 Resource 6

“He said what!?” Analysis of Danforth’s quotes

Place a number in the second column to match the quote to the analysis

| Quote from Danforth | Number | Analysis of quote |
| --- | --- | --- |
| “What proof do you submit for your charge, sir?” (1) | 2 | Danforth claims that there is a prodigious guilt in the country in response to Hale’s claim that there is a prodigious fear of this court in the country. Hale’s comment exposes that the public is scared of the absolute power the court holds at this time. Danforth goes further to say that their fear is due to overthrowing of Christianity in the country. This hints at the lack of separation that existed between Church and State at this time- the two were inseparable. |
| “There is a prodigious guilt in the country...there is fear in the country because there is a moving plot to topple Christ in the country!” (2) | 4 | Danforth’s sense of justice has been questioned by Hale and Danforth’s incredulity at this is palpable. In a public forum, his integrity has been questioned and it has been hinted at that his actions are unjust. Obviously, Danforth prides himself on his probity (strong moral principles)- however, from what the audiences witness, we could say that his moral principles are aligned so much with his sense of religion that by today’s standards they do not hold up. |
| “No uncorrupted man may fear this court...you are under arrest in contempt of this court...or you will be set in jail until you decide to answer all questions.” (3) | 1 | The burden of proof has been placed on on Giles to show that Putnam will gain financially if Jacobs hangs. Giles’ proof is that an honest man he knows heard Putnam admit to it, however he will not give up the man’s name in court. Danforth then threatens to hold him in contempt of the court which shows the draconian nature of his rule. |
| “Mr Hale, you surely do not doubt my justice” and “...you doubt my probity?” (4) | 5 | Danforth tries to use logic to explain how the prosecution of a witch may occur in a just way. However, this logic depends on so many assumptions, mistruths and intangible elements that it cannot be logical. He tries to prove his competence to the public by citing his long history of serving the court, though this is no definitive proof of justice or competence. |
| “I have been thirty-two year at the bar, sir, and I should be confounded were I called upon to defend these people...In an ordinary crime, how does one defend the accused? One calls up witnesses to prove his innocence. But witchcraft is ipso facto, on its face and by its nature, an invisible crime, is it not? Therefore, who may possibly be witness to it? The witch and the victim. None other” (5) | 3 | The hypocrisy and irony here is that many “uncorrupted” women had something to fear. The men are generally left unscathed by the court, especially the corrupted/weak ones such as Parrish and Putnam. The innocent women, however, do have much to fear, and therefore this gendered choice of “man” in Danforth’s statement is important. Again, we see that in arresting Giles for being in contempt of the court, Danforth functions in a draconian manner to maintain his absolute power in the courthouse. |