

**THE ACTS AND MONUMENTS OF THE
CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

by

JOHN FOXE

Commonly known as

FOXES' BOOK OF MARTYRS

Volume 3

From King Edward III to King Henry V.

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**THE FIFTH BOOK,
CONTAINING
THE LAST THREE HUNDRED YEARS FROM THE
LOOSING OUT OF SATAN.**

73. The Persecutions Foretold in the Scriptures



HUS having discoursed in these former books the order and course of years, from the first tying up of Satan unto the year of our Lord 1360, I have a little overpassed the stint of time in the Scripture appointed, for the loosing out of him again. For so it is written by St. John, Apoc. xx., that after a thousand years, Satan, the old dragon, shall be let loose again for a season, &c.

For the better explanation of the which mystery, let us first consider the context of the Scripture; afterward let us examine, by history and course of times, the meaning of the same. And first, to recite the words of the Apocalypse, the text of the prophecy is this, chap. xx.

"And I saw an angel descending from heaven, having a key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he took the dragon, the old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and put him in the bottomless dungeon and shut him up, and signed him with his seal, that he should no more seduce the Gentiles, till a thousand years were expired. And after that he must be loosed again for a little space of time. And I saw seats, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and the souls I saw of them which were beheaded for the testimony of Jesus," &c.

By these words of the Revelation, here recited, three special times are to be noted.

First, the being abroad of Satan to deceive the world.

Secondly, the binding up of him.

Thirdly, the loosing out of him again, after a thousand years consummate, for a time.

Concerning the interpretation of which times, I see the common opinion of many to be deceived by ignorance of histories, and state of things done in the church; they supposing that the chaining up of Satan for a thousand years, spoken of in the Revelation, was meant from the birth of Christ our Lord. Wherein I grant that spiritually the strength and dominion of Satan, in accusing and condemning us for sin, was cast down at the passion and by the passion of Christ our Saviour, and locked up not only for a thousand years, but for ever. Albeit, as touching the malicious hatred and fury of that serpent against the outward bodies of Christ's poor saints, which is the heel of Christ, to afflict and torment the church outwardly; that I judge to be meant in the Revelation of St. John, not to be restrained till the ceasing of those terrible persecutions of the primitive church; at what time it pleased God to pity the sorrowful affliction of his poor flock, being so long under persecution, the space of three hundred years, and so to assuage their griefs and torments; which is meant by binding up of Satan, worker of all those mischiefs; understanding thereby that forasmuch as the devil, the prince of this world, had now by the death of Christ the Son of God, lost all his power and interest against the soul of man, he should turn his furious rage and

malice, which he had to Christ, against the people of Christ, which is meant by the heel of the seed, Gen. iii., in tormenting their outward bodies; which yet should not be for ever, but for a determinate time, whenas it should please the Lord to bridle the malice and snaffle the power of the old serpent, and give rest unto his church for the term of a thousand years; which time being expired, the said serpent should be suffered loose again for a certain or a small time, Apoc. xx.

And thus to expound this prophetical place of Scripture, I am led by three reasons.

The first is, for that the binding up of Satan, and closing him in the bottomless pit by the angel, importeth as much that he was at liberty, raging and doing mischief, before. And, certes, those so terrible and so horrible persecutions of the primitive time universally through the whole world, during the space of three hundred years of the church, do declare no less. Wherein it is to be thought and supposed, that Satan all that time was not fastened and closed up.

The second reason moving me to think that the closing up of Satan was after the ten persecutions of the primitive church, is taken out of the twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse; where we read, that after the woman, meaning the church, had travailed forth her man-child, the old dragon, the devil, the same time being cast down from heaven, drawing the third part of the stars with him, stood before the woman with great anger, and persecuted her, that is, the church of God, with a whole flood of water, (that is, with abundance of all kinds of torments,) and from thence went moreover to fight against the residue of her seed, and stood upon the sands of the sea, whereby it appeareth that he was not as yet locked up.

The third reason I collect out of the Apocalypse, thirteenth chapter, where it is written of the beast, signifying the imperial monarchy of Rome, that he had power to make war forty and two months. By the which months is meant, no doubt, the time that the dragon and the persecuting emperors should have in afflicting the saints of the primitive church. The computation of which forty-two months, counting every month for a sabbath of years, that is, for seven years, after the order of Scripture, riseth to the sum, counting from the passion of the Lord Christ, of three hundred years, lacking six; at what time Maxentius, the last persecutor in Rome, fighting against Constantine, was drowned with his soldiers, like as Pharaoh, persecuting the children of Israel, was drowned in the Red Sea. Unto the which forty-two months, or sabbaths of years, if ye add the other six years wherein Licinius persecuted in the east, ye shall find just three hundred years, as is specified before in the first book of this volume.

After the which forty and two months, being expired, manifest it is that the fury of Satan, that is, his violent malice and power over the saints of Christ, was diminished and restrained universally through the whole world.

Thus then, the matter standing evident that Satan, after three hundred years, counting from the passion of Christ, began to be chained up, at what time the persecution of the primitive church began to cease; now let us see how long this binding up of Satan should continue, which was promised in the book of the Revelation to be a thousand years; which thousand years, if ye add to the forty-two months of years, that is, to two hundred and ninety-four years, they make one thousand two hundred and ninety four years after the passion of the Lord. To these, moreover, add the thirty years of the age of Christ, and it cometh to the year of our

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Lord 1324, which was the year of the letting out of Satan, according to the prophecy of the Apocalypse.

The first persecution of the primitive church, beginning at the thirtieth year of Christ, was prophesied to continue forty-two months; that is, till A. D. 294.

The ceasing of the last persecution of the primitive church by the death of Licinius, the last persecutor, began in the year 324 from the nativity of Christ, which was from the thirtieth year of his age, 294.

The binding up of Satan after peace given to the church, counting from the thirty years of Christ, began A. D. 294, and lasted a thousand years, that is, counting from the thirtieth year of Christ, to the year 1294.

About which year Pope Boniface the Eighth was pope, and made the sixth book of the Decretals, confirmed the orders of friars, and privileged them with great freedoms, as appeareth by his constitution, Super Cathedram, A. D. 1294.

Unto the which count of years doth not much disagree that which I found in a certain old chronicle prophesied and written in the latter end of a book; which book was written, as it seemeth, by a monk of Dover, and remaineth yet in the custody of William Cary, a citizen of London; alleging the prophecy of one Hayncard, a Grey Friar, grounded upon the authority of Joachim the abbot, prophesying that antichrist should be born the year from the nativity of Christ 1260; which is, counting after the Lord's passion, the very same year and time when the orders of friars both Dominics and Franciscans began first to be set up by Pope Honorius the Third, and by Pope Gregorius the Ninth, which was the year of our Lord, counting after his passion, 1226; and counting after the nativity of the Lord, was the year 1260.

These things thus premised for the loosing out of Satan, according to the prophecy of the Apocalypse, now let us enter (Christ willing) to the declaration of these latter times which followed after the letting out of Satan into the world; describing the wondrous perturbations and cruel tyranny stirred up by him against Christ's church; also the valiant resistance of the church of Christ against him and antichrist, as in these our books here under following may appear.

The argument of which books consisteth in two parts: first, to treat of the raging fury of Satan now loosed, and of antichrist, against the saints of Christ fighting and travailing for the maintenance of the truth, and reformation of the church. Secondly, to declare the decay and ruin of the said antichrist, through the power of the word of God, being at length, either in a great part of the world overthrown, or, at least, universally in the whole world detected.

Thus then to begin with the year of our Lord 1360, wherein I have a little, as is aforesaid, transgressed the stint of the first loosing out of Satan: we are come now to the time wherein the Lord, after long darkness, beginneth some reformation of his church, by the diligent industry of sundry his faithful and learned servants, of whom divers already we have foretouched in the former book before, as namely, Guliel. de Sancto Amore, Marsilius Patavinus, Ockam, Robertus Gallus, Robertus Groshead, Petrus de Cugneriis, Johannes Rupescissanus, Conradus Hager, Johannes de Poliacco, Cesenas, with other more, which withstood the corrupt errors and intolerable enormities of the bishop of Rome, beside them which about these times were put to death by the said bishop of Rome, as Castillo and Franciscus de Arcatara in the book before recorded; also the two Franciscans, martyrs, which were burned at Avignon, mentioned above.

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Now to these, the Lord willing, we will add such other holy martyrs and confessors, who following after in the course of years with like zeal and strength of God's word, and also with like danger of their lives, gave the like resistance against the enemy of Christ's religion, and suffered at his hands the like persecutions. First, beginning with that godly man, whosoever he was, the author of the book, his name I have not, entitled The Prayer and Complaint of the Ploughman; written, as it appeareth, about this present time.

Which book, as it was faithfully set forth by William Tindal, so I have as truly distributed the same abroad to the reader's hands; neither changing any thing of the matter, neither altering many words of the phrase thereof. Although the oldness and age of his speech and terms be almost grown now out of use, yet I thought it so best, both for the utility of the book to reserve it from oblivion, as also in his own language to let it go abroad, for the more credit and testimony of the true antiquity of the same. The matter of this complaining prayer of the ploughman thus proceedeth.

74. The Prayer and Complaint of the Ploughman.

"Jesus Christ that was ybore of the maide Marie, have on thy poore servants mercy and pitie, and helpe them in their great need to fight against sinne, and against the divell that is author of sinne, and more neednesse there never was to crie to Christ for helpe, than it is right now. For it is fulfilled that God said by Isay the prophet; Yee riseth up earlich to follow drunkennesse, and to drinke till it be even, the harpe and other minstrelsies beeth in your feasts and wine. But the worke of God ye ne beholdeth not, ne taketh no keepe to the workes of his hands: and therefore my people is take prisoner, for they ne had no cunning. And the noblemen of my people deyeden for hunger, and the multitude of my people weren drie for thirst, and therefore hell hath drawne abrode their soule, and hath yopened his mouth without any end. And eftsoones saith Isay the prophet; The word is floten away, and the highnesse of the people is ymade sicke, and the earth is infect of his wonnyers, for they have broken my lawes, and ychanged my right, and han destroyed mine everlasting bond and forward betweene them and me. And therefore cursing shall devoure the earth, and they that wonneth on the earthly shallen done sinne. And therefore the earth tilyars shullen ware wood, and few men shullen ben yleft upon the earth. And yet saith Isay the prophet, This saith God, Forasmuch as this people nigheth me with their mouth, and glorifieth me with their lips, and their heart is farre from me; and they han ydrad more mens commandement, than mine, and more draw to their doctrines, than mine; therefore will I make a great wondring unto this people, wisdom shall perish away from wise men, and understanding of ready men shall bee yhid. And so it seemeth that another saying of Isay is fulfilled, here as God bad him goe teach the people, and said, Goe forth and say to this people: Eares have ye, and understand ye not, and eyes ye have and sight, ne know ye not. Make blind the heart of this people, and make their eares heavie, and close their eyen, lest he see with his eyne, and yheare with his ears, and understand with his heart, and be yturned, and ych heale him of his sicknesse. And Isay said to God; How long Lord shall this bee? And God said, For to that the cities ben desolate withouten a wonnier, and an house withouten a man.

"Heere is mychel nede for to make sorrow, and to crie to our Lord Iesus Christ heartilich for helpe and for succour, that hee wole forgive us our sinnes, and give us grace and conning to serven him better hereafter. And God of his endlesse mercie give us grace and conning trulich to tellen which is Christs law in helping of mens soules; for we beth lewd men and sinfull men, and unconning, and if hee woll bee our help and our succour, we shullen well performe our purpose. And blessed be our Lord God that hideth his wisdom from wise men, and fro readie men, and teacheth it to small children, as Christ teacheth in the gossell.

"Christen men have a law to keepe, the which law hath two partes. Beleeve in Christ that is God, and is the foundment of their law, and upon this foundment, as he said to Peter, and the gossell beareth witnesse, he woll byelden his church, and this is the 1. partie of Christs law. The 2. partie of this law beth Christs commandements that beth written in the gossell, and more verilich in Christen mens hearts.

"And as touching the beleve, we beleven that Christ is God, and that there ne is no God but he. We beleven neverthelesse that in the Godhead there bene three

persons, the Father, the Sonne, and the Holy Ghost, and all these three persons ben one God, and not many gods, and all they beth ylich mightie, ylich good, and ylich wise, and ever have ben, and ever shullen ben. We beleven this God made the world of nought, and man hee made after his owne likenesse in Paradise, that was a land of blisse, and gave him that land for his heritage, and bad him that hee should not eate of the tree of knowledge of good and evill, that was amid Paradise. Then the divell, that was fallen out of heaven for his pride, had envie to man, and by a false suggestion hee made man eate of this tree, and breake the commandement of God, and tho was man overcome of the divell, and so hee lost his heritage, and was put out thereof into the world that was a land of travell, and of sorrow under the fiends thraldome, to bee punished for his trespasse. There man followed wickednesse and sinne, and God for the sinne of man sent a floud into this world, and drownd all mankinde, save eight soules. And after this floud hee let men multiply in the world, and so he assayed whether man dread him or loved him, and among other hee found a man, that hight Abraham: this man hee proved whether hee loved him and dread him, and bad him that he should offeren Isaac his sonne upon an hill; and Abraham as a true servant fulfilled the Lords commandement: and for his buxumnesse and truth, God sware unto Abraham that hee would multiply his seed as the gravell in the sea, and as the starres of heaven, and hee behight to him and to his heires the land of behest for heritage for ever, gif they wolden ben his true servants and keepe his hests. And God held him forward, for Isaac Abrahams sonne begat Jacob and Esau: and of Iacob, that is ycleped Israel, comen God's people that hee chose to bee his servants, and to whom he behight the land of behest. This people was in great thraldome in Egypt under Pharaoh that was king of Egypt: and they crieden to God that hee should deliveren them out of that thraldome, and so hee did: for hee sent to Pharaoh, Moses and his brother Aaron, and bad him deliver his people to done him sacrifice: and tofore Pharaoh hee made Moses done many wonders, or that Pharaoh would deliver his people, and at the last by night he delivered his people out of thraldome, and led them through a desert toward the land of behest, and there hee gave them a law, that they shoulden liven after, when, they comen into their country, and in their way thitherward, the ten commandements God wrote himselfe in two tables of stone; the remnant of the law hee taught them by Moses his servant, how they should doe everichone to other, and gif they trespassed against the law, hee ordained how they shoulden be punished. Also hee taught them what manner sacrifices they should doe to him, and hee chose him a people to ben his priests, that was Aaron and his children, to done sacrifices in the tabernacle, and afterward in the temple also. He chose him the remnant of the children of Levi to ben servants in the tabernacle to the priest, and hee said; When ye come into the land of behest, the children of Levi they shullen have none heritage amongst their brethren, for I would bee their part, and their heritage, and they shullen serve mee in the tabernacles by dayes and by nights, and hee ordained that priests should have a part of the sacrifices that were offred in the tabernacle, and the first begotten beasts, both of men and beasts and other things, as the law telleth. And the other children of Levi, that served in the tabernacle, should have tithings of the people to their livelode, of the which tithings they should given the priests the tenth party in forme of offering. The children of Levi, both priests and other, should have houses and crofts, and lessewes for their beasts in the land of behest, and none other heritage: and so God gave them their land of behest, and bad them that they ne should worship no other than him: so hee bad them that they should keepe his commandements; and gif they did so, all their enemies about them should drede them, and bee their servants. And gif they worshipped false gods, and so

forsaken his lawes, hee behight them that hee would bring them out of that land, and make them serve their enemies: but yet he said he would not benemen his mercie away from them, if they would crie mercy and amend their defaults; and all this was done on Gods side.

"And here is much love showed of God to man. And who so looketh the Bible, hee shall finde that man showed him little love againeward: for when they were come into their heritage, they forgatten their God, and worshipped false gods. And God sent to them the prophets and his servants feile times to bid them withdrawen them from their sinnes, and other they have slown them, or they beaten them, or they led them in prison: and oft-times God tooke upon them great vengeance for their sinnes; and when they cried after helpe to God, hee sent them helpe and succour. This is the generall processe of the Old Testament, that God gave to his people by Moses his servant. And all this Testament and this doing ne was but a shadow and a figure of a new Testament that was given by Christ. And it was byhoten by Ieremie the prophet, as Saint Paul beareth witnesse in the Epistle that hee writeth to the Iewes. And Ieremie saith in this wise; Loe daies shall come, God saith, and I will make a new band to the house of Israel, and to the house of Iuda, not like the forward that I made with their fathers, in that day that I tooke their hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, the which forward they maden veine, and I had lordship over them. But this shall bee the forward that I wold make with them after those dayes: I will give my lawes with them in their inwardnesse, and I will writen them in their hearts, and I will bee their God, and they should bee my people: and after that a man shall not teach his neighbour, ne his brother. For all (God saith) from the least to the most, should know me, for I will forgiven them their sinnes, and will no more thinke on their sins.

"This is the New Testament, that Christ both God and man, borne of the maide Mary, hee taught here in this world to bring man out of sinne, and out of the divels thraldome and service to heaven, that is a land of blisse and heritage, to all tho that beleeven on him, and keepen his commandements, and for his teaching hee was done to the death. But the third day hee arose againe from death to life, and fet Adam and Eve, and many other folke out of hell, and afterward he came to his disciples, and comforted them. After, hee stied up to heaven to his Father, and tho he sent the Holy Ghost amongst his disciples, and in time comming, hee will come and demen all mankinde after their workes, and after the words hee spake upon earth; some to blisse, within body and in soule ever withouten end; and some to paine withouten end, both in body and in soule.

"This is our beleewe and all Christen mens, and this beleewe is the first point of the New Testament, that ych Christen man is hold stedfastly to beleewe, and rather to suffer the death, then forsaken this beleewe; and so this beleewe is the bread of spirituall life, in forsaking sinne, that Christ brought us to life.

"But forasmuch as mans living ne stondest not all onlych by bread, he hath ygiven us a draught of water of life to drinke. And who that drinketh of that water he ne shall never afterward ben athurst. For this water is the cleare teaching of the gossell, that encloseth seven commandements.

"The first is this: Thou shalt love thy God over all other things, and thy brother as thy selfe, both enemy and friend.

"The second commandment is of meeknesse, in the which Christ chargeth us to forsake lordship upon our brethren, and other worldly worships, and so hee did himselfe.

"The third commandment, is in standing stedfastlich in truth, and forsaking all falsenesse.

"The fourth commandment, is to suffer in this world diseases and wrongs, withouten againststandings.

"The fifth commandment is mercy, to forgiven our brethren their trespasse, as often time as they gilteth, without asking of vengeance.

"The sixth commandment is poorenesse in spirit, but not to ben a beggar.

"The seventh commandment, is chastitie; that is, a forsaking of fleshlich likings displeasing to God. These commandements enclosen the ten commandements of the old law, and somewhat more.

"This water is a blessed drinke for Christen mens soules. But more harme is, much folke would drinke of this water, but they mowe not come thereto: for God saith by Ezechiel the prophet; When ich geve to you the most cleane water to drinke, ye troubled that water with your feet, and that water is so defouled, ye geve my sheepe to drinke. But the cleane water is yhid fro the sheepe, and but gif God cleare this, it is dread lest the sheepe dyen for thurst. And Christ that is the wisdom of the Father of heaven, and well of this wisdom, that come from heaven to earth to teach man this wisdom, through the which man should overcome the sleights of the divell, that is the principall enemy of mankind; have mercy and pitie of his people, and shew, if it bee his will, how this water is troubled, and by whom; and sith cleare this water that his sheepe mowe drinke hereof, and kele the thirst of their soules. Blessed mote our Lord ben, for he hath ytaught us in the gospel, that ere then he would come to the universall dome, then should come many in his name, and sayen, that they weren Christ; and they shoulde done many wonders, and begilen many men; and many false prophets shoulde arisen and beguilen much folke.

"A Lord, yblessed mote thou ben of everich creature; which ben they that have ysaid that they weren in Christ, and have thus begiled thy people? Trulich Lord I trow, thilke that sayen that they ben in thy stead, and benemen thy worship, and maken the people worshippen them as God, and have hid thy lawes from thy people: Lord, who durst sit in thy stead, and benemen thee thy worship and thy sacrifice, and durst maken the people worshippen them as gods? The Sauter tels, that God ne wole not in the day of dome demen men for bodilich sacrifices and holocaustes; but God saith; Yeld to me sacrifice of heryng, and yeld to God thine avowes, and clepe me in the day of tribulation, and ich wil defend thee, and thou shalt worship me.

"The heryng of God standeth in three things. In loving God over all other things; in dreading God over all other things; in trusting in God over all other things.

"These three points Christ teacheth in the gossell. But I trow men loven him but a little. For who so loveth Christ, he wole kepen his words. But men holden his words for heresie and folly, and keepeth mens words. Also men dreden more men and mens lawes and their cursings, than Christ and his lawes and his cursings. Also men hopen more in men and mens helpe, than they doe in Christ and in his helpe. And thus hath hee, that setteth in Gods stede, bynomen God these three heryngs, and makes men loven him and his lawes, more than Christ and Christs law, and dreden

him also. And there as the people shulden yeeld to God their vowes, he saith, hee hath power to assoylen them of their avowes, and so this sacrifice hee nemeth away from God. And there as the people should cry to God in the day of tribulation, hee letteth them of their crying to God, and bynemeth God that worship. This day of tribulation is when man is fallen through sinne into the divels service, and then we shulden cry to God after helpe, and axen forgiveness of our sinne, and make great sorrow for our sinne, and ben in full will to doe so no more, ne none other sinne, and that our Lord God wole forgiven vs our sinne, and maken our soule cleane. For his mercy is endlesse.

"But Lord, heere men haue benomen thee much worship: for men seyn that thou ne might not cleane assoylen vs of our sinne: but if we knowedgen our sinnes to priests, and taken of them a penance for our sinne, gif we mowen speake with them.

"A Lord, thou forgave sometime Peter his shames, and also Mary Magdalen, and many other sinfull men without shriuing to priests, and taking penance of priests for their sinnes. And Lord thou art as mighty now as thou were that time, but gif any man haue bynomen thee thy might. And wee lewd men beleuen, that there is no man of so great power, and gif any man maketh himselfe of so great power, he heighteth himselfe aboute God. And S. Paul speaketh of one that sitteth in the temple of God, and heighten him aboute God; and gif any such be, he is a false Christ.

"But hereto seyn priests, that when Christ made clean leproous men, he bade them go and shew them to priests. And therefore they seyn that it is a commandement of Christ, that a man should shewen his sinne to priests. For as they seyn, lepre in the old law betokeneth sinne in this new law. A Lord God, whether thine apostles knew not thy meaning as well as men done now? And gif they hadden yknow that thou haddest commanded men to shriuen them to priests, and they ne taught not that commandement to the people; me thinketh they hadden ben to blame. But I trow they knewen well that it was none of thy commandements, ne needfull to heale of mans soule. And as me thinketh, the law of lepre is nothing to the purpose of shriuing: for priests in the old law hadden certaine points and tokens to know whether a man were leproous or not: and gif they were leproous, they hadden power to putten them away from other cleane men, for to that they weren cleane; and then they hadden power to receiven him among his brethren, and offeren for him a sacrifice to God.

"This is nothing to the purpose of shriuing. For there is but one Priest, that is Christ, that may know in certaine the lepre of the soule. Ne no priest may make the soule cleane of her sinne, but Christ that is Priest after Melchisedeks order: ne no priest here beneath may ywit for certaine whether a man be clean of his sinne, or cleane assoiled, but gif God tell it him by reuelation. Ne God ordained not that his priests should set men a penance for their sinne, after the quantitie of the sinne, but this is mans ordinance, and it may well be that there commeth good thereof. But I wot well that God is much unworshipped thereby. For men trust more in his absolutions, and in his yeeres of grace, than in Christs absolutions, and thereby is the people much appaired. For now the sorrow a man should make for his sinne, is put away by this shrift: and a man is more bold to doe sinne for trust of this shrift, and of this bodilich penance.

"Another mischiefe is, that the people is ybrought into this beliefe, that one priest hath a great power to assoylen a man of his sinne and clenner, than another priest hath.

"Another mischiefe is this, that some priest may assoylen them both of sin and paine: and in this they taken them a power that Christ granted no man in earth, ne he ne used it dought on earth himselfe.

"Another mischiefe is, that these priests sellen forgiuenesse of mens sinnes and absolutions for money; and this is an heresie accursed that is ycleped simony: and all thilke priests that axeth price for granting of spiritual] grace, beth by holy lawes depriued of their priesthood, and thilke that assenteth to this heresie. And be they ware; for Helyse the prophet toke no mony of Naaman, when he was made cleane of his lepre; but Giesi his seruant; and therefore the lepre of Naaman abode with him and with his heires euermore after.

"Here is much matter of sorrow, to see the people thus farre ylad away from God and worshupen a false god in earth, that by might and by strength hath ydone away the great sacrifice of God out of his temple: of which mischiefe and discomfort, Daniel maketh mention, and Christ beareth therof witnesse in the gossell. Who that readeth it, understand it. Thus we haue ytold apertly, how he that saith he sitteth in Christs stede bynemeth Christ his worship, and his sacrifice of his people, and maketh the people worshupen him as a god on earth.

"Cry we to God, and knowledge we our sinnes everichone to other, as S. James teacheth, and pray wee heartilich to God everichone one for other, and then we shulen hopen forgiuenesse of our sinnes. For God that is endlesse in mercy saith, that he ne will not a sinfull mans death, but that he be turned from his sin and liven. And therefore, when he came downe to save mankind, he gaue us a law of love and of mercy; and bade, gif a man doe a trespasse, amend him priuilich, and gif he leue not his sinne, amend him before witnesse, and gif he ne amendeth not, men should tell to the church; and gif he ne amendeth not then, men should shone his company as a publican, or a man that is misbeleued and this law was yfigured in the law of lepre, who that reades it, he may see the sooth.

"But Lord God, he that sitteth in thy stede hath undoe thy law of mercy and love; Lord, thou biddest loven enemies as our selfe; and shewest in the gossell there as the Samaritan had mercy on the Iew. And thou biddest us also prayen for them that cursen us, and that defamen us, and pursuen us to death. And so Lord thou diddest, and thine apostles also. But hee that clepeth himselfe thy vicar on earth, and head of thy church, he hath undone thy law of love and mercy. For gif we speaken of loving our enemies, he teacheth us to fight with our enemies, that Christ hath forboden. He curseth and desireth vengeance to them that so doth to him. Gif any man pursueth him, he curseth him, that it is a sorrow a Christen man to hearken the cursings that they maken, and blasphemies in such cursing. Of what thing that I know, I may beare true witnesse.

"But gif we speake of louing of our brethren, this is undone by him that saith he is Gods vicar in earth. For Christ in the gossell biddeth us, that we shoulde clepen us no father upon earth: but clepen God our Father, to maken us loue perfittlich together. And he clepeth himselfe Father of fathers, and maketh many religions, and to euerich a father. But whether is love and charity encreased by these fathers and by their religions, or else ymade lesse? For a frier ne loueth not a monke, ne a secular man neither, nor yet one frier another that is not of the order, and it is againward.

"A Lord, me thinketh that there is little perfection in these religions. For Lord, what charitie hauen such men of religion, that knowne how they mown againstand

sinne, and flee away from their brethren that ben more uncunning than they ben, and sufferen them to trauelen in the world withouten their counsell as beasts? Trulich Lord, me thinketh that there is but little charitie, and then is there little perfection. Lord God, when thou were on earth, thou were among sinfull men to drawen them from sinne, and thy disciples also. And Lord, I trow thou ne grantest not one man more cunning than another all for himselfe: and I wote well that lewd men that ben laborers, ne trauell not alonlich for himselfe. Lord our beliefe is, that thou ne were not of the world, ne thy teaching, neither thy seruants that linden after thy teaching. But all they forsaken the world, and so euery Christen man must. But Lord; whether thou taughtest men to forsake their brethrens company and trauell of the world, to liven in ease and in rest, and out of trouble and anger of the world, by their brethrens trauell, and so forsaken the world?

"A Lord, thou ne taughtest not a man to forsaken a poore estate and trauell, to ben afterward a lord of his brethren, or beene a lords fellow, and dwelling with lords, as doth men of these new religions. Lord thou ne taughtest not men of thy religion thus to forsake the world, to liven in perfection by themselfe in ease, and by other mens trauell. But Lord they sayen they ben ybound to thy seruice, and seruen thee both night and day in singing their praiers, both for themselfe and for the other men, that done them good both quicke and dead, and some of them gone about to teach thy people when they hauen leisure.

"A Lord, gif they be thy servants; whose seruants ben we that cannot preien as they done? And when thou were here on earth, for our neede thou taughtest thy seruants to preien thy Father priulich and shortlich: and gif there had beene a better manner of preying, I trow thou wouldest haue taught it in help of thy people. And Lord thou reouest hypocrites that preyen in long prayer, and in open places, to ben yholden holy men. And thou seyst in the gospel, Wo to you Pharisies hypocrites. And Lord thou ne chargedst not thy seruants with such manner seruice: but thou seyst in the gossell, that the Pharisies worshopen thee with their lips, and their heart is farre from thee. For they chargen more mens traditions than thy commandement.

"And Lord, we lewd men han a beliefe, that thy goodnesse is endlesse: and gif we keepen thine hestes, then ben we thy true seruants. And though we preyen thee but a little and shortlich, thou wilt thinken on us, and granten us that us nedeth, for so thou behighted us sometime. And Lord I trow, that pray a man neuer so many quaint prayers, gif hee ne keepe not thine hests, hee is not thy good seruant. But gif hee keepe thine bests, then hee is thy good seruant. And so me thinketh, Lord, that praying of long praiers ne is not the seruice that thou desirest, but keeping of thine hests: and then a lewd man may serue God as well as a man of religion; though that the ploughman ne may not haue so much siluer for his prayer, as men of religion. For they kunnen not so well preisen their praiers as these other chap-men: but Lord, our hope is, that our praiers be neuer the worse, though it be not so well sold as other mens prayers.

"Lord, Ezechiel the prophet saith, that when he spake to the people thy words, they turned thy words into songs and into tales. And so Lord men done now: they sing merilich thy words, and that singing they clepen thy seruice. But Lord I trow that the best singers herieth thee not most: but he that fulfilleth thy words, he herieth thee full well, though hee weepe more than sing: and I trow that weeping for breaking of thy commandements bee more pleasing seruice to thee than the singing of thy words. And would God that men would serue him in sorrow for their sins, and that they shoulde

afterward seruen thee in mirth. For Christ saith, yblessed ben they that maken sorrow, for they shoulde ben ycomforted. And woe to them that ben merry, and haue their comfort in this world. And Christ said, that the world should joyen, and his seruants shulde be sorry, but their sorrow should be turned into joy.

"A Lord, hee that clepeth himselfe thy vicar upon earth hath yordained an order of priests to doe thy seruice in church tofore thy lewd people in singing mattens, euensong, and masse. And therefore hee chargeth lewd men in paine of cursing, to bring to his priests tithings and offrings to finden his priests, and he clepeth that Gods part, and due to priests that seruen him in church.

"But Lord, in the old law the tithings of the lewd people ne were not due to priests, but to that other childer of Leui that serueden thee in the temple, and the priest hadden their part of sacrifices, and the first bygeten beasts and other things as the law telleth. And Lord S. Paul thy seruant saith, that the order of the priesthood of Aaron ceased in Christs comming and the law of that priesthood. For Christ was end of sacrifices yoffered upon the crosse to the Father of heauen, to bring man out of sinne, and become himselfe a priest of Melchisedeks order. For he was both King and Priest, without beginning and end; and both the priesthood of Aaron, and also the law of that priesthood ben ychanged in the comming of Christ. And S. Paul saith it is reprobud, for it brought no man to perfection. For blood of goats, ne of other beasts ne might done away sinne, for to that Christ shad his blood.

"A Lord Iesus; whether thou ordenest an order of priests to offren in the auter thy flesh and thy blood to bringen men out of sin, and also out of peine? And whether thou geue them alonelych a power to eate thy flesh and thy blood, and whether none other man may eate thy flesh and thy blood withouten leue of priests? Lord, we beleuen, that thy flesh is uery meat, and thy blood uery drinke; and who eateth thy flesh, and drinketh thy blood, dwelleth in thee, and thou in him, and who that eateth this bread shall liue without end. But Lord thine disciples said; this is a word; but thou answerest them and saidest; when ye seeth man soone stiuen up there he was rather, the spirit is that maketh you liue, the words that ych haue spoken to you ben spirit and life. Lord, yblessed mote thou be, for in this word thou teachest us that he that keepeth thy words, and doth after them, eateth thy flesh, and drinketh thy blood, and hath an euerlasting life in thee. And for we shoulde haue minde of this living, thou gauest us the sacrament of thy flesh and blood, in forme of bread and wine at thy supper, before that thou shouldest suffer thy death, and tooke bread in thine hand, and saidest; Take ye this, and eate it, for it is my body: and thou tookest wine, and blessedst it, and said; This is the blood of a new and an euerlasting testament, that shall be shed for many men in forgiuense of sins: as oft as ye done this, do ye this in mind of me.

"A Lord, thou ne bede not thine disciples maken this a sacrifice, to bring men out of peines, gif a priest offred thy body in the altar; but thou bed them goe and fullen all the folke in the name of the Father, and the Sonne, and the Holy Ghost, in forgiuense of their sins; and teach ye them to keepe those things that ych haue commanded you. And Lord, thine disciples ne ordained not priests principallich to make thy body in sacrament, but for to teach the people, and good husbandmen that well gouerne their houtholds, both wives and children, and their meiny, they ordeined to be priests to teachen other men the law of Christ, both in word, in dede, and they lived ein as true Christian men, euery day they eaten Christs body, and drinken his blood, to the sustenance of living of their soules, and other whiles they taken of the sacrament of his body in forme of bread and wine, in minde of our Lord Iesus Christ.

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

"But all this is turned upsedowne: for now whoso will liven as thou taughtest, hee shall ben holden a foole. And gif he speake thy teaching, he shall ben holden an hereticke, and accursed. Lord, haue no longer wonder hereof, for so they seiden to thee when thou were here sometime. And therefore we moten take in patience their words of blasphemy as thou diddest thy selfe, or else we were to blame. And trulich Lord I trow, that if thou were now in the world, and taughtest as thou diddest sometime, thou shouldest ben done to death. For thy teaching is damned for heresie of wise men of the world, and then moten they needes ben heretikes that teachen thy lore, and all they also that trauailen to liue thereafter.

"And therefore Lord, gif it be thy will, helpe thine uncunning and lewd seruants, that wolen by their power and their cunning helpe to destroy sinne. Leue Lord, sith thou madest woman in helpe of man, and in a more fraile degree than man is, to be gouerned by mans reason: what perfection of charity is in these priests and in men of religion, that haue forsaken spoushod that thou ordeinedst in Paradise betwixt man and woman, for perfection to forsaken traueile, and liven in ease by other mens traueile? For they mow not doe bodilich workes for defouling of their hands, with whom they touchen thy precious body in the altar.

"Leue Lord, gif good men forsaken the company of woman, and needes they moten haue the gouernaile of man, then moten they ben ycoupled with shrewes, and therefore thy spousehod that thou madest in cleannesse from sinne, it is now ychanged into liking of the flesh. And Lord, this is a great mischief unto thy people. And young priests and men of religion, for default of wives, maken many women horen, and drawne through their ensample many other men to sinne, and the ease that they liven in, and their welfare, is a great cause of this mischief. And Lord me thinketh, that these ben quaint orders of religion, and none of thy sect that wolen taken horen, whilke God forbends, and forsaken wives that God ne forbendeth not: and forsaken trauaile that God commands, and geuen their selfe to idlenes, that is the mother of all naughtinesse.

"And Lord, Mary thy blessed mother and Ioseph touched oftentimes thy body, and wroughten with their hands, and liueden in as much cleannes of soule, as our priests done now, and touched thy body, and thou touchedest them in their souls. And Lord our hope is, that thou goen not out of a poore mans soule that traueileth for his livelode with his hands. For Lord, our beliefe is, that thine house is mans soule, that thou madest after thine owne likenesse.

"But Lord God, men maketh now great stonen houses full of glasen windowes, and clepeth thilke thine houses and churches. And they setten in these houses mawmets of stocks and stones, tofore them they knelen priuilich and apert, and maken their praier; and all this they sayen is thy worship, and a great herying to thee. A Lord, thou forbiddest sometime to make such mawmets, and who that had yworshipped such, had ben worthy to be dead.

"Lord in the gospel thou sayst, that true heriers of God ne herieth him not in that hill beside Samaria, ne in Hierusalem neither, but true heriers of God herieth him in spirit and in truth. And Lord God, what herying is it to bidden thee a church of dead stones, and robben thy quicke churches of their bodilich liuelood? Lord God, what herying is it, to cloth mawmets of stocks and of stones in siluer and in gold, and in other good colours? And Lord I see thine image gone in cold and in hete, in clothes all to-broken, without shone and hosen, an hungred and athurst. Lord what herying is it to teende tapers and torches before blinde mawmets that mowen not I seyen? And hide

thee that art our light and our lantern towards heauen, and put thee under a bushell, that for darknesse we ne may not seene our way toward blisse? Lord what herying is it to kneele tofore mawmets that mow not yheren, and worshepen them with preyers, and maken thine quicke images kneele before them, and asken of them absolutions and blessings, and worshepen them as gods, and putten thy quicke images in thraldome and in traueile euermore as beasts, in cold and in heate, and in feeble fare to finden them in liken of the world? Lord what herying is it to fetch deed mens bones out of the ground, there as they shoulde kindelich rotten, and shrinen them in gold and siluer; and suffren the quick bones of thine images to rot in prison for default of clothings? And suffren also thy quicke images to perish for default of sustenance, and rooten in the hoorehouse in abominable lechery? Some become theeues and robbers, and manquellers, that mighten ben yholpen with the gold and siluer that hongeth about deed mens bones, and other blind mawmets of stocks and stones.

"Lord, here ben great abominations that thou shewdest to Ezechiel thy prophet, that priests done in thy temple, and yet they clepen that thine herying. But leue Lord, me thinketh that they louen thee little that thus defoulen thy quicke images, and worshippen blinde mawmets.

"And Lord, another great mischiefe there is now in the world, an hunger that Amos thy prophet speaketh of; that there shall comen an hunger in the earth, not of bread, ne thurst of drinke, but of hearing of Gods word. And thy sheepe woulde be refreshed, but their shepherds taken of thy sheepe their livelode, as tythings, &c. and liuen themselfe thereby where them liketh.

"Of such shepherds thou speaketh by Ezechiel thy prophet, and seyest; Woe to the shepherds of Israel that feden themselfe, for the flocks of sheepe shoulde be yfed of their shepherds: but ye eaten the milke, and clothen you with their wolle, and the fat sheepe ye slew, and my flocke ye ne fede not, the sicke sheepe ye ne healed not, thilke that weren to-broken ye ne knit not together, thilke that perished ye ne brought not againe; but ye rattled them with sternship and with power. And so the sheepe be sprad abroad in deuouring of all the beasts of the field. And Ieremie the prophet saith; Woe to the shepherds that desparseth abroad and teareth the flock of my lesew.

"A Lord, thou were a good shepherd, for thou putttest thy soule for thy sheepe. But Lord, thou teldest that thilke that comen not in by the dore ben night theeues and day theeues, and a theefe, as thou seyst, commeth not but for to steal, to slein, and to destroy. And Zechary the prophet saith; that thou wouldest reren up a shepherd uncunning, that ne wol not hele thy sheepe that beth sicke, ne seeke thilke that beth lost. Vpon his arme is a swerd, and upon his right eye; his arme shall waxe dry, and his right eye shall lose his light. O Lord, help, for thy sheep beth at great mischiefe in the shepherds defaut.

"But Lord, there commeth hired men, and they ne feden not thy sheep in thy plenteous lesew, but feden thy sheepe with sweuens, and false miracles and tales. But at thy truth they ne comen not: for Lord, I trow thou sendest them neuer. For haue they hire of thy sheepe, they ne careth but little of the feding and the keping of thy sheepe. Lord, of these hired men speaketh Ieremie the prophet, and thou seyst that word by him; I ne send them not, and they nonne blie; I ne speake unto them, and they propheciden. For if they hadden stonden in my counsell, and they had made my words knowne to the peouple, ich would haue turned them away from their yuill way, and from their wicked thoughts. For Lord, thou seyst that thy words ben as fire, and as

an hammer breaking stones. And Lord, thou seyst; Lo. I to these prophets meeting sweuens of lesing, that haue ytold her sweuens, and haue begiled my people in their lesing, and in their false miracles, when I neither sent, ne bed them. And these haue profitet nothing to my people. And as Ieremie saith; From the least to the most all they studien couetice, and from the prophet to the priest all they done gile.

"A Lord, here is much mischief and matere of sorrow: and yet there is more. For gif a lewd man would teach thy people truth of thy words, as hee is yhold by thy commandement of charity, he shall be forboden and put in prison gif he do it. And so Lord, thilk that haue the key of conning, haue ylockt the truth of thy teaching under many wardes, and yhid it from thy children. But Lord, sith thy teaching is ycome from heauen aboue, our hope is, that with thy grace it shall breake these wards, and shew him to thy people, to kele both the hunger and thirst of the soule. And then shall no shepheard, ner no false hirid-man begile thy people no more. For by thy law I write, as thou ihighest sometime, that from the least to the most, all they shullen knowen thy will, and weten how they shullen please thee euermore in certaine.

"And leue Lord, gif it be thy will helpe at this need, for there is none help but in thee. Thus Lord, by him that maketh himselfe thy uiker in earth, is thy commandement of lone to thee and our brethren ybroken, both to him and to thy people. But Lord God mercy and patience, that beth tweine of thy commandements, beth destroyed, and thy poeple hath forsake mercy. For Lord, Daud in the Sauter saith; Blessed beth they that done dome and rightfulness in euerich time.

"O Lord, thou hast ytaught vs as rightfulness of heauen, and hast ybeden vs forgeuen our breathren as oft as they trespassen against vs. And Lord, thine old law of iustice was, that such harme as a man did his brother, such he should suffer by the law, as eye for an eye, and tooth for a tooth. But Christ made an end of this law, that one brother should not desire wracke of another: but not that he would that sin should ben unpunished, for thereto hath he ordained kings and dukes, and other lewd officers vnder them; whilke as S. Paul saith, ne carien not the swerd in uain, for they ben the ministers of God, and wrakers to wrath, to them that euill done. And thus hath Christ ymade an end of this old law, that one brother may not suen another himselfe, for that to wreken without sinne, for breaking of charity. But this charity Lord hath thy uicar ybroke, and says that we sinnen, but gif we suen for our right. And we see, I wot, that thou taughtest us sometime to giue our mantell also, euer that we shoulde suen for our coat. And so Lord beleuen we, that we ben ybonden to done by thy law, that is all charity, and officers duty is to defenden us from thilke theeury, though we complainen not. But Lord, thy law is turned upsedowne.

"A Lord, what dome is to sleane a theefe that take a mans cattell away from him, and sufferen a spouse-breaker to liue, and a lecherour that killeth a womans soule? And yet thy law stoned the spouse-breakers and lecherous, and let the theeues liven and haue other punishment.

"A Lord, what dome is it to sleane a theefe for stealing of an horse, and to let him liue unpunished, and to maintaine him that robbeth thy poore people of their livelode, and the soule of his food?

"Lord, it was never thy dome to sayen, that a man is an heretike, and cursed for breaking of mans law, and demen him for a good man for breaking thy hests.

"Lord, what dome is it to curse a lewd man if he smite a priest, and not curse a priest that smiteth a lewd man, and leeseth his charity?

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"Lord, what dome is it to curse the lewd people for tithings, and not curse the parson that robbeth the people of tithings, and teacheth them not Gods law, but feedeth them with painting of stone walles, and songs of Latine, that the people known not?

"Lord, what dome is it to punish the poore man for his trespasse, and suffer the rich to continue in his sinne for a quantity of mony?

"Lord, what dome is it to sleane an uncunning lewd man for his sinne, and suffer a priest, other a clerke that doth the same sinne, scape alive? Lord the sinne of the priest or of the clerke is greater trespasse than it is of a lewd uncunning man; and greater ensample of wickednesse to the common people?

"Lord, what maner people be we, that neither keep thy domes and thy rightfulness of the Old Testament, that was a law of dread, nor thy domes and thy rightfulness of thy New Testament, that is a law of loue and of mercy: but haue another law, and taken out of both thy lawes, that is liking to us, and remnant of heathen mens lawes? and Lord this is a great mischiefe.

"O Lord, thou saiest in thy law, deme ye not and ye should not be demed; for the same mesure that ye meten to other men, men shall meten to yo againward: and Lord thou saiest that by their work we should know them; and by what we know thou commanded vs not to demen mens thought not their works, that were not against thy lawe expresly. And yet Lord he, that saith he is thy car, will demen our thoughts, and aske us what thinke: not of the Lord, of thy hests, for they care little for them, but of him and of his, whilke they sate aboute thine, and maken us accusen our selfe, or else they willen accursen us, for our accusers mowen we not knowne. And Lord, thou saiest in thine old law, that under two witnes at the least, or three, should stand euery matter: and that the witnes shoulden euer be the first the shoulden helpe to kill them.

"And when the scribes and the Pharises sometimes brought before thee a woman that was ytake in spouse-breaking, and exeden of thee a dome, thou didst write on the earth, and then thou gaue this dome; He that is without sinne, throw first at her a stone, and Lord they went forth away from thee and the woman: and thou forgau the woman her trespasse, and bade her goe forth, and sinne no more.

"Sweet Lord, if the priests tooke keepe to thy dome, they would be agast to demen men as they done, O Lord, if one of them breake a commandement of thy law, he will aske mercy of thee, and not a peine that is due for the sinne, for peine of death were too little. O Lord, how daren they demen any man to the death for breaking of their lawes, other assent to such law? for breaking of thy law they will set penance, or pardon them, and maintaine them as often as they trespassen. But Lord, if a man once breake their lawes, or speake against them, he may done penance but once, and after be burnt. Trulich Lord thou saiest, but if euery one of us forgiue not other his trespasse, thy Father will not forgeuen us our sinnes. And Lord when thou hong on the crosse, thou praiedst to thy Father to haue mercy on thy enemies.

"And yet they sein Lord, that they demen no man to the death, for they sein, they ne mown by their law demen any man to the death. A leeu Lord, euen so saiden their forefathers the Pharises, that it ne was not lawfull for them to kill any man: and yet they bidden Pilate to done thee to the death against his owne conscience, for he would gladly haue yquit thee, but for that they threatened him with the emperour, and broughten against thee false witnes also: and he was an heathen man.

"O Lord, how much truer dome was there in Pilat, that was an heathen justice, than in our kings and justices that woulden demen to the death, and burne in the fire him that the priests deliueren unto them withouten witnes, or prefe? For Pilat ne would not demen thee; for that the Pharises sayden that gif thou ne haddest not ben a misdoer, we ne would not deliuer him unto thee; for to, they broughten in their false witnessse against thee. But Lord, as thou saidst sometime that it should ben lighter at domesday to Tyre, and to Sydon, and Gomorra, than to the cities where thou wrought wonders and miracles: so I dred, it shall be more light to Pilat in the dome than to our kings and domesmen, that so demen without witnes and prefe. For Lord, to demen thy folke for heretiks, is to holden thee an heretike; and to brennen them, is to brennen thee: for thou saidst to Paul when he persecuted thy people; Saul, Saul, wherefore persecutest thou me? and in the dome thou shalt say; that ye haue done to the least of mine, ye haue don to me.

"Thus Lord is thy mercy and justice foredone by him that saith he is thy uicar in earth: for he neither keepeth it himselfe, nor nil not suffer other to doe it.

"The third commandement, that is, patience and sufferance, is also ybroken by this uicar. Lord thou biddest sufferen both wrongs and strokes withouten againstanding; and so thou diddest thy selfe to geuen us ensample to sufferen of our brethren. For suffering nourisheth loue, and againstandeth debate. All thy lawes is loue, or else the thing that draweth to loue.

"But Lord, men teachen, that men shoulde pleten for their right, and fighten also therefore; and else they seyn, men ben in perill: and thou bid in the old law men fight for their countrey. And thy selfe haddest two swords in thy company, when thou shouldest goe to thy passion; that as these clerkes sein, betokeneth a spirituall sword, and a temporall sword, that thou gaue to thy uicar to rule thy church with.

"Lord, this is a sleight speech; but Lord we beleuen that thou art King of blisse, and that is thine heritage and mankindes countrey; and in this world we ne ben but strangers and pilgrimes. For thou Lord ne art of this world, ne thy law neither, ne thy true seruants that keepen thy law. And Lord, thou were King of Iuda by heritage, if thou wouldest haue yhad it; but thou forsooke it, and pletedest not therefore, ne fought not therfore.

"But Lord, for thy kinde heritage, and mandkindes country, that is a land of blisse, thou foughtest mightilich. In battell thou ouercame thy enemy, and so thou won thine heritage. For thou that were a Lord mightiest in battle, and also Lord of uertues, are rightfullich King of blisse; as Dauid saith in the Psalter. But Lord thine enemy smote thee dispitfullich, and had power of thee, and hang thee upon the crosse as thou hadst ben a theefe and benomin thee all thy clothes, and sticked thee to the heart with a speare.

"O Lord, this was an hard assault of a battell, and here thou ouercome by patience mightilich thine enemies; for thou ne wouldest not done against the will of thy Father. And thus Lord thou taughtest thy seruants to fight for their countrey. And Lord this fighting was in figure ytaught in the old law. But Lord, men holden now the shadow of the old fighting and leauen the light of thy fighting, that thou taughtest openlich both in word and in deed.

"Lord, thou gaue us a sword to fighten against our enemies for our countrey, that was thine holy teaching, and Christen mens law. But Lord thy sword is put in a sheath, and in priests ward, that haue forsake the fighting that thou taughtest. For as

they seyn, it is against their order to ben men of armes in thy batten, for it is unseemelich, as they seyn, that thy uicar in earth, other, his priests shulden suffer of other men. And therefore gif any man smite him, other any of his clerks, he ne taketh it not in patience, but anon he smiteth with his sword of cursing, and afterward with his bodelich sword, he doth them to death. O Lord, me thinketh that this is a fighting against kind, and much against thy teaching.

"O Lord, whether axsedest thou after swerds in the time of thy passion to againstond thine enemies? nay forsooth thou Lord. For Peter, that smote for great love of thee, had no great thanke of thee for his smiting. And Lord, thou were mighty enough to haue againstond thine enemies, for through thy looking they fellen downe to the ground, Lord yblessed mote thou be. Here thou teachest us that we shoulde suffren: for thou were mighty ynow to haue againstand thine enemies, and thou haddest wepen, and thy men weren hearty to haue smitten.

"O sweet Lord, how may he for shame clepen himselfe thy uicar and head of the church, that may not for shame suffer? Sith thou art a Lord, and sufferedst of thy subjects, to giuen us ensample, and so did thy true seruants.

"O Lord, whether geue thou to Peter a spirituall swerd to curse, and a temporall swerd to sle mens bodies? Lord, I trow not, for then Peter that loued thee so much, would haue smit with thy swerds. But Lord, he taughten us to blessen them that cursen us, and suffren and not smiten. And Lord, he fed thy people as thou bed him, and therefore he suffred the death as thou didst.

"O Lord, why clepeth any man him Peters successor, that hath forsaken patience, and feedeth thy people with cursing, and with smiting? Lord thou saidest in thy gossell, when thy disciples knewen well that thou were Christ, and that thou mustest go to Ierusalem, and sufferen of the scribes and Pharises spittings, reproofes, and also the death. And Peter tooke thee aside, and said; God forbid that. And Lord, thou saydest to Peter, Goe behinde me Sathanas, thou sclaunderest me in Israel. For thou ne sauorest not thilke things that ben of God, but thilke that ben of men. Lord to mens wit it is unreasonable, that thou or thy uicar, gif thou madest any on earth, shoulde suffren of your suggets.

"A Lord, whether thou ordeinest an order of fighters to turne men to the believe? Other ordeinest that knights shoulde swere to fight for thy words?

"A Lord, whether bed thou, that gif any man turne to the faith, that he should geue his goods and cattell to the uicar that hath great lordshops, and more than him needeth? Lord I wot well, that in the beginning the churchmen that were conuerted threwen adown their goods afore the apostles feete. For all they weren in charity, and none of them said this is mine, ne Peter made himselfe no lord of these goods.

"But Lord, now he that clepeth himselfe thy uicar upon earth, and successor to Peter, hath ybroke commandement of charity, for he is become a lord. And hee hath also broken thy commandement of mercy, and also of patience. Thus Lord wee be fallen into mischiefe and thraldome, for our chiefetaine hath forsaken war and armes, and hath treated to haue peace with our enemies.

"A Lord, gif it be thy will, draw thy swerd out of his sheath, that thy seruants may fight therewith against their enemies, and put cowardise out of our hearts: and comfort us in battaile, or than thou come with thy swerd in thy mouth, or take uengeance on thine enemies. For gif wee ben accorded with our enemies till that time

come, it is dread lest thou take uengeance both of them and of us together. A Lord, there is no helpe now in this great mischeife but only in thee.

"Lord, thou geuest us a commandement of truth, in bidding us say yea, yea, nay, nay, and sweare for nothing. Thou geue us also a maundement of meekenesse, and another of poorenesse: but Lord, he that clepeth himselfe thy uicar on earth, hath both ybroken these commandements; for he maketh a law to compell men to sweare, and by his lawes he teacheth that a man, to saue his life, may forswear and lie. And so Lord, through comfort of him and his lawes, the people ne dreadeth not to sweare and to lie, ne oft times to forswearen them. Lord here is little truth.

"O Lord, thou hast ybrought us to a lining of souls that stands in beleeuing in thee, and keeping thy hests, and when wee broken thy hests, then wee slen our souls: and lesse harme it were to suffer bodilich death.

"Lord, King Saul brake thine hests, and thou tooke his kingdome from his heires euermore after him, and giue it to Dauid thy seruant, that kept thine hests. And thou saidst by Samuel thy prophet to Saul the king, that it is a manner of worshipping of false gods to breake thy hests. For who that loueth thee ouer all things, and dreadeth thee also, he nole for nothing breake thine hests.

"O Lord, gif breaking of thine hests be herying of false gods, I trow that hee that maketh the people breake thine hests, and commandeth that his hests ben kept of the people, maketh himselfe a false god on earth; as Nebugodonosor did sometime that was king of Babylon.

"But Lord, we forsaken such false gods, and beleuen that there ne ben no mo gods than thou: and though thou suffer us a while to ben in disease for knowledging of thee; we thanken thee with our heart, for it is a token that thou louest us, to giuen us in this world some penance for our trespas.

"Lord, in the old law, thy true seruants tooke the death, for they would not eaten swines flesh that thou haddest forbidde them to eat. O Lord, what truth is in us to eaten unclean mete of the soule, that thou hast forbid? Lord thou saidst, he that doth sinne is seruant of sin, and then he that lieth in forswearing himselfe, is seruant of lesing: and then he is seruant to the diuell, that is a lier and father of lesings. And Lord, thou sayest, no man may serue two lords at once. O Lord then, euery lier for the time that he lieth, other forswareth himselfe, and forsaketh thy seruice for dread of his bodily death, becommeth the diuels seruant.

"O Lord, what truth is in him that clepeth himselfe seruant of thy seruants, and in his doing hee maketh him a lord of thy seruants. Lord thou were both Lord and Master, and so thou said thy selfe; but yet in thy works thou were as a seruant. Lord this was a great truth, and a great meeknesse: but Lord, bid thou thy seruants that they should not haue lordship ouer their brethren. Lord thou saydst kings of the heathen men han lordship ouer their subjects, and they that use their power be cleped well doers.

"But Lord, thou saidst it should not be so amongst thy seruants. But he that were most, should be as a seruant. Thou Lord, thou taughtest thy disciples to be meeke. Lord in the old law thy seruants durst haue no lordship of their brethren, but if that thou bid them: and yet they should not doe to their brethren as they did to thralles that serued them. But they should do to their brethren that were their seruants, as to their owne brethren: for all they were Abrahams children: and at a certaine time, they

should let their brethren passe from them in all freedom, but if they would wilfullich abide still in seruice.

"O Lord, thou gaue us in thy comming a law of perfect loue, and in token of loue thou clepedst thy selfe our brother. And to make us perfect in loue, thou bid that we should clepe to us no father upon earth, but thy Father of heauen wee should clepe our Father. Alas, Lord, how uiolently our brethren, and thy children ben now put in bodily thraldome, and in despise as beasts euermore in grieuous trauell to finde proud men in ease. But Lord, if we take this defoule and this disease in patience, and in meeknesse, and keepe thine hests, we hope to be free. And Lord giue our brethren grace to come out of thraldome of sinne, that they fall in through the desiring and usage of lordship upon their brethren. And Lord, thy priests in the old law had no lordships among their brethren, but houses and pastures for their beasts: but Lord our priests now haue great lordships, and put their brethren in greater thraldome than lewde men that be lords. Thus is meeknesse forsaken.

"Lord, thou biddest in the gospell, that when a man is bid to the feast, he should sit in the lowest place, and then he may be set higher with worship, when the lord of the feast beholdeth how his guEsts sitteth. Lord it is dread that they, that sit now in the highest place, should be bid in time comming sit beneath: and that will be shame and villany for them. And it is thy saying, those that hyeth himselfe should be lowed, and those that loweth himselfe should be an heyghed. O Lord, thou biddest in thy gospell to beware of the Pharises, for it is a point of pride contrary to meeknesse. And Lord, thou sayest that they love the first sittings at suppers, and also the principal chaires in churches, and greetings in cheeping, and to bee cleped masters of men. And Lord, thou sayest be yee not cleped masters, for one is your Master, and that is Christ, and all ye be brethren: and clepe ye to you no father upon earth, for one is your Father that is in heauen. O Lord, this is a blessed lesson to teach men to be meeke.

"But Lord, he that clepeth himselfe thy uicar on earth, he clepeth himselfe father of fathers against thy forbidding. And all those worships thou hast forbad. He approueth them, and maketh them masters to many, that teach thy people their owne teaching, and leaue thy teaching that is needfull, and hidden it by quaint glosses from thy lewd people and feede thy people with sweuens that they meete, and tales that doth little profite but much harme to the people. But Lord, these glosers object, that they desire not the state of masterie to be worshipped thereby, but to profit the more to thy people, when they preach thy word. Far as they suggen the people will beleue more the preaching of a master that hath taken a state of schoole, than the preaching of another man that hath not taken the state of mastry.

"Lord; whether it be any need that masters bearen witness to thy teaching, that it is true and good? O Lord, whether may any master now by his estate of mastry, that thou hast forboden, draw any man from his sinne, rather then another man that is not a master, ne wole be none; for it is forbodden him in thy gospell? Lord thou sendest to masters to preach thy people; and thou knowledgist in the gospell to thy Father, that he hath hid his wisdom from wise men and readie men; and shewed it to little children. And Lord, masters of the law hylden thy teaching folly, and saiden that thou wouldest destroy the people with thy teaching. Trulich Lord, so these masters seggeth now; for they haue written many bookes against thy teaching, that is truth; and so the prophecie of Ieremy is fulfilled when he saith; Trulich the false points of the masters of the law hath wrought lesing. And now is the time come that S. Paul speaketh of, where he saith; Time shall come when men shall not sustaine wholsome

teaching; but they shullen gather to hear masters with hutching eares, and from truth they shullen turnen away their hearing, and turnen them to tales, that masters haue maked to showne their maistry and their wisedome.

"And Lord, a man shall beleue more a mans workes than his words, and the deede sheweth well of these masters, that they desiren more maistry for their owne worship, than for profit of the people. For when they be masters, they ne preachen not so oft as they did before. And gif they preachen, commonlich it is before rich men, there as they mowne beare worship and also profit of their preaching. But before poore men they preachen but seldem, when they ben masters: and so by their workes we may seene that they ben false glosers.

"And Lord, me thinketh that who so wole keepen thine hests, him needeth no gloses: but thilke that clepen themselfe Christen men, and liven against thy teaching and thine hests, needelich they more glose thine hests, after their lining, other elsmen shulden openlich yknow their hypocrisie and their falshod.

"But Lord, thou sayst that there is nothing yhid that shall not be shewed sometime. And Lord yblessed mote thou be: for somewhat thou shewest us now of our mischiefes that we beene fallen in through the wisdomes of masters, that haue by sleights ylad us away from thee and thy teaching, that thou, that were the Master of heauen, taught us for love, when thou were here sometime to heale of our soules, withouten error or heresie. But masters of worlds wisedome and their founder haue ydamned it for heresie and for error.

"O Lord, me thinketh it is a great pride thus to reprove thy wisedome and thy teaching. And Lord, me thinketh that this Nabugodonosor king of Babylon, that thus hath reprooved thy teaching and thine hests, and commandeth on all wise to keepen his hests, maken thy people hearen him as a god on earth, and maketh them his thralls and his seruants.

"But Lord, we lewd men knowen no God but thee, and we with thine helpe and thy grace forsaken Nabugodonosor and his lawes. For he in his proud estate wole haue all men under him, and he nele be under no man. He ondoth thy lawes that thou ordainest to ben kept, and maketh his owne lawes as him liketh: and so he maketh him king aboue all other kings of the earth, and maketh men to worshippen him as a god, and thy great sacrifice he hath ydone away.

"O Lord, here is thy commandement of meeknes, mischiflich to-broke: and thy blessed commandement of poornes is also to-broken, and yhid from thy people. Lord, Zechary thy prophet saith, that thou that shouldest be our King, shouldest ben a poore man, and so thou were: for thou saidest thy selfe; Foxes haue dens, and birds of heauen nests, and mans Sonne hath not where to ligge his head on. And thou saidest, yblessed ben poore men in spirit, for thy kingdome of heauen is therein: and woe to rich men, for they han their comfort in this world. And thou bad thy disciples to ben ware of all couetise, for thou saydest, in the abundance of mans hauing, ne is not his lifelode. And so thou teachest, that thilke that han more then them needeth to their liuing liuen in couetise. Also thou sayst, but gif a man forsake all things that he oweth, he ne may not ben thy disciple. Lord, thou sayst also, that thy word, that is sowne in rich mens hearts, bringeth forth no fruit; for riches and the businesse of this world maken it withouten fruit.

"O Lord, here bene many blessed teachings to teach men to ben poore, and loue poorenesse. But Lord harme is, poore men and poorenesse ben ybated, and rich

men ben yloued and honored: and gif a man bee a poore man, men holden him a man withouten grace; and gif a man desireth poorenesse, men holden him but a foole: and gif a man be a rich man, men clepen him a gracious man, and thilke that ben busie in getting of riches, ben yhold wise men and ready: but Lord, these rich men sayen, that it beth lawfull to them to gather riches together. For they ne gathereth it for themselfe, but for other men that ben needy, and Lord their workes shewen the truth. For if a poore needy man would borrowen of their riches, he nele lean him none of his good; but gif he mow be seker to haue it againe by a certaine day.

"But Lord, thou bed that a man should lend, and not hoping yelding againe of him that he lendeth to: and thy Father of heauen wole quite him his mede. And gif a poore man aske a rich man any good, the rich man will giue him but a little, and yet it shall be little worth. And Lord me thinketh that here is little loue and charity, both to God and to our brethren.

"For Lord, thou teachest in thy gossell, that what men doe to thy servants, they done to thee. A Lord, gif a poore man axe good for thy loue, men giueth him a little of the wurst. For these rich men ordeinen both bread and ale for Gods men of the wurst that they haue. O Lord, sith all good that men hath, commeth of thee; how dare any man geue thee of the wurst, and kepe to himselfe of the best? How may such men say that they gatheren riches for others need, as well as himselfe, sith their workes ben contrary to their words? and that is no great truth. And be ye seker these goods that rich man han, they ben Gods goods, ytake to your keeping, to looke how he wolen be setten them to the worshipping of God. And Lord, thou saiest in the gossell, that who so is true in little, he is true in that thing that is more: and who that is false in a little thing, who wole taken him toward things of a greater ualue? And therefore be yee ware that han Gods goods to keepe. Spend ye thilke trulich to the worship of God, lest ye leesen the blisse of heauen, for the untrue dispending of Gods goods in this world.

"O Lord, these rich men seggen that they don much for thy loue. For many poore labourers ben yfound by them, that shoulde fare febelich, ne we not they and their readinesse. Forsooth me thinketh that poore laborers giueth to these rich men, moren then they given them againeward. For the poore men more gone to his labour in cold and in heat, in wete and dry, and spend his flesh and his bloud in rich mens workes, upon Gods ground, to finde the rich man in ease, and in liking, and in good fare of meate, of drinke, and of clothing. Here is a great gift of the poore man, for he giueth his owne body. But what giueth the rich man again-ward? Certes feeble meat, and feeble drinke, and feeble clothing. What euer they seggen, such bee their workes, and here is little loue. And whosoever looketh well about, all the world fareth as we seggen: and all men studieth on euery side, how they may wex rich men; and euerich man almost is ashamed to ben holden a poore man.

"And Lord, I trow for thou were a poore man, men token little regard to thee, and to thy teaching. But Lord thou came to giue us a New Testament of loue; and therefore it was semelich that thou came in poorenesse, to proue who would love thee, and keepen thy hests. For gif thou haddest ycome in forme of a rich man and of a lord, men wold rather for thy dread then for thy loue, have yclept thine hests. And so Lord, now thou might well ysee which louen thee as they should in keeping thine hests. For who that loveth thee in thy poorenesse and in thy lownesse, needs he mote loue thee in thy lordship and highnesse.

"But Lord, the world is turned upse downe, and men loue poore men but a little, ne poorenesse neither. But men be ashamed of poorenesse; and therefore Lord, I

trow that thou art a poore King. And therefore I trow that he that clepeth himself thy vicar on earth, hath forsaken poorenesse, as he hath do the remnant of thy law, and is become a rich man and a lord, and maketh his treasure upon the earth, that thou forbiddest in the gospell; and for his right and riches, he will plete, and fight and curse. And yet Lord he will segge, that he forsaketh all things that he oweth, as thy true disciple mete done after thy teaching in the gospell.

"But Lord, thou ne taughtest not a man to forsaken his goods, and plete for them, and fight, and curse. And Lord, he taketh on him power to assoile a man of all manner things, but if it be of debt. Truly Lord, me thinketh he knoweth little of charity. For who that beth in charity, possesseth thy goods in common, and not in proper at his neighbors neede. And then shall there none of them segge this is mine, but it is Gods that God granteth to us to spenden it to his worship. And so if any of them borroweth a portion of those goods, and dispendeth them to Gods worship, God is apayed of this spending, and alloweth him this true doing. And if God is payed of that dispending, this is the principall lord of those goods, how dare any of his seruants axen thereof accounts, other challenge it for det? Serten, of one thing I am incerteine, that these that charge so much det of worldly cattell, they know little of Christs law of charity: for if Ich am a baily of Gods goods in the world; if I see my brother in need, I am hold by charitie to part with him of these goods to his nede; and if he spendeth them well to the worship of God, I mote be well apaid, as though I my selfe had spended them to the worship of God. And if the principall Lord is well payed of my brothers doing, and the dispending of his goods, how may I segge for shame that my brother is dettour to mee of the goods that I tooke him to spend in Gods worship at his nede? And if my brother spendeth amisse the goods that I take him, I am discharged of my deliuerance of the goods, if I take him in charity thilke goods at his nede. And I am hold to bee sory of his euill dispending, ne I may not axen the goods, that I tooke him to his nede in forme of debt, for at his need they were his as well as mine. And thus is my brother yhold to done to me gif he see me in nede, and gif we bed in charity, little should we chargen of det. And ne we should not axen so dets, as men that knowen not God: and then we be poore in forsaking all things that we own. For gif we ben in charitie, we wollen nother fight nor curse, ne plete for our goods with our brethren.

"O Lord, thus thou taughtest thy seruants to liuen; and so they liueden while they hadden good shepherds, that fedden thy sheep, and robbed them not of their livelode, as Peter thy good shepheard and thy other apostles. But Lord, he that clepeth himselfe thy vicar upon earth, and successor to Pcter, he robbeth thy people of their bodilich livelode, for hee ordeineth proud shepherds to liven in ease by the tenth party of poore mens trauell: and he giueth them leaue to liven where them liketh. And gif men ne wolen wilfullich giuen them the tithings, they wolen han them against their will by maisterie and by cursing, to maken them rich.

"Lord, how may any man segge that such shepherds that loven more the wolle than the sheepe, and fedden not thy sheepe in body, ne in soule, ne ben such ravenors and theeves? And who may segge, that the mainteinour of such shepherds ne is not a mainteinour of theeves and robbers? How wole hee assoile shepherds of their robbing, without restitution of their goods, that they robben thy shepe of against their will? Lord of all shepherds, blessed mote thou bee. For thou lovedst more the sheepe than their wolle. For thou feedest thy sheepe both in body and, soule. And for love of thy sheepe, thou tooke thy death to bring thy sheepe out of wolves mouthes. And the most charge that thou Bove to Peter was to feede thy sheepe. And so hee did

truelich, and tooke the death for thee and for thy sheepe. For hee came into the fold of sheepe by thee that were the doore. And so I trow few other did as hee did, though they clepen themselfe successors to Peter; for their workes shoven what they ben. For they robben and sleene and destroyen; they robben thy sheepe of the tenth part of their trauell, and feeden themselves in ease. They sleene thy sheepe, for they pyenen them for hunger of their soule to the death. They destroyen the sheepe, for with might and with sternship they rulen thy sheepe; that for dred they ben dispersed abroad in mountaines, and there the wilde beasts of the field destroyeth them for default of a good shepheard.

"O Lord, gif it be thy will deliver thy sheepe out of such shepherds ward that watcheth not of thy sheepe, so they han their wolle to make themselfe rich. For thy sheepe ben in great mischiefe, and foule accombred with their shepherds.

"But for thy shepherds wolden ben excused, they have ygetten them hired men to feed thy people, and these comen in sheepes clothing. But dredlesse their workes shewen that within forth they ben but wolfes. For han they their hire, they ne retcheth but a little how sorrilich thy sheepe ben kept. For as they seggen themselfe, they ben but hired men that han no charge of thy sheepe. And when they shulden feden thy sheepe in the plenteous lesew of thy teaching, they stonden between them and their lesew, so that the sheepe ne han but a sight of thy lesew, but eaten they shall not thereof. But they feden them in a sorrie sowre lesew of lesings and of tales. And so thy sheepe fallen into grievous sicknesse through this evill lesew. And gif any sheepe breake ouer into thy lesew to tasten the sweetnesse thereof, anon these hired men drive him out with hounds. And thus thy sheepe by these hired men ben ykept out of their kindlich lesew, and ben yfed with sowre grasse and sorrie barren lesew. And yet they feden but seldome, and when they han sorrilich fed them, they taken great hire, and gone away from thy sheepe and letten them a worth.

"And for dread lest thy sheepe wolden in their absence goe to thy sweet lesew, they han enclosed it all about so stronglich and so high, that there may no sheepe comen there within, but gif it be a Walisch leper of the mountaines, that may with his long legs lepen over the vallys. For the hired men ben full certaine, that gif thy sheepe had once ytasted the sweetnesse of thy lesew: they ne would no more bene yfed of these hired men in their sowre lesewes, and therefore these hired men kepen them out of that lesew. For haden the sheepe once ytasted well of that lesew, they wolden without a leader goe thider to their mete, and then mote these hired men sechen them another labor to live by than keeping of sheepe. And they ben fell and ware ynow thereof, and therefore they feeden thy sheepe with sowre meat that naught is, and hiden from thy sheepe the sweetnesse of thy lesew. And so though these hired men gon in sheepes clothing, in their workes they ben wolves, that much harme done to thy sheepe as we have ytold.

"O Lord, they comen as sheepe, for they seggen that they ben poore and have forsaken the world to liven perfiltich as thou taughtest in the gospell. Lord this is sheepes clothing. But Lord thou ne taughtest not a man to forsaken the travellous living in poorenesse in the world, to liven in ease with riches by other mens travell, and have lordship on their brethren. For Lord, this is more to forsaken thee and goe to the world.

"O Lord, thou ne taughtest not a man to forsake the world to liven in poorenesse of begging by other mens travell that ben as feeble as they ben. Ne Lord thou ne taughtest not a man to live in poorenesse of begging, that were strong enough

to travell for his lifelode. Ne Lord, thou ne taughtest not a man to ben a begger to begge of men more than him needeth, to build great castles and make great feasts to thilke that han no neede.

"O Lord, thou ne taughtest not men this poorenesse, for it is out of charitie. But thy poorenesse, that thou taughtest, nourisheth charitie. Lord, sith Paul saith, that hee that forsaketh the charge of thilke that ben homelich with him, hath forsaken his faith and is worse then an misbeleeven man: how then now these men seggen that they beleeven in Christ, that han forsaken their poore feeble friends, and let them live in travell and in disease, that travelled full sore for them, when they weren yong and unmightie to helpen themselves? And they wolen live in ease by other mens travell, evermore begging withouten shame.

"Lord thou ne taughtest not this manner poorenesse, for it is out of charitie. And all thy law is charitie and thing that nourisheth charitie, and these shepheards send about to keepe thy sheepe, and to feden them other whiles in bareine lesewes. Lord thou ne madest none such shepheards, ne keepers of the sheepe that feede sorrilich thy sheepe, and for so little travell taken a great hire, and sithen all the yeere afterward, doe what them liketh, and let thy sheepe perish for default of keeping.

"But thy shepheards abiden still with their sheepe, and feeden them in thy plenteous lesew of thy teaching, and gone before thy sheepe, and teachen them the way into the plenteous and sweete lesew, and keepen thy flocke from ravening of the wilde beasts of the field.

"O Lord deliver the sheep out of the ward of these shepheards, and these hired men, that stonden more to keepe their riches that they robben of thy sheepe, than they stonden in keeping of thy sheepe.

"O Lord when thou come to Jerusalem, sometime thou drove out of the temple sellers of beasts and of other chaffare, and saidst: Mine house shoulde ben cleped an house of prayers, but they maden a den of theeves of it. O Lord thou art the temple in whom we shoulde praie thy Father of heaven. And Salomons temple, that was ybelded at Jerusalem, was figure of this temple. But Lord, he that clepeth himselfe thy vicar upon earth, and saith that he occupieth thy place here on earth, is become a chapman in thy temple, and hath his chap-men walking in diuers countries to sellen his chaffare, and to maken him rich. And hee saith, thou gave him so great a power aboven all other men, that whatever he bindeth other unbindeth in earth, thou bindest other unbindest the same in heaven. And so of great power hee selleth other men forgiveness of their sinne. And for much money he will assoilen a man so cleane of his sinne, that he behoteth men of the blisse of heaven withouten any paine after that they be dead, that given him much money.

"Bishoprikes and chirches, and such other chaffares he selleth also for money, and maketh himselfe rich. And thus he beguiled the people.

"O Lord Iesus here is much untruth, and mischiefe, and matter of sorrow. Lord thou saidest sometime, that thou wouldest bee with thy servants unto the end of the world. And thou saidest also, there as tweine or three ben ygadred togedder in thy name, that thou art in the middle of them. A Lord, then it was no need to thee to maken liefetenant, sith thou wolte be evermore amongst thy servants.

"Lord, thou axedst of thy disciples, who they trowed that thou were. And Peter answered and said, that thou art Christ Gods Sonne. And thou saidest to Peter; Thou art yblessed Simon Bariona, for flesh and bloud ne showed not this to thee, but my

Father that is in heaven. And I say to thee that thou art Peter, and upon this stone ych would bilde my church, and the gates of hell hee shullen not availen agens it.

"And to thee ych wole geve the keyes of heaven, and what ever thou bindest upon earth shall bee bound in heaven, and what ever thou unbindest on earth, shall be unbounden in heaven. This power also was granten unto the other disciples, as well as to Peter, as the gospell openlich telleth. In this place men seggen that thou granted to Peters successours the selue power that thou gave to Peter. And therefore the bishop of Rome, that saith he is Peters successour, taketh this power to him to binden and unbinden in earth what him liketh. But Lord, ych have much wonder how hee may for shame clepen himselfe Peters successour: for Peter knowledged that thou wert Christ and God, and kept the hests of thy law: but these han forsaken the hests of thy law, and hath ymaken a law contrary to thine hests of thy law. And so he maketh himselfe a false Christ, and a false god in earth. And I trow thou gave him no power to undoe thy law. And so in taking this power upon him, maketh him a false Christ and antichrist.

"For who may be more agens Christ, than hee that in his words maketh himselfe Christs vicar in earth; and in his werkes undoth the ordinance of Christ, and maketh men beleeven that it is needfull to the heale of mans soules, to beleeven that he is Christs vicar in earth? And what ever he bindeth in earth, is ybounden in heaven, and under this colour hee undoth Christs law, and maketh men alwayes to keepen his law and hests.

"And thus man may yseene that bee is against Christ, and therefore hee is antichrist that maketh men worshipping him as a god on earth, as the proud kin Nabugodonosor did sometime, that was king of Babylon. And therefore wee lewde men that knowen not God but thee Iesus Christ, beleeven in thee that art our God, and our King, and our Christ, and thy lawes; and forsaken antichrist, and Nabugodonosor that is a false god, and a false Christ, and his lawes ben contrary to thy preaching.

"And Lord strength thou us against our enemies. For they ben about to maken us forsaken thee and thy law, other else to putten us to death.

"O Lord, onlich in thee is our trust to helpe us in this mischiefe, for thy great goodnesse that is withouten end.

"Lord thou ne taughtest not thy disciples to assoilen men of their sinne, and setten them a penance for their sinne, in fasting, ne in praying, ne other almous deed; ne thy selfe, ne thy disciples, useden no such power here on earth. For Lord, thou forgeve men her sinnes and bede him sinne no more. And thy disciples fulleden men in thy name, in forgivenessse of her sinnes. Nor they tooke no such power upon them as our priests dare now. And Lord, thou ne assoildest no man both of his sinne and of his paine, that was due for his sinne, ne thou grantedst no man such power here on earth.

"And Lord, me thinketh that gif there were a purgatorie, and any earthlich man had power to deliveren sinfull men from the peines of purgatorie, hee should, and hee were in charitie, saven everich man that were in way of salvation from thilke peines, sith they make them greater than any bodilich peines of this world. Also gif the bishop of Rome had such a power, hee himself shuld never come in purgatorie, ne in hell. And sith we see well that hee ne hath no power to kepen himselfe, ne other men nother out of these bodilich peines of the world, and he may goe to hell for his sinne as another man may: I ne beleeve not, that he hath so great power to assoylen men of

their sinne as bee taketh upon him aboven all other men. And I trow that in this hee higheth himselfe above God.

"As touching the selling of bishoprickes and parsonages, I trow it be a point of falsehed. For agenst Gods ordinance hee robbeth poore men of a portion of their sustenance, and selleth it, other giveth it, to find proud men in idlenesse that don the lewd people little profit, but much harme, as we told before. Thus ben thy commandements of truth, of meeknesse, and of poorenesse undone by him, that clepeth himselfe thy vicar here upon earth.

"A Lord, thou gave us a commandement of chastice, that is, a forsaking of fleshlich lusts. For thou broughtest us to a living of soule, that is, ygoverned by the word. For Lord, thou ordeinedist women more frele than man to ben ygoverned by mans rule, and his helpe, to please thee and keepe thine hests. Ne thou ne ordeinedist that a man should desire the company of a woman, and maken her his wife, to liven with her in his lustis, as a swine doth or a horse. And his wife ne like him not to his lustes, Lord thou ne gave not a man leave to departen him from his wife, and taken him another.

"But Lord, thy marriage is a common accord betweene man and woman, to liven together to their lives end, and in thy service either the better for others helpe, and thilke that thus ben ycome together, ben joyned by thee, and thilke that God joyneth, may no man depart. But Lord, thou saiest, that gif a man see a woman to coveten her, then he doth with the woman lecherie in his heart. And so Lord, gif a man desire his wife in covetise of such lusts, and not to flie from whoredome, his weddins is lecherie, ne thou ne joynest them not together. Thus was Raguels daughter ywedded to seven husbands that the divell instrangled. But Toby tooke her to live with her in cleannesse, and bringing up of her children in thy worship, and on him the divell ne had no power. For the wedding was I-maked in God, for God, and through God.

"A Lord, the people is farre ygo from this manner of wedding. For now men wedden their wives for fairenesse, other for riches, or some such other fleshlich lusts. And Lord, so it preveth by them for the most part. For a man shall not find two wedded in a land, where the husband loues the wife, and the wife is buxum to the man, as they shoulden after the law of marriage. But other the man loves not his wife, or the wife is not buxum to her man. And thus Lord is the rule of prefe, that never faileth no preue whether it bee done by thee or no. And Lord, all this mischief is common among thy people, for that they know not thy word, but their shepherds and hired men fedden them with their sweuens and leasings. And Lord, where they shoulden gon before us in the field, they seggen their order is too holy for thy marriage. And Lord, he that calleth himselfe thy vicar upon earth will not suffren priests to taken them wives, for that is against his law: but Lord, hee will dispensen with them to kepen horen for a certaine summe of money. And Lord, all whoredome is forfended in thy law. And Lord, thou never forfendest priests their wiues, ner thy apostles neither. And well I wote in our land, priests hadden wives untill Anselmus dayes in the yeare of our Lord God 1129, as Huntingdone writes. And Lord, this makes people for the most part beleven, that lecherie is no sinne. Therefore wee lewd men prayen thee that thou wolt send vs shepherds of thine own, that wolen feeden thy flocke in thy lesew, and gon before themselfe, and so written thy law in our hearts, that from the least to the most all they mayen knowen thee. And Lord, geue our king and his lords heart to defenden thy true shepherds and thy sheepe from out of the

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wolues mouthes, and grace to know thee that art the true Christ, the Sonne of thy heauenly Father, from the antichrist, that is, the sonne of pride. And Lord, geue vs thy poore sheepe patience and strength to suffer for thy law, the cruelnesse of the mischieuous wolues. And Lord, as thou hast promised, shorten these daies. Lord we axen this now, for more neede was there neuer."

75. The Parable of Friar Rupescissanus

I doubt not, gentle reader, but in reading this godly treatise above prefixed, the matter is manifest and plain of itself without any further explication, what is to be thought and judged of this vicar of Christ, and successor of Peter, whom we call the bishop of Rome; whose life here thou seest not only to be disordered in all points, swerving from the steps and example of Christ, the Prince and Bishop of our souls, but also whose laws and doctrines are so repugnant and contrary to the precepts and rule of the gospel, that almost there is no convenience between them; as in the perusing of this complaining prayer thou mayest notoriously understand. Wherefore, having no need to stand in any further expressing of this matter, but leaving it to thine own consideration and discretion, I will speed myself (Christ willing) to proceed toward the time of John Wickliff and his fellows, taking by order of years as I go, such things by the way, as both happened before the said time of Wickliff, and also may the better prepare the mind of the reader to the entering of that story; where, first, I think it not inconvenient to infer a propheticall parable, written about this time, or not much before, which the author morally applieth unto the bishop of Rome. To what author this prophecy or moral is to be ascribed, I have not certainly to affirm: some say, that Rupescissanus, of whom mention is made before, was the author thereof, and allegeth it out of Froisart; but in Froisart, as yet, I have not found it. In the mean season, as I have found it in Latin expressed, because it painteth out the pope so rightly in his feathers and colours; as I thought the thing was not to be omitted, so I took this present place, as most fit, although, peradventure, missing the order of years a little, to insert the same. The effect of which parable followeth hereunder written.

In the time of Pope Innocent the Sixth above specified, this Johannes de Rupescissa, a friar, among other his prophecies marvellously forespake (as allegeth Froisart, who both heard and saw him) of the taking of John the French king prisoner, and brought forth many other notable collections concerning the perils, mutations, and changings in the church to come. And at what time the pope kept him at Avignon in prison, where Froisart is said to see him, and to speak with him, the said Froisart heard in the pope's court this example and parable recited by the aforesaid friar Rupescissanus, to the two cardinals, to wit, Cardinal Hostiensis, and Cardinal Auxercensis, which followeth in these words:

"When, on a certain time, a bird was brought into the world all bare and without feathers, the other birds hearing thereof, came to visit her; and for that they saw her to be a marvellous fair and beautiful bird, they counselled together how they might best do her good, since by no means without feathers she might either fly, or live commodiously. They all wished her to live for her excellent form and beauty's sake, insomuch that among them all there was not one that would not grant some part of her own feathers to deck this bird withal; yea, and the more trim they saw her to be, the more feathers still they gave unto her, so that by this means she was passing well panned and feathered, and began to fly. The other birds that thus had adorned her with goodly feathers, beholding her to fly abroad, were marvellously delighted therewith. In the end this bird, seeing herself so gorgeously feathered, and of all the rest to be had in honour, began to wax proud and haughty; insomuch that she had no regard at all unto them by whom she was advanced; yea, she panged them with her beak, plucked them by the skin and feathers, and in all places annoyed them. Whereupon

the birds, sitting in council again, called the matter in question, demanding one of another what was best to be done touching this unkind bird, whom they lovingly with their own feathers had decked and adorned; affirming that they gave not their feathers to the intent that she, thereby puffed up with pride, should contemptuously despise them all. The peacock, therefore, answereth the first; Truly, saith he, for that she is bravely set forth with my painted feathers, I will again take them from her. Then saith the falcon, And I also will have mine again. This sentence at length took place among them all, so that every one plucked from her those feathers which before they had given, challenging to them their own again. Now this proud bird, seeing herself thus to be dealt withal, began forthwith to abate her haughty stomach, and humbly to submit herself openly, confessing and acknowledging, that of herself she had nothing, but that her feathers, her honour and other ornaments, was their gift; she came into the world all naked and bare; they clad her with comely feathers, and therefore of right may they receive them again. Wherefore, in most humble wise she desireth pardon, promising to amend all that is past, neither would she at any time hereafter commit, whereby through pride she might lose her feathers again. The gentle birds, that before had given their feathers, seeing her so humble and lowly, being moved with pity, restored again the feathers which lately they had taken away, adding withal this admonition, We will gladly, say they, behold thy flying among us, so long as thou wilt use thine office with humbleness of mind, which is the chiefest comeliness of all the rest: but this have thou for certainty, that if at any time hereafter thou extol thyself in pride, we will straightway deprive thee of thy feathers, and reduce thee into thy former state wherein we found thee. Even so, O you cardinals, (saith Johannes Rupescissanus,) shall it happen unto you; for the emperors of the Romans and Almains, and other Christian kings, potentates, and princes of the earth, have bestowed upon you goods, lands, and riches, that should serve God, but you have poured it out, and consumed it upon pride, all kind of wickedness, riot, and wantonness."

