

Isaac Newton & the Trinity

(When quoting scriptures, from the Rotherham Emphasized Bible New Testament, I will substitute the Hebrew word Yahshua for Jesus, Yahweh and Elohim for God and the LORD and Anointed for Christ.)

Isaac Newton was an English physicist, mathematician, astronomer, natural philosopher and alchemist,¹ regarded by many as the greatest figure in the history of science. In optics, he invented the reflecting telescope and argued that light is composed of particles. In mathematics, Newton shares the credit with Gottfried Leibniz for the development of calculus. Newton's laws of motion and universal gravitation are taught in every physics classroom. He said, "Gravity explains the motions of the planets, but it cannot explain who set the planets in motion. Yahweh² governs all things and knows all that is or can be done."³ His scientific fame notwithstanding, Newton's study of the Bible and of the early Church Fathers was among his greatest passions. One Church doctrine Newton would not accept was the doctrine of the Trinity. In England, denying the doctrine of the blessed Trinity was a criminal offense punishable by imprisonment.

Isaac Newton (1643-1727) wrote more on the Bible than he did on natural science; two and one-half million words.⁴ He said, "I have a fundamental belief in the Bible as the Word of Yahweh, written by those who were inspired. I study the Bible daily."⁵ Newton tested and investigated the Words of Yahweh with the scientific method of observing, hypothesizing, and testing. To Newton, his scientific and religious experiments were one and the same, observing and understanding how the world functioned. Newton saw Yahweh as the Master Creator, whose existence could not be denied in the face of the grandeur of all creation. "He being a fellow of the college named Trinity, turned to Christian theology with the same sleepless fervor he brought to alchemy. He started a notebook, writing Latin headings atop the folios: Life of Christ; Miracles of Christ; Passion, Descent, and Resurrection...The topics that most absorbed his interest were the relation of Yahweh and Christ, the Father and the Son, and most of all, *De Trinitate*, Of the Trinity. Here he swerved into what the Church would call heresy. He abjured this central dogma being taught by the Church: three persons in one Godhead, holy and undivided. He denied the divinity of Yahshua and of the Holy Spirit."⁶ Newton wrote to John Locke, who was a kindred spirit in the dangerous area of anti-Trinitarianism, the subject treatises on the "corruptions of Scriptures."⁷

¹ The chemistry of the Middle Ages and the 16th century. OED

² When Isaac Newton and John Locke speak of God, they are referring to the God of Israel, who is Yahweh. In their quotes, I will replace the word God with the actual name of that God, which is Yahweh.

³ Tiner, J.H. (1975). *Isaac Newton: Inventor, Scientist and Teacher*. Milford, Michigan, U.S.: Mott Media.

⁴ <http://www.newtonproject.sussex.ac.uk/prism.php?id=43>

⁵ Tiner 1975

⁶ Isaac Newton by James Gleick; pg. 107

⁷ Isaac Newton by James Gleick; pg. 145

John Locke (1632-1704) was an English philosopher, medical physician, epistemologist,⁸ political philosopher, Christian and friend of Isaac Newton. Locke, as a political philosopher, fled to the Netherlands from 1683 to 1688 to avoid the rule of King James II. Upon his return to England, after King James II was dethroned, he wrote the "Two Treatises of Government." His writings influenced the American Revolutionaries, such as Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, Thomas Jefferson and other Founding Fathers. This influence is reflected in the American Declaration of Independence. "He believed that in a natural state all people were equal and independent, and none had a right to harm another's "life, health, liberty, or possessions." Locke also advocated governmental checks and balances and believed that revolution is not only a right but an obligation in some circumstances. These ideas would come to have a profound influence on the Constitution of the United States and its Declaration of Independence."⁹ John Locke also wrote, "The Reasonableness of Christianity, as Delivered in the Scriptures" in 1695 and "A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul" in 1707. John Locke, a man of reason, was a devoted believer in the Divine Inspiration of the Scriptures, as was Isaac Newton.

John Locke and Isaac Newton both lived through turbulent and dangerous religious times. "James I, from which was commissioned the 1611 King James Bible, reigned from 1603-1625. His son, Charles I, reigned from 1625-1649. He was beheaded in January 1649, and the military protectorate of Puritan leader Oliver Cromwell took power, initiating a "rule of saints." On Cromwell's death, the protectorate collapsed; with the return of Charles II, son of the beheaded king, the Stuart royal house and the Anglican establishment were restored in 1660. However, conflicts about religious freedom and royal power, going back to the Elizabethan settlement of the previous century, were not resolved but only intensified during the next three decades. Specifically, what were the legal status and consequent legal rights of Protestant and Roman Catholic dissenters to the Anglican establishment? One of Charles's first regal acts (the 1660 Declaration of Breda) was to grant a general pardon to all who claimed it within forty days - a pardon that covered all crimes including those "committed against us or our royal father." In the same decree the King declared "a liberty to tender consciences, and that no man shall be disquieted or called in question for differences of opinion in matter of religion, which do not disturb the peace of the kingdom." Nonetheless, the Corporation Act of 1661 required of all "mayors and other magistrates" an "oath of allegiance and supremacy" and denied all public offices to those who had not "taken the Lord's Supper, according to the rites of the Church of England." In addition, two Conventicle Acts (in 1664 and 1670) forbade religious services in homes where five or more people sixteen years of age or over and not of the same family were present. Finally, the Test Act of 1673 (the Popish Recusants Act) added to the allegiance oaths and sacramental practice an explicit denial of transubstantiation. Catholics were thus barred from all public offices."¹⁰

