

sentiments, and the grounds thereof, as plainly and as concise as I was able: though 'tis indeed a subject that calls for the ablest pens to discuss, acknowledging myself to be insufficient for these things. However, I think I have done but my duty, for the glory of God, the Sovereign Being; and have purposely avoided such a reply as some parts of yours required; and pray that not only you and I, but all mankind, may give to the Almighty the glory due unto his name.

From, sir, yours to command, R. C.

Witchcraft is manifestly a work of the flesh

PART V.

AN IMPARTIAL ACCOUNT

OF THE MOST MEMORABLE

MATTERS OF FACT,

TOUCHING THE SUPPOSED WITCHCRAFT
IN NEW-ENGLAND.

Mr. PARRIS had been some years a minister in Salem Village, when this sad calamity, as a deluge, overflowed them, spreading itself far and near. He was a gentleman of liberal education; and not meeting with any great encouragement, or advantage, in merchandising, to which for some time he applied himself, betook himself to the work of the ministry; this Village being then vacant; he met with so much encouragement, as to settle in that capacity among them.

After he had been there about two years, he obtained a grant from a part of the town, that the house and land he occupied, and which had been allotted by the whole people to the ministry, should be and remain

to him, &c. as his own estate in fee simple. This occasioned great divisions both between the inhabitants themselves, and between a considerable part of them and the said minister; which divisions were but a beginning, or prelude, to what immediately followed.

It was the latter end of *February*, 1692, when divers young persons belonging to Mr. Parris's family, and one or more of the neighborhood, began to act after a strange and unusual manner, viz. as by getting into holes, and creeping under chairs and stools, and to use sundry odd postures and antic gestures, uttering foolish, ridiculous speeches, which neither they themselves nor any others could make sense of. The physicians that were called could assign no reason for this; but it seems one of them having recourse to the old shift, told them he was afraid they were bewitched. Upon such suggestions, they that were concerned applied themselves to fasting and prayer, which was attended not only in their own private families, but with calling in the help of others. *March the 11th*, Mr. Parris invited several neighboring ministers to join with him in keeping a solemn day of prayer at his own house. The time of the exercise, those persons were for the most part silent; but after any one prayer was ended, they would act and speak strangely and ridiculously; yet were such as had been well educated, and of good behavior: the one, a girl of 11 or 12 years old, would

sometimes seem to be in a convulsion fit, her limbs being twisted several ways, and very stiff, but presently her fit would be over.

A few days, before this solemn day of prayer, Mr. Parris's Indian man and woman made a cake of rye meal, with the children's water, and baked it in the ashes, and, as is said, gave it to the dog; this was done as a means to discover witchcraft; soon after which, those ill affected or afflicted persons named several that they saw, when in their fits, afflicting them.

The first complained of was the said Indian woman, named Tituba: she confessed that the devil urged her to sign a book, which he presented to her, and also to work mischief to the children, &c. She was afterwards committed to prison, and lay there till sold for her fees. The account she since gives of it is, that her master did beat her, and otherways abuse her, to make her confess and accuse (such as he called) her sister witches; and that whatsoever she said by way of confessing, or accusing others, was the effect of such usage; her master refused to pay her fees, unless she would stand to what she had said.

The children complained likewise of two other women to be the authors of their hurt, viz. Sarah Gool, who had long been reputed a melancholy or distracted woman; and one Osborn, an old bed-ridden woman; which two were persons so ill thought of, that the accusation was the more readily

believed: and, after examination before the Salem magistrates, were committed. *March 9th*, Mr. Lowson (who had been formerly a preacher at said village) came thither, and hath since set forth, in print, an account of what then passed; about which time, as he saith, the complained of goodwife Cory and goodwife Nurse, members of churches at the village and at Salem, many others being by that time accused.

March 21. Goodwife Cory was examined before the magistrates of Salem, at the meeting house in the Village, a throng of spectators being present to see the novelty. Mr. Noyes, one of the ministers of Salem, began with prayer; after which the prisoner being called, in order to answer to what should be alleged against her, she desired that she might go to prayer: and was answered by the magistrates, that they did not come to hear her pray, but to examine her.

The number of the afflicted were at that time about ten, viz. Mrs. Pope, Mrs. Putnam, goodwife Bibber, and goodwife Gossall, Mary Wolcott, Mercy Leves, (at Times as Putnam's) and Dr. Clegg's maid, and three girls, viz. Elizabeth Farris, daughter to the minister, Abigail Williams his niece, and Ann Putnam: which last three were not only the beginners, but were also the chief in these accusations. These ten were most of them present at the examination, and did vehemently accuse her of afflicting them, by biting, pinching, strangling, &c.

and they said they did in their fits see her likeness coming to them, and bringing a book for them to sign. Mr. Hathorn, a magistrate of Salem, asked her why she afflicted those children. She said she did not afflict them. He asked her who did then. She said, I do not know, how should I know? She said, they were poor distracted creatures, and no heed ought to be given to what they said. Mr. Hathorn and Mr. Noyes replied that it was the judgment of all that were there present that they were bewitched, and only she (the accused) said they were distracted. She was accused by them, that the *black man* whispered to her in her ear now, (while she was upon examination) and that she had a yellow bird, that did use to suck between her fingers, and that the said bird did suck now in the assembly. Order being given to look in that place to see if there were any sign, the girl that pretended to see it said, that it was too late now, for she had removed a pin, and put it on her head; it was upon search found, that a pin was there sticking upright. When the accused had any motion of their body, hands or mouth, the accusers would cry out: as when she bit a lip, they would cry out of being bitten; if she grasped one hand with the other, they would cry out of being pinched by her, and would produce marks; so of the other motions of her body, as complaining of being pressed, when she leaned to the seat next her; if she stirred her feet, they would stamp,

and cry out of pain there. After the hearing, the said Cory was committed to Salem prison, and then their crying out of her abated.

