THE SIMPLE COBLER OF AGGAWAM

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The Simple Cobler of Aggawam by Nathaniel Ward & Thomas Franklin Waters

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NATHANIEL WARD & THOMAS FRANKLIN WATERS

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OF

AGGAWAM

BY

REV. NATHANIEL WARD

A REPRINT OF THE 4TH EDITION, PUBLISHED IN 1647, WITH FAC-SIMILES OF TITLE PAGE, PREFACE AND HEAD LINES, THE TEXT IN ANTIQUE TYPE.

WITH AN ESSAY
NATHANIEL WARD AND THE SIMPLE COBLER
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TO THE READER

Gentlemen,

Pray make a little roome for a Cobler, his work was done in time, but a ſhip ſetting ſayle one day too ſoon makes it appeare ſome weeks too late; Seeing her is ſo reaſonable as to demand no other pay for his labour and leather, but leave to pay us well for our faults, let it be well accepted, as Counſell in our occaſions to come, and as Teſtimony to what is paſt,

By a Friend.

SUTOR ULTRA CREPIDAM.

EITHER I am in an Appoplexie, or that man is in a Lethargie, who doth not now ſenſibly feele God ſhaking the heavens over his head, and the earth under his feet: The Heavens ſo, as the Sun begins to turne into darkneſſe, the Moon into blood, the Starres to fall down to the ground; So that little Light of Comfort or Counſell is left to the ſonnes of men: The Earth ſo, as the foundations are failing, the righteous ſcarce know where to finde reſt, the inhabitants ſtagger like drunken men: it is in a manner diſſolved both in Religions and Relations: And no marvell; for, they have defiled it by tranſgreſſing the Lawes, changing the Ordinances, and breaking the Everlaſting Covenant. The Truths of God are the Pillars of the world, whereon States and Churches may ſtand quiet if they will; if they will not, Hee can eaſily ſhake them off into deluſions, and diſtractions enough.

Sathan

Sathan is now in his paſſions, he feeles his paſſion approaching; hee loves to fiſh in royled waters. Though that Dragon cannot ſting the vitals of the Elect mortally, yet that Beelzebub can fly-blow their Intellectuals miſerably: The finer Religion grows, the finer hee ſpins his Cobwebs, hee will hold pace with Chriſt ſo long as his wits will ſerve him. Hee ſees himſelfe beaten out of groſſe Idolatries, Hereſies, Ceremonies, where the Light breakes forth with power; he will therefore beſtirre him to prevaricate Evangelicall Truths, and Ordinances, that if they will needs be walking, yet they ſhall *laborare varicibus*, and not keep their path, he will put them out of time and place; Aſſaſſinating for his Engineers, men of Paracelſian parts; well complexioned for honeſty; for, ſuch are fitteſt to Mountebanke his Chimiſtry into ſicke Churches and weake Judgements.

Nor ſhall hee need to ſtretch his ſtrength overmuch in this worke: Too many men having not laid their foundations ſure, nor ballaſted their Spirits deepe with humility and feare, are preſt enough of themſelves to evaporate their owne apprehenſions. Thoſe that are acquainted with Story know, it hath ever beene ſo in new Editions of Churches: Such as are leaſt able, are moſt buſie to pudder in the rubbiſh, and to raiſe duſt in the eyes of more ſteady Repayrers. Civill Commotions make roome for uncivill practiſes: Religious mutations, for irreligious opinions: Change of Aire, diſcovers corrupt bodies; Reformation of Religion, unfound mindes. Hee that hath any well-faced phanſy in his Crowne, and doth not

not vent it now, fears the pride of his owne heart will dub him dunce for ever. Such a one will trouble the whole *Iſrael* of God with his moſt untimely births, though he makes the bones of his vanity ſtick up, to the view and griefe of all that are godly wiſe. The devill deſiers no better ſport then to ſee light heads handle their heels, and fetch their carreers in a time, when the Roofe of Liberty ſtands open.

The next perplexed Queſtion, with pious and ponderous men, will be: What ſhould bee done for the healing of theſe comfortleſſe exulcerations. I am the unableſt adviſer of a thouſand, the unworthieſt of ten thouſand; yet I hope I may preſume to affert what follows without juſt offence.

Firſt, ſuch as have given or taken any unfriendly reports of us *New-Engliſh*, ſhould doe well to recollect themſelves. Wee have beene reputed a Colluvies of wild Opinioniſts, ſwarmed into a remote wildernes to find elbow-roome for our phanatick Doctrines and practiſes: I truſt our diligence paſt, and conſtant ſedulity againſt ſuch perſons and courſes, will plead better things for us. I dare take upon me, to bee the Herauld of *New-England* ſo farre, as to proclaime to the world, in the name of our Colony, that all Familiſts, Antinomians, Anabaptiſts, and other Enthuſiaſts ſhall have free Liberty to keepe away from us, and ſuch as will come to be gone as faſt as they can, the ſooner the better.

Secondly, I dare averre, that God doth no where in his word tolerate Chriſtian States, to give Tolerations to ſuch adverſaries of his Truth, if they have power in their hands to ſuppreſſe them.

Here is lately brought us an Extract of a *Magna Charta*, ſo called, compiled between the Sub-planters of a *Weſt-Indian* Iſland; whereof the firſt Article of conſtipulation, firmly provides free ſtable-room and litter for all kinde of conſciences, be they never ſo dirty or jadiſh; making it actionable, yea, treaſonable, to diſturbe any man in his Religion, or to diſcommend it, whatever it be. Wee are very ſorry to ſee ſuch profeſſed prophaneneſſe in *Engliſh* Profeſſors, as induſtrioufly to lay their Religious foundations on the ruine of true Religion; which ſtrictly binds every conſcience *to contend earneſtly for the Truth: to preſerve unity of ſpirit, Faith and Ordinances, to be all like minded, of one accord; every man to take his brother into his Chriſtian care: to ſtand faſt with one ſpirit, with one mind, ſtriving together for the faith of the Goſpel.* and by no meanes to permit Hereſies or erronious opinions: But God abhorring ſuch loathſome beverages, hath in his righteous judgement blaſted that enterprize, which might otherwiſe have proſpered well, for ought I know; I preſume their caſe is generally knowne ere this.

If the devill might have his free option, I beleeve he would ask nothing else, but liberty to enfranchize all falſe Religions, and to embondage the true; nor ſhould hee need: It is much to be feared, that laxe Tolerations upon State-pretences and planting neceſſities, will be the next ſubtle Stratagem he will ſpread to diſtate the Truth of God and ſupplant the peace of the Churches. Tolerations in things tolerable, exquiſitely drawn out by the lines of the Scripture, and penſill of the Spirit, are the ſacred favours of Truth, the