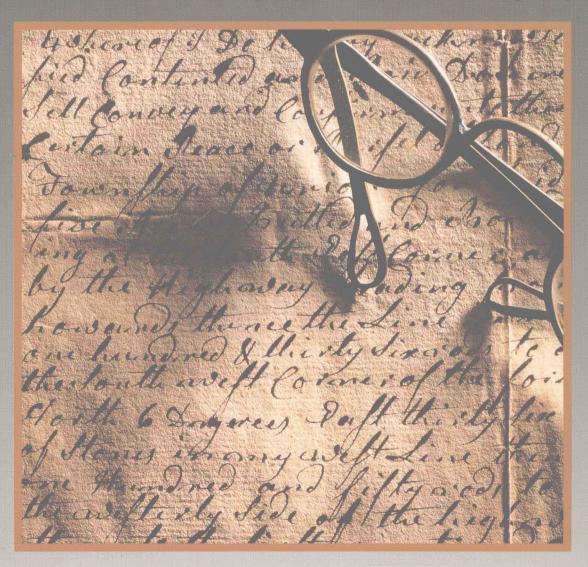
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Introduction

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The Earliest Days of Virginia (1608)

EDWARD MARIA WINGFIELD

The British colony of Jamestown was governed during its first two years by a council of its most distinguished settlers. They elected Edward Maria Wingfield their president, a position he clearly did not enjoy. During that first year, and for many years after, the leaders of Jamestown made one grievous error after another, and the colony became a death camp. Wingfield was removed after only six months in office and wrote this account to justify his presidency.

Questions to Consider

- How could such a new colony be so quickly divided by internal political rivalries?
- Why would the local Indians supply food to these settlers?

Here followeth what happened in James Towne, in Virginia, after Captayne Newport's departure for Engliund.

Captayne Newport, haveing allwayes his eyes and eares open to the proceedings of the Collonye, 3 or 4 dayes before his departure asked the President [Wingfield] how he thought himself settled in the government: whose answere was, that no disturbance could indaunger him or the Collonye, but it must be wrought eyther by Captayne Gosnold or Mr. Archer; for the one was strong with friends and followers, and could if he would; and the other was troubled with an ambitious spirit, and would if he could.

The Captayne gave them both knowledge of this, the President's opinion; and moved them, with many intreaties, to be myndefull of their dutyes to His Majestie and the Collonye.

Source: Edward Maria Wingfield, A Discourse of Virginia, ed. Charles Deane (Boston, 1860), pp. 13–37.

June, 1607.—The 22th, Captayne Newport retorned for England; for whose good passadge and safe retorne wee made many prayers to our Almighty God.

June the 25th, an Indian came to us from the great Poughwaton with the word of peace; that he desired greatly our freindshipp; that the wyrounnces, Pasyaheigh and Tapahanagh, should be our freindes; that wee should sowe and reape in peace, or els he would make warrs upon them with us. This message fell out true; for both those wyroaunces have ever since remayned in peace and trade with us. Wee rewarded the messinger with many tryfles which were great wonders to him.

This Powatan dwelleth 10 myles from us, upon the River Pamaonche, which lyeth North from us. The Powatan in the former iornall mentioned (a dwellar by Captn. Newport's faults) ys a wyroaunce, and under this Great Powaton, which before wee knew not.

July.—The 3rd of July, 7 or 8 Indians presented the President a dear from Pamaonke a wyrouance, desiring our friendshipp. They enquired after our shipping; which the President said was gon to Croutoon. They fear much our shipps; and therefore he would not have them think it farr from us. Their wyrounce had a hatchet sent him. They wear well contented with trifles. A little after this came a dear to the President from the Great Powatan. He and his messingers were pleased with the like trifles. The President likewise bought divers tymes dear of the Indyans; beavers, and other flesh; which he alwayes caused to be equally devided among the Collonye.

About this tyme, divers of our men fell sick. We myssed above forty before September did see us; amongst whom was the worthy and religious gent. Captn. Bartholomew Gosnold, upon whose liefs stood a great part of the good succes and fortune of our government and Collony. In his sicknes tyme, the President did easily foretel his owne deposing from his comaund; so much differed the President and the other Councellors in managing the government of the Collonye....

...Mr. Kendall was put off from being of the Counsell, and comitted to prison; for that it did manyfestly appeare he did practize to sowe discord betweene the President and Councell.