⁸ One who is versed in the theory or science of the method or grounds of knowledge. OED

⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Locke

¹⁰ Religion & Liberty Sept./Oct. 2000, Vol. 10, No. 5. John Bolt; <http://www.acton.org/publicat/randl/article.php?id=356>

Charles II died in 1685, his Catholic brother, James II, assumed the English throne and appointed Catholics to public office and as military officers. His grand design was to restore the Catholic faith and destroy heresy everywhere. James II fled England and the Protestants, William and Mary, were appointed jointly as king in 1689. A Bill of Rights and the Act of Toleration (See Appendix A) were drawn up and passed by Parliament on May 24, 1689. "The Act of Toleration provided full religious freedom for Protestant dissenters and pardoned all who had been penalized by the old restrictive laws. Conventicles and other assemblies for worship were permitted, provided the doors were not barred or locked, and provision was made for those reluctant to swear oaths of allegiance, provided they promised loyalty to the crown, professed belief in the Trinity (Article XIII I, A.B. and XVII), and acknowledged biblical inspiration. All of this was intended to provide "ease to scrupulous consciences in the exercise of religion" with the goal that such toleration "may be an effectual means to unite their majesties' Protestant subjects in interest and affection." The same legal toleration, however, was not granted Catholics. (Historians have observed, however, that the Act of Toleration did nurture a climate of religious freedom that also benefited Catholics.) The 1689 settlement was a major step in the development of religious freedom, but we are still a long ways from the First Amendment in the American Bill of Rights. Dissent was not legally proscribed, but the Anglican Church remained established by law. Still, thanks to 1688-89, the British crown never attempted to dictate the consciences of the American colonists, and one hundred years of religious freedom helped make the First Amendment possible, if not likely."¹¹

The above history explains the following behavior of Isaac Newton, when he wrote to John Locke concerning the Trinity. "Newton began to send Locke treatises on the "corruptions of Scriptures [I John 5:7-8 and I Timothy 3:16],"¹² addressing them stealthily

¹¹ Religion & Liberty Sept./Oct. 2000, Vol. 10, No. 5. John Bolt; <http://www.acton.org/publicat/randl/article.php?id=356>

¹² **Newton's Views on the Corruptions of Scripture and the Church**

"Newton's history of the Church was in essence the history of its corruption from a pristine original, both in terms of its doctrine and of its relationship with the ruling state. This perversion of Christianity reached its peak in the fourth century after Christ, a period which coincided with what he took to be a monumental tampering with Scripture. Newton had noted discrepancies between different versions of the New Testament from an early period in his study, but he undertook his most serious research into putative corruptions of Scripture after conversations with John Locke in early 1690. These conversations in turn had been prompted by Locke inquiring what Newton thought of the recent 'antitrinitarian controversy', in which authors such as John Wallis and Stephen Nye (anonymously) had put forward various arguments pro or con the orthodoxy and authenticity of various passages in Scripture. Drawing on the 1657 *Polyglot* of Brian Walton and the 1675 Oxford Greek New Testament, Newton argued (in a letter to Locke of November 1690) that the earliest Greek and Latin manuscripts lacked passages that supported the Trinity. He showed by means of often convoluted arguments that two central texts invoked in support of the doctrine of the Trinity (1 John 5:7-8 -- containing the long-disputed *Johannine Comma* -- and 1 Timothy 3:16) were absent from the earliest manuscripts, but was keen to stress that his analysis was merely an unbiased assessment of the evidence. Where there did seem to be incontrovertible evidence for the authenticity of a 'doubtful' passage, Newton argued that it had been deliberately misinterpreted by certain factions, in the main by the Catholic Church in the fourth century, and that an antitrinitarian reading made more sense. As in his other studies, Newton claimed that the corruption of Scripture had been masterminded by Athanasius and his followers in the middle of the fourth century. The letter to Locke was followed up by a second missive containing critiques of series of other pro-trinitarian passages.