76. Armachanus and The Begging Friars

In the catalogue of these learned and zealous defenders of Christ against antichrist above rehearsed, whom the Lord about this time began to raise up for the reanimation of his church, being then far out of frame; I cannot forget nor omit something to write of the reverend prelate, and famous clerk, Richard Armachanus, primate and archbishop of Ireland: a man for his life and learning so memorable, as the condition of those days then served, that the same days then, as they had but few good, so had they none almost his better. His name was Richard Fizraf, made primate and archbishop, as is said, of Ireland; first brought up in the university of Oxford in the study of all liberal knowledge, wherein he did exceedingly profit under John Bakenthorpe, his tutor and instructor. In this time the Begging Friars began greatly to multiply and spread, unto whom this Bakenthorpe was ever a great enemy; whose steps the scholars also following, began to do the like. Such was the capacity and dexterity of this Fizraf, that he, being commended to King Edward the Third, was promoted by him, first, to be archdeacon of Lichfield, then to be the commissary of the University of Oxford, at length to be archbishop of Armagh in Ireland. He being archbishop, upon a time had a cause to come up to London; at what time here, in the said city of London, was contention between the friars and the clergy about preaching and hearing confessions, &c. Whereupon, this Armachanus, being requested to preach, made seven or eight sermons; wherein he propounded nine conclusions against the friars, for the which he was cited up by the friars before this Pope Innocent the Sixth to appear; and so he did: who before the face of the pope valiantly defended, both in preaching and in writing, the same conclusions, and therein stood constantly unto the death, as the words of John Wickliff, in this Trialogo, do well testify. The like also Waldenus testifieth of him: also Volateranus reporteth the same. Gulielmus Botonerus, testifying of him in like manner, saith, that Armachanus first reproveth Begging Friars for hearing the confessions of professed nuns, without licence of their superiors, and also of married women without knowledge of their husbands. What dangers and troubles he sustained by his persecutors, and how miraculously the Lord delivered him from their hands; insomuch that they, meeting him in the open streets, and in clear daylight, yet had no power to see him nor to apprehend him: in what peril of thieves and searchers he was, and yet the Lord delivered him; yea, and caused his money, being taken from him, to be restored again to him by portions in time of his necessity and famine: and in what dangers he was of the king's officers, which, coming with the king's letters, laid all the havens for him; and how the Lord Jesus delivered him, showing him by what ways, and how to escape them: moreover, what appeals were laid against him, to the number of sixteen; and yet how the Lord gave him to triumph over all his enemies: how the Lord also taught him and brought him out of the profound vanities of Aristotle's subtilty, to the study of the Scriptures of God: all this, with much more, he himself expresseth in a certain prayer or confession made to Christ Jesus our Lord, in which he describeth almost the whole history of his own life; which prayer I have to show in old written hand, and hereafter (Christ willing) intend, as time serveth, to publish the same. Thus what were the troubles of this good man, and how he was cited up by the friars to the pope, you have partly heard. Now what were his reasons and arguments wherewith he defended his cause in the pope's presence, followeth to be declared; for the tractation whereof, first, I must put the reader in remembrance of the controversy mentioned before in the story of

Gulielmus de sancto Amore; also in the story of the university of Paris contending against the friars; for so long did this controversy continue in the church, from the year 1240, when the Oxford men began first to stand against the friars, to the time of this Armachanus, that is, to the year 1360; and after this time yet more increased. So it pleased the secret providence of God, for what cause he best knoweth, to suffer his church to be entangled and exercised sometimes with matters and controversies of no great importance; either to keep the vanity of men's wits thus occupied from idleness, or else to prepare their minds, by these smaller matters, to the consideration and searching out of other things more grave and weighty. Like as now in these our queen's days, we see what tragedies be raised up in England about forms and fashions of ministers' wearings, what troubles grow, what placing and displacing there is about the same. Even so at this time happened the like stir about the liberties and privileges of the friars, which not a little troubled and occupied all the churches and divines almost through Christendom. The which controversy, to the intent it may better be understood, (all the circumstances thereof being explained,) we will first begin from the original and foundation of the matter, to declare by order and course of years, upon what occasion this variance first rising, in continuance of time increased and multiplied in gathering more matter, and burst out at length to this tumultuous contention among learned men.

Concerning therefore this present matter; first, it is to be understood, that in the year of our Lord 1215, under Pope Innocent the Third, was called a general council at Lateran, mentioned before, in the days of King John. In the which council, among many other things, was constituted a certain law or canon, beginning *Omnis utriusque sexus, &c.*, the tenor of which canon in English is thus:

"Be it decreed, that every faithful Christian, both man and woman, coming to the years of discretion, shall confess himself alone of all his sins to the priest of his own proper parish, once in the year at least; and that he shall endeavour, by his own self, to fulfil the penance, whensoever he receiveth the sacrament of the Eucharist, at least at the time of Easter. Unless by the assent of his minister, upon some reasonable cause, he abstain for the time. Otherwise doing, let him both lack the communion of the church being alive, and Christian burial when he is dead. Wherefore be it decreed, that this wholesome constitution shall be published accustomedly in churches, to the end that no man of ignorance or of blindness make to himself a cloak of excuse. And if any shall confess himself to any other priest than of his own parish upon any just cause, let him ask and obtain first licence of his own priest; otherwise the priest shall have no power to bind him or to loose him," &c.

In the time of this Innocent, and of this Lateran council, was Dominic, the first author and founder of the Preaching Friars; who laboured to the said Pope Innocent, for the confirmation of his order, but did not obtain in his lifetime.

The next year after this Lateran council died Pope Innocent, A. D. 1216, after whom came Honorius the Third, who in the first year of his popedom confirmed the order of the friar Dominic, and gave to him and his friars authority to preach, and to hear confessions, with divers other privileges more. And under this pope, which governed ten years, lived Dominic five years after the confirmation of his order, and died A. D. 1221. About which year the order of the Franciscan Friars began also to breed, and to spread in the world, through preaching and hearing confessions.



fter this Honorius, next followed Pope Gregory the Ninth, about the year of our Lord 1228, who, for the promoting of the aforesaid order of Dominics, gave out this bull, in tenor as followeth:

"Gregorius bishop, servant of God's servants, to his reverend brethren, archbishops, bishops, and to his well-beloved children, abbots, priors, and to all prelates of churches, to whomsoever these presents shall come, greeting, and apostolical blessing.

Because iniquity hath abounded, and the charity of many hath waxed cold; behold, the Lord hath raised up the order of our well-beloved children the Preaching Friars, who not seeing things of their own, but pertaining to Jesus Christ, to the extirpating a swell of heresies, as to the rooting out also of other pernicious pestilences, have dedicated themselves to the preaching of the word of God. We therefore, minding to advance their sacred purpose, &c. And followeth; commanding you to see the said persons, gently to be received among you; and that your flocks committed to your charge do receive devoutly the seed of God's word out of their mouth, and do confess their sins unto them, all such as list, whom we have authorized to the same, to hear confessions, and to enjoin penance, &c. Dat. Perusii. An. Pont. nostri 8."

This Pope Gregory died about the year of our Lord 1241, after whom came Celestine the Fourth, and sat but eighteen days: then came Innocent the Fourth, and sat eleven years and six months; who, although he began first to favour the friars, yet afterward being altered by certain divines of universities, prelates of churches, and curates, he debarred them of their liberties and privileges, and gave out again precepts and excommunications, as well against friars, as all other religious persons. And not long after the same he was despatched and made away.

Innocent being thus removed out of the way, about the year of our Lord 1353, then succeeded Pope Alexander the Fourth, a great maintainer of the friars, and sat seven years. He revoked and repealed the acts and writings of Pope Innocent his predecessor, given forth against the friars; wherewith the divines and students of Paris being not well contented, stirred up four principal doctors: the first and chief captain was Gulielmus de Sancto Amore, mentioned before, against whom wrote Albertus Magnus, and Thomas Aquinas; and at last he was condemned by this aforesaid Pope Alexander the Fourth, in the Extravagant, *Non sine mulcta*. The second was Simon Jornalensis; the third, Godfridus de Fontibus; the fourth, Henricus de Gandavo. These four, with other their complices, compiled a certain book against the begging order of friars, both Dominicans and Franciscans, entitled *De periculis Ecclesiae*, containing fourteen chapters, whereof the fourteenth, which is the last, with thirty-nine articles against the friars, we have already translated and expressed. Beside these thirty-nine articles, be other seven articles, moreover, to the said book annexed, under the name of the students of Paris against the friars, proving why the said friars ought not to be admitted into their society.

"First, We say they are not to be admitted to the society of our school, but upon our will and licence; for our company or fellowship ought not to be co-active, but voluntary and free.

"Secondly, We say they are not to be admitted, forasmuch as we oft proved their community manifold ways to be hurtful and incommodious.

"Thirdly, Seeing they be of a diverse profession from us, (for they are called regular, and not scholastical,) we therefore ought not to be joined and associate together in one scholastical office; forasmuch as the council of Spain doth say, Thou shalt not plough with an ox and with an ass together; which is to say, Men of diverse professions ought not together to be matched in one kind of calling, or standing, for their studies and conditions be disagreeing and dissevered from ours, and cannot frame or couple together in one communion.

"Fourthly, We affirm by the apostle that they are not to be admitted, because they work dissensions and offences; for so saith the apostle, Rom. xvi. We desire you, brethren, that ye observe and take heed of such as make dissensions and offences about the doctrine which you have learned by the apostles, and avoid them; for such serve not the Lord, but their own belly. Gloss. 'Some they flatter, some they backbite, whereby they might feed their bellies.' That through their sweet and pleasant words, and by their benedictions, they may deceive the hearts of the simple. Gloss. 'That is, with their fine sugared and trim-couched words they set forth their own traditions, wherewith they beguile the hearts of the simple innocents.'

"Fifthly, We say they are not to be admitted, for that we fear lest they be in the number of them which go about and devour men's houses; for they thrust in themselves into every man's house, searching and sacking the conscience and states of all persons: and whom they find easy to be seduced, and women, such they do circumvent, and lead them away from the counsels of their prelates, binding them in act or oath: from such we are warned by the apostle to avoid.

"Sixthly, We say they are to be avoided, because we fear they are false prophets; which being neither bishops, nor parish priests, nor yet their vicars, nor sent by them, yet they preach (not sent) against the mind of the apostle, Rom. x., saying, How shall they preach except they be sent? for else there appeareth in them no such great virtue, for the which they ought to be admitted to preach uncalled. Seeing therefore that such are so dangerous to the church, they ought to be avoided.

"Seventhly, We say they are not to be admitted, because they be a people so curious in searching and inquiring of other men's doings and spiritual demeanour. And they yet be neither apostles, nor yet successors of the apostles, as bishops; nor of the number of the seventy-two disciples of the Lord; nor their successors, that is, parish priests, nor their helpers, nor yet vicars. Wherefore, seeing they live so in no order, by the sentence of the apostle we are commanded to avoid them, 2 Thess. iii., where he saith, We admonish and denounce unto you, O brethren! in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, (that is, as the gloss saith, 'We command you by the authority of Christ,') that you withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh inordinately, and not after the tradition which you have received of us, &c. Look upon the common gloss of this place, and you shall find, that such are to be avoided till time they amend from so doing," &c.

Besides these articles above rehearsed, certain propositions or conclusions were also propounded in the schools of Paris the same time, solemnly to be disputed and defended against the friars; which, in a brief sum of words to collect them, were these:

"First, That the Begging Friars were not in the state of salvation.

"Secondly, That they were bound to labour with their hands that could, and not to beg.

"Thirdly, That they ought not to exercise the office of preaching, or to hear the confessions of them that will come unto them, although being licensed thereunto by the bishop of Rome, or by the diocesan, forasmuch as the same is prejudicial to the ministers and priests of the parishes."

All these aforesaid articles and conclusions, with the book set forth by these Paris men, this Pope Alexander the Fourth condemned to be abolished and burned, writing his precepts to the French king, and also the university of Paris, in the favour of the friars, willing and commanding the said friars to be restored to all their privileges and liberties in as ample manner as in Pope Gregory's time before.

Not long after Pope Alexander the Fourth followed Clement the Fourth, A. D. 1263, and sat three years: who also gave the privilege to the friars, beginning, *Quidam temere*, &c.; in which privilege he condemneth them that say that no man without licence of his curate or minister ought to confess him to the friars, or that a subject ought to ask licence of their ministers so to do, which was against the canon *Omnis utriusque sexus*, &c., made by Pope Innocent the Third, before recited.

After this Clement again came Pope Martin the Fourth, A. D. 1281, who renewed again the canon, *Omnis utriusque sexus*, in the behalf of the curates against the friars.

Then Pope Boniface the Eighth began to sit, A. D. 1294, and sat eight years and nine months; who, taking side with the friars, gave to them another privilege, beginning, *Supra cathedram*, &c.; in the which privilege he licensed the friars, that without licence of vicars of churches they shall first present themselves to the prelates to be admitted; by whom, if they be refused the second time, then they, upon special authority of this pope, shall be privileged, without either bishop or curate, to preach, to bury, and to hear confessions, whosoever will come to them, revoking all that was decreed by his predecessors before to the contrary.

By this Pope Boniface, a certain Dominic Friar was made cardinal, named Nicolaus de Tervisio, and after the death of Boniface he was also made pope, A. D. 1303, surnamed Pope Benedict the Eleventh, who, seeing the constitution of Boniface, his predecessor, to gender dissension between the priests and friars, made another constitution, beginning, *Inter cunctas*, &c., revoking the constitution of Boniface his predecessor. Upon which constitution of Pope Benedict, Johannes Monachus, making a gloss, revoked also his other made upon the constitution of Pope Boniface before.

Again, after this Benedict the Eleventh followed Pope Clement the Fifth, A. D. 1305, and sat nine years. Who, in his general council holden at Vienna, revoked the constitution of Benedict his predecessor, and renewed again the former decree of Boniface, by a new constitution of his, beginning, *Dudum a Bonifacio VIII.*, &c., which constitution, moreover, was confirmed afterward by Pope John the Twenty-second, A. D. 1316. Which pope also caused Johannes de Poliacco to recant.

Upon this variable diversity of the popes (one dissenting and repugning from another) rose among the divines and schoolmen in universities great matter of contention, as well in the university of Paris as the university of Oxford, about the Begging Friars, some holding one way, some another way. But especially five principal opinions be noted of learned men, who, then disputing against the friars, were condemned for heretics, and their assertions reproved.

The first was the opinion of them which defended that the friars might not, by the licence of the bishop of Rome and of the prelates, preach in parishes and hear confessions. And of this opinion was Gulielmus de Sancto Amore, with his fellows, who, as it is said, were condemned.

The second opinion was this, that friars, although not by their own authority, yet by privilege of the pope and of the bishop, might preach and hear confessions in parishes, but yet not without licence of the parish priests. Of this opinion was Bernard, glossing upon the canon, *Omnis utriusque sexus*, afore mentioned.

The third opinion was, that friars might preach and hear confessions without licence of the parish priests; but yet the said parishioners, notwithstanding, were bound by the canon *Omnis utriusque sexus*, to repeat the same sins again, if they had no other, to their own proper curate. And of this opinion were many, as Godfridus de Fontibus, Henricus de Gandavo, Johannes Monachus Cardinalis, Johannes de Poliaco; which Johannes de Poliaco Pope John the Twenty-second caused openly in Paris to recant and retract.

This Johannes de Poliaco, doctor of divinity in Paris, being complained of by the friars for certain articles or assertions, was sent for to the pope; where, time and place being to him assigned, he, in the audience of the pope and of friarly cardinals and other doctors, was straitly examined of his articles. To make the story short he, at length submitting himself to the authority of the terrible see of Rome, was caused to recant his assertions openly at Paris. His assertions which he did hold were these:

First, that they which were confessed to friars, although having a general licence to hear confessions, were bound to confess again their sins to their own parish priest, by the constitution *Omnis utriusque sexus*, &c.

The second was, that the said constitution *Omnis utriusque sexus* standing in his force, the pope could not make, but parishioners were bound once a year to confess their sins to their priest. For the doing otherwise importeth a contradiction in itself.

The third was, that the pope could not give general licence to hear confessions so, but that the parishioner so confessed was bound to reiterate the same confession made unto his own curate; which he proved by these places of the canon law: "Those things which be generally ordained for public utility, ought not to be altered by any change, &c. Item, the decrees of the sacred canons none ought to keep more than the bishop apostolical, &c. Item, to alter or to ordain any thing against the decrees of the fathers, is not in the authority or power, no, not of the apostolical see."

The fourth opinion was, that the friars by the licence of the pope and of the bishops might lawfully hear confessions, and the people might be of them confessed and absolved. But yet notwithstanding, it was reason, convenient, honest, and profitable, that once in the year they should be confessed to their curates, (although being confessed before to the friars,) because of the administration of the sacraments, especially at Easter. Of which opinion was Gulielmus de Monte Landuno. Henricus de Gaudano also held it not only to be convenient, but also that they were bound so to do.

The fifth opinion was, that albeit the friars might at all times, and at Easter also, hear confessions as the curates did; yet it was better and more safe, at the time of Easter, to confess to the curates, than to the friars. And of this opinion was this our Armachanus, of whom we presently now treat.

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

And thus have ye, as in a brief sum, opened unto you what was the matter of contention between the friars and the churchmen; what popes made with the friars, and what popes made against them. Moreover, what learned men disputed against them in Paris, and other places; and what were their opinions.

The matter of contention about the friars stood in four points; first, preaching without licence of curates; secondly, in hearing confession; thirdly, in burying; fourthly, in begging and taking of the people.

The popes that maintained the friars were, Honorius the Third, Gregorius the Ninth, Alexander the Fourth, Clement the Fourth, Boniface the Eighth, Clement the Fifth. The popes that maintained curates, were Innocentius the Third, Innocentius the Fourth, Martinus the Fourth, Benedictus the Eleventh.

The learned men that disputed against the friars were, Gulielmus de S. Amore, Bernardus super capitulum, Omnis utriusque sexus, Godfridus de Fontibus, Henricus de Gandavo, Gulielmus de Landuno, Johannes Monachus Cardinalis, Johannes de Poliac, and Armachanus. All these were condemned by the popes, or else caused to recant.

These considerations and circumstances hitherto premised, for the more opening of this present cause of Armachanus sustained against the idle beggarly sects of friars, in whom the reader may well perceive antichrist plainly reigning and fighting against the church: it now remaineth, that as I have before declared the travails and troubles of divers godly learned men in the church striving against the said friars, continually from the time of Gulielmus de Amore, hitherto; so now forasmuch as this our Armachanus laboured, and in the same cause sustained the like conflict with the same antichrist, we likewise collect and open his reasons and arguments uttered in the consistory and in the audience of the pope himself, wherewith he maintaineth the true doctrine and cause of the church against the pestiferous canker creeping in by these friars after subtle ways of hypocrisy, to corrupt the sincere simplicity of Christ's holy faith and perfect testament; the which reasons and arguments of his, with the whole process of his doings, I thought good and expedient for the utility of the church more amply and largely to discourse and prosecute, for that I note in the sects, institutions, and doctrine of these friars, such subtle poison to lurk, more pernicious and hurtful to the religion of Christ and souls of Christians than all men, peradventure, do consider.

Thus Armachanus, joining with the clergy of England, disputed and contended with the friars here of England, A. D. 1358, about a double matter; whereof the one was concerning confession and other excheats which the friars encroached in parish churches against the curates, and public pastors of churches. The other was concerning wilful beggary and poverty, which the friars then took upon them, not upon any necessity, being otherwise strong enough to work for their living, but only upon a wilful and affected profession. For the which cause the friars appealed him up to the court of Rome. The occasion whereof thus did rise.

It befell that Armachanus, upon certain business coming up to London, found there certain doctors disputing and contending about the begging of Christ our Saviour. Whereupon he, being greatly urged and requested oftentimes thereunto, at request made seven or eight sermons unto the people at London, wherein he uttered nine conclusions; whereof the first and principal conclusion was, touching the matter of the friars' privileges in hearing confessions.

By this oration of Armachanus the learned prelate, made before Pope Innocent and his cardinals, divers and sundry things there were, for the utility of the church, worthy to be observed. First, what troubles and vexations came to the church of Christ by these friars. Also what persecution followeth after by the means of them, against so many learned men and true servants of Christ. Furthermore, what repugnance and contrariety was among the popes, and how they could not agree among themselves about the friars. Fourthly, what pestiferous doctrine, subverting well nigh the Testament of Jesus Christ. Fifthly, what decay of ministers in Christ's church. Sixthly, what robbing and circumventing of men's children. Seventhly, what decay of universities, as appeareth by Oxford. Eighthly, what damage to learning and lack of books to students came by these friars. Ninthly, to what pride, under colour of feigned humility, to what riches, under dissembled poverty, they grew, here is to be seen; insomuch that at length, through their subtle and most dangerous hypocrisy, they crept up to be lords, archbishops, cardinals, and at last also chancellors of realms, yea, and of most secret counsel with kings and queens.

All these things well considered, now remaineth in the church to be marked; that forasmuch as these friars, (with their new-found testament of friar Francis,) not being contented with the testament of God in his Son Christ, began to spring the same time when Satan was prophesied to be let loose by the order of the Scripture; whether therefore it is to be doubted, that these friars make up the body of antichrist, which is prophesied to come in the church, or not; which is much less to be doubted, because whoso list to try shall find, that of all other enemies of Christ, of whom some be manifest, some be privy, all be together cruel, yet is there no such sort of enemies which more sleightly deceiveth the simple Christian, or more deeply drowneth him in damnation, than doth this doctrine of the friars.

But of this oration of Armachanus enough. Which oration what success it had with the pope, by story it is not certain: by his own life declared, it appeareth that the Lord so wrought that his enemies did not triumph over him. Notwithstanding, this by story appeareth, that he was seven or eight years in banishment for the same matter, and there died in the same at Avignon, of whom a certain cardinal hearing of his death openly protested, that the same day a mighty pillar of Christ's church was fallen.

After the death of Armachanus, the friars had contention likewise with the monks of Benedict's order about the same year, 1360, and so removed their cause, both against the monks and against the university of Oxford, unto the court of Rome; wherein, saith the author, they lacked another Richard. By this that appeareth to be true, which is testified in the first tome of Waldenus, that long debate continued between the friars and the university of Oxford. Against whom first stood Robert Grosthead, bishop of Lincoln, above mentioned, then Sevallus of York, Johannes Baconthorpe, and now this Armachanus, of whom here presently we treat; and after him again John Wickliff, of whom (Christ willing) we will speak hereafter. Against this aforesaid Armachanus wrote divers friars; Roger Conaway, a Franciscan, John Heyldesham, a Carmelite, Galfridus Hardby, a friar Augustine. Also friar Engelbert, a Dominican, in a book entitled Defensorium Privilegiorum, and divers other. I credibly hear of certain old Irish Bibles translated long since into the Irish tongue, which, if it be true, it is not other like but to be the doing of this Armachanus. And thus much of this learned prelate and archbishop of Ireland, a man worthy, for his Christian zeal, of immortal commendation.

After the death of this Innocent, next was popped in the see of Rome Pope Urban the Fifth, who by the father's side was an Englishman. This Urban had been a long waiter in the court of Rome; and when he saw no promotion would light upon him, complaining to a certain friend of his, he made to him his moan, saying, That he thought, verily, if all the churches of the world should fall, yet none would fall in his mouth. The which friend after seeing him to be pope, and enthronized in his threefold crown, cometh to him, and putting him in remembrance of his words to him before, saith, That where his Holiness had moaned his fortune to him, that if all the churches in the world would fall, none would fall upon his head; now (saith he) God hath otherwise so disposed, that all the churches in the world are fallen upon your head, &c.

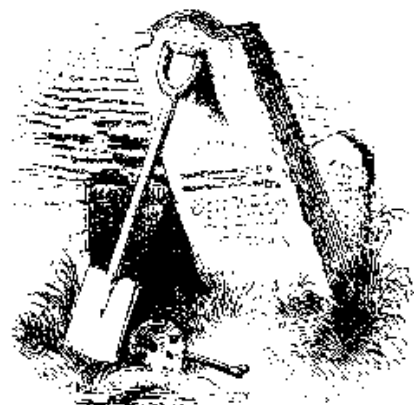
This pope maintained and kindled great wars in Italy, sending Egidius, his cardinal and legate, and after him Arduinus, a Burgundian, his legate and abbot, with great puissance and much money, against sundry cities in Italy; by whose means the towns and cities which before had broken from the bishop of Rome, were oppressed; also Barnabes and Galeaceus, princes of Milan, vanquished. By whose example other, being sore feared, submitted themselves to the Church of Rome; and thus came up that wicked church to her great possessions, which her patrons would needs father upon Constantine, the godly emperor.

In the time of this Pope Urban the Fifth, and in the second year of his reign, about the beginning of the year of our Lord 1364, I find a certain sermon of one Nicholas Orem, made before the pope and his cardinals, on Christmas even. In the which sermon the learned man doth worthily rebuke the prelates and priests of his time, declaring their destruction not to be far off, by certain signs taken of their wicked and corrupt life. All the sayings of the prophets, spoken against the wicked priests of the Jews, he doth aptly apply against the clergy of his time, comparing the church then present to the spiritual strumpet spoken of in the 16th chapter of the prophet Ezekiel. And proveth, in conclusion, the clergy of the church then to be so much worse than the old synagogue of the Jews, by how much it is worse to sell the church and sacraments, than to suffer doves to be sold in the church. With no less judgment also and learning he answereth to the old and false objections of the papists, who, albeit they be never so wicked, yet think themselves to be the church which the Lord cannot forsake.

This sermon was made by master Nicholas Orem before Pope Urban and his cardinals, upon the even of the nativity of the Lord, being the fourth Sunday of Advent, in the year of our Lord 1364, and the second of his popedom.

In the fifth year of this forenamed Pope Urban began first the order of the Jesuits. And unto this time, which was about the year of our Lord 1367, the offices here in England, as the lord chancellor, lord treasurer, and of the privy seal, were wont to be in the hands of the clergy; but about this year, through the motion of the lords in the parliament, and partly (as witnesseth mine author) for hatred of the clergy, all the said offices were removed from the clergy to the lords temporal.

77. Pope Gregory the Eleventh and King Edward the Third



fter the death of Pope Urban, next succeeded Pope Gregory the Eleventh, who, among his other acts, first reduced again the papacy out of France unto Rome, which had from thence been absent the space now of seventy years; being thereto moved (as Sabellicus recordeth) by the answer of a certain bishop, whom, as the pope saw standing by him, he asked, why he was so long from his charge and church at home, saying, that it was not the part of a good pastor, to keep him from his flock so long. Whereunto the bishop answering again, said, And

you yourself being the chief bishop, who may and ought to be a spectacle to us all, why are you from the place so long where your church doth lie? By the occasion whereof the pope sought all means after that to remove and to rid his court out of France again to Rome, and so he did.

This Gregory the Eleventh, in a certain bull of his sent to the archbishop of Prague, maketh mention of one named Militzius, a Bohemian, and saith in the same bull, that this Militzius should hold opinion and teach, A. D. 1366, that antichrist was already come. Also that the said Militzius had certain congregations following him; and that in the same congregations were certain harlots, who, being converted from their wickedness, were brought to a godly life; which harlots being so converted, he used to say, were to be preferred before all the holy religious virgins. And therefore he commanded the archbishop to excommunicate and persecute the said Militzius, which in foretime had been a religious man of Prague, and after forsook his order, and gave himself to preaching, and at length was by the aforesaid archbishop imprisoned.

Jacobus Misnensis, a learned man and a writer in the time of John Huss, maketh mention of this Militzius, and calleth him a worthy and a famous preacher. Also he citeth many things out of his writings, in the which writings this good Militzius thus declareth of himself, how he was moved and urged by the Holy Ghost to search out by the sacred Scriptures, concerning the coming of antichrist. And that he was compelled by the same Holy Spirit publicly to preach at Rome, and also before the inquisitor there to protest plainly, that the same great antichrist, which is prophesied of in the Holy Scriptures, was already come. Moreover his saying was, That the church through negligence of the pastors was desolate, did abound in temporal riches, but in spiritual riches was empty. Also, That in the church of Christ were certain idols which destroyed Jerusalem, and defaced the temple, but hypocrisy caused that those idols could not be, seen. Also, That many there were which denied Christ, because that knowing the truth, yet for fear of men they durst not confess their conscience, &c. And thus much of good Militzius, living in the time of Gregory the Eleventh, and King Edward the Third, A. D. 1370. The which king of England, holding a parliament in the third year of this pope, sent his ambassadors to him, desiring him, that he from henceforth would abstain from his reservations of benefices used in the court of England; and that spiritual men within this realm promoted unto bishoprics, might freely enjoy their elections within the realm, and be confirmed by their metropolitans, according to the ancient custom of the realm. Wherefore, upon

these, and such other like, wherein the king and the realm thought themselves much grieved, he desired of the pope some remedy to be provided, &c. Whereunto the pope returned a certain answer again unto the king, requiring by his messengers to be certified again of the king's mind concerning the same. But what answer it was it is not in the story expressed, save that the year following, which was 1374, there was a tractation at Bruges upon certain of the said articles between the king and the pope, which did hang two years in suspense; and so at length it was thus agreed between them, that the pope should no more use his reservations of benefices in England, and likewise the king should no more confer and give benefices upon the writ, *Quare impedit*, &c.; but as touching the freedom of elections to be confirmed by the metropolitan, mentioned in the year before, thereof was nothing touched.

As touching these reservations, provisions, and collations, with the elections of the archbishops, bishops, beneficed men, and other, wherewith the pope vexed this realm of England, as before you have heard; the king, by the consent of the lords and commons, in the twenty-fifth year of his reign, enacted, that according to a statute made in the thirtieth year of his grandfather, Edward the First, wherein was made an act against the ravenous pillage of the pope, through the same provisions, reservations, and collations, &c., but not put in execution; by the which provisions, the state of the realm decreased more and more, the king's royalty and prerogative was greatly obscured and diminished, innumerable treasure of the realm transported, aliens and strangers placed in the best and fattest bishoprics, abbeys, and benefices within the realm; and such, as either for their offices in Rome, as cardinalships and such like, could not be here resident, or, if resident, yet better away for causes infinite, as partly have been touched before; he not only revived the said statute made by Edward the First, his grandfather, but also enlarged the same; adding thereunto very strait and sharp penalties against the offenders therein, or in any part thereof, as exemption out of the king's protection, loss of all their lands, goods, and other possessions, and their bodies to be imprisoned at the king's pleasure; and further, whosoever was lawfully convict, or otherwise, for want of appearance by process directed forth, were within the lapse of this statute of *Præmunire*, for so bare the name thereof, should suffer all and every such molestations and injuries, as men exempted from the protection of the king. Insomuch, that whosoever had killed such men, had been in no more danger of law therefore, than for the killing of any outlaw, or one not worthy to live in a commonwealth. Like unprofitable members were they then, yea, in that time of ignorance, esteemed in this commonwealth of England, which would offer themselves to the wilful slavery and servile obedience of the pope; which thing in these days, yea, and that amongst no small fools, is counted more than evangelical holiness. He that list to peruse the statute, and would see every branch and article thereof at large discussed and handled, with the penalties therefore due, let him read the statute of Provision and *Præmunire*, made in the twenty-fifth year of this king's days. And let him read in the statutes made in the parliaments holden the twenty-seventh year and thirty-eighth year of his reign; and under the same title of Provision and *Præmunire* he shall find the pope's primacy and jurisdiction within this realm more nearly touched, and much of his papal power restrained: insomuch that whosoever, for any cause or controversy in law, either spiritual or temporal, the same being determinable in any of the king's courts, as all matters were, whether they were personal or real citations, or other, should either appeal, or consent to any appellation to be made, out of the realm to the pope or see of Rome, should incur the said penalty and danger of *Præmunire*. Divers other matters wherein the pope is restrained of his usurped power, authority, and jurisdiction within this realm of England, are in the said titles and statutes

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expressed, and at large set forth, whoever list to peruse the same, which for brevity's sake I omit, hastening to other matters.

78. Anti-Papal Writers, 1370-1390

About this time, being the year of our Lord 1370, lived holy Bridget, whom the Church of Rome hath canonized not only for a saint, but also for a prophetess; who, notwithstanding, in her book of revelations, which hath been oftentimes imprinted, was a great rebuker of the pope, and of the filth of his clergy, calling him a murderer of souls, a spiller and a piller of the flock of Christ, more abominable than the Jews, more cruel than Judas, more unjust than Pilate, worse than Lucifer himself. The see of the pope, she prophesieth, shall be thrown down into the deep, like a millstone, and that his assister shall burn with brimstone; affirming that the prelates, bishops, and priests, are the cause why the doctrine of Christ is neglected, and almost extinguished. And that the clergy have turned the ten commandments of God in two words, to wit, *Da pecuniam*, that is, Give money. It were long and tedious to declare all that she against them writeth. Among the rest which I omit, let this suffice for all; whereas the said Bridget affirmeth in her revelations, that when the holy virgin should say to her Son, how Rome was a fruitful and fertile field; Yea, said he, but of weeds only and cockle, &c.

To this Bridget I will join also Catharina Senensis, a holy virgin, which lived much about the same time, A. D. 1379. This Catharine, having the spirit of prophecy, was wont much to complain of the corrupt state of the church, namely, of the prelates of the court of Rome, and of the pope; prophesying before of the great schism which then followed in the Church of Rome, and dured to the council of Constance, the space of thirty-nine years; also of the great wars and tribulation, which ensued upon the same. And moreover, declared before and foretold of this so excellent reformation for religion in the church now present. The words of Antoninus be these: After this virgin, in her going to Rome, had told her brother of the wars and tumults that should rise in the countries about Rome, after the schism of the two popes; I, then curious to know of things to come, and knowing that she understood by revelation on what should happen, demanded of her; I pray you, (good mother,) said I, and what shall befall after these troubles in the church of God? And she said, "By these tribulations and afflictions, after a secret matter unknown unto man, God shall purge his holy church, and stir up the spirit of his elect. And after these things shall follow such a reformation of the holy church of God, and such a renovation of holy pastors, that the only cogitation and remembrance thereof maketh my spirit to rejoice in the Lord. And, as I have oftentimes told you heretofore, the spouse, which now is all deformed and ragged, shall be adorned and decked with most rich and precious ouches and brooches. And all the faithful shall be glad and rejoice to see themselves so beautified with so holy shepherds. Yea, and also the infidels then, allured by the sweet savour of Christ, shall return to the catholic fold, and be converted to the true Bishop and Shepherd of their souls. Give thanks therefore to God; for after this storm he will give to his a great calm." And after she had thus spoken, she staid, and said no more.

Besides these aforementioned, the Lord, which never ceaseth to work in his church, stirred up against the malignant Church of Rome the spirits of divers other good and godly teachers, as Matthew Paris, a Bohemian born, who, about the year of our Lord 1370, wrote a large book of antichrist, and proveth him to be already come, and noteth the pope to be the same; which book one Illiricus, a writer in these our days, hath, and promiseth to put it in print. In this book he doth greatly inveigh

against the wickedness and filthiness of the clergy, and against the neglecting of their duty in governing the church. The locusts mentioned in the Apocalypse, he saith, be the hypocrites reigning in the church. The works of antichrist, he saith, be these, the fables and inventions of men reigning in the church, the images and feigned relics that are worshipped every where. Item, That men do worship every one his proper saint and saviour beside Christ, so that every man and city almost hath his diverse and peculiar Christ. He taught and affirmed, moreover, that godliness and true worship of God are not bound to place, persons, or times, to be heard more in this place than in another, at this time more than at another, &c. He argueth also against the cloisterers, which, leaving the only and true Saviour, set up to themselves their Franciscans, their Dominics, and such other, and have them for their saviours, glorying and triumphing in them, and feigning many forged lies upon them. He was greatly and much offended with monks and friars for neglecting or rather burying the word of Christ, and instead of him, for celebrating and setting up their own rules and canons; affirming it to be much hurtful to true godliness, for that priests, monks, and nuns do account themselves only spiritual, and all other to be lay and secular, attributing only to themselves the opinion of holiness, and contemning other men, with all their politic administration, and the office as profane in comparison of their own. He further writeth that antichrist hath seduced all universities and colleges of learned men, so that they teach no sincere doctrine, neither give any light to the Christians with their teaching. Finally, he forewarneth that it will come to pass, that God yet once again will raise up godly teachers, who, being fervent in the spirit and zeal of Elias, shall disclose and refute the errors of antichrist, and antichrist himself, openly to the whole world. This Matthew, in the said book of antichrist, allegeth the sayings and writings of the university of Paris, also the writings of Gulielmus de Sancto Amore, and of Militzius, afore noted.

About the same time, or shortly after, A. D. 1384, we read also of Johannes of Mountziger, rector of the university of Ulm, who openly in the schools, in his oration, propounded that the body of Christ was not God, and therefore not to be worshipped as God with that kind of worship called *Latria*, as the sophister termeth it, meaning thereby the sacrament not to be adored, which afterward he also defended by writing; affirming also, that Christ in his resurrection took to him again all his blood which in his passion he had shed. Meaning thereby to infer, that the blood of Christ, which in many places is worshipped, neither can be called the blood of Christ, neither ought to be worshipped. But by and by he was resisted and withstood by the monks and friars, who by this kind of idolatry were greatly enriched, till at length the senate and council of the city was fain to take up the matter between them.

Nilus was archbishop of Thessalonica, and lived much about this time. He wrote a long work against the Latins; that is, against such as took part and held with the Church of Rome. His first book being written in Greek was afterward translated into Latin, and lately now into English, in this our time. In the first chapter of this book, he layeth all the blame and fault of the dissension and schism between the East and the West Church upon the pope. He affirmed that the pope only would command what him listed, were it never so contrary to all the old and ancient canons; that he would hear and follow no man's advice; that he would not permit any free councils to be assembled, &c. And that therefore it was not possible that the controversies between the Greek Church and Latin Church should be decided and determined.

In the second chapter of his book, he purposely maketh a very learned disputation. For first, he declareth that he no whit at all by God's commandment, but

only by human law, hath any dignity, more than hath other bishops; which dignity the councils, the fathers, and emperors, have granted unto him: neither did they grant the same for any other consideration more, or greater ordinance, than for that the same city then had the empire of all the whole world, and not at all for that Peter ever was there, or not there.

Secondarily he declareth, that the same primacy or prerogative is not such and so great as he and his sycophants do usurp unto themselves. Also he refuteth the chiefest propositions of the papists one after another. He declareth that the pope hath no dominion more than other patriarchs have, and that he himself may err as well as other mortal men; and that he is subject both to laws and councils as well as other bishops. That it belonged not to him, but to the emperor, to call general councils; and that in ecclesiastical causes he could establish and ordain no more than all other bishops might. And lastly, that he getteth no more by Peter's succession, than that he is a bishop, as all other bishops after the apostles be, &c.

I cannot, among other, following here the occasion of this matter offered, leave out the memory of Jacobus Misuensis, who also wrote of the coming of antichrist. In the same he maketh mention of a certain learned man, whose name was Militzius, which Militzius, saith he, was a famous and worthy preacher in Prague. He lived about the year 1366, long before Huss, and before Wickliff also. In the same his writings he declareth, how the same good man Militzius was by the Holy Spirit of God incited, and vehemently moved, to search out of the Holy Scriptures the manner and coming of antichrist, and found that now in his time he was already come. And the same Jacobus saith, that the said Militzius was constrained by the Spirit of God to go up to Rome, and there publicly to preach. And that afterward, before the inquisitor, he affirmed the same; that the same mighty and great antichrist, the which the Scriptures made mention of, was already come.

He affirmed also, that the church, by the negligence of the pastors, should become desolate; and that iniquity should abound, that is, by reason of Mammon, master of iniquity. Also, he said that there were in the church of Christ idols, which should destroy Jerusalem, and make the temple desolate, but were cloaked by hypocrisy. Further, that there be many which deny Christ, for that they keep silence; neither do they hear Christ, whom all the world should know, and confess his verity before men; which also wittingly do detain the verity and justice of God.

There is also a certain bull of Pope Gregory the Eleventh to the archbishop of Prague; wherein he is commanded to excommunicate and persecute Militzius and his auditors. The same bull declareth that he was once a canon of Prague, but afterward he renounced his canonship, and began to preach; who also, for that he so manifestly preached of antichrist to be already come, was of John, archbishop of Prague, put in prison, declaring what his error was; to wit, how he had his company or congregation to whom he preached, and that amongst the same were certain converted harlots, which had forsaken their evil life, and did live godly and well, which harlots he accustomed in his sermons to prefer before all the blessed virgins that never offended. He taught also openly, that in the pope, cardinals, bishops, prelates, priests, and other religious men, was no truth, neither that they taught the way of truth, but that only he, and such as held with him, taught the true way of salvation. His postil in some places is yet to be seen. They allege unto him certain other inconvenient articles, which, notwithstanding, I think the adversaries, to deprave him withal, have slanderously

invented against him. He had, as appeared by the aforesaid bull, very many of every state and condition, as well rich as poor, that cleaved unto him.

About the year of our Lord 1371, lived Henricus de Iota, whom Gerson doth much commend, and also his companion Henricus de Hassia, an excellent learned and famous man. An epistle of this Henricus de Hassia, which he wrote to the bishop of Normacia, Jacobus Cartsiensis inserted in his book *De Erroribus Christianorum*. In the same epistle the author doth greatly accuse the spiritual men of every order, yea, and the most holy of all other, the pope himself, of many and great vices. He said, that the ecclesiastical governors in the primitive church were compared to the sun shining in the day time; and the political governors, to the moon shining in the night. But the spiritual men, he said, that now are, do neither shine in the day time, nor yet in the night time, but rather with their darkness do obscure both the day and the night; that is, with their filthy living, ignorance, and impiety. He citeth also out of the prophecy of Hildegard these words: "Therefore doth the devil in himself speak of you priests: Dainty banquets and feasts, wherein is all voluptuousness, do I find amongst these men; insomuch that mine eyes, mine ears, my belly, and my veins be even filled with the froth of them, and my breasts stand astrut with the riches of them, &c. Lastly, saith he, they every day more and more, as Lucifer did, seek to climb higher and higher; till that every day with him, more and more, they fall deeper and deeper."

About the year of our Lord 1390, there were burned at Bringa thirty-six citizens of Moguntina, for the doctrine of Waldensis, as Brussius affirmeth; which opinion was nothing contrary to that they held before, wherein they affirmed the pope to be that great antichrist which should come; unless, peradventure, the pope seemed then to be more evidently convicted of antichristianity, than at any other time before he was revealed to be.

For the like cause, many other beside these are to be found in stories, which sustained the like persecutions by the pope, if leisure would serve to peruse all that might be searched. As where Masseus recordeth of divers to the number of one hundred and forty, which in the province of Narbonne chose rather to suffer whatsoever grievous punishment by fire, than to receive the decretals of the Romish church, contrary to the upright truth of the Scripture.

What should I here speak of the twenty-four which suffered at Paris, A. D. 1210? Also in the same author is testified that, A. D. 1211, there were four hundred under the name of heretics burned, eighty beheaded, Prince Americus hanged, and the lady of the castle stoned to death.

Moreover, in the chronicles of Hoveden, and of other writers, be recited a marvellous number, which in the countries of France were burned for heretics; of whom, some were called Publicans, some Catharites, some Paterines, and other by other names. What their assertions were, I find no certain report worthy of credit.

In Trithemius it is signified of one Eckhard, a Dominican friar, who, not long before Wickliff's time, was condemned and suffered for heresy at Heidelburgh, A. D. 1330, who as he differeth not much in name, so may he be supposed to be the same, whom other do name Beghard, and is said to be burned at Erphord.

Of Albigenses, because sufficient mention is made before, of whom a great number were burned about the time of King John, I pass them over.

Likewise, I let pass the hermit, of whom John Bacon maketh relation, who, disputing in Paul's church, affirmed that those sacraments, which were then used in

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the church, were not instituted by Christ, A. D. 1306. Peradventure, it was the same Ranulphus, mentioned in the Flower of Histories, and is said to die in prison; for the time of them doth not much differ.

In Boetius, why the pope should so much commend a certain king, because for one man he had slain four hundred, cutting away the genitals from the rest, I cannot judge, except the cause were that which the pope calleth heresy.

79. John Wickliff



John Wickliff

But to let these things overpass that be uncertain, because neither is it possible to comprehend all them which have withstood the corruption of the pope's see, neither have we any such firm testimony left of their doings, credibly to stay upon, we will now, Christ willing, convert our story to things more certain and undoubted, grounding upon no light reports of feeble credit, nor upon any fabulous legends

without authority, but upon the true and substantial copies of the public records of the realm, remaining yet to be seen under the king's most sure and faithful custody: out of the which records such matter appeareth against the popish Church of Rome, and against his usurped authority, such open standing and crying against the said see, and that not privily, but also in open parliament, in the days of this King Edward the Third; that neither will the Romish people of this our age easily think it to be true when they see it, neither yet shall they be able to deny the same, so near standeth the force of those records.

Besides the truths and notes of the king's parliaments, wherein may appear the toward proceedings of this king and all his commons against the pretended Church of Rome; this is, moreover, to be added to the commendation of the king, how in the volumes of the Acts and Rolls of the king it appeareth, that the said King Edward the Third sent also John Wickliff, reader then of divinity lecture in Oxford, with certain other lords and ambassadors, over into the parts of Italy, to treat with the pope's legates concerning affairs betwixt the king and the pope, with full commission; the tenor whereof here followeth expressed.

"The king, to all and singular to whom these presents shall come, greeting. Know ye, that we, reposing assured confidence in the fidelity and wisdom of the reverend father, John, bishop of Bangor, and other our loving and faithful subjects, Master John Wickliff, reader of the divinity lecture, Master John Guntur, dean of Segobyen, and Master Simon Moulton, doctor of the law, Sir William Burton, knight, Master John Belknap, and Master John Honnington, have directed them as our ambassadors and special commissioners to the parts beyond the seas. Giving to the said our ambassadors and commissioners, to six or five of them, of whom I will that the said bishop shall be one, full power and authority, with commandment special, to treat and consult mildly and charitably with the legates and ambassadors of the lord pope, touching certain affairs; whereupon, of late, we sent heretofore the said bishop, and William Ughtred, monk of Durham, and Master John Shepy, to the see apostolical: and hereof to make full relation of all things done and passed in the said assembly, that all such things which may tend to the honour of holy church and the advancement of our crown and this our realm, may, by the assistance of God and the wisdom of the see apostolical, be brought to good effect, and accomplished accordingly. Witness ourselves, &c., at London, dated the twenty-sixth day of July, in the forty-eighth year of our reign."

By the which it is to be noted, what good-will the king then bare to the said Wickliff, and what small regard he had to the sinful see of Rome.

Of the which John Wickliff, because we are now approached to his time, it remaineth consequently for our story to treat of, so as we have heretofore done of other like valiant soldiers of Christ's church before him.

After all these heretofore recited, by whom, as ye have heard, it pleased the Lord something to work against the bishop of Rome, and to weaken the pernicious superstition of the friars, it now remaineth consequently, following the course of years, orderly to enter into the story and tractation of John Wickliff, our countryman, and other more of his time and same country, whom the Lord (with the like zeal and power of spirit) raised up here in England, to detect more fully and amply the poison of the pope's doctrine, and false religion set up by the friars. In whose opinions and assertions, albeit some blemishes perhaps may be noted; yet such blemishes they be, which rather declare him to be a man that might err, than which directly did fight

against Christ our Saviour, as the pope's proceedings and the friars' did. And what doctor or learned man hath been from the prime age of the church so perfect, so absolutely sure, in whom no opinion hath sometime swerved awry? And yet be the said articles of his, neither in number so many, nor yet so gross in themselves and so cardinal, as those cardinal enemies of Christ perchance do give them out to be; if his books, which they abolished, were remaining, to be conferred with those blemishes, which they have wrested to the worst, as evil-will never said the best.

This is certain and cannot be denied, but that he, being the public reader of divinity in the university of Oxford, was, for the rude time wherein he lived, famously reputed for a great clerk, a deep school-man, and no less expert in all kind of philosophy; the which doth not only appear by his own most famous and learned writings and monuments, but also by the confession of Walden, his most cruel and bitter enemy, who, in a certain epistle written unto Pope Martin the Fifth, saith, that he was wonderfully astonished at his most strong arguments, with the places of authority which he had gathered, with the vehemency and force of his reasons, &c. And thus much out of Walden. It appeareth by such as have observed the order and course of times, that this Wickliff flourished about the year of our Lord 1371, Edward the Third reigning in England; for thus we do find in the Chronicles of Caxton: "In the year of our Lord 1371, saith he, Edward the Third, king of England, in his parliament was against the pope's clergy: he willingly hearkened and gave ear to the voices and tales of heretics, with certain of his council, conceiving and following sinister opinions against the clergy; wherefore (afterward) he tasted and suffered much adversity and trouble. And not long after, in the year of our Lord (saith he) 1372, he wrote unto the bishop of Rome, that he should not by any means intermeddle any more within his kingdom, as touching the reservation or distribution of benefices; and that all such bishops as were under his dominion should enjoy their former and ancient liberty, and be confirmed of their metropolitans, as hath been accustomed in times past," &c. Thus much writeth Caxton. But as touching the just number of the year and time, we will not be very curious or careful about it at this present. This is out of all doubt, that at what time all the world was in most desperate and vile estate, and that the lamentable ignorance and darkness of God's truth had overshadowed the whole earth, this man steppeth forth like a valiant champion, unto whom it may justly be applied that is spoken in the book called Ecclesiasticus, of one Simon, the son of Onias: Even as the morning star being in the midst of a cloud, and as the moon being full in her course, and as the bright beams of the sun; so doth he shine and glister in the temple and church of God.

Thus doth Almighty God continually succour and help, when all things are in despair: being always (according to the prophecy of the Psalm) a helper in time of need; the which thing never more plainly appeared, than in these latter days and extreme age of the church, whenas the whole state and condition, not only of worldly things, but also of religion, was depraved and corrupted; that, like as the disease named lethargy amongst the physicians, even so the state of religion amongst the divines, was past all men's help and remedy. The name only of Christ remained amongst Christians, but his true and lively doctrine was as far unknown unto the most part, as his name was common unto all men. As touching faith, consolation, the end and use of the law, the office of Christ, of our impotency and weakness, of the Holy Ghost, of the greatness and stength of sin, of true works, of grace and free justification by faith, of liberty of a Christian man, wherein consisteth and resteth the sum and matter of our profession, there was no mention, nor any word almost spoken of

Scripture, learning, and divinity, were known but unto a few, and that in the schools only, and there also turned and converted almost all into sophistry. Instead of Peter and Paul, men occupied their time in studying Aquinas and Scotus, and the Master of Sentences. The world, leaving and forsaking the lively power of God's spiritual word and doctrine, was altogether led and blinded with outward ceremonies and human traditions, wherein the whole scope, in a manner, of all Christian perfection did consist and depend. In these was all the hope of obtaining salvation fully fixed; hereunto all things were attributed; insomuch that scarcely any other thing was seen in the temples or churches, taught or spoken of in sermons, or finally intended or gone about in their whole life, but only heaping up of certain shadowy ceremonies upon ceremonies; neither was there any end of their heaping.

The people were taught to worship no other thing but that which they did see; and did see almost nothing which they did not worship.

The church, being degenerated from the true apostolic institution above all measure, reserving only the name of the apostolic church, but far from the truth thereof in very deed, did fall into all kind of extreme tyranny; whereas the poverty and simplicity of Christ was changed into cruelty and abomination of life. Instead of the apostolic gifts and continual labours and travails, slothfulness and ambition had crept in amongst the priests. Beside all this, there arose and sprung up a thousand sorts and fashions of strange religions; being only the root and well-head of all superstition. How great abuses and depravations were crept into the sacraments, at what time they were compelled to worship similitudes and signs of things for the very things themselves, and to adore such things as were instituted and ordained only for memorials! Finally, what thing was there in the whole state of Christian religion so sincere, so sound and pure, which was not defiled and spotted with some kind of superstition? Besides this, with how many bonds and snares of daily newfangled ceremonies were the silly consciences of men, redeemed by Christ to liberty, snared and snarled; insomuch that there could be no great difference almost perceived between Christianity and Jewishness, save only the name of Christ: so that the state and condition of the Jews might seem somewhat more tolerable than ours! There was nothing sought for out of the true fountains, but out of the dirty puddles of the Philistines; the Christian people were wholly carried away as it were by the noses, with mere decrees and constitutions of men, even whither as pleased the bishops to lead them, and not as Christ's will did direct them. All the whole world was filled and overwhelmed with errors and darkness; and no great marvel: for why, the simple and unlearned people, being far from all knowledge of the Holy Scripture, thought it sufficient enough for them to know only these things which were delivered them by their pastors and shepherds, and they on the other part taught in a manner nothing else but such things as came forth of the court of Rome; whereof the most part tended to the profit of their order, more than to the glory of Christ.

The Christian faith was esteemed or counted none other thing then, but that every man should know that Christ once suffered, that is to say, that all men should know and understand that thing which the devils themselves also knew. Hypocrisy was counted for wonderful holiness. All men were so addict unto outward shows, that even they themselves, which professed the most absolute and singular knowledge of the Scriptures, scarcely did understand or know any other thing. And this did evidently appear, not only in the common sort of doctors and teachers, but also in the very heads and captains of the church, whose whole religion and holiness consisted, in a manner, in the observing of days, meats, and garments, and such like rhetorical

circumstances, as of place, time, person, &c. Hereof sprang so many sorts and fashions of vestures and garments; so many differences of colours and meats, with so many pilgrimages to several places, as though St. James at Compostella could do that, which Christ could not do at Canterbury; or else that God were not of like power and strength in every place, or could not be found but being sought for by running and gadding hither and thither. Thus the holiness of the whole year was transported and put off unto the Lent season. No country or land was counted holy, but only Palestine, where Christ had walked himself with his corporal feet. Such was the blindness of that time, that men did strive and fight for the cross at Jerusalem, as it had been for the chief and only force and strength of our faith. It is a wonder to read the monuments of the former times, to see and understand what great troubles and calamities this cross hath caused almost in every Christian commonwealth; for the Romish champions never ceased by writing, admonishing, and counselling, yea, and by quarrelling, to move and stir up princes' minds to war and battle, even as though the faith and belief of the gospel were of small force or little effect, without that wooden cross. This was the cause of the expedition of the most noble prince King Richard unto Jerusalem; who, being taken in the same journey, and delivered unto the emperor, could scarcely be ransomed home again for thirty thousand marks. In the same enterprise or journey, Frederic, the emperor of Rome, a man of most excellent virtue, was much endamaged, A. D. 1179; and also Philip, the king of France, scarcely returned home again in safety, and not without great losses: so much did they esteem the recovery of the holy city and cross.

Upon this alone all men's eyes, minds, and devotions were so set and bent; as though either there were no other cross but that, or that the cross of Christ were in no other place but only at Jerusalem. Such was the blindness and superstition of those days, which understood or knew nothing but such as were outwardly seen; whereas the profession of our religion standeth in much other higher matters and greater mysteries. What is the cause why that Urban did so vex and torment himself? Because that Antioch, with the holy cross, was lost out of the hands of the Christians; for so we do find it in the chronicles, at what time as Jerusalem with King Guido and the cross of our Lord was taken, and under the power of the sultan, Urban took the matter so grievously, that for very sorrow he died. In whose place succeeded Lambert, which was called Gregory the Eighth, by whose motion it was decreed by the cardinals, that (setting apart all riches and voluptuousness) they should preach the cross of Christ, and by their poverty and humility first of all should take the cross upon them, and go before others into the land of Jerusalem. These are the words of the history, whereby it is evident unto the vigilant reader, unto what grossness the true knowledge of the spiritual doctrine of the gospel was degenerate and grown in those days; how great blindness and darkness was in those days, even in the first primacy and supremacy of the bishop of Rome; as though the outward succession of Peter and the apostles had been of greater force and effect to the matter. What doth it force in what place Peter did rule or not rule? It is much more to be regarded that every man should labour and study with all their endeavour to follow the life and confession of Peter; and that man seemeth unto me to be true successor of Peter against whom the gates of hell shall not prevail. For if that Peter in the Gospel do bear the type and figure of the Christian church, as all men in a manner do affirm, what more foolish or vain thing can there be, than through private usurpation to restrain and to bind that unto one man, which by the appointment of the Lord is of itself free and open to so many?

Thus, in these so great and troublous times and horrible darkness of ignorance, what time there seemed in a manner to be no one so little a spark of pure doctrine left or remaining, this aforesaid Wickliff, by God's providence, sprang and rose up, through whom the Lord would first waken and raise up again the world, which was overmuch drowned and whelmed in the deep streams of human traditions. Thus you have here the time of Wickliff's original.

Which Wickliff, after he had now a long time professed divinity in the university of Oxford, and perceiving the true doctrine of Christ's gospel to be adulterate and defiled with so many filthy inventions of bishops, sects of monks, and dark errors; and that he, after long debating and deliberating with himself, (with many secret sighs, and bewailing in his mind the general ignorance of the whole world,) could no longer suffer or abide the same; he at the last determined with himself to help and to remedy such things as he saw to be wide, and out of the way. But, forasmuch as he saw that this dangerous meddling could not be attempted or stirred without great trouble, neither that these things, which had been so long time with use and custom rooted and grafted in men's minds, could be suddenly plucked up or taken away, he thought with himself that this matter should be done by little and little. Wherefore he, taking his original at small occasions, thereby opened himself a way or mean to greater matters. And first he assailed his adversaries in logical and metaphysical questions, disputing with them of the first form and fashion of things, of the increase of time, and of the intelligible substance of a creature, with other such-like sophisms of no great effect; but yet, notwithstanding, it did not a little help and furnish him, which minded to dispute of greater matters. So in these matters first began Keningham (a Carmelite) to dispute and argue against John Wickliff.

By these originals the way was made unto greater points, so that at the length he came to touch the matters of the sacraments, and other abuses of the church; touching which things this holy man took great pains, protesting (as they said) openly in the schools, that it was his chief and principal purpose and intent, to revoke and call back the church from her idolatry, to some better amendment, especially in the matter of the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ. But this boil or sore could not be touched without the great grief and pain of the whole world; for first of all, the whole glut of monks and Begging Friars were set on a rage or madness, which (even as hornets with their sharp stings) did assail this good man on every side; fighting (as is said) for their altars, paunches, and bellies. After them the priests, and then after them the archbishop, took the matter in hand, being then Simon Sudbury; who, for the same cause, deprived him of his benefice, which then he had in Oxford.

Notwithstanding, he being somewhat friended and supported by the king, as appeareth, continued and bare out the malice of the friars, and of the archbishop, all this while of his first beginning, till about the year of our Lord 1377; after which time, now to prosecute likewise of his troubles and conflicts, first I must fetch about a little compass, as requisite is, to infer some mention of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, the king's son, Lord Henry Percy, which were his special maintainers.

As years and time grew on, King Edward the Third, which had reigned now about fifty-one years, after the decease of Prince Edward his son, who departed the year before, was stricken in great age, and in such feebleness withal, that he was unwieldy through lack of strength, to govern the affairs of the realm. Wherefore, a parliament being called the year before his death, it was there put up by the knights and other the burgesses of the parliament, because of the misgovernment of the realm,

(by certain greedy persons about the king, raking all to themselves, without seeing any justice done,) that twelve sage and discreet lords and peers, such as were free from note of all avarice, should be placed as tutors about the king, to have the doing and disposing under him (six at one time, and in their absence, six at another) of matters pertinent to the public regiment. Here, by the way, I omit to speak of Alice Perris, the wicked harlot which, as the story reporteth, had bewitched the king's heart, and governed all, and sat upon causes herself, through the devilish help of a friar Dominic; who by the duke of Lancaster was caused to be taken, and was convicted, and should have suffered for the same, had not the archbishop of Canterbury and the friars (more regarding the liberty of their church than the punishing of vice) reclaimed him for their own prisoner. This Alice Perris, notwithstanding she was banished by this parliament from the king, yet afterward she came again, and left him not, till at his death she took all his rings upon his fingers and other jewels from him, and so fled away like a harlot. But this of her by the way.

These twelve governors, by parliament aforesaid being appointed to have the tuition of the king, and to attend to the public affairs of the realm, remained for a certain space about him; till afterward it so fell out, that they being again removed, all the regiment of the realm, next under the king, was committed to the duke of Lancaster, the king's son For as yet Richard, the son of Prince Edward lately departed, was very young and under age.

This duke of Lancaster had in his heart of long time conceived a certain displeasure against the popish clergy; whether for corrupt and impure doctrine joined with like abominable excess of life, or for what other cause, it is not precisely expressed; only by story the cause thereof may be guessed to rise by William Wickham, bishop of Winchester. The matter is this:

The bishop of Winchester, as the saying went then, was reported to affirm, that the aforesaid John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, was not the son of King Edward, nor of the queen; who, being in travail at Gaunt, had no son (as he said) but a daughter, which the same time, by lying upon of the mother in the bed, was there smothered. Whereupon the queen, fearing the king's displeasure, caused a certain man-child of a woman of Flanders (born the very same time) to be conveyed, and brought unto her instead of her daughter aforesaid; and so she brought up the child whom she bare not, who now is called duke of Lancaster. And this, said the bishop, did the queen tell him, lying in extremes on her death-bed under seal of confession; charging him, if the said duke should ever aspire to get the crown, or if the kingdom by any means should fall unto him, he then should manifest the same, and declare it to the world, that the said duke of Lancaster was no part of the king's blood, but a false heir of the king. This slanderous report of the wicked bishop, as it savoureth of a contumelious lie, so seemeth it to proceed of a subtle zeal toward the pope's religion, meaning falsehood. For the aforesaid duke, by favouring of Wickliff, declared himself to be a professed enemy against the pope's profession; which thing was then not unknown, neither unmarked of the prelates and bishops then in England. But the sequel of the story thus followed:

This slanderous villany of the bishop's report being blazed abroad, and coming to the duke's ear; he therewith not being a little discontented (as no marvel was) sought again, by what means he could, to be revenged of this forenamed bishop. In conclusion the duke, having now all the government of the realm under the king his father, in his own hands, so pursued the bishop of Winchester, that by act of

parliament he was condemned and deprived of all his temporal goods; which goods were assigned to Prince Richard of Bourdeaux, the next inheritor of the crown after the king; and furthermore he inhibited the said bishop not to approach near to the court by twenty miles. Further as touching this bishop, the story thus proceedeth: Not long after, in the year of our Lord 1377, a parliament was called by the means of the duke of Lancaster, upon certain causes and respects; in which parliament great request and suit was made by the clergy for the deliverance of the bishop of Winchester. At length, when a subsidy was asked in the king's name of the clergy, and request also made in the king's behalf, for speedy expedition to be made for the dissolving of the parliament, the archbishop therefore accordingly convented the bishops for the tractation thereof. To whom the bishops with great lamentation complaining for lack of their fellow and brother, the bishop of Winchester, whose injury, said they, did derogate from the liberties of the whole church; and therefore denied to join themselves in tractation of any such matters, before all the members together were united with the head; and (seeing the matter touched them all together in common, as well him as them) they would not otherwise do. And seemed, moreover, to be moved against the archbishop for that he was not more stout in the cause, but suffered himself so to be cited of the duke.

The archbishop, although having sufficient cause to excuse himself, wherefore not to send for him, as also he did, because of the perils which might ensue thereof, yet being enforced and persuaded thereunto by the importunity of the bishops, directed down his letters to the aforesaid bishop of Winchester, willing him to resort unto the convocation of the clergy; who being glad to obey the same, was received with great joy of the other bishops. And at length, by the means of Alice Perris, the king's paramour above mentioned, giving to her a good quantity of money, the said Winchester was restored to his own temporalities again.

As the bishops had thus sent for Winchester, the duke in the mean time had sent for John Wickliff, who, as is said, was then the divinity reader in Oxford, and had commenced in sundry acts and disputations, contrary to the form and teaching of the pope's church in many things; who also for the same had been deprived of his benefice, as hath been afore touched. The opinions which he began in Oxford, in his lectures and sermons, first to treat of, and wherefore he was deprived, were these: That the pope had no more power to excommunicate any man, than hath another. That if it be given by any person to the pope to excommunicate, yet to absolve the same is as much in the power of another priest, as in his. He affirmed, moreover, that neither the king nor any temporal lord could give any perpetuity to the church, or to any ecclesiastical person; for that when such ecclesiastical persons do sin, *habitualiter*, continuing in the same still, the temporal powers ought and may meritoriously take away from them that before hath been bestowed upon them. And that he proved to have been practised before here in England by William Rufus; which thing, said he, if he did lawfully, why may not the same also be practised now? if he did it unlawfully, then doth the church err, saith he, and doth unlawfully in praying for him. But of his assertions more shall follow, Christ willing, hereafter. The story which ascribeth to him these assertions, being taken out, as I take it, of the monastery of St. Alban's, addeth withal: That in his teaching and preaching he was very eloquent, but a dissembler, saith he, and a hypocrite. Why he surmiseth him to be a hypocrite, the cause was this:

First, Because he resorted much to the orders of the Begging Friars, frequenting and extolling the perfection of their poverty.

Secondly, Because he and his fellows usually accustomed in their preaching to go barefoot, and in simple russet gowns.

By this, I suppose, may efficiently appear to the indifferent, the nature and condition of Wickliff, how far it was from the ambition and pride, which the slanderous pen of Polydore Virgil reporteth in his 19th book of him, that because he was not preferred to higher honours and dignities of the church, (conceiving therefore indignation against the clergy,) he became their mortal enemy. How true was this, He only knoweth best, that rightly shall judge both the one and the other.

In the mean time, by other circumstances and parts of his life, we may also partly conjecture what is to be thought of the man. But howsoever it was in him either true or false, yet it had been Polydore's part, either not so intemperately to have abused his pen, or at least to have showed some greater authority and ground of that his report. For to follow nothing else but flying fame, so rashly to defame a man whose life he knoweth not, is not the part of a faithful story-writer.

But to return from whence we digressed. Beside these his opinions and assertions above recited, with other more, which are hereafter to be brought in order, he began also then something nearly to touch the matter of the sacrament, proving that in the said sacrament the accidents of bread remained not without the subject of substance; both by the Holy Scriptures, and also by the authority of the doctors, but specially by such as were most ancient. As for the later writers, that is to say, such as have written upon that argument under the thousand years since Christ's time, he utterly refused, saying, That after these years Satan was loosed and set at liberty; and that since that time the life of man hath been most subject, and in danger of errors; and that the simple and plain truth doth appear and conlist in the Scriptures, whereunto all human traditions, whatsoever they be, must be referred, and specially such as are set forth and published now of late years. This was the cause why he refused the later writers of decretals, leaning only to the Scriptures and ancient doctors; most stoutly affirming out of them, that in the sacrament of the body which is celebrate with bread, the accidents not to be present without the substance; that is to say, that the body of Christ is not present without the bread, as the common sort of priests in those days did dream. As for his arguments, what they were, we will shortly, at more opportunity, by God's grace, declare them in another place. But herein the truth, as the poet speaketh very truly, had gotten John Wickliff great displeasure and hatred at many men's hands; and specially of the monks and richest sort of priests.

Albeit through the favour and supportation of the duke of Lancaster and Lord Henry Percy, he persisted hitherto in some mean quiet against their wolfish violence and cruelty: till at last, about the year of our Lord 1376, the bishops still urging and inciting their archbishop Simon Sudbury, who before had deprived him, and afterward prohibited him also not to stir any more in those sorts of matters, had obtained, by process and order of citation, to have him brought before them; whereunto both place and time for him to appear, after their usual form, was to him assigned.

The duke, having intelligence that Wickliff his client should come before the bishops, fearing that he, being but one, was too weak against such a multitude, calleth to him, out of the orders of friars, four bachelors of divinity, out of every order one, to join them with Wickliff also, for more surety. When the day was come, assigned to the said Wickliff to appear, which day was Thursday, the nineteenth of February, John Wickliff went, accompanied with the four friars aforesaid, and with them also the

duke of Lancaster, and Lord Henry Percy, lord marshal of England; the said Lord Percy also going before them to make room and way where Wickliff should come.

Thus Wickliff (through the providence of God) being sufficiently guarded, was coming to the place where the bishops sat; whom, by the way, they animated and exhorted not to fear nor shrink a whit at the company of the bishops there present, who were all unlearned, said they, in respect of him; for so proceed the words of my aforesaid author, whom I follow in this narration; neither that he should dread the concourse of the people, whom they would themselves assist and defend, in such sort as he should take no harm. With these words, and with the assistance of the nobles, Wickliff, in heart encouraged, approached to the church of St. Paul in London, where a main press of people was gathered to hear what should be said and done. Such was there the frequency and throng of the multitude, that the lords, notwithstanding all the puissance of the high marshal, and only with great difficulty could get way through; insomuch that the bishop of London, whose name was William Courtney, seeing the stir that the lord marshal kept in the church among the people, speaking to the Lord Percy, said, That if he had known before what masteries he would have kept in the church, he would have stopped him out from coming there; at which words of the bishop, the duke, disdainng not a little, answered to the bishop again, and said, That he would keep such mastery there, though he said nay.

At last, after much wrestling, they pierced through and came to our Lady's chapel, where the dukes and barons were sitting together with the archbishops and other bishops; before whom the aforesaid John Wickliff, according to the manner, stood to know what should be laid unto him. To whom first spake the Lord Percy, bidding him to sit down, saying, that he had many things to answer to, and therefore had need of some softer seat. But the bishop of London, cast eftsoons into a fumish chafe with those words, said, He should not sit there. Neither was it, said he, according to law or reason, that he, which was cited there to appear to answer before his ordinary, should sit down during the time of his answer, but should stand. Upon these words a fire began to heat and kindle between them; insomuch that they began so to rate and revile one the other, that the whole multitude, therewith disquieted, began to be set on a hurry.

Then the duke, taking the Lord Percy's part, with hasty words began also to take up the bishop. To whom the bishop again, nothing inferior in reproachful checks and rebukes, did render and requite not only to him as good as he brought, but also did so far excel him in this railing art of scolding, that the duke blushed and was ashamed, because he could not overpass the bishop in brawling and railing, and therefore fell to plain threatening; menacing the bishop, that he would bring down the pride not only of him, but also of all the prelacy of England. And speaking, moreover, unto him: Thou, said he, bearest thyself so brag upon thy parents, which shall not be able to help thee; they shall have enough to do to help themselves; for his parents were the earl and countess of Devonshire. To whom the bishop again answered, that to be bold to tell truth, his confidence was not in his parents, nor in any man else, but only in God in whom he trusted. Then the duke softly whispering in the ear of him next by him, said, That he would rather pluck the bishop by the hair of his head out of the church, than he would take this at his hand. This was not spoken so secretly, but that the Londoners overheard him. Whereupon, being set in a rage, they cried out, saying, that they would not suffer their bishop so contemptuously to be abused. But rather they would lose their lives than that he should so be drawn out by the hair. Thus that council, being broken with scolding and brawling for that day, was dissolved before

nine of the clock; and the duke, with the Lord Percy, went to the parliament, where the same day, before dinner, a bill was put up in the name of the king by the Lord Thomas Woodstock and Lord Henry Percy, that the city of London should no more be governed by a mayor, but by a captain, as in times before; and that the marshal of England should have all the ado in taking the arrests within the said city, as in other cities besides, with other petitions more, tending to the like derogation of the liberties of London. Which bill being read, John Philpot, burgess then for the city, standeth up, saying to them which read the bill, that that was never seen so before; and adding, moreover, that the mayor would never suffer any such things, or other arrest to be brought into the city, with more such words of like stoutness.

The next day following the Londoners assembled themselves in a council, to consider among them upon the bill for changing the mayor, and about the office of the marshal, also concerning the injuries done the day before to their bishop.

In which mean time, they being busy in long consultation of this matter, suddenly and unawares entered in the place two certain lords, whether to come to spy, or for what other cause, the author leaveth it uncertain, the one called Lord Fitz-Walter, the other Lord Guy Bryan. At the first coming in of them the vulgar sort was ready forthwith to fly upon them as spies, had not they made their protestation with an oath, declaring that their coming in was for no harm toward them. And so they were compelled by the citizens to swear to the city their truth and fidelity; contrary to the which oath, if they should rebel, they would be contented to forfeit whatsoever goods and possessions they had within the city.

This done, then began the Lord Fitz-Walter, in this wise, to persuade and exhort the citizens, first declaring how he was bound and obliged to them and to their city, not for the oath only now newly received, but of old and ancient good-will from his great-grandfather's time. Besides other divers duties, for the which he was chiefly bound to be one of their principal favourers; forasmuch as whatsoever tendeth to their damage and detriment, redounded also no less unto his own, for which cause he could not otherwise choose, but that what he did understand to be attempted against the public profit and liberties of the city, he must needs communicate the same to them; who, unless they, with speedy circumspection, do occur, and prevent perils that may and are like to ensue, it would turn in the end to their no small incommodity. And as there were many other things which required their vigilant care and diligence, so one thing there was which he could in no wise but admonish them of; which was this, necessary to be considered of them all, how the lord marshal Henry Percy, in his place within himself, had one in ward and custody, whether with the knowledge or without the knowledge of them, he could not tell: this he could tell, that the said lord marshal was not allowed any such ward or prison in his house, within the liberties of the city; which thing, if it be not seen to in time, the example thereof being suffered, would, in fine, breed to such a prejudice unto their customs and liberties, as they should not hereafter, when they would, reform the injury thereof.

These words of the Lord Fitz-Walter were not so soon spoken, but they were as soon taken of the rash citizens; who, in all hasty fury, running to their armour and weapons, went incontinently to the house of the Lord Percy, where, breaking up the gates, by violence they took out the prisoner, and burned the stocks wherein he sat, in the midst of London. Then was the Lord Percy sought for, whom, saith the story, they would doubtless have slain if they might have found him. With their bills and javelins, all corners and privy chambers were searched, beds and hangings torn asunder. But

the Lord Percy, as God would, was then with the duke, whom one John Yper the same day, with great instance, had desired to dinner.

The Londoners not finding him at home, and supposing that he was with the duke at Savoy, in all hasty heat turned their power thither, running as fast as they could to the duke's house; where also in like manner they were disappointed of their cruel purpose. In the mean while, as this was doing, cometh one of the duke's men running in post haste to the duke and to the Lord Percy, declaring what was done. The duke, being then at his oysters, without any further tarrying, and also breaking both his shins at the form for haste, took boat with the Lord Percy, and by water went to Kingston, where then the princess, with Richard the young prince, did lie; who there declared unto the princess all the whole matter concerning the outrage of the Londoners, as it was. To whom she promised again, that such an order should be taken in the matter, as should be to his contentation. At what time the commons of London thus, as is said, were about the duke's house at Savoy, there meeteth with them a certain priest, who, marvelling at the sudden rage and concourse, asked what they sought. To whom answer was given again of some, that they sought for the duke and the lord marshal, to have of them the Lord Peter de la Mare, whom they wrongfully had detained in prison. To this the priest answered again more boldly than opportunely: That Peter (said he) is a false traitor to the king, and worthy long since to be hanged. At the hearing of these words, the furious people, with a terrible shout, cried out upon him, that he was a traitor, and one that took the duke's part, and so falling upon him with their weapons, strove who might first strike him; who, after they had wounded him very sore, so being wounded they had him into prison; where, within few days, upon the soreness of his wounds, he died.

Neither would the rage of the people thus have ceased, had not the bishop of London, leaving his dinner, come to them at Savoy, and putting them in remembrance of the blessed time, as they term it, of Lent, had persuaded them to cease and to be quiet.

The Londoners, seeing that they could get no advantage against the duke, who was without their reach, to wreak their anger they took his arms, which in most despiteful ways they hanged up in the open places of the city, in sign of reproach, as for a traitor. Insomuch that when one of his gentlemen came through the city, with a plate containing the duke's arms hanging by a lace about his neck, the citizens not abiding the sight thereof, cast him from his horse, and plucked his escutcheon from him, and were about to work the extremity against him, had not the mayor rescued him out of their hands, and sent him home safe unto the duke his master. In such hatred was then the duke among the vulgar people of London.

After this the princess, understanding the hearts and broil of the Londoners, set against the aforesaid duke, sent unto London three knights, Sir Albred Lewer, Sir Simon Burley, and Sir Lewis Clifford, to entreat the citizens to be reconciled with the duke. The Londoners answered, that they, for the honour of the princess, would obey and do with all reverence what she would require; but this they required and enjoined the messengers to say to the duke by word of mouth: that he should suffer the bishop of Winchester afore mentioned, and also the Lord Peter de la Mare, to come to their answer, and to be judged by their peers; whereby either they might be quit, if they were guiltless; or otherwise, if they be found culpable, they might receive, according to their deserts after the laws of the realm, what grief and displeasure the duke conceived and retained in his mind hereof. Again, what means and suit the Londoners

for their part made to the old king for their liberties; what rhymes and songs in London were made against the duke; how the bishops, at the duke's request, were moved to excommunicate those malicious slanderers; and, moreover, how the duke at last was revenged of those contumelies and injuries; how he caused them to be brought before the king; how sharply they were rebuked for their misdemeanour by the worthy oration of the lord chamberlain, Robert Aston, in the presence of the king, archbishops, bishops, with divers other states, the king's children, and other nobilities of the realm; in conclusion, how the Londoners were compelled to this at length, by the common assent and public charges of the city, to make a great taper of wax, which, with the duke's arms set upon it, should be brought with solemn procession to the church of St. Paul, there to burn continually before the image of our Lady; and, at last, how both the said duke and the Londoners were reconciled together, in the beginning of the new king, with the kiss of peace, and the same reconciliation publicly announced in the church of Westminster, and what joy was in the whole city thereof: these, because they are impertinent and make too long a digression from the matter of Wickliff, I cut off with brevity, referring the reader to other histories, namely, of St. Alban's, where they are to be found at large.

As these aforesaid, for brevity' sake, I pass over, so will I not be long, and yet cannot omit that which happened the same time and year to the bishop of Norwich, to the intent that this posterity now may see to what pride the clergy of the pope's church was then grown. The same time as this broil was at London, the bishop of Norwich, a little after the time of Easter, coming to the town of Lennam, belonging to his lordship; being not contented with the old accustomed honour due unto him, and used of his predecessors before in the same town, required, moreover, with a new and unused kind of magnificence to be exalted: insomuch that when he saw the chief magistrate or mayor of that town to go in the streets with his officer going before him, holding a certain wand in his hand tipped at both ends with black horn, as the manner was, he, reputed himself to be lord of that town, as he was, and thinking to be higher than the highest, commanded the honour of that staff due to the mayor, to be yielded and borne before his lordly personage. The mayor or bailiff, with other the townsmen, courteously answered to him again, that they were right willing and contented with all their hearts to exhibit that reverence unto him; and would so do, if he first of the king and council could obtain that custom, and if the same might be induced, after any peaceable way, with the good-wills of the commons and body of the town; otherwise, said they, as the matter was dangerous, so they durst not take in hand any such new alteration of ancient customs and liberties, lest the people, (which is always inclinable and prone to evil,) do fall upon them with stones, and drive them out of the town. Wherefore, kneeling on their knees before him, there humbly they besought him that he would require no such thing of them; that he would save his own honour and their lives, who, otherwise, if he intended that way, were in great danger. But the bishop, youthful and haughty, taking occasion, by their humbleness, to swell the more in himself, answered, that he would not be taught by their council, but that he would have it done, though all the commons (whom he named ribalds) said nay. Also he rebuked the mayor and his brethren for mecocks and dastards, for so fearing the vulgar sort of people.

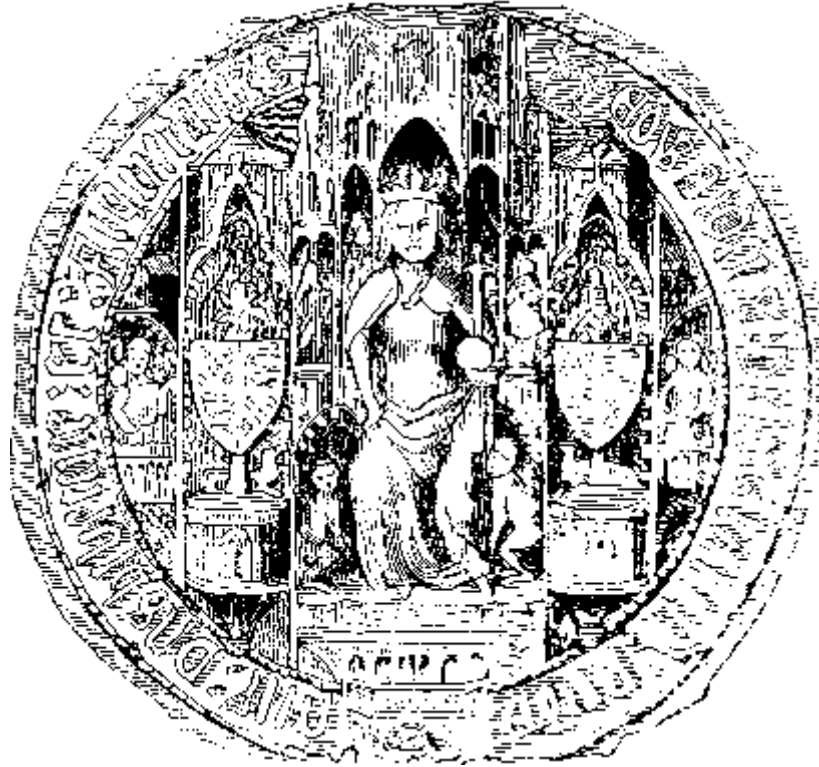
The citizens perceiving the wilful stoutness of the bishop, meekly answering again, said, They minded not to resist him, but to let him do therein what he thought good: only they desired him that he would license them to depart, and hold them excused for not waiting upon him, and conducting him out of the town with that

reverence which he required; for if they should be seen in his company, all the suspicion thereof would be upon them, and so should they be all in danger, so much as their lives were worth. The bishop, not regarding their advice and counsel, commanded one of his men to take the rod borne before the mayor, and to carry the same before him. Which being done, and perceived of the commons, the bishop after that manner went not far, but the rude people running to shut the gates, came out with their bows, some with clubs and staves, some with other instruments, some with stones, and let drive at the bishop and his men as fast as they might, in such sort, that both the bishop and his horse under him, with most part of his men, were hurt and wounded. And thus the glorious pride of this jolly prelate, ruffling in his new sceptre, was received and welcomed there. That is, he was so pelted with bats and stones, so wounded with arrows and other instruments fit for such a skirmish, that the most part of his men, with his mace-bearer, all running away from him, the poor wounded bishop was there left alone, not able to keep his old power, which went about to usurp a new power more than to him belonged. Thus, as it is commonly true in all, so is it well exemplified here, which is commonly said, and as it is commonly seen, that pride will have a fall, and power usurped will never stand. In like manner, if the citizens of Rome, following the example of these Lennam men, as they have the like cause, and greater, to do by the usurped power of their bishop, would after the same sauce handle the pope, and unsceptre him of his mace and regality, which nothing pertaineth to him; they, in so doing, both should recover their own liberties, with more honour at home, and also win much more commendation abroad.

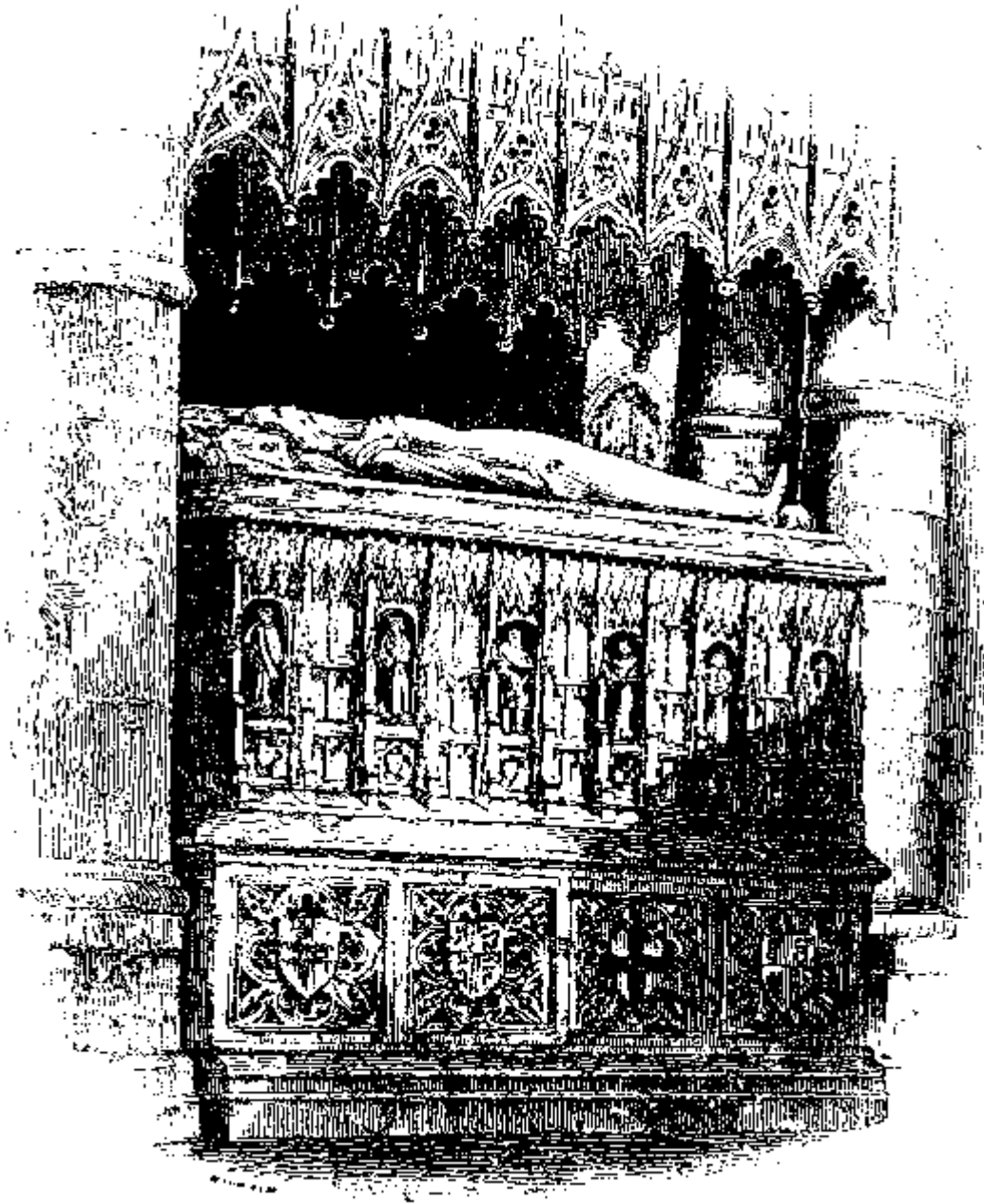
This tragedy, with all the parts thereof, being thus ended at Lennam, which was a little after Easter, as is said, about the month of April, A. D. 1377, the same year, upon the twelfth day of the month of June next after, died the worthy and victorious prince, King Edward the Third, after he had reigned fifty-one years; a prince not more aged in years than renowned for many singular and heroical virtues, but principally noted and lauded for his singular meekness and clemency towards his subjects and inferiors, ruling them by gentleness and mercy, without all rigour or austere severity. Among other noble and royal ornaments of his nature, worthily and copiously set forth of many, thus he is described by some, which may briefly suffice for the comprehension of all the rest: to the orphans he was a father, compassionate to the afflicted, mourning with the miserable, relieving the oppressed, and to all them that wanted a helper in time of need, &c. But chiefly, above all other things in this prince, in my mind, to be commemorate is this, that he above all other kings of this realm, unto the time of King Henry the Eighth, was the greatest bridler of the pope's usurped power and outrageous oppressions: during all the time of which king, neither the pope could greatly prevail in this realm, and also John Wickliff was maintained with favour and aid sufficient.



Edward III



Seal of Edward III



Tomb of Edward III

But before we close up the story of this king, there cometh to hand that which I thought good not to omit, a noble purpose of the king in requiring a view to be taken in all his dominions of all benefices and dignities ecclesiastical remaining in the hands of Italians and aliens, with the true valuation of the same, directed down by commission; whereof the like also is to be found in the time of King Richard the Second, the tenor of which commission of King Edward I thought hereunder to set down for worthy memory.

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

The king directed writs unto all the bishops of England in this form.

"Edward, by the grace of God, king, &c. To the reverend father in Christ N., by the same grace bishop L., greeting. Being willing upon certain causes to be certified what and how many benefices, as well archdeaconries and other dignities, as vicarages, parsonages, prebends, and chapels, within your diocese, be at this present in the hands of Italians and other strangers, what they be, of what value, and how every of the said benefices be called by name; and how much every of the same is worth by the year, not as by way of tax or extent, but according to the true value of the same; and likewise of the names of all and singular such strangers being now incumbents or occupying the same and every of them; moreover, the names of all them, whether Englishmen or strangers, of what state or condition soever they be, which have the occupation or disposition of any such benefices with the fruits and profits of the same, in the behalf, or by the authority, of any the aforesaid strangers, by way of farm, or title, or procuration, or by any other ways or means whatsoever, and how long they have occupied or disposed the same; and withal if any the said strangers be now residents upon any benefices: we command you, as heretofore commanded you, that you send us a true certificate of all and singular the premises, into our high court of chancery under your seal distinctly and openly, on this side the feast of the Ascension of our Lord next coming, without further delay: returning unto us this our writ withal. Witness ourself at Westminster the 16th day of April in the 48th year of our reign of England, and over France the 35th year." A. D. 1375.