March 24, goodwife Nurse was brought before Mr. Hattorn and Mr. Curwin (magistrates) in the meeting house. Mr. Hall, minister of Beverly, began with prayer after which she, being accused of much the same crimes, made the like answers, asserting her own innocence with earnestness. The accusers were mostly the same, Thomas Putnam's wife, &c. complaining much. The dreadful shrieking from her and others was very amazing, which was heard at a great distance. She was also committed to prison.

A child of Sarah Good's was likewise apprehended, being between 4 and 5 years old. The accusers said this child bit them, and would show such like marks, as those of a small set of teeth, upon their arms; as many of the afflicted as the child cast its eyes upon, would complain they were in torment, which child they also committed.

Concerning those that had been hitherto examined and committed, it is among other things observed, by Mr. Lawson (in prison) that they were by the accuser charged to belong to a company that did muster in arms, and were reported by them to keep days of fast, thanksgiving and sacrament; and that those afflicted (or accusers) did in the assembly cure each other, even with the touch of their hand, when strangled and

otherwise tortured, and would endeavour to get to the afflicted to relieve them thereby (for hitherto they had not used the experiment of bringing the accused to touch the afflicted, in order to their cure) and could forget one another's fit to be coming, and would say, look to such a one, she will have a fit presently, and so it happened; and that at the same time when the accused person was present, the afflicted said they saw her spectre or likeness in other places of the meeting house sucking their familiars.

The said Mr. Lawson being to preach at the Village, after the psalm was sung, Abigail Williams said, *Now stand up and name your text*; after it was read, she said *it was a long text*. Mrs. Pope in the beginning of sermon said to him, *now there is enough of that*. In sermon, he referring to his doctrine, Abigail Williams said to him, *I know no doctrine you had: if you did name one, I have forgot it*. Ann Putnam, an afflicted girl, said, *there was a yellow bird sat on his hat as it hung on the pin in the pulpit*.

March 31, 1692, was set apart as a day of solemn humiliation at Salem, upon the account of this business; on which day Abigail Williams said, *that she saw a great number of persons in the Village at the administration of a mock sacrament, where they had bread as raw flesh, and red drink*.

April 1. Mercy Lewis affirmed, *that she saw a man in white, with whom she went into a glorious place, viz. in her fits, where was the light of the sun, much less of candles, yet*

was full of high and brightness, with a great multitude in white glittering robes, who sang the song in Rev. v. 9, and the cxlix. Psalm; and was given that she might tarry no longer in this place. This white man is said to have appeared several times to others of them, and to have given them notice how long it should be before they should have another fit.

April 3. Being sacrament day at the Village, Sarah Cloyce, sister to Goodwin Nurse, a member of one of the churches was (though it seems with difficulty prevailed with to be) present; but being entered the place, and Mr. Parris naming his text, John vi. 70, *Have not I chosen you twelve? and one of you is a devil;* (for what cause may rest as a doubt, whether upon the account of her sister's being committed, or because of the choice of that text) she rose up and went out; the wind shutting the door forcibly, gave occasion to some to suppose she went out in anger, and might occasion a suspicion of her; however, she was soon after complained of, examined and committed.

April 11. By this time the number of the accused and accusers being much increased, there was a public examination at Salem, six of the magistrates with several ministers being present. There appeared several who complained against others with hideous clamours and screechings. Good wife Proctor was brought thither, being accused or cried out against; her husband

coming to attend and assist her, as there might be need, the accusers cried out of him also, and that with so much earnestness, that he was committed with his wife. About this time, besides the experiment of the afflicted falling at the sight, &c. they put the accused upon saying the Lord's prayer, which one among them performed, except in that petition, *deliver us from evil*, she exprest it thus—*deliver us from all evil*; this was looked upon as if she prayed against what she was now justly under, and being put upon it again, and repeating those words, *hallowed be thy name*, she exprest it, *hallowed be thy name*; this was counted a depraving the words, as signifying to make void, and so a curse, rather than a prayer; upon the whole it was concluded that she also could not say it, &c. Proceeding in this work of examination and commitment, many were sent to prison. As an instance, see the following mittimus.

To their Majesties' Gaol-keeper in Salem.

You are in their majesties' names hereby required to take into your care, and safe custody, the bodies of William Hobbs and Deborah his wife, Mary Easty, the wife of Isaac Easty, and Sarah Wild, the wife of John Wild, all of Topsfield; and Edward Bishop, of Salem Village, husbandman, and Sarah his wife, and Mary Black, a negro of lieutenant Nathaniel Putman, of Salem Village; also Mary English, the wife of Philip