Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In the year of our Lord, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight.

AN ACT for the ease of the Citizens, concerning Actions upon penal Statutes.

BE it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, That all actions, suits, bills or informations, which shall hereafter be had, brought, sued or commenced, for any forfeiture upon any penal statute, made or to be made, the benefit whereof is or shall be by the said statute limitted in whole, or in part, to the person or persons, who shall inform and prosecute in that behalf, shall be had, brought, sued or commenced, by any person that may lawfully pursue the same, as aforesaid, within one year next after the offence committed or to be committed, against the said statute; and in default of such pursuit, then the same shall be had, brought or prosecuted for the Commonwealth, at any time within two years after the offence committed; and if any action, suit, indictment or information, for any offence against any penal statute, shall be brought after the time in that behalf limited, the same shall be void and of none effect; any act to the contrary notwithstanding.

Provided always, That when any action, suit or information, is or shall be limitted by any penal statute, to be had, sued, commenced or brought within a shorter time than is abovementioned, in every such case, the action, suit or information, shall be brought within the time limitted by such statute.

Provided also, That this act, or any clause contained therein, shall not extend to any action, suit, indictment or information, which shall hereafter be had, brought sued or commenced for offences heretofore committed, by any person or persons, against any act or acts, for restraining the taking of excessive usury, if the person or persons who may be sued or prosecuted therefor, have for the space of one year, from the passing this act, refused or neglected to make restitution of the full amount of the excessive usury, by him or them so heretofore taken or received; and the lawful interest thereof, from the time the same was taken, to the person or persons, his or their executors or administrators, or to his or their lawful agents or attornies, from whom such excessive usury has been taken or received as aforesaid, if by them thereunto required, in person, at any time within the said year, or by writing left at his or their last place of abode, fourteen days at least, before the expiration of the said year; the cost of the travel to make such request, to be paid by the person or persons, guilty of taking the excessive usury; but in all such cases, the action, suit, indictment or information, had, sued and commenced, for the offences aforesaid, shall and may be sustained and prosecuted to final judgment; any thing in this act to the contrary notwithstanding: Provided the same be commenced within two years after the passing of this act, and not otherwise.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That in all informations to be exhibited, and in all actions, or suits to be commenced against any person or persons, on the behalf of any informer, or on the behalf of the Commonwealth, and any informer, for or concerning any offence committed or to be committed against any penal statute, the offence shall be laid and alledged to have been committed in the county where such offence was in truth committed, and not elsewhere, and if the defendant in any such information, action or suit, pleadeth that he owes nothing or that he is not guilty, and the plaintiff or informer in such information, action or suit upon evidence to the jury that shall try such issue, shall not both prove the offence laid in the said information, action or suit, and that the same offence was committed in that County, the issue shall be found for the defendant or defendants.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That if any information, suit or action, shall be brought or exhibited against any person or persons, for any offence committed or to be committed, against the form of any penal law, on behalf of any informer, or on behalf of the Commonwealth and any informer, it shall be lawful for such defendents to plead the general issue, and give any special matter in evidence to the Jury, which shall be as available to him or them, as if he or they had sufficiently pleaded the same matter in bar or discharge of such information, suit or action.

Provided always, That this act or any clause contained herein, shall not extend to any information, suit or action grounded upon any law or statute, concerning the concealing or defrauding the Commonwealth of any customs, duties, impost or excises.

In the House of Representatives, June 19, 1788.

This bill having had three several readings passed to be enacted.

THEODORE SEDGWICK, Speaker.

In Senate, June 19th, 1788.

This bill having had two several readings passed to be enacted.

SAMUEL PHILIPS, jun. President.

Approved

JOHN HANCOCK.

A true copy, attest.

JOHN AVERY, jun. Sec'ry.

PURSUANT to the direction of the Comptroller-General, Notice is hereby given to all persons licenced or permitted to sell dutied articles, within the county of Hampshire, who have neglected to settle their accounts with the collector to the 1st of May last, that unless their accounts shall be properly settled, executions will be issued agreeably to law against all such delinquents, whose accounts have been rendered and the sum is ascertained and all such as have not rendered their accounts to the collector may expect that their bonds of recognizance will be put in suit.

And all persons that are owners or possessors of dutied carriages within the said county, that have neglected to pay the said duties agreeably to law, are also informed that executions will be issued for collecting the same unless prevented by a speedy payment.

And the assessors of the several towns within the county which have neglected to make returns of the same to the collector as the law directs, may expect to be sued for the penalty in that case provided, at the next August term; unless prevented by speedily making such return, or a punctual payment of the duty from such carriages as shall make such return unnecessary.

And the worshipful Justices of the said county, are likewise requested to settle their accounts and pay up the duties upon writs, executions &c. which have been issued from their respective offices, without further delay, as the act which heretofore required such duties is now repealed.