The initial letter to Locke raises two interesting points, the first of which is that Newton would not have sent him even an ostensibly impartial analysis of the history of the corruptions in the New Testament unless he was sure that Locke would not

to a nameless, "Friend." These letters ran many thousands of words. You seemed curious, Newton wrote, about the truth of the text of I John 5:7: "the testimony of the three in heaven." He placed his trust in Locke's prudence and calmness of temper. "There cannot be a better service done to the truth than to purge it of things spurious," he said but he nonetheless forbade Locke to publish this dangerous nonconformist scholarship."¹³

Newton and Locke 1690–1704

"It is well known that in the early 1690s Locke and Newton had an active correspondence concerning theological matters and the interpretation of various biblical works, and that Newton had engaged Locke to publish some anti-trinitarian tracts subtitled, *An Historical Account of Two Notable Corruptions of Scripture in a Letter to a Friend*. The *Historical Account* contained a textual analysis of the famous *Comma Johanneum*,⁴ or 1 John 5:7, and 1 Timothy 3:16. Locke was to have published these papers through his friend Jean Le Clerc and would have done so had not Newton changed his mind at the last minute. Newton may have realized that, if it came to be known that he was responsible for writing *An Historical Account*, it could have had a damaging effect on his career. It certainly would have cost him his Lucasian chair at Cambridge, as it did his protégé and successor, William Whiston, who was removed in 1711 for his anti-trinitarian beliefs."¹⁴

Newton's beliefs are revealed in his discourse called, "Drafts on the history of the Church (Section 3)."¹⁵ (See Appendix B) Some excerpts of his original writings are listed below. "I beleive in one God, the ffather almighty, maker of heaven & earth, & of all things visible & invisible, & in one Lord Iesus Christ the Son of God, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was buried, the third day rose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven & shall come to judge the quick & the dead . And I beleive in the holy Ghost who spake by the Prophets. . . We are forbidden to worhsip two Gods but we are not forbidden to worship one God, & one Lord: one God for creating all things & one Lord for redeeming us with his blood. We must not pray to two Gods, but we may pray to one God in the name of one Lord. We must beleive therefore in one Lord Iesus Christ that we may behave our selves obediently towards him as subjects & keep his laws, & give him

look unkindly upon the heretical implications of his work. Secondly, when Locke received the November 1690 letter from Newton, he sent it on to his friend Jean le Clerc, who suggested that the author (of whose identity he was unaware) should read the recent English translation of the influential *Critical History of the New Testament* (1689), written by the Oratorian priest Richard Simon. Newton found a couple of additional pieces of evidence from Simon concerning early manuscripts, but Simon's monumental undertaking apparently left intact the main thrust of his argument. It should be pointed out, however, that Newton's radical antitrinitarian critique of passages in Scripture and Simon's claim that the authenticity of certain passages in Scripture could only be guaranteed by tradition both undercut standard Anglican defences of the passages in question. As this and other evidence from Newton's notes suggest, his researches were largely independent of the interpretations of others, and were designed to appear as such in his writings. Indeed, he told Locke that he was interpreting these texts and questions in the spirit of an independent lay person, who had a duty as a Christian -- as he put it -- 'to take up with what I can best understand'."¹³ <http://www.newtonproject.sussex.ac.uk/prism.php?id=73>

¹³ Isaac Newton by James Gleick; pg. 145

¹⁴ Newton, Locke and the Trinity: Sir Isaac's comments on Locke's: A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistle of St Paul to the Romans by Kim Ian Parker; pg. 41-42

¹⁵ Source: Yahuda Ms. 15.3, Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem; <http://www.newtonproject.sussex.ac.uk/texts/viewtext.php?id=THEM00220&mode=normalized>

that honour & glory & worship which is due to him as our Lord & King or else we are not his people... We must believe that he is exalted to the right hand of God (Acts 2) or is next in dignity to God the father Almighty, being the first begotten the heir of all things & Lord over all the creation next under God, & we must give him suitable worship... The worship which we are directed in scripture to give to Jesus Christ respects his death & exaltation to the right hand of God & is given to him as our Lord & King & tends to the glory of God the father. Should we give the father that worship which is due to the Son we should be Patripassians,¹⁶ & should we give the Son all that worship which is due to the father we should make two creators & be guilty of polytheism & in both cases we should practically deny the father & the son. We may give blessing & honour & glory & power unto God & the Lamb together but it must be in different respects, to God as he is God the father Almighty who created the heaven & earth & to the Lamb as he is the Lord who was slain for us & washed away our sins in his own blood & is exalted to the right hand of God the father. In worshipping them we must keep to the Characters given them in the primitive Creed & then we are safe. We must also believe that Jesus Christ shall come to judge the quick & the dead, that is to reign over them with justice & judgment until he shall subdue all rule & all. We must believe that he sits at the right hand of God or is next in dignity to God Almighty & give him suitable worship because he humbled himself to death even the death of the cross therefore God hath highly exalted him & given him a name above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow... And we must believe that there is a holy prophetic spirit by which Moses & the Prophets & Apostles were influenced that we may study their writings as the Oracles of truth, & thereby grow in grace & in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ to the end of our lives.”¹⁷

Isaac Newton’s theological writings were and still are heresies¹⁸ according to the Protestant and Catholic Church. Isaac Newton, as a heretic, is in good company. The word, ‘heresy,’ is a transliteration of the Greek word, “139 airesiv haireisis *hah’-ee-res-is*,” which is sometime translated, ‘sect.’ Paul was also called a heretic by the religious rulers; “But I confess, this, unto thee,—That, according to the Way which they call a Sect [haireisis], so, I [Paul] am rendering divine service unto my father’s Elohim, believing in all the things which, throughout the law, and those which, in the prophets, are written” (Acts 24:14).¹⁹ Isaac Newton was actually pointing out the error of the doctrine of the Trinity, which was introduced into the Church after the Apostle Paul’s death. Concerning this incomprehensible doctrine Jerome says, in a well-known phrase: “The true profession