By virtue hereof, certificate was sent up to the king into his chancery, out of every diocese of England, of all such spiritual livings as were then in the occupation either of priors aliens, or of other strangers; whereof the number was so great, that being all set down, it would fill almost half a quire of paper. Whereby may appear that it was high time for the king to seek remedy herein, either by treaty with the pope or otherwise; considering so great a portion of the revenues of his realm was by this means conveyed away, and employed either to the relief of his enemies, or maintenance of the foreigners; amongst which number the cardinals of the court of Rome lacked not their share.

[Fox subjoins to this statement a long list of the rich and numerous preferments enjoyed by the cardinals of Rome. In fact the chief part of the church revenues was reaped, by men who had no connexion whatever with the country.]



John Wicliff defending himself.



fter King Edward the Third, succeeded his grandson, Richard the Second, being yet but young, of the age of eleven years: who, in the same year of his father's decease, with great pomp and solemnity was crowned at Westminster, A. D. 1377, who, following his father's steps, was no great disfavourer of the way and doctrine of Wickliff: albeit at the first beginning, partly through the iniquity of time, partly through the pope's letters, he could not do that he would.

Notwithstanding something he did in that behalf, more perhaps than in the end he had thank for from the papists, as more (by the grace of Christ) shall appear. But as times do change, so changeth commonly the cause and state of man. The bishops now seeing the aged king to be taken away, during the time of whose old age all the government of the realm depended upon the duke of Lancaster; and now the said bishops again seeing the said duke, with the Lord Percy, the lord marshal, to give over their offices, and to remain in their private houses without intermeddling, thought now the time to serve them, to have some advantage against John Wickliff; who hitherto, under the protection of the aforesaid duke and lord marshal, had some rest and quiet. Concerning the story of this Wickliff, I trust, gentle reader, it is not out of thy memory what went before, how he being brought before the bishops, by the means of the duke and of Lord Henry Percy, the council was interrupted, and brake before nine of the

clock. By reason whereof Wickliff at that time escaped without any further trouble. Who, notwithstanding his being by the bishops forbidden to deal in that doctrine any more, continued yet with his fellows, going barefoot and in long frieze gowns, preaching diligently unto the people. Out of his sermons these articles most chiefly at that time were collected.

"That the holy eucharist, after the consecration, is not the very body of Christ, but figuratively.

"That the Church of Rome is not the head of all churches more than any other church is; nor that Peter hath any more power given of Christ, than any other apostle hath.

"Item, That the pope of Rome hath no more part in the keys of the church, than hath any other within the order of priesthood.

"Item, If God be, the lords temporal may lawfully and meritoriously take away their temporalities from the churchmen offending *habitualiter*.

"Item, If any temporal lord do know the church so offending, he is bound, under pain of damnation, to take the temporalities from the same.

"Item, That the gospel is a rule sufficient of itself to rule the life of every Christian man here, without any other rule.

"Item, That all other rules, under whose observances divers religious persons be governed, do add no more perfection to the gospel, than doth the white colour to the wall.

"Item, That neither the pope, nor any other prelate of the church, ought to have prisons wherein to punish transgressors."

Besides these articles, divers other conclusions afterward were gathered out of his writings and preachings by the bishops of England, which they sent diligently to Pope Gregory at Rome; where the said articles being read and perused, were condemned for heretical and erroneous by three and twenty cardinals.

In the mean time the archbishop of Canterbury, sendeth forth his citations, as is aforesaid, called before him the said John Wickliff in the presence of the duke of Lancaster and Lord Percy; who, upon the declaration of the pope's letters made, bound him in silence, forbidding him not to treat any more of those matters. But then, through the disturbance of the bishop of London, and the duke, and Lord Percy, that matter was soon despatched, as hath been above recorded. And all this was done in the days and last year of King Edward the Third, and Pope Gregory the Eleventh.

In the year following, A. D. 1378, being the first year of King Richard the Second, the said Pope Gregory taking his time, after the death of King Edward, sendeth his bull by the hands and means, peradventure, of one Master Edmund Stafford, directed unto the university of Oxford, rebuking them sharply, imperiously, and like a pope, for suffering so long the doctrine of John Wickliff to take root, and not plucking it up with the crooked sickle of their catholic doctrine. When the bull came to be delivered into their hands by the pope's messenger aforesaid, the proctors and masters of the university, joining together in consultation, stood long in doubt, deliberating with themselves whether to receive the pope's bull with honour, or to refuse and reject it with shame.

I cannot here but laugh in my mind to behold the authors of this story whom I follow; what exclamations, what wonderings and marvels, they make at these Oxford men, for so doubting at a matter so plain, so manifest of itself, as they say, whether the pope's bull sent to them from Rome was to be received or not; which thing to our monkish writers seemed then such a prodigious wonder, that they with blushing cheeks are fain to cut off the matter in the midst with silence.

The copy of this wild bull, sent to them from the pope, was this:

"Gregory the bishop, the servant of God's servants, to his well-beloved sons, the chancellor and university of Oxford, in the diocese of Lincoln, greeting and apostolical benediction.

"We are compelled not only to marvel, but also to lament, that you, considering the apostolical seat hath given unto your university of Oxford so great favour and privilege, and also for that you flow, as in a large sea, in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and ought to be champions and defenders of the ancient and catholic faith, without the which there is no salvation, by your great negligence and sloth will suffer wild cockle, not only to grow up among the pure wheat of the flourishing field of your university, but also to wax strong and choke the corn. Neither have ye any care, as we are informed, to extirpate and pluck the same up by the roots, to the great blemishing of your renowned name, the peril of your souls, the contempt of the Church of Rome, and to the great decay of the ancient faith. And further, which grieveth us, the increase of that filthy weed was more sharply rebuked and judged of in Rome, than in England where it sprang. Wherefore let there be means sought, by the help of the faithful, to root out the same. Grievously it is come to our ears, that one John Wickliff, parson of Lutterworth, in Lincoln diocese, a professor of divinity, (would God he were not rather a master of errors,) is run into a kind of detestable wickedness, not only and openly publishing, but also vomiting out of the filthy dungeon of his breast, divers professions, false and erroneous conclusions, and most wicked and damnable heresies; whereby he might defile the faithful sort, and bring them from the right path headlong into the way of perdition, overthrow the state of the church, and utterly subvert the secular policy. Of which his mischievous heresies some seem to agree, certain names and terms only being changed, with the perverse opinions and unlearned doctrine of Marsilius of Padua, and of John of Ganduno, of unworthy memory, whose books were utterly abolished in the realm of England, by our predecessor of happy memory, John the Twenty-second, which kingdom doth not only flourish in power, and abundance of faculties, but is much more glorious and shining in pureness of faith; accustomed always to bring forth men excellently learned in the true knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, ripe in gravity of manners, men notable in devotion, and defenders of the catholic faith. Wherefore we will and command you, by our writing apostolical, in the name of your obedience, and upon pain of privation of our favour, indulgences and privileges granted unto you and your university from the said see apostolical; that hereafter ye suffer not those pestilent heresies, and those subtle and false conclusions and propositions, misconstruing the right sense of faith and good works, (howsoever they term it, or what curious implication of words soever they use,) any longer to be disputed of, or brought in question; lest if it be not withstood at the first, and plucked up by the roots, it might perhaps be too late hereafter to prepare medicines, when a greater number is infected with the contagion. And further, that ye apprehend immediately, or cause to be apprehended, the said John Wickliff, and deliver him to be detained in the safe custody of our well-beloved brethren, the archbishop of Canterbury and the bishop of London, or either of them.

And if you shall find any gainsayers corrupted with the said doctrine, which God forbid, in your said university within your jurisdiction, that shall obstinately stand in the said errors, that then in like manner ye apprehend them, and commit them to safe custody, and otherwise to do in this case as it shall appertain unto you; so as by your careful proceedings herein, your negligence past concerning the premises may now fully be supplied and recompensed with present diligence. Whereby you shall not only purchase unto you the favour and benevolence of the seat apostolical, but also great reward and merit of Almighty God.

"Given at Rome, at St. Mary's the Greater, xi. kalends of June, and in the 7th year of our consecration."

Beside this bull sent to the university of Oxford, the said Pope Gregory directed moreover his letters the same time to the archbishop of Canterbury, Simon Sudbury, to the bishop of London, named William Courtney, with the conclusions of John Wickliff therein enclosed, commanding them, by virtue of those his letters apostolical, and straitly enjoining them to cause the said John Wickliff to be apprehended and cast into prison, and that the king and the nobles of England should be admonished by them, not to give any credit to the said John Wickliff, or to his doctrine in any wise.

Beside this bill or bull of the pope, sent unto the archbishop of Canterbury and to the bishop of London, bearing the date, 11th kal. June, and the seventh year of the reign of the pope; I find, moreover, in the said story two other letters of the pope concerning the same matter, but differing in form, sent unto the same bishops, and all bearing the same date, both of the day, year, and month of the reign of the said Pope Gregory. Whereby it is to be supposed, that the pope either was very exquisite and solicitous about the matter, to have Wickliff to be apprehended, which wrote three divers letters to one person, and all in one day, about one business; or else that he did suspect the bearers thereof; the solution whereof I leave to the judgment of the reader.

Furthermore, beside these letters written to the university, and to the bishops, he directeth also another epistle bearing the same date unto King Edward, as one of my stories saith, but as another saith, to King Richard, which soundeth more near to the truth, forasmuch as in the seventh year of Pope Gregory the Eleventh, which was A. D. 1378, King Edward was not alive.

The copy of the epistle sent by the bishop of Rome to Richard, king of England, to persecute John Wickliff:

"Unto his well-beloved son in Christ, Richard the most noble king of England, health, &c.

The kingdom of England, which the Most Highest hath put under your power and governance, being so famous and renowned in valiancy and strength, so abundant and flowing in all kind of wealth and riches, but much more glorious, resplendent, and shining through the brightness and clearness of all godliness and faith, hath been accustomed always to bring forth men endued with the true knowledge and understanding of the Holy Scriptures, grave in years, fervent in devotion, and defenders of the catholic faith: the which have not only directed and instructed their own people through their wholesome doctrine and precepts into the true path of God's commandments, but also we have heard by the report and information of many credible persons, to our great grief and heart sorrow, that John Wickliff, parson of

Lutterworth, in the diocese of Lincoln, professor of divinity, (I would to God he were no author of heresy,) hath fallen into such a detestable and abominable madness, that he hath propounded and set forth diverse and sundry conclusions full of errors, and containing most manifest heresy, which do tend utterly to subvert and overthrow the state of the whole church. Of the which, some of them (albeit under coloured phrase and meeche) seem to smell and savour of perverse opinions, the foolish doctrine of condemned memory of Marsilius of Padua, and John of Ganduno, whose books were by Pope John the Twenty-second, our predecessor, a man of a most happy memory, reproved and condemned," &c.

itherto, gentle reader, thou hast heard how Wickliff was accused by the bishop. Now you shall also hear the pope's mighty reasons and arguments, by the which he did confute him, to the king. It followeth:

"Therefore, forasmuch as our reverend brethren, the archbishop of Canterbury and the bishop of London, have received a special commandment from us, by our authority to apprehend and commit the forenamed John Wickliff unto prison, and to transport his confession unto us; if they shall seem in the prosecution of this their business to lack your favour or help, we require and most earnestly desire your Majesty, even as your most noble predecessors have always been most earnest lovers of the catholic faith, (whose case or quarrel in this matter is chiefly handled,) that you would vouchsafe, even for the reverence of God, and the faith aforesaid, and also of the apostolic seat, and of our person, with your help and favour to assist the said archbishop and all other that go about to execute the said business. Whereby, besides the praise of men, you shall obtain a heavenly reward and great favour and good will at our hand, and of the see aforesaid. Dated at Rome, at St. Mary the Greater, the 11th kal. of June, in the 7th year of our bishopric, A. D. 1378."

The articles included in the pope's letters, which he sent to the bishops and to the king against Wickliff, were these which in order do follow.

The conclusions of John Wickliff, exhibited in the convocation of certain bishops at Lambeth.

"1. All the whole race of mankind here on earth, besides Christ, hath no power simply to ordain that Peter and all his offspring should politically rule over the world for ever.

"2. God cannot give to any man for him and his heirs any civil dominion for ever.

"3. All writings invented by men, as touching perpetual heritage, are impossible.

"4. Every man, being in grace justifying, hath not only right unto the thing, but also for his time hath right indeed above all the good things of God.

"5. A man cannot only ministratoriously give any temporal or continual gift, either as well to his natural son, or to his son by imitation.

"6. If God be, the temporal lords may lawfully and meritoriously take away the riches from the church when delinquent. We know that Christ's vicar cannot, neither is able by his bulls, neither by his own will and consent, neither by the consent of his college, either to enable or disable any man.

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"7. A man cannot be excommunicated to his hurt or undoing, except he be first principally excommunicate by himself.

"8. No man ought, but in God's cause alone, to excommunicate, suspend, or forbid, or otherwise to proceed to revenge, by any ecclesiastical censure.

"9. A curse or excommunication doth not simply bind, but in case it be pronounced and given out against the adversary of God's law.

"10. There is no power given by any example of Christ or his apostles to excommunicate any subject, specially for denying of any temporalities, but rather contrariwise.

"11. The disciples of Christ have no power to exact, by any civil authority, temporalities by censures.

"12. It is not possible by the absolute power of God, that if the pope or any other Christian do pretend by any means to bind or to loose, that thereby he doth so bind and loose.

"13. We ought to believe that the vicar of Christ doth only bind and loose, when he worketh conformably to the law and ordinance of Christ.

"14. This ought universally to be believed, that every priest rightly and duly ordered, according unto the law of grace, hath power according to his vocation, whereby he may minister the sacraments, and consequently absolve any man confessing his fault, he being contrite for the same.

"15. It is lawful for kings, in causes licensed by the law, to take away the temporalities from the spirituality, sinning *habitualiter*, that is, which continue in the custom of sin, and will not amend.

"16. Whether they be temporal lords, or any other men whatsoever they be, which have endowed any church with temporalities, it is lawful for them to take away the same temporalities, as it were by way of medicine, to avoid sin, notwithstanding any excommunication or other ecclesiastical censure; forasmuch as they are not given but under a condition.

"17. An ecclesiastical minister, and also the bishop of Rome, may lawfully be rebuked of his subjects, and for the profit of the church be accused either of the clergy or of the laity."

These letters, with the articles enclosed, being received from the pope, the bishops took them no little to heart, thinking and fully determining with themselves, and that in open profession before their provincial council, that, all manner respects of fear or favour set apart, no person neither high nor low should hinder them, neither would they be seduced by the entreaty of any man, nor by any threatenings or rewards, but that in this cause they would execute most surely upright justice and equity; yea, albeit even if danger of life should follow thereupon. But these so fierce brags and stout promises, with the subtle practices of these bishops, who thought them so sure before, the Lord, against whom no determination of man's counsel can prevail, by a small occasion, did lightly confound and overthrow. For the day of the examination being come, a certain personage of the prince's court, and yet of no great noble birth, named Lewis Clifford, entering in among the bishops, commanded them that they should not proceed with any definitive sentence against John Wickliff. With which words all they were so amazed, and their combs so cut, that (as in the story is

mentioned) they became mute and speechless, as men having not one word in their mouths to answer. And thus, by the wondrous work of God's providence, escaped John Wickliff the second time out of the bishops' hands, and was by them clearly dismissed upon this declaration made of his articles, as anon shall follow.

Moreover, here is not to be passed over, how, at the same time, and in the said chapel of the archbishop at Lambeth, where the bishops were sitting upon John Wickliff, the historian, writing of the doing thereof, addeth these words, saying, "I say not only that the citizens of London, but also the vile abjects of the city, presumed to be so bold in the same chapel at Lambeth, where the bishops were sitting upon John Wickliff, as both to entreat for him, and also to let and stop the said matter; trusting, as I suppose, to the negligence which they saw before in the bishops," &c.



ohn Wickliff, by giving his exposition unto his aforesaid propositions and conclusions, unto the bishops in writing at the time of his examination, either shifted off the bishops, or else satisfied them so, that for that time he was dismissed and escaped clearly away, only being charged and commanded by them, that he should not teach or preach any such doctrine any more, for the offence of the lay people.

Thus this good man, being escaped from the bishops with this charge, yet, notwithstanding, ceased not to proceed in his godly purpose, labouring and profiting still in the church as he had begun.

Unto whom also, as it happened by the providence of God, this was likewise a great help and stay, for that in the same year, or in the beginning of the next year following, the aforesaid Pope Gregory the Eleventh, which was the stirrer up of all this trouble against him, turned up his heels and died. After him ensued such a schism in Rome, between two popes, and other succeeding after them, one striving against another, that it endured the space of thirty-nine years, until the time of the council of Constance.

The first occasioner of which schism was Pope Urban the Sixth, who, in the beginning of his popedom, was so proud and insolent to his cardinals, and other, as to dukes, princes, and queens, and so set to advance his nephews and kindred, with injuries to other princes, that the greatest number of his cardinals and courtiers by little and little shrunk from him, and set up another French pope against him, named Clement, who reigned eleven years. And after him Benedict the Thirteenth, who reigned twenty-six years. Again, on the contrary side, after Urban the Sixth succeeded Boniface the Ninth, Innocent the Eighth, Gregory the Twelfth, Alexander the Fifth, John the Twenty-third.

As touching this pestilent and most miserable schism, it would require here another Iliad to comprehend in order all the circumstances and tragical parts thereof, what trouble in the whole church, what parts taking in every country, what apprehending and imprisoning of priests and prelates taken by land and sea, what shedding of blood did follow thereof. How Otho, duke of Brunswick and prince of Tarentum, was taken and murdered. How Joan his wife, queen of Jerusalem and Sicily, who before had sent to Pope Urban, beside other gifts at his coronation, forty thousand ducats in pure gold, was after by the said Urban committed to prison, and in

the same prison strangled. What cardinals were racked, and miserably, without all mercy, tormented on gibbets to death; what slaughter of men, what battles were fought between the two popes, whereof five thousand on one side were slain, beside the number of them which were taken prisoners. Of the beheading of five cardinals together after long torments, and how the bishop of Aquilonensis, being suspected of Pope Urban, for not riding faster with the pope, his horse being not good, was there slain by the pope's commandment, sending his soldiers unto him to slay him, and cut him in pieces. All which things, with divers other more acts of horrible cruelty, happening in the time of this abominable schism, because they are abundantly discoursed at full by Theodricus Niemus, who was near to the said Pope Urban, and present at all his doings; therefore, as a thing needless, I here omit; referring them who covet to be certified more amply herein, unto the three books of the said Theodric, above mentioned.

About the same time also, about three years after, there arose a cruel dissension in England, between the common people and the nobility, which did not a little disturb and trouble the commonwealth. In this tumult Simon of Sudbury, archbishop of Canterbury, was taken by the rustic and rude people, and was beheaded. In whose place succeeded William Courtney, which was no less diligent than his predecessor had been before him, in doing his diligence to root out heretics. Notwithstanding, in the mean season Wickliff's sect increased privily, and daily drew to greater force, until the time that William Barton, vice-chancellor of Oxford, about A. D. 1380, had the whole rule of that university; who calling together eight monastical doctors, and four other, with the consent of the rest of his affinity, putting the common seal of the university unto certain writings, set forth an edict, declaring unto every man, and threatening them under a grievous penalty, that no man should be so hardy hereafter to associate themselves with any of Wickliff's fautors or favourers; and unto Wickliff himself he threatened the greater excommunication and further imprisonment, and to all his abettors, unless that they, after three days canonical admonition or warning, or, as they call it, peremptory, did repent and amend. When Wickliff understood this, forsaking the pope and all the clergy, he thought to appeal unto the king's majesty; but the duke of Lancaster coming between, forbade him, that he should not hereafter attempt or begin any such matters, but rather submit himself unto the censure and judgment of his ordinary. Whereby Wickliff being beset with troubles and vexations, as it were in the midst of the waves, he was forced once again to make confession of his doctrine; in which his confession, to avoid the rigour of things, he answered as is aforesaid, making his declaration, and qualifying his assertions after such a sort, that he did mitigate and assuage the rigour of his enemies.

The year after, A. D. 1382, by the commandment of William, archbishop of Canterbury, there was a convocation holden at London, where John Wickliff was also commanded to be present. But whether he there appeared personally or not, I find it not in story certainly affirmed. The mandate of the archbishop, William Courtney, (sent abroad for the conventing together of this council,) here followeth underwritten, truly copied out of his own registers.

"Memorandum — Whereas amongst the nobles as well as commons of this realm of England, there hath a certain bruit been spread of divers conclusions, both erroneous, and also repugnant to the determination of the church, which tend to the subversion of the whole church, and to our province of Canterbury, and also to the subversion of the whole realm, being preached in divers and sundry places of our said province, generally, commonly, and publicly: We William, by God's permission

archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, and legate of the see apostolical, being minded to execute our office and duty herein, have convocated or called together certain of our fellow brethren and others a great many, as well doctors and bachelors of divinity, as doctors of the canon and civil law, and those whom we thought to be the most famous men, skilfullest men, and men of soundest judgment in religion, that were in all the realm, whose names hereunder ensue. And the same being (the seventh day of the month of May) in the year of our Lord 1382, in a certain chamber within the territories of the priory of the Friars Preachers of London, before us and our foresaid fellow brethren assembled, then and there personally present: after that the said conclusions (the tenor whereof hereunder ensueth) were openly put forth, and distinctly and plainly read, we burdened our aforesaid fellow brethren, doctors and bachelors, in the faith wherein they stood bound to our Lord Jesus Christ, and as they would answer before the high Judge in the day of judgment, that they should speak their opinions touching the said conclusions, and what each of them thinketh therein.

"And at length, after good deliberation had upon the premises, the aforesaid our brethren the bishops, doctors, and bachelors reassembled before us the twenty-first day of the same month in the aforesaid chamber, the aforesaid conclusions being again and again repeated and plainly read; by us, and by the common consent of us all, it remaineth published and declared, that some of the said conclusions are heretical, and other erroneous and contrary to the determination of the church, as hereafter most manifestly shall appear. And forasmuch as by sufficient information we find and perceive, that the said conclusions in many places of our said province have been, as is said, both taught and preached; and that divers other persons do hold and maintain the same, and be of heresy vehemently and notoriously suspected; we have thought good, as well generally as specially, to send out this process underwritten." The names of the jurors were these:— Eight bishops,

Canterbury, Winchester, Durham, Exeter, Hereford, Sarum, Rochester, and Friar Botlesham, bishop: three Friars Preachers; Siward, Paris, Langley: four Minorites; Folvile, Carlel, Frisly, Bernwell: Augustine friars four; Ashborne, Bowkin, Woldley, Hornington: Carmelites four; Glanvile, Dis, Loney, Kiningham: monks four; Wells, Ramsey, Bloxam, Marton: doctors of the canon and civil law fourteen; Appelby, Waltram, Baketon, Chadesden, Tregision, Stow, Blanchard, Rocombey, Lidford, Welbourne, Flainburgh, Motrum, Brandon, and Prophet: bachelors of divinity six; Humbleton, Pickwech, Lindlow, Wich, Chiselden, Tomson.

The articles of John Wickliff here above specified, whereof there were ten which were by these friars condemned as heretical, the rest as erroneous, here in order follow, and are these: although it may be thought, that some of them were made worse by their sinister collecting, than he meant them in his own works and writings.

The articles of John Wickliff condemned as heretical.

1. That the substance of material bread and wine doth remain in the sacrament of the altar after the consecration.

2. That the accidents do not remain without the subject in the same sacrament, after the consecration.

3 That Christ is not in the sacrament of the altar truly and really, in his proper and corporal person.

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4. That if a bishop or a priest be in deadly sin, he doth not order, consecrate, nor baptize.

5. That if a man be duly and truly contrite and penitent, all exterior and outer confession is but superfluous and unprofitable unto him.

6. That God ought to obey the devil.

7. That it is not found or established by the gospel, that Christ did make or ordain mass.

8. That if the pope be a reprobate and evil man, and consequently a member of the devil, he hath no power by any manner of means given unto him over faithful Christians, except peradventure it be given him from the emperor.

9. That since the time of Urban the Sixth, there is none to be received for pope, but every man is to live after the manner of the Greeks, under his own law.

10. That it is against the Scripture, that ecclesiastical ministers should have any temporal possessions.

Other articles of John Wickliff, condemned as erroneous.

11. That no prelate ought to excommunicate any man, except he know him first to be excommunicate of God.

12. That he who doth so excommunicate any man, is thereby himself either a heretic or excommunicated.

13. That a prelate or bishop excommunicating any of the clergy, which hath appealed to the king or the council, is thereby himself a traitor to the king and realm.

14. That all who do leave off preaching or hearing the word of God, or preaching the gospel, for fear of excommunication, are already excommunicated, and in the day of judgment shall be counted as traitors unto God.

15. That it is lawful for any man, either deacon or priest, to preach the word of God without the authority or licence of the apostolical see or any other of his Catholics.

16. That so long as the man is in deadly sin, he is neither bishop nor prelate in the church of God.

17. Also that the temporal lords may, according to their own will and discretion, take away the temporal goods from the churchmen whensoever they do offend.

18. That tenths are pure alms, and that the parishioners may, for offence of their curates, detain and keep them back, and bestow them upon others, at their own will and pleasure.

19. Also, that all special prayers applied to any private or particular person, by any prelate or religious man, do no more profit the same person, than general or universal prayers do profit others, which be in like case or state unto him.

20. Moreover, in that any man doth enter into any private religion, whatsoever it be, he is thereby made the more unapt and unable to observe and keep the commandments of God.

21. That holy men, which have instituted private religions, whatsoever they be, (as well such as are endued and possessed, as also the order of Begging Friars having no possessions,) in so doing have grievously offended.

22. That religious men, being in their private religion, are not of the Christian religion.

23. That friars are bound to get their living by the labour of their hands, and not by begging.

24. That whosoever doth give any alms unto friars, or to any begging observant, is accursed, or in danger thereof.

The letter of William Courtney, archbishop of Canterbury, directed to the bishop of London, against John Wickliff and his adherents.

"William, by God's permission, archbishop of Canterbury, metropolitan of all England, and of the apostolical see legate; to our reverend brother, by the grace of God, bishop of London, salutation. The prelates of the church ought to be so much the more vigilant and attentive about the charge of the Lord's flock committed unto them; how much the more they shall understand the wolves, being clothed in sheep's apparel, fraudulently to go about to worry and scatter the sheep. Truly by the continual cry and public fame, which it grieveth me to report, it is come to our knowledge, that although by the canonical sanctions no man, being forbidden, or not admitted, should either publicly or privily, without the authority of the apostolical see or bishop of that place, usurp or take upon him the office of a preacher; some, notwithstanding, such as are the children of damnation, being under the veil of blind ignorance, are brought into such a doting mind, that they take upon them to preach, and are not afraid to affirm and teach divers and sundry propositions and conclusions here-under recited, both heretical, erroneous, and false, condemned by the church of God, and repugnant to the decree of holy church, which tend to the subverting of the whole state of the same, of our province of Canterbury, and to the destruction and weakening of the tranquillity of the same; and that as well in the churches as in the streets, as also in many other profane places of our said province, generally, commonly, and publicly, they do preach the same, infecting very many good Christians, causing them lamentably to wander out of the way, and from the catholic church, without which there is no salvation. We therefore, considering that so pernicious a mischief, which may creep amongst many, we ought not to suffer, and by dissimulation to pass over, which may with deadly contagion slay the souls of men, lest their blood be required at our hands; are willing, so much as God will permit us to do, to extirpate the same. Wherefore, by the counsel and consent of many of our brethren and suffragans, we have convented divers and sundry doctors of divinity, as also professors and other clerks of the canon and civil laws, the most learned within the realm, and of the soundest opinion and judgment in the catholic faith, to give their opinions and judgments concerning the aforesaid conclusions. But forasmuch as the said conclusions and assertions, being in the presence of us, and our fellow brethren and other convocates, openly expounded, and diligently examined, were in the end found by common counsel and consent, as well of them as of us, and so declared, that some of those conclusions were heretical, and some of them erroneous, and repugnant to the determination of the church, as hereunder are described: we will and command your brotherhood, and, by virtue of holy obedience, straitly enjoin all and singular our brethren, and suffragans of our body and church of Canterbury, that with all speedy diligence you possibly can, you likewise enjoin them, as we have enjoined you, and

each of them; and that every one of them, in their churches and other places of their city and diocese, do admonish and warn, and that you, in your church and other churches of your city and diocese, do admonish and warn, as we, by the tenor of these presents, do admonish and warn the first time, the second time, and the third time; and yet more straitly do warn, assigning for the first admonition one day, for the second admonition another day, and for the third admonition canonical and peremptory, another day: That no man from henceforth, of what estate or condition soever, do hold, preach, or defend the aforesaid heresies and errors, or any of them; nor that he admit to preach any one that is prohibited, or not sent to preach; nor that he hear or hearken to the heresies or errors of him or any of them, nor that he favour or lean unto him either publicly or privately; but that immediately he shun him, as he would avoid a serpent putting forth most pestiferous poison, under pain of the greater curse, which we command to be thundered against all and every one which shall be disobedient in this behalf, and not regarding these our monitions, after those three days be past which are assigned for the canonical monition, and that their delay, fault, or offence committed require the same: and then, according to the tenor of these writings, we command both by every one of our fellow brethren and our suffragans in their cities and dioceses, and by you in your city and diocese, (so much as belongeth both to you and them,) that to the uttermost both ye and they cause the same excommunications to be pronounced. And, furthermore, we will and command our aforesaid fellow brethren, and all and singular of you apart by yourselves, to be admonished, and by the aspersion of the blood of Jesus Christ we likewise admonish you; that according to the institution of the sacred canons, every one of them, in their cities and dioceses, be a diligent inquisitor of this heretical pravity; and that every one of you also in your cities and dioceses be the like inquisitor of the aforesaid heretical pravity and that of such like presumption they and you carefully and diligently inquire, and that both they and you (according to your duties and office in this behalf) with effect do proceed against the same, to the honour and praise of his name that was crucified, and for the preservation of the Christian faith and religion."

Here is not to be passed over the great miracle of God's divine admonition or warning; for when the archbishop and suffragans, with the other doctors of divinity and lawyers, with a great company of babbling friars and religious persons, were gathered together to consult as touching John Wickliff's books, and that whole sect; when, as I say, they were gathered together at the Grey Friars in London, to begin their business, upon St. Dunstan's day after dinner, about two of the clock, the very hour and instant that they should go forward with their business, a wonderful and terrible earthquake fell throughout all England; whereupon divers of the suffragans, being feared by the strange and wonderful demonstration, doubting what it should mean, thought it good to leave off from their determinate purpose. But the archbishop, (as chief captain of that army, more rash and bold than wise,) interpreting the chance which had happened clean contrary to another meaning or purpose, did confirm and strengthen their hearts and minds, which were almost daunted with fear, stoutly to proceed and go forward in their attempted enterprise. Who then discoursing Wickliff's articles, not according unto the sacred canons of the Holy Scriptures, but unto their own private affections and traditions, pronounced and gave sentence, that some of them were simply and plainly heretical, some half erroneous, other irreligious, some seditious, and not consonant to the Church of Rome.



The convocation thrown into confusion by an earthquake

80. Herford, Reppington and Ashton

Item, the twelfth day of June, in the year aforesaid, in the chamber of the Friars Preachers, the aforesaid Master Robert Rigges, chancellor of the university of Oxford, and Thomas Brightwell, professors of divinity, being appointed the same day and place, by the aforesaid reverend father in God, archbishop of Canterbury, appeared before him in the presence of the reverend father in God, Lord William, by the grace of God, bishop of Winchester, and divers other doctors and bachelors of divinity, and of the canon and civil law, whose names are before recited. And first, the said chancellor, by the said lord archbishop of Canterbury, being examined what his opinion was touching the aforesaid articles, publicly affirmed and declared, that certain of those conclusions were heretical, and certain erroneous, as the other doctors and clerks aforementioned had declared. And then immediately next after him the aforesaid Thomas Brightwell was examined, who upon some of the conclusions at first somewhat staggered, but in the end being by the said archbishop diligently examined upon the same, did affirm and dispute the same to be heretical and erroneous, as the aforesaid chancellor had done. Another bachelor of divinity, also, there was, named N., stammering also at some of those conclusions, but in the end affirmed that his opinion therein was as was the judgment of the aforesaid chancellor and Thomas, as is above declared. Whereupon the said lord archbishop of Canterbury, willing to let and hinder the peril of such heresies and errors, delivered unto the aforesaid chancellor, there being publicly read, his letters patent to be executed, the tenor whereof in these words doth follow.

"William, by the grace of God archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, and legate of the apostolic see: To our well-beloved son in Christ, the chancellor of the university of Oxford, within the diocese of Lincoln, greeting, grace, and benediction. The prelates of the church, about the Lord's flock committed to their charge, ought to be so much more vigilant as that they see the wolf, clothed in sheep's attire, fraudulently go about to worry and scatter the sheep. Doubtless, the common fame and rumour is come unto our ears. We will, therefore, and command, straitly enjoining you, that the church of our blessed Lady in Oxford, upon those days in the which accustomedly the sermon is made, as also in the schools of the said university upon those days the lectures be read, ye publish, and cause by others to be published, to the clergy and people; as well in their vulgar tongue, as in the Latin tongue, manifestly and plainly, without any curious implication, the same heretical and erroneous conclusions, so repugnant to the determination of holy church, as is aforesaid, to have been and be condemned; which conclusions we also declare by these our letters to be utterly condemned. And furthermore that you forbid, and canonically admonish, and cause to be admonished, as we by the tenor of these presents do forbid and admonish you, once, twice, and thrice, and that peremptorily, that none hereafter hold, teach, and preach, or defend the heresies and errors above said, or any of them, either in school or out of school, by any sophistical cavilling or otherwise; or that any admit to preach, hear, or hearken unto, John Wickliff, Nicholas Herford, Philip Reppington, canon regular, or John Ashton, or Lawrence Redman, who be vehemently and notoriously suspected of heresy, or else any other whatsoever, so suspected or defamed; or that either privately or publicly they either aid or favour them or any of them, but that immediately they shun and avoid the same as a serpent

which putteth forth most pestiferous poison. And furthermore, we suspend the said suspected persons from all scholastical act, till such time as they shall purge themselves before us in that behalf; and we enjoin that you denounce the same publicly by us to have been and be suspended; and that ye diligently and faithfully inquire of all their abettors and favourers, and cause to be inquired throughout all the halls of the said university. And that when you shall have intelligence of their names and persons, that ye compel all, and every of them, to abjure their outrages by ecclesiastical censures and other pains canonical whatsoever, under pain of the greater curse, the which against all and singular the rebellious in this behalf, and disobeying our monitions, we pronounce; so that their fault, deceit, and offence in this behalf deserve the same, (the said monition of ours being first sent,) which in this behalf we esteem and allow canonical, that then and again, according to the effect of these our letters, &c., the absolution of all and singular such, which shall incur the sentence of this instrument by us sent forth, (which God forbid,) we specially reserve unto ourselves; exhorting you, the chancellor, by the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, that to the uttermost of your power hereafter you do your endeavour, that the clergy and people being subject unto you, if there be any which have strayed from the catholic faith by such errors, may be brought home again to the laud and honour of His name that was crucified, and preservation of the true faith. And further, our will is, that whatsoever you shall do in the premises, in manner and form of our process in this behalf it be had and done; and that you, for your part, when you shall be required thereunto, plainly and distinctly do certify us by your letters patent, having the tenor hereof."

The conclusions and articles here mentioned in this letter are above prefixed. Of which some were condemned for heretical, some for erroneous. After this, within few days the aforesaid archbishop, William Courtney, directed down his letters of admonition to Robert Rigges, commissary of Oxford, for the repressing of this doctrine; which still notwithstanding, both then, and yet to this day (God be praised) doth remain.

The examination of Nicholas Herford, Philip Reppington, and John Ashton.

The eighteenth day of the month and year aforesaid, in the chamber of the Preaching Friars before mentioned, before the aforesaid archbishop, in the presence of divers doctors and bachelors of divinity, and many lawyers both canon and civil, whose names are underwritten, appeared Master Nicholas Herford, Philip Reppington, and John Ashton, bachelors of divinity, who, after a corporal oath taken to show their judgment upon the conclusions aforesaid, were examined severally, each one by himself, before the archbishop; who there required day and place to deliberate upon the conclusions aforesaid, and to give their answer unto the same in writing; and also required to have a copy of the said conclusions to be delivered unto them. The which copy the said Nicholas and Philip (being openly read unto them) received. Also the aforesaid Master John Ashton likewise was examined, and judicially admonished by the said archbishop by virtue of his oath, that he, setting aside all sophistical words and subtleties, would say his mind fully and plainly upon the conclusions aforesaid. And being asked, moreover, by the said archbishop whether he would have a further day to deliberate upon his answers, as the aforesaid Nicholas and Philip had before, he said expressly that he would not, but would answer presently to those conclusions; and so for final answer said, as concerning all these conclusions, (containing them all together,) that his judgment was in this behalf to hold his peace. Wherefore, the aforesaid archbishop, reputed the said John herein to be suspected, admonished him

in form of words as followeth: "We admonish thee, John Ashton, whom we repute to be defamed, and notoriously suspected of heresy, the first, the second, and third time, that in our province of Canterbury hereafter thou do not preach publicly or privately, without our special licence, under pain of the greater curse, which we denounce here by these presents against thy person, if thou obey not our monitions, for now as for then." And consequently, forasmuch as the said John, being asked of the archbishop, confessed that he had heard before of the publication of the archbishop's mandate, wherein was contained, that no person prohibited or not sent should preach hereafter, the aforesaid archbishop assigned to him Friday next following, which was the twentieth day of the same month, after dinner, to appear before him either at Lambeth, or in the same place, to say for himself wherefore he might not be pronounced for a heretic, and for such a one to be denounced through his whole province. Also the said archbishop assigned to the aforesaid Nicholas and Philip, the said day and place to answer peremptorily, and to say fully and plainly to the conclusions aforesaid, all sophistication of words and disputation set apart.

The names of the friars that sat upon them — Friars Preachers, seven: Thomas Barnewell, William Swinherd, William Pickworth, Thomas Whately, Lawrence Grenham, John Leigh, John Haker. Carmelites, three: Walter Dish, John Kiningham, John Lovey. Augustine Friar: Thomas Ashborne, doctor.

At the time and place above prefixed, before the aforesaid archbishop, sitting in his tribunal seat, in the presence of divers doctors of divinity, and lawyers both civil and canon, personally appeared Master Nicholas Herford, and Philip Reppington, bachelors of divinity, and John Ashton, master of arts. The aforesaid Nicholas and Philip, being required by the said archbishop to answer, and say fully and plainly their judgment upon the conclusions prefixed, to which purpose the archbishop had assigned to the said Nicholas and Philip the same term, did exhibit to the archbishop, there judicially sitting, certain answers in writing, contained after the manner of indenture. The tenor of which indenture, containing the aforesaid conclusions, followeth in these words.

The protestation of Nicholas Herford, Philip Reppington, and John Ashton, with their articles and answers.



We protest here as before, publicly in these presents, that we intend to be humble and faithful children to the church and Holy Scripture, and to obey in all things the determinations of the church. And if it shall chance to us at any time, which God forbid, to swerve from this our intention, we submit ourselves humbly to the correction of our reverend father, lord archbishop of Canterbury, and primate of all England, and of all other who have interest to correct such swervers.

This protestation premised, thus we answer to the conclusions aforesaid.

"That the substance of material bread and wine remaineth in the sacrament of the altar after consecration.'

"After the sense contrary to the decretal, beginning *Firmiter credimus*:— We grant that it is heresy.

"That the accidents do not remain without the subject after consecration of the sacrament.'

"After the sense contrary to that decretal, *Cum Marthe*:— We grant that it is heresy.

"That Christ is not in the sacrament of the altar truly and really in his own corporal presence.'

"Although this conclusion, as the words stand, sound to be probable and intelligible, yet, in the sense contrary to the decretal in Cle. *Si dudum*, we grant that it is heresy. And, briefly, concerning this whole matter of the sacrament of the altar, as touching also all other things, we profess that we will both in word and sense hold with the Holy Scripture, with the determination of the holy church, and sayings of the holy doctors.

"Obstinately to affirm that it hath no foundation in the gospel, that Christ ordained the mass:' — We grant that it is heresy.

"That God ought to obey the devil.'

"In this sense, that God in his own person or essence, ought to obey the devil with the obedience of necessity:— We grant that it is heresy.

"If a man be duly contrite, that all external confession is to him superfluous and unprofitable:' — We grant that it is heresy.

"If the pope be a reprobate and an evil man, and consequently a member of the devil, he hath no power over the faithful of Christ given to him of any, unless it be of Cæsar:' — We grant that it is heresy.

"That after Pope Urban the Sixth, none is to be received for pope, but that we ought to live after the manner of the Grecians, under our own laws:' — We grant that it is heresy.

"That it is against the Holy Scripture for ecclesiastical persons to have temporal possessions:' — If obstinacy be joined withal, we grant that it is heresy.

"That no prelate ought to excommunicate any man, unless he know him before to be excommunicate of God:' — - We grant that it is an error; understanding this knowledge to signify an experimental knowledge; so that herewith may stand the decree of the church.

"That he who doth so excommunicate, is thereby a heretic or excommunicate:' — After the sense, agreeing with the other before, we grant this to be an error.

"That a prelate excommunicating a clerk, which appealeth to the king or council of the realm, in so doing is a traitor to God, the king, and the realm: '— We grant it is an error.

"That they which leave off to preach, or to hear the word of God, and the gospel preached, for the excommunication of men, are excommunicate, and in the day of judgment shall be counted traitors to God:' — Understanding this conclusion universally, so as Scripture and laws do understand such indefinite propositions, we grant it is an error.

"That it is lawful for any deacon or priest to preach the word of God without the authority of the see apostolic, or catholic bishop, or of any other whose authority he knoweth sufficient:' — We grant it is an error.

"That there is no civil lord, no bishop, nor prelate, whilst he is in mortal sin:' — We grant it is an error.

"That temporal lords may at their pleasure take away the temporal goods from churches offending *habitualiter*: — We grant it is an error, after this sense, that they may so take away temporal goods of the churches, without the cases limited in the laws of the church and kingdoms.

"That the vulgar people may correct the lords offending at their pleasure:' — Understanding by this word 'may,' that they may do it by the law, we grant it is an error, because that subjects have no power over their lords.

"That tithes are pure alms, and that parishioners may, for the offences of their curates, detain the same, and bestow them on others at their pleasure: '— Understanding by this word 'may,' as before, to be, 'may by the law,' we grant it is an error. "

"That special prayers applied to any one person by prelates or religious men, do no more profit than the general prayers if there be no let by the way to make them unlike:' — Understanding this conclusion universally negative, and understanding by special prayers, the prayers made upon special devotion, and general prayers of general devotion; then, after this sense, no such special prayers, applied to any one person, by special orators, do profit more specially the said person, than general prayers do, which are made of the same, and for the same persons, we grant it is an error.

"That he that giveth alms to the friars, or to any friar that preacheth, is excommunicate; both he that giveth, and he that taketh: '— Understanding this proposition universally or conditionally, as is aforesaid, we grant it to be an error.

"That whoso entereth into any private religion whatsoever is thereby made more unapt and unmeet to obey the commandments of God:' — We grant it is an error.

"That such holy men as did institute any private religions whatsoever, as well of secular having possessions, as of friars having none, in so instituting did sin:' — Understanding this reduplicatively or universally, we grant it an error, after this sense, that what saint soever did institute private religion, instituting the said religion upon that consideration as they did, did sin.

"That religious men, living in private religions, be not of the religion of Christ:' — Understanding the proposition universally, as is aforesaid, we grant it is an error.

"That friars are bound to get their living by the labour of their hands, and not by begging:' — Understanding this proposition universally, as before, we grant it is an error.

"These things have we spoken, reverend father and lord, in all humility, under your gracious supportation and benign correction, according to our abilities and slender capacities for this present, (the honour of God, the verity of our belief, and safe conscience in all points reserved,) more humbly yet beseeching you, that if any other thing there be, that seemeth meet unto your excellency and discretion to be more or otherwise said and spoken, that your gracious fatherhood would vouchsafe to inform us as children, by the sacred Scriptures, by the determination of the church, or authorities of the holy doctors. And, doubtless, with ready wills and obedient minds, we will consent and agree unto your wholesome doctrine. May it therefore please your fatherhood, right reverend in God, according to the accustomed manner of your

benignity, favourably to accept these our words and sayings, forasmuch as the aforesaid conclusions were never by us either in schools affirmed, or else in sermons publicly preached."

Further examinations and proceedings against the aforesaid Nicholas Herford, Philip Reppington, and John Ashton.

When all these answers were made unto the said lord archbishop of Canterbury, the said Nicholas and Philip, for that they answered not unto the meaning and words of the first conclusion expressly, but contrary to the sense of the decretal *Firmiter credimus*, were there judicially examined what their sense and meaning was; but they would not express the same. Then was it demanded of them, according to the sense of the same conclusion declared on the behalf of the said lord of Canterbury, whether the same material bread *in numero*, which before the consecration is laid upon the altar, remain in proper substance and nature, after the consecration in the sacrament of the altar; and likewise of the wine? To this the said Nicholas and Philip answered, that for that time they could say no more therein, than that they had already answered, as is before alleged in writing. And for that unto the sense and words of the second conclusion they answered not fully and expressly, but in a sense contrary to the decretal *Cum Marthe*; being asked what was their meaning, they would not express the same: therefore it was demanded of them, according to the sense of the same conclusion, declared in the behalf of the said lord of Canterbury, whether those corporal accidents which formally were in the bread and wine before the consecration of them, were in the same bread and wine after the consecration, or else were subjected in any other substance? To this they answered: that to answer better than, before in their writings, they already had, for that time they could not. To the meaning also and words of the third conclusion, for that they answered not plainly and expressly, but in sense contrary to the decretal in the Clementines, *Si dudum*, being asked what was that sense and meaning, would not declare the same. Wherefore it was then demanded of them, according to the sense of the same conclusion, declared on the behalf of the said lord of Canterbury, whether the same body of Christ, which was assumed of the Virgin, be in the sacrament of the altar, *secundum seipsum*, even as he is really in carnal substance, proper essence, and nature? To this they answered, that for that time they could say no more than that they had said, as before is specified in writing.

Furthermore, to the sense and text of the sixth conclusion, for that they answered not fully and expressly, being asked whether God owed any manner of obedience to the devil or not? they said, Yea, as the obedience of love, because he loveth him, and punished him as he ought. And to prove that God ought so to obey the devil, they offered themselves to the fire.

To the eleventh conclusion, for that they answered not expressly, being asked whether a prelate might excommunicate any man being in the state of grace? they said, Yea.

Unto the twentieth conclusion, for that they answered not fully, simply, and expressly; being demanded whether special or general prayers did most profit, and were of greater force, they would not say but that special did.

Unto the last conclusion, for that they answered neither simply, nor expressly; and being demanded particularly, whether any friar were bound to get his living with his

manual labour, so that it might not be lawful for him to live by begging, they would make no answer at all.

After that, the aforesaid lord archbishop of Canterbury demanded of all the aforesaid doctors, what their judgment was touching the answers that were made upon all and singular such conclusions. All which doctors and every of them severally said, that all the answers given unto the first, second, third, and sixth conclusions, (as is before recited,) were insufficient, heretical, and subtle; and that all the answers made specially to the ninth, tenth, and last conclusions, as is above mentioned, were insufficient, erroneous, and perverse. Whereupon the said lord archbishop of Canterbury, considering the said answers to be heretical, subtle, erroneous, and perverse, accordingly as the said doctors (as is aforesaid) had weighed and considered, admonished the said Nicholas and Philip sufficiently under this form of words.



Trial of Herford, Reppington and Ashton

"The name of Christ being called upon, we, William, by God's permission, archbishop of Canterbury, metropolitan of all England, and legate of the apostolic see, and through all our province of Canterbury, inquisitor of all heretical pravity, do sufficiently and lawfully admonish and cite you, Nicholas Herford, and Philip Reppington, professors of divinity, having this day and place assigned you by your own consent and our appointment, peremptorily to answer and to say fully and plainly your opinions touching these conclusions, whereunto we do refer you, (all subtle, sophistical, and logical words set apart,) being thereunto sworn, cited, and commanded. Which thing to do, without cause reasonable or any licence given thereunto, you neither have been willing, nor are willing; nay, rather ye contemptuously refused to answer to some of those conclusions before us judicially, according to the effect of our monition, citation, and commandment aforesaid. But for that ye have answered unto some of them heretically, and to other some erroneously, although not fully; we admonish and cite you once, twice, and thrice, and that peremptorily, that plainly and fully (all subtle, sophistical, and logical words set apart) you and every of you answer unto the same conclusions, and unto that sense and meaning by us limited, under the pain that otherwise such conclusions by you confessed deserve, and that for the same conclusions you ought to have."

Which admonition being made and done, for that the aforesaid Nicholas and Philip would make none other answer, the said lord archbishop of Canterbury concluded that business, prefixing and assigning unto the aforesaid Nicholas and Philip eight days' space; that is to say, until the twenty-seventh day of the same month, and that then they should appear before the said lord archbishop of Canterbury, wheresoever within the same his province of Canterbury he should fortune to be, to hear his decree that should be made in that behalf. This done, the aforesaid archbishop of Canterbury admonished and cited lawfully and sufficiently John Ashton, under the tenor of these words following.

"In the name of God; we, William, by God's mission, archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, legate of the see apostolical, and through all our province of Canterbury, of all heretical pravity chief inquisitor, do admonish and cite thee, John Ashton, master of arts, and student in divinity, appearing before us, judicially to say and speak the plain verity touching these conclusions, to the which we do refer thee, and to the which we have caused thee to swear, laying thy hand upon a book; as being also otherwise by us admonished and commanded to keep this day and place by us appointed, for the third time peremptorily, to propone such reasonable cause (if thou hast any) wherefore thou oughtest not to be pronounced a heretic. And sufficiently and lawfully we admonish and cite thee, the first, second, and third time, and that peremptorily, that thou fully and plainly (all subtle, sophistical, and logical words set apart) do answer unto the same conclusions under the pain that unto such conclusions belong, and on thy part confessed, and that thou for such conclusions oughtest to suffer." Which monition being thus premised, the said archbishop read the first conclusion, and of the said John inquired what was his opinion and meaning therein? and hereupon he said his mind concerning the aforesaid monition. Then the aforesaid John Ashton, being often required by the archbishop, that he would answer in the Latin tongue to those questions which were demanded of him, because of the lay people that stood about him; he, crying out in the English tongue, uttered frivolous and opprobrious contumelies to move and excite the people against the said archbishop, as it should seem. Neither did he unto the first conclusions, nor unto any of these other conclusions, effectually and pertinently seem to them to answer; but

rather by subtleties and shifts, saying oftentimes, and as expressly as Luke said, it was sufficient for him to believe as the holy church believed. Then the said archbishop examined him upon the first conclusion touching the sacrament of the altar; whether that after the words of consecration there remaineth material bread, particular bread, or universal bread? He said the matter passed his understanding, and therefore said, he would in that form and manner answer, and otherwise not: but amongst other things, he spake in deriding-wise unto the said archbishop against this word material, saying, You may put that in your purse, if you have any. Whereupon the said archbishop calling that an unwise and foolish answer, as the rest of the doctors did, (of whom mention was made before,) the rather for that he was a graduate in the schools, further proceeded against the said John Ashton in this wise.

"And thou John Ashton, admonished and commanded by us, as is aforesaid, after thine oath taken, without any reasonable cause or any other licence, neither wouldest thou, nor yet wilt, but refusedst, and yet dost contemptuously, to answer unto such conclusions before us; judicially, according to our monition and commandment aforesaid, we do hold all such conclusions to be by thee confessed, and thee, the aforesaid John, with all thy aforesaid conclusions, convicted. And therefore we do pronounce and declare by sentence giving, that thou John Ashton, concerning those conclusions, which by us with good deliberation of divers prelates our suffragans, and also divers and sundry professors of divinity, and other wise men and learned in the law, according to the canonical sanctions, being condemned and declared for a heretic and heretical, hast been and still art a heretic, and thy conclusions heretical. And as touching thy other conclusions, by us heretofore counted erroneous, and for erroneous condemned, we do pronounce and declare sententially by these our writings, both that thou hast erred, and dost err."

Upon the same twentieth day of June, in the year and place above recited, the aforesaid lord of Canterbury being desirous, as he pretended, to be informed by Thomas Hilman, bachelor of divinity, there being present, and somewhat favouring the said Master John Ashton, what his judgment and opinion was touching the aforesaid conclusions, prefixed and assigned unto the said Thomas (for that time demanding the same deliberation and day) eight days after, that is to say, the twenty-eighth of the said month, to appear before the archbishop of Canterbury, wheresoever within his said province of Canterbury he should then happen to be, to declare plainly and fully what his judgment and opinion was touching the aforesaid conclusions.

The Friday next following, that is to say, the twenty-eighth day of June, A. D. 1382, the aforesaid Nicholas Herford, Philip Reppington, and Thomas Hilman, appeared before the said archbishop and lord inquisitor of Canterbury, in the chapel of his manor of Otford, in the diocese of Canterbury, there sitting in his tribunal seat; to whom the said bishop of Canterbury saying, that because at that time he had not the presence and assistance of the doctors in divinity and of the canon and civil law, he continued the said business touching the said Nicholas, Philip, and Thomas, in the same state wherein then it was, till Tuesday next and immediately ensuing, that is to say, the first day of July, the year of our Lord aforesaid; and prefixed unto the said Nicholas, Philip, and Thomas Hilman the same day to appear before him, wheresoever within his province of Canterbury he should then chance to be, to do that which upon the said twenty-eighth day they were purposed to do together or apart.

Which Tuesday being come, the aforesaid archbishop, in the chief house of his church at Canterbury, before the hour of nine, with the doctors whose names are

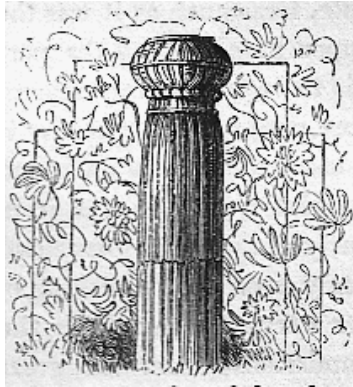
under contained, and other clerks a great multitude, expected the aforesaid Nicholas, Philip, and Thomas a long time, the beadle calling them and looking after them; who, nevertheless, appeared not before two of the clock after dinner the same day, continuing the aforesaid business in the pristine state till the same hour; at which hour the aforesaid archbishop of Canterbury, having assistants the doctors and clerks under recited, examined the aforesaid Master Thomas Hilman, then and there judicially appearing, what his opinion was touching the aforesaid conclusions; who, at them and the meaning of them somewhat stammering, at last, to all and singular the same conclusions then to him read and expounded, thus answered: "I suppose and judge all and singular those conclusions lately condemned by my lord of Canterbury that now is, together with the counsel and consent of his clerks, to be heretical and erroneous, even as the same my lord of Canterbury and other doctors of divinity, of the canon and civil law, by common consent and counsel, have supposed and thought. And the same, being for heresies and errors, as before is said, condemned, I do, as much as in me is, condemn; protesting that I will hold and affirm the contrary of those conclusions, and in the same faith live and die." Then the said archbishop of Canterbury, then and there sitting as tribunal or judge, pronouncing the said Masters Nicholas and Philip, long in court called before and tarried for, and yet not appearing, guilty of contumacy and disobedience, excommunicated them for the penalty of this their contumacy.

Against this blind excommunication of the said archbishop the parties excommunicate commenced and exhibited their appeal unto the bishop of Rome; which appeal of theirs, as insufficient, or rather to him unpleasant, the said archbishop utterly rejected, (as might oftentimes overcome right,) proceeding in his preconceived excommunication against them, and writing moreover his letters to him that should preach next at Paul's Cross, as is aforesaid, to denounce and to publish openly the said Nicholas Herford and Philip Reppington to be excommunicate, for not appearing at their term assigned, which was in the thirteenth day of the month of July.

This archbishop, moreover, the said year, the month and day aforesaid, sent also another letter to Master Rigges, commissary of Oxford, straitly enjoining and charging him, not only to denounce the said sentence of excommunication, and to give out public citation against them, but also to make diligent search and inquisition through all Oxford for them, to have them apprehended and sent up to him, personally before him to appear at a certain day, prescribed for the same. Whereby may appear how busy this bishop was in disquieting and persecuting these poor men, whom rather he should have nourished and cherished as his brethren. But as his labour is past, so his reward will follow, at what day the great Archbishop of our souls shall judicially appear in his tribunal seat, to judge both the quick and the dead.

The archbishop, not yet contented with this, doth moreover by all means possible solicit the king to join withal the power of his temporal sword; for that he well perceived, that hitherto as yet the popish clergy had not authority sufficient, by any public law or statute of this land, to proceed unto death against any person whatsoever, in case of religion, but only by the usurped tyranny and example of the court of Rome. Where note (gentle reader) for thy better understanding, the practice of the Romish prelates in seeking the king's help to further their bloody purpose against the good saints of God. Which king being but young, and under years of ripe judgment, partly induced, or rather seduced, by importune suit of the aforesaid archbishop, partly also either for fear of the bishops, (for kings cannot always do in their realms what they will,) or else perhaps enticed by some hope of subsidy to be

gathered by the clergy, was content to adjoin his private assent (such as it was) to the setting down of an ordinance, which was indeed the very first law that is to be found made against religion and the professors thereof, bearing the name of an act made in the parliament holden at Westminster, in the fifth year of Richard the Second; where among sundry other statutes then published, and yet remaining in the printed books of statutes, this supposed statute is to be found, cap. 5, et ultimo.



tem, forasmuch as it is openly known that there be divers evil persons within the realm, going from country to country, and from town to town, in certain habits under dissimulation of great holiness, and without the licence of the ordinaries of the places, or other sufficient authority, preaching not only in churches and churchyards, but also in markets, fairs, and other open places where a great congregation of people is, divers sermons containing heresies and notorious errors, to the great emblemishing of Christian faith, and destruction of the laws and of the estate of holy church, to the great peril of the souls of the people, and of all the realm of England, as more plainly is found, and sufficiently proved before the reverend father in God, the archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishops and other prelates, masters of divinity, and doctors of canon and of civil law, and a great part of the clergy, of the said realm, specially assembled for this great cause; which persons do also preach divers matters of slander, to engender discord and dissension betwixt divers estates of the said realm, as well spiritual as temporal, in exciting of the people to the great peril of all the realm; which preachers being cited or summoned before the ordinaries of the places, there to answer to that whereof they be impeached, they will not obey to their summons and commandments, nor care for their monitions, or censures of the holy church, but expressly despise them; and moreover, by their subtle and ingenious words, do draw the people to hear their sermons, and do maintain them in their errors by strong hand, and by great routs; it is ordained and assented in this present parliament, that the king's commissions be made and directed to the sheriffs and other ministers of our sovereign lord the king, or other sufficient persons learned, and according to the certifications of the prelates thereof, to be made in the chancery from time to time, to arrest all such preachers, and also their favourers, maintainers, and abettors, and to hold them in arrest and strong prison, till they will justify themselves according to the law and reason of holy church. And the king willeth and commandeth that the chancellor make such commissions at all times, that he, by the prelates, or any of them, shall be certified and thereof required, as is aforesaid.

An examination of the aforesaid supposed statute, and of the invalidity thereof.

Which supposed statute, forasmuch as it was the principal ground whereupon proceeded all the persecution of that time, it is therefore not impertinent to examine the same more particularly, whereby it shall appear, that as the same was fraudulently and unduly devised by the prelates only, so was it in like manner most injuriously and unorderly executed by them. For immediately upon the publishing of this law, without further warrant either from the king or his council, commissions under the great seal of England were made in this form: "Richard, by the grace of God," &c.; *ut patet act.*, above; "witness myself, at Westminster, the twenty-sixth day of June, in the sixth year

of our reign;" without more words of warrant underwritten, such as in like cases are both usual and requisite; viz. *per ipsum regem: per regem et concilium; per breve de privato sigillo*: all or any which words being utterly wanting in this place, as may be seen in the king's records of that time, it must therefore be done either by warrant of this aforesaid statute, or else without any warrant at all. Whereupon it is to be noted, that whereas the said statute appointed the commissions to be directed to the sheriff, or other ministers of the king's, or to other sufficient persons learned, for the arresting of such persons; the said commissions are directed to the archbishop and his suffragans, being, as it appeareth, parties in the case, authorizing them further, without either the words or reasonable meaning of the said statute, to imprison them in their own houses, or where else pleased them.

Besides also, what manner of law this was, by whom devised, and by what authority the same was first made and established, judge by that that followeth: viz.

In the Utas of St. Michael next following, at a parliament summoned and holden at Westminster, the sixth year of the said king, among sundry petitions made to the king by his commons, whereunto he assented, there is one in this form, article 52.

"Item, praying the commons, that whereas a statute was made the last parliament, in these words: It is ordained in this present parliament, that commissions from the king be directed to the sheriffs and other ministers of the king, or to other sufficient persons skilful, and according to the certificates of the prelates thereof, to be made unto the chancery from time to time, to arrest all such preachers, and their favourers, maintainers, and abettors; and them to detain in strong prison, until they will justify themselves according to reason, and law of holy church: and the king willeth and commandeth that the chancellor make such commissions at all times as he shall be by the prelates or any of them certified, and thereof required, as is aforesaid.' The which was never agreed nor granted by the commons; but whatsoever was moved therein, was without their assent: That the said statute be therefore disannulled. For it is not in any wise their meaning, that either themselves, or such as shall succeed them, shall be further justified or bound by the prelates, than were their ancestors in former times: whereunto is answered, *Il plaist al roy*, that is, 'The king is pleased.'"

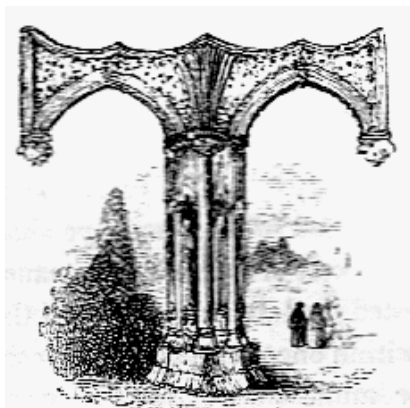
Hereby, notwithstanding the former unjust law of the fifth of Richard the Second was repealed, and the fraud of the framers thereof sufficiently discovered, yet such means was there made by the prelates, that this act of repeal was never published, nor ever since imprinted with the rest of the statutes of that parliament; insomuch as the said repeal being concealed, like commissions and other process were made from time to time, by virtue of the said bastard statute, as well during all the reign of this king, as ever since, against the professors of religion, as shall hereafter, by the grace of God, appear in the second year of King Henry the Fourth, where the clergy pursued the like practice. And now again to the story of our Oxford divines, and of the archbishop, to whom the king writeth his letters patent, first to the archbishop, then to the vice-chancellor of Oxford, in form as followeth.

The king's letters patent to the archbishop.



RICHARD, by the grace of God, king of England, and lord of Ireland, to all those to whom these present letters shall come, greeting. By the petition of the reverend father in God, William, archbishop of Canterbury, primate of England, exhibited unto us, we right well understand: That divers and sundry conclusions, very contrary to wholesome doctrine, and redounding both to the subversion of the Catholic faith, the holy church, and of his province of Canterbury, in divers and sundry places of the same his province, have been openly and publicly preached, although damnably preached: of the which conclusions, some as heresies, other some as errors, have been condemned, but not before good and mature deliberation first therein had and used; and by common counsel of the said archbishop, his suffragans, and many doctors in divinity, and other clerks and learned men in the Holy Scriptures, were sententially and wholesomely declared. Whereupon the said archbishop hath made his supplication unto us; that both for the coercion and due castigation of such as shall henceforth, of an obstinate mind, preach or maintain the aforesaid conclusions, we would vouchsafe to put to the arm and helping hand of our kingly power. We therefore, moved by the zeal of the Catholic faith, whereof we be and will be defenders, and unwilling that any such heresies or errors should spring up within the limits of our dominion, give and grant special licence and authority, by the tenor of these presents, unto the aforesaid archbishop, and to his suffragans, to arrest and imprison, either in their own prisons or any other, all and every such person and persons, as shall either privily or apertly preach and maintain the aforesaid conclusions, so condemned; and the same persons, so imprisoned there, at their pleasures to detain, till such time as they shall repent them and amend them of such heretical pravities, or else it shall be of such arrests, by us and our council otherwise determined and provided: further charging and commanding all and singular our liegemen, ministers, and subjects, of what state and condition soever they be, upon their fidelity and allegiance, wherein they stand bound to us, that by no means they either favour, counsel, or help the preachers or maintainers of the said conclusions so condemned, or their favourers, upon pain and forfeiture of all that ever they have; but that they obey and humbly attend upon the said archbishop, his suffragans, and ministers, in the execution of these presents; so that due and manifest publication against the aforesaid conclusions and their maintainers, without any perturbation, may be done and executed, as for the defence of our realm and Catholic faith shall be thought most meet and requisite. In witness whereof, we have caused these our letters patent to be made.

Witness ourself at Westminster, the sixteenth of June, and sixth year of our reign.

The king's letters patent to the vice-chancellor.

HE king, to the chancellor and the procurators of the university of Oxford which now be, or for the time being shall be, greeting. Moved by the zeal of Christian faith, whereof we be, and always will be, defenders, and for our soul's health induced thereunto, having a great desire to repress, and by condign punishment to restrain the impugners of the aforesaid faith, which newly and wickedly go about, and presume to sow their naughty and perverse doctrine within our kingdom of England, and to preach and hold damnable conclusions, so notoriously repugnant and contrary to the same faith, to the perverting of our subjects and people, as we understand; before they any further proceed in their malicious errors, or else infect others, we have by these presents appointed you to be inquisitor-general, all the chief divines of the said university being your assistants, and the same likewise to be done of all and singular the graduates, divines, and lawyers of the same university. And if they shall know any which be of the jurisdiction of the said university of Oxford, which be probably of them suspected to be in the favour, belief, or defence of any heresy or error, and specially of any one of the conclusions publicly condemned by the reverend father, William, archbishop of Canterbury, by the counsel of his clergy, or else of any other conclusion like unto any of them in meaning, or in words; and that if henceforth you shall find any that shall believe, favour, or defend any of the aforesaid heresies or errors, or any other such-like, or else which shall be so bold to receive into their houses and inns, Master John Wickliff, Master Nicholas Herford, Master Philip Reppington, or Master John Ashton, or any other noted by probable suspicion of any the aforesaid heresies, or errors, or any other like unto them in meaning, or in word; or that shall presume to communicate with any of them, or else to defend or favour any of such favourers, receivers, communicants, and defenders, within seven days after the same shall appear and be manifest unto you, that you banish and expel them from the university and town of Oxford, till such time as they shall declare their innocency before the archbishop of Canterbury for the time being, by manifest purgation. So, notwithstanding, that such as be compelled to purge themselves, you certify us and the said archbishop, under your seals, from time to time within one month, that they be such manner of men. Commanding furthermore, that through all the halls of the said university ye cause diligently to be searched and inquired out of hand, if any man have any book or tractation of the edition, or compiling of the aforesaid Master John Wickliff, or Nicholas Herford; and that, when and wheresoever ye shall chance to find any such book or tractation, ye cause the same to be arrested and taken, and unto the aforesaid archbishop within one month, (without correction, corruption, or mutation whatsoever,) word for word, and sentence for sentence, to be brought and presented. And therefore we straitly enjoin and command you, upon your fidelity and allegiance wherein ye stand bound unto us, and upon the pain of forfeiture of all and singular your liberties and privileges of your said university, and of all that ever you have besides; that you give your diligent attendance upon the premises, and that well and faithfully you execute the same in manner and form aforesaid. And that you obey the aforesaid archbishop, and his lawful and honest mandates, that he shall think good to

direct unto you in this behalf, as it is meet ye should. And we give in charge unto the vice-chancellor and mayor of Oxford for the time being, and to all and singular our sheriffs, and under-sheriffs, bailiffs, and subjects, by these presents, that they aid, obey, and be attendant upon you in the execution of the premises. In witness whereof, &c., witness the king at Westminster, the thirteenth day of July, the sixth year of his reign.

Besides these letters patent, the said young king, moved by the unquiet importunity of the archbishop, sendeth, moreover, another special letter to the vice-chancellor and proctors of the university of Oxford. Wherein, under a pretended zeal of defence of Christian faith, he straitly and sharply enjoyneth and assigneth them (for the utter abolishing of those conclusions and opinions) to make a general inquisition through the whole university, as well for the parties aforesaid, John Wickliff, Nicholas Herford, Philip Reppington, John Ashton, and such others, as also for all other whom they know or judge to be suspected of that doctrine, or to be maintainers, receivers, and defenders of the aforesaid parties, or their conclusions any manner of way; to the intent that they being so apprehended through their diligent search, may be, within seven days of their admonitions, expelled the university, and cited up to the archbishop of Canterbury, before him to appear and to stand to their answers; willing, moreover, and commanding the said vice-chancellor and proctors, with other regents, their assisters, that if any person or persons in any house, hall, or college, or in any other place, shall be found to have any of their books or treatises compiled by the said John Wickliff, Nicholas Herford, &c., they will cause without delay the said person or persons, with their books, to be arrested and attached, and presented within one month, without correction, corruption, or mutation, to the aforesaid archbishop, upon their faith and allegiance, as they will avoid the forfeiture of all and singular the liberties and privileges of the university appertaining. And that they will be obedient to the archbishop aforesaid in the ordering hereof, and all other his injunctions to be obeyed in all things lawful and honest. Giving, moreover, in these our letters, charge and commandment to the mayor, bailiffs, and other the inhabitants of Oxford, to be assistant and attendant unto the aforesaid vice-chancellor and proctors, touching the execution of the premises, bearing the date of the fourteenth day of July, which was the year of our Lord 1382.

Matters incident of Robert Rigges, vice-chancellor of Oxford, Nicholas Herford, and Philip Reppington, with others.

The vice-chancellor the same time in Oxford was Master Robert Rigges; the two proctors were John Huntman and Walter Dish; who then, as far as they durst, favoured the cause of John Wickliff and that side; insomuch that the same time and year, which was A. D. 1382, when certain public sermons should be appointed customably at the feast of the Ascension, and of Corpus Christi, to be preached in the cloister of St. Frideswide (now called Christ's Church) before the people, by the vice-chancellor aforesaid and the proctors; the doings thereof the vice-chancellor aforesaid and proctors had committed to Philip Reppington and Nicholas Herford, so that Nicholas Herford should preach on the Ascension day, and Reppington upon Corpus Christi day. First, Herford beginning, was noted to defend John Wickliff openly to be a faithful, good, and innocent man; for the which no small ado with outcries was amongst the friars. This Herford, after he had long favoured and maintained Wickliff's part, grew first in suspicion amongst the enemies of the truth. For as soon as he began somewhat liberally and freely to pronounce and utter any thing, which tended to the defence of Wickliff; by and by the Carmelites, and all the orders of religion, were on

his top, and laid not a few heresies unto his charge; the which they had strained here and there out of his sermons, and had compiled together in a certain form, by the hands of certain notaries, through the industry and diligence of one Peter Stokes, a Carmelite; a kind of people prone and ready to all kind of mischief, uproars, and debate, and dissension. After this the feast of Corpus Christi drew near; upon which day it was looked for that Reppington should preach. This man was a canon of Leicester, and had before taken his first degree unto doctorship, who preaching the same time at Broadgate, for the same sermon he became first suspected, and hated of the Pharisical brood of the friars: but through the great and notable dexterity of his wit, (which all men did behold and see in him,) accompanied with like modesty and honesty, he did so overcome, or at the least assuage, this cruelty and persecution which was towards him, that shortly after, by the consent of the whole fellowship, he was admitted doctor. Who as soon as he had taken it upon him, by and by he stepped forth in the schools, and began immediately to show forth and utter that which he had long hidden and dissembled, protesting openly, that in all moral matters he would defend Wickliff; but as touching the sacrament he would as yet hold his peace, until such time as the Lord shall otherwise illuminate the hearts and minds of the clergy.

Now the day of Corpus Christi aforesaid approaching near, when the friars understood that this man should preach, fearing lest that he would rub the galls of their religion, they convented with the archbishop of Canterbury that the same day, a little before that Philip should preach, Wickliff's conclusions, which were privately condemned, should be openly defamed in the presence of the whole university. The doing of which matter was committed to Peter Stokes, friar, standard-bearer and chief champion of that side against Wickliff.

There were also letters sent unto the commissary, that he should help and aid him in publishing of the same conclusions, as is before declared.

These things thus done and finished, Reppington at the hour appointed proceeded to his sermon. In the which sermon, among many other things, he was reported to have uttered these sayings, or to this effect.

That the popes or bishops ought not to be recommended above temporal lords.

Also that in moral matters he would defend Master Wickliff as a true Catholic doctor.

Moreover, that the duke of Lancaster was very earnestly affected and minded in this matter, and would that all such should be received under his protection; besides many things more, which touched the praise and defence of Wickliff.

And finally, in concluding his sermon, he dismissed the people with this sentence; I will (said he) in

the speculative doctrine, as appertaining to the matter of the sacrament of the altar, keep silence and hold my peace, until such time as God otherwise shall instruct and illuminate the hearts of the clergy.



hen the sermon was done, Reppington entered into St. Frideswide's church, accompanied with many of his friends; who, as the enemies surmised, were privily weaponed under their garments, if need had been. Friar Stokes, the Carmelite aforesaid, suspecting all this to be against him, and being afraid of hurt, kept him within the sanctuary of the church, not daring as then to put out his head. The vice-chancellor and Reppington, friendly saluting one another in the church porch, sent away the people, and so departed every man home to his own

house. There was not a little joy through the whole university for that sermon; but in the mean time, the unquiet and busy Carmelite slipt not his matter. For first, by his letters he declared the whole order of the matter unto the archbishop, exaggerating the perils and dangers that he was in, requiring and desiring his help and aid, pretermittting nothing thereby to move and stir up the archbishop's mind, which of his own nature was as hot as a toast, as they say, and ready enough to prosecute the matter of his own accord, though no man had pricked him forward thereunto. Besides all this, three days after, with a fierce and bold courage, the said friar, breathing out threatenings and heresies against them, took the way into the schools, minding there to prove, that the pope and the bishops ought to be prayed for before the lords temporal. Whilst this friar was thus occupied in the schools, he was mocked and derided of all men, and shortly after he was sent for by the archbishop to London; whom, immediately after, the vice-chancellor and Brightwell followed up, to purge and clear themselves and their adherents from the accusations of this Friar Peter. At the length, they being examined upon Wickliff's conclusions that were condemned, they did all consent that they were worthily condemned. The vice-chancellor being afterward accused for the contempt of the archbishop's letters, whenas he perceived and saw that no excuse would prevail to avoid that danger, humbling himself upon his knees, he desired pardon. The which when he had now again, (as is aforesaid,) albeit very hardly, obtained, by the help of the bishop of Winchester he was sent away again with certain commandments, and suspensions of heretics. Then began the hatred on either part somewhat to appear and show, and especially, men were offended, above all, with the friars and religious men, unto whom, whatsoever trouble or mischief was raised up, they did impute it, as to the authors and causers of the same. Amongst whom there was one Henry Crompe, a monk Cistercian, a well learned divine, which afterward was accused by the bishops of heresy. He at that time was openly suspected by the commissary, because in his lectures he called the heretics Lollards, or rather in his acts (as they term them) in the school. Then he, coming by and by up to London, made his complaint unto the archbishop and to the king's council.

Whereupon he obtained the letters of the king, and of his council, by virtue whereof he (returning again to the university) was released and restored again to his former state.

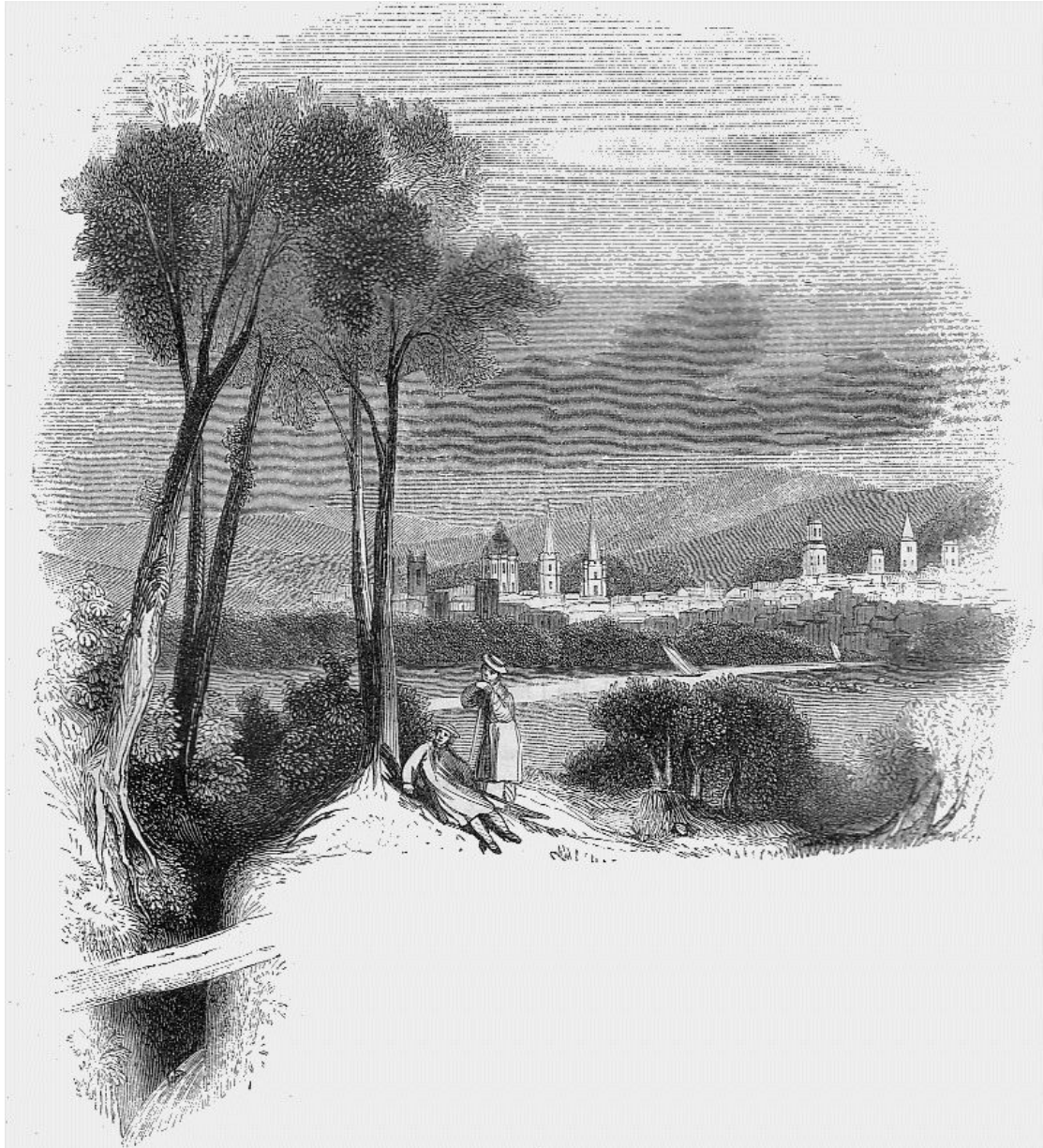
Mention was made, as you heard a little before, how Master Rigges, vice-chancellor of Oxford, coming up with Master Brightwell to the archbishop of Canterbury, was there straitly examined of the conclusions of Wickliff, where he, notwithstanding, through the help of the bishop of Winchester, obtained pardon, and

was sent away again with commandments and charges, to seek out all the favourers of John Wickliff. This commandment being received, Nicholas Herford and Philip Reppington (being privily warned by the vice-chancellor) in the mean season conveyed themselves out of sight, and fled to the duke of Lancaster for succour and help; but the duke, whether for fear, or for what cause else I cannot say, in the end forsook his poor and miserable clients.

In the mean time, while they were fled thus to the duke, great search and inquisition was made for them, to cite and to apprehend them wheresoever they might be found. Whereupon the archbishop of Canterbury, William Courtney, directed out his letters first to the vice-chancellor of Oxford, then to the bishop of London, named Robert Braybroke; charging them not only to excommunicate the said Nicholas and Philip within their jurisdiction, and the said excommunication to be denounced likewise throughout all the diocese of his suffragans; but also, moreover, that diligent search and watch should be laid for them, both in Oxford and in London, that they might be apprehended; requiring, moreover, by them to be certified again, what they had done in the premises. And this was written the fourteenth day of July, A. D. 1382.

Unto these letters received from the archbishop, diligent certificate was given accordingly, as well of the bishop of London his part, as also of the vice-chancellor.

In the mean time, Nicholas Herford and Reppington, being repulsed of the duke, and destitute, as was said, of his support, whether they were sent, or of their own accord went, to the archbishop, it was uncertain. This I find in a letter of the aforesaid archbishop, contained in his register; that Reppington, the twenty-third day of October, the same year, 1382, was reconciled again to the archbishop, and also by his general letter was released, and admitted to his scholastical acts in the university; and so was also John Ashton, of whom (Christ willing) more shall follow hereafter. Of Nicholas Herford all this while I find no special relation.



Oxford

In the mean time, about the twenty-third of the month of September, the said year, the king sent his mandate to the archbishop for collecting of a subsidy, and to have a convocation of the clergy summoned against the next parliament, which should begin the eighteenth day of November. The archbishop likewise, on the fifteenth day of October, directed his letters monitory, as the manner is, to Robert Braybroke, bishop of London, to give the same admonition to all his suffragans, and other of the clergy within his province, for the assembling of the convocation aforesaid. All which done and executed, the parliament begun, being holden at Oxford the eighteenth day of November, where the convocation was kept in the monastery of Frideswide, in Oxford. In the which convocation the archbishop, with other bishops there sitting in their pontificalibus, declared two causes of that their present assembly: the one, said he, to repress heresies, which began newly in the realm to spring, and for correcting other excesses in the church: the other cause, said he, was to aid and support the king with some necessary subsidy of money to be gathered, which thus declared, the

convocation was continued till the day following, which was the nineteenth of November.

At the said day and place, the archbishop with the other prelates assembling themselves as before, the archbishop, after the used solemnity, willed the procurators of the clergy, appointed for every diocese, to consult within themselves, in some convenient several place, what they thought for their parts touching the redress of things, to be notified and declared to him and to his brethren, &c.

Furthermore, forasmuch, saith he, as it is so noised through all the realm, that there were certain in the university of Oxford, which did hold and maintain conclusions, as he calleth them, heretical and erroneous, condemned by him, and by other lawyers and doctors of divinity; he therefore assigned the bishops of Sarum, Hereford, and Rochester, with William Rugge, then vice-chancellor of the university of Oxford, (for perhaps Robert Rigges was then displaced,) as also William Berton, and John Middleton, doctors; giving them his full authority, with cursing and banning to compel them to search and to inquire with all diligence and ways possible, over all and singular whatsoever, either doctors, bachelors, or scholars of the said university, which did hold, teach, maintain, and defend, in schools or out of schools, the said conclusions heretical (as he called them) or erroneous, and afterward to give certificate truly and plainly touching the premises. And thus for that day the assembly brake up to the next, and so to the next, and the third, being Monday, the twenty-fourth day of November.

On the which day, in the presence of the prelates and the clergy in the chapter-house of St. Frideswide, came in Philip Reppington, otherwise called by the brethren, afterward, Rampington, who there abjured the conclusions and assertions aforesaid, in this form of words as followeth:

"I Philip Reppington, canon of the house of Leicester, acknowledging one catholic and apostolic faith, do curse and also abjure all heresy, namely, these heresies and errors underwritten, condemned and reprov'd by the decrees canonical, and by you, most reverend father, touching which hitherto I have been defamed; condemning, moreover, and reprov'ing both them and the authors of them, and do confess the same to be catholically condemned. And I swear also, by these holy evangelists, which here I hold in my hand, and do promise, never by any persuasions of men, nor by any way hereafter, to defend or hold as true any of the said conclusions underwritten; but do and will stand and adhere in all things to the determination of the holy catholic church, and to yours, in this behalf. Over and besides, all such as stand contrary to this faith, I do pronounce them, with their doctrine and followers, worthy of everlasting curse. And if I myself shall presume at any time to hold or preach any thing contrary to the premises, I shall be content to abide the severity of the canons. Subscribed with mine own hand, and of mine own accord,

"PHILIP REPPINGTON."

And thus the said Rampington was discharged, who afterward was made bishop of Lincoln, and became at length the most bitter and extreme persecutor of this side, of all the other bishops within the realm, as in process hereafter may appear.

After the abjuration of this Reppington, immediately was brought in John Ashton, student of divinity; who being examined of those conclusions, and willed to say his mind, answered, that he was too simple and ignorant, and therefore would not, and could not, answer any thing clearly or distinctly to those conclusions. Whereupon

the archbishop assigned to him Doctor William Rugge, the vice-chancellor, and other divines, such as he required himself, to be instructed in the mystery of those conclusions against the afternoon; who then, appearing again after dinner before the archbishop and the prelates, did in like sort and form of words abjure, as did Reppington before.

Of this John Ashton we read, that afterward, by Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, he was cited and condemned; but whether he died in prison, or was burned, we have yet no certainty to show. This is certain by the plain words of the Chronicle of St. Alban's, that when the archbishop with his doctors and friars sat in examination upon this said John Ashton, in London, the Londoners brake open the door of the conclave, and did hinder the archbishop himself sitting in the city of London, when he would have made process against John Ashton, A. D. 1382. And thus much of John Ashton.

As touching Nicholas Herford, during the time of this convocation he did not appear; and therefore had the sentence of excommunication, against which he put in his appeal from the archbishop to the king and his council. The archbishop would not admit it, but finding stays and stops, caused him to be apprehended and enclosed in prison. Notwithstanding, through the will of God and good means, he escaped out of the prison, returning again to his former exercise and preaching as he did before, albeit in as covert and secret manner as he could.

Whereupon the archbishop, thundering out his bolts of excommunication against him, sending to all pastors and ministers, willing them in all churches, and on all festival days, to divulge the said excommunication against him to all men; he writeth moreover, and sendeth special charge, to all and singular of the laity, to beware that their simplicity be not deceived by his doctrine, but that they, like catholic children, will avoid him, and cause him of all other to be avoided.

Furthermore, not contented with this, he addresseth also his letter unto the king, requiring also the aid of his temporal sword to chop off his neck, whom he had already cast down. See and note, reader, the seraphical charity of these priestly prelates towards the poor redeemed flock of Christ. And yet these be they which, washing their hands with Pilate, say, and pretend, *Nobis non licet interficere quemquam*, It is not our parts to kill any man. The copy of the letter written to the king is this:

"To the most excellent prince in Christ, &c.: William, &c., greeting in Him by whom kings do reign and princes bear rule. Unto your kingly celsitude by the tenor of these presents we intimate, that one Master Nicholas Herford, doctor of divinity, for his manifest contumacy and offence in not appearing before us, being called at the day and place assigned, is therefore enwrapped in the sentence of the greater curse, publicly by our ordinary authority; and in the same sentence hath continued now forty days, and yet still continueth with indurate heart, wickedly contemning the keys of the church, both to the greater peril of his soul, and to the pernicious example of other. Forasmuch, therefore, as the holy mother the church hath not to do, or to proceed, any further in this matter, we humbly desire your kingly majesty to direct out your letters for the apprehending of the said excommunicate, according to the custom of this realm of England, wholesomely observed and kept hitherto; to the intent that such, whom the fear of God doth not restrain from evil, the discipline of the secular arm may bridle and pluck back from offending. Your princely celsitude the Lord long continue. From Lambeth, the fifteenth of January."