And although the collector ardently wishes that he might not have occasion to issue any writs or executions, in order to collect the said duties. Yet at the same time is fully determined to have all the outstanding accounts and bonds in the office and all debts duejson or before the first day of May last, paid up and closed in the course of the present summer, however disagreeable a task it may be to effect.

And the several deputy collectors of the said duties are hereby required to use their utmost endeavour in their respective districts, to collect the said duties, as soon as possible, without any unnecessary expence or trouble to the persons who pay them. But if any neglect to settle and pay their accounts until the last day of July next, you will not fail to return their names, and their accounts to me, on the first day of August that they may be proceeded with as the law directs.

ELIJAH HUNT, Collector of Excise and Impost for the County of Hampshire.

Northampton, June 23d, 1788.

Just published, and now selling by the Printer hereof, price 1/.

AN ESSAY on CHRISTIAN BAPTISM, which solves all the common doubts on that subject, and in which it is said are some new sentiments.

ALL Persons who have Book Accounts open and unsettled with the Subscriber, are hereby requested to call on him for a settlement; and all Persons who are indebted to him on book or otherwise are desired to settle and pay the same without further delay or they will be lodged in the hands of an Attorney to be put in suit.

JOSEPH WARNER.

Cumington, June 26, 1788.

NOTICE is hereby given to the non-resident proprietors of unimproved lands lying in Conway, in the county of Hampshire, that their several lots are taxed in list of assessment committed to the subscribers, in state, town, county, clark, and minister taxes, in the years 1783, 1784, 1785, 1786, and 1787, the sum herein annexed to each particular lot, viz.

Names of original proprietors.	l.	s.	d.
Moses Stebbens,	1	1	4
Joseph Barnard,	0	4	11
*Samuel Dwelley,	0	4	11
Moses Stebbins,	0	6	1
John Nims,	0	4	11
*Col. John Hawks,	0	7	3
Samuel Barnard, Esq.	0	2	11
Major Williams,	0	7	4
*Major Williams,	0	18	1
Sam. & Sarah Snead,	0	4	11
Joseph Barnard,	0	8	5
Lands in what is called Shelburne Gore.	0	15	11
Thomas Wells's heirs,	0	0	5
Joseph & Sam. Stebbins,	0	2	6
Sam. Dickinson's heirs,	0	2	1
Joseph Atherton's heirs,	0	0	8
Sam. Dwelley,	0	2	2
Ebenezer Nims's heirs,	0	0	5
Ala & David Childs,	0	0	5
In Tertius French's list for 1784 & 86.			
John Nims,	1	11	8
*Consider Arms,	0	7	6
Sam. Dickinson's heirs,	0	2	6
John Williams,	0	4	1
Sam. Dwelley,		4	2
Joseph & Seth Catlin,		2	3
Joseph Barnard,		11	1
John Hinsdale,		3	3
Abigail Hinsdale,		8	2
Col. Ebenezer Hinsdale,		8	0
Nathaniel Dickinson,	4	0	3
*Sam. Dwelley,		3	0
John Hinsdale,		2	6
Noah Baker,		11	1
Abigail Hinsdale,		11	1
James Oliver's farm,	3	6	0
Col. John Hawks,		4	3
Major Williams,	2	3	0
Col. Hawks,	1	6	5
Noah Baker,		11	1
Major Williams,	3	0	1
In Shelburne Addition.		7	2
Cyrus Rice's List for 1784.			
Joseph Barnard,	6	6	0
Col. John Hawks,	2	11	2
John Hinsdale,	2	5	2
Ebenezer Hinsdale,	5	1	2
Sam. Dwelley,	2	5	2
John Hinsdale,	9	10	2
Noah Baker,	7	4	5
Sam. Dwelley,	3	11	1
John Nims,	6	10	5
Major Williams,	5	10	2
Col. Ebenezer Hinsdale,	9	10	5
In Shelburne Gore.			
Thomas Wells's heirs,		2	5
Sam. Dickinson's heirs,	1	2	3
Sam. Belding,		4	2
Joseph Atherton's heirs,		4	5
Sam. Dwelley,	2	10	0
Ebenezer Nims's heirs,		2	5
Ala & David Childs,		2	5
James Dickinson's List for 1785.			
Joseph Barnard,	4	0	5
John Hinsdale,	2	4	5
Abigail Hinsdale,	2	0	5
Stephen Williams,		1	2
Capt. Thomas French,	2	2	2
Nathaniel Dickinson,	16	5	0
John Hinsdale,	5	5	0
Noah Baker,	4	0	5
*Sam. Dwelley,	2	18	2
Abigail Hinsdale,	4	0	3
John Nims,	3	2	2
*Col. John Hawks,	3	3	0
Major Williams,	5	5	0
Stephen Williams,	1	1	0
In Shelburne Gore.			
Thomas Wells's heirs,		7	0
Joseph and Sam. Stebbins,		10	0
Sam. Dickinson's heirs,		8	5
Sam. Belding,		0	3
Joseph Atherton's heirs,		2	5
Ebenezer Nim's heirs,		2	0
William Warren's List for 1786 & 87.			
Joseph Barnard,	14	4	5
John Hinsdale,	4	6	2
Col. Ebenezer Hinsdale,	2	7	0
Nath. Dickinson,	3	6	0
John Hinsdale,	1	18	0
Noah Baker,	14	4	2
Abig. Hinsdale,	14	4	1
John Nims,	2	11	8
*Major Williams,	18	5	0
Ditto,	25	8	0
Ditto,	8	11	2
Ditto,	4	5	1
Noah Baker,	4	2	1
John Amsden,	1	1	3
In Shelburne Gore.			
Thomas Wells's heirs,	6	5	3
Joseph & Sam. Stebbins,	1	0	2
Sam. Belding,	0	8	2
Joseph Atherton's heirs,	0	8	2
Sam. Allen's heirs,	0	3	0
Joseph & Seth Catlin,	3	7	5
Ebenezer Nim's heirs,	0	4	0
Ala & David Childs,	2	6	0
Col. Ebenezer Hinsdale,	1	1	3
Col. John Hawks,	7	4	2
Ditto,	1	5	2