¹⁶ One who held, as certain early heretics, that God the Father suffered with or in the person of the Son for the redemption of man. OED

¹⁷ Drafts on the history of the Church (Section 3) by Isaac Newton

<http://www.newtonproject.sussex.ac.uk/texts/viewtext.php?id=THEM00220&mode=normalized>

¹⁸ Theological or religious opinion or doctrine maintained in opposition, or held to be contrary, to the ‘catholic’ or orthodox doctrine of the Christian Church, or, by extension, to that of any church, creed, or religious system, considered as orthodox. OED

¹⁹ Ac 24:5 For, finding this man a pest, and moving sedition with all the Jews that are throughout the inhabited earth, a leader also of the sect [haireisis] of the Nazarenes,— Ac 28:22 But we deem it well, that, from thee, we should hear what are thine opinions; for, indeed, concerning this sect [haireisis], it is, known to us, that, everywhere, is it spoken against.

of the mystery²⁰ of the Trinity is to own that we do not comprehend it."²¹ Newton had something to say concerning those who are fond of mysteries; "In disputable places I love to take up with what I can best understand. Tis the temper of the hot and superstitious part of mankind in matters of religion ever to be fond of mysteries, & for that reason to like best what they understand least."²²

²⁰ IV. THE TRINITY AS A MYSTERY

The Vatican Council has explained the meaning to be attributed to the term *mystery* in theology. It lays down that a mystery is a truth which we are not merely incapable of discovering apart from Divine Revelation, but which, even when revealed, remains "hidden by the veil of faith and enveloped, so to speak, by a kind of darkness" (Constitution, "De fide. cath.", iv). In other words, our understanding of it remains only partial, even after we have accepted it as part of the Divine message. Through analogies and types we can form a representative concept expressive of what is revealed, but we cannot attain that fuller knowledge which supposes that the various elements of the concept are clearly grasped and their reciprocal compatibility manifest. As regards the vindication of a mystery, the office of the natural reason is solely to show that it contains no intrinsic impossibility, that any objection urged against it on Reason. "Expressions such as these are undoubtedly the score that it violates the laws of thought is invalid. More than this it cannot do.

The Vatican Council further defined that the Christian Faith contains mysteries strictly so called (can. 4). All theologians admit that the doctrine of the Trinity is of the number of these. Indeed, of all revealed truths this is the most impenetrable to reason. Hence, to declare this to be no mystery would be a virtual denial of the canon in question. Moreover, our Lord's words, Matthew 11:27, "No one knoweth the Son, but the Father," seem to declare expressly that the plurality of Persons in the Godhead is a truth entirely beyond the scope of any created intellect. The Fathers supply many passages in which the incomprehensibility of the Divine Nature is affirmed. St. Jerome says, in a well-known phrase: "The true profession of the mystery of the Trinity is to own that we do not comprehend it" (De mysterio Trinitatus recta confessio est ignoratio scientiae -- "Proem ad 1. xviii in Isai."). The controversy with the Eunomians, who declared that the Divine Essence was fully expressed in the absolutely simple notion of "the Innascible" (*agenetos*), and that this was fully comprehensible by the human mind, led many of the Greek Fathers to insist on the incomprehensibility of the Divine Nature, more especially in regard to the internal processions. St. Basil, "In Eunom.", I, n. 14; St. Cyril of Jerusalem, "Cat.", VI; St. John Damascene, "Fid. Orth.", I, ii, etc., etc.).

²¹ (De mysterio Trinitatus recta confessio est ignoratio scientiae -- "Proem ad 1. xviii in Isai."); The Blessed Trinity; <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15047a.htm>

²² Isaac Newton by James Gleick; pg. 145

Appendix A

The English Toleration Act of 1689

Note: The following text has been modernized. The spelling of some words has been modernized; some words have been changed to the American spelling, emphasis (i.e., **bold** text) has been added, and paragraph numbers have been added. It is further important to note that in 1689, England had an established (i.e., official) church [The Church of England or Anglican Church]. The Church had the power to punish those whose thoughts, deeds, and/or religious loyalties suggested dissent from official Church doctrine. The Toleration Act did not repeal either the laws relating to religion, or exempt persons from the obligation to tithe (give money for the use of the Church), but the Act did require that certain practices be "tolerated." The limited access to toleration under the Act was not available to all dissenters. At best, the relevant "toleration" was only available to Trinitarian, Protestant, Christians who were willing to sign loyalty oaths and able to have their practices "Certified."

The Toleration Act, 1689.

An Act for Exempting their Majesties Protestant Subjects, Dissenting from the Church of England, from the Penalties of certain laws.