81. John Wickliff (Contd.)

And thus far concerning Nicholas Herford, and the other aforesaid. But all this mean while what became of John Wickliff is not certainly known; albeit, so far as may be gathered out of Walden, it appeareth that he was banished and driven to exile. In the mean time it is not to be doubted, but he was alive during all this while, wheresoever he was, as by his letter may appear, which he about this time wrote to Pope Urban the Sixth. In the which letter he doth purge himself, that being commanded to appear before the pope at Rome, he came not; declaring also in the same a brief confession of his faith: the copy of which epistle here followeth, A. D. 1382.

"Verily I do rejoice to open and declare unto every man the faith which I do hold; and especially unto the bishop of Rome; the which, forasmuch as I do suppose to be sound and true, he will most willingly confirm my said faith, or, if it be erroneous, amend the same.

"First, I suppose that the gospel of Christ is the whole body of God's law; and that Christ, which did give that same law himself, I believe to be very God and very man, and in that point to exceed the law of the gospel, and all other parts of the Scripture. Again, I do give and hold the bishop of Rome, forasmuch as he is the vicar of Christ here in earth, to be bound most of all other men unto that law of the gospel. For the greatness amongst Christ's disciples did not consist in worldly dignity or honours, but in the near and exact following of Christ in his life and manners: whereupon I do gather out of the heart of the law of the Lord, that Christ for the time of his pilgrimage here was a most poor man, abjecting and casting off all worldly rule and honour, as appeareth by the Gospel of St. Matthew, the 8th chapter, and the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, the 8th chapter.

"Hereby I do fully gather, that no faithful man ought to follow, either the pope himself, or any of the holy men, but in such points as he hath followed the Lord Jesus Christ. For Peter and the sons of Zebedee, by desiring worldly honour contrary to the following of Christ's steps, did offend, and therefore in those errors they are not to be followed.

"Hereof I do gather, as a counsel, that the pope ought to leave unto the secular power all temporal dominion and rule, and thereunto effectually to move and exhort his whole clergy; for so did Christ, and especially by his apostles. Wherefore, if I have erred in any of these points, I will most humbly submit myself unto correction, even by death, if necessity so require; and if I could labour according to my will or desire in mine own person, I would surely present myself before the bishop of Rome; but the Lord hath otherwise visited me to the contrary, and hath taught me rather to obey God than men. Forasmuch then as God hath given unto our pope just and true evangelical instincts, we ought to pray that those instincts be not extinguished by any subtle or crafty device. And that the pope and cardinals be not moved to do any thing contrary unto the law of the Lord.

"Wherefore let us pray unto our God, that he will so stir up our Pope Urban the Sixth, as he began, that he with his clergy may follow the Lord Jesus Christ in life and manners; and that they may teach the people effectually, and that they, likewise, may faithfully follow them in the same. And let us specially pray, that our pope may

be preserved from all malign and evil counsel, which we do know that evil and envious men of his household would give him. And seeing the Lord will not suffer us to be tempted above our power, much less then will he require of any creature to do that thing which it is not able; forasmuch as that is the plain condition and manner of antichrist."



hus much wrote John Wickliff unto Pope Urban. But this Pope Urban, otherwise termed Turbanus, was so hot in his wars against Clement, the French pope, his adversary, that he had no leisure, and less list, to attend unto Wickliff's matters. By the occasion of which schism, God so provided for poor Wickliff, that he was in some more rest and quietness.

Concerning which schismatical wars of these popes, forasmuch as we have here entered into the mention thereof, it shall not be impertinent from the order of our story, digressing a little from the matter of John

Wickliff, to touch something of the tragical doings of these two holy popes, striving for the triple crown; to the intent that the Christian reader, judging by their fruits and proceedings, may see and understand what difference is between these popes, and Christ and his apostles. For though in the story of the gospel it is read, that certain of the disciples did strive which should be the greater, yet neither do we read that one of them took ever weapon against the other; and moreover, in the said story of the gospel it doth appear, that they, for so striving as they did, were therefore sharply rebuked of our Saviour Christ, and were taught by him another lesson.

About the beginning of the next year following, which was A. D. 1383, Pope Urban setting all his study how to repress and conquer the contrary pope, his adversary, being then at Avignon, seeing all his other means to fail, and that his cross keys could do no good, took to him the sword of Romulus, and set upon him with open war. And first devising with himself whom he might best choose for his chief champion, he thought none meeter for such affairs than Henry Spencer, being then bishop of Norwich, a young and stout prelate, more fitting for the camping cure, than for the peaceable church of Christ, as partly also might appear before by his acts done at Lennam, in striving for the mayor's mace, mentioned before. Unto this bishop of Norwich the pope had sent his bulls about this time, to croisy whomsoever would go with him into France, to destroy the antipope, which named himself Clement, and to make war against all those that took his part. Which bulls, for that they gave unto him such great authority, he caused to be published in the parliament house, and caused the copies of the same to be sent all about, and to be set up and fastened upon all the church doors and monastery gates, that all men might read them. In the which bulls many privileges were granted.

This courageous or rather outrageous bishop, armed thus with the pope's authority, and prompt with his privileges, in the year aforesaid, 1383, about the time of Lent, came to the parliament; where great consultation and contention, and almost no less schism, was about the voyage of this popish bishop in the parliament, than was between the popes themselves. In the which parliament many there were, which thought it not safe to commit the king's people and subjects unto a rude and unskilful priest. So great was the diversity of judgments in that behalf, that the voyage of the

said bishop was protracted unto the Saturday before Passion Sunday. In the which Sunday was sung the solemn anthem, Behold the cross of the Lord, fly away, all you adversaries. After which Sunday the parties so agreed amongst themselves by common decree, that the bishop should set forth in his voyage, having given to him the fifteenth, which was granted to the king in the parliament before. Which things thus concluded in the parliament, this warlike bishop, preparing before all things in readiness, set forward in his pope-holy journey. Who about the month of May, being come to Canterbury, and there tarrying for a wind in the monastery of St. Augustine, received a writ from the king that he should return to him, to know further of his pleasure. The bishop fearing that, if he turned again to the king, his journey should be staid, and so all his labour and preparation lost with great derision and shame unto him, thought better to commit himself to fortune with that little army he had, than, by tarrying, to be made a laughing-stock to his adversaries. Wherefore he sent word back again to the king, that he was now ready prepared, and well forward on his journey; and that it was not expedient now to protract the time for any kind of talk, which, peradventure, should be to no manner of purpose; and that it was more convenient for him to hasten in his journey to God's glory, and also to the honour of the king. And thus he, calling his men unto him, entered forthwith the seas, and went to Calais; where he waiting a few days for the rest of his army, after the receipt of them, took his journey first to the town of Gravelines; which he besieged so desperately, without any preparation of engines of war, or counsel, or of politic men skilful in such affairs, that he seemed rather to fly upon them, than to invade them. At length, through the superstition of our men, trusting upon the pope's absolution, he so harshly approached the walls and invaded the enemies, that a great number of them were piteously slain with shot and wildfire; till at the end (the inhabitants being oppressed and vanquished) our men entered the town with their bishop, where they, at his commandment, destroying both man, woman, and child, left not one alive of all them which remained in the whole town. And so it came to pass by the virtue of the cross, that the enemies of the cross were so utterly destroyed that not one of them remained alive.

From Gravelines this warlike bishop set forward to Dunkirk, where not long after the Frenchmen meeting with him, joined with them in battle; in which battle, if the story be true, twelve thousand of the Frenchmen were slain in the chase, and of our men but seven only missing. It would require a long tractation here to discourse all things done in these popish wars; also it would be no less ridiculous to view and behold the glorious temerity of this new upstart captain. But certes, lamentable it is to see the pitiful slaughter and murder of Christ's people by the means of these pitiless popes, during these wars in France; as when the bishop coming from Dunkirk to the siege of Ypres, a great number of Englishmen there were lost, and much money consumed, and yet nothing done effectually, to the great shame and ignorance of the bishop. Again, after the siege of Ypres, thus with shame broke up, the same bishop proceeding with a small power to fight with the French king's camp, contrary to the counsel of his captains, which counted him rash and unskilful in his attempt, was fain to break company with them; whereby part of the army went unto Burburgh, and the bishop with his part returned to Gravelines; which both towns shortly after were besieged by the French army, to the great loss both of the English and French men. In fine, when the bishop could keep Gravelines no longer, the said bishop with his croysies, crossing the seas, came home again as wise as he went. And thus, making an end of this pontifical war, we will return again from whence we digressed, to the story and matter of John Wickliff.

Which John Wickliff returning again within short space, either from his banishment, or from some other place where he was secretly kept, repaired to his parish of Lutterworth, where he was parson; and there, quietly departing this mortal life, slept in peace in the Lord, in the beginning of the year 1384, upon Silvester's day.

Here is to be noted the great providence of the Lord in this man, as in divers other, whom the Lord so long preserved in such rages of so many enemies from all their hands, even to his old age. For so it appeareth by Thomas Walden, writing against him in his tomes entitled, *De Sacramentis contra Wiclevium*, that he was well aged before he departed; by that which the aforesaid Walden writeth of him in his epilogue, speaking of Wickliff in these words; "so that the same thing pleased him in his old age, which did please him being young." Whereby it seemeth that Wickliff lived till he was an old man, by this report. Such a Lord is God, that whom he will have kept, nothing can hurt.

This Wickliff had written divers and sundry works, the which, in the year of our Lord 1410, were burnt at Oxford, the abbot of Shrewsbury being then commissary, and sent to oversee that matter. And not only in England, but in Bohemia likewise, the books of the said Wickliff were set on fire, by one Subincus, archbishop of Prague, who made diligent inquisition for the same, and burned them; the number of the volumes, which he is said to have burned, most excellently written, and richly adorned with bosses of gold, and rich coverings, (as Æneas Silvius writeth,) were about the number of two hundred.

Johannes Cocleus, in his book *De historia Hussitarum*, speaking of the books of Wickliff, testifieth, that he wrote very many books, sermons, and tractations. Moreover, the said Cocleus, speaking of himself, recordeth also, that there was a certain bishop in England which wrote unto him, declaring that he had yet remaining in his custody two huge and mighty volumes of John Wickliff's works, which for the quantity thereof might seem to be equal with the works of St. Augustine.

Among other of his treatises I myself also have found out certain, as *De sensu et veritate Scripturæ*; item, *De Ecclesia*; item, *De Eucharistia confessio Wicklevi*; which I intend hereafter, the Lord so granting, to publish abroad.

By his words of this blessed man, whom the whole church doth reverence and worship, it doth appear that the pope hath not power to occupy the church goods, as lord thereof; but as minister, and servant, and proctor for the poor. And would to God that the same proud and greedy desire of rule and lordship, which this seat doth challenge unto it, were not a preamble to prepare a way unto anti-christ; for it is evident by the gospel, that Christ through his poverty, humility, and suffering of injury, got unto him the children of his kingdom.

And moreover, so far as I remember, the same blessed man, Bernard, in his third book writeth also thus unto Eugenius; "I fear no other greater poison to happen unto thee, than greedy desire of rule and dominion."

This Wickliff, albeit in his lifetime he had many grievous enemies, yet was there none so cruel unto him as the clergy itself. Yet, notwithstanding, he had many good friends, men not only of the base and meanest sort, but also of the nobility, amongst whom these men are to be numbered, John Clenbon, Lewis Clifford, Richard Stury, Thomas Latimer, William Nevil, John Montague, who plucked down all the images in his church. Besides all these, there was the earl of Salisbury; who, for contempt in him noted towards the sacrament in carrying it home to his house, was

enjoined by Ralph Ergom, bishop of Salisbury, to make in Salisbury a cross of stone, in which all the story of the matter should be written, and he every Friday during his life to come to the cross barefoot and bareheaded in his shirt, and there kneeling upon his knees to do penance for his fact.

The Londoners at this time, somewhat boldly, trusting to the mayor's authority, who for that year was John of Northampton, took upon them the office of the bishops, in punishing the vices, belonging to civil law, of such persons as they had found and apprehended in committing both fornication and adultery. For first, they put the women in the prison, which, amongst them, was then named Dolium; and lastly, bringing them into the marketplace, where every man might behold them, and cutting off their golden locks from their heads, they caused them to be carried about the streets, with bagpipes and trumpets blown before them, to the intent they should be the better known, and their companies avoided; according to the manner then of certain thieves that were named appellatores, accusers or appeachers of others that were guiltless, which were so served. And with other suchlike opprobrious and reproachful contumelies, did they serve the men also that were taken with them, in committing the forenamed wickedness and vices. Here the story recordeth how the said Londoners were encouraged hereunto by John Wickliff, and others that followed his doctrine, to perpetrate this act, in the reproach of the prelates being of the clergy; for they said, that they did not only abhor to see the great negligence of those to whom that charge belonged, but also their filthy avarice they did as much detest; which for greediness of money were choked with bribes, and, winking at the penalties due to such persons by the laws appointed, suffered such fornicators and incestuous persons favourably to continue in their wickedness. They said furthermore, that they greatly feared, lest for such wickedness perpetrated within the city, and so apparently dissimulated, that God would take vengeance upon them and destroy their city. Wherefore they said, that they could do no less than purge the same; lest by the sufferance thereof God would bring a plague upon them, or destroy them with the sword, or cause the earth to swallow up both them and their city.

This story, gentle reader, albeit the author thereof, whom I follow, doth give it out in reproachful wise, to the great discommendation of the Londoners for so doing, yet I thought not to omit, but to commit the same to memory, which seemeth to me rather to tend unto the worthy commendation both of the Londoners that so did, and to the necessary example of all other cities to follow the same. After these things thus declared, let us now adjoin the testimonial of the university of Oxford of John Wickliff.

The public testimony given out by the university of Oxford, touching the commendation of the great learning and good life of John Wickliff.

"Unto all and singular the children of our holy mother the church, to whom this present letter shall come, the vice-chancellor of the university of Oxford, with the whole congregation of the masters, with perpetual health in the Lord. Forasmuch as it is not commonly seen, that the acts and monuments of valiant men, nor the praise and merits of good men, should be passed over and hidden with perpetual silence, but that true report and fame should continually spread abroad the same in strange and far distant places, both for the witness of the same, and example of others; forasmuch also as the provident discretion of man's nature, being recompensed with cruelty, hath devised and ordained this buckler and defence against such as do blaspheme and

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slander other men's doings, that whensoever witness by word of mouth cannot be present, the pen by writing may supply the same.

"Hereupon it followeth, that the special good will and care which we bear unto John Wickliff, sometime child of this our university, and professor of divinity, moving and stirring our minds, as his manners and conditions required no less, with one mind, voice, and testimony, we do witness, all his conditions and doings throughout his whole life to have been most sincere and commendable; whose honest manners and conditions, profoundness of learning, and most redolent renown and fame, we desire the more earnestly to be notified and known unto all faithful, for that we understand the maturity and ripeness of his conversation, his diligent labours and travails, to tend to the praise of God, the help and safeguard of others, and the profit of the church.

"Wherefore we signify unto you by these presents, that his conversation, even from his youth upward, unto the time of his death, was so praiseworthy and honest, that never at any time was there any note or spot of suspicion noised of him. But in his answering, reading, preaching, and determining, he behaved himself laudably, and as a stout and valiant champion of the faith, vanquishing, by the force of the Scriptures, all such who by their wilful beggary blasphemed and slandered Christ's religion. Neither was this doctor convicted of any heresy, either burned of our prelates after his burial. God forbid that our prelates should have condemned a man of such honesty for a heretic; who, amongst all the rest of the university, had written in logic, philosophy, divinity, morality, and the speculative arts, without peer. The knowledge of which all and singular things, we do desire to testify and deliver forth; to the intent that the fame and renown of this said doctor may be the more evident and had in reputation, amongst them unto whose hands these present letters testimonial shall come.

"In witness whereof, we have caused these our letters testimonial to be sealed with our common seal. Dated at Oxford, in our congregation-house, the first day of October, in the year of our Lord 1406."

Now as we have declared the testimony of the university of Oxford, concerning the praise of John Wickliff, it followeth likewise that we set forth and express the contrary censures and judgments of his enemies, blinded with malicious hatred and corrupt affections against him, especially of the pope's council gathered at Constance, proceeding first in condemning his books, then of his articles, and afterward burning of his bones. The copy of which their sentence given against him by that council here followeth.

The sentence given by the Council of Constance, in condemning the doctrine and five and forty articles of John Wickliff.

"The most holy and sacred Council of Constance, making and representing the catholic church, for the extirpation of this present schism, and of all other errors and heresies, springing and growing under the shadow and pretence of the same, and for the reformation and amendment of the church, being lawfully congregated and gathered together in the Holy Ghost, for the perpetual memory of the time to come.

"We are taught by the acts and histories of the holy fathers, that the catholic faith, without the which, as the holy apostle St. Paul saith, it is impossible to please God, hath been always defended by the faithful and spiritual soldiers of the church, by the shield of faith, against the false worshippers of the same faith, or rather perverse impugnors; which, through their proud curiosity, will seem to know more and to be

wiser than they ought to be, and for the desire of the glory of the world have gone about oftentimes to overthrow the same. These kinds of wars and battles have been prefigured to us before, in those carnal wars of the Israelites against the idolatrous people. For in those spiritual wars the holy catholic church, through the virtue and power of faith, being illustrate with the beams of the heavenly light, by the providence of God, and being holpen by the help and defence of the saints and holy men, hath always continued immaculate, and the darkness of errors, as her most cruel enemies, being put to flight she hath most gloriously triumphed over all. But in these our days, the old and unclean enemy hath raised up new contentions and strifes, that the elect of this world might be known, whose prince and captain in time past was one John Wickliff, a false Christian; who, during his lifetime, taught and sowed very obstinately many articles contrary and against the Christian religion, and the catholic faith. And the same John Wickliff wrote certain books which he called a Dialogue, and a Trialogue, besides many other treatises and works, the which he both wrote and taught, in the which he wrote the aforesaid and many other damnable and execrable articles; the which his books, for the publication and advancement of his perverse doctrine, he did set forth openly for every man to read. Whereby, beside many offences, great hurt and damage of soul hath ensued in divers regions and countries, but specially in the kingdom of England and Bohemia. Against whom the masters and doctors of the universities of Oxford and Prague, rising up in truth and verity of God, according to the order of schools, within a while after, did reprove and condemn the said articles.

"Moreover, the most reverend fathers the archbishops and bishops, for that time present, of Canterbury, York, and Prague, legates of the apostolic see, in the kingdom of England and Bohemia, did condemn the books of the said Wickliff to be burned. And the said archbishop of Prague, commissary of the apostolic see, did likewise in this behalf determine and judge. And, moreover, he did forbid that any of those books, which did remain unburned, should be hereafter any more read. And again, these things being brought to the knowledge and understanding of the apostolic see, and in the general council, the bishop of Rome in his last council condemned the said books, treatises, and volumes, commanding them to be openly burned; most straitly forbidding that any men, which should bear the name of Christ, should be so hardy either to keep, read, or expound any of the said books or treatises, volumes or works, or by any means to use or occupy them, or else to allege them openly or privily, but to their reproof and infamy. And to the intent that this most dangerous and filthy doctrine should be utterly wiped away out of the church, he gave commandment throughout all places, that the ordinaries should diligently inquire and seek out, by the apostolic authority and ecclesiastical censure, for all such books, treatises, volumes, and works; and the same so being found, to burn and consume them with fire; providing withal, that if there be any such found, which will not obey the same, process to be made against them, as against the favourers and maintainers of heresies. And this most holy synod hath caused the said forty-five articles to be examined and oftentimes perused, by many most reverend fathers of the Church of Rome, cardinals, bishops, abbots, masters of divinity, and doctors of both laws, besides a great number of other learned men; the which articles being so examined, it was found as in truth it was no less that many, yea, and a great number of them, be notoriously for heretical reprov'd and condemned by the holy fathers; other some not to be catholic, but erroneous; some full of offence and blasphemy; certain of them offensive unto godly ears, and many of them to be rashful and seditious. It is found, also, that his books do contain many articles of like effect and quality, and that they do induce and bring into

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the church unsound and unwholesome doctrine, contrary unto the faith and ordinance of the church. Wherefore, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, this sacred synod, ratifying and approving the sentences and judgments of the archbishops and council of Rome, do by this their decree and ordinance perpetually for evermore condemn and reprove the said articles, and every one of them, his books which he entituled his Dialogue and Trialogue, and all other books of the same author, volumes, treatises, and works, by what name soever they be entituled or called, the which we will here to be sufficiently expressed and named. Also we forbid the reading, learning, exposition, or alleging of any of the said books unto all faithful Christians, but so far forth as shall tend to the reproof of the same; forbidding all and singular catholic persons, under the pain of curse, that from henceforth they be not so hardy openly to preach, teach, or hold, or by any means to allege the said articles, or any of them, except (as is aforesaid) that it do tend unto the reproof of them; commanding all those books, treatises, works, and volumes aforesaid, to be openly burned, as it was decreed in the synod at Rome, as is afore expressed. For the execution whereof duly to be observed and done, the said sacred synod doth straitly charge and command the ordinaries of the place diligently to attend and look unto the matter, according as it appertaineth unto every man's duty by the canonical laws and ordinances."

What these articles were, here condemned by the council, collected out of all his works, and exhibited to that said council, to the number of forty-five, the copy of them following underwritten declareth.

Certain other articles gathered out of Wickliff's books by his adversaries, to the number of forty-five, exhibited up to the council of Constance after his death, and in the same council condemned.

Besides the twenty-four articles above mentioned, there were others also gathered out of his books, to the number of forty-five in all, which his malicious adversaries, perversely collecting, and maliciously expounding, did exhibit up to the Council of Constance; all which to repeat, though it be not here needful, yet to recite certain of them as they stand in that council, it shall not be superfluous.

25. All such as be hired for temporal living to pray for other, offend, and sin of simony.

26. The prayer of the reprobate prevaieth for no man.

27. Hallowing of churches, confirmation of children, the sacrament of orders, be reserved to the pope and bishops only, for the respect of temporal lucre.

28. Graduations and doctorships in universities and colleges, as they be used, conduce nothing to the church.

29. The excommunication of the pope and his prelates is not to be feared, because it is the censure of antichrist.

30. Such as found and build monasteries do offend and sin; and all such as enter into the same be members of the devil.

31. To enrich the clergy is against the rule of Christ.

32. Silvester the pope, and Constantine the emperor, were deceived in giving and taking possessions into the church.

33. A deacon or a priest may preach the word of God without the authority of the apostolical see.

34. Such as enter into orders, or religion monastical, are thereby unable to keep God's commandments, and also to attain to the kingdom of heaven, except they return from the same.

35. The pope, with all his clergy, having those great possessions as they have, be heretics in so having, and the secular powers in so suffering them do not well.

36. The church of Rome is the synagogue of Satan; neither is the pope immediately the vicar of Christ, nor of the apostles.

37. The decretals of the pope be apocryphal, and seduce from the faith of Christ, and the clergy that study them be fools.

38. The emperor and secular lords be seduced, which so enrich the church with such ample possessions.

39. It is not necessary to salvation to believe the Church of Rome to be supreme head over all churches.

40. It is but folly to believe the pope's pardon.

41. All oaths, which be made for any contract or civil bargain betwixt man and man, be unlawful.

42. Benedict, Francis, Dominic, Bernard, with all such as have been patrons of private religion, except they have repented, with such also as have entered into the same, be in a damnable state, and so, from the pope to the lowest novices, they be altogether heretics.

Besides these articles, to the number of forty and five, condemned as is said by the council of Constance, other articles also I find diversely collected, or rather wrested out of the books and writings of Wickliff; some by William Woodford, some by Walden, by Friar Tissington, and other, whom they in their books have impugned rather than confuted.

Besides this William Woodford aforementioned, divers other there were which wrote against these articles of Wickliff aforesaid, maintaining the pope's part, as seemeth, for flattery, rather than following any just cause so to do, or showing forth any reason or learning in disproving the same. Notwithstanding, on the contrary part, some there were again, both learned and godly, which taking the part of Wickliff, without all flattery, defended the most of the said articles openly in schools and other places; as appeareth by the works of John Huss, who, in his public determinations in the university of Prague, stood in defence of the same against all his adversaries.

John Huss prosecuted Wickliff's articles with long arguments and reasons; and it were too long a travail, neither agreeable for this place, to allege all the whole order of his reasons and proofs, which he used in that disputation, above the number of twenty more, besides the testimonies of all the writers before recited, the which he allegeth out of the Scriptures, decretals, St. Ambrose in his book of offices, St. Augustine in his fifth book and fifth question, and also unto Macedo, Isidore, the Council of Nice, Gregory his eleventh question, Bernard unto Eugene in his third book, and out of Lincolniensis, the threescore and one epistle, besides many other more. The sum of all which testimonies tend unto this end, that he might utterly take away all earthly rule and dominion from the clergy, and to bring them under the subjection and censure of kings and emperors, as it were within certain bonds, the which is not only agreeable unto equity and God's word, but also profitable for the

clergy themselves. He teacheth it also to be necessary, that they should rather be subject under the secular power, than to be above them; because that else it were dangerous, lest that they, being entangled with such kind of business, should be an easier prey unto Satan, and sooner trapped in his snares. And thereby it should come to pass, that the governance and principality of all things being at the length brought into the hands of the clergy, the lawful authority of kings and princes should not only be given over unto them, but in a manner as it were grow out of use; especially forasmuch as already, in certain kingdoms and commonwealths, the ecclesiastical power is grown unto such height, that not only in Bohemia, but also almost throughout all the commonwealths, they do occupy the third, or at least the fourth part of the rents and revenues. And last of all, he allegeth the example of Gregory and of Mauritius, and afterward the prophecy of Hildegard, writing in this manner:

"As the ecclesiastical ministers do willingly receive reward and praise of kings and rulers for their good deeds; so also ought they, when they do offend, willingly suffer and receive punishment at their hands for their evil doings. The consequence holdeth thus; forasmuch as the punishment meekly and humbly received for his offence doth more profit a man than his praise received for any good work: whereupon St. Gregory writeth thus unto Mauritius the emperor, when he did persecute him, saying, 'I believe that you do please Almighty God so much the better, in so cruelly afflicting me, which have been so evil a servant unto him.' If then this holy pope did so humbly and meekly, without any offence, suffer this affliction of the emperor, why should not any of the clergy, when they do offend, meekly sustain punishment at the king's or ruler's hands, under whom they are bound to be subject, whenas the true vicar of Christ saith, 1 Pet. ii., Be ye subject unto every creature for God's cause, whether it be unto the king, as most excellent, or unto the rulers, as men sent of God for the punishing of the wicked, and to the praise of the good; for so is the good will of God?

"Whereupon Pope Leo, leaning unto this rule, submitted himself unto Louis, the emperor, as it is written in the second question, 7 par., in these words, 'If we have done any thing incompetently, or if we have not observed the upright path and way of equity among subjects, we will amend the same, either by your own judgment, or else by the advice or judgment of those which you shall appoint for that purpose. For if we, which ought to correct and punish other men's faults, do commit more grievous ourselves, we are not then the disciples of the truth, but, with sorrow we speak it, we shall be above all other the masters of error.'

"And in the tenth distinction he writeth thus, touching the obedience unto the emperor: As concerning the precepts and commandments of our emperors, and our predecessors bishops, (the which the Gloss nameth emperors, which are anointed after the manner of bishops,) to be observed and kept unbroken, we do profess ourselves by all means possible, as much as in us lieth, or that we may and can, we will by the help of God preserve and keep them both now and ever. And if peradventure any man do inform, or hereafter shall inform, you otherwise, know you him assuredly to be a liar and slanderer.'

Mark how this devout and holy pope, calling the emperors bishops, submitted himself, according to the rule of St. Peter the apostle, under the obedience, and also punishment, of the emperor. Wherefore then should not the clergy of the kingdom of Bohemia submit themselves under the obedience of their king, for God's cause, to be punished if they do offend; and not only submit themselves unto the king, but also

unto the rulers; and not only unto the rulers, but unto every other creature? For by how much they do so humble and abase themselves in this world for God's sake, so much the more shall they be exalted with him: but what is the let thereof, but only pride, whereby antichrist doth exalt himself above the most humble and meek Lord Jesus Christ?

"Also it seemeth to appear by that which is aforesaid upon the taking away of the temporalities, out of the prophecy of Hildegard, the virgin, the which she writeth in her books under Eugene the pope, in the Council of Treves, approved and allowed by many bishops of France, Italy, and Almain, which were there present, where also St. Bernard himself was present; the which virgin prophesying, spake in this manner: 'The kings and other rulers of the world, being stirred up by the just judgment of God, shall set themselves against them, and run upon them, saying, We will not have these men to reign over us with their rich houses, and great possessions, and other worldly riches, over the which we are ordained to be lords and rulers; and how is it meet or comely that those shavelings, with their stoles and chisils, should have more soldiers, or more or richer armour or artillery, than we? So is it not convenient that one of the clergy should be a man of war, neither a soldier to be one of the clergy. Wherefore let us take away from them that, which they do not justly, but wrongfully possess.' And immediately after she saith, 'The omnipotent Father equally divided all things, that is to say, the heavens he gave unto the heavenly creatures, and the earth unto the earthly. And by this means was there a just division made between the children of men, that the spirituality should have such things as belong unto them, and the secular people, such things as are meet and necessary for them, so that neither of these two sorts should oppress each other by violence; for God doth not command, that the one son or child should have both the cloak and the coat, and the other should go naked, but he willed that the one should have the cloak and the other the coat. Wherefore the secular sort ought to have the cloak for the greatness of their worldly cares, and for their children, which daily increase and multiply. The coat he giveth unto the spirituality, that they should not lack clothing, and that they should not possess more than necessity doth require. Wherefore we judge and think it good, that all these aforesaid be divided by reason and equity; and that where the cloak and the coat are both found, there the cloak should be taken away, and given unto the needy, that they do not perish for lack or want.' These aforesaid spake the virgin Hildegard, plainly foreshowing the taking away of the temporalities from the clergy by the secular lords; and showing for what cause they shall be so taken away, and what manner of division shall be made of those things that are taken away, that they be not consumed, and spent unprofitably."

Hugo, also, in his second book of Sacraments, in the second part, and third chapter, saith, "The laity, forasmuch as they intermeddle with earthly matters necessary unto an earthly life, they are the least part of the body of Christ. And the clergy, forasmuch as they do dispose those things which pertain unto a spiritual life, are, as it were, the right side of the body of Christ." And afterward, interpreting both these parts himself, he saith, "A spiritual man ought to have nothing but such as pertaineth unto God, unto whom it is appointed to be sustained by the tithes and oblations which are offered unto God; but unto the Christian and faithful laity the possession of the earth is granted; and unto the clergy the whole charge of spiritual matters is committed, as it was in the Old Testament." And in his seventh chapter he declareth how that certain things are given unto the church of Christ by the devotion of the faithful, the power and authority of the secular power reserved, lest there might

happen any confusion; forasmuch as God himself cannot allow any disordered thing. Whereupon oftentimes the worldly princes do grant the bare use of the church, and oftentimes use and power to exercise justice, which the clergy cannot exercise by any ecclesiastical minister, or any other person of the clergy. Notwithstanding they may have certain lay persons ministers unto that office; "but in such sort," saith he, "that they do acknowledge the power which they have to come from the secular prince or ruler, and that they do understand their possessions can never be alienated away from the king's power; but (if that necessity or reason do require) the same possessions, in all such case of necessity, do owe him obeisance and service. For like as the king's power ought not to turn away the defence or safeguard which he oweth unto another; so likewise the possessions obtained and possessed by the clergy, according to the duty and homage which is due unto the patronage of the king's power, cannot by right be denied." Thus much writes Hugo.

And thus, hitherto, I may peradventure seem to have made sufficient long recital out of John Huss, but so, notwithstanding, that the commodity of those things may abundantly recompense the prolixity thereof. Wherefore, if I shall seem unto any man, in the rehearsal of this disputation, to have passed very far the bounds of the history, let him think thus of me, that in what time I took in hand to write of these ecclesiastical matters, I could not omit these things which were so straitly joined with the cause of the church. Not that I did make more account of the history which I had taken in hand, than of the common utility whereunto I had chief respect.

There were, besides these, certain other articles, whereupon the said John Huss had very wisely and learnedly disputed; but these shall suffice us for this present. And for the residue, we will pass them over, to the intent we may the more speedily return whereas our story left; declaring what cruelty they used not only against the books and articles of John Wickliff, but also in burning his body and bones, commanding them to be taken up forty-one years after he was buried, as appeareth by the decree of the said synod, the form whereof we thought hereunto to annex.

The decree of the synod of Constance, touching the taking up of the body and bones of John Wickliff to be burned forty-one years after he was buried in his own parish at Lutterworth.

"Forasmuch as by the authority of the sentence and decree of the Council of Rome, and by the commandment of the church and the apostolical see, after due delays being given, they proceeded unto the condemnation of the said John Wickliff and his memory, having first made proclamation, and given commandment to call forth whosoever would defend the said Wickliff, or his memory, if there were any such (but there did none appear, which would either defend him or his memory). And moreover witnesses being examined, by commissioners appointed by Pope John, and his council, upon the impenitency and final obstinacy and stubbornness of the said John Wickliff, (reserving that which is to be reserved, as in such business the order of the law requireth,) and his impenitency and obstinacy, even unto his end, being sufficiently proved by evident signs and tokens, and also by lawful witnesses, and credit lawfully given thereunto: wherefore, at the instance of the steward of the treasury, proclamation being made to hear and understand the sentence against this day, the sacred synod declareth, determineth, and giveth sentence, that the said John Wickliff was a notorious obstinate heretic, and that he died in heresy: cursing and condemning both him and his memory.

"This synod also decreeth and ordaineth, that the body and bones of the said John Wickliff, if it might be discerned and known from the bodies of other faithful people, should be taken out of the ground, and thrown away far from the burial of any church, according unto the canon laws and decrees. Which determination and sentence definitive being read and pronounced, the lord president, and the aforesaid presidents of the four nations, being demanded and asked whether it did please them or no, they all answered, (and first Hostiensis the president, and after him the other presidents of the nations,) that it pleased them very well; and so they allowed and confirmed all the premises, &c."



The Burning of the bones of John Wickliff

What Heraclitus would not laugh, or what Democritus would not weep, to see these so sage and reverend Catos, to occupy their heads to take up a poor man's body, so long dead and buried before, by the space of forty-one years; and yet, peradventure, were not able to find his right bones, but took up some other body, and so of a catholic made a heretic! Albeit, herein Wickliff had some cause to give them thanks, that they would at least spare him so long till he was dead, and also to give him so long respite after his death, forty-one years to rest in his sepulchre before they ungraved him, and turned him from earth to ashes; which ashes also they took and threw into the river. And so was he resolved into three elements, earth, fire, and water, thinking thereby utterly to extinguish and abolish both the name and doctrine of Wickliff for ever. Not much unlike to the example of the old Pharisees and sepulchre-knights, which, when they had brought the Lord unto the grave, thought to make him sure never to rise again. But these and all other must know, that as there is no counsel

against the Lord, so there is no keeping down of verity, but it will spring and come out of dust and ashes, as appeared right well in this man: for though they digged up his body, burned his bones, and drowned his ashes, yet the word of God, and truth of his doctrine, with the fruit and success thereof, they could not burn; which yet to this day, for the most part of his articles, do remain, notwithstanding the transitory body and bones of the man were thus consumed and dispersed, as by this picture here above set forth to thine eyes, gentle reader, may appear.

These things thus finished and accomplished, which pertain to the story and time of Wickliff, let us now, by the supportation of the Lord, proceed to treat and write of the rest, which either in his time or after his time, springing out of the same university, and raised up (as ye would say) out of his ashes, were partakers of the same persecution; of whom speaketh Thomas Walden in his book, *De Sacramentis et Sacramentalibus*, cap. 53, where he saith, that after Wickliff many suffered most cruel death, and many more did forsake the realm; in the number of whom were William Swinderby, Walter Brute, John Purvey, Richard White, William Thorp, and Reynold Peacock, bishop of St. Asaph, and afterward of Chichester.

To this catalogue also pertaineth (mentioned in ancient writers) Lawrence Redman, master of arts; David Sautre, a divine; John Ashwarby, vicar, as they call him, of St. Mary's church at Oxford; William James, an excellent young man, well learned; Thomas Brightwell, and William Hawlam, a civilian; Rafe Greenhurst, John Scut, and Philip Norise; which, being excommunicated by Pope Eugenethe Fourth, in the year of our Lord 1446, appealed unto a general or œcumenical council.

Peter Paine also, who, flying from Oxford unto Bohemia, did stoutly contend against the sophisters, as touching both kinds of the sacrament of the last supper; who, afterward, among the rest of the orators, was one of the fourteen that was sent unto the Council of Basil; where, by the space of three days, he disputed upon the fourth article, which was touching the civil dominion of the clergy, A. D. 1438. Also the Lord Cobham, &c., with divers others besides, whose names are mentioned in the king's writ, sent to the sheriff of Northampton, which writ of the king followeth in this tenor:

"Forasmuch as John Attyate of Chepingwarden, John Warryner, R. Brewood, &c. being receivers and abettors of heretics, and especially of John Woodward, priest, publicly defamed and condemned of heresy, will not be justified by the censures of the church, as the reverend father, John, bishop of Lincoln, hath certified us; we therefore, willing to withstand all defenders and abettors of such heresies, do will and command as well the fore named, as namely, the aforesaid John Woodward to be apprehended, straitly charging the same to be imprisoned by their bodies, or otherwise punished, as shall seem good to the justices, until they and every of them shall submit themselves to the obedience of the aforesaid bishop in that behalf accordingly. Whereof fail you not, under pain of a hundred pounds. Witness ourselves: Given at our manor of Langley, the eighth day of March, the twelfth year of our reign."

To these above rehearsed, and other favourers of Wickliff, within this our country of England, we may add also the Bohemians; forasmuch as the propagation of the said doctrine of Wickliff in that country also took root, coming from England to Bohemia by this occasion, as in story here followeth.

There chanced at that time a certain student of the country of Bohemia to be at Oxford, one of a wealthy house, and also of a noble stock, who, returning home from

the university of Oxford to the university of Prague, carried with him certain books of Wickliff, *De Realibus Universalibus*, *De Civili Jure et Divino*, *De Ecclesia*, *De Quæstionibus Variis contra Clerum*, &c. It chanced the same time, a certain nobleman in the city of Prague had founded and builded a great church of Matthias and Matthew, which church was called Bethlehem, giving to it great lands, and finding in it two preachers every day, to preach both holy day and working day to the people. Of the which two preachers this John Huss was one, a man of great knowledge, of a pregnant wit, and excellently favoured for his worthy life amongst them. Thus John Huss having familiarity with this young man in reading and perusing these books of Wickliff, took such pleasure and fruit in reading thereof, that not only he began to defend this author openly in the schools, but also in his sermons; commending him for a good man, a holy man, and heavenly man, wishing himself, when he should die, to be there placed, where the soul of Wickliff should be. And thus for the spreading of Wickliff's doctrine enough.

And thus much briefly concerning the favourers and adherents of John Wickliff in general. Now, particularly and in order, let us, by Christ's grace, prosecute the stories and persecutions of the said parties aforementioned, as the course of their times shall require, first beginning with the valiant champions William Swinderby and Walter Brute.

82. William Swinderby.

In the year 1389, William Swinderby, priest, within the diocese of Lincoln, being accused and detected upon certain opinions, was presented before John, bishop of Lincoln, and examined upon certain articles in the church of Lincoln, after the form and order of the pope's law, according to their usual rite observed; his denouncers were these, Friar Frisby, an observant, Friar Hincely, an Augustine, and Thomas Blaxton, Dominican. The articles wherewith they charged him, although in form of words, as they put them up, they might seem something strange here to be recited; yet to the intent that all men may see the spiteful malice of these spider friars, in sucking all things to poison, and in forging that which is not true, as in process (Christ willing) hereafter shall better appear by his answers, I thought good to notify the same.

That men may ask their debts by charity, but in no manner for debt to imprison any man; and that he so imprisoning is accursed.

That if parishioners do know their curate to be a lecher, incontinent, and an evil man, they ought to withdraw from him their tithes, or else they be abettors of his sins.

That tithes be purely alms, and in case that curates be evil men, the same may lawfully be conferred to other men.

That for an evil curate to curse his subject for withholding of tithes, is nothing else, but to take with extortion wickedly and unduly from them their money.

That no prelate may curse a man, except he know before that he is cursed of God.

That every priest may absolve any sinner being contrite; and is bound (notwithstanding the inhibition of the bishop) to preach the gospel unto the people.

That a priest, taking any annual pension upon covenant, is in so doing a simoniac and accursed.

That any priest being in deadly sin, if he give himself to consecrate the body of the Lord, committeth idolatry rather than doth consecrate.

That no priest entereth into any house, but to evil entreat the wife, the daughter, or maid; and therefore he admonished the good man of the house to take heed what priest he let into his house.

Another conclusion falsely to him objected, That a child is not truly baptized, if the priest that baptizeth, or the godfather or godmother, be in deadly sin.

Item, that no man living against the law of God is a priest, however he were ordained priest of any bishop.

These articles or conclusions, untruly collected, were as cruelly exhibited against him by the friars in the bishop of Lincoln's court. The which articles, although he never preached, taught, or at any time defended, as appeareth more in the process following; yet the friars with their witnesses standing forth against him, declared him to be convict; bringing also dry wood with them to the town to burn him, and would not leave him before they made him promise and swear, for fear of death, never to hold them, teach them, nor preach them privily nor apertly, under pain of relapse; and

that he should go to certain churches to revoke the aforesaid conclusions, which he never affirmed: as first in the church of Lincoln; then in St. Margaret's church of Leicester; also in St. Martin's church in Leicester; and in our Lady's churches at Newark; and in other parish churches also, of Melton-Mowbray, of Helhoughton, Hareborough, and Lent-borough. Which penance, being to him enjoined, he did obediently accomplish; with this form of revocation, which they bound him unto, under these words.

"I, William Swinderby, priest, although unworthy, of the diocese of Lincoln, acknowledging one true catholic and apostolic faith of the holy Church of Rome, do abjure all heresy and error repugning to the determination of the holy mother church, whereof I have been hitherto defamed; namely, the conclusions and articles above prefixed, and every one of them, to me judicially objected, by the commissary of the reverend father in Christ and Lord, Lord John, by the grace of God, bishop of Lincoln; and do revoke the same, and every one of them, some as heretical, some as erroneous and false; and do affirm and believe them to be so, and hereafter will never teach, preach, or affirm publicly or privily the same. Neither will I make any sermon within the diocese of Lincoln, but asking first and obtaining the licence of the aforesaid reverend father and lord, the bishop of Lincoln. Contrary to the which if I shall presume hereafter to say or do, to hold or preach, I shall be content to abide the severity of the canon, as I have judicially, by the necessity of the law, sworn, and do swear," &c.

Thus have you the conclusions and articles of this good man, falsely objected to him by the malicious and lying friars; and also the retractation whereunto they by force compelled him; whereby it may likewise be conjectured what credit is to be given to the articles and conclusions which these cavilling friars, wresting all things to the worst, have objected and imputed both to Wickliff and all other of that sort, whom they so falsely do defame, so slanderously do belie, and so maliciously do persecute. After these things thus done and wrought in the diocese of Lincoln, it so befell, that the said William Swinderby removed to the diocese and county of Hereford; where he was as much, or more, molested by the friars again, and by John Tresnant, bishop of Hereford, as by the process and story here ensuing, set out at large out of their own registers, may appear.

The process of John Tresnant, bishop of Hereford, had against the aforesaid William Swinderby in the cause of heretical pravity, as the popish heretics call it.

"The glorious name of the Prince of Peace, and his counsel (whose counsellor no man is, and whose providence in his disposition is never deceived) being invocated, To all and singular believers of Christ, which shall see or hear this our process underwritten, John, by the sufferance of God, bishop of Hereford, greeting, and peaceable charity in the, Lord. Forasmuch as God, the Creator of all things, the keeper of justice, the lover of right, and the hater of malice, beholding from the high throne of his providence the sons of men, now, through the fall of their first father, prone and declining to dishonest, and filthy, and detestable mischiefs, and to keep under their malice, which wicked transgression did first gender, hath appointed divers presidents of the world stablished in sundry degrees, by whom, and their circumspect providence, man's audacity should be restrained, innocency should be nourished amongst the good, and terror should be stricken into the wicked not to deceive; also that their power to hurt and their insolency should be bridled in all places: and whereas, amongst many kinds of cares which come to our thoughts, by the duty of the

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office committed unto us, we are specially bound to extend our strength, chiefly that the catholic faith may prosper in our times, and heretical pravity may be rooted from out of the borders of the faithful. We, therefore, being excited, through the information of many credible and faithful Christians of our diocese, to root out pestiferous plants, as sheep diseased with an incurable sickness, going about to infect the whole and sound flock, are by the care of the shepherd to be removed from the flock, that is to say, preachers, or more truly execrable offenders of the new sect, vulgarly called Lollards; which, under a certain cloaked show of holiness, running abroad through divers places of our diocese, and endeavouring to cut asunder the Lord's unsewed coat, that is to say, to rend the unity of the holy church, and of the catholic faith, and also to tear in pieces with their tempestuous blasts the power of St. Peter, that is to say, to weaken the strength of the ecclesiastical states and degrees, and the determination of the same holy church, have wickedly presumed and do presume from day to day to speak, to teach, to maintain, and, that which is more horrible to be uttered, to preach openly many things heretical, blasphemies, schisms, and slanderous defamings, even quite contrary to the sacred canons and decrees of the holy fathers, so that they know not to direct their paths in the ways of righteousness and truth, in that they expound to the people the Holy Scripture as the letter soundeth, after a judicial sort, otherwise than the Holy Ghost will have it, whereas the words wander from their proper significations, and appear to bring in, by guessing, new meanings; whereas the words must not be judged by the sense that they make, but by the sense whereby they be made, where the construction is not bound to the Donates' rules, where faith is far placed from the capacity of reason; but they labour, by their pernicious doctrines and teachings, public and privy, to boil out the poison of schisms between the clergy and the people. We, to encounter against such kind of preachers, nay rather deceivers, and horrible seducers amongst the people, advancing and rousing up ourselves in God's behalf, and holy mother church, with the spiritual sword, which may strike them wisely, and wound them medicinally, for their health and welfare; and namely, William Swinderby, priest, so pretending himself to be, as a teacher of such kind of pernicious doctrine, and a horrible seducer amongst the people; to whom personally appearing before us on the Wednesday, to wit, the fourteenth of the month of June, in the parish church of Kingston, of our diocese, in the year of our Lord 1391, he being vehemently defamed to us of heresy, schism, and his perverse doctrines both manifest and privy; we, therefore, have caused many cases and articles concerning the catholic faith to be ministered unto him, that he should answer to the same at a day and place for him meet and convenient, of his own choice and free will; that is to say, on the Friday, being the last of the same month of June next following; assigned to him, at the church of Bodenham of the same our diocese: of which cases and articles exhibited unto us by many of Christ's faithful people, zealous followers of the catholic faith, to make information to our office, which cases and articles also were by us administered, as is before said, to the same William Swinderby, the tenor thereof followeth, and is thus:

"Reverend father and high lord, Lord John, by God's sufferance bishop of Hereford, it is lamentably declared unto your reverend fatherhood on the behalf of Christ's faithful people, your devout children of your diocese of Hereford, that notwithstanding the misbelief of very many Lollards, which have too long a time sprung up here in your diocese, there is newly come a certain child of wickedness, named William Swinderby; who, by his horrible persuasions and mischievous endeavours, and also by his open preachings and private teachings, doth pervert as much as in him is the whole ecclesiastical state, and stirreth up, with all his possible

power, schism between the clergy and the people. And that your reverend fatherhood may be the more fully informed, who and what manner of man the same William Swinderby is, there be proposed and exhibited hereafter to the same your fatherhood, on the behalf of the same faithful people of Christ, against the same William Swinderby, cases and articles. Which if the same William shall deny, then shall the same cases and articles most evidently be proved against him by credible witness worthy of belief, and by other lawful proof and evidences, to the end that those being proved, the same fatherhood of yours may do and ordain therein, as to your pastoral office belongeth.

"Imprimis, the same William Swinderby, pretending himself priest, was openly and publicly convicted of certain articles and conclusions, being erroneous, schismatical, and heretical, preached by him at divers places and times before a multitude of faithful Christian people. And the same articles and conclusions did he by force of law revoke and abjure, some as heretical, and some as erroneous and false; avouching and believing them for such, as that from thenceforth he would never preach, teach, or affirm openly or privily any of the same conclusions: and if, by preaching or avouching, he should presume to do the contrary, that then he should be subject to the severity of the canons, accordingly as he did take a corporal oath, judicially, upon the holy Gospels.

"2. Also the conclusions, which by the same William were first openly taught and preached, and afterward abjured and revoked, as is aforesaid, are contained before in the process of the bishop of Lincoln, even as they be there written word by word. And, for the cases and articles, they were consequently exhibited by the forenamed faithful Christian people against the said William Swinderby, together with the conclusions before said, and hereafter written: of which cases and articles the tenor here ensueth.

"3. Item, The said William, contrary to the former revocation and abjuration, not converting to repentance, but perverted from ill to worse, and given up to a reprobate sense, came into your diocese, where he, running about in sundry places, hath presumed to preach, or rather to pervert and to teach of his own rashness, many heretical, erroneous, blasphemous, and other slanderous things, contrary and repugnant to sacred canons and the determination of the holy catholic church. What those things were, at what place and what time, it shall hereafter more particularly be declared.

"4. Item, The same William, notwithstanding your commandments and admonitions, sealed with your seal, and to all the curates of your diocese directed, containing amongst other things, that no person, of what state, degree, or condition soever he were, should presume to preach or to teach, or else expound the Holy Scripture to the people, either in hallowed or profane places within your diocese, without sufficient authority, by any manner of pretence that could be sought, as in the same your letters monitory and of inhibition, the tenor whereof hereafter ensueth, is more largely contained; which letters the same William did receive into his hands, and did read them word by word in the town of Monmouth of your diocese, in the year of our Lord 1390, so that these your letters and the contents thereof came to the true and undoubted knowledge of the same William; yet, notwithstanding, hath the same William presumed in divers places and times to preach within the same your diocese, after and against your commandments aforesaid."

The tenor of the same letters before mentioned followeth, and is this:

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

"John, by the sufferance of God, bishop of Hereford, to the dean and chapter of our church of Hereford; and to all and singular abbots, priors, provosts, deans rural, parsons and vicars of monasteries, priories, churches, colleges, and parishes, and to other having cure of souls within the city and diocese of Hereford; and to all and every other being within the same city and diocese, greeting, grace, and blessing. Forasmuch as the golden laurel of teaching doctoral is not from above indifferently every man's gift, neither is the office of preaching granted, save to such as are called, and especially by the church admitted thereunto: we do admonish and require you, all and singular clerks aforesaid, and do straitly enjoin you all, in the virtue of holy obedience, that you nor any of you do admit any man to preach or to teach the catholic faith, saving such as the same office of preaching shall by the authority apostolical, or else your bishop, be specially committed unto; but that, as much as in you shall lie, you do by word and deed labour to let those that would attempt the contrary. And you, lords, ladies, knights, barons, esquires, and all singular persons, of what estate, degree, pre-eminence, or condition soever ye be, remaining within the city and diocese of Hereford, we do beseech and exhort in our Lord, that, following the words of our Saviour, you beware of the leaven of the Pharisees.

"Item, according to the saying of the apostle, Be not ye carried away with divers and strange doctrines, and that in the mean while, as saith the apostle, you be not removed from the sense of the holy ancient fathers, lest that any man by any means should seduce you; but you, agreeing together in one mind, see that you honour God with one mouth. But if any man, to whom that thing is not specially, as is aforesaid, committed, shall attempt to instruct, or in this your life to direct you into the catholic faith, do ye deny to give them audience, and refuse you to be present at their assemblies, and shun ye their teachings, because they be wicked and perverse. And as for us, we will not omit to proceed according to the sacred canons and precepts of the holy fathers, against such as do the contrary.

"Dated at London, in the house of our habitation, under our seal, the last day save one of December, in the year of our Lord 1389, and of our consecration the first."

"5. Item, The same William, in his preaching to the people on Monday, being the first of August, in the year of our Lord 1390, in the parish of Whitney, of your diocese, did hold and affirm that no prelate of the world, of what estate, pre-eminence, or degree soever he were of, having cure and charge of souls, he being in deadly sin, and hearing the confession of any under his hand, in giving him absolution doth nothing; as who neither doth loose him from his sin, nor in correcting or excommunicating him for his demerits doth bind him by his sentence, except the prelate shall be free himself from deadly sin, as St. Peter was, to whom our Lord gave power to bind and loose.

"6. Item, The same William in many places said and affirmed, in the presence of many faithful Christian people, that after the sacramental words uttered by the priest, having the purpose to consecrate, there is not made the very body of Christ in the sacrament of the altar.

"7. Item, That accidents cannot be in the sacrament of the altar without a subject, and that there remaineth material bread there to such as be partakers communicant with the body of Christ, in the same sacrament.

"8. Item, That a priest, being in deadly sin, cannot be able, by the strength of the sacramental words, to make the body of Christ, or bring to perfection any other sacrament of the church, neither yet to minister it to the members of the church.

"9. Item, That all priests are of like power in all things, notwithstanding that some of them in this world are of higher and greater honour, degree, or pre-eminence.

"10. Item, That only contrition putteth away sin, if so be that a man shall be duly contrite; and that all auricular and outward confession is superfluous, and not requisite or necessity to salvation.

"11. Item, Inferior curates have not their power of binding and loosing immediately from the pope or bishop, but immediately from Christ; and therefore neither can the pope nor bishop revoke to themselves such kind of power, when they see time and place, at their lust and pleasure.

"12. Item, That the pope cannot grant such kind of annual and yearly pardons, because there shall not be so many years to the day of judgment, as are in the pope's bulls or pardons contained. Whereby it followeth that the pardons are not of such like value as they speak of, and are praised to be.

"13. Item, It is not in the pope's power to grant unto any person penitent, forgiveness of the punishment of the fault.

"14. Item, That person that giveth his alms to any, which in his judgment is not in necessity, doth sin in so giving it.

"15. Item, That it stands not in the power of any prelate, of what religion soever he be of, privately to give letters for the benefit of his order; neither doth such benefit granted profit them, to the salvation of their soul, to whom they be granted.

"16. Item, That the same William, unmindful of his own salvation, hath many and oftentimes come into a certain desert wood, called Dervallwood, of your diocese, and there in a certain chapel not hallowed, or rather in a profane cottage, hath, in contempt of the keys, presumed of his own rashness to celebrate, nay, rather to profanate.

"17. Item, The same William hath also presumed to do such things in a certain profane chapel, being situate in the park of Newton, nigh to the town of Leintwarden, of the same your diocese.

"Upon Friday, being the last of the month of June, in the year above said, about six of the clock, in the said parish church of Bodenham, hath the said William Swinderby personally appeared before us. And he, willing to satisfy the term to him assigned, as before specified, hath read out word by word before all the multitude of faithful Christian people, many answers made and placed by the same William (in a certain paper-book of the sheet folded into four parts) to the said articles, and the same answers for sufficient hath he already to us exhibited, avouching them to be agreeable to the law of Christ. Which thing being done, the same William (without any more with him) did depart from our presence, because that we, at the instance of certain noble personages, had promised to the same William free access, that is, to wit, on that day for the exhibiting of those answers, and also free departing without prefixing of any term, or without citation, or else any other offence or harm in body or in goods."

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

William Swinderby keeping from the bishop was cited as followeth.

"John, by God's permission bishop of Hereford: to his dear sons, our dean of Leamster, to the parsons of Croft, Almady, and Whitney, and also to the vicars of Kingston, Ladersley, Wiggemore, and Monmouth Clifford, and of St. John's altar in our cathedral church of Hereford, and to the rest of the deans, parsons, vicars, chaplains, parish priests, and to other, whosoever in any place are appointed through our city and diocese of Hereford, sendeth greeting, grace, and benediction.

"We bid and command, charging you straitly, in the virtue of holy obedience, that you cite or cause to be cited peremptorily, and under the pain of excommunication, William Swinderby, pretending himself to be a priest; that he appear before us, or our commissaries, the twentieth day of this present month of July, at North Lodebury, within our diocese, with the continuance of the days following in other places also to be assigned unto him if it be expedient, till such things as have been and shall be laid against him he fully discussed, to answer more at large to certain positions and articles, touching the catholic faith, and the holy mother church's determination, that have been exhibited and ministered unto the said William; and to see and hear also many things that have openly, in judgment before us and a great number of faithful Christians, by him been even in writing confessed, to be condemned as heretical, false, schismatical, and erroneous; and to see and hear positions and articles denied by the said William, to be proved by faithful witnesses, and other lawful trials against the said William; and to receive for his false, heretical, erroneous, and schismatical doctrine, that justice shall appoint, or else to show causes why the premises should not be done.

"And if the said William lieth privily, or else cannot be so cited in his proper person, we will that in your churches, when most people shall then come together to Divine service, you openly, with a loud voice, and that may be understood, cause the said William, peremptorily to be cited unto the premises, certifying the same William, that whether he shall appear the day and place appointed or no, we notwithstanding will proceed unto the premises against the said William, according to the canonical decrees by form of law, in the absence or contumacy of the said William notwithstanding. We will, moreover, if the said William shall appear at the said day and place, as is aforesaid, before us, friendly hear him, and honestly and favourably, as far as we may with God's leave, deal with him; granting free licence to come and to go for his natural liberty without any hurt either in body or goods. And see that you fully certify us of the things that you or any of you shall do about the execution of this our commandment, and that by your letters patent signed with your seal authentical; giving also faithfully to the said William, or to his lawful proctor, if he require it, a copy of this our present commandment.

"Given at our house of Whitborne, under our seal, the fifth day of the month of July, in the year of our Lord 1391."

First sitting against William Swinderby.

"On Thursday, the twentieth of July, in the year of the Lord aforesaid, we, in the parish church of North Lodebury aforesaid, about six of the clock, sitting in judgment, after that it was reported unto us how the aforesaid William was personally taken and lawfully cited, caused the same William then and there openly in judgment to be called out, to do, hear, and receive such things, whereto he was afore cited, and to do otherwise that which justice should persuade. And the said William appeared

neither by himself, nor by proctor; but only by a servant, whose name we know not, he sent a certain schedule of paper, made like an indenture, unto us, to excuse him. After which schedule seen, read, and with right deliberation weighed, and in any wise notwithstanding, we adjudged the said William, after he was often called, and long, even to the due hour, tarried for, and by no means appearing, worthily obstinate; and for his obstinacy, and for his stubbornness, we assigned unto him the 29th day of July, in the church of Ponsley, to appear before us with the aforesaid safeguard, to answer more fully to such articles, and otherwise to hear, receive, and do as before is noted."

Second sitting.

"Upon Saturday, being the twenty-nine of July, and in the year of our Lord aforesaid, we, John, by God's permission the fore-remembered bishop, in the church of Pontesbury, of our diocese, at six of the clock, or thereabout, sitting in judgment, made the said William of Swinderby to be openly called, that, as was to him appointed and assigned, he should appear before us, to answer to the aforesaid articles more fully, and to declare the said articles as the darkness of his answers did worthily require. And because the said William, being called, and for a due time looked for, did make no means to appear, we pronounced him to be obstinate, and for his obstinateness (to overcome his malice, and of our exceeding favour) thought good to appoint, and did appoint the eighth of August, then next following, at Cleobury Mortemere of the same our diocese, unto the said William for the same thing."

Third sitting.

"Upon Tuesday, the eighth of August, the year aforesaid, I, John, by God's permission bishop of Hereford aforesaid, in the church of Cleobury Mortemere, about six of the clock, sitting in judgment, caused the aforesaid William Swinderby to be called many times openly, to do and receive about the premises, according to the appointment of the same day, that justice should advise; which William did not appear at all. Whereupon, we, after that the said William was called, and often proclaimed, and long looked for, but appeared not at all, did judge him worthily (as of right appertained) obstinate; and, for his obstinateness, assigned him the sixteenth day of the same month of August next following, in the parish church of Whitborne, of the same our diocese, to bring forth, or to see brought forth, all laws, muniments, and other kinds of proofs, and to see all witnesses brought forth, admitted and sworn, by whom and which things we intend to prove the aforesaid articles, or, at leastwise, some of the same."

Fourth sitting.

"Upon Wednesday, the sixteenth day of the month of August, the year aforesaid, we, John, the bishop, in the parish church of Whitborne aforesaid of our diocese, sitting in judgment, caused the said William Swinderby oftentimes to be called, who, as is aforesaid, appeared not all; whom, after that he was so called, proclaimed, and long looked for, and yet by no means appeared, we pronounced to be obstinate. We received also, by certain faithful Christians, and zealous men for the catholic faith of our diocese, a certain process made and had at another time against the same William, before the reverend father in God and lord, Lord John, by the grace of God, bishop of Lincoln, confirmed by the hanging on of the seal of the same reverend father, the lord bishop of Lincoln. The tenor whereof, word for word, is contained before. And these faithful Christians, moreover, against the obstinateness of the said William Swinderby, brought forth discreet men, Master William Leviet,

parson of the parish church of Kyversly, and also Edmund Waterdon, parish chaplain of the chapel of N., and Roger Newton, and Hugh Sheppert, laymen of the diocese of Lincoln, asking instantly that they might be received for witnesses, to prove some of the aforesaid articles, whom, against the obstinateness of the said William Swinderby, we thought good to receive, and did receive, and their oaths on the holy Gospels of God, being laid hands on corporally in our hand; and did diligently examine them in proper person severally in form of law; whose sayings and depositions are afterward brought in, and at the instance of the same faithful Christians, we assigned the second day of September then next following to the said William Swinderby, to say and allege against the said process, witnesses, and their sayings, in the said church of Whitborne; decreeing that a copy should be made for him of these things that were brought forth, and of the depositions of the witnesses. * * * [Here we fail in our copy, till the register come to our hands again.]

by the doore, but wendeth upon another halfe, he is a night theefe and a day theefe. And there he telleth, how he that flyeth from the flock, is not the sheepeheard, but an hired man, and it pertaineth not to him of the sheep.

"* To the second conclusion that he saien is error or heresie, that toucheth taking away of the temporalities and of lordships of priests that beene evill livers.

"I say, me seemeth that the conclusion is true, and is this; that it were needfull and leefull to secular lords by way of charity, and by power given to them of God, in default of prelates that amend nought by Gods law: cursed curates that openly misuse the goods of the holy church, that ben poore mens goods: and customably ayens the law of God, (the which poore men lords ben holden to maintaine and defend) to take away and to draw from such curates poore mens goods in help of the poore, and their owne wilfull offrings, and their bodily almsdeeds of worldly goods, and give them to such as duly serven God in the church, and ben ready in upbearing of the charge that prelats shoulde do, and done it not. And as anences taking away of temporalities, I say thus, that it is leefull to kings, to princes, to dukes, and to lords of the world to take away from popes, from cardinals, from bishops, prelates, and possessioners in the church, their temporalities and their almes that they have given them upon condition, that they shoulde serve God the better: when they verily seene that their giving and taking ben contrary to the law of God, contrary to Christs living, and his apostles; and namely in that they taken upon them that they shoulde be next followers of Christ and his apostles, in poorenesse and meekenesse, to be secular lords against the teaching of Christ and of Saint Peter. Truly me seemeth that all Christen men, and namely priests shoulde take keepe, that their doing were according with the law of God, either the old law, either the new. The priests of the old law weren forbidden to have lordships among their brethren; for God said, that he would be their part and their heritage. And Christ that was the highest Priest of the New Testament forsooke worldly lordship, and was here in forme of a servant, and forbad his priests such lordships, and said, the kings of the heathen beare dominion and rule, &c. But you shall not doe so. And as Saint Peter saith, Not bearing rule and dominion of the clergie, &c. So it seemeth me, that it is against both lawes of God, that they have such lordships, and that their title to such lordships is not ful good: and so it seemeth me that if they have beene thereto of evill living, it is no great perill to take away from them such lordships, but rather meedfull, if the taking away were in charity, and not for singular covetousnesse ne wrath. And I suppose that if friers that beene bounden to their founders to live in povertie, would break their rule and take worldly lordships; might not men lawfully take from them such lordships, and make them to live in

povertie as their rule would? And forsooth it seemeth me, that priests oughten also well to keepe Christs rule, as friers owen to keep the rule of their founder. Jeremie witnesseth how God commended Rechabs children for that they would not breake their faders bidding in drinking of wine. And yet Jeremy proffered them wine to drink. And so I trow, that God would commend his priests, if they woulden forsake worldly lordships, and holden them apayed with lifelot, and with clothing, and busie them fast about their heritage of heaven. And God saith, You shall have no inheritance in that land, nor have no part amongst them: I will be your part and inheritance amongst the children of Israel, &c. Deut. xviii. The priests and Levites, and all that be of the same tribe, shall have no part nor inheritance with the rest of Israel; because they shall eate the sacrifices of the Lord and his oblations, and they shall take nothing for the possession of their brethren. The Lord himself is their possessions, as he spake unto them. And the 14. chapter of Luke; Even so every one of you, which forsaketh not all that he possesseth, cannot be my disciple. And Jerome in his 14. Epistle hath the like words. And Bernard in his 20. booke to Eugenius the Pope. And also Hugo in his book De Sacramentis, the second part of his second book the 7. chapter. And also in the 12. q. first chapter, *Duo sunt*, and in the chapter *Clericus*. And again, Bernard in Sermone de Apostolis, upon this place; Behold we leave all, &c. Chrysostome upon the Gospel of S. Matth. &c.

"* The third conclusion toucheth the matter of preaching of priests, withouten leave of bishops, and is this; that such true priests may counsell sinfull men, that shewen to them their sins, after the wit and cunning that God hath given, to turne hem from sin to vertuous life.

"As touching preaching of the gospell, I say that no bishop oweth to let a true priest, that God hath giffen grace, wit, and cunning to doe that office. For both priests and deacons that God hath ordained deacons or priests bene holden, by power given to them of God, to preach to the people the gospell; and namely, and sovereignly popes, bishops, prelates, and curates; for this is due to the people and the parishioners, to have it and ask it. And hereto seemeth me, that Christ said generally to his disciples, Goe and preach the gospell to all creatures, as well as he said, Goe and baptize all nations; and also as well longeth preaching to priests without leave of a bishop, as doth baptizing; and then why may he not preach Gods word withouten a bishops leave? And sithen Christ bad his priests preach, who should forbidden them preach? The apostles were forbidden of a bishop at Jerusalem to speak more of the name of Jesus; but Peter said, Whether it be iust in the sight of God to hear and obey you before the Lord, be your selves judges. A bishop may not let a priest of giving bodily almes in his diocess: much more may he not let the doing of spirituall almes in his diocess by Gods law. A priest may say his mattens withouten the bishops leave; for the pope, that is above the bishop, hath charged priests therewith: and me thinketh that Christs bidding should be all so much of charge as the popes. Matt. x. Goe you forth and preach. And againe, Behold I send you, &c. Mark xvi. Go you into all the world, &c. and Luke x. And Beda upon this place; The harvest is great. Also Isidorus. And Gregorius in the canon distinct. 43. and Chrysostome in his 34. distinction. And Augustine in the 34. distinction. And Gregory in his pastorall. And Chrysostome in his 31. Homily. And Augustine in the prologue of his Sermons. And Hierome in the 95. distinct. And Augustine upon this place, A certaine traveller.

"* The fourth conclusion toucheth the sacrament of the altar, and is this: That wholly I beleve that the sacrament of the altar, made by vertue of heavenly words, is bread and Christs body; so as Christ himselfe saith in the gospell, and as Saint Paul

saith, and as doctors in the common law have determined: to this sentence John vi., Moses hath not given you bread from heaven, but my Father will give you bread from heaven. He is the true bread that came downe from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. My Father giveth unto you bread indeed: the very true bread of God is that, which came downe from heaven and giveth life unto the world. I am the bread of life: the bread which I will give is my flesh. And in the canon of the masse, the holy bread of life. And Corinthians the tenth chapter and first Epistle; The bread which we break, is it not the communicating of the body of the Lord? Let a man prove himselfe, and so eat of that bread, &c. And canon *De consecratione*, distinction 2. under the authority of Hilarius the pope; *Corpus Christi quod sumitur de altari*, &c. And Augustine in the foresaid distinction: That which is seene is bread, &c. That which faith requireth, is bread and is the body of Christ. And in the foresaid distinction, cap. *Omnia quaecunque*, &c. By these two sentences it is manifestly declared, that that bread and this be not two, but one bread and one flesh. Note the words for that he saith the bread and flesh. And the author, *De divinis officiis*, and also Augustine in his booke *De remediis pœnitentiæ*: Why preparest thou thy teeth, &c.? And Ambrose, *De Sacramentis, de consecratione*, dist. 2. *Revera mirabile est*, &c. This meate which you receive, and this bread of one which descended from heaven, doth minister the substance of eternall life, and whosoever shall eate the same shall not dye everlastingly, and is the body of Christ. Note how hee saith and is the body of Christ.

"* The fifth article telleth of forgiveness of sinnes, and is this: That very contrition withouten charitie and grace, doe away all sinnes before done of that man that is verily contrite; and all true confession made by mouth outwardly to a wise priest and a good, profiteth much to a man, and it is need-full and helping, that men shew their life to such, trusting fully to Gods mercy, that he forgiveth the sinne.

"And hereto I say, that there been two remissions of sinnes; one that belongeth only to God; and that remission is the cleansing of the soul from sinn: and the other remission, a certifying that one man certifieth another that his sinnes beene forgiven of God, if he be sorry with all his heart for them; and is in full will to leave them for ever: and this maner of forgiveness longeth to priests. Of the first maner of forgiveness David saith; And I said I will confesse my unrighteousnesse unto the Lord, and thou forgavest me my misdeed. And Zecharie saith, And thou O child shalt be called the prophet of the highest, &c. To give knowledge of salvation unto his people for the remission of their sins, by the bowels of Gods mercy. And John Baptist, Behold the Lambe of God that taketh away the sinnes of the world. And Saint John the evangelist saith in his Epistle; If we confesse our sinns, he is faithfull and iust to forgive us our sinnes, and cleanse us from all our iniquitie. And it followeth: If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ, and he it is that is the propitiation for our sins. And of the other remission of sins Christ speaketh in the gospel, and saith; Whose sins ye forgive they shall bee forgiven. And mans forgiveness availeth little, but if God forgive our sins through his grace.

"* The sixth conclusion toucheth indulgences and pardons that the pope granteth in his buls; and men callen it an absolution, *A pœna et culpa*.

"Of this maner of speech I cannot find in the gospell, ne in no place of holy writ, ne I have not read that Christ used this maner of remission, ne none of his apostles. But as mee seemeth, if the pope had such a power, sithen the paines after a mans death beene much greater than any bodily paines of the world; me thinketh he should of charite keepe men out of such paines, and then men needed not to find so

many vicious priests, after their life, to bring their soules out of purgatorie. Another thing me thinketh, that sith the popes power ne may not keepe us in this world from bodily paines, as from cold, from hunger, from dread, from sorrow and other such paines, how should his power helpe us from spirituall paines, when wee beene dead? But for that no man commeth after his death to tell us the sooth of what paine they been, men mow tell thereof what him list. Saint John saith in his Apocalypse, that he saw under the altar the soules of them which were slaine for the word of God, and for the testimonie which they had. And they did cry with a loud voice saying; How long Lord holy and true, dost not thou revenge our blood of them which dwell on the earth? And white stoles were given to every of them to rest a while, til the number of their fellow servants and brethren should be fulfilled, which also remained to be slaine as they were, &c. Here seemeth it, that these soules were not assoiled *a pœna*, that is, from paine; for their desire is not fulfilled. And they were bidden abide awhile, and that is a paine. And if martyrs were not assoiled from paine, it is hard for any man to say, that he assoileth other men *a pœna*. Also good mens souls have not but spirituall blisse, and they want bodily blisse, untill their resurrection in the day of doome. And after they desiren to have that blisse, and abiden it, and that is paine to them. And I cannot see that the pope hath power to bring him from this paine. But if any man can shew me, that he hath such a power granted in the troth of holy writ, I will gladly leefen it."

"* The seventh point speaketh of the pope, and is this; Sith it is only due to God, as I have said before, to geve and to grant plenary remission from paine, and from blame: that whatsoever he be, pope or other, that presumptuously mistaketh upon him the power that is onely due to God, in that, inasmuch as in him is, he maketh himselfe even with Christ, and blasphemeth God, as Lucifer did, when he said, I will ascend, and be like the highest, &c.

"For that I say, if the pope hold men of armes in maintaining of his temporall lordship, to venge him on them that gilten and offenden him, and geveth remission to fight and to sley them, that contrarien him, as men sayden he did by the bishop of Norwich, not putting his sword in his sheath, as God commanded to Peter; he is antichrist. For hee doth the contrary of the commandement of Jesus Christ, that had Peter forgiven to his brother seventy sith seven sith. Well I finde in the Gospell, that when Christ sent his disciples to Samaria, the Samaritans would not receive them. And some of them bidden Christ, that hee should make fire come downe from heaven, to destroy the citie. And he blamed them and said; Ye know not of what spirit ye are; the Son of man is not come downe to destroy, but to save the lives and soules of men, &c. If Christ then come to save men, and not to slea them: who that doth the revers hereof, is against Christ, and then he is antichrist. Christ bad Peter put his sword into his sheath and said; All which take the sword, shall perish with the sword. And I cannot find that Peter drew out his sword after that time, but suffered as Christ said; When thou shalt waxe old, another shall gird thee, and lead thee whither thou wilt not. And therefore said Peter, Christ suffered for us, leaving us example that we should follow his steps. And Paul saith, Not defending your selves but give place to anger, leave revenging to me, and I shall reward them, &c. And therefore it seemeth to me, that it is much against Christs lore, that his vicar should bee a fighter; sithen that hee mote bee a shepherd, that should goe before his sheepe, and let them come after him, and not with swords to drive them away from him. For as Christ saith, A good shepherd shal putt his life for his sheepe. And zif all that Christ had two swords, when that he was taken of the Jewes, he said himselfe, it was for that the Scriptures

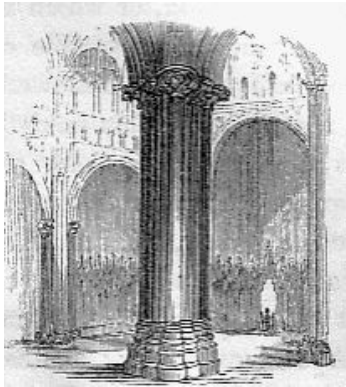
moten zif be fulfilled, He was reputed among the wicked: and not to figure two swords, that men sayen the pope hath to governe with the church. And when I see such doings of the pope, and many other that accorden not with Christs lore, ne his living; and when I read divers Scriptures of holy writ, I am foule astonied whether they shoulde be understood of him, or of any other. And I pray you for Gods love tell mee the sooth. Christ saith; Many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall seduce many, &c. Christ (I wot well) is as much to say, as hee that is anointed, and two anointings there weren in the law, one of kings, another of priests. And Christ was both king and priest, and so the pope saith that he is. And if all that have been emperours of Rome, and other heathen kings have beene antichrists, they come not in Christs name. But who so commeth in Christs name, and faineth himselfe Christs friend, and he be privily his enemy, he may lightly beguile many. Saint Paul saith, before there commeth a defection first and the sonne of perdition shall be revealed, which is the adversary, and is extolled above all that is named God, or which is worshipped; so that he shall sit in the temple of God, shewing himselfe as God. And it followeth in the same place; And now ye know what holdeth till he be revealed in his time, for he worketh already the mystery of iniquity. Onely he that holdeth, let him hold till he come abroad, and then that wicked one shall be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the spirit of his mouth, &c. And Saint John saith in the Apocalyps; I saw another beast ascending out of the earth, and two homes like to the lamb. He spake like the dragon, and had the power of the first beast. Many such authorities astonieth me oft sithes; and therefore I pray you, for the love of God, to tell me what they meane."

The sentence.

"The which schedule aforementioned, with the contents thereof, diligently of us perused, we considering that diseases, which he not easily cured with gentle remedy, must have harder plaisters; considering moreover these his articles with his answers to the same, and to other articles, also lastly against him produced; first mature deliberation had before upon the whole matter, with the aforesaid masters and doctors, as well secular as regular, to a great number, observing in the same all things to be observed in this behalf, have given sentence against the said William in form as followeth.

"The name of Christ being invocated, we John, by the permission of God bishop of Hereford, sitting in tribunal seat, having God before our eyes, weighing and considering the articles by the aforesaid faithful Christians put up against the said Swinderby, pretending himself to be priest, with his answers upon the same *actis et actitatis* before us, in the cause of heretical perversity, with mature deliberation had before, in this behalf, with masters and doctors of divinity, and also of other faculties, with their counsel and consent, do pronounce, decree, and declare the said William to have been and to be a heretic, schismatic, and a false informer of the people, and such as is to be avoided of faithful Christians. Wherefore we admonish, under the pain of the law, all and singular Christians, of what sex, state, condition, or pre-eminence soever, that neither they nor any of them within our diocese, or any other, do believe, receive, defend, or favour the said William, till he shall deserve fully to be reconciled to the bosom again of holy church."

The appeal of William Swinderby, from this sentence of the bishop prefixed, unto the king and his council.



n the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Amen. I, William Swinderby, priest, knowledge openly to all men, that I was before the bishop of Hereford the third day of October, and before many other good clerkes, to answer to certaine conclusions of the faith that I was accused of. And mine answer was this, that if the bishop or any man couthe shew me by Gods law, that my conclusions or my answers were error or heresie, I would be amended, and openly revoke them before all the people. * * * knowes in any of my conclusions, but sayden singly with sword, that there was errors in them, and bidden me subject me

to the bishop, and put me into his grace, and revoke mine error, and shewed me nought by Gods law ne reason, ne proved which they weren. And for I would not knowledge mee guilty, so as I knew no error in them, of which I should be guilty, therefore the bishops sate in doome in mine absence, and deemed me an heretike, a schismatike, and a teacher of errors, and denounced me accursed, that I come not to correction of the church. And therefore for this unrightfull judgement, I appeale to the kings justices for many other causes.

"One cause is, for the kings court in such matter is above the bishops court; for after that the bishop has accursed, he may no feare by his law, but then mote he sech succour of the kings law, and by a writ of *Significavit* put a man in prison.

"The second cause is, for in cause of heresie there liggeth judgement of death, and that dome may not be given without the kings justices. For the bishop will say; It is not lawfull for us to kill any man; as they saiden to Pilate, when Christ should be doomed. And for I thinke that no justice will give sodainly an untrue doome, as the bishop did, and therefore openly I appeale to hem, and send my conclusions to the knights of the parliament, to be shewed to the lords, and to be taken to the justices, to be well aviset or that they geven doome.

"The third cause is, for it was a false doome; for no man is an heretike, but he that masterfully defends his error or heresie, and stiffely maintaines it. And mine answer has benee alway conditionall, as the people openly knowes, for ever I say, and yet say, and alway will; that if they cannen shew me by Gods law that I have erret, I will gladly bene amendet, and revoke mine errors, and so I am no heretike, ne nevermore in Gods grace will ben in no wise.

"The fourth cause is, for the bishops law, that they doome men by, is full of errors and heresies, contrary to the truth of Christs law of the gspell.

"For there as Christs law bids us love our enemies, the popes law gives us leave to hate them and to sley them, and grants men pardon to werren against heathen men, and sley hem. And there as Christs law teach us to be merciful, the bishops law teaches to be wretchfull. For death is the greatest wretch that men mowen done to him that guiltie is.

"Where as Christs law teaches us, to blessen him that diseazen us, and to pray for him; the popes law teacheth us to curse them, and in their great sentence that they

usen, they presume to damne hem to hell that they cursen. And this is a foule heresie of blasphemie: there as Christs law bids us be patient, the popes law iustifies two swords, wherewith he smiteth the sheep of the church. And he has made lords and knights to swear to defend him and his church.

"There as Christs law forbiddeth us lechery, the popes law iustifies the abominable whoredome of common women; and the bishops in some place have a great tribute or rent of whoredome.

"There as Christs law bids to minister spirituall things freely to the people; the pope with his law sels for money, after the quantitie of the gift, pardons, orders, blessing, and sacraments, and prayers, and benefices, and preaching to the people, as it is knowne amongst them.

"There as Christs law teaches peace; the pope with his law assoiles men for money to gader the people, priests, and other to fight for his cause.

"There as Christs law forbids swearing; the popes law iustifieth swearing, and compels men thereto.

"Whereas Christs law teacheth his priest to bee poore; the pope with his law iustifies and maintains priests to be lords.

"And yet the fifth cause is, for the popes law, that bishops demen men by is the same unrightfull law that Christ was demet by of the bishops, with the Scribes and with the Pharisees. For right as at that time they gaven more credens to the two false witnesses that witnessed against Christ, than they deden to all the people that witnesseden to his true preaching and his miracles: so the bishops of the popes law geven more leven by their law to two heretiks and apostates, or two comen women that woulden witnesseden agains a man in the cause of heresie, than two thousands of people that were true and good. And for the pope is this antichrist, and his law contrary to Christ his law, fully I forsake this law, and so I reed all Christen men. For thus by another point of this law they mighten conquer much of this world: for whan they can by this law present a man an heretike, his goods shulen bee forfet from him & from his heires, & so might they lightly have two or three false witnesses to record an heresie againe what true man so hem liked. Herefore mee thinks, that whatsoever that I am a Christen man, I may lawfully appeale from a false doome of the law, to bee righteously demet by the trouth of Gods law. And if this appeale will not serve, I appeale openly to my Lord Jesus Christ that shall deme all the world, for hee, I wot well, will not spare for no man to deeme a trouth. And therefore I pray God almighty with David in the Sauter book, O God, give thy iudgement to the king, & thy iustice to the kings son, to iudge thy people in iustice, & thy poore ones in iudgement, &c."

A letter sent to the nobles and burgesses of the parliament, by Master William Swinderby.

"Jesus that art both God and man, helpe thy people that loven thy law, and make knowne through thy grace thy teaching to all Christen men. Deare sirs, so as wee seene by many tokens that this world drawes to an end, and all that ever have beene brought forth of Adams kind into this world shulen come togeder at domesday, rich and poore, schone to geve accompt and receive after his deeds, joy or paynen for evermore: therefore make wee our werkes good, ye while that God of mercy abides, and bee yee stable and true to God, and yee shulen see his helpe about you.

Constantes estote et videbitis auxilium Domini super vos. This land is full of ghostly cowards; in ghostly battell few dare stand. But Christ that comforter of all that falleth

(to that his heart brast for our love) against the fiend the doughty duke comforteth us thus; *Estote fortes in bello*, &c. Bee yee strong in battell, hee sayes, and fight yee with the old adder. *State in fide, viriliter agite*, &c. Wake yee and pray yee, stonde yee in beleewe, doe yee manly and bee yee comforted, and let all your things bee done with charity. For, Saint Paul that saw the mysteries of God in heaven, bids thus in his Epistle, Awake yee that beene righteous men, bee yee stable and unmoveable: awake yee quickly and sleepe nought, and stonde now strongly for Gods law. For Saint Iohn in the Apocalyps sayes, Blessed bee hee that awakes; for nought to sleepers but to wakers God has behite the crowne of life. For the houre is now, as S. Paul saith to us, from sleepe for to rise, for bee that earely awakes to mee, he shall finde mee, saith Christ himselfe. This waking ghostly is good living out of sinne: this sleepe betokens that which cowardeth a mans heart from ghostly comfort, and to stand in the same through a deceivable sleepe is this that lets a man of the blisse of heaven: the fiend makes men bold in sinne, and ferd to doe worship to God: death is a likening to a theefe that privily steales upon a man that now is rich, and full of wele, anon bee makes him a needy wretch? therefore said God by Saint Iohn in the Apocalyps in this wise, Bee thou waking, for if thou wake nought, I shall come to thee as a theefe, and thou shalt not wit what houre. And if the husbandman (sayes Christ) wist what houre the theefe should come, hee would wake and suffer him not to undermine his house. Saint Peter therefore warneth and saith: Wake and bee yee ware, suffer yee no man (hee saies) as a theefe, but willingly for Gods love; for it is time, as Peter sayes, that doome begin from the house of God. Yee beene the body of Christ, sayes Paul, that needs must suffer with the head, or else your bodies beene but dead and departed from Christ that is the head. And therefore curset bee hee, sayes Paul, that loves not Iesus Christ. And who it is that loves him, Christ himselfe tels in the Gospell: Hee that has my hests, and keepest them, hee it is that loves mee. Cursed hee bee therefore, sayes Paul, that doth Christs workes deceivably. Bee yee not therefore, sayes Paul, ashamed of the true wisse of Iesus Christ; for Christ our God sayes in his Gospell, Hee that shames mee and my words, him shall mans Sonne ashamed, when hee shall come for to set in the siege of his Majestie. And each man, hee sayes, that knowes mee and my words before men in this sinfull generation and whorish, mans Sonne shall knowledge him before my Father, sayes Christ himselfe, when hee shall come with his angels in the glory of his Father. Sith yee therefore beene Christen men, that is to say, Christs men, shew in deed that yee beene such as yee daren shew you the Kings men; for hit had beene, as Peter saies, better not to have knowne the way of truth, than after the knowing thereof to bee converted backward therefrom. We knowen Christ, that is tought; wee sain all through our believe, if wee turne from him for dred, truly wee deny the troth. And therefore sith our time is short, how short no man knowes but God, do we the good that wee may to Gods worship, when wee have time. Bee true, saies God, to the death, and you shall have the crowne of life. And thinke on Iudas Macchabeus, that was Gods true knight, that comforted heartily Gods true people, to bee the followers of his law. And geve ye, he said, your lives for the testament of your fathers. And ye shulen win, hee said, great joy, and a name for evermore. Was not Abraham, he said, in temptation founden true, and was arected unto him evermore to righteousness: Ioseph in time of his anguish he kept truly Gods hest, hee was made by Gods providence lord of Egypt, for his troth. Phinees our fadure loving, he saith, the zeale of God, tooke the testament of everlasting priesthood. Iosue, for hee fulfilllet the word of God, was doomes man in Israel. Caleph, that witnessed in the church, he took therefore the heritage, he saith: David in his mercy hee gat the siege of the kingdome in worlds: Heli, for that hee loved the

zeale of Gods law, was taken up into heaven. Ananie, Azarie, and Misael, hee sayes, weren delivered thore through true beliefe out of the hoat flame of fire. True Daniel in his simplenesse was deliveret from the lions mouth. Bethinke ye therefore, he sayes, by generation and generation, and thou shalt never find that hee failed that man that truely trusted in him. And therefore dread you nought, hee sayes, of the words of a sinfull man; his glory is, he sayes, but wormes and tords: hee is to day, he saith, ymade hie, to morrow, he says, he is not founden; for he is turned, he sayes, into his earth again, and the minde of him is perished. Sonnes therefore, he sayes, be yee comfortet, and die manly in the law: for when yee han done that that God commands you to doe, ye shulen be glorious in him. And King David sayes also on this wise in the Psalter booke: Blesset be they (Lord) that kepen thy law, in worlds of worlds they shall praise thee. And in Levit. sayes God thus, Gif that ye wenden in mine hests, and kepen my commandements, and done hem, I shall bring forth their fruit, and trees shall be fulfilled with apples. And ye shall eate your bread in fulnesse, ye shoulde dwell in your land without drede; I shall give peace in your costes, yee shall sleepe and no man shall feare you. Evill beasts I shall done away from you, and sword shall not passe your termes, yee shulne pursue your enemies, and they shall fall before you; fifty of yours shulne pursue an hundreth of heren, an hundret of yours, a thousand of theirs: your enemies, hee saith, sholen fall through sword, and your sute: I shall, hee sayes, behold you and make you to wax, and ye shall bee multipliet: And I shall strength with you my covenant, yee shall eat the aldest, and the new shulne come in thereon; and yee shulne cast forth the old: I shall dwell in the midst of you. And I shall wend amongs you, and I shall bee your God, and yee shulne bee my people. If that yee heare mee not, ne done nought all my hests, but despisen my law and my doomes, and that yee done not those things that of mee bene ordenet, and broken my commandements and my covenants; I shall doe these things to you. I shall visit you surely in nene and brenning, which shall dimme your eghenen, and shall waste your lives about nought. Yee shulne sow your sede, for hit shall bee devouret of enemies, I shall put my face against you, and yee shall fall before your enemies. And yee shullen bee underlings to them that han hatet you, yee shall flee, no man pursuing. And if yee will not be buxome to mee, I shall adde thereunto thornes and sevenfold blame. And I shall all to-brast the hardnesse of you, I shall geve the heaven above you as iron, and the earth as brasse. About nought shall your labour bee, for the earth shall bring you forth no fruite, ne tree shall geve none apples unto you. If that ye wenden against mee, and will not heare mee, I shall adde hereto sevenfold wounds for your sinnes. I shall send amongst you beasts of the field that shall devoure you and your beasts, I shall bring you into a field, and wayes shulne be desart. And if that yee will not receive lore, but wenden against me, I will also wenden against you, and I shall smite you seven sithes for your sinnes. I shall leade in upon you sword, venger of my covenant; and upon the fleen into cities I shall send pestilence in the midst of you. So that tenne women shall bake their bread in one furnace, and yeld them againe by weight, and yee shall eat, and bee not fillet. If that yee heare mee not by these things, but wenden against mee, I shall wend in against you in a contrary woodnesse, and blame you with seven plagues for your sinnes, so that they shulne eate the flesh of your sonnes and of your daughters. And insomuch my soule shall loth you, that I shall bring your cities into wilderness, and your sanctuaries I shall make desart, ne I shall not over that receive sweet odor of your mouth. And I shall disperkle your land, and enemies shullen marvell thereon, when they shulen inhabit it, I shall disperkle you among heathen, and draw my sword after you. These vengeance and many moe God said should fall on them that breake his bidding, and despiseth his lawes, and his

doomes. Then sith Christ become man, and bought us with his heart blood, and has shewed us so great love, and given us an easie law, of the best that ever might bee made, and to bring us to the joy of heaven, and wee despise it and loven it nought: what vengeance will bee taken hereon, so long as hee has suffered us, and so mercifully abidden, when hee shall come that righteous judge in the cloudes to deme this world? Therefore turne wee us to him, and leave sinne that hee hates, and over all things maintaine his law that hee confirmed with his death. For other lawes, that men had made, should be demed at that day by the just law of Christ, and the maker that them made; and then we wonne that long life and that joy that Paul speaketh of, that eye ne see not, ne eare heard not, ne into mans heart ascended not, the blisse and joy that God hath ordained to them that loven him and his lawes.