Unless said taxes are paid on or before the 3d day of September next, so much of said lands will be then sold at Public Vendue, at the house of Capt. Elias Dickinson, in Conway, at nine o'clock, A. M. as will be sufficient to discharge the same with intervening charges. Said vendue will be continued from day to day till the whole is completed, by us the subscribers.

Abel Denmore, Collector for 1783.
Tertius French, ditto for 1784 & 86.
James Dickinson, ditto for 1785.
Cyrus Rice, ditto for 1784.
William Warren, ditto for 1786 & 87.

N. B. Those with this mark * are but parts of lots.

Conway, June 25, 1788.

*** Subscriptions for the book lately advertised in this paper, entitled "A Compendium of Christian Theology," are taken in by John Clark, John Pinks, and Andrew Wood, subscribers from this office.

JULY, 1788. THE NUMBER 98.

HAMPSHIRE GAZETTE.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 1788.

NORTHAMPTON: PRINTED BY WILLIAM BUTLER, A FEW RODS EAST OF THE COURT-HOUSE.

For the HAMPSHIRE GAZETTE.

THE sacredness of religion speaks for cautious prudence in treating of it in the common vehicle of news, politicks, and amusement. The disposition of many people, who think one day in a week enough to attend to discourses on religious subjects, and expect diverting rather than serious things from a news-paper, inclines them to relish turns of wit, more than the grave precepts of morality, and the spiritual doctrines of christianity. A laughable story of a blundering *Parson*, tho' told with circumstances totally disagreeing with the manners of the age, is read with greater pleasure than any serious observations of the clearest truth and highest importance. To dispute about sacred things in such manner as to expose them to the ridicule of profane wit, where this taste prevails, would lie as improper as to *cast pearls before swine*. When, however, propositions are stated in a serious manner, professedly for the promotion of religion, they are fit to engage the attention of its friends; and if erroneous and likely to propagate error, they call for candid refutation.

Influenced by these sentiments, a friend of what he esteems to be the true religion, submits to the publick judgment, some remarks occasioned by a publication of June 18th, entitled *Observations on religion. And the reasons why it is not more practised.*

The piece is not denied to contain a number of good observations; but it thought in some things to manifest a deficiency both of the genuine spirit, and a right understanding of the subject of which it treats. The assertion, *That the decay of religion is as much owing to clerical ignorance or priestcraft, as it is to the depravity of the human heart,* does not appear to me to find sufficient foundation to warrant the writer to make it. And his representation of facts to give countenance to it, I cannot allow to be either candid or just. It is not said indeed for what country his observations were intended, but no mention being made of their being taken from any foreign production, they may naturally be considered as designed to apply to the place in which they are published. But had the writer, before he formed his judgment, been so just as to visit any number of religious assemblies within the limits of the circulation of this paper, I am bold to speak it as my opinion, that he might have heard religious subjects discoursed, not only in a more candid, and scriptural manner, than he has represented, but even more advantageously for the promotion of religion, than if its preachers were to be governed by the authority of his observations.

