood?

Sam. If she were innocent what could we doe lesse? we went according to the evidence of such as were sworne, they swore that they in their conscience tooke her to bee a witch, and that she did those things.

Dan. If other take their oath that in their conscience they think so, is that sufficient to warrant me upon mine oath to say it is so?

Sam. Nay, but you see what matters they brought, which perswaded them to thinke so.

Dan. Might not both you and they be deceived in your thinking, or may you upon matters which may induce you to thinke so, present uppon your oath that you know it is so?

Sam. If witnesses come in and swear falsely, the jury proceeding according, their testimony is cleere from blame, for they goe but by testimonie of men sworne.

Dan. If witnesses doe sweare directly that in their knowledge a matter was so or so, and sweare falsely, the jurie is cleere which proceedeth according to their evidence: unlesse the jurie do perceive that their oth cannot be true. But what is that to make the testimonie sufficient where men doe but thinke, and can shew no necessarie reason to ground their thought upon? As let us see in al these which one could prove that she must needs be a witch. One saith her husband tooke it upon his death that she killed him, because hee would not lend her five shillings: does this prove she bewitched him? Can the divell kill a man at his pleasure, to gratifie the witch? Is it not rather to be judged he dyed of som pining sicknesse growing from an evill constitution of bodie, which the divel did know, and would set him at some variance with one old woman or other, that so it might breed suspition of witchcraft?

Sam. You see there were some things which could not be done but by the divell.

Dan. Indeed the great face which the man thought he saw, was the illusion of the divell. But is this a good prooffe, the divel appeareth to a man after he hath displeased a woman, therefore she sent him? Doth not Sathan haunt all men continually, and would if he could get leave from God terrifie them with such illusions? when men are affraid and have strong imaginations. What reason did the woman shew which toke it upon her conscience that the old woman killed her childe, to prove that it was so? If shee thought so

in her conscience, and tenne thousand more with her upon bare imagination, was that a warrant for you to sweare solemnly that it was so? As for the testimonie of the cunning woman that he was bewitched which had the paine in his backe, upon the deniall of pot-herbes, it was the testimonie but of the divell, as I shewed before. And what is common fame grounded upon imaginations?

Sam. Then you thinke we did amisse, doe you?

Dan. I would not upon mine oath doe such a thing for to gaine a kingdome.

Sam. It may be she was a witch, although she tooke it upon her death that she was not.

Dan. It is rather to be thought she was not a witch: for what should make her denie it upon her death? The divell had accused her to be a witch, for no direct testimony against her but his.

Sam. You say it was the divell that told by the cunning woman that she was a witch.

Dan. And doe you thinke it was any other but Satan?

Sam. I did not at that time thinke it was the divell: but now I see it could be none other.

Dan. Then be wiser hereafter, and sorie for that which you have done.

Sam. Indeed I have cause to be grieved if she were not a witch.

Dan. If she were a witch your warrant was small: but she being no witch, you have taken away both her life, and covered her with infamie.

Sam. I was of another jurie since, and there was a woman indicted for a witch, but not for killing any man or childe. There came in five or sixe against her : the first was an old woman, and she sayd she had displeas'd her, as shee thought, and within two or three nights after as she sate by her fire, there was a thing like a toad, or like some little crabbe fish which did creepe upon the harth, she tooke a beesome and swept it away, and suddenly her bodie was griped. Another fel out with her, as she said, and her hennes began to die up, untill she burnt one hen alive. A third man came in, and hee said she was once angrie with him, he had a dun cow which was tyed up in a house, for it was in winter, he feared that some evill would follow, and for his life he could not come in where she was, but he must needs take up her tayle and kisse under it. Two or three other came in and said she was by common fame accounted a witch. Wee found her guiltie, and she was condemned to prison, and to the pillorie, but stood stiffe in it that she was no witch.

Dan. And are you sure she was one ?

Sam. I thinke verily shee was one, although there bee many of her neighbors which thinke she is none : for how could those thinges followe so upon her anger ? It seemeth they were all done by the devill.