Sicknes had not now left us [6] able men in our towne. God's onely mercy did now watch and warde for us: but the President hidd this our weaknes carefully from the salvages; never suffring them, in all his tyme, to come into our towne.

Septem.—The 6th of September, Pasyaheigh sent us a boy that was run from us. This was the first assurance of his peace with us; besides, wee found them no canyballs....

The Councell demanded some larger allowance for themselves, and for some sick, their favorites; which the President would not yeeld unto, without their warrants.

This matter was before pounded by Captn. Martyn, but so nakedly as that he neyther knew the quantity of the stoare to be but for 13 weekes and a half, under the Cap Merchaunt's hand. He prayed them further to consider the long tyme before wee expected Captn. Newport's retorne; the incertainty of his retorne, if God did not favor his voyage; the long tyme before our harvest would bee ripe; and the doubtfull peace that wee had with the Indyans, which they would keepe no longer then oportunity served to doe us mischief.

It was then therefore ordered that every meale of fish or fleshe should excuse the allowance for poridg, both against the sick and hole. The Councell, therefore, sitting againe upon this proposition, instructed in the former reasons and order, did not thinke fit to break the former order by enlarging their allowance, as will appeare by the most voyces reddy to be shewed under their handes. Now was the comon store of oyle, vinigar,

sack, & aquavite all spent, saveing twoe gallons of each: the sack reserved for the Comunion Table, the rest for such extreamityes as might fall upon us, which the President had onely made knowne to Captn. Gosnold; of which course he liked well. The vessells wear, therefore, boonged up [sealed]. When Mr. Gosnold was dead, the President did acquaint the rest of the Counsell with the said remnant! but, Lord, how they then longed for to supp up that little remnant! for they had nowe emptied all their own bottles, and all other that they could smell out....

The President, well seeing to what end their impacience would grow, desired them earnestly & often tymes to bestow the Presidentshipp amonge themselves; that he would obey, a private man, as well as they could comand. But they refused to discharge him of the place; sayeing they mought not doe it, for that hee did his Majestie good service in yt. In this meane tyme, the Indians did daily relieve us with corne and fleshe, that, in three weekes, the President had reared upp 20 men able to worke; for, as his stoare increased, he mended the comon pott: he had laid up, besides, provision for 3 weekes' wheate before hand.

By this tyme, the Councell had fully plotted to depose Wingfield, ther then President; and had draune certeyne artycles in wrighting amongst themselves, and toke their oathes upon the Evangelists to observe them:

...

The 10 of September, Mr. Ratcliff, Mr. Smyth, and Mr. Martynn, came to the President's tennt with a warrant, subscribed under their handes, to depose the President; sayeing they thought him very unworthy to be eyther President or of the Councell, and therefore discharged him of bothe. He answered them, that they had eased him of a great deale of care and trouble....

I will now write what followeth in my owne name, and give the new President his title. I shall be the briefer being thus discharged. I was comytted to a Sergeant, and sent to the pinnace; but I was answered with, "If they did me wronge, they must answere it." ...

Mr. Archer, being settled in his authority [as the new President], sought how to call Mr. Smyth's life in question, and had indited him upon a chapter in Leuiticus for the death of his twoe men. He had had his tryall the same daie of his retorne, and, I believe, his hanging the same or the next daie, so speedie is our lawe there. But it pleased God to send Captayne Newport unto us the same evening, to our unspeakable comfort; whose arrivall saved Mr. Smyth's life and mine, because hee took me out of the pinnace, and gave me leave to lye in the towne. Also by his comying was prevented a parliament, which ye newe Counsailor, Mr. [Archer], intended thear to summon. Thus error begot error.

Captayne Newport, haveing landed, lodged, and refreshed his men, emploied some of them about a faire stoare house, others about a stove, and his maryners aboute a church; all which workes they finished cheerefully and in short tyme. ...The 7 of January, our towne was almost quite burnt, with all our apparell and provision; but Captn. Newport healed our wants, to our great comforts, out of great plenty sent us by the provident and loving care of our worthie and most worthie Councell....