I. Forasmuch as some ease to scrupulous consciences in the exercise of religion may be an effectual means to unite their majesties' protestant subjects in interest and affection,

II. Be it enacted, by the King's and Queen's most excellent majesties, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and the commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that neither the statute made in the three and twentieth year of the reign of the late queen Elizabeth, entitled, an Act to retain the queen's majesty's subjects in their due obedience; nor the statute made in the twenty-ninth year of the said queen, entitled, an Act for the more speedy and due execution of certain branches of the statute made in the three-and-twentieth year of the queen's majesty's reign viz., the aforesaid act; nor that branch or clause of a statute made in the first year of the reign of the said queen, entitled, an Act for the Uniformity of Common Prayer and Service in the Church, and Administration of the Sacraments; whereby all persons, having no lawful or reasonable excuse to be absent, are required to resort to their parish church or chapel, or some usual place where the common prayer shall be used, upon pain of punishment by the censures of the Church, and also upon pain that every person so offending shall forfeit for every such offence twelve pence; nor the statute made in the third year of the reign of the late King James the first, entitled, an Act for the better Discovering and Repressing Popish Recusants; nor that other statute made in the same year, entitled, an Act to prevent and avoid Dangers which may grow by Popish Recusants; nor any other law or statute of this realm, made against papists or popish recusants, except the statute made in the five-and-twentieth year of King Charles II, entitled, an Act for preventing Dangers which may happen from Popish Recusants; and except also the statute made in the thirteenth year of the said King Charles II, entitled, an Act for the more effectual preserving the King's Person and Government by disabling Papists from sitting in either House of Parliament; shall be construed to extend to any person or persons dissenting from the Church of England, that shall take the oaths mentioned in a statute made this present Parliament, entitled, an Act for removing and preventing all Questions and Disputes concerning the assembling and sitting of this present Parliament; and shall make and subscribe the declaration mentioned in a statute made in the thirtieth year of the reign of King Charles II, entitled, an **Act to prevent Papists from sitting in either House of Parliament:** which oaths and declaration the justices of peace at the general sessions of the peace to be held for the county or place where such person shall live, are hereby required to tender and administer to

such persons as shall offer themselves to take, make, and subscribe the same, and thereof to keep a register: and likewise none of the persons aforesaid shall give or pay, as any fee or reward, to any officer or officers belonging to the court aforesaid, above the sum of sixpence, nor that more than once for his or their entry of his taking the said oaths, and making and subscribing the said declaration; nor above the further sum of sixpence for any certificate of the same to be made out and signed by the officer or officers of the said court.

III. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that all and every person and persons already convicted or prosecuted in order to conviction of recusancy, by judgment, information, action of debt, or otherwise, grounded upon the aforesaid statutes, or any of them, that shall take the said oaths mentioned in the said statute made this present Parliament, and make and subscribe the declaration aforesaid, in the Court of Exchequer, or assizes, or general or quarter sessions to be held for the county where such person lives, and to be thence respectively certified into the Exchequer, shall be thenceforth exempted and discharged from all the penalties, seizures, forfeitures, judgments, and executions, incurred by force of any the aforesaid statutes, without any composition, fee, or further charge whatsoever.

IV. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that all and every person and persons that shall, as aforesaid, take the said oaths, and make and subscribe the declaration aforesaid, shall not be liable to any pains, penalties, or forfeitures, mentioned in an act made in the five and thirtieth year of the reign of the late queen Elizabeth, entitled, an Act to retain the Queen's Majesty's Subjects in their due Obedience; nor in an act made in the two and twentieth year of the reign of the late King Charles II, entitled, an Act to prevent and suppress Seditious Conventicles; nor shall any of the said persons be prosecuted in any ecclesiastical court, for or by reason of their non-conforming to the Church of England.

V. Provided always, and be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, that if any assembly of persons dissenting from the Church of England shall be had in any place for religious worship with the doors locked, barred, or bolted during any time of such meeting together, all and every person or persons, that shall come to and be at such meeting, shall not receive any benefit from this law, but be liable to all the pains and penalties of all the aforesaid laws recited in this act, for such their meeting, notwithstanding his taking the oaths, and his making and subscribing the declaration aforesaid.

VI. Provided always, that nothing herein contained shall be construed to exempt any of the persons aforesaid from paying of tithes or other parochial duties, or any other duties to the church or minister, nor from any prosecution in any ecclesiastical court, or elsewhere, for the same.

VII. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that if any person dissenting from the Church of England, as aforesaid, shall hereafter be chosen or otherwise appointed to bear the office of high constable, or petit constable, churchwarden, overseer of the poor, or any other parochial or ward office, and such person shall scruple to take upon him any of the said offices in regard of the oaths, or any other matter or thing required by the law to be taken or done in respect of such office, every such person shall and may execute such office or employment by a sufficient deputy, by him to be provided, that shall comply with the laws on this behalf. Provided always, the said deputy be allowed and approved by such person or persons, in such manner as such officer or officers respectively should by law have been allowed and approved.

