THE DECLARATION OF THE Philadelphian Society OF ENGLAND,
EASTER-DAY, 1699.

Addressed to the Catholic Church Representative and Diffusive.

TO the Bishops and Presbyters of the Catholic Church, and to all Orders, Ranks and Degrees of the same, elected by God the Father, and called out of the World, being sanctified by his Spirit: And in particular to the Churches, whether Established or Dispersed within these three Kingdoms, of England, Scotland, and Ireland; and yet more peculiarly to that of this Kingdom, and to all Religious Societies therein; however they may be nominated and distinguished, either separated from it, or holding Communion with it: But in a most special manner, to as many as either here or abroad, do truly believe, and pray for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the Majesty of his Father: The Philadelphian Society, founded for the Propagation of Apostatical Faith and Love, with the increase of Grace, Peace and Truth.

Fathers, Brethren and Friends,

§ 2. God having appeared in these latter Days, to excite and rouse up many Persons in all Nations, both Secretly and Publiquely, after divers and sundry manners, to prepare the Way of his dear Son; unto whom he hath given by an Oath, the utmost ends of the Earth for his Inheritance: Be it known unto you, that he hath Excited and Commanded us by his Spirit, which is the Testimony of his Son, to bear an open and publick Witness at this time for his Kingdom. Which Kingdom is not of this World, nor after the manner of the Nations; But is of Heaven, and from Heaven, and after the manner of the Saints in Bliss; who are ever doing their Father’s Will, and following

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ing the LAMB, who is their Light, whether he goeth. And that this Kingdom may come quickly, according to the Oath and Covenant of the Everlasting Father, and that the Will of our God and Lord be obeyed with the same Universality, Perpetuity and Alacrity, even here upon the Earth, as it is in Heaven, to the Sanctification of his Name, The Lord our Righteousness; and even to a visible Inscription of it on all his Disciples: so that it may indeed be Exalted above every Name under Heaven, and every Knee made to bow down to it; we think it our bounden Duty, by all Ways and Mediums, by all Methods, Expedients and Enterprises, according to the Pattern of the Holy Ancients, with continued Labours, Watchings and Supplications, to promote, advance and carry on the Interest of the Time.

§ 3. And therefore we cannot but exhort and encourage one another, and as many as with us do look for such things, to walk in all Holy Conversation and Godliness, to keep the Works of the Son of God unto the end; and to hold fast the Word of his Patience, until he come: being diligent that we may be found of him in Peace and in Love, without Spot, and blameless, as was the Primitive Church of PHI LA DEL PHIA. Wherefore, being mindful of the Words which were spoken before by the Holy Prophets, and of the Commandment of the Lord and Saviour, blessed for ever: As often as we do meet together for this end, we do after this manner. And as at all Times, and in all Places, we account it our highest Duty thus to do, without any Partiality or Acceptance of Persons: So effectually, when we are assembled in the Spirit of the Lord, that our Loyals may not be at any time ungirt, or our Lamps extinguished, and without Oil: For when the Bridegroom cometh, it will then be too late to go to buy it; and the little Door, which is already begun to be opened, will then be shut up.

Ephesians and Brethren,

§ 4. Marvel not that this is a little Door; and that there is but a little visible Strength as yet: Since God, even our God, hath chosen the small things of this World to confound the great, and the foolish things to confound the wise; and that not once only, but always. As for yourselves, we could have been very well contented, had it been the Will of our Father in Heaven, not to have appeared as we have done; but to have enjoyed rather in private (as some of You do) the Satisfaction of those great and august Truths, which we now confess before the whole World. It would have been far more safe for us, and would not have exposed us to so many Evils; but our Will, which is in themselves most contrary, we have learnt by his Spirit afflicting us, to submit to his Holy and most Adorable Will.

§ 5. But notwithstanding this our more publick appearance at present, we do not hereby intend to recede from what we have formerly declared in the Reasons for the Foundation and Promotion of this Society; but do earnestly desire to keep still, and maintain the Communion of Saints inviolable, in the Band of the Holy Catholick Church.