2

The Mayflower Compact (1620)

WILLIAM BRADFORD AND OTHERS

The Pilgrims, Protestant separatists who took seriously the injunction to have no communion with sinners, left the Netherlands in 1620 bound originally for the Chesapeake. After a hard journey aboard the Mayflower, the Pilgrims decided to settle in New England instead. Before going ashore at Plymouth, the Pilgrims entered into the following compact—"the first foundation of their governmente in this place," as their governor, William Bradford, put it. Bradford noted that the compact was necessary as there were many aboard the Mayflower who "would use their owne libertie; for none had power to command them." These nonseparatists posed a threat to the religious and social unity of the colony, and Bradford hoped that the compact would provide the means of keeping them in check. The document was signed by 41 of the Mayflower's 102 passengers.

Questions to Consider

- What would the role of nonsignatories be under the compact's government?
- What is the compact's stated goal?

In the name of God, Amen. We whose names are under-written, the loyall subjects of our dread sovereign Lord, King James, by the grace of God, of Great Britaine, Franc, and Ireland kind, defender of the

Source: William T. Davis, ed., Bradford's History of Plymouth Plantation, 1606–1646 (New York, 1908), p. 107.

faith, etc., haveing undertaken, for the glorie of God, and advancemente of the Christian faith, and honour of our king and countrie, a voyage to plant the first colonie in the Northerne parts of Virginia, doe by these presents solemnly and mutualy in the presence of God, and one of another, covenant and combine our selves togeather into a civill body politick, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by vertue hearof to enacte, constitute, and frame such

just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meete and convenient for the generall good of the Colonie, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witnes wherof we have hereunder

subscribed our names at Cap-Codd the 11. of November, in the year of the raigne of our soveraigne lord, King James, of England, France, and Ireland the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fiftie fourth. Ano: Dom. 1620....

3

A Model of Christian Charity (1630)

JOHN WINTHROP

Probably the most famous and oft-cited sermon in American history, "A Modell of Christian Charitie" was delivered by John Winthrop aboard the *Arbella* in its passage from England to Massachusetts with a company of Puritans. These English religious dissenters left England not so much because of persecution, as because they felt the need to separate themselves from the impure. In this sermon, Winthrop, who was not a minister, sought to express the nature of their mission in the new world. Winthrop later became the long-time governor of the colony of Massachusetts Bay and its dominant figure until his death in 1649. Many scholars have pointed to the sermon's emphasis on community as marking a path not taken by mainstream American culture. Others have drawn attention to the fact that Winthrop began his sermon with an unquestioned hierarchy. Either way, presidents and hippies have claimed "A Modell of Christian Charitie" as their inspiration, and it continues to be a powerful testament to an imagined America.

Questions to Consider

- Did the Puritans live up to their ideals?
- Why was it necessary for them to leave England?
- Does community negate individualism?

Christian Charitie

A Modell hereof

God Almighty in his most holy and wise providence, hath soe disposed of the condition of mankind, as in all

times some must be rich, some poore, some high and eminent in power and dignitie; others mean and in submission.

The Reason hereof

1 Reas. First to hold conformity with the rest of his world, being delighted to show forth the glory of his wisdom in the variety and difference of the creatures,

Source: Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, 3rd series, 7 (1838): pp. 31–48.

and the glory of his power in ordering all these differences for the preservation and good of the whole; and the glory of his greatness, that as it is the glory of princes to have many officers, soe this great king will have many stewards, counting himself more honoured in dispensing his gifts to man by man, than if he did it by his owne immediate hands.

2 Reas. Secondly that he might have the more occasion to manifest the work of his Spirit: first upon the wicked in moderating and restraining them: soe that the riche and mighty should not eate upp the poore nor the poore and dispised rise upp against and shake off theire yoake. 2ly, In the regenerate, in exerciseing his graces in them, as in the grate ones, theire love, mercy, gentleness, temperance &c., in the poore and inferior sorte, theire faithe, patience, obedience &c.