"Deare worshipfull sirs in this world, I beseech you for Christs love, as yee that I trow loven Gods law and trouth (that in these dayes is greatly borne abacke) that they wollen vouchsafe these things that I send you written to Gods worship, to let them bee shewed in the parliament, as your wits can best conceive, to most worship to our God, and to sheaving of the trouth and amending of holy church. My conclusions, and mine appeale, and other true matters of Gods law (gif any man can finde therein error, falsenesse, or default, provet by the law of Christ clearely to Christen mens knowledge) I shall revoke my wrong conceit, and by Gods law bee amendet; ever ready to hold with Gods law openly and privily with Gods grace, and nothing to hold, teach, or maintaine that is contrary to his law."

Of this process, answers, and condemnation of this worthy priest, and true servant of Christ, William Swinderby, you have heard. What afterward became upon him I have not certainly to say or affirm; whether he in prison died, or whether he escaped their hands, or whether he was burned, there is no certain relation made. This remaineth out of doubt, that during the life of King Richard the Second, no great harm was done unto him. Which was to the year 1401, at what time King Richard being wrongfully deposed, Henry the Fourth invaded the kingdom of England. About the beginning of whose reign we read of a certain parliament holden at London, mentioned also of Thomas, Walden, as is above specified, in which parliament it was decreed, that whosoever showed themselves to be favourers of Wickliff, who at that time were called Lollards, they should be apprehended, and if so be they did obstinately persevere in that doctrine, they should be delivered over unto the bishop of the diocese, and from him should be committed unto the secular magistrate. This law, saith the story, brought a certain priest unto punishment the same year, who was burned in Smithfield in the presence of a great number. This we have drawn out of a piece of an old story; and it is most certain that there such a priest was burned for the affirmation of the true faith; but it doth not appear by the story what the priest's name was. Notwithstanding by divers conjectures it appeareth unto me that his name was Swinderby, that was forced to recant before the bishop of Lincoln. Whereby what is to be conjectured by the premises let other men judge what they think, I have nothing hereof expressly to affirm. This is plain for all men to judge, which have here seen and read his story, that if he were burned, then the bishops, friars, and priests, which were the causes thereof, have a great thing to answer to the Lord, when he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

83. Walter Brute.

After the story of William Swinderby, I thought good and convenient to adjoin the acts and doings of Walter Brute, his joint fellow and companion, being a layman, and learned; brought up, as it seemeth, in the university of Oxford, being there also graduate; the tractation of whose discourse, as it is something long, so therein may appear divers things worthy to be read and considered.

First, the mighty operation of God's Spirit in him, his ripe knowledge, modest simplicity, his valiant constancy, his learned tractations and manifold conflicts sustained against God's enemies. On the contrary part, in his adversaries may appear, might against right; man's authority against plain verity; against which they, having nothing directly to answer, proceed in condemnation, against whom they are able to bring forth no confutation. The chiefest occasion, that seemed to stir up the heart and zeal of this Walter against the pope, was the impudent pardons and indulgences of Pope Urban, granted to Henry Spencer, bishop of Norwich, to fight against Pope Clement, mentioned before. Secondly, the wrongful condemnation of the articles and conclusions of William Swinderby; the whole order whereof, in the process here following, more plainly may appear.

The process had by John, bishop of Hereford, against Walter Brute, a layman and learned, of the diocese of Hereford, touching the cause of heresy, as they called it; set forward by the way of the bishop's office, &c., at the instruction of certain faithful Christians, as he termed them, but indeed cruel and false promoters.

"In the name of God, Amen: To all manner of faithful Christian people, that shall see and hear this our present process, John, by the sufferance of God, bishop of Hereford, sendeth greeting and continual charity, in the Lord. We would that you all should know, that of late, by many faithful Christian people, and specially zealous followers of the catholic faith, it was lamentably done us to understand, by way of complaint, that a certain son of ours going out of kind, named Walter Brute, a lay person, learned, of our diocese, hath, under a cloaked show of holiness, damnably seduced the people; and, setting behind him the fear of God, doth seduce them as much as he can, from day to day; informing and teaching openly and privily as well the nobles as the commons, in certain conclusions heretical, schismatical, and erroneous, and also heretofore condemned: and they have also probably exhibited against the same Walter, articles underwritten, in manner and form as followeth.

"Reverend father and lord! we, the faithful people of Christ, and zealous lovers of the catholic faith, and also your humble and devout children, do minister and exhibit to your reverend fatherhood the articles underwritten, touching the catholic faith, contrary and against malicious persons, and detractors of the same faith, and the determinations of holy mother church; and, namely, against the child of Belial, one Walter Brute, a false teacher and seducer amongst the people: humbly beseeching, that you would vouchsafe to have regard to the correction of the enormities underwritten, according unto the canonical constitutions, even as to your office pastoral doth lie and belong.

"Imprimis, We do give and exhibit, and intend to prove, that the same Walter Brute, being unmindful of his salvation, hath been, by many and divers faithful Christian people, sundry times accused of the cursedness of heresy, as by the swift

report, slander, and rumour of the people, proceeding before the most reverend father and lord, Lord William, archbishop of Canterbury, and also before the reverend father and lord, Lord John, late bishop of Hereford, your predecessor, and now bishop of St. Asaph, hath been testified; and also hath been many and divers times cited to answer unto articles by him against the catholic faith avouched, and openly and publicly taught. But he, in this matter of heretical cursedness, (so grievously and shamefully spoken of,) hath never regarded to purge his innocency; but lurkingly, and running into corners, hath many and sundry years laboured to advance things erroneous and schismatical, and also heresies, and to imprint them in the hearts of faithful people.

"Item, The aforesaid Walter Brute hath openly, publicly, and notoriously avouched, and commonly said and taught, and stubbornly affirmed, that every Christian man, yea, and woman, being without sin, may make the body of Christ so well as the priest.

"Item, The same Walter hath notoriously, openly, and publicly avouched and taught, that in the sacrament of the altar there is not the very body, but a sign and a memorial only.

"Item, The aforesaid Walter hath said commonly, and avouched and also hath laboured to inform men and companies, that no man is bound to give tithes nor oblations; and if any man will needs give, he may give his tithes and oblations to whom he will, excluding thereby their curates.

"Item, That such as do preach and prefer croised matters and pardons (granted by the high bishop to them that helped the purpose of the reverend father Lord Henry, by the grace of God bishop of Norwich, when he took his journey upon him to fight for the holy father the pope) are schismatics and heretics, and that the pope cannot grant such manner of pardons.

"Item, The said Walter hath oftentimes said, and commonly avouched, that the pope is antichrist, and a seducer of the people, and utterly against the law and life of Christ.

"Item, Whereas of late your reverence did (at the instance of faithful Christian people) proceed in form of law against William Swinderby; and that the said William Swinderby had unto the said articles objected against him given up his answers in writing, containing in them errors, schisms, and heresies, even as you, with the mature counsel of masters and doctors in divinity and other faculties, have determined and given sentence, and have pronounced the same William Swinderby to be a heretic and a schismatic, and an erroneous teacher of the people: nevertheless the forenamed Walter hath openly, publicly, and notoriously said, avouched, and stubbornly affirmed, that the said William's answers (whereof notice hath been given before) are good, righteous, and not able to be convinced, in that they contain none error; and that your sentence before said, given against the said William, is evil, false, and unjust; and that your assistants have wickedly, naughtily, perversely, and unjustly condemned the answers aforesaid.

"Now thereupon immediately those same faithful Christian people have instantly required, that we would vouchsafe that other articles given by the same faithful Christians against the said William Swinderby, together with the writings and answers of the same William thereunto, should be admitted against Walter Brute, mentioned of in this matter of cursed heresy; of which articles and answers the tenors do follow in these words:

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

"Imprimis, That one William Swinderby, pretending himself priest, was of certain articles and conclusions, erroneous, false, schismatical, and heretical, by him preached, at divers places and times, before a great multitude of faithful Christians, judicially convinced; and the same articles and conclusions did he (enforced by necessity of law) revoke and abjure, some as heretical, and other as erroneous and false; and for such did he avouch them for ever afterward, promising so to take and believe them, and that from thenceforth he would openly or privily preach, teach, or affirm none of them; nor that he should make sermon or preach within your diocese without licence demanded and obtained: and in case he should to the contrary presume, by preaching or avouching, that then he should be subject to the severity of the canons, even as he judicially sware accordingly as the law enforced. Also the conclusions abjured by the said William do follow, and are such:

"1. Imprimis, That men by the rule of charity may demand debts, but by no means imprison any man for debts: and that the party so imprisoning a body, is excommunicated.

"2. Item, That if the parishioners shall know their curate to be incontinent and naughty, they ought to withdraw from him their tithes, &c.

"3. Item, That tithes are mere alms, and in case that the curates shall be ill, that they may be lawfully bestowed upon others by the temporal owners, &c.

"4. Item, That an evil curate to excommunicate any under his jurisdiction for withholding of tithes, is nought else, &c.

"5. Item, That no man may excommunicate any body, except that first he know him excommunicate of God: neither do those that communicate with such a one incur the sentence of excommunication by any manner of means.

"6. Item, That every priest may absolve every sinner, being contrite; and is bound to preach the gospel unto the people, notwithstanding the prohibition of the bishops.

"7. Item, That a priest, receiving by bargain any thing of yearly annuity, is in so doing a schismatic, and excommunicate.

"8. Item, He doth assuredly believe (as he avoucheth) that every priest, being in deadly sin, if he dispose himself to make the body of Christ, doth rather commit idolatry, than make Christ's body.

"9. Item, That no priest doth enter into any house, but to handle ill the wife, the daughter, or the maid, and therefore, &c.

"10. Item, That the child is not rightly baptized, if the priest, &c.

"11. Item, That no manner of person, if he live against God's law, &c.

"12. Item, The same William, against the things premised, and his revocation and abjuration, (not to his heart converting, but from evil to worse perverting,) did turn aside into our diocese, where, running to and fro in divers places, he hath of his own rash head presumed to preach, or rather to pervert, &c.

"13. Item, After that we had heard divers rumours, and slanders of very many, we directed divers monitions and commandments comminatory, to be sent abroad by our commissaries to sundry places of our diocese; that no person, of what estate,

degree, or condition soever he were, should presume to preach or to teach the sacred Scripture to the people, in places holy or profane, within our diocese.

"14. Item, That the same sort of monitions, inhibitions, and precepts, confirmed by our seal, came to the true and undoubted knowledge of the said William.

"15. Item, The same William, unmindful of his own salvation, hath since, and against those monitions, inhibitions, and precepts, and (that which is more abominable to be spoken) in contempt of the high bishop's dignity, and to the slander and offence of many people, presumed, in divers places of our said diocese, to preach, or rather to pervert, and to teach the forementioned and other heretical, erroneous, and schismatical devices.

"16. Item, The same William, in preaching to the people on Monday, to wit, the first of August, in the year of our Lord 1390, in the church of Whitney in our diocese, held and affirmed, that no prelate of the world, of what state, pre-eminence, or degree soever he were, having cure of souls and being in deadly sin, &c.

"17. Item, The same William in many places said and affirmed in the presence of many faithful Christian people, after the sacramental words uttered by the priest, having the intent to consecrate, there is not made the very body of Christ in the sacrament of the Eucharist.

"18. Item, That accidents cannot be in the sacrament of the altar without their subject; and that there remaineth material bread *concomitanter*, with the body of Christ in the sacrament.

"19. Item, That a priest being in deadly sin cannot, by the power of the sacramental words, make the body of Christ.

"20. Item, That all priests are of like power in all points, notwithstanding that some of them are in this world of higher dignity, degree, or preeminence.

"21. Item, That contrition only putteth away sin if a man shall be duly contrite; and that all vocal confession and exercise is superfluous, and not requisite of necessity to salvation.

"22. That inferior curates have not their power of binding and loosing immediatly from the pope or bishop, but immediatly of Christ, &c.

"23. Item, That the pope cannot grant such a kind of annual pardons, because there shall not be so many years to the day of judgment as are contained in the pope's bulls or pardons. Whereby it followeth, that pardons are not so much worth as they are noised and praised to be.

"24. Item, That it is not in the pope's power to grant to any penitent body forgiveness of the pain, or of the trespass.

"25. Item, That one giving his alms to any body, which as he judgeth hath no need thereof, doth sin in so giving, &c.

"26. Item, That it stands not in the power of any prelate, of what private religion soever he be, to give by letters benefits of their order; neither do such kind of benefits given profit them to whom they be given for the salvation of souls.

"27. Item, That the same William, unmindful of his own salvation, hath many times and often resorted to a certain desert wood called Derwalswood, of our diocese,

and there in a certain unhallowed chapel (nay, a profane cottage) hath presumed of his own proper rashness, to celebrate, &c.

"28. Item, The same William hath also presumed to do the like things in a certain profane chapel, situate in the park of Newton, nigh to the town of Leyntwardyn, in the same our diocese.

"Which things being done, the same faithful Christian people, and specially Sir Walter Pride, the penitentiary of our cathedral church of Hereford, personally appearing before us, sitting in our judgment-seat in the parish church of Whitborne of our diocese, brought forth and exhibited two public instruments against the same Walter Brute, in the case of cursed heresy aforesaid, of which instruments here followeth the tenors and articles in this sort.

"In the name of God, Amen. Be it plainly known to all persons by this present public instrument, that in the year from the incarnation, after the course and computation of the church of England, 1391, the indiction fifteen of the pontifical office of our most holy father and lord in Christ, Lord Boniface the Ninth, by God's wisdom pope; the second year, the fifteenth day of the month of October, in the dwelling-house of the worshipful man, Master John Godemoston, canon of the cathedral church of Hereford, in the presence of me the public notary underwritten, and of witnesses subscribed; Walter Brute, a layman, learned, of Hereford diocese, personally appearing said, avouched, and stiffly maintained, that the said bishop of Hereford, and his assistants which were with him, the third day of the foresaid month of October, the year of our Lord aforesaid, in the church of Hereford, did naughtily, wickedly, perversely, and unjustly condemn the answers of Sir William Swinderby, chaplain, given by the same Sir William to the same lord bishop in writing, and also the articles ministered by the same Sir William.

"And furthermore he said, held, and avouched, that the same conclusions given by the same Sir William, even as they were given, are true and catholic.

"Item, as touching the matters objected against him by them that stood by, concerning the sacrament of the altar; he said, that after the sacramental words there doth remain very bread, and the substance thereof after the consecration of the body of Christ; and that there do not remain accidents without substance or subject after the consecration of the body of Christ. And as touching this matter, the doctors hold divers opinions.

"Furthermore, as concerning the pope, he said, held, and avouched, that he is the very antichrist; because that in life and manners he is contrary to the laws, doctrines, and deeds of Christ our Lord.

"All and every of these things were done, even as they be above-written and rehearsed, in the year of our Lord, pontifical office, month, day, and place aforesaid, at supper time of the day aforesaid; then and there being present the worshipful and discreet men, Sir Walter Ramsbury, chief chanter of the said cathedral church of Hereford, Roger Hoore, canon of the same church, Walter Wall, chaplain of the said church of Hereford, being a vicar of the choral, and certain other worthy witnesses of credit, that were specially called and desired to the premises.

"And I, Richard Lee, wheeler, clerk of Worcester, being a public notary, by the authority apostolic, was personally present at all and singular the premises, whilst that, as is before rehearsed, they were done and a doing in the year of our Lord 1391; pontifical office, month, day, place, and the hour aforesaid; and I did see, write, and

hear all and singular those things thus to be done, and have reduced them into this public manner and form; and, being desired truly to testify the premises, have sealed the said instrument made hereupon, with mine accustomed seal and name.

"In the name of God, Amen. Be it plainly known to all persons, by this present public instrument, that in the year from the incarnation of the Lord, after the course and computation of the Church of England, 1391, the indiction fifteen, in the third year of the pontifical office of the most holy father in Christ, and our lord, Lord Boniface, pope, by the providence of God, the Ninth, and in the nineteenth day of the month of January; Walter Brute, layman, of Hereford diocese, personally appearing before the reverend father in Christ and lord, Lord John, by God's grace bishop of Hereford, in the presence of me, being a public notary, and one of the witnesses underwritten, did say, hold, publish, and affirm, the conclusions hereafter written, that is to say, that Christian people are not bound to pay tithes, neither by the law of Moses nor by the law of Christ.

"Item, That it is not lawful for Christians, for any cause in any case, to swear by the Creator, neither by the creature.

"Item, He confesseth openly and of his own accord, that within the same month of January, he did eat, drink, and communicate with William Swinderby, not being ignorant of the sentence of the said reverend father, whereby the same William Swinderby was pronounced a heretic, schismatic, and a false seducer of the common people; which conclusions the same reverend father caused to be written, and in writing to be delivered to the same Walter; which when he had seen and read, he said also that he did maintain and justify them according to the laws aforesaid. These things were done in the chamber of the said bishop of Hereford, at his manor of Whitborne of the said diocese of Hereford; there being then present the same bishop abovesaid, Master Reynold, of Wolston, canon of Hereford; Sir Philip Dilesk, parson of the parish church of Blamurin; Thomas Guildefeld, parson of the church of Englishbyknore; John Cresset, parson of the church of Whitborne; and Thomas Wallewayne, household servant; for witnesses especially called and desired to the premises, of the diocese of Hereford and St. Asaph.

"And I, Benedict Come, clerk of the diocese of St. Asaph, public notary, by the apostolic authority of the diocese of St. Asaph, was personally present, together with the witnesses before named, at all and singular these and other things here premised, whilst they were so done and a doing; and did see, hear, and write those things so to be done, as is before mentioned; and did write the same, and reduce them into this public form, and with my wonted and accustomed seal and name have sealed it, being desired and required truly to testify the premises.

"At the last, the aforesaid Walter Brute did present and cause to be presented to us, at divers places and times, assigned by us to the same Walter, to answer to the former conclusions and articles, divers scrolls of paper, written with his own proper hand, for his answers to the same articles and conclusions above written; he partly appearing by his own self, before us sitting in our judgment-seat, and partly by his messengers, specially appointed to that purpose; of which scrolls, the tenors do follow in order, word by word, and be on this manner.

"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Ghost, Amen. I, Walter Brute, sinner, layman, husbandman, and a Christian, (having my offspring of the Britons, both by my father's and mother's side,) of the Britons have been accused

to the bishop of Hereford, that I did err in many matters concerning the catholic Christian faith, by whom I am required that I should write an answer in Latin to all those matters; whose desire I will satisfy to my power, protesting first of all, before God, and before all the world, that like as it is not my mind, through God's grace, to refuse the known truth, for any reward greater or smaller, yea, be it never so big, nor yet for the fear of any temporal punishment; even so it is not my mind to maintain any erroneous doctrine for any commodity's sake. And, if any man, of what state, sect, or condition soever he be, will show me that I err in my writings or sayings, by the authority of the sacred Scripture, or by probable reason grounded on the sacred Scripture, I will humbly and gladly receive his information. But as for the bare words of any teacher, (Christ only excepted,) I will not simply believe, except he shall be able to stablish them by the truth of experience, or of the Scripture; because that, in the holy apostles elected by Christ, there hath been found error by the testimony of the Holy Scripture, because that Paul himself doth confess that he rebuked Peter, for that he was worthy to be rebuked, Gal. ii. There have been errors found in the holy doctors that have been before us, as they themselves confess of themselves. And oftentimes it falleth out, that there is error found in the teachers in our age, who are of contrary opinions among themselves, and some of them do sometimes determine one thing for truth, and others do condemn the selfsame thing to be heresy and error. Which protestation premised, I will here place two suppositions or cases for a ground and a foundation of all things that I shall say, out of which I would gather two probable conclusions, stablished upon the same, and upon the sacred Scripture. By which conclusions, when they shall be declared after my manner and fashion, it shall plainly appear what my opinion and judgment is concerning all matters that I am accused of. But because I am ignorant and unlearned, I will get me under the mighty defences of the Lord: O Lord, I will remember thine only righteousness.

"God the Father Almighty, uncreate, the Maker of heaven and earth, hath sent his Son, that was everlastingly begotten, into this world, that he should be incarnated for the salvation and redemption of mankind, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, everlastingly proceeding from the Father and the Son, and was born of Mary the Virgin, to the end that we might be born anew. He suffered passion under Pontius Pilate for our sins, laying down his life for us, that we should lay down our life for our brethren. He was crucified, that we should be crucified to the world, and the world to us. He was dead, that he might redeem us from death, by purchasing for us forgiveness of sins. He was buried, that we, being buried together with him into death by baptism, and that we, being dead to sins, should live to righteousness. He descended into hell, thereby delivering man from thralldom, and from the bondage of the devil, and restoring him to his inheritance, which he lost by sin. The third day he rose from the dead, through the glory of his Father, that we also should walk in newness of life. He ascended up to the heavens, to which nobody hath ascended, saving he that descended from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. He sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, until his enemies be made his footstool. He being in very deed so much better than the angels, as he hath obtained by inheritance a more excellent name than they. From whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead, according to their works, because the Father hath given all judgment to the Son. In whose terrible judgment we shall rise again, and shall all of us stand before his judgment-seat, and receive joy, as well bodily as spiritually, for ever to endure, if we be of the sheep placed at the right hand; or else punishment both of body and soul, if we shall be found amongst goats, placed on the left hand, &c.

"Jesus Christ, the Son of God, very God and very man, a King for ever, by establishing an everlasting kingdom, breaking to powder all the kingdoms of the world, Dan. ii.; a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedek, whereby also he is able evermore to save such as by him come unto God, and always liveth to entreat for us, Heb. vii. He, offering one sacrifice for our sins, hath made perfect for ever by one oblation those that be sanctified, Heb. x. Being the wisdom that cannot be deceived, and the truth that cannot be uttered, he hath in this world taught the will of God his Father, which will he hath in work fulfilled, to the intent that he might faithfully instruct us; and hath given the law of charity to he of his faithful people observed; which he hath written in the hearts and minds of the faithful with the finger of God, where is the Spirit of God, searching the inward secrets of the Godhead. Wherefore his doctrine must be observed above all other doctrines, whether they be of angels or of men, because that he could not or would not err in his teaching. But in men's doctrine there chanceth oftentimes to be error, and therefore we must forsake their doctrines, if cloakedly or expressly they be repugnant to the doctrine of Christ. Men's doctrines being made for the people's profit, must be allowed and observed, so that they be grounded upon Christ's doctrine, or at least be not repugnant to his words.

"If the high bishop of Rome, calling himself the servant of the servants of God, and the chief vicar of Christ in this world, do make and maintain many laws contrary to the gospel of Jesus Christ, then is he of those that have come in Christ's name, saying, I am Christ, and have seduced many a one, by the testimony of our Saviour in Matt. xxiv., and the idol of desolation sitting in the temple of God, and taking away from him the continual sacrifice for a time, times, and half a time, which idol must be revealed to the Christian people, by the testimony of Daniel, whereof Christ speaketh in the Gospel; When ye shall see the abomination of desolation that was told of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, let him that readeth understand; he is the pestiferous mountain infecting the whole universal earth, as witnesseth Jeremiah, chap. li., and not the head of Christ's body. For the ancient person in years, and honourable in reverence, he is the head: and the prophet teaching lies is the tail, as Isaiah allegeth, chap. ix.; and he is that wicked and sinful captain of Israel, whose foreappointed day of iniquity is come in time of iniquity, who shall take away Cidarim, and take away the crown, Ezekiel, chap. xxi., to whom it was said, Forasmuch as thy heart was exalted, and didst say, I am a god, and sittest in the seat of god, in the heart of the sea, seeing thou art a man and not a god, and hast given thine heart, as if it were the heart of God; therefore, behold, I will bring upon thee the most strong and mighty strangers of the nations, and they shall draw their swords upon the beauty of thy wisdom, and shall defile the commandments, and kill thee, and pull thee out; and thou shalt die in the destruction of the slain. And it followeth, In the multitude of thine iniquities, and of the iniquities of thy merchandise, thou hast defiled thy sanctification. I will therefore bring forth a fire from the midst of the whole earth, and will make thee as ashes upon the earth. Thou art become nothing, and never shalt thou be any more, Ezekiel, chap. xxviii. Furthermore, he is the idle shepherd, forsaking his flock, having a sword on his arm, and another sword on his right eye, Zech. xi., and, sitting in the temple of God, doth advance himself above all that is called God, or whatsoever is worshipped, by the testimony of Paul to the Thessalonians, 2 Epist. chap. ii.: and in the defection or falling away shall the man of sin be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth. For every kingdom divided in itself shall be brought to desolation. He is also, besides, the beast ascending up out of the earth, having two horns like unto a lamb, but he speaketh like a dragon; and as the cruel beast ascending up out of the sea, whose

power shall continue forty and two months. He worketh the things that he hath given to the image of the beast. And he compelled small and great, rich and poor, free-men and bond-slaves, to worship the beast, and to take his mark in their forehead or their hands, Apoc. xiii. And thus, by the testimony of all these places, is he the chief antichrist upon the earth, and must be slain with the sword of God's word, and cast, with the dragon, the cruel beast, and the false prophet that hath seduced the earth, into the lake of fire and brimstone to be tormented world without end.

"If the city of Rome do allow his traditions, and do disallow Christ's holy commandments, and Christ's doctrine, that it may confirm his traditions, then is she Babylon the great, or the daughter of Babylon, and the great whore sitting upon many waters, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth are become drunken with the wine of her harlotry, lying open to lewdness, with whose spiritual whoredom, enchantments, witchcrafts, and Simon Magus merchandises, the whole round world is infected and seduced; saying in her heart, I sit as queen, and widow I am not, neither shall I see sorrow and mourning. Yet is she ignorant that within a little while shall come the day of her destruction and ruin by the testimony of the Apocalypse, chap. xvii., because that from the time that the continual sacrifice was taken away, and the abomination of desolation set up, there be passed twelve hundred and ninety days by the testimony of Daniel, chap. xii.; and the chronicles added do agree to the same. And the holy city also hath been trodden under foot of the heathen for forty-two months, and the woman was nourished up in the wilderness (unto which she fled for fear of the face of the serpent) during twelve hundred and sixty days, or else for a time, times, and half a time, which is all one. All these things be manifest by the testimony of the Apocalypse, and the chronicles thereto agreeing. And as concerning the fall of Babylon aforesaid, it is manifest in the Apocalypse, chap. xiv.; where it is said, In one day shall her plagues come, death, lamentation, and famine, and she shall be burned with fire. For, strong is the Lord, which shall judge her. And again, Babylon, that great city, is fallen, which hath made all nations to drink of the wine of her whoredom. And thirdly, One mighty angel took up a mill-stone, that was a very great one, and did cast it into the sea, saying, With such a violence as this is, shall that great city Babylon be overthrown, and shall no more be found. For her merchants were the princes of the earth, and with her witchcraft all nations have gone astray, and in her is there found the blood of the saints and prophets. And of her destruction speaketh Isaiah in chap. xiii.: And Babylon, that glorious city, being so noble amongst kingdoms in the pride of the Chaldeans, it shall be that, like as the Lord did overturn Sodom and Gomorrah upside down, it shall never more be inhabited, nor have the foundation laid in no age, from generation to generation. Jeremiah, chap. li., saith, Your mother that hath borne you is brought to very great confusion, and made even with the ground. And again, The Lord hath devised and done as he hath spoken against the inhabitants of Babylon, which dwell richly in their treasures upon many waters, thine end is come. And thirdly, Drought shall fall upon her waters, and they shall begin to be dry; for it is a land of graven images, and boasteth in her prodigious wonders: it shall never more be inhabited, neither be builded up in any age or generation. Verily even as God hath subverted Sodom and Gomorrah with their calves.

"Pardon me, I beseech you, though I be not plentiful in pleasant words; for if I should run after the course of this wicked world, and should please men, I should not be Christ's servant. And, because I am a poor man, and neither have nor can have notaries hired to testify of these my writings, I call upon Christ to be my witness,

which knoweth the inward secrets of my heart, that I am ready to declare the things that I have written after my fashion, to the profit of all Christian people, and to the hurt of no man living, and am ready to be reformed if any man will show me where I have erred; being ready also (miserable sinner though I be) to suffer for the confession of the name of Christ, and of his doctrine, as much as shall please him by his grace and love to assist me, a miserable sinner. In witness of all these things I have to this writing set the seal of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, which I beseech him to imprint upon my forehead, and to take from me all manner of mark of antichrist. Amen."

These two suppositions, as they are termed in the schools, written by Walter Brute, and exhibited unto the bishop, although they contained matter sufficient either to satisfy the bishop if he had been disposed to learn, or else to have provoked him to reply again, if his knowledge therein had been better than his; yet could they neither of them work effect in him. But he, receiving and perusing the same, when he neither could confute that which was said, neither would reply or answer by learning to that which was truth, finding other by-cavillations, said, That this his writing was too short and obscure; and therefore required him to write upon the same again more plainly and more at large. Whereupon the said Master Walter, satisfying the bishop's request, and ready to give to every one an account of his faith in a more ample tractation, reneweth his matter again before declared, writing to the bishop in words and form as followeth

"Reverend father, forasmuch as it seemeth to you that my motion in my two suppositions or cases, and in my two conclusions, is too short and somewhat dark, I will gladly now satisfy your desire, according to my small learning, by declaring the same conclusions; in opening whereof, it shall plainly appear, what I do judge in all matters that I am accused of to your reverence, desiring you, first of all, that your discretion would not believe that I do enterprise of any presumption to handle the secrets of the Scriptures, which the holy, and just, and wise doctors have left unexpounded. It is not unknown to many, that I am in all points far inferior to them, whose holiness of life and profoundness in knowledge is manifoldly always allowed. But as for mine ignorance and multitude of sins, they are to myself and others sufficiently known; wherefore I judge not myself worthy to unloose or to carry their shoes after them. Do you therefore no otherwise deem of me, than I do of mine own self. But if you shall find any goodness in my writings, ascribe it to God only, who, according to the multitude of his mercy, doth sometimes reveal those things to idiots and sinners, which are hidden from the holy and wise, according to this saying, I will praise and confess thee, O Father! for that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast disclosed them to the little ones; even so, O Father! because it hath thus pleased thee. And in another place: I am come to judgment into this world, that they which see not, may see, and that they which see, may be made blind. And Paul saith, That God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty; that no man shall boast in himself, but that all men should give the honour to God.

"It was commanded to Isaiah, bearing the type of Christ: Go, and say to this people, Hear ye with your hearing, and do not understand? Behold ye the vision, and yet know ye not the thing that ye see? Make blind the heart of this people, and make dull their ears, and shut their eyes, lest that perchance with their eyes they should see, and with their ears they should hear, and with their hearts they should understand, and be converted, and I should heal them. And I said, How long Lord? And he said, Until

that the cities be made desolate without inhabitants, and the house without any person within it. Also in Isaiah thus it is written: And the multitude of the nations, which shall fight against Ariel, and all persons that have warred, and besieged and prevailed against it, shall be as a dream that appeareth in the night, and as the hungry person dreameth that he eateth, but when he shall awake out of sleep, his soul is empty. And like as the hungry person dreameth that he eateth, and yet after that he shall awake he is still weary and thirsty, and his soul void of nourishment; even so shall it be with the multitude of all nations that have fought against the mount Zion. Be you amazed, and have great wonder; reel ye to and fro, and stagger ye; be ye drunken, and not with wine; stagger, but not through drunkenness; for the Lord hath mingled for you the spirit of drowsiness. He shall shut your eyes, he shall cover your prophets and princes that see visions. And a vision shall be to you, altogether, like the words of a sealed book, which when he shall give to one that is learned, he shall say, Read here, and he shall answer, I cannot, for it is sealed. And the book shall be given to one that is unlearned, and knoweth not his letters, and it shall be said unto him, Read; and he shall answer, I know not the letters, I am unlearned. Wherefore the Lord saith, Forasmuch as this people draweth nigh me with their mouths, and glorifieth me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, and they have rather feared the commandments of men, and have cleaved to their doctrines; behold, therefore, I will add besides, and bring such a muse and marvel upon this people which shall make men amazed with marvelling. For wisdom shall perish from their wise men, and the understanding of the prudent persons shall be hidden. And soon after it followeth in the same place; Yet a little while and Libanus shall be turned into Carmel, and Carmel counted for a copse or grove; and in the same day shall the deaf folks hear the word of this book, and the eyes of the blind (changed from darkness and blindness) shall see.

"Nebuchadnezzar inquiring of Daniel said, Thinkest thou that thou canst truly declare me the dream that I have seen, and the meaning thereof? And Daniel said, As for the mystery whereof the king doth ask, neither the wise men, magicians, soothsayers, nor enchanters can declare to the king: but there is a God in heaven, that discloseth mysteries, who will declare to thee (O King Nebuchadnezzar) what things shall come to pass in the last times of all. To me also is this sacrament or mystery disclosed, not for any wisdom that is in me more than in all men living, but to the end that the interpretation might be made manifest to the king, and that thou shouldst know the cogitations of thy mind.

"It was also said to Daniel, And thou, Daniel, shut up the words, seal up the book, until the time appointed. Verily many people shall pass over, and manifold knowledge shall there be. And Daniel said to the man that was clothed with linen garments, who stood upon the waters of the flood: How long will it be before the end shall come of these marvellous things? And I heard the man that was clothed in linen apparel, who stood upon the waters of the floods, when he had lifted up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and had sworn by him that liveth for evermore, that for a time, times, and half a time, and when the scattering abroad of the hand of the holy people shall be accomplished, then shall all these things be finished. And I heard and understood not, and I said, O my Lord! what shall be after these things? And he said, Go thy ways, Daniel, for this talk is shut and sealed up, until the time that is before appointed.

"All these things have I written, to show that he that hath the key of David, who openeth and no man shutteth, shutteth and no man openeth, doth (when and how long it pleaseth him) hide the mysteries, and the hid secrets of the Scriptures, from the

wise, prudent, and righteous; and otherwhiles at his pleasure revealeth the same to sinners, and lay persons, and simple souls, that he may have the honour and glory in all things. Wherefore, as I have before said, if you shall find any good thing in my writings, ascribe the same to God alone; if you shall find otherwise, think ye the same to be written of ignorance, and not of malice. And if any doubt of error be showed me in all my writings, I will humbly allow your information and fatherly correction.

"But why that such manner of matters are moved touching the disclosing of antichrist in this kingdom, more than in other kingdoms, and in this time also more than in time past; the answer, as concerning the time of the motion, is, that it is the last conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter in the sign of the Twins, which is the house of Mercury, being the signifier of the Christian people; which conjunction seemeth to me to betoken the second coming of Christ to reform his church, and to call men again, by the disclosing of antichrist, to the perfection of the gospel, from their heathenish rites, and ways of the Gentiles. By whom the holy city was trampled under foot for forty-two months, even as the conjunction of the said two planets, being enclosed in the side of the Virgin, which is also the house of Mercury, did betoken the first coming of Christ, for the salvation of all people that were perished of the house of Israel, whereby to call them, through the same coming, to the full perfection of the gospel. As touching this calling of the heathen speaketh Christ in the gospel, I have also other sheep that are not of this fold, and those must I bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one sheepfold, and one shepherd. For although the Gentiles be converted from the infidelity of their idolatry to the faith of Christ, yet are they not converted to the perfection of the law of Christ. And therefore did the apostles in the primitive church lay no burden upon the Gentiles, but that they should abstain from heinous things, as from things offered to idols, and from blood, and strangled, and fornication. As touching this second coming speaketh Isaiah; On that day the root of Jesse, which standeth for a sign or mark to the people, to him shall the heathen make their homage and supplication, and his sepulchre shall be glorious; and in that day shall it come to pass, that the Lord shall the second time put to his hand, to possess the remnant of his people, &c. And he shall lift up a token toward the nations, and he shall assemble the runnagate people of Israel that were fled, and those that were dispersed of Judah shall he gather together from the four quarters of the earth. And the zealous emulation of Ephraim shall be broken to pieces, and the enemies of Judah shall come to nought. Paul to the Thessalonians saith, We beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together before him, that you be not soon removed from your understanding, neither that you be put in fear, as though the day of the Lord were at hand, neither, as it were, by letter sent by us, neither by spirit, nor yet by talk. Let not anybody by any means bring you out of the way, or seduce you, for except there shall first come a departing, and that the man of sin, the son of perdition, shall be disclosed, which maketh resistance and is advanced above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he doth sit in the temple of God, showing himself as if he were God. Do you not remember, that whilst I was as yet with you, I told you of this? And now ye know what keepeth him back, that he may be uttered in his due time. For even now doth he work the mystery of iniquity; only that he which holdeth, may hold still until he be come to light; and then shall that wicked one be disclosed, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming; even him whose coming is, according to the working of Satan, in all power, with signs and lying wonders, and in all deceitful leading out of the truth towards those that do perish, because that they receive not heartily the love of truth, that they might be saved.

"Christ being demanded of the apostles what should be the token of his coming, and of the end of the world, said unto them, There shall come many in my name, saying, I am Christ, and they shall seduce many: also he telleth them of many other signs; of battles, famine, pestilence, and earthquakes. But the greatest sign of all he teacheth to be this, When you shall see, saith he, the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place, he that readeth let him understand. But Luke, in chap. xxi. of his Gospel, speaketh more plainly hereof; When you, therefore, shall see Jerusalem to be compassed about with an army, then know ye that the desolation thereof shall draw nigh. And afterward it followeth, And they shall fall by the face of the sword, and shall be led away captive to all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden underfoot of the heathen, until the times of the nations be fulfilled. Now in Daniel thus it is written of this matter: And after seventy-two weeks shall Christ be slain, neither shall that be his people, that will deny him. And as for the city and sanctuary, a people shall (with his captain that will come with them) destroy the said city and sanctuary, and his end shall be to be wasted utterly, till it be brought to nought; and, after the end of the war, shall come the desolation appointed. In one week shall he confirm the covenant to many, and within half a week shall the offering and sacrifice cease. And in the temple shall there be the abomination of desolation, and even unto the end shall the desolation continue. And elsewhere, in Daniel, thus it is written, From the time that the continual sacrifice shall be offered, and that the abomination shall be placed in desolation, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days.

"Now if any man will behold the Chronicles, he shall find that after the destruction of Jerusalem was accomplished, and after the strong hand of the holy people was fully dispersed, and after the placing of the abomination, that is to say, the idol of desolation of Jerusalem, within the holy place, where the temple of God was before, there had passed twelve hundred and ninety days, taking a day for a year, as commonly it is taken in the prophets; and the times of the heathen people are fulfilled, after whose rites and customs God suffered the holy city to be trampled under foot for forty and two months. For although the Christian church, which is the holy city, continued in the faith from the ascension of Christ, even till this time, yet hath it not observed and kept the perfection of the faith all this whole season; for soon after the departure of the apostles, the faith was kept with the observation of the rites of the Gentiles, and not of the rites of Moses's law, nor of the law of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Wherefore, seeing that this time of the error of the Gentiles is fulfilled, it is likely that Christ shall call the Gentiles from the rites of their Gentility to the perfection of the gospel, as he called the Jews from the law of Moses to the same perfection in his first coming; that there may be one sheepfold of the Jews and Gentiles, under one Shepherd. Seeing, therefore, that antichrist is known, which hath seduced the nations, then shall the elect, after that they have forsaken the errors of their Gentility, come, through the light of God's word, to the perfection of the gospel, and that same seducer shall be slain with the sword of God's word: so that by these things it doth partly appear unto me, why that at this time, rather than at any other time, this matter of antichrist is moved.

"And why that this motion is come to pass in this kingdom, rather than in other kingdoms, methinks there is good reason; because that no nation of the Gentiles was so soon converted unto Christ as were the Britons, the inhabitants of this kingdom. For to other places of the world there were sent preachers of the faith, who, by the working of miracles, and continual preaching of the word of God, and by grievous passion and death of the body, did convert the people of those places; but, in this

kingdom, in the time of Lucius, the king of the Britons, and of Eleutherius, bishop of the Romans, did Lucius hear from the Romans, who were infidels, (by the way of rumours and tales,) of the Christian faith which was preached at Rome. Who believed straightways, and sent to Rome, to Eleutherius, for men skilful to inform him more fully in the very faith itself; at whose coming he was joyful, and was baptized, with his whole kingdom. And, after the receiving of the faith, they never forsook it, neither for any manner false preaching of other, neither for any manner of torments, or yet assaults of the Painims, as in other kingdoms it hath come to pass. And thus it seemeth to me the Britons, amongst other nations, have been, as it were by the special election of God, called and converted to the faith of Christ.

"Of them, as me seemeth, did Isaiah prophesy, saying, For they did see, to whom there was nothing told of him, and they did behold, that had not heard of him. And again, Behold, thou shalt call a nation which thou knowest not; and nations that have not known thee shall run unto thee; for the Lord thy God, and the Holy One of Israel, shall glorify thee.

"Of this kingdom did St. John in the Apocalypse prophesy, (as me seemeth,) where he said, The dragon stood before the woman, which was about to be delivered of a child, to the intent that when she had brought it forth into the world, he might devour up her son: and she brought forth her child, which was a man-child, who should govern all nations with an iron rod. And the same son was taken up to God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared of God, that they may feed her one thousand two hundred and sixty days. And again, in the same chapter, after that the dragon saw that he was cast out upon the earth, he did persecute the woman, which brought forth the man-child. And there were given to the woman two wings of a great eagle, that she might flee into the wilderness into her place, where she is fostered up for a time, times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent did cast, as it were, a flood of water after the woman, to the intent that he might cause her to be drowned by the flood; and the earth, opening her mouth, did help the woman, and did swallow up the flood which the dragon did cast out of his mouth. Let us see how these sayings may be applied unto this kingdom rather than to other kingdoms. It is well known that this kingdom is a wilderness or a desert place, because that the philosophers and wise men did not pass upon it, but did leave it for a wilderness and desert, because it is placed without the climates.

"Unto this place fled the woman; that is to say, the church, (which by faith did spiritually bring forth Christ into the world,) where she was fed with the heavenly bread, the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ, for one thousand two hundred and sixty days, seeing that for so many days, taking a day for a year, the Britons continued in the faith of Christ; which thing cannot be found so of any Christian kingdom, but of this desert. And well it is said, that she flew to this place. For from the East came the faith into Britain, not by walking in journey, nor yet by sailing; for then should it have come by Rome, Italy, Almaine, or France, which cannot be found: and therefore she flew over those plates, and rested not in them, even as a bird, flying over a place, resteth not in the same, but resteth in this wilderness for a time, times, and half a time, that is, one thousand two hundred and sixty years, from the first coming of the faith into Britain until this present.

"In saying for a time, times, and half a time, there is a going forward from the greater to the less. The greatest time that we name, is one thousand years; there is a

time; and the next time, that is less, in the singular number, is one hundred years. In the plural number, "times" signify that there be more hundreds than one, at least two hundred years. Wherefore, if they be put under a certain number, it must needs be that they be two; but the same two cannot fitly be called some times, except they be hundreds. For in that, that there is a going down from the greater to the less, when it is said a time, times, and half a time, and that the number of one thousand is likely assigned for a time, it must needs follow, that times must be taken for hundreds, and half a time for sixty, because it is the greater half of a hundred years, though that fifty be the even half.

"And when that the serpent sent the water of the persecution after the woman to cause her to be drowned of the flood, then did the earth, that is to say, the stableness of faith, help the woman, by supping up the water of tribulation. For in the most cruel persecution of Dioclesian and Maximian against the Christians, when Christianity was almost every where rooted out, yet did they, in this kingdom, stand continually in the faith unmovable. And so, considering that the Britons were converted to the faith of Christ, as you would say, by an election and picking out amongst all the nations of the heathen, and that, after they had received the faith, they did never start back from the faith for no manner of tribulation; it is not to be marvelled, if, in their place, the calling of the Gentiles be made manifest, to the profiting of the gospel of Jesus Christ, by the revealing of antichrist.

"But besides this, me seemeth that Ezekiel doth specially speak of them, where he speaketh of the fall of the prince of Tyre, saying; Forasmuch as thy heart is lifted up, as if it were the heart of God, therefore, behold, I will bring upon thee some of the strongest of the heathen; and they shall draw their naked swords upon the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy comeliness, and they shall slay thee, and pull thee out; and thou shalt die in the slaughter of the slain persons, in the heart of the sea.

"This prince, who saith that he himself is God, and doth sit in God's chair in the heart of the sea, doth signify, as most likely it seemeth to me, that antichrist shall be destroyed by the most mighty persons of the Gentile folk, through the sword of the word of God; because that amongst the other Gentiles there have been none more strong than the Britons, either in their body or their faith; and, in their bodily wars, there have been none more mighty than they, for never in wars have they been vanquished, but by their own sedition or treason. But how many kingdoms have they conquered! Yea, and neither by the most mighty city of Rome could they be driven out of their kingdom, until that God sent upon them pestilence and famine; whereby they, being wasted, were compelled to leave their country; which thing I have not heard of any other people. Now, in the faith, have they been amongst all the people the strongest, as is before said, because that by no tribulation could they be compelled to forsake the faith.

"Wherefore of them this seemeth to me to be understood: Then I will bring upon thee some of the strongest people, and they shall draw their naked swords, &c. By these things it may plainly appear, why at this time (rather than in time past) this matter is stirred up; and why in this kingdom (rather than in other kingdoms) the calling of the Gentiles is treated of, to the verifying of the gospel, through the disclosing of antichrist.

"But forasmuch as many tales and fables are told of antichrist and his coming, and many things, which do rather seduce than instruct the hearers, are applied to him out of the Scriptures of the prophets, we will briefly write those things which are

spoken of him, and we will show that the same fable sprang from the error of people imagining, and from no truth of the Scriptures prophesying. Now then they do say, that antichrist shall be born in Babylon of the tribe of Dan, and conceived of the mixture of man and woman in sin, because that Christ was born of a virgin, and conceived of the Holy Ghost. They say, that he shall be an ill-favoured personage, because that it is written of Christ, Comely and beautiful is he, beyond the sons of men. They say, that he shall preach three years and a half where Christ preached; and that he shall circumcise himself, and say that he is Christ and the Messias, sent for the salvation of the Jews. And they say, that he shall three manner of ways seduce the people; by false miracles, gifts, and torments; so that whom he shall not be able to overcome with miracles nor with gifts, those shall he go about to overcome with divers kinds of torments; and those that he shall seduce, will he mark with his tokens in their forehead or hands. He shall sit in the temple of God, and cause himself to be worshipped as God. He shall fight (as they say) with the two witnesses of Christ, Enoch and Elijah, and shall kill them; and he himself shall finally be slain with lightning. To this imagined man of their own imagination, but of none of the prophets foreshowed, (at least in no such wise as this is,) do they apply the prophets, as this of Daniel: When that continual sacrifice shall be taken away, and abomination shall be placed to desolation: that is, (say they,) when the worshipping of God shall be taken away, and desolation (to wit, antichrist) shall abominably show forth himself to be worshipped, then shall there be one thousand two hundred and ninety days; that is to say, three years and a half: and this time do they say is the time, times, and half a time. And when it is said in Daniel, Blessed is he that looketh for and cometh to one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days; this, do they say, is thus to be understood: forty-five days of repentance to such as have worshipped antichrist; which forty-five days added to the one thousand two hundred and ninety, make one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days: which days they that shall reach unto shall be called blessed.

"They apply also to this antichrist, this saying of the Apocalypse, I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, who had power given him to make forty-two months: which months (as they say) do make three years and a half, in which antichrist shall reign. And many other things there are told, and applied unfitly to this imagined antichrist, that are not truly grounded upon the Scriptures.

Now let us show the errors of this fable. First of all, if there shall come such a one, (saying expressly that he is Christ,) what Christian would be seduced by him, though he should do never so many miracles? Neither shall he come after the manner of a seducer, which shall show himself an express adversary. Neither is it likely that the Jews can be seduced by such a one, seeing that Christ is not promised unto them of the stock of Dan by any of the prophets, but of the stock of Judah; nor yet is he promised to them to be a king warlike, but peaceable, taking war away, and not making war. For of Christ saith Isaiah, And in the last days shall there be prepared the mountain of the house of the Lord, in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and to it shall all the nations have great recourse, and many people shall go and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and he shall teach us his ways, and we shall walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall there go a law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, and he shall judge the nations, and reprove much people. And they shall turn their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into scythes. There shall not a nation lift up itself against another nation, nor yet shall they be any more exercised to war. And again, A

little babe is born to us, and a son is given to us, and his imperial kingdom upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called, The great Counsellor, The mighty God, The Father of the world to come, The Prince of Peace. His empire shall be multiplied, and there shall be no end of his peace. He shall sit upon the seat of David, and upon his kingdom; that he may make it stedfast and strong in judgment and in justice, from henceforth and for evermore. Zechariah doth say of Christ, Rejoice thou greatly, O thou daughter Zion! be thou exceeding merry, O daughter Jerusalem! Behold, thy king shall come a righteous person and a Saviour unto thee, and yet he a poor man, and getting up upon an ass, even upon a young colt of the she-ass. And I will scatter abroad the chariot of Ephraim, and the horse of Jerusalem; and the bow of war shall be dispersed, and he shall speak peace to the nations, and his power shall be from the sea to the sea, and from the flood unto the borders of the earth.

"By which things it is manifest, that the wise Jews knew well enough Christ to be promised to them of the stock of Judah, and not of the stock of Dan; and that he was given all to peace, and not to war: therefore it is not likely that they can be seduced by such a one. But if there should have been, in time to come, some such singular antichrist, then would Christ (seeing he loved his) have said somewhat unto them of him. Now, of one singularly doth he not speak, but of many, saying, Many shall come in my name, and say, I am Christ; and they shall seduce many persons. But now let us see how the prophecies in Daniel, and in the Apocalypse, aforesaid, be falsely and erroneously applied to the same imagined antichrist. For in Daniel, chap. ix., thus it is written: And after seventy-two weeks shall Christ be slain, and they which will deny him shall not be his people. And the city and sanctuary shall a people, with their captain that shall come with them, destroy; whose end shall be utter desolation, and after the end of the war a determined destruction. Now he shall in one week confirm his covenant towards many, and in the half week shall the offering and sacrifice cease; and in the temple shall there be an abomination of desolation; and even to the fulfilling up of all, and to the end shall the desolation continue. It is plain and manifest that this prophecy is now fulfilled. For the people of Rome, with their captain, destroyed Jerusalem even to the ground, and the people of the Jews were slain and scattered. And the abomination, that is, the idol of desolation, was placed of Adrian, in the last destruction, in Jerusalem, in the holy place, that is to say, in a place of the temple. And from that time hitherto have passed near about twelve hundred and ninety days, taking a day for a year, as Daniel takes it in his prophecies, and other prophets likewise. For Daniel, speaking of sixty-two weeks, doth not speak of the weeks of days, but of years. So, therefore, when he saith, From the time that the continual sacrifice was taken away, &c., twelve hundred and ninety days must be taken for so many years, from the time of the desolation of Jerusalem, even unto the revealing of antichrist; and not for three years and a half, which, they say, antichrist shall reign. And again, whereas Daniel said, How long till the end of these marvellous matters? It was answered him, For a time, and times, and half a time. Behold also, how unfitly they did assign this time, by three years and a half, which they say antichrist shall reign. For when it is said a time, times, and half a time; there is a going downward from the greater to the less, from the whole to the part, because it is from a time to half a time. If, therefore, there be a going downward from the whole to the part, by the midst, (which is greater than the whole itself,) the going downward is not meet nor agreeing. And this is done when it is said, that a time, times, and half a time, is a year, two years, and half a year. Wherefore more fitly it is said, that a time, times, and half a time, doth signify twelve hundred and ninety years, as is before said in the

chapter preceding. Thus therefore is the prophecy of Daniel falsely applied to that imagined antichrist.

"Likewise is the process of the Apocalypse applied to the same imagined antichrist too much erroneously. Because that the same cruel beast which came up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, to whom there was power given over every tribe, people, and tongue; and the power given for the space of forty-two months: this beast doth note the Roman emperors, which most cruelly did persecute the people of God, as well Christians as Jews. For when the condemnation of the great whore sitting upon the many waters was showed to John, he saw the same woman sitting upon the purple-coloured beast, full of the names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns; and he saw a woman being drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus. And the angel, expounding and telling him the mystery of the woman and the beast that carried her, said, That seven heads are seven hills, and are seven kings: five are fallen; one is, the other is not yet come: and when he shall come, he must reign a short time. And the ten horns which thou sawest, are ten kings, who have not yet taken their kingdom, shall receive their power as it were in one hour under the beast. And, finally, he saith, The woman whom thou sawest is the great city, which hath the kingdom over the kings of the earth. And it is manifest that the city of Rome, at the time of this prophecy, had the kingdom over the kings of the earth. And this city was borne up and upholden by her cruel and beastly emperors; who, by their cruelty and beastliness, did subdue unto themselves, in a manner, all the kingdoms of the world; of zeal to have lordship over others, and not virtuously to govern the people that were their subjects, seeing that they themselves did lack all virtue, and drew back others from the faith, and from virtue.

"Wherefore that cruel beast coming up out of the sea, doth rightly note the Roman emperors, who had power over every language, people, and country. And the power of the beast was for forty-two months, because that from the first emperor of Rome, that is to say, Julius Cæsar, unto the end of Frederic, the last emperor of Rome, there were forty-two months, taking a month for thirty days, as the months of the Hebrews and Grecians are, and taking a day always for a year, as commonly it is taken in the prophets. By which things it may plainly appear how unfitly this prophecy is applied to that imagined antichrist; and the forty-two months taken for three years and a half, which they say he shall reign in, against the saying of the prophets, because that days are taken for years. As in the 2nd of the Apocalypse, They shall be troubled ten days; which do note the most cruel persecution of Dioclesian against the Christians, that endured ten years. And in another place of the Apocalypse it is written of the smoke coming up out of the bottomless pit: out of which pit there came forth grasshoppers into the earth, and to them was power given, as scorpions have power, to vex and trouble men five months. Now, it is manifest, that from the beginning of the Friars Minors and Preachers, to the time that Armachanus began to disclose and uncover their hypocrisy, and their false foundation of valiant begging under the poverty of Christ, were five months, taking a month for thirty days, and a day for a year: and to Ezekiel were days given for years. Wherefore it is an unfit thing to assign the forty-two months, being appointed to the power of the beast, unto three years and a half, for the reign of that fantastical and imagined antichrist; especially seeing that they do apply to his reign the twelve hundred and ninety days in Daniel, which make forty-two months, and in the Apocalypse they assign him forty-two months. It is plain that the psaltery and the harp agree not. And, therefore, seeing that it is sufficiently showed that the same fabling tale of that imagined antichrist to come,

is a fable and erroneous; let us go forward to declare whether antichrist be already come, and yet is he hid from many, and must be opened and disclosed within a little while, according to the truth of the Holy Scripture, for the salvation of the faithful.

"And because that in the first conclusion of mine answer I have conditionally put it, Who is that antichrist lying privy in the hid Scriptures of the prophets? I will pass on to the declaration of that conclusion, bringing to light those things which lay hid in darkness, because nothing is hid which shall not be disclosed, and nothing covered which shall not be known. And therefore the thing which was said in the darkness, let us say in the light; and the thing that we have heard in the ear, let us preach upon the house-tops. I, therefore, as I have before said, so say, that if the high bishop of Rome, calling himself the servant of God, and the chief vicar of Christ in this world, do make and justify many laws contrary to the gospel of Jesus Christ, then is he the chief of many, which, coming in the name of Christ, have said, I am Christ; who have seduced many: which is the first part of the first conclusion, and is manifest; for Christ is called of the Hebrews the very same that we call anointed; and amongst them there was a double sort of legal anointing by the law, the one of kings, and the other of priests; and as well were the kings, as the priests, called in the law Christs. The kings, as in the Psalm, The kings of the earth stood up together, and the princes assembled themselves in one against the Lord, and against his Christ or Anointed. And in the Books of the Kings, very often are the kings called Christs; and our Saviour was Christ, or anointed King, because he was a King for evermore upon the throne of David, as the Scriptures do very oftentimes witness. The priests also were called anointed, as where it is written, Do not ye touch my Christs, that is, mine anointed ones, and be not ye spiteful against my prophets. And so was our Saviour Christ a Priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedec.

Seeing then that the bishops of Rome do say that they are the high priests, they say also therein that they are kings, because they say that they have the spiritual sword pertaining to their priesthood, and the corporal sword which agreeth for a king's state. So is it plain, that really and in very deed, they say that they are Christs, albeit that expressly they be not called Christs. Now, that they come in the name of Christ is manifest, because they say that they are his principal vicars in this world, ordained of Christ specially for the government of the Christian church. Therefore, seeing they say that really and in very deed they are Christs, and the chief friends of Christ; if they make and justify many laws contrary to the gospel of Jesus Christ, then is it plain that they themselves in earth are the principal antichrists, because there is no worse plague and pestilence than a familiar enemy. And if in secret they be against Christ, and yet in open appearance they say that they are his friends, they are so much the more meet to seduce and deceive the Christian people; because that a manifest enemy shall have much ado to deceive a man, because men trust him not; but a privy enemy, pretending, outward friendship, may easily seduce, yea, those that be wise.

"But that this matter may the more fully be known, let us see what is the law and doctrine of Christ, that ought to be observed of all faithful people; which being known, it shall be an easy thing to see, if the bishop of Rome do make or maintain any laws contrary to the law of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

"I say then, that the law of Christ is charity, which is the perfect love of God and of Christ. This thing is plain and manifest. For Christ being demanded of a certain doctor of the law, What is the greatest commandment in the law? answered: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy

mind: that is the principal and greatest commandment. And as for the second, it is like unto this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thine own self. On these two commandments the whole law and prophets depend. And in another place Christ saith, All manner of things, therefore, that you would that men should do to you, the same also do ye unto them, for this is the law and the prophets. And in John xiii. Christ saith, And now do I say unto you, I give you a new commandment, that you should love each other; as I loved you, in like manner that you also should love one another. In this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you shall have love one towards another. And John xv., This is my commandment, that you love together as I have loved you. Greater love than this hath nobody, that a man should give his life for his friends. The apostle Peter saith, in his First Epistle, chap. iv., Above all things having continually charity one towards another; for charity covereth the multitude of sins. Be ye harbourers, and entertain ye one another without grudging: every one as he hath received grace, so let him bestow it upon another man, as the good stewards of the manifold graces of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the word of God. If any man do aught for another, let it be done with singleness and unfeigned verity, ministered of God to usward, that in all things God may be honoured through Jesus Christ our Lord. James, in his Epistle, chap. ii.: If ye perform the royal law accordingly to the Scriptures, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, ye do well; but if ye be partial in receiving and preferring men's personages, ye work wickedness, being blamed of the law as transgressors. And again, So speak ye, and so do ye, as ye should now begin to be judged by the law of liberty. What shall it avail, my brethren, if a man say he have faith and have no works? Never shall the faith be able to save him. For if a brother or sister be naked, and have need of daily food, and some of you say to them, Go ye in peace, be ye made warm and satisfied; and if ye shall not give those things that are necessary for the body, what shall it avail? Even so faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself.

"John, in his First Epistle, chap. iii., This is the tidings which you have heard from the beginning, that you should love one another. And again, We know that we are translated from death to life, if we love the brethren: he that loveth not, abideth in death. And again, Herein do we know the love of God, because that he hath laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our life for the brethren. He that shall have the substance of this world, and shall see his brother have need, and shall shut up his bowels from him, how abideth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word nor tongue, but in deed and truth. And again, 4th chapter: Most dearly beloved, let us love together. For love is of God; he that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love. In this thing hath the love of God appeared in us, that God hath sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we should live by him. Herein is love; not that we have loved God, but that he hath first loved us, and hath sent his Son an atonement for our sins. Most dearly beloved, if God have loved us, we so ought to love together. No man hath seen God at any time; if we love together, God abideth in us, and his love is perfect in us. And again, Let us love God, for he hath first loved us. If a man shall say, I love God, and do hate his brother, he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother whom he seeth, how can he love God whom he seeth not? And this commandment have we of God, that whoso loveth God, should love his brother also. Paul the apostle, in his Epistle to the Romans, the 13th chapter: Owe ye nothing to nobody, saving that you should love together, for he that loveth his brother hath fulfilled the law. For thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not murder, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods;

and if there be any other commandment, it is plentifully fulfilled in this word, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Wherefore the fulfilling of the law is love.

"Paul to the Corinthians, the 13th chapter, saith, If I should speak with the tongues of men and angels, and yet have not charity, I am become as it were a piece of sounding metal or tinkling cymbal. And if I shall have all prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and shall have all faith, so that I might remove mountains, and yet shall not have charity, I am nothing. And if I shall give abroad all my goods to feed the poor, and shall give up my body to be burned, and yet have not charity, it profits me nothing. To the Galatians, chap. v., saith Paul, For you, my brethren, are called unto liberty; do ye not give your liberty for an occasion of the flesh, but by charity of the spirit serve ye one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one saying, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thine own self. To the Ephesians, 4th chapter, he saith, I therefore that suffer bonds in the Lord do beseech you, that you would walk worthy of the calling wherewith ye are called, with all humbleness and mildness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, being careful to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; that you be onebody and one spirit, even as you be called in one hope of your calling. And again in the 5th chapter, Be ye followers of me as most dear children, and walk ye in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath delivered up himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God of a sweet savour. To the Philippians, thus he speaketh, in the first chapter: Only let your conversation be worthy of the gospel of Christ, that either when I shall come and see you, or else in mine absence I may hear of you, that you stand stedfast in one spirit, labouring together with one accord for the faith of the gospel. And in nothing be ye afraid of the adversaries, which is to them a cause of damnation, but to you of salvation, and that of God. For to you it is given, not only that you should believe in him, but also that you should suffer with him, you having the like fight and battle that both you have seen in me, and also now do hear of me. If therefore there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of charity, if any fellowship of the spirit, if any bowels of compassion, fulfil you my joy, that you may be of one judgment, having one and the selfsame charity, being of one accord, of one manner of judgment, doing nothing of contention nor of vain-glory, but in humbleness accounting other amongst you, every one, better than yourselves; not everybody looking upon the things that be his own, but those that belong unto others. And to the Colossians, 3rd chapter, thus he writeth, You therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put upon you the bowels of mercy, gentleness, humbleness, lowliness, modesty, patience, bearing one with another, and giving place to yourselves: if any have a quarrel against any body, even as the Lord forgave you, so do you also. Above all things have ye charity, which is the bond of perfection, and let the peace of Christ triumph in your hearts, in which peace you also are called in one body; and be ye kin and thankful. And to the Thessalonians, thus Paul writeth, in his First Epistle, chap. iv.: As concerning brotherly charity we have no need to write unto you; for you yourselves have learned of God, that you should love one another. And the same thing ye do towards all the brethren throughout all Macedonia.

"Out of all these and many other places of the Holy Scripture it sufficiently appeareth, that the law of Christ is charity; neither is there any virtue commanded of Christ, or any of his apostles, to be observed of the faithful people, but that it cometh out of charity, or else doth nourish charity.

"The law is given by Moses, and the truth by Christ. Christ came not to unloose the law and the prophets, but to fulfil them. But yet many things were lawful

and might have been observed in the time of the law, which in the time of grace must not be observed. And many things were unlawful to them that were under the law, which in the time of grace are lawful enough. After what sort then he did not loose the law, but did fulfil it, it is necessary to declare, for those things which hereafter must be said; for amongst Christians many things are judged to be lawful, because in the former testament in the law they were lawful, and yet they be expressly contrary to Christ's gospel. But the authors of such things do argue and reason thus, Christ came not to loose the law or the prophets. Now, after what sort he did not unloose them it is manifest by the Holy Scripture; that the law given by Moses, was written in tables of stone, to declare the hardness of the people's heart towards the love of God, or of Christ. But Christ hath written his law in the hearts and in the minds of his; that is to say, the law of perfect love of God, and of Christ; which law, whosoever observeth, he doth observe the law of Moses, and doth much greater works of perfection, than were the works of the law. Thus, therefore, were the morals of the old law fulfilled in the law of charity of Christ, and not unloosed; because they are much more perfectly observed, than of the Jews: this I say, if the Christians do observe the commandments of Christ in such sort as he commanded the same to be observed. Christ hath fulfilled the laws moral of the Old Testament, because that the morals and judicials were ordained, that one person should not do injury to another, and that every man should have paid him that is his. Now they that are in charity, will do no injury to others, neither do they take other men's goods away from them. Nay, it seeketh not her own things; for charity seeketh not the things that be her own. Wherefore much less by a stronger reason it ought not to seek for other men's goods. And when the judicials and morals were ordained, Christ did not by the works of the law justify the believers in him, but by grace justified them from their sins. And so did Christ fulfil that by grace, that the law could not by justice.

"Paul to the Romans declareth in a godly discourse, and to the Galatians likewise, that none shall be justified by the works of the law, but by grace in the faith of Jesus Christ. As for the morals and ceremonies of the law, as circumcision, sacrifices for offences and for sins, first-fruits, tenths, vows, divers sorts of washings, the sprinkling of blood, the sprinkling of ashes, abstaining from unclean meats, which are ordained for the sanctifying and cleansing of the people from sin; no, nor yet the prayers of the priests, neither the preachings of the prophets, could cleanse a man from his sin. For death reigned even from Adam to Moses, and sin from Moses to Christ, as Paul declareth to the Romans, in the fifth chapter. But Christ, willing to have mercy and not sacrifice, being a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec, and a High Priest of good things to come, did neither by the blood of goats nor calves, but by his own blood, enter in once into the holy places, when everlasting redemption was found: neither did Jesus enter into the holy places that were made with hands, which are the examples of true things, but unto the very heaven, that now he may appear before the countenance of God for us. Nor yet he did so, that he should offer up himself oftentimes, as the high bishop entered into the holy place every year with strange blood (for otherwise he must needs have suffered oftentimes since the beginning of the world); but now, in the latter end of the world, hath he once appeared by his own sacrifice, for the destruction of sin. And, like as it is decreed for men once to die, and after that cometh judgment, even so was Christ once offered up to consume away the sins of many. The second time shall he appear without sin to the salvation of such as look for him. For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image or substance itself of the things, can never by those sacrifices which they offer (of one selfsame sort continually, year by year) make them perfect that come

unto her. Otherwise men would leave off offering, because that those worshippers, being once cleansed, should have no more prick of conscience for sin afterwards. But in them is there remembrance made of sins every year. For it is impossible, that by the blood of goats and bulls sins should be taken away. Wherefore he, entering into the world, doth say, As for sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not have, but a body hast thou framed unto me: and sacrifices for sin have not pleased thee. Then said I, Behold, I come; in the head, or principal part, of the book it is written of me, that I should do thy will, O God. Wherefore he said before, that sacrifices, oblations, and burnt-offerings, and that for sin, thou wouldst not have; neither were those things pleasant to thee which are offered according to the law: then said I, Behold, I come, that I may do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish that that followed. In which will we are sanctified and made holy by the offering up of the body of Jesus Christ once. And verily every priest is ready every day ministering, and oftentimes offering the selfsame sacrifices, which never can take away sins. But this man, offering one sacrifice for sins, doth for ever and ever sit at God's right hand, looking for the rest to come, till that his enemies be placed to be his footstool. For with one offering hath he for ever made perfect those that be sanctified. By which things it plainly appeareth, that Christ by once offering hath cleansed him from their sins, who could not be cleansed from the same by all the ceremonies of the law, and so did fulfil that which the priesthood of the law could. Wherefore only the morals and judicials he fulfilled by the law of charity, and by grace; and the ceremonials, by one offering up of his body on the altar of the cross. And so it is plain that Christ fulfilled the whole law.

"Wherefore since that the holy things of the law were a shadow of those things that were to come in the time of grace, it were meet that all those things should utterly cease amongst Christians, which should either be against charity or the grace of Christ. Although in the time of the law they were lawful, and not utterly contrary to it, but were figures of perfections in Christ's faith; yet it were meet that they should cease at the coming of the perfection which they did prefigure; as circumcision, the eating of the paschal lamb, and other ceremonial points of the law. Whereupon also, Paul to the Hebrews, chap. vii., saith thus, If, therefore, the making up of the perfection of all, was by the Levitical priesthood, (for the people received the law under him,) why was it necessary besides that another Priest should rise up after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For when the priesthood is removed, it must needs be that the law also be removed. For he in whom these things are spoken, is of another tribe, of which none stood present at the altar; because it is manifest that our Lord had his offspring of Judah, in which tribe Moses spake nothing of the priests. And besides this, it is manifest, if, according to the order of Melchisedec, there do rise up another Priest, which was not made according to the law of the carnal commandment, but according to the power of the life that cannot be lost. For thus he beareth witness, that thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec: so that the commandment that went before, is disallowed for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof, for the law hath brought nobody to perfection. By which things it appeareth that Christ, making an end of the priesthood of Aaron, doth also make up a full end of the law belonging to that priesthood. Whereupon I marvel that your learned men do say, that Christian folks are bound to this small ceremony of the payment of tithes, and care nothing at all for other, as well the great as the small ceremonics of the law.

"It is plain that the tithes were given to the sons of Levi, for their serving in the tabernacle and in the temple of the Lord, as the first-fruits were given to the priests, and also part of the sacrifices; and so were the vows of their ministry, as it appeareth in the book of Numbers, chap. xxii. But forasmuch as the labour of those sacrifices did cease at the coming of Christ, how should those things be demanded, which were ordained for that labour? And seeing that the first-fruits were not demanded of Christians, which first-fruits were then rather and sooner demanded than the tithes; why must the tithes be demanded, except it be therefore, peradventure, because that the tithes be more worth in value than be the first-fruits?

"Secondly, why are the lay people bound to the payment of tithes, more than the Levites and the priests were to the not having of possessions of realties and lordships amongst their brethren, seeing that the selfsame law, in the selfsame place, (where he saith that the tithes ought to be given to Levites,) saith also to the Levites, You shall be contented with the offering of the tithes, and have none other thing amongst your brethren. Wherefore seeing that the priests be bound to the not having of temporal lordships, how are the lay people bound by that law (of God he meaneth, and not of man) to the payment of tithes?

"Thirdly, as touching circumcision, which is one of the greater ceremonies of the law, and was given before the law, and was a universal ceremony concerning the covenant between God and his people, and was so much regarded in the law, that thereof it was said, The soul, whose flesh shall not be circumcised in the foreskin, shall perish from amongst his people: yet did this ceremony utterly cease at the coming of Christ, although that certain of the Jews did say in the primitive church, that the Christians must needs keep the commandment of circumcision with the faith; whom Paul reproveth, writing thus to the Galatians, chap. iv., where he speaketh of the children of the bond-woman and of the free-woman, which do signify the two testaments: But we, O brethren, are the children of the promise after Isaac; but like as at that time, he that was born after the flesh did persecute him which was after the spirit, even so it is now also. But what saith the Scripture? Throw out the bond-woman and her son. The son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman. Wherefore, brethren, we are not the sons of the bondwoman, but of the free. Stand ye stedfast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath delivered you, and be not ye holden again under the yoke of slavery. Behold, I Paul say unto you, if you be circumcised, Christ shall nothing profit you. For I testify again, to every man that circumciseth himself, that he is bound to keep all the whole law. Ye are utterly void of Christ: whosoever will be justified in the law, are fallen from grace.

"In like manner we may reason, if we be bound to tithing, we are debtors and bound to keep all the whole law. For to say that men are bound to one ceremony of the law, and not to the others, is no reasonable saying. Either, therefore, we are bound to them all, or to none. Also, that by the same old law men are not bound to pay tithes, it may be showed by many reasons, which we need not any more to multiply and increase, because these things that be said are sufficient. Whereupon some do say that by the gospel we are bound to pay tithes, because Christ said to the Pharisees, Matt. xxiii., Woe be to you scribes and Pharisees, which pay your tithe of mint, of anise seed, and of cummin, and leave judgment, mercy, and truth undone, being the weightier things of the law! both should ye have done these things, and also not have left the other undone. O ye blind guides, that strain out a gnat, and swallow up a camel. This word soundeth not as a commandment or manner of bidding, whereby Christ did command tithes to be given; but it is a word of disallowing the hypocrisy of

the Pharisees, who, of covetousness, did weigh and esteem tithes because of their own singular commodity, rather than other great and weighty commandments of the law. And me seemeth that our men are in the same predicament of the Pharisees, which do leave off all the ceremonies of the old law, keeping only the commandment of tithing. It is manifest and plain enough by the premises, and by other places of the Scripture, that Christ was a priest after the order of Melchisedec, of the tribe of Judah, not of the tribe of Levi; who gave no new commandment of tithing of any thing to him and to his priests, whom he would place after him; but when his apostles said to him, Behold, we leave all things and have followed thee, what then shall we have; he did not answer them thus, Tithes shall be paid you; neither did he promise them a temporal, but an everlasting reward in heaven. For he both for food, and also apparel, taught his disciples not to be careful: Be ye not careful for your life, what ye shall eat, or for your body, what ye shall put on: is not the life of man more worth than the meat, and the body more worth than apparel? Behold ye the birds of heaven, which do not sow, nor reap, neither yet lay up in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. And as for apparel, why should you be careful? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow, they labour not, neither do they spin, &c. In conclusion he saith, Be not ye careful, saying, What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be covered? For all these things do the Gentiles seek after; for your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. First, therefore, seek ye for the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof, and all these things shall be cast unto you. And Paul, right well remembering this doctrine, instructeth Timothy, and saith thus, But we having food, and wherewithal to be covered, let us therewith be contented. And as the Acts of the Apostles do declare in the first conversion of the Jews at Jerusalem, they had all things common, and to every one was division made, as need required. Neither did the priests make the tithes their own proper goods. For like as it was not meet that the lay people, being converted, should have propriety of goods, even so neither that priests should have propriety of tithes. So that if the priests started back from fervent charity in challenging to themselves the propriety of tithes; it is no marvel of departing backward (as do the priests from the perfection of charity) also of the laity, to be willing to appropriate to themselves the nine parts remaining after tithes. Wherefore seeing that neither Christ, nor any of the apostles, commanded to pay tithes; it is manifest and plain, neither by the law of Moses, nor by Christ's law, Christian people are bound to pay tithes; but by the tradition of men they are bound.

"By the premises now it is plain, that Christ did not undo the law, but by grace did fulfil it. Notwithstanding, in the law many things were lawful which in the time of grace are forbidden; and many things were then unlawful, which now are lawful enough. For nothing that is contrary to charity, is lawful to a Christian.

"Let us now hear what manner of commandments Christ hath given us in the gospel, without the observation of which commandments, charity shall not perfectly be kept. By which commandments Christ did not undo the old law, but did fulfil it. By the observation also of which commandments, he teacheth us to pass and go beyond the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, who most perfectly thought themselves to keep the law. This absolute and perfect righteousness, which we are bound to have beyond the righteousness of the Pharisees and the scribes, he teacheth in Matt. v. — vii., which being heard and compared to the traditions made and commanded by the Roman prelates, it shall plainly appear, whether they be contrary or no. Christ therefore saith, You have heard, that it was said to them of the old time, Thou shalt not kill; for he that killeth shall be guilty of judgment. But I say unto you, that every

one that is angry with his brother shall be in danger of judgment. In this he doth teach that we ought not to be angry with our brethren; not that he would undo this old commandment (Thou shalt not kill); but that the same should be the more perfectly observed. Again, he saith, You have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy friend and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, do well to them that hate you, pray for them that persecute and slander you, that you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; which maketh his sun to arise upon the good and the evil people, and raineth upon the just and unjust. For if you love them which love you, what reward shall you have? Do not the publicans thus? And if you shall salute your brethren only, what great thing do ye? do not the heathens thus also? Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect, Matt. v. 38 — 42.

"Again Christ saith: You have heard that it is said, An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, see that you resist not evil; but if any man shall strike you upon the right cheek, give him the other too. And to him that will strive with thee for thy coat in judgment, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall constrain thee one mile, go with him also two other. He that asketh of thee, give him; and he that will borrow of thee, turn not thyself from him, Matt. vi. 38 — 42.

"By these things it may plainly appear how that Christ, the King of Peace, the Saviour of mankind, who came to save, and not to destroy, who gave a law of charity to be observed of his faithful people, hath taught us not to be angry, not to hate our enemies, nor to render evil for evil, nor to resist evil: for all these things do foster and nourish peace and charity, and do proceed and come forth of charity; and when they be not kept, charity is loosed, and peace is broken. But the bishop of Rome approveth and alloweth wars, and slaughters of men in war, as well against our enemies, that is, the infidels, as also against the Christians, for temporal goods. Now, these things are quite contrary to Christ's doctrine, and to charity, and to peace.

"In the decree 23. q. 1. cap. *Paratus*, it is taught, that the precepts of patience must always be retained in purpose of the heart; so that patience, with benevolence, must be kept in the mind secret. But apparently and manifestly that thing should be done which seemeth to do good to those whom we ought to wish well unto; wherein they give to understand, that a Christian may freely defend himself. And for confirmation of this saying they do say, that Christ, when he was stricken on the face of the high bishop's servant, did not fulfil (if we look upon the words) his own commandment; because he gave not to the smiter the other part, but rather did forbid him, that he should not do it, to double his injury. For he said, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why dost thou strike me? I do marvel of this saying, for, first, if those commandments of patience must be kept in secret in the mind, and seeing the body doth work at the motion of the mind, and is and ought to be moved and ruled by the same, it must then needs be, that if patience be in the mind, it must appear also outwardly in the body.

"Secondly, I marvel that it is said, that Christ did not fulfil his own precept of patience: for it is manifest, that albeit he, teaching always as a good schoolmaster those things which were fit for the salvation of souls, speaking the wholesome word of instruction to the high bishop's servant smiting him unjustly, did neither by word forbid another stroke to be given on the other cheek, neither did he defend himself bodily from striking on the same cheek; but, speaking to him, it is likely that he gave him the other cheek; he meaneth, that he turned not the other cheek away. For a man turneth not away from him whom he speaketh to, or whom he informeth, but layeth

open before him all his face; even so do I believe that Christ did, that he might fulfil in very deed that which before he had taught in word. Neither yet did Christ, by his word, or by his deed, show any thing of defence, or of bodily resistance.

"Thirdly, I marvel why wise men, leaving the plain and manifest doctrine of Christ, whereby he teacheth patience, do leave corners of their own imagining, to the intent they may approve fightings and wars. Why mark they not after what manner Christ spake to Peter, striking the high bishop's servant, saying, Put up thy sword into the sheath, for every one that shall take the sword, shall perish with the sword? But in another case we must make resistance; which case may be so righteous, as it is for a man's lord and master being a most righteous man, and yet suffering injury of mischievous persons.

"Fourthly, I marvel, seeing that we are bound of charity, and by the law of Christ, to give our lives for our brethren, how they can allow such manner of dissensions, and resisting; for when thy brother shall maliciously strike thee, thou mayst be sure, that he is manifestly fallen from charity, into the snare of the devil. If thou shalt keep patience, he shall be ashamed of his doing, and thou mayst bow and bend him to repentance, and take him out from the snare of the devil, and call him back again to charity. If thou resist, and perchance by resisting dost strike again, his fury shall be the more kindled, and he, being stirred up to greater wrath, peradventure shall either slay thee, or thou him. Touching thyself, thou art uncertain, if thou go about to make resistance, whether thou shalt fall from charity, and then shalt thou go backward from the perfection of Christ's commandment; neither dost thou know but that it may happen thee so greatly to be moved, as that by the heat and violence of wrath, thou shalt slay him. Whereas if thou wouldst dispose thyself to patience, (as Christ teacheth,) thou shouldst easily avoid all these mischiefs, as well on the behalf of thy brother, as also of thine own part. Wherefore the observing of charity, as the precept of patience, is to be observed.

"Fifthly, I do marvel why, that for the allowing of this corporal resistance, he doth say in the same chapter, that Paul did not fulfil the precept of the patience of Christ, when he, being stricken in the place of judgment by the commandment of the high priest, did say, God strike thee, O thou painted wall; dost thou sit to judge me according to the law, and dost thou command me to be stricken against the law? It is manifest that Paul made resistance in nothing, though he spake a word of instruction to the priest, who against the law commanded him to be stricken. And if Paul had over-passed the bounds of patience, through the grief of the stroke, what of that? Must the deed of Paul's impatience for this cause be justified, and the commandment of patience taught by Christ be left undone for Paul's deed, and corporal resistance be allowed? God forbid. For both Paul and Peter might err; but in the doctrine of Christ there may be found no error. Wherefore we must give more credence and belief to Christ's sayings, than to any living man's doings. Wherefore although Paul had resisted, which I do not perceive in that scripture, it followeth not thereof, that corporal resistance must be approved, which is of Christ expressly forbidden. I much marvel that always they seek corners and shadows to justify their deeds. Why do they not mark what great things Paul reciteth himself to have suffered for Christ? And where, I pray you, have they found that he, after his conversion, struck any man that did hurt him? Or where do they find that he in express word doth teach such a kind of corporal resistance? But as touching patience, he saith in plain words to the Romans, Be not wise in your own conceits: render ill for ill to nobody; providing good things not only before God, but also before all men, if it be possible. Be at peace with all

folks as much as in you lieth; not revenging yourselves, my most dearly beloved, but give you place unto anger; for it is written, Vengeance is mine, and I will recompense them, saith the Lord. But if thine enemy shall be an hungered, give him meat; if he be athirst, give him drink: for thus doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome thou evil with good.

"To the Corinthians, 1 Cor. vi., as touching judgment and contention, which are matters of less weight than are fightings, thus he writeth: Now verily there is great fault in you, that ye be at law amongst yourselves: why rather take ye not wrong? why rather suffer ye not deceit? And generally, in all his epistles, he teacheth that patience should be kept, and not corporal resistance by fighting, because charity is patient, it is courteous, it suffereth all things. I marvel how they justify and make good the wars by Christians, saving only the wars against the devil and sin; for, seeing that it is plain, that those things which were in the Old Testament were figures of things to be done in the New Testament, therefore, we must needs say, that the corporal wars being then done, were figures of the Christian wars against sin and the devil, for the heavenly country which is our inheritance. It is plain that it was written thus of Christ: The mighty Lord, and of great power in battle, hath girded himself in force and manliness to the war; and he came not to send peace into the earth, but war. In this war ought Christian people to be soldiers, according to that manner which Paul teacheth to the Ephesians, chap. vi.: Put upon you the armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the deceits of the devil. For we have not to wrestle against flesh and blood, but against princes and potentates, against the rulers of the darkness of the world, against spiritual wickedness in heavenly things, which are in the high places. Wherefore take ye the armour of God, that ye may be able to resist in the evil day, and to stand perfectly in all things. Stand ye, therefore, girded about in truth upon your loins, having put upon you the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod in a readiness to the gospel of peace; in all things taking the shield of faith, wherewith you may quench all the fiery darts of that wicked one. And take unto you the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

"By these things it is plain, what are the wars of Christians, and what are the weapons of their warfare. And because it is manifest, that this testament is of greater perfection than the former, we must now fight more perfectly than at that time: for now spiritually, then corporally; now for a heavenly everlasting inheritance, then for an earthly and temporal; now by patience, then by resistance. For Christ saith, Blessed are they that suffer persecution for righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. He saith not, Blessed are they that fight for righteousness. How can a man say that they may lawfully make war and kill their brethren for the temporal goods, which peradventure they unjustly occupy, or unjustly intend to occupy? for he that killeth another to get those goods which another body unjustly occupieth, doth love more the very goods than his own brother; and then he, falling from charity, doth kill himself spiritually: if he go forward without charity to make war, then doth he evil, and to his own damnation. Wherefore he doth not lawfully nor justly in proceeding to the damnation of his own self and his brother, whom, though he see unjustly to occupy his goods, yet he doth intend to kill. And what if such kind of wars were lawful to the Jews? this argueth not that now they are lawful to Christians; because that their deeds were in a shadow of imperfection, but the deeds of Christians in the light of perfection. It was not said unto them, All people that shall take the sword, shall perish with the sword. What if John the Baptist disallowed corporal fightings, and corporal warfare, at such time as the soldiers asked him, saying, And what shall we do? who

saith to them, See that ye strike no man, neither pick ye quarrels against any, and be ye contented with your wages. This saying of John alloweth not corporal warfare amongst Christians; for John was of the priests of the Old Testament, and under the law; neither to him it appertained not to follow the law, but to warn the people to the perfect observation of the law: for he, being likewise demanded of the publicans what they should do, said unto them, Do no other thing than is appointed unto you. But Christ, the author of the New Testament, and of greater perfection than was the perfection of the old law, gave new things, as it plainly appeareth by the gospel; so that Christians ought to receive information of Christ, not of John. For of John also doth Christ speak, Verily I say unto you, there hath not risen amongst the children of men a greater than John Baptist; but he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. In which saying Christ showeth, that those that the least in the kingdom of heaven in the time of grace, are placed in greater perfection than was John, which was one of them that were the elders; and he lived also in the time of the law in greater perfection. And when certain of John's disciples said unto him, Master, he that was beyond Jordan, to whom thou gavest witness, behold, he baptizeth, and all people come unto him: John answered and said, A man cannot take upon him, unless it shall be given him from above. You yourselves do bear me record, that I said, I am not Christ, but that I was sent before him. He that hath the bride, is the bridegroom; as for the bridegroom's friend, who standeth and heareth him, he rejoiceth with great joy to hear the voice of the bridegroom. This therefore my joy is fulfilled; he must increase, and I must be diminished. He that cometh from on high, is above all; he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven, is above all folks; that which he hath seen and heard, the same doth he witness, and yet his witnessing doth nobody receive. But he that receiveth his witnessing, hath put to his seal, that God is true. For he whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God.