Dan. Hee is cunning that can tell that : let it be that it was the devil which appeared to the old woman like a toad, or like a crabbe fish, and that he did gripe her bodie : doth it follow therefore of necessitie that the

other woman sent him? He can not turne him selfe into any likenesse unlesse God give him leave, as he doth in justice permit that so he may delude ignorant persons. No witch can give him power to appeare unto any in a visible shape. He had this graunted him from God, and Satan by and by will set anger, and then appeare, that it might seeme it grew from that.

Sam. Wee see hee appeareth unto witches and conjurers.

Dan. Yea, but wee may not thinke hee can at his pleasure take a likenes for to appeare in. That he doth appeare unto witches and conjurers, it is granted in Gods wrath, to the ende he may strongly delude such wicked people as will not heare and obey the voyce of the Lord God. For the devils are chained up by Gods most mightie power and providence, and in all things so farre as he letteth foorth their chaine, so farre they proceede, one inch further they can not proceede. Where men love darkenes more then light, hee hath leave given him to do many thinges. Some he terrifieth with ugly shapes, some he intiseth with faire shewes: others he playeth withall in likenes of a weasell, or mouse, or some such small vermine.

Sam. I thought Satan could appeare in what liknesse he would, and to whom he would, if the witch sent him.

Dan. Therein you were much deceived: for the sending by the witch can give him no power, and if hee had power, he would no doubt in all places appeare unto many as far and in such sort, as should best serve

his turne. Therefore if he appeare unto any man, let him thinke, God hath given him leave to goe thus farre with mee, and let him call for faith to resist him, and for true wisdomes that he may not be deceived nor deluded by him.

Sam. But doth hee not appeare sometimes when the witches send him ?

Dan. Where he findeth it is graunted unto him for to appeare, he mooveth witches to send him, if he have any to deale by: but if there be none, yet will he appeare, and deale so farre as he hath power given him.

Sam. But what say you to the womans hens ?

Dan. What should one say to them when they be dead ?

Sam. I meane doe you not thinke they were bewitched ?

Dan. Christ saith, a sparrow cannot fall without the will of your heavenly Father: and is not a henne as good as a sparrow ?

Sam, Nay, I am fully perswaded by that which you have sayd, that the divell cannot touch any thing to kill or to hurt it, but upon speciall leave from God. They can give him no power, she thinketh she setteth him on, and it is hee that setteth her on worke. Let these things be no more called in question: but was it not evident that the divell killed those hennes? because after the burning of one henne the woman had no more that died. If Satan did it not, how could they cease dying for that? You sayd that he, where he hath power to hurt in such bodily harmes, is willing to cease,

that such wickednesse may bee practised. And then if this hurt were done by the divell, is it not to bee thought that the woman was a witch, seeing it followed after she was angrie? Let it be that Satan having power to do that he did, would be sent by the witch for a colour, and to make it evident did set anger between her and that other woman, to make men thinke that he would not deale, but intreated by her being angrie. And so we could doe no lesse but finde her a witch.

Dan. These be weake foundations to set such a weightie building upon. For first it is not certaine that the divell killed those hens. Might it not be they had some infection which he did know would kill them, and he craftily bringeth the matter about, making two women fall out (which is the easiest matter of an hundred) even upon the dying of the hennes, that so it might seeme they were bewitched. But you say then, how could it bee that upon the burning of an henne, there dyed no more, if the divell did not kill them? Nay how can you tell but that there should no more have dyed, although the live hen had not been burned? What if hee saw there should no more dye, and there-upon mooved the heart of that woman to use that witchcraft in burning a henne, that it might seeme that was a present remedie to drive away divels? Or put case he had the power to kill the womans hens, either he is a weake killer, or els he goeth to his worke but lazily. He could kill a great heard of swine quickly when Christ gave him leave: could he not, if the woman had five thousand hens, have killed them

all at once? Why did the foole then but nibble, killing now one and then one, and so was scared away before he had killed all? If he had power before the henne was burnt for to kil, why did hee not then when they went about to burne an henne kill the rest? It may be he did not know what they went about, he was laid soft in his pot of wooll: and comming to kill another henne, he was met withall, he smelt the roastmeat, and was scared.

