

abash my spirit, yet being still by them desired and entreated. I consented to their requests, and did twice at two several assemblies, (but in private,) though with much weakness and infirmity, discover my gifts among them, at which they not only seemed to be, but did frequently protest as in the sight of the Great God, that they were both affected and comforted, and gave thanks to the Father of mercies for the grace of God bestowed upon me. After this, sometimes, when some of them did go into the country to preach, they would also that I should go with them, where though as yet, I did not and durst not make use of my gifts *in an open way*, yet more privately still, as I came amongst the good people in those places, I did sometimes speak a word of admonition unto them also—which they, as well as others received with rejoicing at the mercy of God to me-ward, professing their souls were edified thereby. Wherefore to be brief, at least being still desired by the church after solemn prayer to the Lord, with fasting, I was more particularly called forth and appointed to a more ordinary and public preaching of the word, not only amongst them, that believed, but also to offer the gospel to those who had not yet received the faith thereof; about which I did evidently find in my mind a secret “pricking” forward thereto, though I bless God not a desire for vain glory, for all that time. I was most sorely afflicted with the fiery darts of the devil concerning my eternal state. But yet I could not be contented unless I was found in the exercise of my gift, unto which also I was greatly animated, not only by the continual desires of my brethren, but also by that saying of Paul to the Corinthians, “I beseech you brethren (ye know the household of Stephanas, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints” (1 Cor. xvi. 15. 16.) By this text I was made to see that the Holy Ghost never intended that men who had gifts and abilities should bury them in the earth but rather did command and stir up such to the exercise of their gifts.”

At length the “honest tinker” after preaching several years, was apprehended on the 12th Nov. 1660, on a charge of “upholding unlawful assemblies, and not conforming to the worship of the church of England.”—“When the constable came in,” says our worthy in his “Relation” of his improvement, “he found us only with our Bibles in our hands, ready to speak and hear the word of God. We were just about to begin our exercise. When brought before the Justice he was asked, “How he could prove it lawful for him to