"By which things it plainly appeareth, that credence is to be given neither to John, nor yet to an angel, if he teach any thing that is not agreeable to Christ's doctrine. For Christ is above the angels, because that God infinitely passeth them in wisdom. Now, if Moses the servant of God, a minister of the Old Testament., was so much to be believed, that nothing could be added, nor yet any thing diminished from the commandments that were given by him, (for so Moses had said, The thing that I command thee, that do thou only to the Lord, neither add thou any thing, nor diminish,) how much more ought we not to add nor to take away from the commandments given by God himself, and also the Son of God! In the primitive church, because the Christians had fervent love and charity, they observed these precepts as they were given; but their fervent charity afterward waxing lukewarm, they invented glosses by drawing the commandments of God hack to their own deeds, which they purposed to justify and maintain; that is to say, wars against the infidels. But that these, by wars, should be converted to the faith is a deed faithless enough: because that by violence, or unwillingly, nobody can believe in Christ, nor be made a Christian; neither did he come to destroy them by battle that believed not in him; for he said to his disciples, You know not what spirit you are of. The Son of man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them. Then to grant pardons and forgiveness of sins to those that kill the infidels, is too much an infidel's fact, seducing many people; for what greater seducing can there be, than to promise to a man forgiveness of sins, and afterward the joy of heaven, for setting himself against Christ's commandments in the killing of infidels, that would not be converted to the faith? whereas Christ doth say, Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven, this person shall

enter into the kingdom of heaven. Now the will of the Father is, that we should believe in his only Son Jesus Christ, and that we should obey him by observing of those things which he himself hath commanded. Wherefore Christ's precepts of patience must be fulfilled; wars, fightings, and contentions must be left, because they are contrary to charity.

"But peradventure some man will thus reason against Christ: The saints, by whom God hath wrought miracles, do allow wars against the faithful people, as also against the infidels; and the holy kings were warriors, for whose sakes miracles also have been showed, as well in their death, as also in their life, yea, in the very time wherein they were at warfare: wherefore it seemeth that their facts were good and lawful; for, otherwise, God would not have done miracles for them.

"To this again I say, that we for no miracles must do contrary to the doctrine of Christ, for in it there can be no error; but in miracles there oftentimes chanceth error, as it is plain as well by the Old, as by the New Testament. God forbid then that a Christian should, for deceivable miracles, depart from the infallible doctrine of Christ. In Exodus, chap. vii., it is manifest, how that the wicked wise men of the Egyptians, through the enchantments of Egypt, and certain secret workings, threw their wands upon the earth, which were turned into dragons; even as Aaron, beforetime, in the presence of Pharaoh, threw his wand upon the earth, which, by the power of God, was turned into a serpent. In the first book of Kings, chap. xxii. 19, Micaiah did see the Lord sitting upon his throne, and all the host of heaven standing about him on the right hand and on the left. And the Lord said, Who shall deceive Ahab the king of Israel, that he may go up and be slain in Ramoth-gilead? And one said this way, and another otherwise. Now there went forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will deceive him. To whom the Lord spake; By what means? And he said, I will go forth, and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And the Lord said, Thou shalt deceive him and prevail; go thy ways forth, and do even so. Thus also it is written in Deuteronomy: If there shall arise a prophet amongst you, or one that shall say he hath seen a dream, and shall foretell a sign and a wonder; and if that shall come to pass that he hath spoken, and he shall say unto thee, Let us go and follow strange gods, whom thou knowest not, and let us serve them, thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or dreamer; for the Lord your God tempteth you, to make it known whether ye love him, or no, with all your heart, and with all your soul.

"In Jeremiah, chap. xxiii.: Are not my words even like fire, saith the Lord? and like a hammer that breaketh the stone? Therefore, behold, I will come against the prophets which have dreamed a lie, (saith the Lord,) which have showed those things, and have seduced the people through their lies and their miracles, whenas I sent them not, neither commanded them; which have brought no profit unto this people, saith the Lord. In Mark, chap. xiii., saith Christ; For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, to deceive, if it were possible, even the very elect. Paul, in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. xi.: Such false apostles are deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel, for even Satan transformeth himself into an angel of light; therefore it is no great thing though his ministers transform themselves, as though they were the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works.

"In the Apocalypse, chap. xiii., John saw a beast ascending up out of the earth, and it had two horns like a lamb, but he spake like the dragon, and he did all that the

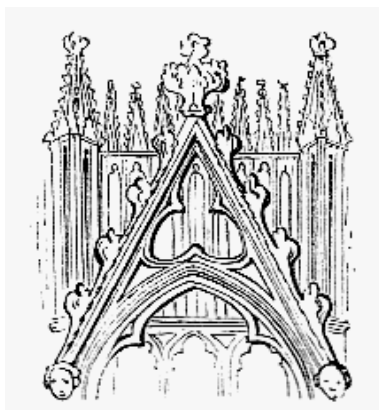
first beast could do before him; and he caused the earth and the inhabitants thereof to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed, and did great wonders, so that he made fire come down from heaven on the earth, in the sight of men, and deceived them that dwelt on the earth, by means of the signs which were permitted him to do in the sight of the beast.

"By these things it is most manifest and plain, that in miracles this manifold error oftentimes happeneth, through the working of the devil, to deceive the people withal; wherefore we ought not, for the working of miracles, to depart from the commandments of God. I would to God that they which put confidence in miracles, would give heed unto the word of Christ, in the seventh chapter of Matthew, thus speaking: Many shall say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not in thy name prophesied? and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many great works? &c. I will profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from me, all ye which work iniquity.

"By this saying it is most manifest that the servants of Christ are not discerned by working of miracles, but by the working of virtues, departing from iniquity, and obeying the commandments of God. Wherefore it is wonderful, that any in this life dare presume to prevent the day of the judgment of God, to judge by means of miracles, that some are saints, whom men ought to worship; whom, peradventure, God will in the last judgment condemn, saying, Depart from me, all ye which work iniquity. If any man could here on earth judge sinners to be condemned, then, if this judgment were certain, Christ should not judge the second time; and whatsoever such judges bind in earth, the same ought to be bound in heaven. But if such a judgment be uncertain, then it is perilous and full of deceit, when by it men on earth may, instead of saints, worship such as are damned with the fellowship of the devils, and in prayer require their aid, who, even like as the devils their companions, are more ready, and more of might, to evil than to good, more to hurt than to profit. I wonder they mark not what Christ said, when his kinswoman came unto him, desiring and requiring something of him, and saying, Command that these my two sons may sit one upon thy right hand, and the other upon thy left hand in thy kingdom. But Jesus answering, said, Ye know not what ye ask; can ye drink of the cup which I shall drink of? They said unto him, We can. He said unto them, Of my cup indeed ye shall drink but to sit at my right hand, or at my left, it is not mine to give, but unto whom it is prepared of my Father. Christ, being equal unto the Father according to his Godhead, and exceeding all manner of men according to his manhood, namely, in goodness and wisdom, said, To sit at my right hand, or at my left, is not mine to give, but unto whom it is prepared of my Father. If it were none of his to give, to sit at the right hand, or at the left, &c.; how then is it in the power of any sinful man to give unto any man a seat, either on the right hand, or on the left, in the kingdom of God, which sinful man knoweth not whether such have any seat prepared for them of the Father in his kingdom? They much extol themselves, which exercise this judicial power in giving judgment, that there are some saints which ought to be honoured of men, by reason of the evidences of dreams, or of deceitful miracles; of which men they are ignorant, whether God in his judgment will condemn them or not, together with the devils, for ever to be tormented. Let them beware, for the infallible truth saith, that every one that exalteth himself shall be brought low.

"By these things is gathered that the wars of Christians are not lawful; for that by the doctrine and life of Christ they are prohibited, and by reason of the evidence of the deceitful miracles of those which have made wars amongst the Christians, as well

against the Christians, as also against the infidels: because Christ could not err in his doctrine, forasmuch as he was God; and forasmuch as heaven and earth shall pass away, but the words of Christ shall not pass away. He, therefore, which establisheth his laws, allowing wars and the slaughter of men in war, as well of Christians as of infidels, doth he not justify those things which are contrary unto the gospel and law of Christ? Therefore in this he is against Christ, and therefore antichrist, seducing the people, making men believe that to be lawful and meritorious unto them, which is expressly prohibited by Christ."



nd thus much concerning the first part, touching peace and war, wherein he declareth Christ and the pope to be contrary, that is, the one to be given all to peace, the other all to war, and so to prove, in conclusion, the pope to be antichrist: where, in the mean time, thou must understand, gentle reader, his meaning rightly; not that he so thinketh no kind of wars among the Christians in any case to be lawful, for he himself before hath openly protested the contrary; but that his purpose is to prove the pope, in all his doings and teachings, more to be addicted to war than to peace; yea, in such cases where is no necessity of war. And therein proveth he the pope to be contrary to Christ, that is, to be antichrist.

Now he proceedeth further to the second part, which is of mercy. In which part he showeth how Christ teacheth us to be merciful, because mercy, as he saith, proceedeth from charity, and nourisheth it.

"In this doctrine of mercy, Christ breaketh not the law of righteousness, for he himself, by mercy, hath cleansed us from our sins, from which we could not by the righteousness of the law be cleansed. But whom he hath made clean by mercy, undoubtedly it behoveth those same to be also merciful; for in the 6th chapter of Matthew he saith, Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. And again, in the 6th of Matthew, If ye forgive unto men their sins, your Father will forgive unto you your sins. And again, in the 7th chapter of Matthew, Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned; and with what measure ye measure, with the same shall it be measured unto you again. In the 18th chapter of Matthew, Peter asked the Lord, saying, Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I shall forgive him? seven times? Jesus said unto him, I say not unto thee seven times, but seventy times seven times. Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him which oweth him ten thousand talents; and because he had nothing wherewithal to pay, his master commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and his children, and all that he had, and the debt to be paid. The servant therefore fell down, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And the Lord had pity on that servant, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. But when that servant was departed, he found one of his fellow servants, which owed him an hundred pence, and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest; and his fellow fell down, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. But he would not, but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. And when his other fellows

saw the things that were done, they were very sorry, and came and declared unto their master all that was done. Then his master called him, and said unto him, O thou ungracious servant, I forgave thee all that debt when thou desiredst me: oughtest thou not then also to have such pity on thy fellow, even as I had pity on thee? And his Lord was wroth, and delivered him unto the jailers, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do unto you, except ye forgive from your hearts each one to his brother their trespasses.

"By this doctrine it is most plain and manifest, that every Christian ought to be merciful unto his brother, how often soever he offendeth against him; because we, so often as we offend, do ask mercy of God. Wherefore forasmuch as our offence against God is far more grievous than any offence of our brother against us, it is plain that it behoveth us to be merciful unto our brethren, if we will have mercy at God's hand. But, contrary to this doctrine of mercy, the Romish bishop maketh and confirmeth many laws which punish offenders even unto the death; as it is plain by the process of the decrees. It is declared and determined, that to kill men *ex officio*, that is, having authority and power so to do, is not sin; and again, The soldier which is obedient unto the higher power, and so killeth a man, is not guilty of murder; and again, He is the minister of the Lord, which smiteth the evil in that they are evil, and killeth them. And many other such-like things are, throughout the whole process of that question, determined: that for certain kinds of sins men ought, by the rigour of the law, to be punished even unto death. But the foundation of their saying they took out of the old law, in which, for divers transgressions were appointed divers punishments. It is very much wonderful unto me, why that wise men, being the authors and makers of laws, do always, for the foundation of their sayings, look upon the shadow of the law, and not the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ; for they give not heed unto the figure of perfection, nor yet unto the perfection figured. Is it not written in the 3rd of John, God sent not his Son into the world to judge the world, but to save the world by him? In John the 8th chapter, The scribes and Pharisees bring in a woman taken in adultery, and set her in the midst, and said unto Christ, Master, even now this woman was taken in adultery; but in the law, Moses hath commanded us to stone such: what sayest thou therefore? This they said to tempt him, that they might accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground. And while they continued asking him, he lift himself up, and said unto them, Let him that is among you without sin, cast the first stone at her. And again he stooped and wrote on the ground. And when they heard it, they went out one by one, beginning at the eldest: so Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lift up himself again, he said unto her, Where be they which accused thee? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee, go thy way, and sin no more.

"It is manifest by the Scriptures, that Christ was promised he should be King of the Jews, and unto the kings pertained the judgments of the law; but, because he came not to judge sinners according to the rigour of the law, but came according to grace, to save that which was lost, in calling the sinner to repentance; it is most plain, that in the coming of the law of grace, he would have the judgment of the law of righteousness to cease: for otherwise he had dealt unjustly with the aforesaid woman, forasmuch as the witnesses of her adultery bare witness against her. Wherefore, seeing the same King, Christ, was a judge, if it had been his will that the righteousness of the law should be observed, he ought to have adjudged the woman to death, according as the law commanded; which thing, forasmuch as he did not, it is most

evident that the judgments of the righteousness of the law are finished in the coming of the King, being King of the law of grace; even as the sacrifices of the priesthood of Aaron are finished in the coming of the Priest, according to the order of Melchisedec, who hath offered himself up for our sins; because, as it is before said, neither the righteousness of the law, nor sacrifices for sin, brought any man to perfection. Wherefore it was necessary that the same, by reason of their imperfection, should cease. And seeing, among all the laws of the world, the law of Moses was most just; forasmuch as the author thereof was God, who is the most just Judge; and by that law always look, what manner of injury one had done unto another, contrary to the commandment of the law, the like injury he should receive for his transgression, according to the upright judgment of the law; as death for death, a blow for a blow, burning for burning, wound for wound, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, and most just punishments were ordained according to the quantity of the sins. But if this law of righteousness be clean taken away in the coming of the law of grace, how then shall the law of the Gentiles remain among Christians, which was never so just? Is not this true, that in them which are converted unto the faith, there is no distinction between the Jew and the Grecian? For both are under sin, and are justified by grace in the faith of Christ, being called unto faith and unto the perfection of the gospel.

"If therefore the Gentiles converted are not bound to play the Jews, to follow the law of the Jews; why should the Jews converted follow the laws of the Gentiles, which are not so good? Wherefore it is to be wondered at, why thieves are, among Christians, for theft put to death, when after the law of Moses they were not put to death. Christians suffer adulterers to live, Sodomites, and they which curse father and mother, and many other horrible sinners; and they which according to the most just law of God were condemned to death, are not put to death. So we neither keep the law of righteousness given of God, nor the law of mercy taught by Christ.

"Wherefore the law-makers and judges do not give heed unto the aforesaid sentence of Christ unto the scribes and Pharisees, who said, He which amongst you is without sin, let him cast the first stone at her. What is he that dareth be so bold as to say he is without sin, yea, and without a grievous sin, when the transgression of the commandment of God is a grievous sin? And who can say that he never transgressed this commandment of God, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; or the other commandment, which is of greater force, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c.? Wherefore thou, whatsoever thou art, that judgest thy brother unto death, thinkest thou that thou shalt escape the judgment of God, which peradventure hast offended more grievously than he hath whom thou judgest? How seest thou a mote in thy brother's eye, and seest not a beam in thine own eye? Knowest thou not that with what measure thou measurest, that same shall be measured to you again? Doth not the Scripture say, Unto me belongeth vengeance, and I will render again, saith the Lord? How can any man say that these men can with charity keep these judgments of death? Who is it that offendeth God, and desireth of God just judgment for his offence? He desireth not judgment, but mercy. If he desire mercy for himself, why desireth he vengeance for his brother offending? How therefore loveth he his brother as himself? Or how dost thou show mercy unto thy brother (as thou art bound by the commandment of Christ) which seekest the greatest vengeance upon him that thou canst infer unto him? for death is the most terrible thing of all, and a more grievous vengeance than death can no man infer. Wherefore, they which will keep charity, ought to observe the commandments of Christ touching mercy; and they which live in the law of charity, ought to leave the law of vengeance and judgments.

Ought we to believe that Christ in his coming, by grace, abrogated the most just law which he himself gave unto the children of Israel, by Moses's servant, and established the laws of the Gentiles, being not so just, to be observed of his faithful? Doth not Daniel expound the dream of Nebuchadnezzar the king, concerning the image, whose head was of gold, the breast and arms of silver, the belly and thighs of brass, the legs of iron, one part of the feet was of iron, and the other part of clay. Nebuchadnezzar saw that a stone was cut out of a mountain without hands, and struck the image in his feet of iron and of clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and gold broken all together, and became like the chaff of the summer floor, which is carried away by the wind, and there was no place found for them; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. He applieth therefore four kingdoms unto the four parts of the image, namely, the kingdom of the Babylonians unto the head of gold; the kingdom of the Medes and Persians unto the breast and arms of silver; the kingdom of the Grecians unto the belly and thighs of brass; but the fourth kingdom, which is of the Romans, he applieth unto the feet and legs of iron. And Daniel addeth, In the days of their kingdoms shall God raise up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and his kingdom shall not be delivered unto another, but it shall break and destroy those kingdoms; and it shall stand for ever, according as thou sawest, that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and brake in pieces the clay, and iron, brass, silver, and gold. Seeing therefore it is certain that this stone signifieth Christ, whose kingdom is for ever; it is also a thing most assured, that he ought to reign every where, and to break in pieces the other kingdoms of the world. Wherefore if terrestrial kings, and the terrestrial kingdom of the Jews, and their laws and judgments, have ceased by Christ the King calling the Jews unto the perfection of his gospel, namely, unto faith and charity; it is not to be doubted, but that the kingdom of the Gentiles, which is more imperfect, and their laws, ought to cease among the Gentiles, departing from their Gentility unto the perfection of the gospel of Jesus Christ. For there is no distinction between the Jews and Gentiles being converted unto the faith of Christ; but all of them, abiding in that eternal kingdom, ought to be under one law of charity and of virtue. Therefore they ought to have mercy, and to leave the judgments of death, and the desire of vengeance. Wherefore they which do make laws mark not the parable of Christ, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a man which sowed good seed in his field; but when men were asleep, the enemy came and sowed tares in the midst of the wheat, and went his way. But when the herb was grown and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares. And the servants came unto the good man of the house, and said unto him, Lord, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then come these tares? And he said unto them, The enemy hath done this. And the servants said unto him, Wilt thou that we go and gather them up? And he said, No, lest peradventure gathering up the tares ye pluck up the wheat by the roots; suffer them both to grow until the harvest, and in the time of the harvest I will say unto the harvestmen, Gather first the tares and bind them in bundles, that they may be burnt, but gather the wheat into my barn. Christ himself only expoundeth this parable in the selfsame chapter, saying, He which soweth the good seed is the Son of man, but the field is the world, and the good seed, those are the children of the kingdom. But the tares are the naughty children. And the enemy which soweth them is the devil. And the harvest is the end of the world; and the harvestmen are the angels. Even as therefore the tares are gathered and burnt with fire, so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of man shall send his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom

all offenders, and those which commit iniquity, and shall put them into a furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

"By which plain doctrine it is manifest, that Christ will have mercy showed unto sinners, even unto the end of the world, and will have them to remain mingled with the good; lest peradventure, when a man thinketh that he doth right well to take away the tares, he taketh away the wheat. For how great a sinner soever a man be, we know not whether his end shall be good, and whether in the end he shall obtain mercy of God; neither are we certain of the time, wherein God will by grace judge him whom we abhor as a sinner. And peradventure such a one shall more profit after his conversion in the church, than he whom we think to be just, as it came to pass in Paul. And if God justifieth a man by grace, although at his end, why darest thou be so bold to be his judge, and to condemn him? Yea rather, although a man seem to be obstinate and hardened in his evil, so that he is not corrected by a secret correction, correct him before one alone; if he do not receive open correction, being done before two or three witnesses; neither passeth upon a manifest correction when his sin is made known unto the church; Christ doth not teach to punish such a one with the punishment of death. Yea rather, he saith, If he hearken not unto the church, let him be unto thee as an ethnic and publican. And Paul, following this doctrine in 1 Cor. v., saith, There goeth a common saying, that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not once named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather sorrowed, that he which hath done this deed might be put from among you. For I, verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have already determined, as though I were present, that he which hath done this thing, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that such a one, by the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, be delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Paul teacheth not to kill this man, as some gather by this text, but to separate him from the other faithful, and so from Christ, which is the Head of the church of the faithful; and so is he delivered unto Satan, which is separated from Christ, that the flesh may be killed, that is, that the carnal concupiscence, whereby he luxuriously lusted after the wife of his father, may be destroyed in him by such a separation, that the spirit may be saved, and not that his body should be killed, as some say; as it is most manifest in the same chapter, where he saith, I wrote unto you an epistle, that you should not keep company with fornicators; and I meant not of all the fornicators of this world, either of the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, for then must ye needs have gone out of the world. But now I have written unto you, that ye keep not company together; if any that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous person, or a worshipper of images, either a cursed speaker, or drunkard, or an extortioner: with him that is such, see that ye eat not.

"By which it is manifest, that Paul would have the aforesaid fornicator separated from the fellowship of the faithful; that his carnal concupiscence might be mortified, for the health of the spirit, and not that the body should be killed: wherefore they do ill understand Paul, which by this saying do confirm the killing of men. And forasmuch as heresy is one of the most grievous sins, (for a heretic leadeth men in errors, whereby they are made to stray from faith, without which they cannot be saved,) it doth most great hurt in the church.

"Further, as concerning such a wicked man, Paul thus speaketh, Flee from the man that is a heretic after the first and second correction, knowing that such a one is subverted and sinneth, forasmuch as he is by his own judgment condemned. Behold,

Paul teacheth not to kill this man, but with Christ to separate him from the fellowship of the faithful. But some say, that Peter, in the primitive church, slew Ananias and Sapphira for their sins: wherefore, they say, it is lawful for them to condemn wicked men to death. We will declare, in showing the whole process, how falsely they speak in alleging of Peter, to justify their error.

"In the 4th chapter of the Acts it is written, that as many as were possessors of lands or houses, they sold them, and offered the prices of that which they sold, and laid it before the feet of the apostles; and it was divided unto every one as he had need thereof. But a certain man, called Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a piece of land, and kept back a part of the price of the field, his wife being privy unto it; and bringing a certain part thereof, he laid it at the feet of the apostles. But Peter said unto Ananias, Ananias, why hath Satan tempted thy heart, that thou shouldst lie unto the Holy Ghost, to keep back a part of the price of the land? Did it not, whilst it remained, remain unto thee; and being sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. And when Ananias heard these words, he fell down and gave up the ghost, and great fear came on all them that heard these things. And the young men rose up and took him up, and carried him out, and buried him. And it came to pass, about the space of three hours after, that his wife came in, being ignorant of that which was done. And Peter said unto her, Tell me, woman, sold ye the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much. But Peter said unto her, Why have ye agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of them which buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out. And straightway she fell down before his feet, and gave up the ghost; and the young men entering in, found her dead, and they carried her out, and buried her by her husband. And great fear came on all the church, and all those which heard these things. It is marvel that any man that is wise will say that by this process Peter slew Ananias or his wife. For it was not his act, but the act of God, who made a wedding to his Son, and sent his servants to call them that were bidden unto the wedding, and they would not come. The king then sent forth his servants to the out-corners of the highways, to gather all that they could find, both good and evil, and so they did; and the marriage was full furnished with guests. Then came in also the king to view and see them sitting; among whom he perceived there one sitting, having not a wedding garment, and saith unto him, Friend, how earnest thou hither? And he being dumb had not a word to speak. Then said the king to the servitors, Take and bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the outward darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Many there be called, but few chosen.

"It is manifest, that this wedding garment is charity, without which because Ananias entered into the marriage of Christ, he was given to death, that by one many might be informed to learn and understand, that they which have faith and not charity, although they appear to men to have, yet it cannot be privy to the Spirit of God, that they do feign. Such there are, no doubt, but they shall be excluded from the marriage of Christ, as we see this here exemplified in the death of Ananias and his wife by the hand of God, and not by the hand of Peter. And how should Peter then have judged Ananias (albeit he had judged him) worthy of death by the rigour of the old law? For why? by the law he had not been guilty of death, for that part which they fraudulently and dissemblingly did reserve to themselves: yea, and if they had stolen as much from another man, which was greater, neither yet for his lie committed, he had not therefore, by that law of justice, been found guilty of death. Wherefore, if he did not condemn him by the law of justice, it appeareth that he condemned him by the law of

grace and mercy, which he learned of Christ: and so, consequently, it followeth much more apparent, that Peter could not put him to death. Furthermore, to say that Peter put him to death by the mere motion of his own will, and not by the authority of the old law, nor by the new, it were derogatory and slanderous to the good fame and name of Peter. But if Peter did kill him, why then doth the bishop of Rome, which pretendeth to be the successor of Peter, excuse himself and his priests from the judgment of death against heretics and other offenders, although they themselves be consenting to such judgments done by laymen? For that which was done of Peter without offence, may reasonably excuse him and his fellow priests from the spot of crime, Acts v.

"It is manifest that there was another which did more grievously offend than Ananias, and that Peter rebuked him with more sharp words; but yet he commanded him not so to be put to death. For Simon Magus also remaining at Samaria, after that he believed and was baptized, he joined himself with Philip; and when he saw that the Holy Spirit was given by the apostles, (laying their hands upon men,) he offered them money, saying, Give unto me this power, that upon whomsoever I shall lay my hand, he shall receive the Holy Ghost. To whom Peter answered, Destroyed be thou and thy money together; and for that thou supposest the gift of God to be bought with money, thou shalt have neither part nor fellowship in this doctrine. Thy heart is not pure before God, therefore repent thee of thy wickedness, and pray unto God that this wicked thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee; for I perceive thou art even in the bitter gall of wickedness, and band of iniquity. Behold here the grievous offence of Simon Peter's hard and sharp rebuking of him, and yet thereupon he was not put to death. Whereby it appeareth that the death of Ananias, aforesaid, proceeded of God and not of Peter. Of all these things it is to be gathered, seeing the judgments of death are not grounded upon the express and plain Scriptures, but only under the shadow of the old law, that they are not to be observed of Christians, because they are contrary to charity. Ergo, the bishop of Rome, approving such judgments, alloweth those that are contrary to the law and doctrine of Christ; as before is said of wars, where he approveth and justifieth that which is contrary to charity. The order of priesthood, albeit it doth justify the judgments to death of the laity, whereby offenders are condemned to die, yet are they themselves forbidden to put in execution the same judgments. The priests of the old law, being imperfect, when Pilate said unto them concerning Christ, whom they had accused worthy of death, Take him unto you, and according to your law judge him, answered, That it was not lawful for them to put to death any man.

" Whereby it appeareth, that our priests, being much more perfect, may not lawfully give judgment of death against any offenders: yet, notwithstanding, they claim unto them the power judicial upon offenders; because, say they, it belongeth unto them to know the offences by the auricular confession of the offenders, and to judge upon the same being known, and to enjoin divers penances unto the parties offending, according to the quantity of their offences committed, so that the sinner may make satisfaction, say they, unto God, for the offences which he never committed. And to confirm unto them this judicial power, they allege the Scripture in many places, wresting it to serve their purpose.

"First, They say that the bishop of Rome (who is the chief priest and judge among them) hath full power and authority to remit sins. Whereupon they say, that he is able fully and wholly to absolve a man; so that if a man at the time of his death had this remission, he should straightways fly unto heaven without any pain of purgatory.

The other bishops, as they say, have not so great authority. The priests constituted under every bishop, have power, say they, to absolve the sins of them that are confessed, but not all kind of sins: because there are some grievous sins reserved to the absolutions of the bishops; and some again to the absolution only of the chief and high bishop. They say also, that it behoveth the offenders, for the necessity of their souls' health, to call to remembrance their offences, and to manifest the same, with all the circumstances thereof, unto the priest in auricular confession, supplying the place of God, after the manner of a judge; and afterward humbly to fulfil the penance enjoined unto him by the priest for his sins, except the said penance so enjoined, or any part thereof, be released by the superior power. All these things, say they, are manifestly determined, as well in the decrees as decretals. And although these things have not expressly their foundation in the plain and manifest doctrine of Christ, nor any of the apostles, yet the authors of the decrees and decretals concerning this matter, have grounded the same upon divers places of the Scriptures, as in the process of Christ in the Gospel of St. Matthew, chap. xvi. Whereupon they ground the pope's power judicial, to surmount the powers of other priests; as where Christ said unto his disciples, Whom do men say that I am? And they answered, Some say thou art John Baptist, some Elias, and some Jeremias, or one of the prophets. To whom he said, But who say you that I am? Simon Peter making answer, said, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon the son of Jonas; for flesh and blood hath not opened this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church, and hell-gates shall not prevail against it. And I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, shall also be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven.

"Out of this text of Christ, divers expositors have drawn divers errors. For when Christ said, And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church: some thereupon affirm that Christ meant he would build his church upon Peter, by authority of that text, as it is written in the first part of the decrees. The exposition hereof is ascribed to Pope Leo; the error whereof is manifestly known. For the church of Christ is not builded upon Peter, but upon the rock of Peter's confession, for that he said, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And for that Christ said singularly unto Peter, I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind, &c. By this saying they affirm, that Christ gave unto Peter specially, as chief of the rest of the apostles, a larger power to bind and to loose, than he did unto the rest of the apostles and disciples. And because Peter answered for himself and all the apostles, not only confessing the faith which he had chiefly above the rest, but also the faith which the rest of the apostles had even as himself, by the revelation of the heavenly Father; it appeareth that as the faith of all the apostles was declared by the answer of one; so by this that Christ said unto Peter, Whatsoever thou shalt bind, &c., is given unto the rest of the apostles the same power and equality to bind and to loose, as unto Peter. Which Christ declareth in the Gospel of St. Matthew, chap. xviii., in these words: Verily I say unto you, what things soever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be also loosed in heaven. And further he addeth: And again I say unto you, that if two of you shall consent upon earth, and request, whatsoever it be, it shall be granted unto you of my Father which is in heaven. For when two or three be gathered together in my name, I am there in the midst of them. And in John, chap. xx., he saith generally

unto them, Receive ye my Spirit. Whose sins ye shall remit, shall be remitted unto them; and whose sins you shall retain, shall be retained.

"By this it appeareth that the power to bind and to loose is not specially granted to Peter, as chief and head of the rest, and that by him the rest had their power to bind and to loose; for that the head of the body of the church is one, which is Christ, and the head of Christ is God. Peter and the rest of the apostles are the good members of the body of Christ, receiving power and virtue of Christ; whereby they do confirm and glue together the other members, (as well the strong and noble, as the weak and unable,) to a perfect composition and seemliness of the body of Christ; that all honour from all parts and members may be given unto Christ as head and chief, by whom, as head, all the members are governed. And therefore Paul, 1 Cor. iii.: When one man saith, I hold of Paul, and another saith, I hold of Apollos, are ye not carnal men? For what is Apollos? what is Paul? The minister of him in whom ye have believed, and he, as God, giveth unto every man. I have planted, Apollos hath watered, but God hath given the increase. Therefore neither he that planteth is any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase. And Paul to the Galatians, chap. ii.: God hath no respect of persons. Those that seemed to be great and do much, availed or profited me nothing at all; but, contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the circumcision unto Peter, for he that wrought with Peter in the apostleship of the circumcision, wrought with me also among the Gentiles; and when they knew the grace which was given me, Peter, James, and John straightways joined themselves with me and Barnabas; that we among the Gentiles, and they in circumcision only, might be mindful of the poor, the which to do I was very careful. Hereby it appeareth, that Paul had not his authority of Peter to convert the Gentiles, to baptize them, and to remit their sins, but of him which said unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. Here is Paul the head of the church, and not Peter; by which head they say, that all the members are sustained and made lively.

"The third error which the authors of the canons conceive in the said text of Christ, which was said to Peter, Unto thee will I give the keys, is this. They say that in this sentence which was said to Peter, of the authority to bind and loose, was meant, that as Christ gave unto Peter, above all the rest of the apostles, a special, and as it were an excellent power above all the apostles; even so, say they, he gave power unto the bishops of Rome, whom they call Peter's chief successors, the same special power and authority, exceeding the power of all other bishops of the world.

"The first part of this similitude and comparison doth appear manifestly by the premises to be erroneous; wherein is plainly showed, that the other apostles had equal power with Peter to bind and loose. Wherefore consequently it followeth the second part of the similitude, grounded upon the same text, to be also erroneous. But and if the first part of the said similitude were truth, as it is not, yet the second part must needs be an error, wherein is said, that the bishops of Rome are Peter's chief successors. For although there be but one catholic Christian church of all the faithful sort converted, yet the first part thereof, and first converted, was of the Jews, the second of the Greeks, and the third part was of the Romans or Latins: whereof the first part was most perfectly converted unto the faith, for that they faithfully observed the perfection of charity, as appeareth in the Acts of the Apostles, chap. ii., by the multitude of the believers. They were of one heart and one soul, neither called they any thing that they possessed their own, but all was common amongst them.

"Hereupon Paul to the Romans, chap. i.: Salutation to every believer, first to the Jew, and to the Greeks after the Jews. The Greeks were the second, and after the Jews next converted; and after them the Romans, taking their information of the Greeks, as appeareth by the chronicles, although indeed some Romans were converted unto the faith by Peter and Paul; and as Christ said thrice unto Peter, Feed my sheep, so Peter ruled these three churches, as witnesseth the chronicles. But first he reformed the church of the Jews in Jerusalem and Judea, as appeareth by the testimony of the Acts of the Apostles; for, chap. i., it is manifest how Peter, standing up amongst his brethren, spake unto them concerning the election of an apostle in the place of Judas the traitor, alleging places unto them out of the Scripture, that another should take upon him his apostleship: and so by lot was Matthias constituted in the twelfth place of Judas. Acts ii., after that the Holy Ghost was come upon the apostles, and that they spake with the tongues of all men, the hearers were astonished at the miracle; and some mocked them, saying, These men are full of new wine: but Peter stood up and spake unto them, saying, That it was fulfilled in them that was prophesied by Joel the prophet. And he preached unto the people Christ, whom they of ignorance had put to death; to whom was a Saviour promised by the testimony of the prophets. And when they heard the words of Peter, they were pricked at the heart, saying unto him and the rest of the apostles, What shall we then do? And Peter said unto them, Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost. And there were joined unto them the same day about three thousand souls. And Acts iii. — v., it appeareth that Peter, above the rest, did those things which belonged to the ministry of the apostleship, as well in preaching as in answering. Whereupon some chronicles say, that Peter governed the church of the Jews at Jerusalem four years before he governed Antioch. And by the testimony of Paul to the Galatians, chap. ii., as before is said, the gospel of the uncircumcision is committed to Paul, even as the circumcision to Peter; and he that wrought with Peter in the apostleship of circumcision, wrought with Paul amongst the Gentiles; whereby it appeareth that the church of the Jews was committed to the government of Peter. And in the process of the Acts of the Apostles it appeareth, that Peter believed that the faith of Christ was not to be preached unto those Gentiles, which always lived in uncleanness of idolatry. But when Peter was at Joppa, Cornelius, a Gentile, sent unto him that he would come and show him the way of life: but Peter, a little before the coming of the messengers of Cornelius, being in his chamber, after he had prayed, fell in a trance, and saw heaven open, and a certain vessel descending even as a great sheet, letten down by four corners from heaven to earth; in the which were all manner of four-footed beasts, serpents of the earth, and fowls of the air. And a voice spake unto him, saying, Arise, Peter, kill and eat: and Peter said, Not so, Lord, because I have never eaten any common or unclean thing. This was done thrice. And Peter descended, not knowing what the vision did signify, and found the messengers of Cornelius.

"As concerning the authority judicial of the clergy, many things are written thereof in the canons of decrees greatly to be marvelled at, and far from the truth of the Scripture. The authors of the canons say, that Christ gave unto the priests power judicial over sinners that confessed their sins unto them. And this they ground upon the text of Christ, I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou loosest, &c. And these keys of the kingdom of heaven they call the knowledge to discern, and the power to judge, which they say only belongeth to the priests, except in case of necessity; then they say a layman may absolve a man from sin. And as touching absolution, they say there are three things to be required on the

sinner's part: first, hearty contrition, whereby the sinner ought to bewail his offending of God through sins. The second is, auricular confession, whereby the sinner ought to show unto the priest his sins, and the circumstances of them. The third is, satisfaction through penance enjoined unto him by the priest for his sins committed. And of his part that giveth absolution there are two things, say they, to be required: that is to say, knowledge to discern one sin from another; whereby he ought to make a difference of sins, and appoint a convenient penance, according to the quantity of the sins. The second is, authority to judge, whereby he ought to enjoin penance to the offender. And further they say, that he that is confessed ought with all humility to submit himself to this authority, and wholly and voluntarily to do those penances which are commanded him by the priest, except the said penance be released by a superior power; for all priests, as they say, have not equal authority to absolve sins. The chief priest, whom they call Peter's successor, hath power fully and wholly to absolve. But the inferior priests have power, some more, some less. The more, as they are near him in dignity; the less, as they are further from the degree of his dignity. All this is declared by process in the decrees, but not by the express doctrine of Christ, or of any of his apostles; for although Christ absolved men from their sins, I do not find that he did it after the manner of a judge, but of a Saviour. For Christ saith, God sent not his Son into the world to judge sinners, but that the world should be saved by him, John iii. Whereupon he spake unto him whom he healed of the palsy, Behold, thou art made whole, go thy ways and sin no more: and to the woman taken in adultery Christ said, Woman, where be thy accusers? hath no man condemned thee? who said, No man, Lord. To whom then Jesus thus said, No more will I condemn thee; go, and sin no more, John v.

"By which words and deeds of Christ, and many other places of the Scripture, it appeareth he was not, as a judge, at his first coming, to punish sinners according to the quantity of their offences; but that day shall come hereafter, wherein he shall judge all men, according to their works, as in Matt. xxv., where he saith, When the Son of man shall come in his majesty, and all his angels with him, then shall he sit upon the seat of his majesty, and all nations shall be gathered together before him, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats, &c. Neither shall he judge alone, but his saints also with him: for he saith, You that have followed me in this generation, when the Son of man shall sit in the seat of his majesty, shall sit also upon twelve seats, and judge the twelve tribes of Israel. If then Christ came not as a judge, why do the priests say, that they supply the room of Christ on earth, to judge sinners according to the quantity of their offences? And yet not only this, but it is more to be marvelled at, how the bishop of Rome dareth to take upon him to be a judge before the day of judgment, and to prevent the time, judging some to be saints in heaven, and to be honoured of men, and some again to be tormented in hell eternally with the devils. Would God these men would weigh the saying of St. Paul, 1 Cor. iv., Judge ye not before the time until the coming of the Lord, who shall make light the dark and secret places, and disclose the secrets of hearts, and then every one shall have his praise. Let the bishop of Rome take heed, lest that in Ezekiel be spoken of him, Because thy heart is elevate, and thou saidst unto thyself, I am God, I have sitten in the seat of God, and in the heart of the sea, when thou art but man, and not God. It is manifest that the remission of sins principally belongeth to God, who, through grace, washeth away our sins. For it is said, The Lamb of God taketh away the sins of the world. And unto Christians it belongeth as the ministers of God. For in John xx. Christ saith, Receive unto you the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose sins

you shall retain, they are retained. Seeing, therefore, that all Christians that are baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, receive the Holy Ghost, it appeareth that they have power given to them of Christ, to remit sins ministerially. Hath not every Christian (according to the principles and practice of the Church of Rome) authority to baptize? and in the baptism all the sins of the baptized are remitted. Ergo, they that do baptize do remit sins. And thus ministerially all such have power to remit sins. I pray you, how are the sins remitted him that is baptized of the priest, (yea, although he were of the pope himself baptized,) more than if he were baptized of another Christian? Surely I think no more. For seeing that before baptism he remaineth a sinner, and of the kingdom of the devil by sin, after baptism he entereth into the kingdom of heaven; it appeareth that he that doth baptize, openeth the gate of the kingdom of heaven to him that is baptized, the which he cannot do without the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Therefore every one that doth baptize, hath the keys of the kingdom of heaven; as well the inferior priest, as the pope. But these keys are not the knowledge to discern, and power to judge, because these do nothing avail in baptism. Ergo, there are other keys of the kingdom of heaven than these. Wherefore it seemeth that the authors of the canons erred in mistaking the keys, whereupon they ground the authority judicial of the clergy.

"Now a little error in the beginning granted, groweth to great inconvenience in the end. Wherefore, in my judgment, it seemeth that the keys of the kingdom of heaven are faith and hope. For by faith in Jesus Christ, and hope in him for the remission of sins, we enter the kingdom of heaven. This faith is a spiritual water, springing from Jesus Christ the fountain of wisdom, wherein the soul of the sinner is washed from sin. With this water were the faithful patriarchs baptized before the law; and the faithful people of the Hebrews, and the faithful Christians, after the law. Wherefore I greatly marvel at that saying in the decrees, which is ascribed unto Augustine, that little children that are not baptized shall be tormented with eternal fire, although they were born of faithful parents, that wished them with all their hearts to have been baptized: as though the sacrament of baptism in water were simply necessary to salvation, when nevertheless many Christians are saved without this kind of baptism, as martyrs. If that kind of sacrament be not necessary to one of elder years, how then is it necessary to an infant born of the faithful? Are not all baptized with the Holy Ghost, and with fire? but yet not with material fire; no more is the lotion of water corporally necessary to wash away sins, but only spiritual water, that is to say, the water of faith. Are not the quick baptized for them that are dead? as witnesseth Paul, 1 Cor. xv., If the dead rise not at all, why are the living then baptized for them? If the living be baptized for the dead, why then is not the infant saved by the baptism of his parents; seeing the infant itself is impotent at the time of death, and not able to require baptism? Christ saith, He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. He saith not, he that is not baptized, but he that believeth not, shall be damned. Wherefore in the 12th chapter of John Christ saith, I am the resurrection and life; he that believeth in me, yea, although he were dead, shall live. The faith, therefore, is necessary which the infant hath in his faithful parents, although he be not washed with corporal water. How then is the infant damned and tormented with eternal fire? Were not they that were before the coming of Christ, and dead before his death by a thousand years, saved also by his death and passion? All that believed in him were baptized in his blood, and so were saved and redeemed from sin and the bondage of the devil, and made partakers of the kingdom of heaven. How then in the time of grace shall the infant be damned that is born of faithful parents, that do not despise, but rather desire, to have their children baptized? I dare not consent to so hard a

sentence of the decrees; but rather believe that he is saved by virtue of the passion of Christ in faith of his faithful parents, and the hope which they have in Christ; which faith and hope are the keys of the heavenly kingdom. God were not just and merciful, if he would condemn a man that believeth not in him, except he showed unto him the faith which he ought to believe. And therefore Christ saith, If I had not come and spoken unto them, sin could not have been laid unto their charge, but now they have no excuse of sin. Therefore seeing the faith of Christ is not manifest unto the infant departing before baptism, neither hath he denied it, how then shall he be damned for the same? But if God speaketh inwardly by way of illumination of the intelligence of the infant, as he speaketh unto angels, who then knoweth (save God alone) whether the infant receiveth or not receiveth the faith of Christ? What is he, therefore, that so rashly doth take upon him to judge the infants begotten of faithful parents dying without baptism, to be tormented with eternal fire?

"Now let us consider the three things which the canons of decrees affirm to be requisite for the remission of the sins of those that sin after baptism; that is to say, contrition of heart, auricular confession, and satisfaction for the deed through penance enjoined by the priest for the sins committed. I cannot find in any place in the gospel, where Christ commanded that this kind of confession should be done unto the priest; nor can I find that Christ assigned any penance unto sinners for their sins, but that he willed them to sin no more. If a sinner confess that he hath offended God through sin, and sorroweth heartily for his offences, minding hereafter no more to sin, then is he truly repentant for his sin, and then he is converted unto the Lord. If he shall then, humbly and with good hope, crave mercy at God and remission of his sins, what is he that can let God to absolve that sinner from his sin? And as God absolveth a sinner from his sin, so hath Christ absolved many, although they confessed not their sins unto the priests, and although they received not due penance for their sins. And if Christ could, after that manner, once absolve sinners, how is he become now not able to absolve, except some man will say that he is above Christ, and that his power is minished by the ordinances of his own laws? How were sinners absolved of God in the time of the apostles, and always heretofore, unto the time that these canons were made? I speak not these things as though confession to priests were wicked, but that it is not of necessity requisite unto salvation. I believe verily that the confession of sins unto good priests, and likewise to other faithful Christians, is good, as witnesseth St. James the apostle: Confess ye yourselves one to another, and pray ye one for another, that ye may be saved; for the continual fervent prayer of the just availeth much. Elias was a man that suffered many things like unto you, and he prayed that it should not rain upon the earth, and it rained not in three years and six months. And again he prayed, and it rained from heaven, and the earth yielded forth her fruit. This kind of confession is good, profitable, and expedient; for if God peradventure heareth not a man's own prayer, he is helped with the intercession of others. Yet, nevertheless, the prayers of the priests seem too much to be extolled in the decrees, where they treat of penitence, and that saying is ascribed unto Pope Leo, dist. 1. cap. *Multiplex misericordiae Dei*, &c. And it followeth, So is it ordained by the providence of God's divine will, that the mercy of God cannot be obtained but by the prayer of the priests, &c. The prayer of a good priest doth much avail a sinner, confessing his faults unto him. The counsel of a discreet priest is very profitable for a sinner, to give the sinner counsel to beware hereafter to sin, and to instruct him how he shall punish his body by fasting, by watching, and such-like acts of repentance, that hereafter he may be better preserved from sin.

"After this manner I esteem confession to priests very expedient and profitable to a sinner. But to confess sins unto the priest as unto a judge, and to receive of him corporal penance as a satisfaction unto God for his sins committed; I see not how this can be founded upon the truth of the Scripture. For before the coming of Christ, no man was sufficient or able to make satisfaction unto God for his sins, although he suffered never so much penance for his sins. And therefore it was needful that he that was without sin, should be punished for sins, as witnesseth Isaiah, chap. liii. 4, where he saith, He took our griefs upon him, and our sorrows he bare. And again, He was wounded for our iniquities, and vexed for our wickedness. And again, The Lord put upon him our iniquity. And again, For the wickedness of my people have I stricken him. If, therefore, Christ through his passion hath made satisfaction for our sins, whereas we ourselves were unable to do it; then through him have we grace and remission of sins. How can we say now, that we are sufficient to make satisfaction unto God by any penance enjoined unto us by man's authority, seeing that our sins are more grievous after baptism, than they were before the coming of Christ? Therefore, as in baptism the pain of Christ in his passion was a full satisfaction for our sins; even so after baptism, if we confess that we have offended, and be heartily sorry for our sins, and mind not to sin again afterwards.

"Hereupon John writeth in his First Epistle, chap. i. 8: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just, he will remit them, and cleanse us from all our iniquities. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. My well-beloved children, thus I write unto you, that ye sin not; but if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world. Therefore we ought to confess ourselves chiefly unto God, even from the heart, for that he chiefly doth remit sins, without whose absolution little availeth the absolution of man. This kind of confession is profitable and good. The authors of the canons say, that although auricular confession made unto the priest be not expressly taught by Christ, yet, say they, it is taught in that saying which Christ said unto the diseased of the leprosy, whom he commanded, Go your ways and show yourselves unto the priests; because, as they say, the law of cleansing lepers, which was given by Moses, signified the confession of sins unto the priest. And whereas Christ commanded the lepers to show themselves unto the priests, they say, that Christ meant, that those that were unclean with the leprosy of sin, should show their sins unto the priests by auricular confession. I marvel much at the authors of the canons; for, even from the beginning of their decrees unto the end, they ground their sayings upon the old law, which was the law of sin and death, and not (as witnesseth Paul) upon the words of Christ, which are spirit and life. Christ saith, The words which I speak unto you, are spirit and life. They ground their sayings in the shadow of the law, and not in the light of Christ: For every evil-doer hateth the light, and cometh not unto it, that his deeds be not reproved; but he that doth the truth, cometh into the light, that his works may be openly seen, because they are done in God, John iii. 20, 21.

"Now let us pass to the words that Christ spake to the leper: Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus stretching forth his hand touched him, saying, I will, be thou clean; and straightways he was cleansed of his leprosy. And Jesus said unto him, See thou tell no man, but go and show thyself to the priests, and offer the gifts that Moses commanded for a witness of these things. This Gospel witnesseth plainly, that the diseased of the lepers were cleansed only by Christ, and not by the

priests: neither did Christ command the leper to show himself unto the priests, for any help of cleansing that he should receive of the priests; but to fulfil the law of Moses, in offering a sacrifice for his cleansing, and for a testimony unto the priests, who always of envy accused Christ as a transgressor of the law. For if Christ, after he had cleansed the leper, had licensed him to communicate with others that were clean, before he had showed himself cleansed unto the priests, then might the priests have accused Christ as a transgressor of the law; because it was a precept of the law, that the leper, after he was cleansed, should show himself unto the priests. And they had signs in the book of the law, whereby they might judge whether he were truly cleansed or no. And if he were cleansed, then would the priests offer a gift for his cleansing; and if he were not cleansed, then would they segregate him from the company of others that were clean. Seeing every figure ought to be assimilated unto the thing that is figured, I pray you then what agreement is there between the cleansing of lepers by the law, and the confession of sins? By that law the priest knew better whether he were leprous than he himself that had the leprosy. In confession, the priest knew not the sins of him that was confessed, but by his own confession. In that law the priest did not cleanse the leprous. How now therefore ought the priests to cleanse sinners from their sin, and that without them they cannot be cleansed? In this law the priest had certain signs, by the which he could certainly know whether a man were cleansed from his leprosy or not. In confession the priest is not certain of the cleansing of sins, because he is ignorant of his contrition. He knoweth not also whether he will not sin any more; without the which contrition and granting to sin no more, God hath not absolved any sinner. And if God hath not absolved a man, without doubt then is he not made clean. And how then is confession figured under that law? Doubtless so it seemeth to me, (under the correction of them that can judge better in the matter,) that this law beareth rather a figure of excommunication, and reconciliation of him that hath been obstinate in his sin, and is reconciled again. For so it appeareth by the process of the gospel, that when the sinner doth not amend for the private correction of his brother, nor for the correction of two or three, neither yet for the public correction of the whole church; then is he to be counted as an ethnic and a publican, and as a certain leper to be avoided out of the company of all men. Which sinner, notwithstanding, if he shall yet repent, is then to be reconciled, because he is then cleansed from his obstinacy.

"But he which pretendeth himself to be the chief vicar of Christ, and the high priest, saith that he hath power to absolve *a pœna et culpa*. But I do not find it is founded in the Scripture, that of his own authority he may enjoin to sinners penance for their sins. And grant that from their sins he may well absolve them, yet from the pain (which they call *a pœna*) he doth not simply absolve, as in his indulgences he promiseth. But if he were in charity, and had such power as he pretendeth, he would suffer none to lie in purgatory for sin: forasmuch as that pain doth far exceed all other pain which here we suffer, what man is therebeing in charity, but if he see his brother to be tormented in this world, if he may, he will help him and deliver him? Much more ought the pope then to deliver out of pains of purgatory, indifferently, as well rich as poor. And if he sell to the rich his indulgences, doublewise, yea treblewise, he seduceth them. First, in promising them to deliver them out of the pain from whence he doth not, neither is able to deliver them; and so maketh them falsely to believe that which they ought not to believe. Secondly, he deceiveth them of their money, which he taketh for his indulgences. Thirdly, he seduceth them in this, that he, promising to deliver them from pain, doth induce them into grievous punishment indeed, for the heresy of simony, which both of them do commit, and, therefore, are worthy both of

great pain to fall upon them: for so we read that Jesus cast out buyers and sellers out of his temple. Also Peter said unto Simon, the first author of this heresy, Thy money, said he, with thee be destroyed, for that thou hast thought the gift of God to be possessed for money. Moreover, whereas Christ saith, Freely you have received, freely give; and whereas, contrary, the pope doth sell that thing which he hath taken; what doubt is there, but that he doth grievously deserve to be punished, both he that selleth, and he that buyeth, for the crime of simony which they commit? Over and besides, by many reasons and authorities of the Scripture it may be proved, that he doth not absolve a man contrite for his sins, although he do absolve him from the guilt.

"But this marvelleth me, that he, in his indulgences, promiseth to absolve men from all manner of deadly sins, and yet cannot absolve a man from debt; forasmuch as the debt which we owe to God, is of much greater importance than is the debt of our brother. Wherefore, if he be able to remit the debt due to God, much more it should seem that he is able to forgive the debt of our brother.

"Another thing there is that I marvel at, for that the pope showeth himself more strait in absolving a priest for not saying, or negligently saying, his matins, than for transgressing the commandment of God; considering that the transgression of the commandment of God, is much more grievous than the breach of man's commandment.

"For these and many other errors concurring, in this matter of the pope's absolutions, blessed be God, and honour be unto him, for the remission of our sins. And let us firmly believe and know, that he doth and will absolve us from our sins, if we be sorry from the bottom of our hearts that we have offended him, having a good purpose and will to offend him no more. And let us be bold to resort unto good and discreet priests, who, with wholesome discretion and sound counsel, can instruct us, how to avoid the corruption of sin hereafter. And which, because they are better than we, may pray to God for us; whereby we may both obtain sooner the remission of our sins past, and also may learn better how to avoid the danger of sin to come."

And thus much concerning the judgment and doctrine of this Walter for Christian patience, charity, and mercy; which, as they be true and infallible notes and marks of true Christianity, so the said Walter Brute, making comparison herein between Christ and the pope, goeth about purposely to declare and manifest, whereby all men may see, what contrariety there is between the rule of Christ's teaching, and the proceedings of the pope; between the examples and life of the one, and the examples of the other. Of which two, as one is altogether given to peace, so is the other, on the contrary side, as much disposed to wars, murder, and bloodshed, as is easy to be seen. Whoso looketh not upon the outward shows and pretended words of these Romish popes, but adviseth and considereth the inward practices and secret works of them, shall easily espy, under the visor of peace, what discord and debate they work; who bearing outwardly the meek horns of the lamb mentioned in the Apocalypse, within do bear the bowels of a wolf, full of cruelty, murder, and bloodshed. Which, if any do think to be spoken of me contumeliously, would God that man could prove as well the same to be spoken of me not truly! But truth it is, I speak it sincerely, without affection of blind partiality, according to the truth of histories both old and new. Thus, under *in Dei nomine, Amen*, how unmercifully doth the pope condemn his brother! And while he pretended not to be lawful for him to kill any man, what thousands of men hath he killed! And likewise in this sentence,

pretending *in visceribus Jesu Christi*, as though he would be a mediator to the magistrate for the party; yet, indeed, will he be sure to excommunicate the magistrate, if he execute not the sentence given. Who be true heretics, the Lord when he cometh shall judge; but give them to be heretics whom he condemneth for heretics, yet what "bowels of mercy" is here, where is nothing but burning, faggoting, drowning, poisoning, chaining, famishing, racking, hanging, tormenting, threatening, reviling, cursing, and oppressing; and no instructing, nor yet indifferent hearing of them, what they can say? The like cruelty also may in their wars appear, if we consider how Pope Urban the Fifth, beside the racking and murdering of seven or eight cardinals, set up Henry Spencer, bishop of Norwich, to fight against the French pope Innocent the Fourth was in war himself against the Apulians. Likewise Alexander the Fourth, his successor, stirred up the son of King Henry the Third to fight against the son of Frederic the Second, emperor, for Apulia. Boniface the Eighth moved Albertus, which stood to be emperor, to drive Philip, the French king, out of his realm. Gregory the Ninth excited Louis, the French king, three sundry times to mortal war against the Earl Raimund, and city of Toulouse, and Avignon, where Louis, the said French king, died. Honorius the Third, by strength of war, many ways resisted Frederic the Second, and sent out thirty-five galleys against the coasts of the emperor's dominions. The same pope also besieged Ferrara. To pass over the war at Ticinum, with many other battles and conflicts of popes against the Romans, Venetians, and divers other nations, Innocent the Third set up Philip, the French king, to war against King John. What stir Pope Gregory the Seventh, otherwise named Hildebrand, kept against the emperor, Henry the Fourth, it is not unknown. And who is able to recite all the wars, battles, and fields, fought by the stirring up of the pope? These, with many other like examples considered, did cause this Walter Brute to write in this manner so as he did, making yet thereof no universal proposition, but that Christian magistrates, in case of necessity, might make resistance in defence of public right. Now he proceedeth further to other matter of the sacrament.

"Touching the matter," saith he, "of the sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, divers men have divers opinions, as the learned do know. As concerning my judgment upon the same, I firmly believe whatsoever the Lord Jesus taught implicitly or expressly to his disciples and faithful people to be believed. For he is, as I believe and know, the true bread of God which descended from heaven, and giveth life to the world: of which bread whosoever eateth, shall live for ever; as it is in the 6th of John declared. Before the coming of Christ in the flesh, although men did live in body, yet in spirit they did not live, because all men were then under sin, whose souls thereby were dead; from the which death no man, by the law, nor with the law, was justified: For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified, Gal. ii. And again, in the same Epistle, chap. iii., That by the law no man is justified before God, it is manifest; for the just man shall live by his faith: the law is not of faith; but whosoever hath the works thereof, shall live in them. And again in the same chapter: If the law had been given, which might have justified, then our righteousness had come by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise might be sure by the faith of Jesus Christ to all believers. Moreover, before that faith came, they were kept and concluded all under the law, until the coming of that faith which was to be revealed. For the law was our schoolmaster in Christ Jesus, that we should be justified by faith. Also the said Paul, Rom. v. 20, saith, That the law entered in the mean time, that sin might more abound. Where then sin hath more abounded, there hath also grace superabounded; that like as sin hath reigned unto death, so that grace might also reign by righteousness unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our

Lord. Whereby it is manifest, that by the faith which we have in Christ, believing him to be the true Son of God which came down from heaven to redeem us from sin, we are justified from sin; and so do live by him, which is the true bread and meat of the soul. And the bread which Christ gave is his flesh given for the life of the world, John vi. For he being God, came down from heaven, and being truly carnal man, did suffer in the flesh for our sins, which in his Divinity he could not suffer. Wherefore like as we believe by our faith that he is true God; so must we also believe that he is true man. And then do we eat the bread of heaven, and the flesh of Christ. And if we believe that he did voluntarily shed his blood for our redemption, then do we drink his blood.

"And thus, except we eat the flesh of the Son of man, and shall drink his blood, we have not eternal life in us; because the flesh of Christ verily is meat, and his blood is drink indeed; and whosoever eateth the flesh of Christ and drinketh his blood, abideth in Christ and Christ in him, And as in this world the souls of the faithful live, and are refreshed spiritually, with this heavenly bread, and with the flesh and blood of Christ; so in the world to come, the same shall live eternally in heaven, refreshed with the Deity of Jesus Christ, as touching the most principal part thereof, that is, to wit, *intellectum*: forasmuch as this bread of heaven, in that it is God, hath in itself all delectable pleasantness. And as touching the intelligible powers of the same, as well exterior as interior, they are refreshed with the flesh, that is to say, with the humanity, of Jesus Christ; which is as a queen standing on the right hand of God, decked with a golden robe of divers colours: for this queen of heaven alone, by the word of God, is exalted above the company of all the angels; that by her all our corporal power intellective may fully be refreshed, as is our spiritual intelligence with the beholding of the Deity of Jesus Christ, and even as the angels shall we be fully satisfied. And in the memory of this double refection, present in this world and in the world to come, hath Christ given unto us, for eternal blessedness, the sacrament of his body and blood in the substance of bread and wine; as it appeareth in Matt. xxvi. 26: As the disciples sat at supper, Jesus took bread and blessed it, brake it, and gave it unto his disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my body: and he took the cup, and thanked, and gave it them, saying, Drink ye all of this, this is my blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for many for the remission of sins. And Luke in his Gospel, chap. xxii., of this matter thus writeth: And after he had taken the bread, he gave thanks, he brake it, and gave it unto them, saying, This is my body which shall be given for you; do you this in my remembrance. In like manner he took the cup after supper, saying, This is the cup of the new testament in my blood, which shall be shed for you. That Christ said, This is my body, in showing to them the bread, I firmly believe, and know that it is true; that Christ, forasmuch as he is God, is the very truth itself, and, by consequence, all that he saith is true. And I believe that the very same was his body, in such wise as he willed it to be his body; for in that he is almighty, he hath done whatsoever pleased him. And as in Cana of Galilee he changed the water into wine, really, so that after the transubstantiation it was wine, and not water; so when he said, This is my body, if he would have had the bread really to be transubstantiated into his very body, so that after this changing it should have been his natural body, and not bread as it was before, I know that it must needs have been so. But I find not in the Scripture, that his will was to have any such real transubstantiation or mutation.

"And as the Lord God Omnipotent, in his perfection essential being the Son of God, doth exceed the most pure creature, and yet when it pleased him he took upon him our nature, remaining really God as he was before, and was really made man; so

that after this assuming of our substance, he was really very God and very man; even so, if he would, when he said, This is my body, he could make this to be his body really, the bread still really remaining as it was before. For less is the difference of the essence between bread and the body of a man, than between the Deity and humanity, because that of the bread is naturally made the body of a man. Of the bread is made blood; of the blood, natural seed; and of natural seed the natural substance of man is engendered. But in that that God became man, this is an action supernatural. Wherefore, he that could make one man to be very God and very man, could, if he would, make one thing to be really very bread, and his very body. But I do not find it expressly in the Scripture, that he would any such identity or conjunction to be made. And, as Christ said, I am very bread, not changing his essence or being into the essence or substance of bread, but was the said Christ which he was before really, and yet bread by a similitude or figurative speech; so, if he would, it might be, when he said, This is my body, that this should really have been the bread as it was before, and sacramentally or memorially to be his body. And this seemeth unto me most nearly to agree to the meaning of Christ, forasmuch as he said, Do this in remembrance of me. Then, forasmuch as in the supper it is manifest that Christ gave unto his disciples the bread of his body, which he brake, to that intent to eat with their mouths, in which bread he gave himself also unto them, as one in whom they should believe, (as to be the food of the soul,) and by that faith they should believe him to be their Saviour which took his body, wherein also he willed it to be manifest, that he would redeem them from death; so was the bread eaten with the disciples' mouths, that he, being the true bread of the soul, might be in spirit received and eaten spiritually by their faith which believed in him.

"The bread which in the disciples' mouths was chewed, from the mouth passed to the stomach. For as Christ saith, Whatsoever cometh to the mouth, goeth into the belly, and from thence into the draught, Matt. xv. 17. But that true and very bread of the soul was eaten of the spirit of the disciples, and by faith entered their minds, and abode in their inward parts through love. And so the bread broken seemeth unto me to be really the meat of the body, and the bread which it was before; but, sacramentally, to be the body of Christ; as Paul, I Cor. x. 16, The bread which we break, is it not the participation of the body of the Lord? So the bread which we break is the participation of the Lord's body: and it is manifest that the heavenly bread is not broken, neither yet is subject to such breaking, therefore Paul calleth the material bread which is broken, the body of Christ, which the faithful are partakers of. The bread therefore changeth not its essence, but is bread really, and is the body of Christ sacramentally: even as Christ is the very vine, abiding really and figuratively the vine; so the temple of Jerusalem was really the material temple, and, figuratively, it was the body of Christ, because he said, Destroy you this temple, and in three days I will repair the same again. And this spake he of the temple of his body; whereas others understood it to be the material temple, as appeared by their answer. For, said they, Forty and seven years hath this temple been in building, and wilt thou build it up in three days?

"Even so may the consecrated bread be really bread, as it was before, and yet, figuratively, the body of Christ. And if, therefore, Christ would have this bread to be only sacramentally his body, and would not have the same bread actually to be transubstantiated into his body, and so ordained his priests to make this sacrament as a memorial of his passion, then do the priests grievously offend, which beseech Christ in the holy mass, that the bread which lieth upon the altar may be made really the body of Christ, if he would only have the same to be but a sacrament of his body; and

then both be they greatly deceived themselves, and also do greatly deceive others. But whether the bread be really transubstantiated into the body of Christ, or is only the body of Christ sacramentally, no doubt but that the people are marvellously deceived; for the people believe that they see the body of Christ, nay rather Christ himself, between the hands of the priests, for so is the common oath they swear, By him whom I saw this day between the priest's hands. And the people believe that they eat not the body of Christ but at Easter, or else when they lie upon their death-bed, and receive with their bodily mouth the sacrament of the body of Christ. But the body of Christ, (admit the bread be transubstantiated really into the body) is in the sacrament not able to be divided; and so, not able to be measured: ergo, not able to be seen. To believe therefore that he may be seen corporally in the sacrament, is erroneous. And forasmuch as the body of Christ is the soul's food, and not the food of the body in this world, for that whosoever believeth doth eat spiritually and really, at any time when he so believeth; it is manifest that they do greatly err which believe that they eat not the body of Christ, but when they eat with their teeth the sacrament of the body of Christ.

"And although it should be to the great honour of priests, that the bread really were changed into the body of Christ, by the virtue of the sacramental words pronounced; yet if Christ would not have it to be so, then they, desiring to do this contrary to the will of Christ, and informing the people what is to be done, so contrary to the will of Christ, are in great peril, most dangerously seducing both themselves and the people. And then, although that hereby they get a little worldly and transitory honour for a short time, it is to be feared lest perpetual shame finally shall follow and ensue upon the same; for Christ saith, Every one that exalteth himself shall be brought low. Let them therefore take heed, lest they, extolling themselves for this sacrament above the company of angels which never sinned, for the error which they be in, for evermore be placed with the sinful angels under the earth.

"Let every man therefore think lowly of himself, in what state or degree soever he be; neither let him presume to do that which he is not able to do; neither desire to have that thing done, which God would not have done.

"I greatly marvel at those which were the makers of the canons, how variably, and contrary one to another, they write of this sacrament of the body of Christ. In the last part of the decrees where this matter is touched, not only in the text, but also in the process of the matter, divers do diversely write, and one contrary to another. For in the chapter that thus beginneth, *Prima inquit hæresis*, it is thus written, You shall not eat this body which you see, nor shall drink this blood which they shall shed which shall crucify me: I will commend unto you a certain sacrament spiritually understood that quickeneth you; for the flesh profiteth you nothing at all. And in the end of the same chapter it is thus written, Till the world shall have an end, the Lord's place is in heaven: yet notwithstanding the verity of the Lord is here abiding with us. For the body wherewith he rose ought to be in one place; but his verity is in every place diffused and spread abroad. And in the chapter following, which thus beginneth, *Omnia quaecunque voluit, &c.*, it is written, Although the figure of the bread and wine seem to be nothing, yet, notwithstanding, they must, after the words of consecration, be believed to be none other thing than the very flesh of Christ, and his blood. Whereupon the Verity himself said unto his disciples, This is, saith he, my flesh, which is given for the life of the world, and to speak yet more marvellously, this is none other flesh than that which was born of the Virgin Mary, and suffered upon the cross, and rose out of the sepulchre.

"See how far this chapter differeth from the first. And in the chapter which beginneth, *Ego Berengarius, &c.*, this is the confession which Berengarius himself confessed touching this sacrament, and his confession is of the church allowed: 'I confess,' saith Berengarius, that the bread and wine which is laid upon the altar after the consecration, is not only a sacrament, but also that it is the very body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ: and the same not only sensually to be a sacrament, but also verily to be handled with the priest's hands, and to be broken, and chewed with the teeth of faithful men.' This confession doubtless is heretical: for why? If the body of Christ be in the sacrament (as of the church it is so determined) it is there then multiplicative, and so *indivisibiliter*, wherefore not *sensualiter*. And if it be there *indivisibiliter*, that is, in such sort as it cannot be divided or separated, then can it not be touched, felt, broken, nor with the teeth of men chewed.

"The writers of this time and age do affirm, that if, by the negligence of the priest, the sacrament be so negligently left, that a mouse, or any other beast or vermin, eat the same; then they say, that the sacrament returneth again into the nature and substance of bread. Whereby they must needs confess, that a miracle is as well wrought by the negligence of the priest, as first there was made by the consecration of the priest in making the sacrament. For either by the eating of the mouse the body of Christ is transubstantiated into the nature of bread, which is a transubstantiation supernatural, or else of nothing by creation is this bread produced; and therefore either of these operations is miraculous and to be marvelled at. Now, considering the disagreeing opinions of the doctors, and for the absurdities which follow, I believe with Paul, that the bread which we break, is the participation of the body of Christ; and, as Christ saith, that the bread is made the body of Christ for a memorial and remembrance of him. And in such sort as Christ willed the same to be his body, in the same manner and sort do I believe it to be his body.

"But, whether women may make the body of Christ, and minister it unto the people; or whether that priests be divided from the lay-people for their knowledge, pre-eminence, and sanctity of life, or else by external signs only; also, whether the sign of tonsure and other external signs of holiness in priests, be signs of antichrist and his characters, or else introduced and taught by our Lord Jesus Christ: consequently it remaineth next to speak thereof unto the faithful sort, according to the process of the Holy Scripture; and first, of the three kinds of the priests. I remember that I have read, the first of them to be Aaronical, legal, and temporal; the second to be eternal and regal, according to the order of Melchisedec; the third to be Christian. The first of these ceased at the coming of Christ; for that, as St. Paul to the Hebrews saith, The priesthood of Aaron was translated to the priesthood of the order of Melchisedec. The legal sort of priests of Aaron were separate from the rest of the people by kindred, office, and inheritance: by kindred, for that the children of Aaron only were priests: by office, for that it only pertained to them to offer sacrifice for the sins of the people, and to instruct the people in the precepts and ceremonies of the law: by inheritance, because the Lord was their portion of inheritance; neither had they any other inheritance amongst their brethren, but those things which were offered unto the Lord, as the first-fruits, parts of the sacrifices, and vows; except places for their mansion houses, for them and theirs, as appeareth by the process of Moses's law. The priesthood of Christ did much differ from this priesthood, as Paul doth witness to the Hebrews, chap. vii. — x.

"First, in kindred: because that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ came of the stock and tribe of Judah, of which tribe none had to do with the altar, and in which tribe nothing at all was spoken of the priests of Moses.

"Secondly, for that other were made priests without their oath taken; but he, by an oath by him which said, The Lord swore and it shall not repent him, Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedec.

"Thirdly, by durability; for that many of them were made priests but during the term of their lives; but he, for that he remaineth for ever, hath an eternal priesthood. Wherefore he is able to save us for ever, having by himself access unto God, which ever liveth to make intercession for us. The law made also such men priests as had infirmities; but *Sermo* (that is, the Word, which, according to the law, is the eternal Son and perfect) by an oath.

"The priesthood of Christ also did differ from the priesthood of Aaron and the law in the matter of the sacrifice, and in the place of sacrificing. In the matter of their sacrifice: because they did use in their sacrifices strange bodies of the matter of their sacrifices, and did shed strange blood for the expiation of sins; but he offering himself unto God his Father for us, shed his own blood for the remission of our sins. In the place of sacrificing: because that they did offer their sacrifice in the tabernacle or temple; but Christ suffering death without the gates of the city, offered himself upon the altar of the cross to God his Father, and there shed his precious blood. In his supping chamber, also, he blessed the bread, and consecrated the same for his body, and the wine which was in the cup he also consecrated for his blood; delivering the same to his apostles to be done for a commemoration and remembrance of his incarnation and passion. Neither did Jesus enter into the sanctuary made with man's hands, which be examples and figures of true things, but he entered into heaven itself, that he might appear before the Majesty of God for us. Neither doth he offer himself oftentimes, as the chief priest in the sanctuary did every year with strange blood (for then should he oftentimes have suffered from the beginning); but now once for all, in the latter end of the world, to destroy sin by his peace-offering hath he entered. And even as it is decreed, that man once shall die, and then cometh the judgment, so Christ hath been once offered, to take away the sins of many. The second time he shall appear without sin to them that look for him, to their salvation. For the law having a shadow of good things to come, can never, by the image itself of things, (which every year without ceasing they offer by such sacrifices,) make those perfect that come thereunto; for otherwise that offering should have ceased, because that such worshippers, being once cleansed from their sins, should have no more conscience of sin. But in these, commemoration is made every year of sin; for it is impossible that by the blood of goats and calves, sins should be purged and taken away. Therefore, coming into the world he said, Sacrifice and oblation thou wouldst not have, but a body hast thou given me; peace-offerings for sins have not pleased thee: then said I, Behold I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, that I should do thy will, O God: saying, as above, Because thou wouldst have no sacrifices nor burnt-offerings for sin, neither dost thou take pleasure in those things that are offered according to the law. Then said I, Behold I come, that I may do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first to establish that which followeth. In which will we are sanctified, by the oblation of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest is ready daily ministering, and oftentimes offering like sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Jesus, offering one sacrifice for sin, sitteth for evermore on the right hand of God, expecting

the time till his enemies be made his footstool. For by his own only oblation hath he consummated for evermore those that are sanctified.

"All these places have I recited which Paul writeth, for the better understanding and declaration of those things I mean to speak; by all which it appeareth manifestly, how the priesthood of Christ differeth from the legal priesthood of Aaron; and by the same also appeareth, how the same differeth from all other priesthood Christian, that imitateth Christ; for the properties of the priesthood of Christ, above recited, are found in no other priest, but in Christ alone.

"Of the third priesthood, that is, the Christian priesthood, Christ, by his express words, speaketh but little to make any difference between the priests and the rest of the people; neither yet doth use this name of *sacerdos*, in the gospel, but some he calleth disciples, some apostles, whom he sent to baptize and to preach, and in his name to do miracles. He calleth them the salt of the earth, in which name wisdom is meant; and he calleth them the light of the world, by which good living is signified: for he saith, Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. And Paul, speaking of the priests to Timothy and Titus, seemeth not to me to make any diversity betwixt the priests and the other people, but in that he would have them to surmount other in knowledge and perfection of life.

"But the fourth priesthood is the Roman priesthood, brought in by the Church of Rome; which church maketh a distinction between the clergy and the lay-people; and after that the clergy is divided into sundry degrees, as appeareth in the decretals. This distinction of the clergy from the laity, with the tonsure of clerks, began in the time of Anacletus, as it doth appear in the chronicles. The degrees of the clergy were afterward invented and distinguished by their offices, and there was no ascension to the degree of the priesthood, but by inferior orders and degrees. But in the primitive church it was not so; for immediately after the conversion of some of them to faith and baptism received; they were made priests and bishops; as appeareth by Anianus, whom Marcus made of a tailor or shoemaker to be a bishop; and of many other it was in like case done, according to the traditions of the Church of Rome. Priests are ordained to offer sacrifices, to make supplication and prayers, and to bless and sanctify. The oblation of the priesthood only to priests (as they say) is congruent; whose duties are upon the altar to offer for the sins of the people of the Lord's body, which is consecrated of bread. Of which saying I have great marvel, considering St. Paul's words to the Hebrews before recited. If Christ, offering for our sins one oblation for evermore, sitteth at the right hand of God, and with that one oblation hath consummated for evermore those that are sanctified; if Christ evermore sitteth at the right hand of God, to make intercession for us; what need he to leave here any sacrifice for our sins, by the priests to be daily offered? I do not find in the Scriptures of God, nor of his apostles, that the body of Christ ought to be made a sacrifice for sin; but only as a sacrament and commemoration of the sacrifice passed, which Christ offered upon the altar of the cross for our sins. For it is an absurdity to say that Christ is now every day really offered as a sacrifice upon the altar by the priests; for then the priests should really crucify him upon the altar, which is a thing of no Christian to be believed. But even as in his supper his body and his blood he delivered to his disciples, in memorial of his body that should be crucified on the morrow for our sins: so, after his ascension, did his apostles use the same (when they brake bread in every house) for a sacrament, and not for a sacrifice, of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. And by this means were they put in remembrance of the great love of

Christ, who so entirely loved us, that willingly he suffered the death for us, and for the remission of our sins. And thus did they offer themselves to God by love, being ready to suffer death for the confession of his name, and for the saving health of his brethren, fulfilling the new commandment of Christ, which said unto them, A new commandment do I give unto you, that you love one another, as I have loved you. But when love began to wax cold, or rather to be frozen for cold, through the anguish and anxiety of persecution for the name of Christ; then priests did use the flesh and blood of Christ, instead of a sacrifice. And because many of them feared death, some of them fled into solitary places, not daring to give themselves a sacrifice by death unto God through the confession of his name, and saving health of their brethren; some other worshipped idols, fearing death, as did also the chief bishop of Rome, and many other more in divers places of the world. And thus it came to pass, that that which was ordained and constituted for a memorial of the one and only sacrifice, was altered, for want of love, into the reality of the sacrifice itself."

After these things thus discussed, he inferreth consequently upon the same, another brief tractation of women and laymen; whether, in defect of the other, they may exercise the action of prayer, and administration of sacraments belonging to priests; where he declareth the use received in the pope's church for women to baptize, which, saith he, cannot be without remission of sins; wherefore seeing that women have power by the pope to remit sin, and to baptize, why may not they as well be admitted to minister the Lord's supper, in like case of necessity? Wherein also he maketh relation of Pope Joan the Eighth, a woman pope, moving certain questions of her. All which, for brevity, I pretermit, proceeding to the ministration of prayer, and blessing of sanctification, appropriate to the office of priests, as followeth:

"Furthermore, as touching the function and office of praying and blessing, whereunto priests seem to be ordained, (to omit here the question whether women may pray in churches, in lack of other meet persons,) it remaineth now also to prosecute. Christ, being desired of his disciples to teach them to pray, gave them the common prayer both to men and women, to the which prayer in my estimation no other is to be compared. For in that, first, the whole honour due unto the Deity is comprehended. Secondly, whatsoever is necessary for us, both for the time present, or past, or for time to come, is there desired and prayed for. He informeth us besides to pray secretly, and also briefly; secretly to enter into our close chamber, and there in secrecy he willet us to pray unto his Father. And saith, moreover, When ye pray, use not much babbling, or many words, as do the heathen; for they think in their long and prolix praying to be heard: therefore be you not like to them. By the which doctrine he calleth us away from the errors of the heathen Gentiles, from whom proceed these superstitious manners of arts, (or rather of ignorances,) as necromancy, the art of divination, and other species of conjuration, not unknown to them that be learned; for these necromancers believe one place to be of greater virtue than another; there to be heard sooner, than in another. Like as Balaam, being hired to curse the people of God by his art of soothsaying or charming, when he could not accomplish his purpose in one place, he removed to another; but he in the end was deceived of his desire: for he, intending first to curse them, was not able to accurse them whom the Lord blessed, so that his curse could not hurt any of all that people. After like sort the necromancers turn their face to the East, as to a place more apt for their prayers. Also the necromancers believe that the virtue of the words of the prayer, and the curiosity thereof, causeth them to bring to effect that which they seek after; which is also another point of infidelity, used much of charmers, sorcerers, enchanters, soothsayers,

and such like. Out of the same art, I fear, proceedeth the practice of exorcising, whereby devils and spirits be conjured to do that whereunto they are enforced by the exorcist. Also, whereby other creatures likewise are exorcised or conjured, so that, by the virtue of their exorcism, they may have their power and strength exceeding all natural operation.

"In the Church of Rome many such exorcisms and conjurations be practised, and are called of them benedictions, or hallowings. But here I ask of these exorcisers, whether they believe the things and creatures so exorcised and hallowed, have that operation and efficacy given them which they pretend? If they so believe, every child may see that they are far beguiled. For holy water, being of them exorcised or conjured, hath no such power in it, neither can have, which they in their exorcism do command. For there they enjoin and command, that wheresoever that water is sprinkled, all vexation or infestation of the unclean spirit should avoid, and that no pestilent spirit there should abide, &c. But most plain it is, that no water, be it never so holy, can have any such power so to do, as it is commanded; to wit, to be a universal remedy to expel all diseases.

"This I would ask of these exorcists: whether in their commanding they do conjure, or adjure, the things conjured to be of a higher virtue or operation, than their own nature doth give; or else whether they in their prayers desire of God, that he will infuse into them that virtue which they require? If they, in their commanding, do so believe, then do they believe that they have that power in them to the which the inferior power of the thing exorcised must obey, in receiving that which is commanded. And so doing, they are much more deceived, forasmuch as they see themselves, that they which are so authorized to the office of exorcising, say to the devil being conjured, Go, and he goeth not; and to another, Come, and he cometh not: and many things else they command the inferior spirit, their subject, to do, and he doth not. So, in like case, when they pray to God to make the water to be of such virtue, that it may be to them health of mind and body, and that it may be able to expulse every unclean spirit, and to chase away all manner of distemperature and pestilence of the air, (being an unreasonable petition asked, and sore displeasing to God,) it is to be feared lest their benediction, their hallowing and blessing, is changed into cursing, according to that saying that followeth: And now, O you priests, I have a message to say unto you; if you will not hear and bear well away in your minds, to give the glory unto my name, saith the Lord God of hosts, I will send scarcity amongst you, and I will curse your blessings. What things, and how many, were blessed or hallowed in the church, that in hallowing thereof displease God, and are accursed? And therefore, according to the saying of St. James, chap. iv., they ask and are not heard, because they ask not as they should, that they in their own desires may perish. Let a man behold the blessing or hallowing of their fire, water, incense, wax, bread, wine, the church, the altar, the churchyard, ashes, bells, copes, palms, oil, candles, salt, the hallowing of the ring, the bed, the staff, and of many such-like things; and I believe that a man shall find out many errors of the heathen magicians, witches, soothsayers, and charmers. And notwithstanding the ancient and old magicians, in their books, command those that be conjurers, that they in any wise live devoutly, (for otherwise, as they say, the spirits will not obey their commandments and conjurations,) yet the Roman conjurers do impute it to the virtue of the holy words, because they be they which work, and not the holiness of the conjurers. How cometh it to pass that, they say, the things consecrated of a cursed and vicious javel should have so great virtue in pronouncing (as they say) the holy and mystical words,

as if they were pronounced of a priest never so holy? But I marvel that they say so, reading this saying in the Acts of the Apostles: because the charmers pronouncing the name of Jesus, that is above all names, would have healed those that were possessed with devils, and said, In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preacheth, go ye out of the men; and the possessed with devils answered, Jesus we know, and Paul we know, but what are ye? And they all to be beat the conjurers.

"And now, considering this and many such-like things, I marvel wherefore the vicious priests do sell their prayers and blessings dearer (as also their masses and trentals of masses) than those that be devout laymen, and holy women, which, with all their heart, desire to flee from vices, and take hold of virtue: forasmuch as God, in divers places of the Scripture, doth promise that he will not hear sinners and wicked persons; neither should he seem to be just, if he should sooner hear the prayers of his enemies, than of his faithful friend. How, I pray you, shall a sinful priest deliver another man from sin by his prayers, or else from the punishment of sin, when he is not able to deliver himself, by his prayers, from sin? What then doth God so much accept in the mass of a vicious priest, that for his mass, his prayer or oblation, he might deliver any man either from sin, or from the pain due for sin? No, but for this, that Christ once offered himself for our sins, and now sitteth on the right hand of God the Father, always showing unto him what and how great things he hath suffered for us. And every priest always maketh mention in his mass of this oblation; neither do we this that we might bring the same oblation into the remembrance of God, because that he always, in his presence, seeth the same; but that we should have in remembrance this so great love of God, that he would give his own Son to death for our sins, that he might cleanse and purify us from our sins. What doth it please God, that the remembrance of so great love is made by a priest which more loveth sin than God? Or how can any prayer of such a priest please God, in what holy place soever he be, or what holy vestments soever he put on, or what holy prayers soever he maketh? And, whereas Christ and his apostles do command the preaching of the word of God, the priests be now more bound to celebrate the mass, and more straitly bound to say the canonical hours; whereat I cannot but greatly marvel. For why? To obey the precepts of men more than the commandments of God, is in effect to honour man as God, and to bestow the sacrifice upon man which is due unto God, and this is also spiritual fornication. How, therefore, are priests bound, at the commandment of man, to leave the preaching of the word of God, at whose commandment they are not bound to leave the celebration of the mass, or singing of matins? Therefore, as it seemeth, priests ought not, at the commandment of any man, to leave the preaching of the word of God, unto the which they are bound both by Divine and apostolical precepts. With whom agreeth the writing of Jerome upon the decretals, saying in this wise; Let none of the bishops swell with the envy of devilish temptation; let none be angry, if the priest do sometimes exhort the people; if they preach in the church, &c. For to him that forbiddeth me these things I will say, that he is unwilling that priests should do those things which be commanded of God. What thing is there above Christ? or what may be preferred before his body and his blood? &c.

"Do priests therefore sin or not, which bargain for money to pray for the soul of any dead man? It is well known that Jesus did whip those that were buyers and sellers out of the temple, saying, My house shall be called the house of prayer, but you have made the same a den of thieves. Truly he cast not out such merchants from out of the church, but because of their sins. Whereupon Jerome, upon this text, saith; Let the priest be diligent and take good heed in this church, that they turn not the house of

God into a den of thieves. He doubtless is a thief which seeketh gain by religion, and by a show of holiness studieth to find occasion of merchandise. Hereupon the holy canons do make simoniacal heresy accursed, and do command that those should be deprived of the priesthood, which, for the surpassing or marvellous spiritual grace, do seek gain or money. Peter, the apostle, said to Simon Magus, Let thy money and thou go both to the devil, which thinkest that the gifts of God may be bought for money. Therefore the spiritual gifts of God ought not to be sold.