Sam. Then you thinke he did not kill those hennes.

Dan. What certaintie had you that hee did kill them? You found it upon your oath that he killed them, and that such a woman sent him and set him a worke, and yet it is an hundred to one hee never had power for to touch them.

Sam. But what can you say to the other: the man which could not chuse but kisse under his coves tayle?

Dan. I say he was farre in love with his cow. Let such men learne to know God, and to expell fantasies out of their mindes, that the devil may not have such power over them, for he worketh in the fantasies of mans mind, and the more strongly where they feare him, as it appeareth this man did. Satan did worke in this mans minde many foolish imaginations, and to make him beleve he was bewitched he maketh him fall out with one that may bee suspected. And thus you jurie men take your oath and condemne many innocent persons because you beleve the devill, and imagine that witches do that which they cannot do.

M. B. I have heard of many that have beene con-

demned for witches which have taken it upon their death that they were innocent. And sundry of them have had farre weaker proofes brought against them then these that have bin mentioned.

Dan. Yea, that is it which I say, men do so little consider the high sovereignty and providence of God over all things: they ascribe so much to the power of the devill and to the anger of witches, and are in such feare of them, that the least shew that can be made by the sleights of Satan deceives them. The only way for men that will eschew the snares and subtilties of the devill and all harmes by him, is this, even to heare the voyce of God, to be taught of him by his lively word which is full of pure light to discover and expel the darke mistes of Satan, in which he leadeth men out of the way: and to be armed with faith to resist him, as the holy Apostle S. Peter willeth, so such as doe forsake this way are seduced into grosse errors and into many abominable sinnes, which carrie men to destruction. I must now bidde you farewell.

M. B. I could bee content to heare more in these matters, I see how fondly I have erred. But seeing you must be gone, I hope we shall meete here againe at some other time; God keepe you!

Sam. I am bound to give you great thankes. And I pray you, when occasion serveth, that you come this way, let us see you at my house.

M. B. I thought there had not been such subtile practises of the divell, nor so great sinnes as he leadeth men into.

Sam. It is strange to see how many thousands are caried awry and deceived, yea many that are very wise men.

M. B. The divell is too craftie for the wisest, unlesse they have the light of Gods word.

The wife of Sam. Husband, yonder commeth the good wife R.

Sam. I would she had come sooner.

The good wife R. Ho, who is within, by your leave?

The wife of Sam. I would you had come a little sooner, here was one even now that said you are a witch.

The good wife R. Was there one said I am a witch? you doe but jest.

The wife of Sam. Nay, I promise you hee was in good earnest.

The good wife R. I a witch? I defie him that saith it, though he be a lord. I would all the witches in the land were hanged, and their spirits by them.

M. B. Would not you be glad if their spirits were hanged up with them to have a gowne furred with some of their skinnes?

The good wife R. Out upon them, there were furre!

Sam. Wife, why diddest thou say that hee said the good wife R. is a witch? he did not say so.

The wife of Sam. Husband, I did marke his words well enough, he said she is a witch.

Sam. He doth not know her, and how could he say she is a witch?

The wife of Sam. What though he did not know her? did hee not say she played the witch that het the spit red hot, and thrust it into her creame, when the butter would not come?

Sam. Indeede, wife, thou saist true, he said that was a thing taught by the divell, as also the burning of an henne, or of an hogge alive, and all such like devices.

The good wife R. Is that witchcraft? Some Scripture man hath tolde you so. Did the divell teach it? Nay, the good woman at R. H. taught it my husband: she doth more good in one yeere then all these Scripture men will doe so long as they live.

M. B. Who doe you thinke taught it the cunning woman at R. H.?

The good wife R. It is a gift which God hath given her. I thinke the Holy Spirit of God doth teach her.