VIII. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that no person dissenting from the Church of England in holy orders, or pretended holy orders, or pretending to holy orders, nor any preacher or teacher of any congregation of dissenting protestants, that shall make and subscribe the declaration aforesaid, and take the said oaths at the general or quarter sessions of the peace to be held for the county, town, parts, or division where such person lives, which court is hereby empowered to administer the same, and shall also

declare his approbation of and subscribe the articles of religion mentioned in the statute made in the thirteenth year of the reign of the late queen Elizabeth, except the thirty-fourth, thirty-fifth, and thirty-sixth, and these words of the twentieth article, viz., 'the Church hath power to decree Rites or Ceremonies, and authority in Controversies of Faith, and yet' shall be liable to any of the pains or penalties mentioned in an act made in the seventeenth year of the reign of King Charles II, entitled, an Act for restraining Non-conformists from inhabiting in Corporations; nor the penalties mentioned in the aforesaid act made in the two-and-twentieth year of his said late majesty's reign, for or by reason of such persons preaching at any meeting for the exercise of religion; nor to the penalty of one hundred pounds mentioned in an act made in the thirteenth and fourteenth of King Charles II, entitled, an Act for the Uniformity of Public Prayers, and Administration of Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies: and for establishing the Form of Taking, Ordaining, and Consecrating of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons in the Church of England, for officiating in any congregation for the exercise of religion permitted and allowed by this act.

IX. Provided always, that the making and subscribing the said declaration, and the taking the said oaths, and making the declaration of approbation and subscription to the said articles, in manner as aforesaid, by every respective person or persons herein before mentioned, at such general or quarter sessions of the peace, as aforesaid, shall be then and there entered of record in the said court, for which sixpence shall be paid to the clerk of the peace, and no more: provided that such person shall not at any time preach in any place, but with the doors not locked, barred, or bolted, as aforesaid.

X. And whereas some dissenting protestants scruple the **baptizing of infants**, be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, that every person in pretended holy orders, or pretending to holy orders, or preacher, or teacher, that shall subscribe the aforesaid articles of religion, except before excepted, and also except part of the seven-and-twentieth article touching infant baptism, and shall take the said oaths, and make and subscribe the declaration aforesaid, in manner aforesaid, every such person shall enjoy all the privileges, benefits, and advantages, which any other dissenting minister, as aforesaid, might have or enjoy by virtue of this act.

XI. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that every teacher or preacher in holy orders, or pretended holy orders, that is a minister, preacher, or teacher of a congregation, that shall take the oaths herein required, and make and subscribe the declaration aforesaid, and also subscribe such of the aforesaid articles of the Church of England, as are required by this act in manner aforesaid, shall be thenceforth **exempted from serving upon any jury**, or from being chosen or appointed to bear the office of churchwarden, overseer of the poor, or any other parochial or ward office, or other office in any hundred of any shire, city, town, parish, division, or wapentake.

XII. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that every justice of the peace may at any time hereafter require any person, that goes to any meeting for exercise of religion, to make and subscribe the declaration aforesaid, and also to take the said oaths or declaration of fidelity hereinafter mentioned, in case such person scruples the taking of an oath, and upon refusal thereof, such justice of the peace is hereby required to commit such person to prison without bail or mainprize, and to certify the name of such person to the next general or quarter sessions of the peace to be held for that county, city, town, part, or division where such person then resides, and if such person so committed shall upon a second tender at the general or quarter sessions refuse to make and subscribe the declaration aforesaid, such person refusing shall be then and there recorded, and he shall be taken thenceforth to all intents and purposes for a popish recusant convict, and suffer accordingly, and incur all the penalties and forfeitures of all the aforesaid laws.

XIII. And whereas there are certain other persons, dissenters from the Church of England, who scruple the taking of any oath, be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, that every such person shall make and subscribe the aforesaid declaration, and also this declaration of fidelity following, viz.:

I, A. B., do sincerely promise and solemnly declare before God and the world, that I will be true and faithful to King William and queen Mary; and I do solemnly profess and declare, that I do from my heart abhor, detest, and renounce, as impious and heretical, that damnable doctrine and position, that princes excommunicated or deprived by the pope, or any authority of the see of Rome, may be deposed or murdered by their subjects, or any other whatsoever. And I do declare, that no foreign prince, person, prelate, state, or potentate hath, or ought to have, any power, jurisdiction, superiority, pre-eminence, or authority ecclesiastical or spiritual within this realm.

And shall subscribe a profession of their Christian belief in these words

I, A. B., profess faith in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ, his Eternal Son, the true God, and in the Holy Spirit, one God, blessed for evermore; and do acknowledge the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be given by divine inspiration.

Which declarations and subscription shall be made and entered of record at the general quarter sessions of the peace for the county, city, or place where every such person shall then reside. And every such person that shall make and subscribe the two declarations and profession aforesaid, being thereunto required, shall be exempted from all the pains and penalties of all and every the aforementioned statutes made against popish recusants, or protestant nonconformists, and also from the penalties of an act made in the fifth year of the reign of the late queen Elizabeth, entitled, an Act for the Assurance of the Queen's Royal Power over all Estates and Subjects within her Dominions, for or by reason of such persons not taking or refusing to take the oath mentioned in the said act; and also from the penalties of an act made in the thirteenth and fourteenth years of the reign of King Charles the Second, entitled, an Act for preventing Mischief's they may arise by certain persons called **Quakers** refusing to take lawful oaths; and enjoy all other the benefits, privileges, and advantages, under the like limitations, provisos, and conditions, which any other dissention should or ought to enjoy by virtue of this act.