"Verily prayer is the spiritual gift of God, as is also the preaching of the word of God, or the laying on of hands, or the administration of other the sacraments. Christ, sending forth his disciples to preach, said unto them, Heal ye the sick, cast out devils, raise the dead; freely ye have received, freely give ye again. If the priest have power by his prayers to deliver souls being in purgatory from grievous pains, without doubt he hath received that power freely from God. How, therefore, can he sell his act, unless he resist the commandments of God, of whom he hath received that authority? This truly cannot be done without sin, which is against the commandment of God. How plainly spake Christ to the Pharisees and priests, saying; Woe be unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because ye have eaten the whole houses of such as be widows by making long prayers, and therefore have you received greater damnation? Wherein, I pray you, do our Pharisees and priests differ from them? Do not our priests devour widows' houses and possessions, that by their long prayers they might deliver the souls of their husbands from the grievous pains of purgatory? How many lordships, I pray you, have been bestowed upon the religious men and women to pray for the dead, that they, by their prayer, might deliver those dead men from the pain (as they said) that they suffer in purgatory, grievously tormented and vexed? If their prayers and speaking of holy words shall not be able to deliver themselves from pain, unless they have good works, how shall other men be delivered from pain by their prayers, which, whilst they lived here, gave themselves over to sin? Yea, peradventure those lordships or lands, which they gave unto the priests to pray for them, they themselves have gotten by might, from other faithful men, unjustly, and violently: and the canons do say, that sin is not forgiven, till the thing taken away wrongfully be restored: how then shall they be able (which do unjustly possess such lordships or lands) to deliver them by their prayers from pain, which have given to them these lordships or lands, seeing God, from the beginning, hath hated all extortion in his burnt-sacrifices? Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he which doth the will of my Father which is in heaven. And again, Not the hearers of the law, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

"If, therefore, the words of him that prayeth, do not deliver himself from sin, nor from the pain of sin, how do they deliver other men from sin or from the pain of sin, when no man prayeth more earnestly for another man than for himself? Therefore many are deceived in buying or selling of prayers, as in the buying of pardons, that they might be delivered from pain; whenas commonly they pay dearer for the prayers of the proud and vicious prelates, than for the prayers of devout women and devout men of the lay-people. But, out of doubt, God doth not regard the person of him that prayeth, neither the place in which he prayeth, nor his apparel, nor the curiousness of his prayer, but the humility and godly affection of him that prayeth. Did not the Pharisee and the publican go up into the temple to pray? The publican's prayer, for his humility and godly affection, is heard. But the Pharisee's prayer, for his pride and arrogancy, is contemned. Consider that neither the person, nor the place, nor the state, nor the curiousness of his prayer, doth help the Pharisee: because the publican, not

thinking himself worthy to lift up his eyes unto heaven, for the multitude of his sins, saying, O God! be merciful unto me a sinner, is justified by his humility, and his prayer is heard. But the Pharisee, boasting in his righteousness, is despised; because God thrusteth down the proud, and exalteth the humble and those that be meek. The rich glutton also, that was clothed with purple and silk, and fared every day daintily, prayed unto Abraham, and is not heard, but is buried in pains and torments of hell-fire. But Lazarus, which lay begging at his gate, being full of sores, is placed in the bosom of Abraham. Behold that neither the riches of his apparel, nor the deliciousness of his banquets, nor the gorgeousness of his estate, neither the abundance of his riches, doth help any thing to prefer the prayers or petitions of the rich glutton, nor yet diminish his torments, because that mighty men in their mightiness, shall suffer torments mightily. How dare any man, by composition, demand or receive any thing of another man for his prayers? If he believe that he can, by his prayer, deliver his brother from grievous pain, he is bound by charity to relieve his brother with his prayers, although he be not hired thereunto: but if he will not pray unless he be hired, then hath he no love at all. What therefore helpeth his prayer which abideth not in charity? Therefore let him first take compassion of himself by prayer, that he may come into charity, and then he shall be the better able to help others. If he believe not, or if he standeth in doubt whether he shall be able to deliver his brother by his prayer, wherefore doth he make with him an assured bargain, and taketh his money, and yet knoweth not whether he shall relieve him ever a whit the more or not, from his pain? I fear lest the words of the prophet are fulfilled, saying, From the least to the most, all men apply themselves to covetousness; and from the prophet to the priest, all work deceitfully. For the poor priests excuse themselves of such bargaining and selling of their prayers, saying, The young cock learneth to crow of the old cock. For, say they, thou mayest see that the pope himself, in stalling of bishops and abbots, taketh the first-fruits: in the placing or bestowing of benefices he always taketh somewhat, and especially if the benefices be great. And he selleth pardons and bulls; and, to speak more plain, he taketh money for them. Bishops, in giving orders, in hallowing churches and churchyards, do take money; in ecclesiastical correction they take money for the mitigation of penance; in the grievous offences of convict persons, money is required, and caused to be paid. Abbots, monks, and other religious men that have possession, will receive no man into their fraternity, or make them partakers of their spiritual suffrages, unless he bestow somewhat upon them, or promise them somewhat. Curates and vicars, having sufficient livings by the tithes of their parishioners, yet in dirges and years-minds, in hearing confessions, in weddings and buryings, do require and have money. The friars, also, of the four orders of beggars, which think themselves to be the most perfect men of the church, do take money for their prayers, confessions, and buryings of the dead; and when they preach, they believe that they shall have either money or some other thing worth money. Wherefore then be the poor priests blamed? ought not they to be held excused, although they take money for their prayers by composition? Truly, me thinketh that this excuse by other men's sins doth not excuse them, forasmuch as to heap one mischief upon another's head, is no sufficient discharge. I would to God that all the buyers and sellers of spiritual suffrages would with the eyes of their heart behold the ruin of the great city, and the fall of Babylon, and that which they shall say after that fall. Doth not the prophet say, And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn for her, because no man shall buy any more their merchandise; that is, their merchandise of gold and silver, and of precious stone, and of pearl, and of silk and purple? And again, he saith, And the merchants which were made rich by her, shall

stand aloof for fear of her torments, weeping, mourning, and saying, Alas! alas! that city Babylon, that great city, which was wont to wear purple, white silk, crimson, gold, pearl, and precious stone, because that in one hour all those riches are come to nought. And again, And they cast dust upon their heads, and cried out, weeping, and mourning, and saying, Alas! alas! that great and mighty city Babylon, by whom all such as had ships upon the sea were made rich by her rewards; because that in one hour she is become desolate.

"Thus, reverend father, have I made mine answer to the matter whereof I am accused; beseeching you, that as I have been obedient to your desire, and that even as a son, declaring unto you the secrets of my heart in plain words (although rudely); so I may know your opinion, and crave your fatherly benevolence, that now your labour may be for my instruction and amendment, and not to accusation and condemnation. For like as in the beginning, I have promised you, if any man, of what state, sect, or condition soever he be, can show me any error in any of my writings by the authority of Holy Scripture, or by any probable reason grounded on the Scriptures; I will receive his information willingly and humbly."

After that all the aforesaid things were exhibited and given by the aforesaid Walter Brute, unto the aforesaid bishop of Hereford, he further appointed to the same Walter, the third day of the month of October, at Hereford, with the continuance of the days following, to hear his opinion. Which third day now at hand, being Friday, in the year of our Lord God 1393, the said Walter Brute appeared before him, sitting in commission in the cathedral church of Hereford, at six o'clock or thereabout; having for his assistants in the same place, divers prelates, abbots, and twenty bachelors of divinity, whereof twelve were monks, and two doctors of the law. Amongst these was Nicholas Herford, accompanied with many other prelates and worshipful men and wise graduates in sundry faculties. Now was the aforesaid Walter apposed of his writings aforesaid, and the contents therein. Earnest were they in picking out of those writings his heresies, and in showing his schisms, sundry errors, and divers other things. Now, after that they had continued all that day and the two days following, (that is, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday,) in their informations and examinations against the same Walter Brute, the same Walter Brute submitted himself to the determination of the church, and to the correction of the said John, bishop, as it appeareth word for word in a scroll written in the English tongue: the tenor of which scroll is as followeth

"I, Walter Brute, submit myself principally to the evangel of Jesus Christ, and to the determination of holy kirk, and to the general councils of holy kirk. And to the sentence and determination of the four doctors of holy writ; that is, Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome, and Gregory. And I meekly submit me to your correction, as a subject ought to his bishop."

Which scroll, as before is recited, in the English tongue, the aforesaid Walter Brute read, with a loud and intelligible voice, at the cross in the churchyard, on Monday, that is to say, the sixth of the said month of October, before the sermon made unto the people, in presence of the said bishop of Hereford and other above written, as also other barons, knights, and noblemen, and clergy, and also a great multitude of people. After which reading of the scroll, the aforesaid Thomas Crawlay, bachelor of divinity, made a sermon unto the people, and took for his theme the words of the apostle to the Romans, chap. xi. 20, that is as followeth: Be not over-wise in your own conceits, but stand in fear, &c.

Out of these declarations and writings of Walter Brute, the bishop, with the monks and doctors above rehearsed, did gather and draw certain articles, to the number of thirty-seven, which they sent to the university of Cambridge to be confuted, unto two learned men, Master Colwill and Master Newton, bachelors of divinity: which Masters Colwill and Newton did both labour in the matter, to the uttermost of their cunning, in replying and answering to the said thirty-seven articles.

Besides them also, William Woodford, a friar, who wrote likewise against the articles of Wickliff, labouring in the same cause, made a solemn and a long tractation; compiling the articles of the said Brute, to the number of nine and twenty: all which treatises, as I wish to come to the reader's hand, that the slenderness of them might be known; so it may happen perchance, that the same being in my hands may hereafter be further published, with other like tractations more, as convenient time, for the prolixity thereof, may hereafter better serve than now.

What, after this, became to this Walter Brute, or what end he had, I find it not registered; but like it is, that he for this time escaped. Certain other writings I find, moreover, which albeit they bear no name of this Walter, nor of any certain author, yet because they are in the same register adjoined to the history of him, I thought therefore most fit here to be inserted: of the which one was a letter sent to Nicholas Herford, a little above specified, who, being at the first a great follower of John Wickliff, as appeareth before, was now in the number of them which sat upon this Walter, as is above recorded. The copy of this letter, bearing no name of any special author, but only as sent by a certain Lollard, as the register doth term him, is written in the manner and form as followeth.

"Forasmuch as no man that putteth his hand to the plough and looketh back, is meet for the kingdom of God, as our Saviour Christ saith, what marvel is it, although Master Nicholas Herford, which at the first (by the visitation of the Spirit of God, peradventure) put his hand, that is, gave his diligence unto the plough; that is, to the sowing of the word of God and Holy Scripture, as well in preaching as in doing good works, is now so blind and unskilful to expound the Scripture, that he knoweth not what is understood by the kingdom of heaven? Truly it is no marvel, O thou that art the master of the Nicolaitans! which, like Nicholas the most false deacon, hast left or forsaken the infallible knowledge of the Holy Scripture: for the true knowledge of the theological verity is shut up as well from thee as from all the other Nicolaitans following thy conditions; forasmuch as thou goest not in by the door to expound the same evangelical verity. Therefore when thou didst recite this other day, first, the Pharisaical and hypocritical woe, (nothing at all to any purpose,) thou shouldest have said justly in this sort, both of thyself, and other thy followers and religious antichrists: Woe be unto us, scribes and Pharisees, which shut up the kingdom of heaven! that is to say, the true knowledge of the Holy Scriptures before men, by our false glosses and crooked similitudes; and neither we ourselves enter into the same kingdom or knowledge, nor suffer others to enter into it. Wherefore, it seemeth unto the faithful sort, that wrongfully, falsely, and without any reverence, ye have expounded that text of Gregory, 1 quæst. 1, that is to say, *Quicumque studet, &c.* For this is the true understanding of the same: knowing, first, that there be some priests after the thing and name only; and doth show that this is true, that whosoever studieth to receive the holy order by giving of money, he is not a priest, *secundum rem et nomen*; but, to say the truth, he desireth to be called a priest, that is, to be a priest *secundum nomen tantum*. And such a priest, which is a priest in name only, is no priest; no more than St. Mary painted is St. Mary; nor a false doctor a doctor, but no

doctor; and a man painted is not a man, but no man. And thus such a priest in name only is not a priest; because that all faithful men do firmly believe with St. Gregory, that no man buying the holy orders, may then be called a priest, as he saith, 1 quæst. 1, They that buy or sell holy orders can be no priests. Whereupon it is written, *Anathema danti*, and *Anathema accipienti*; that is, simoniacal heresy. And it followeth, How, therefore, if they be accursed and not blessed, can they make others blessed? And when that they be not in the body of Christ, how can they either receive or deliver the body of Christ? He that is accursed, how can he bless? as though he would say, It is impossible. As Pope Urban saith, 1 quæst. 1, *Si quis a simoniacis*, &c., They that willingly know and suffer themselves to be consecrated, nay rather execrated, of those that are infected with simony, we judge that their consecration is altogether void. Also Pope Leo, in 2 quæst. 1, saith in this wise: Grace, if it be not freely given and received, is not grace. Spiritual usurers do not receive freely: therefore they receive not the spiritual grace, which specially worketh in the ecclesiastical orders. If they receive it not, they have it not: if they have it not freely, they cannot give it freely. And by this it is more clear than the light, that they which know so much, and receive orders by spiritual usury or simony, are neither priests nor deacons, neither after the manner nor character. For if such character or mark were otherwise given in giving orders, it were requisite always that there should be a certain grace imprinted in the man; but there is no such grace given or imprinted, as afore is manifest. Therefore there is no such character to be feigned. Therefore such character or mark abideth not in him, forasmuch as he never had, nor hath, the same. And yet furthermore, in the same place, What then do the simoniacal prelates give? And he maketh answer, Truly even that which they have, as the spirit of lying. How prove we this? Because that if it be the spirit of verity, as the same verity doth testify from whom it cometh, it is freely received. And it followeth for the whole purpose no doubt, it is convicted to be the spirit of lying, which is not freely received.

"By this it appeareth manifestly to the faithful sort, that those which wittingly and simoniacally are made priests, forasmuch as they receive not the character of the Lord, but only the spirit of lying and the mark of Simon Magus, and of Judas the traitor, they be not priests neither according to the mark nor manner: and such do no more make the sacraments of the church, than any other laymen may in the time of necessity; nor yet so truly, during their heretical naughtiness. And yet indeed, brother mine, *uni voce natura*, but yet *æqui voce in moribus*; I do not write thus sharply unto you, through anger, or any imperfect hate, but through the perfect hate of your horrible heresy and denying the faith of Christ, that I may say with David in the psalm, *Perfecto odio oderam*, &c. And I am very sorry for you, that you, which in times past have excellently well and fruitfully preached the gospel in the pulpit, do now as well fail in the congruity of the Latin tongue, as in the other science natural. For, as it was heard, thrice in one lecture you said *appetit*; that is to say, pronouncing the middle syllable long, which thing not only the masters, but also the young scholars, understood. And many other faults there were in your grammar, which for shame I dare not recite. I send unto you these five conclusions.

"First, It is an infallible verity that the words of the four chief doctors, expounding the Holy Scripture according to the verity which the words do pretend, are to be holden and kept.

"Second, He which importeth any equivocation out of any of the doctors' expounding, for the colouring of his text, his equivocation is always to be left.

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"Third, No perversion of any reprobate is able to turn the congregation of the elect from the faith, because all things that shall come to pass are eternally in God, devised and ordained for the best unto the elect Christians.

"Fourth, Like as the mystical body of Christ is the congregation of all the elect, so antichrist, mystically, is the church of the wicked and of all the reprobates.

"Fifth, The conclusions of Swinderby be agreeable to the faith in every part."

This letter was thus subscribed: "By the Spirit of God, sometime visiting you."

84. A Letter from Lucifer to the Pope and Prelates

Besides this epistle above prefixed, there is also found annexed with the same, a device of another certain letter counterfeited under the name of Lucifer, prince of darkness, writing to the pope and all popish prelates, persecuting the true and right church with all might and main, to maintain their pride and domination in this earth, under a colourable pretence and visor of the catholic church and succession apostolical: which letter, although it seemeth in some authors to be ascribed to Ocham, above mentioned; yet, because I find it in the same register of the church of Hereford contained, and inserted among the tractations of Walter Brute, and devised, as the register said, by the Lollards, I thought no meeter place than here to annex the same; the tenor whereof thus proceedeth in words as follow:

"I, Lucifer, prince of darkness and profound heaviness, emperor of the high mysteries of the king of Acheron, captain of the dungeon, Erebus king of hell, and controller of the infernal fire: To all our children of pride, and companions of our kingdom, and especially to our princes of the church of this latter age and time, (of which our adversary Jesus Christ, according to the prophet, saith, I hate the church or congregation of the wicked,) send greeting; and wish prosperity to all that obey our commandments, as also to those that be obedient to the laws of Satan already enacted, and that are diligent observers of our behests, and the precepts of our decree.

"Know ye that in times past certain vicars or vicegerents of Christ, following his steps in miracles and virtues, living and continuing in a beggarly life, converted, in a manner, the whole world from the yoke of our tyranny unto their doctrine and manner of life, to the great derision and contempt of our prison-house and kingdom, and also to the no little prejudice and hurt of our jurisdiction and authority; not fearing to hurt our fortified power, and to offend the majesty of our estate. For then received we no tribute of the world, neither did the miserable sort of common people rush at the gates of our deep dungeon as they were wont to do, with continual pealing and rapping; but then the easy, pleasant, and broad way, which leadeth to death, lay still, without great noise of trampling travellers, neither yet was trod with the feet of miserable men. And when all our courts were without suitors, hell then began to howl; and thus, continuing in great heaviness and anguish, was robbed and spoiled: which thing considered, the impatient rage of our stomach could no longer suffer, neither the ugly, reckless negligence of our great captain-general could any longer endure; but we, seeking remedy for the time that should come after, have provided us of a very trim shift. For, instead of these apostles and other their adherents which draw by the same line of theirs, as well in manners as doctrine, and are odious enemies unto us, we have caused you to be their successors, and put you in their place, which be prelates of the church in these latter times, by our great might and subtlety, as Christ hath said of you: They have reigned, but not by me. Once we promised unto him all the kingdoms of the world if he would fall down and worship us; but he would not, saying, My kingdom is not of this world, and went his way when the multitude would have made him a temporal king. But to you, truly, which are fallen from the state of grace, and that serve us in the earth, is that my promise fulfilled; and by our means all terrene things which we have bestowed upon you, are under your government: for he hath said of us, as ye know, The prince of this world cometh, &c., and hath made us to reign over all children of unbelief. Therefore our adversaries before recited did

patiently submit themselves unto the princes of the world, and did teach that men should do so, saying, Be ye subject to every creature for God's cause, whether it be to the king, as most chief: and again, Obey ye them that are made rulers over you, &c. For so their Master commanded them, saying, The kings of the heathen have dominion over them, &c. But I think it long till we have poured our poison upon the earth, and therefore fill yourselves full.

"And now, be ye not only unlike those fathers, but also contrary unto them in your life and conditions; and extol yourselves above all other men. Neither do ye give to God that which belongeth to him, nor yet to Cæsar that which is his: but exercise you the power of both the swords, according to our decrees, making yourselves doers in worldly matters, fighting in our quarrel, entangled with secular labours and business. And climb ye, by little and little, from the miserable state of poverty, unto the highest seats of all honours, and the most princely places of dignity by your devised practices, and false and deceitful wiles and subtlety: that is, by hypocrisy, flattery, lying, perjury, treasons, deceits, simony, and other greater wickedness than which our infernal furies may devise. For after that ye have by us been advanced thither where ye would be, yet that doth not suffice you, but, as greedy shavelings, more hungry than ye were before, ye suppress the poor, scratch and rake together all that comes to hand, perverting and turning every thing topsyturvy; so swollen, that ready ye are to burst for pride, living like lechers in all corporal delicateness, and by fraud directing all your doings. You challenge to yourselves names of honour in the earth, calling yourselves lords, holy, yea, and most holy persons.

"Thus, either by violence ye ravin, or else by ambition subtly ye pilfer away, and wrongfully wrest, and by false title possess, those goods, which for the sustentation of the poor members of Christ, (whom from our first fall we have hated,) were bestowed and given, consuming them as ye yourselves list; and therewith ye cherish and maintain an innumerable sort of whores, strumpets, and bawds, with whom ye ride pompously like mighty princes, far otherwise going than those poor beggarly priests of the primitive church. For I would ye should build yourselves rich and gorgeous palaces; yea, and fare like princes, eating and drinking the daintiest meats and pleasantest wines that may be gotten: hoard and heap together an infinite deal of treasure, not like to him that said, Gold and silver have I none: serve and fight for us according to your wages! O most acceptable society or fellowship, promised unto us by the prophet, and of those fathers long ago reprov'd: whilst that Christ called thee the synagogue of Satan, and likened thee to the mighty whore which committed fornication with the kings of the earth, the adulterous spouse of Christ, and of a chaste person made a strumpet. Thou hast left thy first love and hast cleaved unto us, O our beloved Babylon! O our citizens, which from the transmigration of Jerusalem come hither! we love you for your deserts; we rejoice over you, which contemn the laws of Simon Peter, and embrace the laws of Simon Magus our friend, and have them at your fingers' ends; and exercise the same publicly, buying and selling spiritual things in the church of God, and against the commandment of God. Ye give benefices and honours by petition, or else for money; for favour, or else for filthy service: and refusing to admit those that be worthy to ecclesiastical dignities, and preferring those that are unworthy, you call unto the inheritance of God's sanctuary, bawds, liars, flatterers, your nephews, and your own children; and to a childish boy ye give many prebends, the least whereof ye deny to bestow upon a poor good man: ye esteem the person of a man, and receive gifts; ye regard money and have no regard of souls. Ye have made the house of God a den of thieves. All abuse,

all extortion, is more exercised a hundred-fold in your judgment-seats, than with any secular tyrant. Ye make laws and keep not the same; and ye dispense with your dispensations as it pleaseth you; you justify the wicked for rewards, and you take away the just man's desert from him. And, briefly, ye perpetrate or commit all kind of mischief, even as it is our will ye should. And ye take much pain for lucre's sake, in our service; and, especially, to destroy the Christian faith; for now the lay-people are almost in doubt what they may believe; because, if ye preach any thing to them, (as sometimes, although it be but seldom seen, and that negligently enough, even as we would have it,) yet, notwithstanding, they believe you not, because they see manifestly that ye do clean contrary to that ye say. Whereupon the common people, doing as ye do which have the government of them, and should be an example to them of well-doing; now, many of them, leaning to your rules, do run headlong into a whole sea of vices, and so, continually, a very great multitude flocketh at the strong and well-fenced gates of our dungeon. And doubtless ye send us so many day by day of every sort and kind of people, that we should not be able to entertain them, but that our insatiable chaos, with her thousand ravening jaws, is sufficient to devour an infinite number of souls: and thus the sovereignty of our empire by you hath been reformed, and our intolerable loss restored. Wherefore, most specially we commend you, and give you most hearty thanks; exhorting you all that in any wise ye persevere and continue, as hitherto ye have done; neither that you slack henceforth your enterprise. For why? by your helps we purpose to bring the whole world again under our power and dominion. Over and besides this, we commit unto you no small authority, to supply our places in the betraying of your brethren; and we make and ordain you our vicars, and the ministers of antichrist our son, now hard at hand, for whom ye have made a very trim way and passage. Furthermore, we counsel you which occupy the highest rooms of all others, that you work subtly, and that ye feignedly procure peace between the princes of the world, and that ye cherish and procure secret causes of discord. And, like as craftily ye have destroyed and subverted the Roman empire, so suffer ye no kingdom to be overmuch enlarged or enriched by tranquillity and peace; lest perhaps in so great tranquillity, all desire of peace set aside, they dispose themselves to view and consider your most wicked works, suppressing on every side your estate; and from your treasures take away such substance as we have caused to be reserved and kept in your hands, until the coming of our well-beloved son antichrist. We would ye should do our commendations to our entirely beloved daughters, Pride, Deceit, Wrath, Avarice, Belly-cheer, and Lechery, and to all other our daughters; and specially to Lady Simony, which hath made you men, and enriched you; and hath given you suck with her own breasts, and weaned you, and therefore see that in no wise you call her Sin. And be ye lofty and proud, because that the most high dignity of your estate doth require such magnificence: and also be ye covetous, for whatsoever you get and gather into your fardel, it is for St. Peter, for the peace of the church, and for the defence of your patrimony and the crucifix; and therefore ye may lawfully do it. Ye may promote your cardinals to the highest seat of dignities without any let in all the world, in stopping the mouth of our adversary Jesus Christ, and alleging again, that he preferred his kinsfolks, being but of poor and base degree, unto the apostleship; but do not you so, but rather call, as ye do, those that live in arrogancy, in haughtiness of mind, and filthy lechery, unto the state of wealthy riches and pride; and those rewards and promotions, which the followers of Christ forsook, do ye distribute unto your friends. Therefore, as ye shall have better understanding, prepare ye vices cloaked under the similitude of virtues. Allege for yourselves the glosses of the Holy Scripture, and wrest them directly to serve for your

purpose: and if any man preach or teach otherwise than ye will, oppress ye him violently with the sentence of excommunication; and by your censures heaped one upon another, by the consent of your brethren, let him be condemned as a heretic, and let him be kept in most strait prison, and there tormented till he die, for a terrible example to all such as confess Christ. And, setting all favour apart, cast him out of your temple; lest, peradventure, the ingrafted word may save your souls, which word I do abhor as I do the souls of other faithful men. And do your endeavour that ye may deserve to have the place which we have prepared for you, under the most wicked foundation of our dwelling-place. Fare ye well, with such felicity as we desire and intend, finally, to reward and recompense you with.

"Given at the centre of the earth, in that our dark place, where all the rabblement of devils was present, specially for this purpose called unto our most dolorous consistory; under the character of our terrible seal, for the confirmation of the premises."

Who was the true author of this poesy or epistle above written, it is not evidently known; neither doth it greatly skill. The matter being well considered on their part which here be noted, may minister unto them sufficient occasion of wholesome admonition, either to remember themselves what is amiss, or to bethink with themselves what is to be amended. Divers other writings of like argument, both before and since, have been devised; as one bearing the title, *Luciferi ad malos Principes Ecclesiasticos*, imprinted first at Paris in Latin; and under the writing thereof, bearing this date, A. D. 1351; which if ye count from the passion of the Lord, reacheth well to the time of Wickliff, 1385; which was above six years before the examination of this Walter Brute.

There is also another epistle of Lucifer, prince of darkness, mentioned in the epistle of the school of Prague, to the university of Oxford, set forth by Hulderic Hutten, about the year of our Lord (as is there dated) 1370; which seemeth to be written before this epistle.

Also Vincentius, in *Speculo Hist.* lib. 25. cap. 89, inferreth like mention of a letter of the fiends infernal unto the clergymen, as in a vision represented, four hundred years before. In which the devils gave thanks to the spiritual men, for that by their silence, and not preaching the gospel, they sent infinite souls to hell, &c.

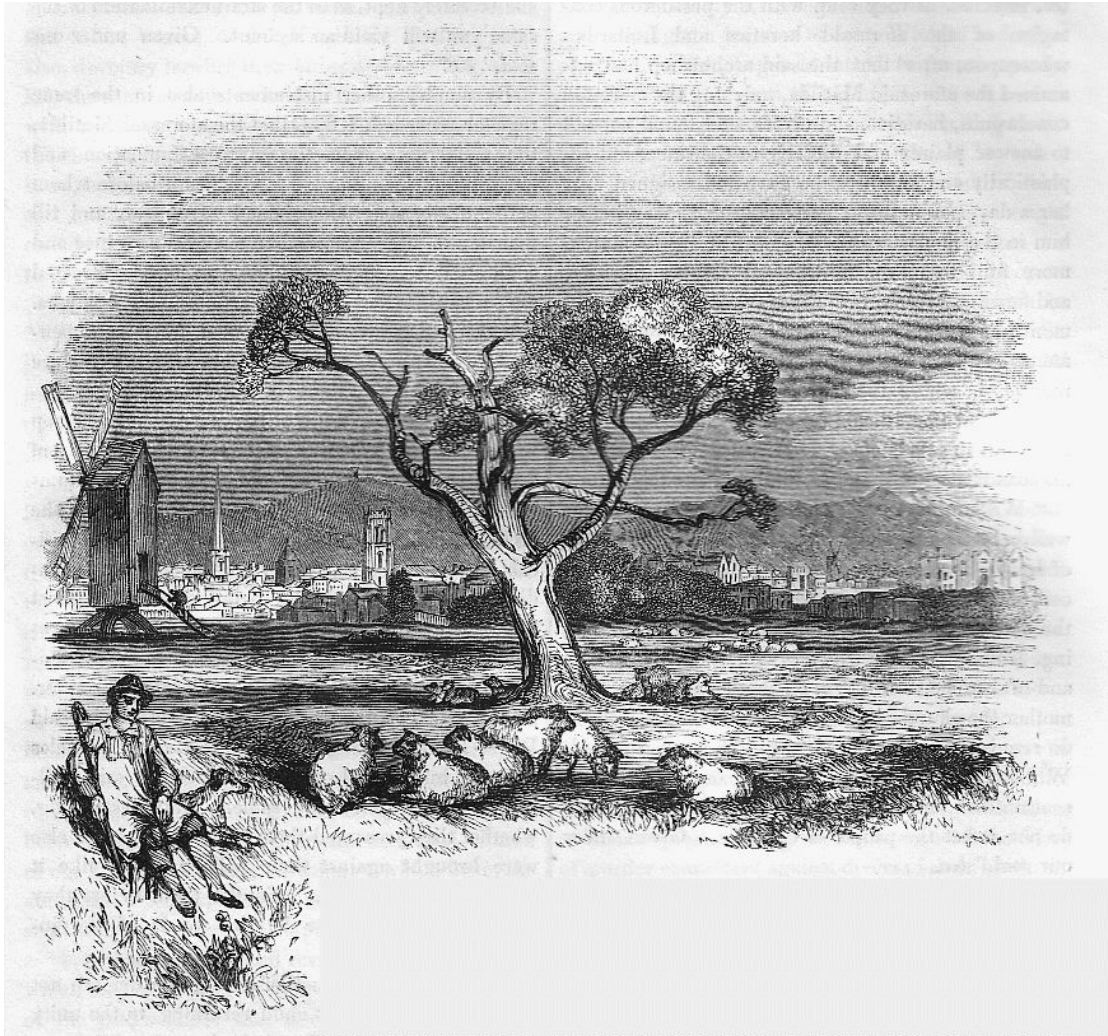
Divers other letters also of like device have been written, and also recorded in authors: whereunto may be added, that one, Jacobus Carthusiensis, writing to the bishop of Worms, allegeth out of the prophecy of Hildegard, in these words: "Therefore, saith he, the devil may say of you priests in himself, The meats of banqueting dishes, and feasts of all kind of pleasure, I find in these men; yea, also mine eyes, mine ears, my belly, and all my veins be full of their frothing, and my breasts be full stuffed with their riches," &c. "Furthermore," saith he, "they labour every day to rise up higher with Lucifer, but every day they fall with him more deeply."

Hereunto also appertaineth a story written, and commonly found in many old written books: In the year of our Lord 1228, at Paris in a synod of the clergy, there was one appointed to make a sermon; who being much careful in his mind, and solicitous what to say, the devil came to him, and asking him why he was so careful for his matter what he should preach to the clergy; say thus, quoth he, The princes of hell salute you, O you princes of the church, and gladly give you thanks, because

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through your default and negligence it cometh to pass, that all souls go down to hell. Adding, moreover, that he was also enforced by the commandment of God to declare the same; yea, and that a certain token, moreover, was given to the said clerk for a sign, whereby the synod might evidently see that he did not lie.

85. King Richard II and the Followers of Wickliff



Leicester

King Richard, by the setting on of William Courtney, archbishop of Canterbury, and his fellows, taking part with the pope and Romish prelates, waxed somewhat strait and hard to the poor Christians of the contrary side of Wickliff; albeit, during all the life of the said king I find of none expressly by name that suffered burning. Notwithstanding some there were, which by the aforesaid archbishop, William Courtney, and other bishops, had been condemned; and divers also abjured, and did penance, as well in other places, as chiefly about the town of Leicester, as followeth here to be declared out of the archbishop's register and records.

At what time the said archbishop, William Courtney, was in his visitation at the town of Leicester, certain there were, accused and detected to him, by the monks and other priests in the said town: the names of which persons there detected were, one Roger Dexter, Nicholas Taylor, Richard Wagstaff, Michael Scrivener, William Smith, John Henry, William Parchmeanar, and Roger Goldsmith, inhabitants of the same town of Leicester. These, with other more, were denounced to the archbishop

for holding the opinion of the sacrament of the altar, of auricular confession, and other sacraments, contrary to that which the Church of Rome doth preach and observe. All which parties above named, and many other more, whose names are not known, did hold these heresies and errors here underwritten, and are of the Romish Church condemned.

"1. That in the sacrament of the altar, after the words of consecration, there remaineth the body of Christ with the material bread.

"2. That images ought not to be worshipped in any case, and that no man ought to set any candle before them.

"3. That no cross ought to be worshipped.

"4. The masses and matins ought not with a high and loud voice to be said in the church.

"5. Item, that no curate or priest, taken in any crime, can consecrate, hear confessions, or minister any of the sacraments of the church.

"6. That the pope and all prelates of the church cannot bind any man with the sentence of excommunication, unless they know him to be first excommunicated of God.

"7. That no prelate of the church can grant any pardons.

"8. That every layman may in every place preach and teach the gospel.

"9. That it is sin to give any alms or charity to the friars Preachers, Minorites, Augustines, or Carmelites.

"10. That no oblation ought to be used at the funerals of the dead.

"11. That it is not necessary to make confession of our sins to the priest.

"12. That every good man, although he be unlearned, is a priest."

These articles they taught, preached, and affirmed manifestly in the town of Leicester, and other places adjoining. Whereupon the said archbishop monished the said Roger and Nicholas, with the rest, on the next day to make answer unto him in the said monastery to the aforesaid articles. But the aforesaid Roger and Nicholas, with the rest, hid themselves out of the way, and appeared not. Whereupon the archbishop, upon All-hallow day, being the first day of November, celebrating the high mass, at the high altar in the said monastery, being attired in his pontificals, denounced the said parties, with all their adherents, abettors, favourers, and counsellors, as excommunicate and accursed, which either held, taught, or maintained the aforesaid conclusions heretical and erroneous; and that in solemn wise, by ringing the bells, lighting the candles, and putting out the same again, and throwing them down to the ground, with other circumstances thereunto belonging. Upon the morrow after (being All-souls' day) he sent for all the curates and other, laymen, of the town of Leicester, to inquire more diligently of the verity of such matter as they knew, and were able to say against any persons whatsoever, concerning the aforesaid articles, as also against the parties before named and specified upon their oaths, denouncing every one of them severally by their names to be excommunicate and accursed and caused them also in divers parish churches in Leicester also to be excommunicate. And further the said archbishop interdicted the whole town of Leicester, and all the churches in the same, so long as any of the aforesaid excommunicate persons should

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remain or be within the same; and till that all the Lollards of the town should return and amend from such heresies and errors, obtaining at the said archbishop's hands the benefit of absolution.

At length it was declared and showed to the said archbishop, that there was a certain anchoress, whose name was Matilda, enclosed within the churchyard of St. Peter's church of the said town of Leicester, infected, as they said, with the pestiferous contagion of the aforesaid heretics and Lollards: whereupon, after that the said archbishop had examined the aforesaid Matilda, touching the aforesaid conclusions, heresies, and errors, and found her not to answer plainly and directly to the same, but sophistically and subtilly; he gave and assigned unto her a day, peremptory, personally to appear before him in the monastery of St. James at Northampton, more fully to answer to the said articles, heresies, and errors: which was the sixth day of the said month of November; commanding the abbot of the monastery of Pratis aforesaid, that the door of the recluse, in which the said Matilda was, should be opened, and that till his return he should cause her to be put in safe custody. That done, he sent forth his mandate against the Lollards, under this form:

"William, by the permission of God, &c. To his well-beloved sons, the mayor and bailiffs of the town of Leicester diocese, greeting. We have lately received the king's letters, graciously granted us for the defence of catholic faith, in these words following, Richard, by the grace of God king of England and of France, &c. We, on the behalf of our holy mother the church, by the king's authority aforesaid, do require you, that you cause the same Richard, William, Roger, and the rest, to be arrested, and sent unto us; that they with their pernicious doctrine do not infect the people of God, &c. Given under our seal," &c.

By another instrument also in the same register is mention made of one Margaret Caily, nun, which, forsaking her order, was by the said archbishop constrained, against her will, again to enter the same, as by this instrument hereunder ensuing may appear.

"William, by the grace of God, &c. To our reverend brother in God, John, by the grace of God bishop of Ely, greeting, &c. In the visitation of our diocese of Lincoln according to our office, amongst other enormities worthy reformation, we found one sheep out of our fold strayed, and amongst the briers tangled; to wit, Margaret Caily, nun professed, in the monastery of St. Radegond within your diocese; who, casting off the habit of her religion, was found in secular attire, many years being an apostate, and leading a dissolute life. And lest her blood should be required at our hands, we have caused her to be taken and brought unto you, being her pastor: and straitly enjoining you, by these presents we do command, that you admit the same Margaret again into her aforesaid monastery, although returned against her will, or else into some other place, where for her soul's health you shall think most convenient; and that from henceforth she be safely kept, as in the strait examination of the same you will yield an account. Given under our seal," &c.

By sundry other instruments also in the same register recorded, I find, that the aforesaid Matilda, the anchoress, upon the strait examination and handling of the aforesaid archbishop, before whom peremptorily she was enjoined to appear, and till that day of appearance taken out of the recluse and committed to safe custody, as you heard, retracted and recanted her aforesaid articles and opinions. For the which she, being enjoined forty days' penance, was again admitted into her aforesaid recluse in Leicester.

Also by another letter of the aforesaid archbishop to the dean of the cathedral church of our Lady of Leicester being registered, I find, that of the number of those eight persons before recited, whom the archbishop himself at high mass did in his pontificals so solemnly curse with book, bell, and candle; after certain process being sent out against them, or else in the mean time they being apprehended and taken, two of them recanted their opinions; to wit, William Smith, and Roger Dexter. But in the mean time, Alice, the wife of the said Roger Dexter, taking hold of the aforesaid articles with her husband also, together with the said William Smith, abjured the same. Notwithstanding, whether they presented themselves willingly, or else were brought against their wills, as most like it was, hard penance was enjoined them before they were absolved. These be the words of the instrument.

"Seeing our holy mother the church denieth not her lap to any penitent child returning to the unity of her, but rather proffereth to them the same; we therefore do receive again the said William, Roger, and Alice, to grace: and further have caused them to abjure all and singular the aforesaid articles and opinions, before they received of us the benefit of absolution, and were loosed from the sentence of excommunication, wherein they were snarled; enjoining unto them penance, according to the quantity of the crime, in form as followeth: that is to say, that the Sunday next after their returning to their proper goods, they, the said William, Roger, and Alice, holding every one of them an image of the crucifix in their hands, and in their left hands every one of them a taper of wax, weighing half a pound weight, in their shirts, having none other apparel upon them, do go before the cross three times during the procession of the cathedral church of our Lady of Leicester; that is to say, in the beginning of the procession, in the middle of the procession, and in the latter end of the procession; to the honour of Him that was crucified, in the memorial of his passion, and to the honour of the Virgin his mother: who also, devoutly bowing their knees and kneeling, shall kiss the same crucifix so held in their hands: and so, with the same procession, they entering again into the church, shall stand, during all the time of the holy mass, before the image of the cross, with their tapers and crosses in their hands; and when the mass is ended, the said William, Roger, and Alice shall offer to him that celebrated that day the mass.

"Then, upon the Saturday next ensuing, the said William, Roger, and Alice, shall, in the full and public market, within the town of Leicester, stand in like manner in their shirts, without any more clothes upon their bodies, holding the aforesaid crosses in their right hands; which crosses three times they shall, during the market, devoutly kiss, reverently kneeling upon their knees: that is, in the beginning of the market, in the middle of the market, and in the end of the market. And the said William, for that he somewhat understandeth the Latin tongue, shall say this anthem with the collect, *Sancta Katharina*, and the aforesaid Roger and Alice, being unlearned, shall say devoutly a *Pater Noster*, and an *Ave Maria*. And thirdly, the Sunday next immediately after the same, the said William, Roger, and Alice, in their parish church of the said town of Leicester, shall stand and do, as, upon the Sunday before they stood and did in the cathedral church of our Lady aforesaid in all things which done, the aforesaid William, Roger, and Alice, after mass, shall offer to the priest or chaplain that celebrated the same, with all humility and reverence, the wax tapers, which they shall carry in their hands. And because of the cold weather that now is, lest the aforesaid penitents might peradventure take some bodily hurt, standing so long naked, (being mindful to moderate partly the said our rigour,) we give leave, that after their entrance into the churches abovesaid, whilst they shall be in

hearing the aforesaid masses, they may put on necessary garments to keep them from cold, so that their heads and feet notwithstanding be bare and uncovered. We, therefore, will and command you, together and apart, that you denounce the said William, Roger, and Alice, to be absolved and restored again to the unity of our holy mother the church, and that you call them forth to do their penance in manner and form aforesaid. Given at Dorchester, the seventeenth day of November, in theyear of our Lord God 1389, and the ninth year of our translation."

Unto the narration of these abovesaid, we will adjoin the story of one Peter Pateshul, an Austin friar, who, obtaining by the pope's privilege, through the means of Walter Dis, confessor to the duke of Lancaster, liberty to change his coat and religion, and hearing the doctrine of John Wickliff and other of the same sort, began at length to preach openly, and to detect the vices of his order, in such sort as all men wondered to hear the horrible reciting thereof. This being brought to the ears of his order, they, to the number of twelve, coming out of their houses to the place where he was preaching, thought to have withstood him by force: among whom one especially, for the zeal of his religion, stood up openly in his preaching, and contraried that which he said; who then was preaching in the church of St. Christopher in London. This when the faithful Londoners did see, taking grief hereat, they were moved with great ire against the said friar, thrusting him with his other brethren out of the church, whom they not only had beaten and sore wounded, but also followed them home to their house, minding to have destroyed their mansion with fire also; and so would have done, had not one of the sheriffs of London, with two of the friars of the said house, well known and reported amongst the Londoners, with gentle words mitigated their rage and violence. After this, Peter Pateshul thus disturbed, as is aforesaid, was desired by the Londoners, forasmuch as he could not well preach amongst them, to put in writing that which he had said before, and other things more that he knew of the friars; who then, at their request, writing the same, accused the friars of murder committed against divers of their brethren. And to make the matter more apparent and credible, he declared the names of them that were murdered, with the names also of their tormentors; and named, moreover, time and place, where and when they were murdered, and where they were buried. He affirmed further, that they were sodomites, and traitors both to the king and the realm; with many other crimes, which mine author for tediousness leaveth off to recite. And for the more confutation of the said friars, the Londoners caused the said bill to be openly set up at St. Paul's church-door in London, which was there read and copied out of very many. This was done in the year of our Lord 1387, and in the tenth year of King Richard the Second.

Thus it may appear, by this and other above recited, how the gospel of Christ, preached by John Wickliff and others, began to spread and fructify abroad in London, and other places of the realm; and more would have done, no doubt, had not William Courtney, the archbishop, and other prelates, with the king, set them so forcibly, with might and main, to gainstand the course thereof: albeit, as is said before, I find none which yet were put to death therefore, during the reign of this King Richard the Second; whereby it is to be thought of this king, that although he cannot utterly be excused for molesting the godly and innocent preachers of that time, (as by his briefs and letters aforementioned may appear,) yet neither was he so cruel against them, as other that came after him; and that which he did, seemed to proceed by the instigation of the pope and other bishops, rather than either by the consent of his parliament, or advice of his council about him, or else by his own nature. For, as the decrees of the parliament in all his time were constant in stopping out the pope's provisions, and in

bridling his authority, as we shall see (Christ willing) anon; so the nature of the king was not altogether so fiercely set, if that he, following the guiding thereof, had not stood so much in fear of the bishop of Rome and his prelates, by whose importunate letters and calling on, he was continually urged to do contrary to that which both right required, and will, perhaps, in him desired. But howsoever the doings of this king are to be excused, or not, undoubted it is, that Queen Anne, his wife, most rightly deserveth singular commendation; who at the same time, living with the king, had the Gospels of Christ in English, with four doctors upon the same. This Anne was a Bohemian born, and sister to Wencislaus, king of Bohemia before; who was married to King Richard, about the fifth (some say the sixth) year of his reign, and continued with him the space of eleven years: by the occasion whereof it may seem not improbable, that the Bohemians coming in with her, or resorting into this realm after her, perused and received here the books of John Wickliff, which afterward they conveyed into Bohemia, whereof partly mention is made before.

The said virtuous Queen Anne, after she had lived with King Richard about eleven years, in the seventeenth year of his reign changed this mortal life, and was buried at Westminster; at whose funeral Thomas Arundel, then archbishop of York, and lord chancellor, made the sermon; in which sermon, as remaineth in the library of Worcester recorded, he, treating of the commendation of her, said these words, That it was more joy of her than of any woman that ever he knew; for, notwithstanding that she was an alien born, she had in English all the four Gospels, with the doctors upon them: affirming, moreover, and testifying, that she had sent the same unto him to examine; and he said, they were good and true. And, further, with many words of praise he did greatly commend her, in that she, being so great a lady, and also an alien, would study so lowly, so virtuous books; and he blamed in that sermon sharply the negligence of the prelates and other men: insomuch that some said, he would on the morrow leave up the office of chancellor, and forsake the world, and give him to fulfil his pastoral office, for what he had seen and read in those books; and then it had been the best sermon that ever they heard.

In the which sermon of Thomas Arundel, three points are to be considered: First, the laudable use of those old times received, to have the Scripture and doctors in our vulgar English tongue. Secondly, the virtuous exercise and also example of this godly lady, who had these books not for a show hanging at her girdle; but also seemed, by this sermon, to be a studious occupier of the same. The third thing to be noted is, what fruit the said Thomas, archbishop, declared also himself to receive at the hearing and reading of the same books of hers in the English tongue. Notwithstanding, the same Thomas Arundel, after this sermon and promise made, became the most cruel enemy that might be against English books, and the authors thereof; as followeth after in his story to be seen. For shortly after the death of Queen Anne, the same year (the king being then in Ireland) this Thomas Arundel, archbishop of York, and Robert Braybrocke, bishop of London, (whether sent by the archbishop of Canterbury and the clergy, or whether going of their own accord,) crossed the seas to Ireland, to desire the king in all speedy wise to return and help the faith and church of Christ, against such as, holding of Wickliff's teaching, went about, as they said, to subvert all their proceedings, and to destroy the canonical sanctions of their holy mother church. At whose complaint, the king hearing the one part speak, and not advising the other, was in such sort incensed, that incontinently, leaving all his affairs uncomplete, he sped his return toward England, having kept his Christmas at Dublin; in the which mean time, in the beginning of the next year following, which was A. D.

1395, a parliament was called at Westminster by the commandment of the king. In which parliament certain articles or conclusions were put up by them of the Gospel's side, to the number of twelve; which conclusions, moreover, were fastened up upon the church-door of St. Paul in London, and also at Westminster: the copy of which conclusions, with the words and contents thereof, hereunder ensue.

"The first conclusion: — When the Church of England began first to dote in temporalities after her stepmother the great Church of Rome, and the churches were authorized by appropriations; faith, hope, and charity began in divers places to vanish and fly away from our church, forasmuch as pride, with her most lamentable and dolorous genealogy of mortal and deadly sins, did challenge that place by title of heritage. And this conclusion is general, and approved by experience, custom, and manner, as ye shall after hear.

"The second conclusion, That our usual priesthood, which took its original at Rome, and is feigned to be a power higher than angels, is not that priesthood which Christ ordained unto his disciples. This conclusion is thus proved, forasmuch as the Romish priesthood is done with signs, and pontifical rites, and ceremonies, and benedictions, of no force and effect, neither having any ground in Scripture; forasmuch as the bishop's ordinal, and the New Testament, do nothing at all agree; neither do we see that the Holy Ghost doth give any good gift through any such signs or ceremonies, because that he, together with all noble and good gifts, cannot consist and be in any person with deadly sin. The corollary or effect of this conclusion is, That it is a lamentable and dolorous mockery unto wise men, to see the bishops mock and play with the Holy Ghost in the giving of their orders; because they give crowns for their characters and marks, instead of white hearts; and this character is the mark of antichrist, brought into the holy church to cloak and colour their idleness.

"The third conclusion, — That the law of chastity enjoined unto priesthood, the which was first ordained to the prejudice of women, induceth infamy into the church; but we do excuse us by the Bible, because the suspect decree doth say, that we should not name it. Both reason and experience prove this conclusion. Reason thus: forasmuch as the delicate feeding and fare of the clergy will have either a natural purgation, or some worse. Experience thus: forasmuch as the secret trial and proof of such men is, that they do delight in women; and whensoever thou dost prove or see such a man, mark him well, for he is one of that number. The corollary of this conclusion is, That these private religions, with the beginners thereof, ought most chiefly to be disannulled, as the original of that sin and offence: but God of his might doth, for privy sins, send open vengeance.

"The fourth conclusion, that most harmeth the innocent people, is this, That the famed miracle of the sacrament of bread induceth all men, except it be a very few, unto idolatry; forasmuch as they think that the body, which shall never be out of heaven, is by the virtue of the priest's words essentially included in the little bread, the which they do show unto the people. But would to God they would believe that which the evangelical doctor teacheth us in his Dialogue, that the bread of the altar is the body of Christ accidentally: forasmuch as we suppose that by that means every faithful man and woman in the law of God may make the sacrament of that bread without any such miracle. The corollary of this conclusion is, That albeit the body of Christ be endowed with the eternal joy, the service of Corpus Christi, made by friar Thomas, is not true, but painted full of false miracles; neither is it any marvel, forasmuch as friar Thomas, at that time taking part with the pope, would have made a

miracle of a hen's egg; and we know it very well, that every lie, openly preached and taught, doth turn to the rebuke and opprobrium of Him, which is always true without any lack.

"The fifth conclusion is this, That the exorcisms and hallowings, consecrations and blessings, over the wine, bread, wax, water, oil, salt, incense, the altar-stone, and about the church-walls, over the vestment, chalice, mitre, cross, and pilgrim-staves, are the very practices of necromancy, rather than of sacred divinity. This conclusion is thus proved: because that by such exorcisms the creatures are honoured to be of more force and power than by their own proper nature; for we do not see any alteration or change in any creature so exorcised, except it be by false faith, which is the principal point of devilish art. The corollary of this is, That if the book of exorcisation or conjuring of holy water, which is sprinkled in the church, were altogether faithful and true, we think certainly that holy water used in the church, were the best medicine for all kind of sickness and sores; the contrary whereof daily experience doth teach us.

"The sixth conclusion, which maintaineth much pride, is, That a king and bishop both in one person, a prelate and justice in temporal causes, a curate and officer in worldly office, doth make every kingdom out of good order. This conclusion is manifest, because the temporality and spirituality are two parts of the holy universal church; and therefore he which addicteth himself to the one part, let him not intermeddle with the other; wherefore to be called *amphroditæ*, which are men of both kinds, or *ambodextri*, which is such as can play with both hands, were good names for such men of double estates. The corollary of this conclusion is, That thereupon we, the procurators of God, in this case do sue unto the parliament, that it may be enacted, that all such as be of the clergy, as well of the highest degree as of the lowest, should be fully excused, and occupy themselves with their own cure and charge, and not with others.

"The seventh conclusion that we mightily affirm is, That spiritual prayers made in the church for the souls of the dead, preferring any one by name more than another, is a false foundation of alms, whereupon all the houses of alms in England are falsely founded. This conclusion is proved by two reasons: the one is, that a meritorious prayer (of any force or effect) ought to be a work proceeding from mere charity; and perfect charity accepteth no person, because thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Whereby it appeareth that the benefit of any temporal gift, bestowed and given unto priests and houses of alms, is the principal cause of any special prayers, the which is not far different from simony. The other reason is, that every special prayer, made for men condemned to eternal punishment, is very displeasing before God; and albeit it be doubtful, yet it is very likely unto the faithful Christian people, that the founders of every such house of alms, for their wicked endowing of the same, are, for the most part, passed by the broad way. The corollary is, that every prayer of force and effect, proceeding of perfect charity, would comprehend generally all such whom God would have saved, and to live. The merchandise of special prayers now used for the dead, maketh mendicant possessioners and other hireling priests; which, otherwise, were strong enough to work and to serve the whole realm; and maintaineth the same in idleness, to the great charge of the realm, because it was proved in a certain book which the king hath, that a hundred houses of alms are sufficient for the whole realm; and thereby might, peradventure, greater increase and profit come unto the temporality.

"The eighth conclusion, needful to tell to the people beguiled, is, That pilgrimages, prayers, and oblations made unto blind crosses or roods, or to deaf images made either of wood or stone, are very near of kin unto idolatry, and far different from alms: and, albeit that these things which are forbidden and imagined are the books of errors unto the common people, notwithstanding the usual and common image of the Trinity is most especially abominable. This conclusion God himself doth openly manifest, commanding alms to be given to the poor and needy man, for he is the image of God, in a more perfect similitude and likeness, than any block or stone. For God did not say, Let us make a block or stone unto our likeness and image, but, Let us make man; forasmuch as the supreme and highest honour, which the clergy call *Latria*, pertaineth only to the Godhead, and the inferior honour, which the clergy call *Dulia*, pertaineth unto men and angels, and to none other inferior creature. The corollary is, That the service of the cross, celebrated twice every year in our church, is full of idolatry: for if rood, tree, nails, and spear, ought so profoundly to be honoured and worshipped, then were Judas's lips, if any man could get them, a marvellous goodly relic. But thou, pilgrim, we pray thee tell us, when thou dost offer to the bones of the saints and holy men which are laid up in any place, whether dost thou relieve thereby the holy man which is already in joy, or that alms-house which is so well endowed, where they are canonized, the Lord knoweth how? and to speak more plainly, every faithful Christian may well judge and suppose that the strokes of that same man, whom they call St. Thomas, were no cause of martyrdom, nor yet be.

"The ninth conclusion, that keepeth the people low, is, That auricular confession, which is said to be so necessary for salvation, and the feigned power of absolution, exalteth and setteth up the pride of priests, and giveth them opportunity of other secret talks, which we will not at this time talk of; forasmuch as both lords and ladies do witness, that for fear of their confessors they dare not speak the truth: and in time of confession is good opportunity ministered of wooing, or to play the bawd, or to make other secret conventions to deadly sin. They affirm and say, that they are commissaries sent of God to judge and discern of all manner of sin, to pardon and cleanse whatsoever please them. They say also, that they have the keys of heaven and hell, and that they can excommunicate, curse and bless, bind and loose, at their own will and pleasure: insomuch, that for a small reward, or for twelve pence, they will sell the blessing of heaven by charter and clause of warranty, sealed by their common seal. This conclusion is so commonly in use, that it needeth not any probation. The corollary hereof is, That the pope of Rome which feigned himself to be the profound treasurer of the whole church, having that same worthy jewel, which is the treasure of the passion of Christ, in his own keeping and custody, together with the merits of all the saints in heaven, whereby he giveth feigned indulgences and pardons *a pœna et culpa*, is a treasurer almost banished out of charity, whereby he may deliver all captives being in purgatory at his pleasure, and make them not to come there. But here every faithful Christian may easily perceive that there is much falsehood hid in our church.

"The tenth, That manslaughter, either by war or by any pretended law of justice, for any temporal cause or spiritual revelation, is expressly contrary unto the New Testament, which is the law of grace, full of mercy. This conclusion is evidently proved by the examples of the preaching of Christ here on earth, who chiefly teacheth every man to love his enemies, and to have compassion upon them, and not to kill and murder them. The reason is this, that for the most part when men do fight, after the first stroke, charity is broken; and whosoever dieth without charity, goeth the right

way to hell. And beside that, we do well understand and know, that none of the clergy, by any lawful reason, can deliver any from the punishment of death for one deadly sin, and not for another: but the law of mercy, which is the New Testament, forbiddeth all manner of murder. For in the gospel it is spoken unto our forefathers, Thou shalt not kill. The corollary is, It is a very robbing of the people, when lords purchase indulgences and pardons *a pœna et culpa*, unto such as do help their armies to kill and murder the Christian people in foreign countries, for temporal gain; as we do see certain soldiers which do run among the heathen people, to get themselves fame and renown by the murder and slaughter of men. Much more do they deserve evil thanks at the hands of the King of Peace, forasmuch as by humility and peace our faith is multiplied and increased; for murderers and man-quellers Christ doth hate, and menaceth, He that striketh with the sword, shall perish with the sword.

"The eleventh conclusion is, which is shame to tell, That the vow of chastity, made in our church by women that are frail and imperfect in nature, is the cause of bringing in many great and horrible offences and vices, incident unto the nature of man: for, albeit the murder of their children born before their time, and before they are christened, and the destruction of their nature by medicine, are filthy and foul sins; yet they, accompanying among themselves, do pass to such unseemliness, that they ought to be punished by infernal torments. The corollary is, That widows, and such as take the mantle and the ring, deliciously fed, we would that they were married, because that we cannot excuse them from private offence of sin.

"The twelfth, That the multitude of arts not necessary, used in this our church, causeth much sin and offence in waste, curiosity, and disguising in curious apparel: experience and reason partly doth show the same, forasmuch as nature, with a few arts, is sufficient for man's use and necessity.

"This is the whole tenor of our embassy, which Christ hath commanded us to prosecute at this time, most fit and convenient for many causes. And, albeit that these matters be here briefly noted and touched, yet, notwithstanding, they are more at large declared in another book, with many other more in our own proper tongue, which we would should be common to all Christian people. Wherefore, we earnestly desire and beseech God, for his great goodness' sake, that he will wholly reform our church, now altogether out of frame, unto the perfection of her first beginning and original."

Certain verses were annexed unto the conclusions, which are thus Englished:

"The English nation doth lament, of these vile men their sin,
Which Paul doth plainly signify, by idols to begin.
But Giersites, full ingrate, from sinful Simon sprung,
This to defend, though priests in name, make bulwarks great and strong.
Ye princes, therefore, which to rule the people God hath placed,
With justice' sword, why see ye not, this evil great defaced."

After these conclusions were thus proposed in the parliament, the king not long after returned home from Dublin into England, towards the latter end of the parliament. Who at his return called certain of his nobles unto him, Richard Stury, Lewis Clifford, Thomas Latimer, John Mountacute, &c., whom he did sharply rebuke, and did terribly threaten, for that he heard them to be favourers of that side; charging them straitly, never to hold, maintain, nor favour any more those opinions and conclusions: and namely of Richard Stury he took an oath, that he should never, from that day, favour or defend any such opinions, which oath being taken, the king then

answered, "And I swear," saith he, "again to thee, that if thou dost ever break thine oath, thou shalt die for it a shameful death," &c.

All this while, William Courtney, archbishop of Canterbury, was yet alive, who was a great stirrer in these matters; but yet Pope Urban, the great master of the Romish sect, was dead and buried six years before, after whom succeeded in the schismatical see of Rome Pope Boniface the Ninth, who, nothing inferior to his predecessor in all kind of cruelties, left no diligence unattempted to set forward that which Urban had begun, in suppressing them that were setters-forth of the light of the gospel; and had written sundry times to King Richard, as well for the repealing of the acts of parliament against his provisions, as also that he should assist the prelates of England in the cause of God, as he pretended, against such, whom he falsely suggested to be Lollards, and traitors to the church, to the king, and the realm. Thus the courteous pope, whom he could not reach with his sword, at least, with cruel slander of his malicious tongue, would work his poison against them; which letter he wrote to the king in the year of our Lord 1396, which was the year before the death of William Courtney, archbishop of Canterbury; after whom succeeded in that see Thomas Arundel, brother to the earl of Arundel, being first bishop of Ely, afterward archbishop of York, and lord chancellor of England; and at last made archbishop of Canterbury about the year of our Lord 1397. The next year following, which was the year of our Lord 1398, and the ninth year of the pope, I find, in certain records of the bishop of Durham, a certain letter of King Richard the Second, written to the said Pope Boniface, which, because I judged not unworthy to be seen, I thought here to annex the same, proceeding in form as followeth:

"To the most holy father in Christ, and lord, Lord Boniface the Ninth, by the grace of God high pope of the most holy Romish and universal church, his humble and devout son Richard, by the grace of God, king of England and France, lord of Ireland, greeting, and desiring to help the miseries of the afflicted church, and kissing of those his blessed feet:

"Who will give my head water, and mine eyes streaming tears, that I may bewail the decay, and manifold troubles of our mother, which have chanced to her by her own children in the distresses of this present schism and division? For the sheep have forgotten the proper voice of their shepherds, and hirelings have thrust in themselves to feed the Lord's flock, who are clothed with the apparel of the true shepherd, challenging the name of honour and dignity; resembling so the true shepherd, that the poor sheep can scarce know whom they ought to follow; or what pastor, as a stranger, they ought to flee; and whom they should shun as an hireling. Wherefore, we are afraid lest the holy standard of the Lord be forsaken of his host, and so that city, being full of riches, become solitary and desolate, and lest the land or people which was wont to say, flourishing in her prosperities, I sat as a queen, and am not a widow, be destitute of the presence of her husband, and, as it were, so bewitched, that she shall not be able to discern his face, and so wrapped in mazes, that she shall not know where to turn her; that she might more easily find him, and that she shall with weeping speak that saying of the spouse, I sought him whom my soul loveth; I sought him and found him not. For now we are compelled so to wander, that if any man say, Behold, here is Christ, or there, we may not believe him so saying; and so many shepherds have destroyed the Lord's vineyard, and made his amiable portion a waste wilderness.

"This multitude of shepherds is become very burdensome to the Lord's flock: for when two strive to be chief, the state of both their dignities stands in doubt, and, in so doing, they give occasion to all the faithful of Christ for a schism and division of the church. And although both parties go about to subdue unto their power the whole church militant, yet, contrary to both their purposes, by working this way, there beginneth to rise now a division in the body of the church, like as when the division of the quick innocent body was asked, when the two harlots did strive before Solomon; like as the ten tribes of Israel followed Jeroboam the intruder, and were withdrawn from the kingdom for Solomon's sin: even so, of old time, the desire of ruling hath drawn the great power of the world from the unity of the church. Let yourselves remember, we beseech you, how that all Greece did fall from the obedience of the Romish Church, in the time of the faction of the patriarch of Constantinople; and how Mahomet, with his fellows, by occasion of supremacy in ecclesiastical dignity, deceived a great part of the Christians, and withdrew them from the empire and ruling of Christ; and now, in these days, where the same supremacy is, hath withdrawn itself from the obedience of it; insomuch that now, in very few realms the candle that burns before the Lord remaineth, and that for David's sake, his servant. And, although now remain few countries professing the obedience of Christ's true vicar, yet, peradventure, if every man were left to his own liberty, he would doubt of the preferring of your dignity, or, what is worse, would utterly refuse it by such doubtful evidence alleged on both sides: and this is the subtle craft of the crooked serpent, that is to say, under the pretence of unity, to procure schisms, as the spider of a wholesome flower gathers poison, and Judas learned of peace to make war.

"Wherefore it is lively believed of wise men, that except this pestilent schism be withstood, by and by, the keys of the church will be despised, and they shall bind the conscience but of a few: and when either none dare be bold to correct this fault, or to reform things contrary to God's law; so, by this means, at length temporal lords will take away the liberties of the church, and, peradventure, the Romans will come and take away their place, people, and lands: they will spoil their possessions, and bring the men of the church into bondage, and they shall be contemned, reviled, and despised, because the obedience of the people, and devotions towards them, will almost be taken away; when the greater part of the church, left to their own liberty, shall wax prouder than they be wont, leaving a wicked example to them that do see it. For when they see the prelates study more for covetousness than they were wont, to purse up money, to oppress the subjects, in their punishings to seek for gain, to confound laws, to stir up strife, to suppress truth, to vex poor subjects with wrong corrections, in meat and drink intemperate, in feastings past shame: what marvel is it if the people despise them as the foulest forsakers of God's law? But all these things do follow if the church should be left long in this doubtfulness of a schism, and then should that old saying be verified; In those days there was no king in Israel, but every one did that that seemed right and straight to himself. Micaiah did see the people of the Lord scattered in the mountains, as they had been sheep without a shepherd; for when the shepherd is smitten, the sheep of the flock shall be scattered: the great stroke of the shepherd is the minishing of his jurisdiction, by which the subjects are drawn from his obedience. When Jason had the office of the highest priest, he changed the ordinance of God, and brought in the customs of the heathen; the priests leaving the service of the holy altar, and applying themselves to wrestling, and other exercises of the Grecians, and despising those things that belonged to the priests, did labour with all their might to learn such things of the Grecians; and by that means the place, people, and holy anointing of priests, which, in times past, were had in great

reverence of kings, were trodden under foot of all men, and robbed by the king's power, and was profaned by thrusting in for money. Therefore, let the highest vicar of Christ look unto this with a diligent eye, and let him be the follower of him by whom he hath gotten authority above others.

"If you mark well, most holy father! you shall find that Christ rebuked sharply two brethren, coveting the seat of honour: he taught them not to play the lords over the people, but the more grace they were prevented with, to be so much more humble than other, and more lowly to serve their brethren; to him that asked his coat, to give the cloak; to him that smote him on the one cheek, to turn the other to him. For the sheep that are given to his keeping he must forsake all earthly things, and to shed his own blood, yea, and if need required, to die. These things, I say, be those that adorn the highest bishop, if they be in him; not purple, not his white horse, not his imperial crown, because he, among all men, is most bound to all the sheep of Christ. For the fear of God, therefore, and for the love of the flock which ye guide, consider these things diligently, and do them wisely, and suffer us no longer to waver betwixt two: although not for your own cause, to whom peradventure the fulness of your own power is known, yet in pitying our weakness, if thou be he, tell us openly, and show thyself to the world, that all we may follow one. Be not to us a bloody bishop, lest, by your occasion, man's blood be shed; lest hell swallow such a number of souls, and lest the name of Christ be evil spoken of by infidels, through such a worthy personage. But, peradventure ye will say, for our righteousness it is manifest enough, and we will not put it to other men's disputation. If this bald answer should be admitted, the schism should continue still; seeing neither part is willing to agree to the other, and that where the world is, as it were, equally divided betwixt them, neither part can be compelled to give place to the other without much bloodshed. The incarnation of Christ and his resurrection was well enough known to himself and his disciples; yet he asked of his Father to be made known to the world. He made also the gospel to be written, and the doctrine of the apostles, and sent his apostles into all the world, to do the office of preaching, that the same thing might be known to all men. The foresaid reason is the subtlety of Mahomet, who, knowing himself guilty of his sect, utterly forbade disputations. If ye have so full trust of your righteousness, put it to the examinations of worthy persons in a general council, to the which it belongeth by right to define such doubts, or else commit it unto able persons, and give them full power to determine all things concerning that matter; or, at the least, by forsaking the office on both parties, leave the church of God free, speedily to provide for a new shepherd.

"We find kings have forsaken their temporal kingdoms, only upon respect of devotion, and have taken the apparel of monks' profession. Therefore let Christ's vicar (being a professor of most high holiness) be ashamed to continue in his seat of honour to the offence of all people, and the prejudice and hurt of the Romish Church, and the devotion of it, and cutting away kingdoms from it.

"But if you say, It is not requisite that the cause of God's church should be called in controversy, and, therefore, we cannot so easily go from it, seeing our conscience gainsayeth it: to this we answer, If it be the cause of God and the church, let the general council judge of it; but if it be a personal cause, (as almost all the world probably thinketh,) if ye were the followers of Christ, ye would rather choose a temporal death, than to suffer such a wavering, I say not, to the hurt of so many, but to the endless destruction of souls, to the offence of the whole world, and to an everlasting shame of the apostolical dignity. Did not Clement, named, or (that I may

more truly speak) ordained of St. Peter to the apostolical dignity, and to be bishop, resign his right, that his deed might be taken of his successors for an example? Also Pope Siricius gave over his popedom to be a comfort of the eleven thousand virgins; therefore much more ought you (if need require) give over your popedom, that you might gather together the children of God which be scattered abroad. For, as it is thought a glorious thing to defend the common right, even to bloodshed; so is it sometimes necessary for a man to wink at his own cause, and to forsake it for a greater profit, and by that means better to procure peace. Should not he be thought a devil and Christ's enemy of all men, that would agree to an election made of him for the apostolical dignity and popedom, if it should be to the destruction of Christians, the division of the church, the offence and loss of all faithful people? If such mischiefs should be known to all the world by God's revelation to come to pass, by such receiving of the popedom and apostolical dignity: then, by the like reason, why shall he not be judged of all men an apostate, and forsaker of his faith, which chooseth dignity, or worldly honour, rather than the unity of the church? Christ died that he might gather together the children of God, which are scattered abroad: but such an enemy of God and the church wisheth his subjects bodily to die in battle, and the more part of the world to perish in soul, rather than, forsaking to be pope, to live in a lower state, although it were honourable. If the fear of God, the desire of the heavenly kingdom, and the earnest love of the unity of the church, do move your heart, show indeed that your works may bear record to the truth. Clement and Siricius, most holy popes, not only are not reproved, but rather are revered of all men, because they gave over their right for profitable causes, and for the same cause all the church of holy men show forth their praise. Likewise your name should live for ever and ever, if ye would do the like for necessary cause, that is to say, for the unity of God's church. Give no heed to the unmeasurable cryings of them that say, that the right choosing of popes is lost, except ye defend your part manfully: but be afraid, lest such stirrers up of mischief look for their own commodity or honour, that is to say, that under your wing they might be promoted to riches and honour. After this sort Ahithophel was joined with Absalom in persecuting his own father, and false usurping of his kingdom.

"Furthermore, there should be no jeopardy to that election, because both parties stick stiffly to the old fashion of election, and either of them covet the pre-eminence of the Romish Church, counselling all Christians to obey them. And although, through their giving over, the fashion of choosing the pope should be changed for a time, it were to be borne, rather than to suffer any longer this division in God's church. For that fashion in choosing is not so necessarily required to the state of a pope, but the successor of the apostle, as necessary cause required, might come in at the door by another fashion of choosing, and that canonical enough. And this we are taught manifestly by examples of the fathers; for Peter the apostle appointed after him Clement, and that not by false usurping of power, as we suppose; and it was thought that that fashion of appointing popes was lawful unto the time of Pope Hilary, which decreed that no pope should appoint his successor.

"Afterwards, the election of the pope went by the clergy and people of Rome, and the emperor's council agreeing thereto, as it appeareth in the election of the blessed Gregory; but Pope Martin, with the consent of the holy synod, granted Charles the power to choose the pope: but of late, Nicholas the Second was the first whom Martin makes mention of in his councils to be chosen by the cardinals. But all the bishops of Lombardy, for the most part, withstood this election, and chose Cadulus to be pope, saying, that the pope ought not to be chosen but of the precinct of Italy.

Wherefore we think it not a safe way so earnestly to stick to the traditions of men, in the fashion of choosing the pope, and so oft to change, lest we be thought to break God's traditions concerning the unity of the church: yea; rather, it were better yet to ordain a new fashion of his election, and meeter for him than as it hath been afore. But all things concerning the same election might be kept safe, if God's honour were looked for before your own, and the peace of the church were uprightly sought; for such a dishonouring should be most honour unto you, and that giving place should be the getting of a greater dignity, and the willing deposing of your honour should obtain you the entry of everlasting honour, and should procure the love of the whole world towards you, and you should deserve to be exalted continually, as David was in humbling himself.

"Oh how monstrous a sight, and how foul a monster, is a man's body disfigured with two heads! So, if it were possible, the spouse of Christ should be made so monstrous, if she were ruled with two such heads; but that is not possible: she is ever altogether fair, in whom no spot is found; therefore we must cast away that rotten member, and thruster-in of his second head. We cannot suffer any longer so great a wickedness in God's house, that we should suffer God's coat that wants a seam, by any means to be torn by the hands of two, that violently draw it in sunder; for if these two should be suffered to reign together, they would so betwixt them tear in pieces that little coat of the Lord, that scarce one piece would hang to another. They pass the wickedness of the soldiers that crucified Christ; for they, willing to have the coat whole, said, Let us not cut it, but let us cast lots for it whose it shall be: but these two popes, suffering their right and title to be tried by no lot nor way, although not in words yet in deeds, they pronounce this sentence, It shall neither be thine nor mine, but let it be divided; for they choose rather, as it appeareth, to be lords, though it be but in a little part, and that to the confusion of the unity of the church, than in leaving that lording, to seek for the peace of the church. We do not affirm this, but we show almost the whole judgment of the world of them; being moved so to think by likely conjectures. We looked for amendment of this intolerable confusion, by the space that these two inventors of this mischief lived. But we looked for peace, and behold trouble; for, neither in their lives nor in their deaths, they procured any comfort, but rather, dying as it were in a doubt betwixt two ways, left to their successors matter of contention continual. But now, for the space of seven years, whereas of their successors we desired and looked for that they should bear good grapes, and they bring forth wild grapes; in this matter we fall into a deep despair. But inasmuch as we hear the comfort of the Lord, which promised that miserably he would destroy those wicked men, and let his vineyard to other husbandmen which will bring him fruit at their times appointed, and hath promised faithfully that he will help his spouse in her need to the end of the world; we, leaning on the sure hope of this promise, and in hope contrary to hope believing, by God's grace will put our helping hands to the easing of this misery, when a convenient time shall serve, as much as our kingly power is able; and although our wit doth not perceive how these things afore rehearsed may be amended, yet we, being encouraged to this by the hope of God's promise, will do our endeavour; like as Abraham believed, his son being slain by sacrifice, that the multitude of his seed should increase to the number of the stars, according to God's promise.

"Now, therefore, the times draw near to make an end of this schism, lest a third election of a schismatic against the apostles' successor make a custom of the doing, and so the pope of Avignon shall be double Romish pope, and he shall say with

his partakers, as the patriarch of Constantinople said unto Christ's vicar when he forsook him: The Lord be with thee, for the Lord is with us; and is much to be feared of all Christian men, for that Pharisee begins now to be called the pope of Avignon among the people.

"But peradventure it would be thought of some men, that it belongeth not to secular princes to bridle outrages of the pope. To whom we answer, that naturally the members put themselves in jeopardy to save the head, and the parts labour to save the whole. Christ so decked his spouse, that her sides should cleave together, and should uphold themselves, and by course of time and occasion of things they should correct one another, and cleave together tunably. Did not Moses put down Aaron, because he was unfaithful? Solomon put down Abiathar, who came by lineal descent from Anathoth, and removed his priesthood from his kindred to the stock of Eleazar in the person of Zadok, which had his beginning from Eli the priest? Otho also, the emperor, deposed Pope John the Twelfth, because he was lecherous. Henry the emperor put down Gratian, because he used simony in buying and selling spiritual livings. And Otho deposed Pope Benedict the First, because he thrust in himself. Therefore, by like reason, why may not kings and princes bridle the Romish pope in default of the church, if the quality of his fault require it, or the necessity of the church, by this means, compel to help the church oppressed by tyranny? In old time schisms, which rose about making the pope, were determined by the power of secular princes; as the schism betwixt Symmachus and Laurence was ended in a council before Theodoric, king of Italy. Henry the emperor, when two did strive to be pope, deposed them both, and received the third, being chosen at Rome to be pope, that is to say, Clement the Second, which crowned him with the imperial crown; and the Romans promised him that from thenceforth they would promote none to be pope without his consent. Alexander also overcame four popes, schismatics; all which Frederic the emperor corrected.

"Thus, look on the register of popes and their deeds, and ye shall find that schisms most commonly have been decided by the power of secular princes; the schismatics cast out, and sometimes new popes made, and sometimes the old ones cast out of their dignities, and restored to their old dignities again. If it were not lawful for secular princes to bridle the outrages of such a pope lawfully made, and afterward becoming a tyrant; in such a case he might oppress over-much the church, he might change Christendom into heathens, and make the labour of Christ crucified to be in vain: or else truly God should not have provided for his spouse in earth, by all means, as much as is possible, by service of men to withstand dangers. Therefore we counsel you, with such a loving affection as becomes children, that ye consider in your heart well, lest, in working by this means, ye prepare a way to antichrist through your desire to bear rule, and so by this means as we fear the one of these two shall chance, either ye shall cause all the princes of this world to rise against you to bring in a true follower of Christ to have the state of the apostolical dignity; or, that is worse, the whole world, despising the ruling of one shepherd, shall leave the Romish Church desolate. But God keep this from the world, that the desire of honour of two men should bring such a desolation into the church of God: for then, that departing away which the apostle prophesied, should come before the coming of antichrist were at hand, which should be the last disposition of the world, peaceably to receive antichrist with honour. Consider, therefore, the state of your most excellent Holiness, how ye received the power from God to the building of the church, and not to the destruction of it; that Christ hath given you wine and oil to heal the wounded, and hath appointed

you his vicar in these things which pertain to gentleness, and hath given us those things which serve to rigour. For we bear not the sword without a cause to the punishment of evil-doers, the which power, ordained of God, we have received, ourselves being witness; beseeching you to receive our counsel effectually, that in doing thus, the waters may return to the places from whence they came, and so the waters may begin to be made sweet with salt; lest the axe swim on the water, and the wood sink, and lest the fruitful olive degenerate into a wild olive, and the leprosy of Naaman, that nobleman, cleave continually to the house of Gehazi, and lest the pope and the Pharisees crucify Christ again. Christ, the spouse of the church, which was wont to bring the chief bishop into the holiest place, increase your holiness, or rather restore it, being lost."

This epistle of King Richard the Second, written to Pope Boniface the Ninth, in the time of the schism, about the year, as appeared, 1397, as it contained much good matter of wholesome counsel to be followed, so how little it wrought with the pope the sequel afterward declared; for the schism, notwithstanding, continued long after, in which neither of the popes would give over their hold, or yield any thing to good counsel given them, for any respect of public weal. Such a stroke beareth ambition in this apostolical see, which we are wont so greatly to magnify: but of this enough, which I leave and refer to the consideration of the Lord, seeing men will not look upon it.

Drawing now toward the latter end of King Richard's reign, it remaineth that, as we did before in the time of King Edward the Third, so here also we show forth a summary recapitulation of such parliamentary notes and proceedings, as then were practised by public parliament in this king's time, against the jurisdiction of the bishop of Rome, to the intent that such, if any such be, that think, or have thought, the receiving of the pope's double authority to be such an ancient thing within this realm, may diminish their opinions; as evidently may appear by divers arguments heretofore touched, concerning the election and investing of bishops by the king; as where King Oswin commanded Cedde to be ordained archbishop of York; also where King Egfride caused Cuthbert to be brought to King Canute, and at his commandment was instituted bishop of the same see. And likewise Matthew Paris testifieth, that King Henry the Third gave the archbishopric of Canterbury to Radulph, then bishop of London, and invested him with staff and ring: and the same king gave the bishopric of Winchester to William Gifford; and, moreover, following the steps both of his father and brother before him, endowed him with the possessions pertaining to the said bishopric (the contrary statute of Pope Urban, forbidding that clerks should receive any ecclesiastical dignity at the hand of princes, or of any lay person, to the contrary notwithstanding). That innumerable examples of like sort are to be seen in ancient histories of this our realm, as also out of the parliament rolls in the time of King Edward the Third, hath sufficiently been touched a little before: whereunto also may be added the notes of such parliaments as have been holden in the reign of this present King Richard the Second, the collection whereof in part here followeth.

Notes of certain parliaments, holden in the reign of King Richard the Second, making against the pope.

"In the first year of King Richard the Second, in the parliament holden at Westminster, it was requested and granted, that the pope's collector be willed no longer to gather the first-fruits of benefices within this realm, being a very novelty, and that no person do any longer pay them.

"Item, That no man do procure any benefice by provision from Rome, on pain to be out of the king's protection.

"Item, That no Englishman do take to farm of any alien, any ecclesiastical benefice or prebend, on the like pain. In which bill was rehearsed, that the Frenchmen had six thousand pounds yearly of such livings in England.

"Item, That remedy might be had against the pope's reservations to dignities elective, the same being done against the treaty of the pope, taken with King Edward the Third.

"In the second year of the said King Richard the Second, it was by petition requested, that some order might be taken touching aliens, having the greatest part of the church dignities in their hands: whereunto the king answered, That by advice of the lords be would provide therefore.

Item, It was enacted, that all the benefices of cardinals, and other rebels to Pope Urban that now is, shall be seized into the king's hands.

"An act that Pope Urban was true and lawful pope, and that the livings of all cardinals, and other rebels to the said pope, should be seized into the king's hands, and the king be answered of the profits thereof: and that whosoever within this realm shall procure or obtain any provision or other instrument from any other pope than the same Urban, shall be out of the king's protection.

"Moreover, in the third year of King Richard the Second, the prelates and clergy made their protestation, in this parliament, expressly against a certain new grant, to wit, their extortions: That the same never should pass with their assent and good will, to the blemishing of the liberties of the church, if, by that word extortion, they meant any thing largely to proceed against ordinaries and others of the church; but if they meant none otherwise to deal hereafter therein, than before that time had been done, then would they consent. Whereunto it was replied for the king, that neither for the same their said protestation, or other words in that behalf, the king would stay to grant to his justices in that case, and in all other cases, as was used to be done in times past, and he was bound to do by virtue of his oath taken at his coronation.

"Furthermore, in the fourth year of the said King Richard the Second, it was requested, That provision might be had against the pope's collectors, for levying of the first-fruits of ecclesiastical dignities within the realm.

"Item, That all priors, aliens, might be removed out of their houses, and licensed to depart, and never to revert; and that Englishmen may be placed in their livings, answering the king as they did.

"And in the ninth year of the aforesaid king, touching matter of the staple, the speaker of the parliament pronounced, that he thought best the same were planted within the realm, considering that Calais, Bruges, and other towns beyond the seas grew very rich thereby, and good towns here very much decayed; and so it was much for the common profit. Touching the king, he affirmed that the subsidy and custom of wool yielded more to the king when the staple was kept in England, by one thousand marks yearly, than it did now, being holden beyond the seas.

"Item, That inquisition and redress might be had against such religious persons, as under the licence to purchase £10 yearly, do purchase £80, or £100.

"Item, That all clerks, advanced to any ecclesiastical dignity or living by the king, will grant to the king the first-fruits of their livings, none otherwise than they would have done to the pope, being advanced by him.

"In the eleventh year of King Richard the Second, it was put up by the petitions of the commons, that such impositions as are gathered by the pope's bulls of *Volumus* and *Imponimus* of the translations of B. B. and such-like, might be employed on the king's wars against the schismatics of Scotland; and that such as bring unto the realm the like bulls and novelties may be reputed for traitors.

"In the thirteenth year of his reign followed another parliament, in which, although the archbishops of Canterbury and York, for them and the whole clergy of their provinces, made their solemn protestations in open parliament, that they in no wise meant, or would assent to any statute or law made in restraint of the pope's authority, but utterly withstood the same; willing this protestation of theirs to be enrolled; yet the said protestation of theirs at that time took no great effect.

"Item, In the same parliament it was put up by public petition, that the pope's collector should be commanded to avoid the realm within forty days, or else to be taken as the king's enemy; and that every such collector, from henceforth, may be an Englishman, and sworn to execute the statutes made in this parliament.

"Moreover, in the said parliament, the year abovesaid of the king, the twenty-sixth of January, Master John Mandoure, clerk, was charged openly in the parliament, that he should not pass or send over to Rome, or attempt or do any thing there touching the archdeaconry of Durham, in prejudice of the king, or of his laws, or of the party presented thereto by the king, on peril that might ensue.

"The next year following, which was the fourteenth of this king's reign, it was enacted first touching the staples, that, after the feast of the Epiphany next ensuing, the staple should be removed from Calais into England, in such places as are contained in the statute made in the twenty-seventh of Edward the Third; the which statute should be fully executed: and further, that every alien that bringeth merchandise into the realm, should find sufficient surety to buy and carry away commodities of the realm, to half the value of the said merchandise.

"Item, In the same parliament petition was made, That against the horrible vice of usury, then termed shifts, practised as well by the clergy as laity, the order made by John Notte, late mayor of London, might be executed throughout the realm.

"Moreover, in the fifteenth year of the reign of the aforesaid king it was accorded: for that Sir William Brian, knight, had purchased from Rome a bull directed from the archbishops of Canterbury and York, to excommunicate such as had broken up his house, and had taken away divers letters, privileges, and charters; the same bull, being read in the parliament house, was adjudged prejudicial to the king's crown, and in derogation of the laws: for the which he was, by the king, and assent of the lords, committed to the Tower, there to remain at the king's will and pleasure.

"In the said parliament also, William, archbishop of Canterbury, maketh his protestation in the open parliament, saying, that the pope ought not to excommunicate any bishop, or to intermeddle for or touching any presentation to any ecclesiastical dignity recorded in any of the king's courts. He further protested, that the pope ought to make no translation to any bishopric within the realm against the king's will; for that the same was to the destruction of the realm and crown of England, which hath always been so free, as the same hath had none earthly sovereign, but hath been

subject to God only, in all things touching regalities, and to none other: the which protestation he prayed might be entered.

"In the seventeenth year of the reign of the king aforesaid, it was desired that remedy might be had against such religious persons as caused their villains or underlings to marry free women inheritable, whereby the lands came to those religious mens' hands by collusion.

"Item, That sufficient persons might be presented to benefices, who may dwell on the same, so as their stock, for want thereof, do not perish.

"Item, That remedy might be had against the abbots of Colchester and Abingdon, who, in the towns of Colchester and Colnham, claim to have sanctuary.

"To come to the parliament holden in the twentieth year of this king's reign, we find, moreover, in the said rolls, how that the archbishops of Canterbury and York, for themselves and the clergy of their provinces, declared to the king in open parliament, that, forasmuch as they were sworn to the pope. and see of Rome, if any thing were in the parliament attempted in restraint of the same, they would in no wise assent thereto, but verily withstand the same: the which their protestation they require to be enrolled.

"Upon the petition of the Begging Friars, there at large it was enacted, that none of that order should pass over the seas without licence of his sovereign, nor that he should take upon him any order of master of divinity, unless he were first apposed in his chapter provincial; on pain to be put out of the king's protection.

"Item, That the king's officers, for making arrests or attachments in churchyards, are therefore excommunicated; whereof remedy was required.

"In the twenty-first year of the same king's reign, the parliament being holden at Westminster, we find how the commons, in full parliament, accused Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, for that he as chancellor procured, and as chief doer executed, the same commission, made traitorously in the tenth year of the king: and also that he, the said archbishop, procured the duke of Gloucester, and the earls of Arundel and Warwick, to encroach to themselves royal power, and to judge to death Simon de Burley and Sir John Berners, without the king's assent: whereupon the commons required that the same archbishop might rest under safe keeping: whereunto, for that the same impeachments touched so great a person, they would be advised.

"Item, The twenty-fifth day of September, the commons prayed the king to give judgment against the said archbishop, according to his deserts. The king answered, that privately the said archbishop had confessed to him, how he mistook himself in the said commission, and therefore submitted himself to the king's mercy; wherefore the king, lords, and Sir Thomas Percy, proctor for the clergy, adjudged the fact of the said archbishop to be treason, and himself a traitor; and therefore it was ordered, that the said archbishop should be banished, his temporalties seized, his lands and goods forfeited, as well in use as in possession.

"The king further prescribed, that the said archbishop should take his passing on Friday, within six weeks of Michaelmas, at Dover, towards the parts of France."

86. The Deposing of King Richard II.

Thus having hitherto sufficiently touched and comprehended such things as have happened in the reign of this king, necessary for the church to know, by course of story we come now to the twenty-second year of King Richard's reign, which is the year of our Lord, 1399. In the which year happened the strange and also lamentable deposing of this King Richard the Second aforesaid, from his kingly sceptre: strange, for that the like example hath not often been seen in seats royal: lamentable, for that it cannot be but grievous to any good man's heart, to see him either so to deserve, if he were justly deposed; or if he were unjustly deprived, to see the kingly title there not able to hold his right, where, by force, it is compelled to give place to might.

As concerning the order and process of whose deposing, for that it neither is greatly pertinent to my argument, and is sufficiently contained in Robert Fabian, and in the king's records in the chronicle of St. Albans, and in other histories at large, it were here tedious and superfluous to intermeddle with repeating thereof. What were the conditions and properties of this king; partly before hath been touched; in whom, as some good virtues may be noted, so also some vices may seem to be mixed withal, but especially this, that he, starting out of the steps of his progenitors, ceased to take part with them which took part with the gospel. Whereupon it so fell, not by the blind wheel of fortune, but by the secret hand of Him which directeth all estates, that, as he first began to forsake the maintaining of the gospel of God, so the Lord began to forsake him.

In such as write the life and acts of this prince, thus I read of him reported, that he was much inclined to the favouring and advancing of certain persons about him, and ruled all by their counsel, which were then greatly abhorred and hated in the realm; the names of whom were Robert Vere, earl of Oxford, whom the king made duke of Ireland; Alexander Nevile, archbishop of York; Michael De la Pole, earl of Suffolk; Robert Trisilian, lord chief justice; Nicholas Brembre, with others.

These men, being hated and disdained of divers of the nobles and of the commons, the king also, by favouring them, was less favoured himself; insomuch, that the duke of Gloucester, named Thomas Woodstock, the king's uncle, with the earl of Warwick, and earl of Derby, stood up in arms against those counsellors and abusers (as they named them) of the king. Insomuch that the king for fear was constrained, against his mind, to remove out of his court, Alexander Nevile, archbishop of York; John Ford, bishop of Durham; Friar Thomas Rushoke, bishop of Chichester, the king's confessor; with the Lord Haringworth, Lord Burnel and Beamond, Lord Vere, and divers others.

And furthermore, in the parliament, the same year following, Robert Trisilian, the justice, was hanged and drawn: also Nicholas Brembre, knight, James Salisbury also, and James Barnese, both knights; John Beauchamp, the king's steward, and John Blake, esquire, in like manner.