3 Reas. Thirdly, that every man might have need of others, and from hence they might be all knitt more nearly together in the Bonds of brotherly affection. From hence it appears plainly that noe man is made more honourable than another or more wealthy &c., out of any particular and singular respect to himselfe, but for the glory of his creator and the common good of the creature, man. Therefore God still reserves the propperty of these gifts to himself as Ezek. 16. 17. he there calls wealthe, his gold and his silver, and Prov. 3. 9. he claims theire service as his due, honor the Lord with thy riches &c.—All men being thus (by divine providence) ranked into two sorts, riche and poore; under the first are comprehended all such as are able to live comfortably by their own meanes duely improved; and all others are poore according to the former distribution. There are two rules whereby we are to walk one towards another: Justice and Mercy. These are always distinguished in their act and in their object, yet may they both concurre in the same subject in eache respect; as sometimes there may be an occasion of showing mercy to a rich man in some sudden danger or distresse, and alsoe doeing of meere justice to a poor man in regard of some perticular contract &c. There is likewise a double Lawe by which wee are regulated in our conversation towardes another; in both the former respects, the lawe of nature and the lawe of grace, or the morrall lawe or the lawe of the gospell, to omitt the rule of justice as not propperly belonging to this purpose otherwise than it may fall into consideration in some perticular cases. By the first of these lawes man as he was enabled soe withall is commanded to love his neighbour as himself. Upon this ground stands all the precepts of the morrall lawe, which concernes our dealings with men. To apply this to the works of mercy; this lawe requires two things. First that every man afford his help to another in every want or distresse. Secondly, that hee performe this out of the same affection which makes him carefull of his owne goods, according to that of our Savior, (Math.) Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you. This was practised by Abraham and Lot in entertaining the angells and the old man of Gibea. The lawe of Grace or of the Gospell hath some difference from the former; as in these respects, First the lawe of nature was given to man in the estate of innocency; this of the Gospell in the estate of regeneracy. 2ly, the former propounds one man to another, as the same flesh and image of God; this as a brother in Christ allsoe, and in the communion of the same Spirit, and soe teacheth to put a difference between christians and others. Doe good to all, especially to the household of faith; upon this ground the Israelites were to putt a difference betweene the brethren of such as were strangers though not of the Canaanites.

3ly. The Lawe of nature would give no rules for dealing with enemies, for all are to be considered as friends in the state of innocency, but the Gospell commands love to an enemy. Proofe. If thine Enemy hunger, feed him; Love your Enemies, doe good to them that hate you. Math. 5. 44.

This lawe of the Gospell propounds likewise a difference of seasons and occasions. There is a time when a christian must sell all and give to the poor, as they did in the Apostles times. There is a time allsoe when christians (though they give not all yet) must give beyond their abillity, as they of Macedonia, Cor. 2, 6. Likewise community of perills calls for extraordinary liberality, and soe doth community in some speciall service for the churche. Lastly, when there is no other means whereby our christian brother may be relieved in his distress, we must help him beyond our ability rather than tempt God in putting him upon help by miraculous or extraordinary meanes.

This duty of mercy is exercised in the kinds, Giving, lending and forgiving.—

Quest. What rule shall a man observe in giving in respect of the measure?

Ans. If the time and occasion be ordinary he is to give out of his abundance. Let him lay aside as God hath blessed him. If the time and occasion be extraordinary, he must be ruled by them; taking this withall, that then a man cannot likely doe too much, especially if he may leave himselfe and his family under probable means of comfortable subsistence.

Object. A man must lay upp for posterity, the fathers lay upp for posterity and children, and he is worse than an infidell that provideth not for his owne.

Ans. For the first, it is plaine that it being spoken by way of comparison, it must be meant of the ordinary and usuall course of fathers, and cannot extend to times and occasions extraordinary. For the other place the Apostle speaks against such as walked inordinately, and it is without question, that he is worse than an infidell who through his owne sloathe and voluptuousness shall neglect to provide for his family.—

Object. The wise man's Eies are in his head, saith Solomon, and foreseeth the plague; therefore he must forecast and lay upp against evill times when hee or his may stand in need of all he can gather.

