

sesses the minds of a considerable portion of the American people, will shrink from those persevering efforts which may seem to promise to dissipate the delusion, and to change the measures, which threaten our national destruction. The heresy mentioned has an extensive and increasing acceptance all over our Country ; but is most prevalent in these northern states, where, we flatter ourselves, the Christian doctrine has most influence, and the principles and measures of genuine Republicanism are best understood. This heresy is the crime of almost all the professors of religion in New-England, I mean those whose religion, in the doctrines and modes of it, corresponds with that of our pious forefathers. It is the crime of almost the whole body of congregational ministers in this section of the United States ; and it is the crime of thousands of prudent and stable patriots, who were the most active in council, and the most valiant in arms, in achieving the grand object of the revolution. With this crime I stand charged, by, it is probable, a majority of my parishioners, and fellow-townsmen ; and to this charge I frankly plead guilty. With the unreservedness of the Apostle to the Gentiles, and I hope with a little of his consciousness of right, when he stood before Felix as his judge, and in presence of his accusers, who had come down from Jerusalem to Cesarea to follow up a prosecution against him, this I confess unto you, " that, after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things that are written in the law and in the prophets." As Paul was permitted to make his apology before Felix, and was attentively heard by him through the whole of his discourse, notwithstanding he was of a religion which it was the design and tendency of Paul's heresy to extirpate ; so I hope you will permit me to make my apology* before you, for myself, my fellow Christians, and fellow Countrymen, with whom I have the honor to agree in what concerns the safety

* The careless reader must not take the term apology here in the sense of concession, as it is more commonly used, for no concession is intended ; but in the sense of *defence*, which is the proper ecclesiastical sense, as we speak of the apology of Justin Martyr.