M. B. You doe not think then that the divell doth teach her.

The good wife R. How should I thinke that the divell doth teach her? Did you ever heare that the devill did teach any good thing?

M. B. Doe you know that was a good thing?

The good wife R. Was it not a good thing to drive the evill spirit out of my creame?

M. B. Do you thinke the divell was afraid of your spit?

The good wife R. I know he was driven away, and we have been rid of him ever since.

M. B. Can a spit hurt him?

The good wife R. It doth hurt him, or it hurteth the witch: one of them I am sure: for he commeth no

more. Either she can get him come no more, because it hurteth him: or els she will let him come no more, because it hurteth her.

M. B. It is certaine that spirits cannot be hurt but with spirituall weapons: therefore your spit cannot fray nor hurt the divell. And how can it hurt the witch, you did not thinke she was in your creame, did you?

The good wife R. Some thinke she is there, and therefore when they thrust in the spit they say: If thou beest here have at thine eye!

M. B. If she were in your creame, your butter was not very cleanly.

The good wife R. You are merrily disposed, *M. B.*, I know you are of my mind, though you put these questions to me. For I am sure none hath counselled more to goe to the cunning folke then you.

M. B. I was of your minde, but I am not now, for I see how foolish I was. I am sorie that ever I offended so grievously as to counsaile any for to seeke unto divels.

The good wife R. Why, *M. B.*, who hath schooled you to day? I am sure you were of another mind no longer agone then yesterday.

The wife of Sam. Truly, good wife *R.*, I thinke my husband is turned also: here hath been one reasoning with them three or foure houres.

The good wife R. Is your husband turned to? I would you might lose all your hens one after another, and then I would she would set her spirit upon your ducks and your geese, and leave you not one alive. Will you come to defend witches?

M. B. We doe not defend witches.

The good wife R. Yes, yes, there be too many that take their part; I would they might witch some of them even into hell, to teach others to defend them. And you, *M. B.*, I would your nagge might hault a little one of these daies: see whether you would not be glad to seeke helpe.

M. B. I would seeke helpe, I would carrie him to the smith to search if he were not pricked or graveld.

The good wife R. Tush, you laugh: if you were plagued as some are, you would not make so light account of it.

M. B. You thinke the divell can kill mens cattell, and lame both man and beast at his pleasure: you thinke if the witch intreate him and send him he will goe, and if she will not have him go, he will not meddle. And you thinke when he doth come, you can drive him away with an hot spitte, or with burning a live henne or a pigge.

The good wife R. Never tell me I thinke so, for you your selfe have thought so: and let them say what they can, all the Scripture men in the world shall never perswade me otherwise.

M. B. I doe wonder, not so much at your ignorance as at this, that I was ever of the same minde that you are, and could not see mine owne follie.

The good wife R. Follie? how wise you are become of a sudden? I know that their spirits lie lurking, for they foster them: and when any bodie hath angred them, then they call them forth and send them. And looke

what they bid them do, or hire them to do, that shall be done: as when she is angrie, the spirit will aske her what shall I doe? Such a man hath misused me, saith she, goe kill his cow; by and by he goeth and doth it. Go kill such a womans hens; downe goe they. And some of them are not content to do these lesser harmes, but they will say, goe make such a man lame, kill him, or kill his child. Then are they readie and will doe any thing: and I thinke they be happie that can learne to drive them away.

M. B. If I should reason with you out of the worde of God, you should see that al this is false which you say. The divell cannot kill nor hurt any thing, no not so much as a poore henne. If he had power, who can escape him? Would he tarrie to be sent or intreated by a woman? he is a stirrer up unto al harmes and mischiefs.

The good wife R. What tell you me of Gods word? Doth not Gods word say there bee witches, and doe not you thinke God doth suffer bad people? Are you a turne coate? Fare you well, I will no longer talke with you.

M. B. She is wilfull indeede. I will leave you also.

Sam. I thanke you for your good companie.

FINIS.

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