

for by a long series of mortifications, not probably intended on the Governor's part, but still felt and resented, as if each one was aimed at the heart. The letter was accompanied with another of the same date, also addressed to the Governor, by Increase Mather, and written in the same tone as that of his son. The Governor answered both of them at once.*

To these infamous and groundless charges of the Mathers, Gov. Dudley made the following reply :†

Roxbury, Feb. 3, 1707-8.

“GENTLEMEN :

“YOURS of the 2d instant I received, and the contents, both as to the matter and manner, astonish me to the last degree. I must think you have extremely forgotten your own station, as well as my character; otherwise it had been impossible to have made such an open breach upon all the laws of decency, honor, justice and Christianity, as you have done in treating me with an air of superiority, and contempt, which would have been greatly culpable towards a Christian of the lowest order, and is insufferably rude towards one, whom divine Providence has honored with the character of your Governor.

“I charitably hoped your second thoughts, ere this, would have corrected your past error, and would have given you a juster view of yourselves and me.

“I trust that I am not so lost to the spirit of Christianity but I am always ready to sustain thankfully all well designed reproofs, administered with a proper temper and spirit, and am disposed to take my reprover into my bosom. But I should be stupid not to distinguish between reproaches and Christian admonitions.

“I always thought that some of the laws of wise and Christian reproof were, that the things reproved be as to fact notorious and not bare matters of fear, jealousy and evil surmisings. That these facts be evident breaches of some known laws of Christianity. That the admonitions be not administered with bitterness, or vilifying, ignominious language, but with a spirit of meekness (Gal. vi. 1); that a superior be treated with a respectful distance; not reviled, not stigmatized, as the most profligate, but entreated, as a father (Job xxxiv. 1-8), (1 Tim. v. 1). That the admonition

* See Peabody's *Life of Dr. Cotton Mather*, Sparks's *N. E. Biography*.

† See *Mass. Hist. Coll.*, Vol. 3, p. 135.