Ans. This very Argument Solomon useth to persuade to liberallity, Eccle.: Cast thy bread upon the waters, and for thou knowest not what evill may come upon the land. Luke 26. Make you friends of the riches of iniquity; you will ask how this shall be? very well. For first he that gives to the poore, lends to the lord and he will repay him even in this life an hundredfold to him or his.—The righteous is ever mercifull and lendeth and his seed enjoyeth the blessing; and besides wee know what advantage it will be to us in the day of account when many such witnesses shall stand forth for us to witnesse the improvement of our tallent. And I would know of those whoe pleade soe much for laying up for time to come, whether they holde that to be Gospell, Math. 16. 19. Lay not upp for yourselves Treasures upon Earth &c. If they acknowledge it, what extent will they allowe it? if only to those primitive times, let them consider the reason whereopon our Saviour groundes it. The first is that they are subject to the moathe, the rust, the theife. Secondly, They will steale away the hearte; where the treasure is there will ye heart be allsoe. The reasons are of like force at all times. Therefore the exhortation must be generall and perpetuall, withallwayes in respect of the love and affection to riches and in regard of the things themselves when any speciall service for the churche or perticular Distresse of our brother doe call for the use of them; otherwise it is not only lawfull but necessary to lay upp as Joseph did to have ready uppon such occasions, as the Lord (whose stewards wee are of them) shall call for them from us; Christ gives us an Instance of the first, when hee sent his disciples for the Ass, and bidds them answer the owner thus, the Lord hath need of him: soe when the Tabernacle was to be built, he sends to his people to call for their silver and gold, &c.; and yeildes noe other reason but that it was for his worke. When Elisha comes to the widow of Sareptah and findes her preparing to make ready her pittance for herselfe and family, he bids her first provide for him, he challengeth first God's parte which she must first give before shee must serve her owne family. All these teache us that the Lord lookes that when hee is pleased to call for his right in any thing wee have, our owne interest wee have, must stand aside till his turne be served. For the other, wee need looke noe further then to that of John 1. he whoe hath this world's goodes and seeth his brother to neede and shutts upp his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him, which comes punctually to this conclusion; if thy brother be in want and thou canst help him, thou needst not make doubt, what thou shouldst doe; if thou lovest God thou must help him.

Quest. What rule must wee observe in lending?

Ans. Thou must observe whether thy brother hath present or probable or possible means of repaying thee, if there be none of those, thou must give him according to his necessity, rather then lend him as he requires; if he hath present means of repaying thee, thou art to look at him not as an act of mercy, but by way of Commerce, wherein thou arte to walk by the rule of justice; but if his means of repaying thee be only probable or possible, then is hee an object of thy mercy, thou must lend him, though there be danger of losing it, Deut. 15. 7. If any of thy brethren be poore &c., thou shalt lend him sufficient. That men might not shift off this duty by the apparent hazzard, he tells them that though the yeare of Jubile were at hand (when he must remitt it, if hee were not able to repay it before) yet he must lend him and that chearefully. It may not greive thee to give him (saith hee) and because some might object, why soe I should soone impoverishe myself and my family, he adds with all thy worke &c.; for our Saviour, Math. 5. 42. From him that would borrow of thee turne not away.

Quest. What rule must we observe in forgiving?

Ans. Whether thou didst lend by way of commerce or in mercy, if he hath nothing to pay thee, must forgive, (except in cause where thou hast a surety or a lawfull pleadge) Deut. 15. 2. Every seaventh yeare the Creditor was to quitt that which he lent to his brother if he were poore as appears ver. 8. Save when there shall be no poore with thee. In all these and like cases, Christ was a generall rule, Math. 7. 22. Whatsoever ye would that men should doe to you, doe yee the same to them allsoe.

Quest. What rule must wee observe and walke by in cause of community of perill?

Ans. The same as before, but with more enlargement towards others and lesse respect towards ourselves and our owne right. Hence it was that in the primitive Churche they sold all, had all things in common, neither did any man say that which he possessed was his owne. Likewise in theire returne out of the captivity, because the worke was greate for the restoring of the church and the danger of enemies was common to all, Nehemiah directs the Jews to liberallity and readiness in remitting theire debts to theire brethren, and disposing liberally to such as wanted, and stand not upon their owne dues which they might have demanded of them. Thus did some of our Forefathers in times of persecution in England, and soe did many of the faithful of other churches, whereof wee keepe an honorable remembrance of them; and it is to be observed that both in Scriptures and latter stories of the churches that such as have beene most bountifull to the poore saintes, especially in those extraordinary times and occasions, God hath left them highly commended to posterity.... Observe againe that the Scripture gives noe caussion to restraine any from being over liberall