XIV. Provided always, and be it enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that in case any person shall refuse to take the said oaths, when tendered to them, which every justice of the peace is hereby empowered to do, such person shall not be admitted to make and subscribe the two Declarations aforesaid, though required thereunto either before any Justice of the Peace, or at the general or quarter sessions before or after any conviction of popish recusants, as aforesaid, unless such person can, within thirty one days after such tender of the Declarations to him, produce two sufficient protestant witnesses, to testify upon oath that they believe him to be a protestant dissenter; or a certificate under the hands of four protestants, who are conformable to the Church of England, or have taken the oaths and subscribed the Declaration above mentioned, and shall also produce a certificate, under the hands and seals of six, or more, sufficient men of the congregation to which he belongs, owning him for one of them

XV. Provided also, and be it enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that until such certificate, under the hands of six of his congregation, as aforesaid, be produced, and two protestant witnesses come to attest his being a protestant dissenter, or a certificate under the hands of four protestants, as aforesaid, be produced, the justice of the peace shall, and hereby is required to take a recognizance with two sureties in the penal sum of fifty pounds, to be levied of his goods and chattels, lands and tenements, to the use of the king's and queen's majesties, their heirs and successors, for his producing the same; and if he cannot give such security, to commit him to prison, there to remain until he has produced such certificates, or two witnesses, as aforesaid.

XVI. Provided always, and it is the true intent and meaning of this act, that all the laws made and provided for the frequenting of divine service on the Lord's day, commonly called Sunday, shall be still in force, and executed against all persons that offend against the said laws, except such persons come to some congregation or assembly of religious worship, allowed or permitted by this act.

XVII. Provided always, and be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that neither this act, nor any clause, article or thing herein contained, shall extend, or be construed to extend, to give any ease, benefit, **or advantage to any Papist or popish recusant whatsoever, or any person that shall deny, in his preaching or writing, the doctrine of the blessed Trinity,** as it is declared in the aforesaid articles of religion.

XVIII. Provided always, and be it enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that if any person or persons, at any time or times after the tenth day of June, do and shall willingly and of purpose, maliciously or contemptuously come into any cathedral or parish church, chapel, or other congregation permitted by this act, and disquiet or disturb the same, or misuse any preacher or teacher, such person or persons, upon proof thereof before any justice of peace, by two or more sufficient witnesses, shall find two sureties, to be bound by recognizance in the penal sum of fifty pounds, and in default of such sureties, shall be committed to prison, there to remain till the next general or quarter sessions; and upon conviction of the said offence, at the said general or quarter sessions, shall suffer the pain and penalty of twenty pounds, to the use of the king's and queen's majesties, their heirs and successors.

XIX. Provided always, that **no congregation or assembly for religious worship shall be permitted or allowed by this act, until the place of such meeting shall be certified** to the bishop of the diocese, or to the archdeacon of that archdeaconry, or to the justices of the peace at the general or quarter sessions of the peace for the county, city, or place in which such meeting shall be held, and registered in the said bishop's or archdeacon's court respectively, or recorded at the said general or quarter sessions; the register, or clerk of the peace whereof respectively, is hereby **required to register** the same, and to give certificate thereof to such person as shall demand the same, for which there shall be no greater fee nor reward taken, than the sum of sixpence.

http://www.agh-attorneys.com/4_act_of_toleration_1689.htm

Appendix B

Drafts on the history of the Church (Section 3).”²³

By Isaac Newton

“I beleive in one God, the ffather almighty, maker of heaven & earth, & of all things visible & invisible, & in one Lord Iesus Christ the Son of God, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was buried, the third day rose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven & shall come to judge the quick & the dead . And I beleive in the holy Ghost who spake by the Prophets. And if it be thought fit the Articles sitteth at the right hand of God. The resurrection of the body & life everlasting may be by way of explication the same being short & in scripture & received into the Creed by the christians of the second century without occasioning any disturbance in the Churches.