If, indeed, because a man is called a presbyterian, his prayer, that we may *turn from the error of our ways to the wisdom of the just*, must be understood only of conversion of his sect, and because another is a baptist, his preaching, *repent ye and be baptized*, must mean only to persuade men to be baptists and not christians, there is no way for a preacher to publish religion and not be a partisan of the sect; otherwise than by being totally destitute of sentiment, concerning things of which there is a difference of opinion among mankind, and by omitting all forms of worship. But if on the contrary these expressions do not require this bigoted interpretation, as certainly they do not, being proper to be used by christians of different sects, who is chargeable with *priestcraft?* the preacher that uses them, or the man that unwarrantably makes them the language of a particular sect?

There are in religion, as in other concerns, two extremes to be equally avoided. One extreme is to magnify unessential circumstances into things of importance; the other is to nullify the essence of religion, by reducing the things which are essential to it, to the low estimation of trifles and things of indifference. To guard against both these, the only safe way is to follow divine examples and instructions. That God is wiser than men, is a maxim worthy to be regarded in every religious transaction. And the mode of preaching which most fully acknowledges it is best adapted to promote religion; however it may be judged, in the wisdom of man, to be contrived by ignorance or priestcraft.

It is justly observed that *if mankind are rational beings they ought to be treated as such.* It may be added, if they are beings designed for eternal duration, and are now probationers for an everlasting future state, they ought to be treated as such. And as the whole term of their existence, has dependence on their present conduct, it is proper that they should know it, and have their condition seasonably presented to their view, to show them the path that will lead them to the possession of a blessed immortality. Allowing that *mankind are generally for putting a far off the evil day*; and that *to tell a considerable part of the human race what will be their condition in the future state, has not so much influence on their minds, as to inform them what will be the case with them in the present state*; it will not follow that they should not be warned to flee from the wrath to come, especially as *the certainty of the future punishment for the impenitent sinner* is not denied. But I think it is a mode of reasoning, the honour of which this writer may claim to himself, that as *mankind are generally for putting a far off the evil day*, and are not so easily influenced by a view of their *future condition*, as by being made to see their *present state, the doctrines of many of the clergy* (which respect the future world) *have a very great tendency to impress on the mind dread and fear, instead of reverence or love; and it is doubtless the case, that where the proselyte is made to religion through the influence of preaching up the threatnings of hell torments to all eternity for the sinner, they are frightened into the mere forms of it.* The conclusion must be undoubtedly good which follows from two arguments directly contradictory one to the other! and results from both parts of a contradiction! But are men not to be told the truth of *the threatnings of hell torments to all eternity for the sinner* least they be *frightened into the forms* of religion *more from the fear they have of the punishments which* await them, *than from the love and gratitude they bear their all beneficent and all wise Creator.* And is this a good reason for telling them only a part of God's character, and for disguising it so as to render him acceptable to mankind. As well may they be taught to love gold or any other idol under the name of God. But should they be induced, in this way to love God, in a falsely conceived character, will they love or be happy in him, when they shall behold him as he is, of a character exceedingly different from what they imagined? or will God reward their love to him, when it is only on the supposition that he is *altogether such an one as themselves*, and they love him only as the vilest of men do *those that love them?*

I am not about to deny *that he who worships in sincerity and in truth*, presents *an acceptable offering to the universal parent of nature*, though he be called a Papist or Mahometan. But doubt whether any one proper distinguishable by either of those names does so worship. "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him." But does it follow that Saul was well pleasing to God while zealously persecuting the disciples of Christ, because he *verily thought with himself that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth?* Or do they worship *in truth* whose religion is modulated according to the pleasure of him whose distinguished opposition to the only saviour in whom mankind can be accepted, has procured him the title of Anti-Christ, or the enemy and opposer of Christ? or is that sincere and true worship, which has been taught by the man, who for the greatness of his deceit and errors is deservedly stiled the *false prophet.* If the religion of Christ's principal opposers, both in his character of messiah or prophet, teach to worship God in *sincerity and truth*, who can be in danger of *bringing in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bringing on themselves swift destruction?*

It is an essential article of religion with those that learn it from divine revelation, that the way of life provided for mankind is in and by Jesus Christ. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." And if this sentiment be true, who that knows the gospel will dare to venture his hope of eternal life either on Mahomet the false prophet, or on the impious arrogance of the man of sin, that proudly assumes to be the vicar Christ; to whom the *dragon*, that is the devil, *has given his power and his seat and great authority?*

The aversion of mankind from holiness & the way of salvation by faith, strongly inclines them both to make the way of life wide which God declares to be narrow, and to plead all possible excuses for not walking in it. And perhaps a better reason that this is not to be assigned, why they make so much as many of them do of the different sentiments prevailing concerning religion, to justify their neglect of it. For where the bible is open to all, those that sincerely read and obey it, will find that it is *able to make them wise to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus*; and that its most essential doctrines are so plain and the path of life so direct, that