§ 6. And for as much as it is found necessary, in order to such a near and intimate Communication with one another, as is required for the effectual Prosecution of the Great and Holy Design before us, the Interest of Christendom, and the Good of all Mankind, to initiate and admit Persons into our Society; (for that otherwise we could not be said to be a Society) we would not

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not herein, that ye should misunderstand us, as if we were by this, setting up for a new Sect, and a divided Church; our solemn Protestations to the contrary, notwithstanding. For we have acted in this matter, and shall continue to act, according to those most Catholic Principles, which all the Churches of Christ, that ever were or are, may justify us in: We think it not our proper Business to meddle with the Controversies, that are at this day in Christendom; but to pray and wait for that Holy Spirit, which alone can determine them, and lead into all divine Truth. The Principles of the Christian Religion we believe to be plain and certain, familiar and obvious, to that degree, that he that runneth may read them, in the sacred Writings of the New Testament: But the Mysteries of the same, we believe none can truly understand as they ought (nor even put in Practice thoroughly, the Principles themselves) but such as are Spiritual; that is, Initiated by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, into the Knowledge of them, Experimentally,Essentially and Fundamentally. All wrangling therefore about these, from the Spirit only of Reason, or the natural Man, we cannot approve as a means for the Establishing the Unity of Faith, in the deep and reconcile things of God; but do think this method most incongruous and inefficient, as it hath hitherto shewed it self to be.

§ 7. All the Precepts and Institutions of our Blessed Master, we, accordingly to their very fullest and utmost Latitude, accept, and entirely submit to. The House of our Society we have founded upon his Sermon on the Mount: Whence, though the Rain hath indeed descended, and the Floods came, and the Winds have blown, and beat upon this our House and Establishment, yet it falleth not: Neither can it fall, for that it is founded by the Eternal Wisdom it self upon a Rock; which Rock is Christ, in the Manifestation of his Spirit and Power.

§ 8. Wherefore the Foundation thereof, which formerly hath been declared, being as the Hill of Zion, that cannot be moved, and the entrance thereof as the Door of David, which is never to be shut in the Church of Philadelphia: We have boldly in this Manner unto you, Men and Brethren; yea, unto you Fathers and Elders, even as many as are Separated and Sanctified, in all the Churches throughout Europe (and whereforeself this our Declaration may be carried for an Holy Ministration and Calling), And we entreat you, by the Bowels of the Lord Jesus Christ, who we all profess to honour, and to follow, as our Leader; that ye would lay aside all Prejudices against one another; all certain Traditions of Men, all Disputes about Words, and all Impurities of the unintelligible Mysteries (though true in themselves); and that ye would be pleased to make a Candid Allowance for the Power of Education in some, of Confinement in others; and of the different Apprehension of things (more or less) in all; and thence love one another as Brethren, and as Christ hath loved you, whereby ye may be able to demonstrate your faiths to be built (together with us) upon Him: He being the Chief Cornerstone of this House of Brotherly Love. Therefore stir up, we beg and beseech you, this most Excellent City, which is no less than the Band of Perfection in the Body of the Church, and the first Born of the Love of God: So shall that Philadelphia Society be spread over the whole Earth, and the Kingdoms of the Nations become the Kingdom of the Prince of Peace.

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§ 9. For the Divisions of Christendom, our Souls do mourn, and hence we cannot but cry out; Sirs, ye are Brethren, why do ye Wrong one to another? And again, we say unto you all, and every one, how good and pleasant is it for Brethren to dwell together in Unity! Consider then, we pray you, of the things that make for Catholick Peace, and for the Establishment of the new Jerusalem, the City and Kingdom of Peace, that so all such as have erred and are deceived, may be brought into the Way of Truth and Love, being made one Fold under one Shepherd, JESUS CHRIST, our Lord. Yea, we doubt not, Honoured and Beloved, that ye will consider of these things: And many among you will blow the Trumpet of the Lord, and found an Alarm in the holy Congregation; to give Notice that the Lord cometh, and that his Kingdom is at Hand, to them that wait for it, and love his Appearance. And as the same Design may be carried on after different Manners, and we have been called to this particular Manner; so we also hope and believe, that it shall be carried on by you after various and sundry Methods, suitable to your several Stations and Calls, and according to the manifold Ministration and Dispensation of the same Spirit.

§ 10. Now, Beloved in the Lord, say not, that the Time is not come, as some of you have declared. For the Time verily cometh, but the Hour thereof no Man knoweth. Therefore we watch, and would awaken others to watch with us, knowing that the Promise is not afar off. The Time indeed is not come, as some understand it, neither is it at Hand. But if Noah arose up, and preached Repentance, an Hundred and Twenty Years before the Completion of what he expected; and if the Prophet preached in like manner, an Hundred and Seventy Years, before it came to pass, concerning the Call and Anointing of the great CYRUS; and if the Prophet foretold, and prophesied before Three Hundred Years before, concerning the great Reformation under JESUS CHRIST: It is not at all to be wondered at, if before so great and glorious a Reformation (or rather Transformation) of the Church, as is this, which is now expected, there be sent forth some Fore-runners, Messengers, and Heralds, to give Warning of the same to the World. This we do: And we know, that our Time is now; and that our Calling shall not be in vain.