Now this Creed is easy to be understood by the meanest capacities & so is fit to be proposed to all men, as the first principles of religion ought to be, & on that account may properly be compared to milk for babes. It is short & easy to be remembered as the Symbols of religion ought to be. All its Articles are in the scriptures in express words & so libable to no disputes. It contains not repetitions nor mere Theories like some of the Articles which we have omitted, but practical truths on which the whole practise of religion depends, & therefore a system of faith fit to be learned in the first place as the foundation of all religion. We must beleive in one God that we may love & fear him. We must beleive that he is the father Almighty, or first author of all things by the almighty power of his will, that we may thank & worship him & him alone for our being and for all the blessings of this life. We must beleive that this is the God of moses & the Iews who created heaven & earth & the sea & all things therein as is exprest in the ten commandments, that we may not take his name in vain nor worship images or visible resemblances nor have (in our worship) any other God then him. For he is without similitude he is the invisible God whom no eye hath seen nor can see, & therefore is not to be worshipped in any visible shape. He is the only invisible God & the only God whom we are to worship & therefore we are not to worship any visible image picture likeness or form. We are not forbidden to give the name of Gods to Angels & Kings but we are forbidden to worship them as Gods. For tho there be that are called Gods whether in heaven or in earth (as there are Gods many & Lords many) yet to us there is but one God the ffather of whom are all things & we in him & our Lord Iesus Christ by whom are all things & we in him, that is, but one God & one Lord in our worship: One God & one mediator between God & man the man Christ Iesus. We are forbidden to worhsip two Gods but we are not forbidden to worship one God, & one Lord: one God for creating all things & one Lord for redeeming us with his blood. We must not pray to two Gods, but we may pray to one God in the name of one Lord. We must beleive therefore in one Lord Iesus Christ that we may behave our selves obediently towards him as subjects & keep his laws, & give him that honour & glory & worship which is due to him as our Lord & King or else we are not his people. We must beleive that this Lord Iesus is the Christ, or Messiah the Prince predicted by Daniel, & we must worship him as the Messiah or else we are no Christians. The Iews who were taught to have but one God were also taught to expect a king, & the Christians are taught in their Creed to have the same God & to beleive that Iesus is that King. And that we may give him the more honour we must beleive also that he is the Son of God born of the Virgin Mary without any other ffather then God himself. Who is a lyar, saith Iohn, but he that denyeth that Iesus is the Christ? He is Antichrist that denyeth the ffather & the Son. And we are authorized also to call him God: for the name of God is in him. Exod. 23.21. And we must beleive also that by his incarnation of the Virgin he came in the flesh not in appearance only but really & truly , being

²³ Source: Yahuda Ms. 15.3, Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem;
<http://www.newtonproject.sussex.ac.uk/texts/viewtext.php?id=THEM00220&mode=normalized>

in all things made like unto his brethren (Heb. 2 17) for which reason he is called also the son of man. For many deceivers, saith Iohn, are entred into the world who confess not that Iesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver & an Antichrist. 2. Iohn. 7. We must beleive that he was crucified being slain at the Passover as a propitiatory sacrifice for us, that in gratitude we may give him honour & glory & blessing as the Lamb of God which was slain & hath redeemed us & washed us from our sins in his own blood & made us Kings & Priests unto God his ffather. We must beleive that he rose again from the dead that we may expect the like resurrection & that he ascended into heaven to prepare a place or mansion for the blessed that by the expectation of such a glorious & incorruptible inheritance we may endeavour to deserve it. We must beleive that he is exalted to the right hand of God (Acts 2) or is next in dignity to God the ffather Almighty, being the first begotten the heir of all things & Lord over all the creation next under God, & we must give him suitable worship. For because he humbled himself to death even the death of the cross therefore God hath highly exalted him & given him a name above every name that at the name of Iesus every kenee should bow of things in heaven & earth & under the earth & every tongue confess that Iesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the ffather. The worship which we are directed in scripture to give to Iesus Christ respects his death & exaltation to the right hand of God & is given to him as our Lord & King & tends to the glory of God the ffather. Should we give the father that worship which is due to the Son we should be Patripassians, & should we give the Son all that worship which is due to the father we should make two creators & be guilty of polytheism & in both cases we should practically deny the father & the son. We may give blessing & honour & glory & power unto God & the Lamb together but it must be in different respects, to God as he is God the ffather Almighty who created the heaven & earth & to the Lamb as he is the Lord who was slain for us & washed away our sins in his own blood & is exalted to the right hand of God the father. In worshipping them we must keep to the Characters given them in the primitive Creed & then we are safe. We must also beleive that Iesus Christ shall come to judge the quick & the dead, that is to reign over them with justice & judgment untill he shall subdue all rule & all. We must beleive that he sits at the right hand of God or is next in dignity to God Almighty & give him suitable worship because he humbled himself to death even the death of the cross therefore God hath highly exalted him & given him a name above every name that at the name of Iesus every knee should bow. We must beleive also that he shall come not from the right hand of God but from heaven to judge the quick & the dead, that is, to reign over them with justice & judgement untill he shal subdue all rule & all authority & power, & all enemies be put under his feet the last of which is death & by consequence untill all the dead be raised & judged. For he sits at the right hand of God not only in this world but also in that which is to come untill all enemies be put under his feet. And this his coming to judgment we must beleive that we may with understanding pray for the coming of this kingdom & fit our selves to stand before him in that day, & to deserve an early resurrection, knowing that the dead in Christ shall rise first & judgement shall begin at the house of God & that the saints who are first judged shall reign with him over the quick & dead untill all the dead be raised in the body & be judged, & the ungodly, the blasphemers, the unjust, the lawless & all the workers of iniquity be sent into places of misery suitable to their merits & the saints go to the place of eternal happiness which Christ is now preparing for them in heaven. And we must beleive that there is a holy prophetic spirit by which Moses & the Prophets & Apostles were influenced that we may study their writings as the Oracles of truth, & thereby grow in grace & in the knowledge of our Lord Iesus Christ to the end of our lives.”²⁴

²⁴ Drafts on the history of the Church (Section 3) by Isaac Newton
<http://www.newtonproject.sussex.ac.uk/texts/viewtext.php?id=THEM00220&mode=normalized>