this way; but all men to the liberall and cherefull practise hereof by the sweeter promises; as to instance one for many, Isaiah 58. 6. Is not this the fast I have chosen to loose the bonds of wickedness, to take off the heavy burdens, to lett the oppressed go free and to breake every yoake, to deale thy bread to the hungry and to bring the poore that wander into thy house, when thou seest the naked to cover them; and then shall thy light brake forth as the morning and thy healthe shall growe speedily, thy righteousness shall goe before God, and the glory of the Lord shall embrace thee; then thou shalt call and the Lord shall answer thee.... On the contrary most heavy cursses are layed upon such as are straightened towards the Lord and his people, Judg. 5.... Hee whoe shutteth his eares from hearing the cry of the poore, he shall cry and shall not be heard; Math. 25. Goe ye curssed into everlasting fire &c. I was hungry and ye fedd mee not, Cor. 2. 9. 16. He that soweth sparingly shall reape sparingly. Having already sett forth the practice of mercy according to the rule of God's lawe, it will be useful to lay open the groundes of it allsoe, being the other parte of the Commandment and that is the affection from which this exercise of mercy must arise, the Apostle tells us that this love is the fullfilling of the lawe, not that it is enough to love our brother and soe noe further; but in regard of the excellency of his partes giving any motion to the other as the soule to the body and the power it hath to sett all the faculties on worke in the outward exercise of this duty; as when wee bid one make the clocke strike, he doth not lay hand on the hammer, which is the immediate instrument of the sound, but setts on worke the first mover or maine wheele; knoweing that will certainly produce the sound which he intends. Soe the way to drawe men to the workes of mercy, is not by force of Argument from the goodness or necessity of the worke; for though this cause may enforce a rationall minde to some present act of mercy, as is frequent in experience, yet it cannot worke such a habit in a soule, as shall make it prompt upon all occasions to produce the same effect, but by frameing these affections of love in the hearte which will as naturally bring forth the other, as any cause doth produce the effect.

The deffinition which the Scripture gives us of love is this. Love is the bond of perfection, first it is a bond or ligament. 2ly, it makes the worke perfect. There is noe body but consists of partes and that which knitts these partes together, gives the body its perfection, because it makes each parte soe contiguous to others as thereby they doe mutually participate with each other, both in strength and infirmity, in pleasure and paine. To instance in the most perfect of all bodies; Christ and his Church make one body; the severall partes of this body considered a parte before they were united, were as disproportionate and as much disordering as soe many contrary quallities or elements, but when Christ comes,

and by his spirit and love knitts all these partes to himselfe and each to other, it is become the most perfect and best proportioned body in the world, Eph. 4. 16. Christ, by whome all the body being knitt together by every joint for the furniture thereof, according to the effectuall power which is in the measure of every perfection of partes, a glorious body without spott or wrinkle; the ligaments hereof being Christ, or his love, for Christ is love, 1 John 4. 8. Soe this definition is right. Love is the bond of perfection.

From hence we may frame these conclusions. 1. First of all, true Christians are of one body in Christ, 1 Cor. 12. 12. 13. 17. Ye are the body of Christ and members of their parte. All the partes of this body being thus united are made soe contiguous in a speciall relation as they must needes partake of each other's strength and infirmity; joy and sorrowe, weale and woe. 1 Cor. 12. 26. If one member suffers, all suffer with it, if one be in honor, all rejoyce with it. 2ly. The ligaments of this body which knitt together are love. 3ly. Noe body can be perfect which wants its proper ligament. 5ly. This sensibleness and sympathy of each other's conditions will necessarily infuse into each parte a native desire and endeavour, to strengthen, defend, preserve and comfort the other. To insist a little on this conclusion being the product of all the former, the truthe hereof will appeare both by precept and patterne. 1 John 3. 10. Yee ought to lay doune your lives for the brethren. Gal. 6. 2. beare ye one another's burthen's and soe fulfill the lawe of Christ. For patterns wee have that first of our Saviour whoe out of his good will in obedience to his father, becomeing a parte of this body and being knitt with it in the bond of love, found such a native sensibleness of our infirmities and sorrowes as he willingly yielded himselfe to deathe to ease the infirmities of the rest of his body, and soe healed theire sorrowes. From the like sympathy of partes did the Apostles and many thousands of the Saintes lay doune theire lives for Christ. Againe the like wee may see in the members of this body among themselves. 1 Rom. 9. Paule could have been contented to have been separated from Christ, that the Jewes might not be cutt off from the body. It is very observable what hee professeth of his affectionate partaking with every member; whoe is weake (saith hee) and I am not weake? whoe is offended and I burne not; and againe, 2 Cor. 7. 13. therefore wee are comforted because yee were comforted. Of Epaphroditus he speaketh, Phil. 2. 30. that he regarded not his owne life to do him service. Soe Phebe and others are called the servants of the churche. Now it is apparent that they served not for wages, or by constrainte, but out of love. The like we shall finde in the histories of the churche in all ages; the sweete sympathie of affections which was in the members of this body one towards another; theire chearfullness in serving and suffering together; how liberall they were without repineing, harbourers without grudgeing, and helpfull without re-