§ 11. Whosoever then shall be offended at us, or at our Proceedings, without due Examination of them; we shall not be mov’d on our Parts, only with a Concern for their Good.

We have the Answer of a good Conscience before GOD, both in acting and suffering for his Names sake; and if in any thing of lesser Moment, there hath been a Mistake committed, at any time, we shall be glad to rectify the same, so soon as it shall be made known. If any better Expedients can be produced for the promoting of the Interest before specified, let not any with-hold them. However, we dare not consult with Flesh and Blood, in this Matter: But all things that we can do, we are ready to do: For that we may make clear the Way of our Lord, the KING: We go forth at this Time, in his Name, to make Proclamation to the World, having received a Foretaste of the Powers of the approaching New State. We are indeed, but as a Voice in the Wilderness; the Church of mystical Israel, being not yet come out of the Wilderness: But
§ 12. In order to a fierer Prosecution of the Designs of this Society, it hath pleased God to grant us the Protection of the Civil Government: Against which, our Principles are no wise Prejudicial, but most advantageous to it, when they are understood. For it is certain, that the Blessings of the Heaven above, and of the Earth beneath, will be given by God to those wise Princes and Magistrates, who shall promote the righteous and peaceable Kingdom of Christ, and pay him the Kils of Homage, which He requireth; that so they may be, as the Light of the Morning, when the Sun riseth, even a Morning without Clouds: And as the tender Grasp out of the Earth, by the clear shining (of the Sun) after Rain. And we do believe, that the Time is at Hand, when the Mountains shall bring Peace, and the little Hills Righteous, unto the People. And then will it be understood, what it is to Reign By the Grace of God.

§ 13. But at this, Satan is extremely enraged, seeing that his Kingdom draweth near to a Period. And therefore, by all manner of Subtil Infinitions, and even by Violence, where he is not chained up, he is working incendiarily to put a Stop to the breaking forth of the Golden Age of Peace and Righteousness which we Proclaim. Hence many of our Brethren, in other Countries, have been, and are spitefully used, who are as shining Lamps in a crooked and stupid Generation, return many to the Wisdom of the Jüd. Persons of the holiest Holiness, and Greatest Modestly, have not been exempted from being exposed on one Hand, to a jealous and exalted Magnificence, and on the other Hand, to a furious and bigoted Vulgar. From hence are Imprisonments, Confinements and Exiles, for the Cause of the Testimony of Jesus, and of his Reign in Spirit, as well in Protestant as in Roman Catholic Countries. From hence also we think, are all those bitter Diports about the Limitation of our Love to God (the Substance of all true Religion) which are carried on at this Day, with most extreme Violence, by Persons of greatest Eminence: And all the present Controversies about the accessory Part of Christianity, to the Exclusion or Neglect of an inward Principle of Divine Life in the Soul, which is also a Principle of Divine Light and Love.

§ 14. And now, it having pleased God to put an Hook into the Nete of this Levitical, in this Kingdom especially, it is no Wonder he reareth and rageth the more, not being able to bear the Brightness of that high Spiritual Dispensation, which is beginning here to break out, and is declared by weak Instruments elected for this purpose. And therefore, since our first publick Appearance, he hath been ever buffed to inspire some of his Agents, to raise Tumults against the Publishers of the approaching New Kingdom; and even to cause and blaspheme where we have been met together to bless God.

But, besides, these, open, his Clandestine Designs are the more dangerous. Against both of which, we have been hitherto preferred by the Grace of Almighty God. And he is able, we know, to carry us through far greater Difficulties: As he:
The hath done our Fore-fathers. Whom we also believe to be no less willing, than able to assist us, and as many as are engaged in this Honourable Service.

§ 15. Whence, by the Evidence of Faith, we are assured, that he will not be wanting to give his extraordinary Attestations, as in the Days of old, so soon as the Fullness of Time shall be wholly come; and according as his Wisdom shall see expedient to raise up likewise, and inspire some great Prince, to carry on this Blessed Work. And in the mean while, we shall rest in this, that our Leader is more than and Hundred Centurions: And that since he hath been fit to employ us in a Preparatory Work, however secret and hidden, his Measures may be for the present, yet all shall be accomplished in the End, to the Surprise and Praise of the whole Earth.

This Declaration was first published in London, at a public Meeting of our Society, upon Easter-Sunday, which was held in Lorimer's Hall; and now printed by a general Order.

An Additional DECLARATION

In the Name of GOD, Amen.

It has been the Method of the Philadelphian Society in general, both here and in other Countries, to Enjoy and Communicate what they have received in a more private manner; as two or three should meet together in Unity: Notwithstanding it hath pleased God of late to Impel and Constrain some of us, on account of the near approach of the Kingdom of Christ, to go forth and Proclaim it openly, which we have done now for almost these two Years: and lately in a more publick manner; whereby the Alarm has been sufficiently given and a free offer made by God of a Renew'd Dispensation of his Grace and Spirit: which has been generally despised and Rejected, and the Messengers thereof despfightly intreated. All stumbling at the Stumbling-Block, the weak and contemptible beginnings of the Philadelphian State; through the gradual opening of the Holy Powers at this day, and being accompanied with many weaknesses of the Instruments: Together with the great latitude of Charity and Liberty it has gone forth in; and the Contrariety of its manner to that of the present Forms and Establishments of Human Wisdom, Tradition and Custom. We have done our part; and would willingly have persisted

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And hence we do intreat all that are Christians indeed, and in the Bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Earthen-born of this Brethren, we do earnestly beseech them not to take any offence at a Name; for tho we esteem none to proper as that of Christian to express a Disciple of the Blessed Jesus, and one Anointed with the Spirit; yet since besides this Old Name, so many other Names have been introduced, through the great Decay of Christian Charity, and even almost to the utter Destruction of it: This appears the most fit to revive the Name and to denote that Spirit of Universal Love toward all that are of the Same Offspring, which is the true Characteristic of that Religion which is Holy and Undishonored. Whence we hope and believe, that to them that are found in this Spirit this Name will not be displeasing, which as we bear, for they have a Right to bear; which is to Unite, and not to Divide; and which is an Old Name, and yet a New Name, as that Commandment wherein it is grounded, is both an Old Commandment and a New Commandment; yea, which in some Sense may be said (as to the Substance of it at least) to be the New Name given by Christ to the Angel of the Church bearing the outward Name hereof; and even designed and appropriated by the Holy Spirit to that blest State of the Church, which is Typified by this of Philadelphia, as a Name of pure Love, freed from the opprobria of its Suffering State, and invested with Power and Dominion. Thus Answering to Christ its Head, who after his Resurrection assumes a New Name agreeable to the change of his Condition, from a State of Suffering and Dying Love, to that of Love Triumphant in its Kingdom of Power and Glory. So that indeed it is not a Name Invented and newly taken up to serve a present Design, as is generally supposed, but a Name which belongs to such as stand in Relation to this future Glorious Church; and
waiting for it, and experiencing already in
some Degree the Power of it: Which also
has been Adapted to this State even by the
Learned Writers themselves in several A-
ges.

Wherefore seeing it was never intended
for a new Wall ofPartition to separate
Christian from Christian; If these are for
Paul, and others for Cephas, we will accord-
ing to the Truth of This Name, love them
both as our Brethren; and we can do no
otherwise if we are for Christ. In whom
Paul is one with Cephas, and Apollo one with
both: Yea, in whom all are One, that are
Christians, not after the Letter, but after
the Spirit; whose Baptism is inwardly of
the Heart, and whose Faith worketh by
Love; Which Covereth all things, Believ-
th all things, Hopeth all things, and En-
dureth all things, working in them accord-
ing to the effectual Operation of This Name
which he has been pleas’d to shed abroad
into their Souls, as a most precious Oint-

not can Anoint, To the
who was anointed above his Fell
the universal Spirit of Charity,
in this sacred Name. By which,
they were Marked in the Forehead, to
be known by all Men, who are his De-
ples. Now, being made Partakers here
by rich Grace, in some Measure, we
not rest till others of our Brethren, we
are yet Strangers to it, do also come
participate of the same; together with
Name of the City of our God, the City
Peace, which is the Mother of all a
Faithful: And which we believe, will de
fend out of Heaven from GOD, a
crown the Earth, in the last Days, with
the unfadable Blessings of Love and Peace
when all they that hear the Voice, which
is now gone out, and keep the Word of
Son’s Patience, will be made Pillars in the
Temple, and will shine as sixt Stars
the Firmament of the new Hea-

Given the 14th of May, being the Day
of the Opening of the Meeting of
this Society in a more retir’d place.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

Theophical Transactions, by the Philadelphian Society, consisting of Memoirs, Con-
ferences, Letters, Dissertations, Inquiries, &c. For the Advancement of Piety and Direc-
Philosophy. Ninth I. II. III. IV. V. Price 4s. 6d.
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