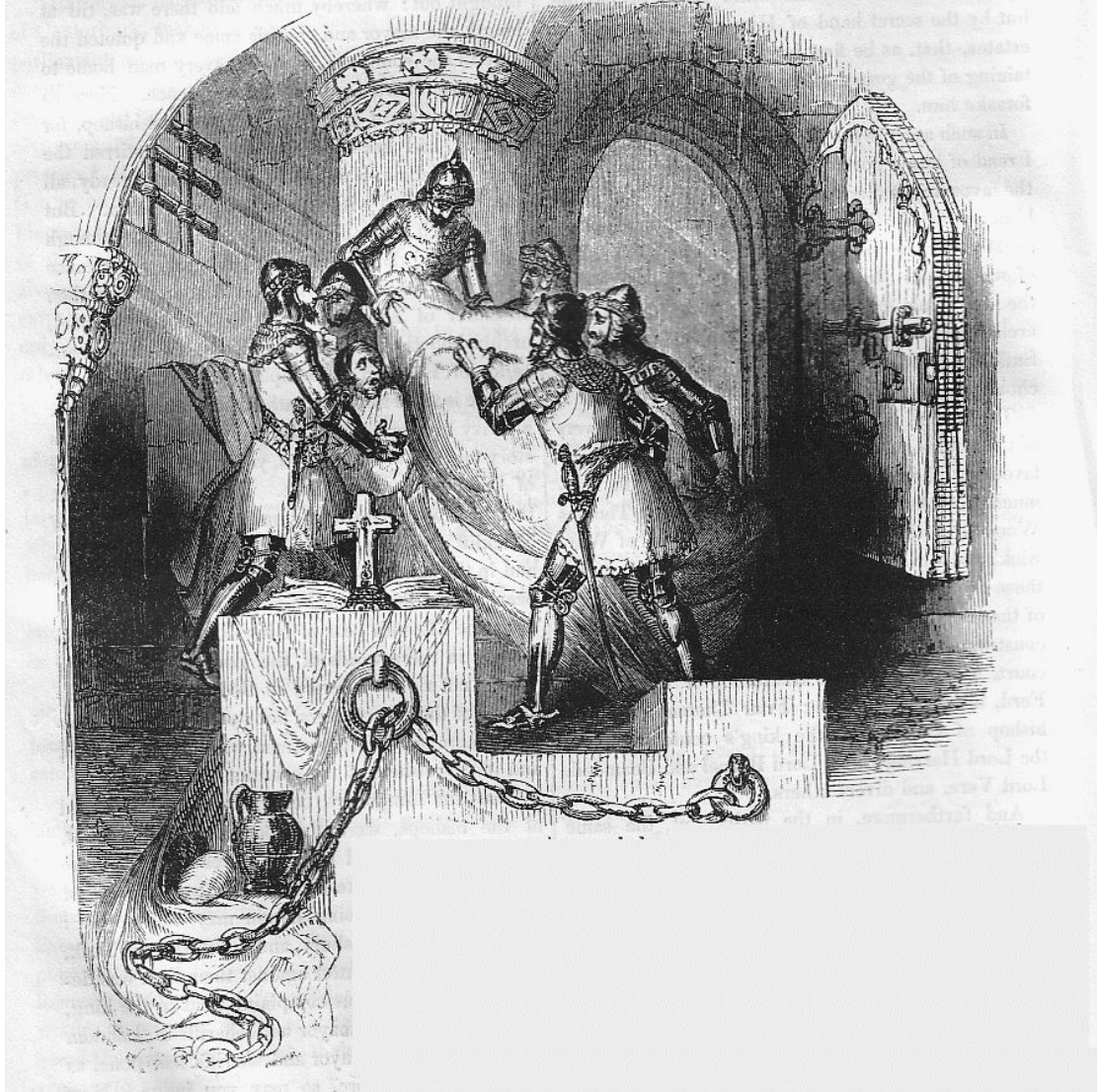
Secondly, Another thing that stirred him up as much against the Londoners, was this, for that he would have borrowed of, them a thousand pounds, and they denied him, to their double and treble disadvantage, as after ensued upon it. Another occasion besides this, between the king and the Londoners, happened thus, by reason of one of the bishop of Salisbury's servants, named Roman, and a baker's man, who

then carrying a basket of horse-bread in Fleet Street, the aforesaid Roman took a horse-loaf out of the basket. The baker asking him why he did so, the bishop's lusty yeoman turned back again and brake his head: whereupon the neighbours came out, and would have arrested this Roman, but he escaped away unto the bishop's house. Then the constable would have had him out; but the bishop's men shut fast the gates, that they should not approach. Thus much people gathered together, threatening to burst open the gates, and fire the house, unless they had the aforesaid party to them brought out: whereby much ado there was, till at length the mayor and sheriffs came and quieted the rage of the commons, and sent every man home to his house, charging them to keep peace. Here as yet was no great harm done; but if the bishop, for his part, had been quiet, and had not stirred the coals of debate, which were well slaked already, all had been ended without further perturbation. But the stomach of the bishop not yet digested, although his man had done the wrong, having no great cause so to do, whose name was John Waltam, being then treasurer of England, went to Thomas Arundel, archbishop the same time of York, and Lord Chancellor of England, to complain of the Londoners. Where is to be noted, or rather revealed, by the way, a privy mystery, which although it be not in this story touched of the writers, yet it touched the hearts of the bishops not a little. For the Londoners at that time were notoriously known to be favourers of Wickliff's side, as partly before this is to be seen, and in the story of St. Alban's more plainly doth appear, where the author of the said history, writing upon the fifteenth year of King Richard's reign, reporteth in these words of the Londoners, that they were "not right believers in God, nor in the traditions of their forefathers, but sustainers of the Lollards, depravers of religious men, withholders of tithes, and impoverishers of the common people," &c.

Thus the Londoners, being noted and suspected of the bishops, were the more hated, no doubt, therefore, of the said bishops, which were the more ready to find and take all occasions to work against them, as by their doing herein may well appear: for the bishop of Salisbury, and archbishop of York, having no greater matter against them than was declared, with a grievous complaint went to the king, complaining of the mayor and sheriffs of London. What trespass the mayor and sheriffs had done, as ye have heard before, so may you judge. Now what followed after let us hear. The king, incensed not a little with the complaint of the bishops, conceived eftsoons against the mayor and sheriffs, and against the whole city of London, a great wrath; insomuch, that the mayor and both the sheriffs were sent for, and removed from their office. Sir Edward Darlington was then made warden and governor of the city; who also, for his gentleness showed to the citizens, was also deposed, and another, named Sir Baldwin Radington, placed in that room. Moreover, so much grew the king's displeasure against the city, that he also removed from London the courts and terms, to be kept at York, that is to say, the chancery, the exchequer, the king's bench, the hanaper, and the common pleas; where the same with his own hands, he arrested the said duke his uncle, and sent him down by water immediately to Calais; and there, through the king's commandment, by secret means he was put to death, being continued from Midsummer till Christmas, to the great decay of the city of London; which was A. D. 1393.

Thirdly, Another great cause which purchased the king much evil will amongst his subjects, was the secret murdering of his own uncle, named Thomas Woodstock, duke of Gloucester, of whom mention was made before; where was declared, how the said duke, with the earl of Arundel, the earl of Warwick, and the earl of Derby, with others, were up in armour against certain wicked counsellors about

the king. Whereupon the king, watching afterwards his time, came into Chelmsford, and so to the place near by where the duke lay; where, strangled under a feather bed, the earl marshal being then the keeper of Calais, whereby great indignation rose in many men's hearts against the king.



The Murder of Thomas Woodstock

With the same duke of Gloucester, also, about the same time, were arrested and imprisoned the earl of Warwick and the earl of Arundel, who, being condemned by parliament, were then executed; whereby great grudge and great indignation rose in the hearts of many against the king, A. D. 1397.

Fourthly, To omit here the blank charts sent over all the land by the king, and how the king was said to let out his realm to farm: over and beside all these above premised befell another matter, which was the principal occasion of this mischief; the banishment, I mean, of Henry, earl of Derby, made duke of Hereford a little before, being son of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, who died shortly after the banishment of his son, and lieth buried in the church of St. Paul, in London, and the duke of Norfolk, who was before earl of Nottingham, and after, by the king, made duke of

Norfolk the year before. At which time the king made five dukes, a marquis, and four earls; to wit, duke of Hereford, which was before earl of Derby; duke of Awmerle, which was before earl of Rutland; duke of Southrey, who was before earl of Kent; duke of Exeter, which was before earl of Huntingdon; and this duke of Norfolk, being before earl of Nottingham, as is aforesaid, &c. The occasion of banishing these aforesaid dukes was this:

About this present time the duke of Hereford did impeach the duke of Norfolk upon certain words to be spoken against the king: whereupon, casting their gloves one against the other, they appointed to fight out the quarrel, a day being for the same appointed at Coventry. But the king took up the matter in his own hands, banishing the duke of Norfolk for ever, who after died at Venice; and the other duke, which was the duke of Hereford, for ten years. Beside these, also was exiled into France Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, by act of parliament in the same year, for points of treason, as ye have heard before expressed above; all which turned to the great inconvenience of this king, as in the event following may appear.

These causes and preparatives thus premised, it followed the year after, which was A. D. 1399, and last year of this king, that the king, upon certain affairs to be done, took his voyage into Ireland. In which mean time Henry of Bolingbroke, earl of Derby and duke of Hereford, and with him the aforesaid archbishop, Thomas Arundel, which before were both exiled, returning out of France to Calais, came into England, challenging the dukedom of Lancaster, after the death of his father. With them also came the son and heir of the earl of Arundel, being yet but young. These together setting out of Calais, arrived at Ravenspur in the north; at the knowledge whereof much people gathered unto them.

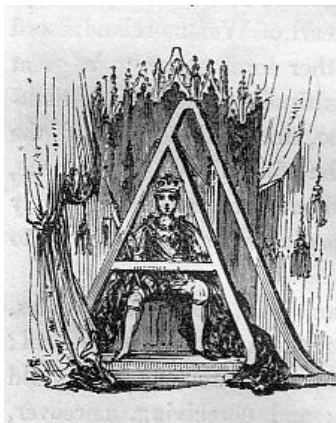
In this mean time, as the duke was hovering on the sea to enter the land, Lord Edmund, duke of York, the king's uncle, to whom the king committed the custody of this realm, having intelligence thereof, called to him the bishop of Chichester, named Edmund Stafford, chancellor of the realm; and William Scrope, earl of Wiltshire, lord treasurer; also John Bushey, William Bagot, Henry Grene, and John Ruschell, with divers others, consulting with them what was best in that case to be done; who then gave their advice, whether wilful or unskilful it is not known, but very unfruitful, that he should leave London, and go to St. Alban's, there to wait for more strength, able to encounter with the duke. But, as the people out of divers quarters resorted thither, many of them protested that they would do nothing to the harm and prejudice of the duke of Lancaster, who, they said, was unjustly expelled. The rest then of the council, John Bushey, William Bagot, Henry Grene, William Scrope, treasurer, hearing and understanding how the commons were minded to join with the duke of Hereford, left the duke of York and the lord chancellor, and fled to the castle of Bristol. Where it is to be understood, that these four were they, to whom the common fame ran, that the king had let out his realm to farm; and were so hated of the people, that it is to be thought, that for the hatred of them, more than for the king, this commotion was among the people.

As this broil was in England, the noise thereof sounding to the king's ears, being then in Ireland, for hasty speed of returning into England, he left in Ireland both his business, and most of his ordnance also behind him; and so, passing the seas, landed at Milford Haven, not daring, as it seemed, to come to London.

On the contrary side, unto Henry, duke of Hereford, being landed, as is said, in the north, came the earl of Northumberland, Lord Henry Percy, and Henry his son, the

earl of Westmoreland, Lord Radulph Nevile, and other lords more to a great number, so that the multitude rose to sixty thousand, able soldiers; who, first making toward the castle of Bristol, took the aforesaid Bushey, Grene, Scrope, and Bagot, of whom three were immediately beheaded; Bagot escaped away, and fled away to Ireland.

The king, in this mean while, lying about Wales, destitute and desolate, without comfort or counsel; who neither durst come to London, neither would any man come to him; and perceiving, moreover, the commons, that were up in such a great power against him, would rather die than give over that they had begun, for fear of themselves; seeing therefore no other remedy, called to him Lord T. Percy, earl of Worcester, and steward of his household, willing him, with other of his family, to provide for themselves in time; who then openly in the hall brake his white rod before them all, commanding every man to shift for himself. Although Fabian and some others say, that he did this of his own accord, contrary to his allegiance. The king, compassed on every side with miseries, shifted from place to place, the duke still following him; till at length, being at the castle of Conway, the king desired to talk with Thomas Arundel, archbishop, and the earl of Northumberland; to whom he declared, that he would resign up his crown, on condition that an honourable living might be for him provided, and life promised to eight persons, such as he would name. Which being granted and ratified, but not performed, he came to the castle of Flint, whence, after talk had with the duke of Lancaster, he was brought the same night, by the duke and his army, to Chester, and from thence was conveyed secretly into the Tower, there to be kept till the next parliament. By the way, as he came near to London, divers evil-disposed men of the city being warned thereof, gathered themselves, thinking to have slain him, for the great cruelty he had used before toward the city; but, by the policy of the mayor and rulers of the city, the madness of the people was stayed. Not long after followed the duke, and also began the parliament: in which parliament the earl of Northumberland, with many other earls and lords, were sent to the king in the Tower, to take of him a full resignation, according to his former promise; and so they did. This done, divers accusations and articles were laid and engrossed against the said king, to the number of thirty-three, some say thirty-eight; which, for the matter not greatly material in them contained, I overpass: and the next year after, he was had to Pomfret Castle, and there famished to death.



ND thus King Richard by common assent being deposed from his rightful crown, the duke of Lancaster was led by Thomas Arundel, the archbishop, to the seat royal; who there standing up, and crossing himself on the forehead and the breast, spake in words as followeth

"In the name of God, Amen. I Henry of Lancaster claim the realm of England and the crown, with all the appurtenances, as I that am descended by right line of the blood, coming from that good lord King Henry the Third, and, through the right that God of his grace hath sent to me, with the help of my kin and of my friends to recover

the same, which was in point to be undone for default of good governance, and due justice," &c.

After which words the archbishop, asking the assent of the people, being joyful of their new king, took the duke by the hand, and placed him in the kingly

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throne, which was A. D. 1399, and, shortly after, by the aforesaid archbishop, he was crowned also for king of England.

87. William Sautre

The next year after followed a parliament holden at Westminster: in which parliament one William Sautre, a good man and a faithful priest, inflamed with zeal of true religion, required he might be heard for the commodity of the whole realm. But the matter being smelt before by the bishop, they obtained that the matter should be referred to the convocation; where the said William Sautre being brought before the bishops and notaries thereunto appointed, the convocation was deferred to the Saturday next ensuing.

"When Saturday was come, that is to say, the twelfth day of February, Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, in the presence of his council provincial, being assembled in the said chapterhouse, against one Sir William Sautre, otherwise called Chatris, chaplain, personally then and there appearing by the commandment of the aforesaid archbishop of Canterbury, objected, that the said Sir William, before the bishop of Norwich, had once renounced and abjured divers and sundry conclusions heretical and erroneous; and that after such abjuration made, he publicly and privily held, taught, and preached the same conclusions, or else such-like, disagreeing to the catholic faith, and to the great peril and pernicious example of others. And after this he caused such-like conclusions holden and preached, as is said, by the said, Sir William without renunciation, then and there to be read unto the said archbishop, by Master Robert Hall, chancellor unto the said bishop, in a certain scroll written, in tenor of words as followeth

"Sir William Chatris, otherwise called Sautre, parish priest of the church St. Scithe the virgin, in London, publicly and privily doth hold these conclusions underwritten:

"Imprimis, He saith, That he will not worship the cross on which Christ suffered, but only Christ that suffered upon the cross.

"2. Item, That he would sooner worship a temporal king, than the aforesaid wooden cross.

"3. Item, That he would rather worship the bodies of the saints, than the very cross of Christ on which he hung, if it were before him.

"4. Item, That he would rather worship a man truly contrite, than the cross of Christ.

"5. Item, That he is bound rather to worship a man that is predestinate, than an angel of God.

"6. Item, That if any man would visit the monuments of Peter and Paul, or go on pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Thomas, or any whither else, for the obtaining of any temporal benefit; he is not bound to keep his vow, but he may distribute the expenses of his vow upon the alms of the poor.

"7. Item, That every priest and deacon is more bound to preach the word of God, than to say the canonical hours.

"8. Item, That after the pronouncing of the sacramental words of the body of Christ, the bread remaineth of the same nature that it was before, neither doth it cease to be bread.

"To which conclusions or articles, being thus read, the archbishop of Canterbury required the same Sir William to answer: and then the said William asked a copy of such articles or conclusions, and a competent space to answer unto the same. Whereupon the said archbishop commanded a copy of such articles or conclusions to be delivered then and there unto the said Sir William, assigning the Thursday then next ensuing to him to deliberate and make answer in. When Thursday, the said day of appearance, was come, Master Nicholas Rishton, auditor of the causes and businesses belonging to the said archbishop, then being in the parliament-house at Westminster, otherwise let, continued the said convocation with all matters rising, depending, and appertinent thereunto, by commandment of the said bishop, until the next morrow at eight of the clock. When the morrow came, being Friday, the aforesaid Sir William Sautre, in the chapter-house, before the said bishop and his council provincial then and there assembled, making his personal appearance, exhibited a certain scroll, containing the answers unto certain articles or conclusions given unto him, as is aforesaid, by the said bishop; and said, that unto the aforesaid archbishop he delivered the same as his answer in that behalf, under the tenor of such words as follow:

"I, William Sautre, priest unworthy, say and answer, that I will not, nor intend not to worship the cross whereon Christ was crucified, but only Christ that suffered upon the cross; so understanding me, that I will not worship the material cross, or the gross corporal matter: yet, notwithstanding, I will worship the same as a sign, token, and memorial of the passion of Christ, *adoratione vicaria*. And that I will rather worship a temporal king, than the aforesaid wooden cross, and the material substance of the same. And that I will rather worship the bodies of saints, than the very cross of Christ whereon he hung; with this addition, that if the very same cross were afore me as touching the material substance. And also that I will rather worship a man truly confessed and penitent, than the cross on which Christ hung, as touching the material substance.

"And that also I am bound, and will rather worship him whom I know to be predestinate, truly confessed, and contrite, than an angel of God: for that the one is a man of the same nature with the humanity of Christ, and so is not a blessed angel. Notwithstanding I will worship both of them, according as the will of God is I should.

"Also, that if any man hath made a vow to visit the shrines of the apostles Peter and Paul, or to go on pilgrimage unto St. Thomas's tomb, or any whither else, to obtain any temporal benefit or commodity, he is not bound simply to keep his vow upon the necessity of salvation; but he may give the expenses of his vow in alms amongst the poor, by the prudent counsel of his superior, as I suppose.

"And also I say, that every deacon and priest is more bound to preach the word of God, than to say the canonical hours, according to the primitive order of the church.

"Also, touching the interrogation of the sacrament of the altar, I say, that after the pronouncing of the sacramental words of the body of Christ, there ceaseth not to be very bread simply, but remains bread, holy, true, and the bread of life; and I believe the said sacrament to be the very body of Christ, after the pronouncing of the sacramental words.

"When all these answers were thoroughly, by Master Robert Hall, directly and publicly there read, the aforesaid archbishop of Canterbury inquired of the said Sir

William, whether he had abjured the aforesaid heresies and errors objected against him, as before is said, before the bishop of Norwich, or not; or else had revoked and renounced the said or such-like conclusions or articles, or not? To which he answered and affirmed that he had not. And then, consequently, all other articles, conclusions, and answers above written immediately omitted, the said archbishop examined the same Sir William Sautre, especially upon the sacrament of the altar.

"First, Whether in the sacrament of the altar, after the pronouncing of the sacramental words, remaineth very material bread or not? Unto which interrogation, the same Sir William somewhat waveringly said and answered, that he knew not that. Notwithstanding he said, that there was very bread, because it was the bread of life which came down from heaven.

"After that the said archbishop demanded of him, whether, in the sacrament, after the sacramental words rightly pronounced of the priest, the same bread remaineth, which did before the words pronounced, or not. And to this question the aforesaid William answered in like manner as before, saying, that there was bread, holy, true, and the bread of life, &c.

"After that, the aforesaid archbishop asked him, whether the same material bread before consecration, by the sacramental words of the priest rightly pronounced, be transubstantiated from the nature of bread into the very body of Christ, or not? Whereunto Sir William said, that he knew not what that matter meant.

"And then the said archbishop assigned unto the said Sir William time to deliberate, and more fully to make his answer, till the next day; and continued this convocation then and there till the morrow: which morrow, to wit, the nineteenth day of February, being come, the aforesaid archbishop of Canterbury, in the said chapter-house of St. Paul in London, before his council provincial then and there assembled, specially asked and examined the same Sir William Sautre, there personally present, upon the sacrament of the altar, as before: and the same Sir William, again, in like manner as before, answered.

"After this, amongst other things, the said bishop demanded of the same William, if the same material bread being upon the altar, after the sacramental words being of the priest rightly pronounced, is transubstantiated into the very body of Christ or not? And the said Sir William said, he understood not what he meant.

"Then the said archbishop demanded, whether that material bread being round and white, prepared and disposed for the sacrament of the body of Christ upon the altar, wanting nothing that is meet and requisite thereunto, by the virtue of the sacramental words being of the priest rightly pronounced, be altered and changed into the very body of Christ, and ceaseth any more to be material and very bread or not? Then the said Sir William, deridingly answering, said, he could not tell.

"Then, consequently, the said archbishop demanded, whether he would stand to the determination of the holy church or not, which affirmeth, that in the sacrament of the altar, after the words of consecration being rightly pronounced of the priest, the same bread, which before in nature was bread, ceaseth any more to be bread. To this interrogation the said Sir William said, that he would stand to the determination of the church, where such determination was not contrary to the will of God.

"This done, he demanded of him again, what his judgment was concerning the sacrament of the altar: who said and affirmed, that after the words of consecration, by the priest duly pronounced, remained very bread, and the same bread which was

before the words spoken. And this examination about the sacrament, lasted from eight o'clock until eleven, or thereabouts, of the same day: insomuch that during all this time the aforesaid William would no otherwise answer, neither yet, touching the same sacrament, receive catholic information, according to the institution of the pope's church, and his Christian faith. Wherefore the said Canterbury, by the counsel and assent of his whole convent then and there present, did promulgate and give sentence, by the mouth of Robert Hall, against the same Sir William Sautre, being personally present, and refusing to revoke his heresies, that is to say, his true doctrine, but constantly defended the same, under the tenor of words as followeth:

"In the name of God, Amen. We, Thomas, by the grace of God archbishop of Canterbury, primate of England, and legate of the see apostolical, by the authority of God Almighty, and blessed St. Peter and Paul, and of holy church, and by our own authority, sitting for tribunal or chief judge, having God alone before our eyes, by the counsel and consent of the whole clergy, our fellow brethren and suffragans, assistants unto us in this present council provincial, by this our sentence definitive, do pronounce, decree, and declare, by these presents, thee William Sautre, otherwise called Chatris, parish priest pretended, personally appearing before us, in and upon the crime of heresy, judicially and lawfully convicted as a heretic, and as a heretic to be punished.

"Which sentence definitive being thus read, the aforesaid archbishop of Canterbury, continued in the same provincial council till Wednesday next and immediately ensuing, to wit, the twenty-fourth day of the same month of February; which being expired, the bishop of Norwich, according to the commandment of the said archbishop of Canterbury, presented unto the aforesaid William Sautre, by a certain friend of his, being present at the same council, a certain process enclosed and sealed with his seal, giving the names of credible witnesses, and sealed with their seals, to which William Sautre thus replied:

"Imprimis, Touching the first and second, where I said, that I would adore rather a temporal prince, and the lively bodies of the saints, than the wooden cross whereupon the Lord did hang: I do revoke and recant the same, as being therein deceived.

"To this I say, that the article is false and erroneous, and by false information I held it; the which I renounce and ask forgiveness thereof, and say, that it is a precious relic, and that I shall hold it while I live, and that I swear here.

"I know well that I erred wrongfully by false information; for I wot well, that a deacon or a priest is more bound to say his matins and hours, than to preach; for thereto he is bounden by right: wherefore I submit me, &c.

"Touching that article, I know right well that I erred by false information: wherefore I ask forgiveness.

"As concerning vows, I say that opinion is false and erroneous, and by false information I held it; for a man is bounden to hold his vow, &c.

"To the seventh article I say, that I did it by authority of priesthood, through which deed I acknowledge well that I have guilt and trespassed: wherefore I submit me to God and to holy church, and to you, father, swearing that I shall never hold it more.

"To the eighth I say, that I held it by false and wrong information: but now I know well that it is heresy, and that bread, anon as the word of the sacrament is said, is no longer bread material, but that it is turned into Christ's very body; and that I swear here.

"I say, that this is false and erroneous, &c. "I say as I said, &c.

"This being done, the twenty-second of February aforesaid, in the year of our Lord 1400, in the chapter-house of St. Paul, in London aforesaid, the aforesaid archbishop of Canterbury, in the convocation of his prelates and clergy, and such-like men there being present, caused the afore recited process of the bishop of Norwich to be read openly and publicly to Sir William Sautre, otherwise called Chatris, And afterward he asked the said Sir William, whether he plainly understood and knew such process, and the contents within the same; and he said, Yea. And further he demanded of him, if he would or could say or object any thing against the process; and he said, No. And after that incontinent, the aforesaid archbishop of Canterbury demanded and objected against the said Sir William, as divers others more did; that after he had, before the bishop of Norwich, revoked and abjured, judicially, divers errors and heresies, among other errors and heresies by him taught, holden, and preached, he affirmed, that in the same sacrament of the altar, after the consecration made by the priest, as he taught, there remained material bread; which heresy, amongst others, as errors also he abjured before the aforesaid bishop of Norwich. Hereunto the afore-said William answered smiling, or in mocking wise, saying and denying that he knew of the premises. Notwithstanding, he publicly affirmed, that he held and taught the aforesaid things after the date of the said process made by the said bishop of Norwich, and that in the same council also he held the same. Then finally it was demanded of the said Sir William, why he ought not to be pronounced as a man fallen into heresy, and why they should not further proceed unto his degradation according to the canonical sanctions: whereunto he answered nothing, neither could he allege any cause to the contrary.

"Whereupon the aforesaid archbishop of Canterbury, by the counsel and assent of the whole council, and especially by the counsel and assent of the reverend fathers and bishops, as also priors, deans, archdeacons, and other worshipful doctors and clerks then and there present in the council, fully determined to proceed to the degradation and actual deposing of the said William Sautre, as refallen into heresy, and as incorrigible; according to the sentence definitive put in writing, the tenor whereof is in words as followeth:

"In the name of God, Amen. We, Thomas, by the grace of God archbishop of Canterbury, legate of the see apostolical, and metropolitan of all England, do find and declare, that thou, William Sautre, otherwise called Chatris, priest, by us, with the counsel and assent of all and singular our fellow brethren and whole clergy, by this our sentence definitive declared in writing, hast been for heresy convicted and condemned, and art (being again fallen into heresy) to be deposed and degraded by these presents.

"And from that day, being Wednesday, there was in the said council provincial nothing further prosecuted, but was continued with all dependents till the Friday next ensuing; which Friday approaching, Master Nicholas Rishton, by the commandment of the said archbishop of Canterbury, being then busied, as he said, in the parliament house, continued this council and convocation with all incidents, dependents, and occasions growing and annexed thereunto, the next day, to wit, Saturday next and

immediately after ensuing. Upon Saturday, being the 26th of the said month of February, the aforesaid archbishop of Canterbury sat in the bishop's seat of the aforesaid church of St. Paul in London, and solemnly apparelled in his pontifical attire, sitting with him as his assistants these reverend fathers and bishops, of London, Lincoln, Hereford, Exeter, Menevensis, and Rossensis, above-mentioned, commanded and caused the said Sir William Sautre, apparelled in priestly vestments, to be brought and appear before him. That done, he declared and expounded in English to all the clergy and people there in a great multitude assembled, that all process was finished and ended against the said Sir William Sautre. Which thing finished, before the pronouncing of the said sentence of the relapse against the said Sir William, as is premised, he often then and there recited and read. And for that he saw the said William in that behalf nothing abashed, he proceeded to his degradation and actual deposition, in form as followeth:

"In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, We, Thomas, by God's permission archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, and legate of the apostolic see, do denounce thee, William Sautre, otherwise called Chatris, chaplain feigned, in the habit and apparel of a priest, as a heretic, and one re-fallen into heresy, by this our sentence definitive, by counsel, assent, and authority, to be condemned; and by conclusion of all our fellow brethren, fellow bishops, prelates, council provincial, and of the whole clergy, do degrade and deprive thee of thy priestly order. And in sign of degradation and actual deposition from thy priestly dignity, for thine incorrigibility and want of amendment, we take from thee the paten and chalice, and do deprive thee of all power and authority of celebrating the mass, and also we pull from thy back the casule, and take from thee the vestment, and deprive thee of all manner of priestly honour.

"Also, We, Thomas, the aforesaid archbishop, by authority, counsel, and assent, which upon the aforesaid William we have, being deacon pretended, in the habit and apparel of a deacon, having the New Testament in thy hands, being a heretic, and twice fallen, condemned by sentence as is aforesaid, do degrade and put thee from the order of a deacon. And in token of this thy degradation and actual deposition, we take from thee the book of the New Testament, and the stole, and do deprive thee of all authority in reading of the gospel, and of all and all manner of dignity of a deacon.

"Item, We, Thomas, archbishop aforesaid, by authority, counsel, and assent, which over thee the aforesaid William we have, being a sub-deacon pretended, in the habit and vestment of a sub-deacon, a heretic, and twice fallen, condemned by sentence, as is aforesaid, do degrade and put thee from the order of a sub-deacon; and in token of this thy degradation and actual deposition, we take from thee the albe and maniple, and do deprive thee of all and all manner of sub-diaconical dignity.

"Also, We, Thomas, archbishop aforesaid, by counsel, assent, and authority which we have over thee, the aforesaid William, an acolyte pretended, wearing the habit of an acolyte, and heretic, twice fallen, by our sentence, as is aforesaid, condemned, do degrade and put from thee all order of an acolyte; and in sign and token of this thy degradation, and actual deposition, we take from thee the candlestick and taper, and also *urceolum*, and do deprive thee of all and all manner of dignity of an acolyte.

"Also, We, Thomas, archbishop aforesaid, by assent, counsel, and authority, which upon thee the aforesaid William we have, an exorcist pretended, in the habit of

an exorcist or holy water clerk, being a heretic, twice fallen, and by our sentence, as is aforesaid, condemned, do degrade and depose thee from the order of an exorcist; and, in token of this thy degradation and actual deposition, we take from thee the book of conjurations, and do deprive thee of all and singular dignity of an exorcist.

"Also, We, Thomas, archbishop aforesaid, by assent, counsel, and authority, as is above said, do degrade and depose thee, the aforesaid William, reader pretended, clothed in the habit of a reader, a heretic, twice fallen, and by our sentence, as is aforesaid, condemned, from the order of a reader; and in token of this thy degradation and actual deposition, we take from thee the book of the divine lections, (that is, the book of the church legend,) and do deprive thee of all and singular manner of dignity of such a reader.

"Item, We, Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury aforesaid, by authority, counsel, and assent, the which we have, as is aforesaid, do degrade, and put thee, the aforesaid William Sautre, sexton pretended, in the habit of a sexton, and wearing a surplice, being a heretic, twice fallen, by our sentence definitive condemned, as aforesaid, from the order of a sexton; and in token of this thy degradation and actual deposition, for the causes aforesaid, we take from thee the keys of the church-door, and thy surplice, and do deprive thee of all and singular manner of commodities of a door-keeper.

"And also, by the authority of omnipotent God, the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost, and by our authority, counsel, and assent of our whole council provincial above written, we do degrade thee, and depose thee, being here personally present before us, from orders, benefices, privileges, and habit in the church; and, for thy pertinacy incorrigible, we do degrade thee before the secular court of the high constable and marshal of England, being personally present; and do depose thee from all and singular clerkly honours and dignities whatsoever, by these writings. Also, in token of thy degradation and deposition, here actually we have caused thy crown and ecclesiastical tonsure, in our presence, to be rased away, and utterly to be abolished, like unto the form of a secular layman; and here we do put upon the head of thee, the aforesaid William, the cap of a lay, secular person; beseeching the court aforesaid, that they will receive favourably the said William unto them thus re-committed."

Thus William Sautre, the servant of Christ, being utterly thrust out of the pope's kingdom, and metamorphosed from a clerk to a secular layman, was committed, as ye have heard, unto the secular power: which so done, the bishops, yet not herewith contented, cease not to call upon the king, to cause him to be brought forth to speedy execution. Whereupon the king, ready enough and too much to gratify the clergy, and to retain their favours, directeth out a terrible decree against the said William Sautre, and sent it to the mayor and sheriffs of London to be put in execution; the tenor whereof hereunder ensueth.

"The decree of our sovereign lord the king and his council in the parliament, against a certain newly sprung up heretic, to the mayor and sheriffs of London, &c. Whereas the reverend father Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, and legate of the apostolic see, by the assent, consent, and council of other bishops, and his brethren suffragans, and also of all the whole clergy within his province or diocese, gathered together in his provincial council, the due order of the law being observed in all points in this behalf, hath pronounced and declared, by his definitive sentence, William Sautre, sometime chaplain, fallen again into his most damnable heresy, the which before-time the said William had abjured, thereupon to be

a most manifest heretic, and therefore hath decreed that he should be degraded, and hath for the same cause really degraded him from all prerogative and privilege of the clergy, decreeing to leave him unto the secular power; and hath really so left him, according to the laws and canonical sanctions set forth in this behalf, and also that our holy mother the church hath no further to do in the premises; we therefore, being zealous in religion, and reverent lovers of the catholic faith, willing and minding to maintain and defend the holy church, and the laws and liberties of the same, to root all such errors and heresies out of our kingdom of Enggland, and with condign punishment to correct and punish all heretics or such as be convict; provided always that both according to the law of God and man, and the canonical institutions in this behalf accustomed, such heretics convict and condemned in form aforesaid, ought to be burned with fire: we command you, as straitly as we may, or can, firmly enjoining you that you do cause the said William, being in your custody, in some public or open place within the liberties of your city aforesaid, the cause aforesaid being published unto the people, to be put into the fire, and there in the same fire really. to be burned, to the great horror of his offence, and the manifest example of other Christians. Fail not in the execution hereof, upon the peril that will fall thereupon."

Thus it may appear how kings and princes have been blinded and abused by the false prelates of the church, insomuch that they have been their slaves and butchers, to slay Christ's poor innocent members. See, therefore, what danger it is for princes not to have knowledge and understanding themselves, but to be led by other men's eyes, and specially trusting to such guides, who, through hypocrisy, both deceive them, and, through cruelty, devour the people.

As King Henry the Fourth, who was the deposer of King Richard, was the first of all English kings that began the unmerciful burning of Christ's saints for standing against the pope; so was this William Sautre, the true and faithful martyr of Christ; the first of all them in Wickliffs time, which I find to be burned in the reign of the aforesaid king, which was in the year of our Lord 1400.



The burning of William Sautre

88. Opposition to Henry IV.

After the martyrdom of this godly man, the rest of the same company began to keep themselves more closely for fear of the king, who was altogether bent to hold with the pope's prelacy. Such was the reign of this prince, that to the godly he was ever terrible, in his actions immeasurable, of few men heartily beloved; but princes never lack flatterers about them. Neither was the time of his reign very quiet, but full of trouble, of blood, and misery. Such was their desire of King Richard again, in the reign of this king, that many years after he was rumoured to be alive, of them which desired belike that to be true which they knew to be false, for the which divers were executed. For the space of six or seven years together almost no year passed without some conspiracy against the king. Long it were here to recite the blood of all such nobles and others, which was spilled in the reign of this king, as the earl of Kent, earl of Salisbury, earl of Huntingdon, named John Holland, &c., as writeth the story of St. Alban's. But the English writers differ something in their names, and make mention of four earls, of Surrey, of Exeter, of Salisbury, and Lord Spencer, earl of Gloucester.

And the next year following Sir John Clarendon, knight, with two of his servants, the prior of Laund, with eight friars, were hanged and quartered. And after these Henry Percy the younger; the earl of Worcester, named Thomas Percy, his uncle; the Lord of Kinderton, and Lord Richard de Vernova. The earl of Northumberland scarce escaped with his pardon, A. D. 1403: in the which year the prison in Cornhill, called the Tun, was turned into the Conduit there now standing.

To let pass others more hanged and quartered the same time, as Blunt, knight, and Benet Kely, knight, and Thomas Winterset, esquire; also the same year was taken and executed Sir Bernard Brookes, knight, Sir John Shilley, knight, Sir John Mandelin, and William Frierby. After all these, Lord Henry, earl of Northumberland, and Lord Bardolf, conspiring the king's death, were taken in the north, and beheaded, which was in the eighth year of this King Henry.

This civil rebellion of so many nobles, and others, against the king, declared what grudging hearts the people then bare toward this King Henry; among whom I cannot pretermite here also the archbishop of York, named Richard Scrope, who, with the Lord Mowbray, marshal of England, gathered a great company in the north country against the aforesaid king, to whom also was adjoined the help of Lord Bardolf, and Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland: and to stir up the people more willingly to take their parts, they collected certain articles against the said king, to the number of ten, and fastened them upon the doors of churches and monasteries, to be read of all men in English; which articles if any be disposed to understand, forasmuch as the same also contain a great part of the doings between King Henry and King Richard aforesaid, I thought, for the better opening of the matter, hereunder to insert the same, in such form as I found them in the story of Scala Mundi expressed.

Articles set upon church-doors against King Henry the Fourth.

"In the name of God, Amen. Before the Lord Jesus Christ, judge of the quick and dead, &c. We A. B. C. D., &c., not long since became bound by oath, upon the sacred evangelical book, unto our sovereign Lord Richard, late king of England and France, in the presence of many prelates, potentates, and nobility of the realm, that we, so long as we lived, should bear true allegiance and fidelity toward him and his

heirs succeeding him in the kingdom, by just title, right, and line, according to the statutes and custom of this realm of England; by virtue whereof we are bound to foresee that no vices, or heinous offences, arising in the commonwealth, do take effect or wished end, and we ought to give ourselves and our goods to withstand the same, without fear of the sword or death whatsoever, upon pain of perjury, which pain is everlasting damnation. Wherefore we, seeing and perceiving divers horrible crimes, and great enormities daily, without ceasing, to be committed by the children of the devil, and Satan's soldiers, against the supremacy of the Church of Rome, the liberty of the Church of England, and the laws of the realm; against the person of King Richard and his heirs; against the prelates, noblemen, religion, and commonalty; and finally, against the whole weal public of the realm of England, to the great offence of the majesty of Almighty God, and to the provocation of his just wrath and vengeance towards the realm and people of the same: and fearing also the destruction both of the Church of Rome and England, and the ruin of our country to be at hand, having before our eyes the justice and the kingdom of God, calling always on the name of Jesus, having an assured confidence in his clemency, mercy, and power, have here taken unto us certain articles, subscribed in form following, to be propounded, tried, and heard before the just Judge, Jesus Christ, and the whole world, to his honour, the delivery of the church, the clergy, and commonalty, and to the utility and profit of the weal public. But if (which God forbid) by force, fear, or violence of wicked persons, we shall be cast in prison, or by violent death prevented, so as in this world we shall not be able to prove the said articles as we would wish, then do we appeal to the high celestial Judge, that he may judge and discern the same, in the day of his supreme judgment.

"First, We depose, say, except, and intend, to prove, against the Lord Henry Derby, son of the Lord John of Gaunt, late duke of Lancaster, and commonly called king of England, (himself pretending the same, although without all right and title thereunto,) and against his adherents, abettors, and complices, that ever they have been, are, and will be traitors, invaders, and destroyers of God's church in Rome, England, Wales, and Ireland, and of our sovereign Lord Richard, late king of England, his heirs, his kingdom, and commonwealth, as shall hereafter manifestly appear.

"Secondly, We depose, &c., against the said Lord Henry, for that he had conceived, devised, and conspired, certain heinous crimes and traitorous offences against his said sovereign Lord Richard, his state and dignity, as manifestly did appear in the contention between the said Lord Henry, and the Lord Thomas, duke of Norfolk, begun at Coventry, but not finished thoroughly. Afterwards he was sent into exile by sentence of the said King Richard, by the agreement of his father, the Lord John, duke of Lancaster, by the voice of divers of the lords temporal, and nobility of the realm, and also by his own consent, there to remain for a certain time appointed unto him by the said lords; and withal he was bound, by oath, not to return into England before he had obtained favour and grace of the king. Not long after, when the king was departed into Ireland, for reformation of that country appertaining to the crown of England, but as then rebelling against the same, the said Lord Henry in the mean time, contrary to his oath and fidelity, and long before the time limited unto him was expired, with all his abettors and invaders, secretly entered into the realm, swearing and protesting before the face of the people, that his coming into the realm in the absence of the king was for none other cause, but that he might, in humble sort, with the love and favour of the king, and all the lords spiritual and temporal, have and enjoy his lawful inheritance descending unto him of right after the death of his father:

which thing as it pleased all men, so cried they, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. But how this blessing afterward turned into cursing, shall appear in that which followeth: and also yeshall understand his horrible and wicked conspiracy against his sovereign lord King Richard, and divers other lords as well spiritual as temporal; besides that his manifest perjury shall well be known, and that he remaineth not only forsworn and perjured, but also excommunicate, for that he conspired against his sovereign lord our king: wherefore we pronounce him, by these presents, as well perjured, as excommunicate.

"Thirdly, We depose, &c., against the Lord Henry, that he the said Lord Henry, immediately after his entry into England, by crafty and subtle policy caused to be proclaimed openly throughout the realm, that no tenths of the clergy, fifteenths of the people, sealing up of cloth, diminution of wool, impost of wine, or other extortions or exactions whatsoever, should hereafter be required or exacted; hoping by this means to purchase unto him the voice and favour of the prelates spiritual, the lords temporal, the merchants, and commonalty of the whole realm. After this he took by force the king's castles and fortresses, spoiled and devoured his goods wheresoever he found them, crying, Havoc, havoc. The king's Majesty's subjects, as well spiritual as temporal, he spoiled and robbed; some he took captive and imprisoned them; and some he slew and put to miserable death; whereof many were bishops, prelates, priests, and religious men: whereby it is manifest, that the said Lord Henry is not only perjured, in promising and swearing that there should be hereafter no more exactions, payments, or extortions within the realm, but also excommunicate, for the violence and injury done to prelates and priests: wherefore, by these presents we pronounce him, as before, as well perjured, as excommunicate.

"Fourthly, We depose, &c., against the said Lord Henry, that he, hearing of the king's return from Ireland into Wales, rose up against his sovereign lord the king with many thousands of armed men, marching forward with all his power towards the castle of Flint, in Wales, where he took the king and held him prisoner, and so led him captive as a traitor unto Leicester; from whence he took his journey towards London, misusing the king by the way, both he and his, with many injuries and opprobrious contumelies and scoffs: and in the end committed him to the Tower of London, and held a parliament, the king being absent and in prison; wherein, for fear of death he compelled the king to yield and resign unto him all his right and title of the kingdom and crown of England. After which resignation being made, the said Lord Henry, standing up in the parliament house, stoutly and proudly before them all, said and affirmed, that the kingdom of England and crown of the same, with all thereunto belonging, did pertain unto him at that present, as of very right, and to none other; for that the said King Richard, by his own deed, was deprived for ever of all the right, title, and interest that ever he had, hath, or may have in the same. And thus at length, by right and wrong, he exalted himself unto the throne of the kingdom; since which time our commonwealth never flourished nor prospered, but altogether hath been void of virtue, for that the spirituality was so oppressed, exercise and warlike practices have not been maintained, charity is waxed cold, and covetousness and misery have taken place, and finally mercy is taken away, and vengeance supplieth the room: whereby it doth appear, as before is said, that the said Lord Henry is not only perjured and false by usurping the kingdom and dominion belonging to another, but also excommunicate for the apprehending, unjust imprisoning, and depriving his sovereign lord the king of his royal crown and dignity: wherefore, as in the articles before, we pronounce the said Lord Henry to be excommunicate.

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

"Fifthly, We depose, &c., against the said Lord Henry, that he the same Lord Henry, with the rest of his favourers and complices, heaping mischief upon mischief, have committed and brought to pass a most wicked and mischievous fact, yea, such as hath not been heard of at any time before: for, after that they had taken and imprisoned the king, and deposed him by open injury against all human nature, yet, not content with this, they brought him to Pomfret Castle, and there imprisoned him, where fifteen days and nights they vexed him with continual hunger, thirst, and cold, and finally bereft him of life, with such a kind of death as never before that time was known in England, but by God's providence it is come to light. Who ever heard of such a deed, or who ever saw the like of it? Wherefore, O England! arise, stand up, avenge the cause, the death and injury of thy king and prince: which if thou do not, take this for certain, that the righteous God will destroy thee by strange invasions and foreign power, and avenge himself on thee for this so horrible an act: whereby doth appear not only his perjury, but also his excommunication most execrable, so that, as before, we pronounce the said Henry not only perjured, but also excommunicate.

"Sixthly, We depose, &c., against the said Lord Henry, that after he had attained to the crown and sceptre of the kingdom, he caused forthwith to be apprehended divers lords spiritual, bishops, abbots, priors, and religious men of all orders, whom he arrested, imprisoned, and bound, and against all order brought them before the secular judges to be examined; not sparing the bishops, whose bodies were anointed with sacred oil, nor priests, nor religious men, but commanded them to be condemned, hanged, and beheaded, by the temporal law and judgment, notwithstanding the privilege of the church and holy orders, which he ought to have revered and worshipped, if he had been a true and lawful king; for the first and chiefest oath in the coronation of a lawful king is, to defend and keep inviolate the liberties and rights of the church, and not to deliver any priest or religious man into the hands of the secular power, except for heresy only, and that after his degradation, according to the order of the church. Contrary unto all this hath he done; so that it is manifest by this article, as before in the rest, that he is both perjured, and excommunicate.

"Seventhly, We depose, &c., against the said Lord Henry, that not only he caused to be put to death the lords spiritual and other religious men, but also divers of the lords temporal and nobility of the realm, and chiefly those that studied for the preservation of the commonwealth, not ceasing as yet to continue his mischievous enterprise, if by God's providence it be not prevented, and that with speed. Amongst all other of the nobility, these first he put to death; the earl of Salisbury, the earl of Huntingdon, the earl of Gloucester, the Lord Roger Clarendon, the king's brother, with divers other knights and esquires; and afterwards, the Lord Thomas Percy, earl of Worcester, and the Lord Henry Percy, son and heir to the earl of Northumberland; the which Lord Henry he not only slew, but to the uttermost of his power again and again he caused him to be slain. For after that he was once put to death, and delivered to the lord of Furnile to be buried, who committed his body to holy sepulture, with as much honour as might be, commending his soul to Almighty God with the suffrages of the blessed mass and other prayers, the said Lord Henry, most like a cruel beast still thirsting for his blood, caused his body to be exhumed and brought forth again, and to be reposed between two millstones in the town of Shrewsbury, there to be kept with armed men; and afterwards to be beheaded and quartered, commanding his head and quarters to be carried into divers cities of the kingdom: wherefore, for so detestable a

fact, never heard of in any age before, we pronounce him, as in the former articles, excommunicate.

"Eighthly, We depose, &c., against the said Lord Henry, for that after his attaining to the crown, he willingly ratified, allowed, and approved a most wicked statute set forth and renewed in the parliament holden at Winchester; the which statute is directly against the Church of Rome, and the power and principality thereof given by our Lord Jesus Christ unto blessed St. Peter and his successors, bishops of Rome; unto whom belongeth, by full authority, the free disposing of all spiritual promotions, as well superior as inferior; which wicked statute is the cause of many mischiefs; viz. of simony, perjury, adultery, incest, disorder, and disobedience; for that many bishops, abbots, priors, and prelates (we will not say by virtue, but rather by error of this statute) have bestowed the benefices vacant upon young men, rude and unworthy persons, which have compacted with them for the same, so that scarce one prelate is found that hath not covenanted with the party promoted, for the half-yearly, or, at the least, the third part of the said benefice so bestowed. And by this means the said statute is the destruction of the right of St. Peter, the Church of Rome and England, the clergy and universities, the whole commonwealth and maintenance of wars, &c.

"Ninthly, We say and depose, &c., against the said Lord Henry, that after he had tyrannously taken upon him the government of the realm, England never flourished since, nor prospered, by reason of his continual exactions of money, and oppressions yearly of the clergy and commonalty; neither is it known how this money so extorted is bestowed, since neither his soldiers nor his gentlemen are paid as yet their wages and fees for their charges and wonderful toil and labour, neither yet the poor country people are satisfied for the victual taken of them; and, nevertheless, the miserable clergy, and more miserable commonalty, are forced still to pay by menaces and sharp threatenings: notwithstanding he swore, when he first usurped the crown, that hereafter there should be no such exactions nor vexations, neither of the clergy nor laity: wherefore, as before, we pronounce him perjured, &c.

In the tenth and last article we depose, say, and openly protest by these presents, for ourselves, and all our assistants in the cause of the Church of Rome and England, and in the cause of King Richard, his heirs, and the clergy and commonalty of the whole realm, that neither our intention is, was, nor shall be, in word or deed to offend any state, either of the prelates spiritual, lords temporal, or commons of the realm; but rather, foreseeing the perdition and destruction of this realm to approach, we have here brought before you certain articles concerning the destruction of the same, to be circumspectly considered of the whole assembly, as well of the lords spiritual as temporal, and the faithful commons of England: beseeching you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ, the righteous Judge, and for the merits of our blessed Lady, the mother of God, and of St. George our defender, under whose displayed banner we wish to live and die, and under pain of damnation, that ye will be favourable to us, and to our causes which are three in number: whereof the first is, that we exalt unto the kingdom the true and lawful heir, and him to crown in kingly throne with the diadem of England. And secondly, that we revoke the Welchmen, the Irishmen, and all other our enemies unto perpetual peace and unity. Thirdly, and finally, that we deliver and make free our native country from all exactions, extortions, and unjust payments; beseeching our Lord Jesus Christ to grant his blessing, the remission of their sins, and life everlasting to all that assist us to their power in this godly and meritorious work: and unto all those that are against us we threaten the curse of

Almighty God, by the authority committed unto us by Christ and his holy church, and by these presents we pronounce them excommunicate."

These articles being seen and read, much concourse of people daily resorted more and more to the archbishop. The earl of Westmoreland (being then not far off, with John, the king's son) hearing of this, mustered his soldiers with all the power he was able to make, and bent toward the archbishop; but seeing his part too weak to encounter with him, he useth practice of policy, where strength would not serve. And first, coming to him under colour of friendship dissembled, he laboureth to seek out the causes of that great stir: to whom the archbishop again answering no hurt to be intended thereby, but profit rather to the king and commonwealth, and maintenance of the public peace; but forasmuch as he stood in great fear and danger of the king, he was therefore compelled so to do. And withal he showed unto him the contents of the articles aforesaid; which when the earl had read, setting a fair face upon it, he seemed highly to commend the purpose and doings of the bishop, promising, moreover, that he would help also forward in that quarrel to the uttermost of his power, and he required upon the same a day to be set, when they, with equal number of men, might meet together, in some place appointed, to have further talk of the matter. The archbishop, easily persuaded, was content, although much against the counsel of the earl marshal, and came; where the articles being openly published and read, the earl of Westmoreland with his company pretended well to like the same, and to join their assents together. Which done, he exhorted the archbishop, that, forasmuch as his garrison had been now long in armour and from home, he would therefore discharge the needless multitude of his soldiers, and dismiss them home to their work and business, and they would together drink and join hands in the sight of the whole company. Thus they, shaking hands together, the archbishop sendeth away his soldiers in peace, not knowing himself to be circumvented, before he was immediately arrested by the hands of the aforesaid earl of Westmoreland: and, shortly after, the king coming with his power to York, he was there beheaded the Monday in Whitsun-week, and with him also Lord Thomas Mowbray, marshal, with divers others, moreover, of the city of York, which had taken their parts; after whose slaughter the king proceedeth further to persecute the earl of Northumberland, and Lord Thomas Bardolph, who then did fly to Berwick. From thence they removed to Wales. At length, within two years after, fighting against the king's part, they were slain in the field, A. D. 1408: in the which year divers others also in the north parts, for favouring the aforesaid lords, were likewise condemned by the king, and put to death; among whom the abbot of Hales, for the like treason, was hanged.

The king, after the shedding of so much blood, seeing himself so hardly beloved of his subjects, thought to keep in yet with the clergy, and with the bishop of Rome, seeking always his chiefest stay at their hands; and therefore he was compelled in all things to serve their humour, as did appear as well in condemning William Sautre before, as also in others, which consequently we have now to treat of; in the number of whom cometh now, by the course of time, to write of one John Badby, a tailor and a layman, who, by the cruelty of Thomas Arundel, archbishop, and other prelates, was brought to his condemnation in this king's reign, A. D. 1409, according as by their own registers appeareth, and followeth by this narration to be seen.

89. John Badby

In the year of our Lord 1409, on Sunday, being the first day of March, in the afternoon, the examination following of one John Badby, tailor, being a layman, was made in a certain house or hall within the precinct of the Preaching Friars of London, in an outer cloister, on the crime of heresy, and other articles repugnant to the determination of the erroneous Church of Rome, before Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, and other his assistants, as the archbishop of York, bishops of London, of Winchester, of Oxford, of Norwich, of Salisbury, of Bath, of Bangor; and also Edmund, duke of York, Thomas Beaufort, the chancellor of England, Lord de Roos, the clerk of the rolls, and a great number of other lords, both spiritual and temporal, being then at the self-same time present: Master Morgan read the articles of his opinions to the hearers, according as it is contained in the instrument read by the aforesaid Master Morgan, the tenor whereof followeth, and in effect is such:

"In the name of God, Amen. Be it manifest to all men by this present public instrument, that in the year of the incarnation of our Lord, according to the course and computation of the Church of England, otherwise in the year 1409, in the second indiction, in the third year of the popedom of the most holy father in Christ and lord, Lord Gregory the Eleventh, by the divine permission pope, the second day of January, in the chapel Carvariæ, of St. Thomas, martyr, nigh unto the cathedral church of Worcester, being situate in the said diocese, in the presence of me, the public notary, and of the witnesses underwritten, the aforesaid John Badby, a layman, of the said diocese of Worcester, appearing personally before the reverend father in Christ and lord, Lord Thomas, by the grace of God bishop of Worcester, sitting in the said chapel for chief judge, was detected of and upon the crime of heresy being heretically taught and openly maintained by the aforesaid John Badby: that is, that the sacrament of the body of Christ, consecrated by the priest upon the altar, is not the true body of Christ by the virtue of the words of the sacrament; but that after the sacramental words spoken by the priests to make the body of Christ, the material bread doth remain upon the altar as in the beginning, neither is it turned into the very body of Christ, after the sacramental words spoken of the priests.

"Which John Badby being examined, and diligently demanded by the aforesaid reverend father concerning the premises, in the end did answer, That it was impossible that any priest should make the body of Christ, and that he believed firmly that no priest could make the body of Christ by such words sacramentally spoken in such sort. And also he said expressly, That he would never, while he lived, believe that any priest could make the body of Christ sacramentally, unless that first he saw manifestly the like body of Christ to be handled in the hands of the priest upon the altar, in his corporal form. And furthermore he said, That John Rakier, of Bristol, had as much power and authority to make the like body of Christ, as any priest had. Moreover he said, that when Christ sat at supper with his disciples, he had not his body in his hand, to the intent to distribute it to his disciples; and he said expressly, that he did not this thing. And also he spake many other words, teaching and fortifying the heresy in the same place, both grievous, and also out of order, and horrible to the ears of the hearers, sounding against the catholic faith.

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

"Upon which occasion the same reverend father admonished and requested the said John Badby oftentimes, and very instantly to charity; forasmuch as he would willingly that he should have forsaken such heresy and opinion holden, taught, and maintained by him in such sort against the the sacrament; to renounce, and utterly abjure them, and to believe other things which the holy mother the church doth believe: and he informed the said John on that behalf both gently, and yet laudably. Yet the said John Badby, although he were admonished and requested both often and instantly by the said reverend father, said and answered expressly, That he would never believe otherwise than before he had said, taught, and answered. Whereupon, the aforesaid reverend father, bishop of Worcester, seeing, understanding, and perceiving the aforesaid John Badby to maintain and fortify the same heresy, being stubborn, and proceeding in the same stubbornness, pronounced the said John to be before this time convicted of such a heresy, and that he hath been and is a heretic, and in the end declared it in these words:

"In the name of God, Amen. We, Thomas, bishop of Worcester, do accuse thee, John Badby, being a layman of our diocese, of and upon the crime of heresy, before us sitting for chief judge, being oftentimes confessed and convicted of and upon that that thou hast taught, and openly affirmed, as hitherto thou dost teach, boldly affirm, and defend: that the sacrament of the body of Christ, consecrated upon the altar by the priest, is not the true body of Christ; but after the sacramental words, to make the body of Christ, by virtue of the said sacramental words pronounced, to have been in the crime of heresy; and we do pronounce thee both to have been, and to be, a heretic, and do declare it, finally, by these writings.'

"These things were done accordingly, as is above written, and are recited in the year, indiction, popedom, month, day, and place aforesaid; being present the same time John Malune, prior of the cathedral church of Worcester; John Dudle, monk; and Haul, the sub-prior of the said church; Thomas Penings, of the order of the Carmelites; Thomas Fekenham, of the order of the Preaching Friars; William Pomfret, of the order of the Minorites, being professors and masters in divinity; William Hailes, Gualter of London, John Swippedew, being public notaries; and William Beauchamp and Thomas Gerbis, being knights; Richard Wish, of Tredington; Thomas Wilby, of Hembury; John Weston, of Yewley, being parsons of churches; and Thomas Baleinges, the master of St. Wolston, in Worcester; and also Henry Haggely, John Penerel, Thomas Trogmorton, and William Wasleborne, esquires, of the dioceses of Worcester and Norwich, and many other worshipful and honest men being witnesses, and called specially to the things aforesaid.

"And I, John Chew, clerk of the diocese of Bath and Wells, and, by the authority apostolical, public notary of the said bishop, have, in testimony of the premises, put my hand and seal to the examination, interrogation, monition, and answer of the same John Badby, and to his obstinacy, and also to the proceedings of all and singular other doings as is aforesaid, which against him, before the said bishop, were handled and done, in the year, indiction, popedom, month, day, and place aforesaid, which, with the forenamed witnesses, was personally present; and the same, even as I heard them and saw them to be done, (being occupied with other matters,) I caused to be written and published, and into this public form have compiled the same. I, the aforesaid notary, am also privy unto the words and examinations interlined between seven or eight lines of the beginning of this instrument; which lines I, also, the aforesaid notary, do approve and make good.

"And I, Walter London, clerk of the diocese of Worcester, and, by the authority apostolical, public notary, to all and singular the aforesaid things as before by the aforesaid notary recited, and in the year, indiction, popedom, month, day, and place aforesaid handled and done, being with other the fore-recited witnesses personally present, and to all and every of the same, (as I saw and heard them to be done, being thereunto faithfully desired and required,) in testimony of the premises, have signed and subscribed according to the accustomed manner.

"And when the articles, in the aforesaid instrument contained, were, by the archbishop of Canterbury, publicly and vulgarly read and approved, he publicly confessed and affirmed, that he had both said and maintained the same. And then the archbishop, to convince the constant purpose of the said John Badby, commanded the same articles again to be read, often instructing him both by words and examples, informing and exhorting him that thereby he might be brought the sooner to the religion that he was of. And, furthermore, the said archbishop said and affirmed there openly to the same John, that he would, if he would live according to the doctrine of Christ, gage his soul for him at the judgment day. And after that again he caused those articles, in the said instrument expressed, to be read by the aforesaid Philip Morgan, and the said archbishop himself expounded the same in English as before; whereunto John Badby answered: as touching the first article, concerning the body of Christ, he expressly said, That after the consecration at the altar, there remaineth material bread, and the same bread which was before; notwithstanding, said he, it is a sign or sacrament of the living God.

"Also, when the second article was expounded unto him, That it is impossible for any priest, &c., to this article he answered and said, That it could not sink into his mind that the words are to be taken as they literally lie, unless he should deny the incarnation of Christ.

"Also, being examined of the third article, concerning Jack Rakier, he said, that if Jack Rakier were a man of good living, and did love and fear God, he hath as much power so to do, as hath the priest; and said further, that he hath heard it spoken of some doctors of divinity, that if he should receive any such consecrated bread, he were worthy to be damned, and were damned in so doing.

"Furthermore he said, That he would believe the omnipotent God in Trinity; and said moreover, that if every host being consecrated at the altar were the Lord's body, that then there be twenty thousand gods in England. But he believed (he said) in one God omnipotent; which thing the aforesaid archbishop of Canterbury denied not.

"And when the other conclusion was expounded, That Christ sitting with his disciples at supper, &c., to this he answered and said, That he would greatly marvel, that if any man had a loaf of bread, and should break the same, and give to every man a mouthful, that the same loaf should afterwards be whole.

"When all these things were thus finished, and all the said conclusions were often read in the vulgar tongue, the aforesaid archbishop demanded of him, whether he would renounce and forsake his opinions and such-like conclusions or not, and adhere to the doctrine of Christ and catholic faith? He answered, That, according to that he had said before, he would adhere and stand to those words, which before he had made answer unto. Then the archbishop oftentimes required the said John, in the bowels of Jesus Christ, that he would forsake those opinions and conclusions, and that

henceforth he would cleave to the Christian faith; which thing to do, in the audience of all the lords and others that were present, he expressly denied and refused.

"After all this, when the aforesaid archbishop of Canterbury and the bishop of London had consulted together, to what safe keeping the said John Badby, until the Wednesday next, might be committed, it was concluded, that he should be put into a certain chamber or safe house within the mansion of the Friars Preachers, and so he was; and then the archbishop of Canterbury said, that he himself would keep the key thereof in the mean time. And when the aforesaid Wednesday was expired, being the fifteenth day of March, and that the aforesaid archbishop of Canterbury, with his fellow brethren and suffragans, were assembled in the church of St. Paul in London, the archbishop of Canterbury, taking the episcopal seat, called unto him the archbishop of York, Richard London, Henry Winchester, Robert Chichester, Alexander Norwich, and the noble Prince Edmund the duke of York, Ralph, earl of Westmoreland, Thomas Beaufort, knight, lord chancellor of England; and the Lord Beaufort, with other noblemen, as well spiritual as temporal, that stood, and sat by, whom to name it would be long; before whom the said John Badby was called personally to answer unto the articles premised in the aforesaid instrument: who when he came personally before them, the articles were read by the official of the court of Canterbury, and by the archbishop, in the vulgar tongue, expounded publicly and expressly; and the same articles, as he had before spoken and deposed, he still held and defended, and said, that whilst he lived he would never retract the same. And, furthermore, he said, specially to be noted, that the lord duke of York, personally there present, as is aforesaid, and every man else for the time being, is of more estimation and reputation, than the sacrament of the altar, by the priest in due form consecrated."

And whilst they were thus in his examination, the archbishop considering and weighing that he would in no wise be altered, and seeing, moreover, his countenance stout, and heart confirmed, so that he began to persuade others, as it appeared, in the same: these things considered, the arch-prelate, when he saw that by his allurements it was not in his power, either by exhortations, reasons, or arguments, to bring the said John Badby from his constant truth to his catholic faith, (executing and doing the office of his great Master,) proceeded to confirm and ratify the former sentence given before by the bishop of Worcester against the said John Badby, pronouncing him for an open and public heretic. And thus, shifting their hands of him, they delivered him to the secular powers, and desired the said temporal lords then and there present, very instantly, that they would not put the same John Badby to death for that his offence, nor deliver him to be punished or put to death, in the presence of all the lords above recited.

These things thus done and concluded by the bishops in the forenoon, in the afternoon the king's writ was not far behind, by the force whereof John Badby, still persevering in his constancy unto the death, was brought into Smithfield, and there, being put in an empty barrel, was bound with iron chains fastened to a stake, having dry wood put about him. And as he was thus standing in the pipe or tun, (for as yet Perillus's brazen bull was not in use among the bishops,) it happened that the prince, the king's eldest son, was there present, who, showing some part of the good Samaritan, began to endeavour how to save the life of him, whom the hypocritical Levites and Pharisees sought to put to death.

In this mean season, the prior of St. Bartholomew's in Smithfield brought, with all solemnity, the sacrament of God's body, with twelve torches borne before, and so showed the sacrament to the poor man being at the stake. And then they demanding of him how he believed in it, he answered, That he knew well it was hallowed bread, and not God's body. And then was the tun put over him, and fire put unto him. And when he felt the fire, he cried, Mercy! calling belike upon the Lord; and so the prince immediately commanded to take away the tun, and quench the fire. The prince, his commandment being done, asked him if he would forsake heresy, to take him to the faith of holy church? which thing if he would do, he should have goods enough; promising also unto him a yearly stipend out of the king's treasury, so much as should suffice his contentation.

But this valiant champion of Christ refused the offer of worldly promises, being no doubt more vehemently inflamed with the Spirit of God than with any earthly desire. Wherefore, when as yet he continued unmoved in his former mind, the prince commanded him straight to be put again into the pipe or tun, and that he should not afterward look for any grace or favour. But as he could be allured by no rewards, even so was he nothing at all abashed at their torments, but, as a valiant champion of Christ, he persevered invincible to the end, not without a great and most cruel battle, but with much greater triumph; the Spirit of Christ having always the upper hand in his members, maugre the fury, rage, and power of the whole world. For the manifestation of which torment, we have here set forth the picture of his burning, in such manner as it was done.



The description of the horrible burning of John Badby, and how he was used at his death

90. Laws Made against Heretics

This godly martyr, John Badby, having thus consummated his testimony and martyrdom in fire, the persecuting bishops yet not herewith contented, and thinking themselves as yet either not strong enough, or else not sharp enough, against the poor innocent flock of Christ, to make all things sure and substantial on their side, in such sort as this doctrine of the gospel now springing should be suppressed for ever, laid their conspiring heads together; and having now a king for their own purpose, ready to serve their turn in all points, (during the time of the same parliament above-recited yet continuing,) the aforesaid bishops and clergy of the realm exhibited a bill unto the king's Majesty, subtly declaring what quietness had been maintained within this realm by his most noble progenitors, who always defended the ancient rites and customs of the church, and enriched the same with large gifts, to the honour of God and the realm; and, contrariwise, what trouble and disquietness was now risen by divers, as they termed them, wicked and perverse men, teaching and preaching openly and privily a certain new, wicked, and heretical kind of doctrine, contrary to the catholic faith and determination of holy church. Whereupon the king, always oppressed with blind ignorance, by the crafty means and subtle pretences of the clergy, granted in the said parliament, by consent of the nobility assembled, a statute to be observed, called *Ex Officio*, as followeth:

The statute Ex Officio.

"That is to say, that no man within this realm, or other the king's Majesty's dominions, presume to take upon him to preach privily or apertly, without special licence first obtained of the ordinary of the same place (curates in their own parish churches, and persons heretofore privileged, and others admitted by the canon law, only excepted): nor that any hereafter do preach, maintain, teach, inform openly or in secret, or make or write any book, contrary to the catholic faith and determination of the holy church: nor that any hereafter make any conventicles or assemblies, or keep and exercise any manner of schools touching this sect, wicked doctrine, and opinion. And further, that no man hereafter shall by any means favour any such preacher, any such maker of unlawful assemblies, or any such bookmaker or writer; and, finally, any such teacher, informer, or stirrer up of the people: and that all and singular persons having any of the said books, writings, schedules, containing the said wicked doctrines and opinions, shall, within forty days after this present proclamation and statute, really and effectually deliver, or cause to be delivered, all and singular the said books and writings unto the ordinary of the same place. And if it shall happen that any person or persons, of what kind, state, or condition soever he or they be, do or attempt any manner of thing contrary to this present proclamation and statute, or do not deliver the same books in form aforesaid: that then the ordinary of the same place, in his own diocese, by authority of the said proclamation and statute, shall cause to be arrested and detained under safe custody the said person or persons in this case defamed and evidently suspected, or any of them, until he or they so offending have, by order of law, purged him or themselves as touching the articles laid to his or their charge in this behalf; or until he or they have denied and recanted (according to the laws ecclesiastical) the said wicked sect, preachings, teachings, and heretical and erroneous opinions. And that the said ordinary, by himself or his commissaries, proceed openly and judicially to all the effect of law, against the said persons so

arrested and remaining under safe custody, and that he end and determine the matter within three months after the said arrest, all delays and excuses set apart, according to the order and custom of the canon law. And if any person, in any cause above mentioned, shall be lawfully convicted before the ordinary of the diocese or his commissaries, that then the said ordinary may lawfully cause the said person so convicted (according to the manner and quality of his fact) to be laid in any of his own prisons, and there to be kept so long as his discretion shall be thought expedient.

"And further, the said ordinary (except in cases by the which, according to the canon law, the party offending ought to be delivered unto the secular power) shall charge the said person with such a fine of money to be paid unto the king's Majesty, as he shall think competent for the manner and quality of his offence. And the said diocesan shall be bound to give notice of the said fine, into the king's Majesty's exchequer, by his letters patent under his seal; to the intent that the said fine may be levied to the king's Majesty's use of the goods of the person so convicted.

"And further, if any person within this realm and other the king's Majesty's dominions shall be convicted before the ordinary of the place, or his commissaries, of the said wicked preachings, doctrines, opinions, schools, and heretical and erroneous informations, or any of them; and will refuse to abjure and recant the said wicked sect, preachings, teachings, opinions, schools, and informations; or if, after his abjuration once made, the relapse be pronounced against him by the diocesan of the place, or his commissaries, (for so, by the canon law, he ought to be left to the secular power, upon credit given to the ordinary or his commissaries,) that then the sheriff of the same county, the mayor, sheriffs or sheriff, or the mayor or bailiffs of the same city, village, or borough of the same county, and nearest inhabiting to the said ordinary, or his said commissaries, shall personally be present, as oft as they shall be required to confer with the said ordinary or his commissaries in giving sentence against the said persons offending, or any of them: and, after the said sentence so pronounced, shall take unto them the said persons so offending, and any of them, and cause them openly to be burned in the sight of all the people; to the intent that this kind of punishment may be a terror unto others, that the like wicked doctrines and heretical opinions, or the authors and favourers thereof, be no more maintained within this realm and dominions, to the great hurt (which God forbid) of Christian religion, and decrees of holy church. In all which and singular the premises, concerning the statute aforesaid, let the sheriffs, mayors, and bailiffs of the said counties, cities, villages, and boroughs, be attendant, aiding and favouring the said ordinaries and their commissaries."

By this bloody statute, so severely and sharply enacted against these simple men, here hast thou, gentle reader, a little to stay with thyself, and to consider the nature and condition of this present world, how it hath been set and bent ever from the beginning, by all might, counsel, and ways possible, to strive against the ways of God, and to overthrow that which he will have set up. And although the world may see, by infinite stories and examples, that it is but in vain to strive against him, yet such is the nature of this world (all set in malignity) that it will not cease still to be like itself.

The like law and statute in the time of Dioclesian and Maximinus was attempted, as before appeareth; and for the more strength was written also in tables of brass, to the intent that the name of Christ should utterly be extinguished for ever: and yet the name of Christ remaineth, whereas that brazen law remained not three years. The which law, written then in brass, although it differ in manner and form from this our statute *Ex officio*, yet to the same end and cruelty, to spill the blood of saints, there

is no difference between the one and the other; neither is there any diversity touching the first original doer and worker of them both: for the same Satan which then wrought his uttermost against Christ, before he was bound up, the same also now, after his loosing out, doth what he can, though not after the same way, yet to the same intent; for then, with outward violence, as an open enemy, he did what he could; now, by a more covert way, under the title of the church, he impugneth the church of Christ, using a more subtle way to deceive, under gay pretended titles, but no less pernicious in the end whereto he shooteth; as well appeareth by this bloody statute *Ex officio*, the sequel whereof cost afterward many a Christian man's life, as, in process of story, remaineth more hereafter, Christ willing, to be declared.

Furthermore, for the more fortification of this statute of the king aforesaid, concurrereth also another constitution made much about the same time by the archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Arundel: so that no industry nor policy of man here did lack to set the matter forward, but specially on the bishops' parts, who left no means unattempted, how to subvert the right ways of the Lord.

First, In most diligent and exquisite execution of the king's statute set forth, the execution whereof they did so exactly apply, that marvel it is to consider, all other laws of kings commonly, be they never so good, to be so coldly kept, and this only, among all the rest, so nearly followed. But herein is to be seen the diligence of the Romish prelates, which never let any thing fall, that maketh for the dignity of their estate.

Secondly, Beside their vigilant care in seeing the king's statute to be executed, no less industrious also were they in adding thereunto more constitutions of their own, as from time to time appeareth as well by other archbishops hereafter, and by Pope Martin, as also by this constitution here present made by Thomas Arundel, the archbishop.

But before we enter to the relation of these aforesaid constitutions of the clergymen, here cometh in more to be said and noted touching the aforesaid statute *Ex officio*, to prove the same not only to be cruel and impious, but also to be of itself of no force and validity for the burning of any person for the cause of religion; for the disproof of which statute we have sufficient authority remaining as yet in the Parliament Rolls to be seen in her Majesty's Court of Records: which here were to be debated at large, but that upon special occasion we have deferred the ample discourse thereof to the cruel persecution of the Lord Cobham hereafter ensuing; as may appear in the defence of the said Lord Cobham against Nicholas Harpsfield, under the title and name of Alanus Copus. And thus referring them for the examination of this statute to the place aforesaid, let us now return to Thomas Arundel, and his bloody constitutions above-mentioned: the style and tenor whereof, to the intent the rigour of the same may appear to all men, I thought hereunder to adjoin, in words as followeth:

"Thomas, by the permission of God, archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, and legate of the see apostolic: to all and singular our reverend brethren, fellow bishops, and our suffragans; and to abbots, priors, deans of cathedral churches, archdeacons, provosts, and canons; also to all parsons, vicars, chaplains, and clerks in parish churches, and to all laymen, whom and wheresoever dwelling within our province of Canterbury, greeting, and grace to stand firmly in the doctrine of the holy mother church.

"It is a manifest and plain case, that he doth wrong and injury to the most reverend council, whoso revolteth from the things being in the said council once discussed and decided; and whosoever dare presume to dispute of the supreme or principal judgment here in earth, in so doing incurreth the pain of sacrilege, according to the authority of civil wisdom and manifold tradition of human law. Much more then they who, trusting to their own wits, are so bold to violate, and with contrary doctrine to resist, and in word and deed to contemn, the precepts of laws and canons, rightly made and proceeding from the key-bearer and porter of eternal life and death, bearing the room and person not of pure man, but of true God here in earth; which also have been observed hitherto of the holy fathers, our predecessors, unto the glorious effusion of their blood, and voluntary sprinkling out of their brains; are worthy of greater punishment, deserving quickly to be cut off, as rotten members, from the body of the church militant. For such ought to consider what is in the Old Testament written, Moses and Aaron among his priests, that is, were chief heads amongst them; and in the New Testament, among the apostles there was a certain difference: and though they were all apostles, yet was it granted of the Lord to Peter, that he should bear preeminence above the other apostles; and also the apostles themselves would the same, that he should be the chieftain over all the rest; and being called Cephas, that is, Head, should be a prince over the apostles, unto whom it was said, Thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren. As though he would say, If there happen any doubt among them, or if any of them chance to err and stray out of the way of faith, of just living, or right conversation, do thou confirm and reduce him in the right way again; which thing, no doubt, the Lord would never have said unto him, if he had not so minded, that the rest should be obedient unto him. And yet, all this notwithstanding, we know and daily prove that we are sorry to speak, how the old sophister, the enemy of mankind, (foreseeing and fearing lest the sound doctrine of the church, determined from ancient times by the holy forefathers, should withstand his malice, if it might keep the people of God in unity of faith under one head of the church,) doth therefore endeavour, by all means possible, to extirpate the said doctrine, feigning vices to be virtues. And so, under false pretences of verity dissimuled, he soweth discord in catholic people, to the intent that some going one way, some another, he, in the mean time, may gather to himself a church of the malignant, differing wickedly from the universal mother, holy church: in the which, Satan, transforming himself into an angel of light, bearing a lying and deceitful balance in his hand, pretendeth great righteousness, in contrarying the ancient doctrine of the holy mother church, and refusing the traditions of the same, determined and appointed by holy fathers; persuading men, by feigned forgeries, the same to be nought, and so inducing other new kinds of doctrine, leading to more goodness, as he by his lying persuasions pretendeth, although he in very truth neither willeth nor mindeth any goodness, but rather that he may sow schisms, whereby divers opinions, and contrary to themselves, being raised in the church, faith thereby may be diminished, and also the reverend holy mysteries, through the same contention of words, may be profaned by pagans, Jews, and other infidels, and wicked miscreants. And so that figure in the Apoc. chap. vi. is well verified, speaking of him that sat on the black horse, bearing a pair of balances in his hand; by the which heretics are understood, who, at the first appearance, like to weights or a balance, make as though they would set forth right and just things, to allure the hearts of the hearers; but afterward appeareth the black horse, that is to say, their intention, full of cursed speaking. For they, under a diverse show and colour of a just balance, with the tail of a black horse sprinkling abroad heresies and errors, do strike; and, being poisoned

themselves, under colour of good raise up infinite slanders, and, by certain persons fit to do mischief, do publish abroad, as it were, the sugared taste of honey mixed with poison, thereby the sooner to be taken: working and causing, through their sleight and subtleties, that error should be taken for verity, wickedness for holiness and for the true will of Christ. Yea, and moreover, the aforesaid persons thus picked out, do preach before they be sent, and presume to sow the seed, before the seed discreetly be separate from the chaff; who, not pondering the constitutions and decrees of the canons, provided for the same purpose against such pestilent sowers, do prefer sacrifice diabolical (so to term it) before obedience to be given to the holy church militant.

We, therefore, considering and weighing that error which is not resisted seemeth to be allowed, and that he openeth his bosom too wide, which resisteth not the viper, thinking there to thrust out her venom; and willing, moreover, to shake off the dust from our feet, and to see to the honour of our holy mother church, whereby one uniform holy doctrine may be sown and planted in the church of God, (namely, in this our province of Canterbury,) so much as in us doth lie, to the increase of faith and service of God, first rooting out the evil weeds and offendicles which, by the means of perverse preaching and doctrine, have sprung up hitherto, and are like more hereafter to grow; purposing by some convenient way, with all diligence possible, to withstand them in time, and to provide for the peril of souls, which we see to rise under pretence of the

premises: also, to remove all such obstacles, by which the said our purpose may be stopped, by the advice and assent of all our suffragans and other prelates, being present in this our convocation of the clergy, as also of the procurators of them that be absent, and at the instant petition of the procurators of the whole clergy within this our province of Canterbury, for the more fortification of the common law in this part; adding thereunto punishment and penalties condign, as be hereunder written.

"We will and command, ordain and decree, That no manner of person, secular or regular, being authorized to preach by the laws now prescribed, or licensed by special privilege, shall take upon him the office of preaching the word of God, or by any means preach unto the clergy or laity, either within the church or without, in English, except he first present himself, and be examined of the ordinary of the place where he preacheth: and so being found a fit person, as well in manners as knowledge, he shall be sent by the said ordinary to some one church or more, as shall be thought expedient by the said ordinary, according to the quality of the person. Nor any person aforesaid shall presume to preach, except first he give faithful signification in due form of his sending and authority; that is, that he that is authorized, do come in form appointed him in that behalf, and that those that affirm they come by special privilege, do show their privilege unto the parson or vicar of the place where they preach. And those that pretend themselves to be sent by the ordinary of the place, shall likewise show the ordinary's letters made unto him for that purpose, under his great seal. Let us always understand, the curate (having the perpetuity) to be sent of right unto the people of his own cure: but if any person aforesaid shall be forbidden by the ordinary of the place, or any other superior, to preach, by reason of his errors or heresies which before, peradventure, he hath preached and taught; that then, and from thenceforth, he abstain from preaching within our province, until he have purged himself, and be lawfully admitted again to preach by the just arbitrement of him that suspended and forbade him; and shall always, after that, carry with him, to all places wheresoever he shall preach, the letters testimonial of him that restored him.

"Moreover the parish priests or vicars temporal, not having perpetuities, nor being sent in form aforesaid, shall simply preach in the churches where they have charge, only those things which are expressly contained in the provincial constitution set forth by John, our predecessor, of good memory, to help the ignorance of the priests, which beginneth, *Ignorantia Sacerdotum*; which book of constitutions we would should be had in every parish church in our province of Canterbury, within three months next after the publication of these presents, and (as therein is required) that it be effectually declared by the priests themselves yearly, and at the times appointed. And, lest this wholesome statute might be thought hurtful to some, by reason of payment of money, or some other difficulty, we therefore will and ordain, that the examinations of the persons aforesaid, and the making of their letters by the ordinary, be done gratis and freely, without any exaction of money at all by those to whom it shall appertain. And if any man shall willingly presume to violate this our statute grounded upon the old law, after the publication of the same, he shall incur the sentence of greater excommunication, *ipso facto*; whose absolution we specially reserve, by tenor of these presents, to us and our successors. But if any such preacher, despising this wholesome statute, and not weighing the sentence of greater excommunication, do, the second time, take upon him to preach, saying and alleging, and stoutly affirming, that the sentence of greater excommunication aforesaid cannot be appointed by the church in the persons of the prelates of the same, that then the superiors of the place do worthily rebuke him, and forbid him from the communion of all faithful Christians.

"And that the said person hereupon lawfully convicted (except he recant and abjure after the manner of the church) be pronounced a heretic by the ordinary of the place. And that from thenceforth he be reputed and taken for a heretic and schismatic, and that he incur the penalties of heresy and schismacy, expressed in the law; and, chiefly, that his goods be adjudged confiscate by the law, and apprehended, and kept by them to whom it shall appertain. And that his abettors, receivers, and defenders, being convicted, in all cases be likewise punished, if they cease not off within one month, being lawfully warned thereof by their superiors.

"Furthermore, no clergyman, or parochians of any parish or place within our province of Canterbury, shall admit any man to preach within their churches, churchyards, or other places whatsoever, except first there be manifest knowledge had of his authority, privilege, or sending thither, according to the order aforesaid: otherwise the church, churchyard, or what place soever in which it was so preached, shall *ipso facto* receive the ecclesiastical interdict, and so shall remain interdicted, until they that so admitted and suffered him to preach, have reformed themselves, and obtained the place so interdicted to be released in due form of law, either from the ordinary of the place, or else his superior.

"Moreover, like as a householder casteth wheat into the ground, well ordered for that purpose, thereby to get the more increase, even so we will and command that the preacher of God's word, coming in form aforesaid, preaching either unto the clergy or laity, according to his matter proponed, shall be of good behaviour, sowing such seed as shall be convenient for his auditory: and chiefly, preaching to the clergy, he shall touch the vices commonly used amongst them; and to the laity, he shall declare the vices commonly used amongst them; and not otherwise. But if he preach contrary to this order, then shall he be sharply punished by the ordinary of that place, according to the quality of that offence.

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"Item, Forasmuch as the part is vile that agreeth not with the whole, we do decree and ordain, that no preacher aforesaid, or any other person whatsoever, shall otherwise teach or preach concerning the sacrament of the altar, matrimony, confession of sins, or any other sacrament of the church, or article of the faith, than that already is discussed by the holy mother church; nor shall bring any thing in doubt that is determined by the church, nor shall, to his knowledge, privily or apertly pronounce blasphemous words concerning the same; nor shall teach, preach, or observe any sect, or kind of heresy whatsoever, contrary to the wholesome doctrine of the church. He that shall wittingly and obstinately attempt the contrary, after the publication of these presents, shall incur the sentence of excommunication ipso facto: from the which, except in point of death, he shall not be absolved, until he hath reformed himself by abjuration of his heresy, at the discretion of the ordinary in whose territory he so offended, and hath received wholesome penitence for his offences. But if the second time he shall so offend, being lawfully convicted, he shall be pronounced a heretic, and his goods shall be confiscated and apprehended, and kept by them to whom it shall appertain. The penance before-mentioned, shall be after this manner: if any man, contrary to the determination of the church, that is, in the decrees, decretals, or our constitutions provincial, do openly or privily teach or preach any kind of heresy or sect, he shall in the parish church of the same place where he so preached, upon one Sunday or other solemn day, or more, at the discretion of the ordinary, and as his offence is more or less, expressly revoke what he so preached, taught, or affirmed, even at the time of the solemnity of the mass, when the people are most assembled; and there shall he, effectually and without fraud, preach and teach the very truth determined by the church; and, further, shall be punished after the quality of his offence, as shall be thought expedient, at the discretion of the ordinary.

"Item, Forasmuch as a new vessel, being long used, savoureth after the head, we decree and ordain, that no schoolmasters and teachers whatsoever, that instruct children in grammar, or others whosoever, in primitive sciences, shall, in teaching them, intermingle any thing concerning the catholic faith, the sacrament of the altar, or other sacraments of the church, contrary to the determination of the church; nor shall suffer their scholars to expound the Holy Scriptures, (except the text as hath been used in ancient time,) nor shall permit them to dispute openly or privily concerning the catholic faith, or sacraments of the church. Contrariwise, the offender herein shall be grievously punished by the ordinary of the place, as a favourer of errors and schisms.

"Item, For that a new way doth more frequently lead astray than an old way, we will and command, that no book or treatise made by John Wickliff, or others whomsoever, about that time, or since, or hereafter to be made, be from henceforth read in schools, halls, hospitals, or other places whatsoever, within our province of Canterbury aforesaid, except the same be first examined by the university of Oxford or Cambridge; or, at least, by twelve persons, whom the said universities, or one of them, shall appoint to be chosen at our discretion, or the laudable discretion of our predecessors; and the same being examined as aforesaid, to be expressly approved and allowed by us or our successors, and in the name and authority of the university, to be delivered unto the stationers to be copied out, and the same to be sold at a reasonable price, the original thereof always after to remain in some chest of the university. But if any man shall read any such kind of book in schools or otherwise, as aforesaid, he shall be punished as a sower of schism, and a favourer of heresy, as the quality of the fault shall require.

"Item, It is a dangerous thing, as witnesseth blessed St. Jerome, to translate the text of the Holy Scripture out of one tongue into another; for in the translation the same sense is not always easily kept, as the same St. Jerome confesseth, that although he were inspired, yet oftentimes in this he erred: we therefore decree and ordain, that no man hereafter, by his own authority translate any text of the Scripture into English, or any other tongue, by way of book, libel, or treatise; and that no man read any such book, libel, or treatise, now lately set forth in the time of John Wickliff, or since, or hereafter to be set forth, in part or in whole, privily or apertly, upon pain of greater excommunication, until the said translation be allowed by the ordinary of the place, or, if the case so require, by the council provincial. He that shall do contrary to this, shall likewise be punished as a favourer of error and heresy.

"Item, For that Almighty God cannot be expressed with any philosophical terms, or otherwise invented of man; and St. Augustine saith, that he hath oftentimes revoked such conclusions as have been most true, because they have been offensive to the ears of the religious; we do ordain and specially command, that no manner of person, of what state, degree, or condition soever he be, do allege or propone any conclusions or propositions contrary to the catholic faith, or repugnant to good manners, (except necessary doctrine pertaining to their faculty of teaching or disputing in their schools or otherwise,) although they defend the same with never so curious terms and words. For, as saith blessed St. Hugh of the sacraments, That which oftentimes is well spoken, is not well understood. If any man, therefore, after the publication of these presents, shall be convicted wittingly to have proponed such conclusions or propositions, except (being monished) he reform himself in one month, by virtue of this present constitution, he shall incur the sentence of greater excommunication *ipso facto*, and shall be openly pronounced an excommunicate, until he hath confessed his fault openly in the same place where he offended, and hath preached the true meaning of the said conclusion or proposition in one church or more, as shall be thought expedient to the ordinary.

"Item, No manner of person shall presume to dispute upon the articles determined by the church, as is contained in the decrees, decretals, or constitutions provincial, or in the general councils; but only to seek out the true meaning thereof, and that expressly, whether it be openly or in secret; nor shall call in doubt the authority of the said decretals or constitutions, or the authority of him that made them; nor teach any thing contrary to the determination thereof: and, chiefly, concerning the adoration of the holy cross, the worshipping of images, of saints, going on pilgrimage to certain places, or to the relics of saints, or against the oaths, in cases accustomed to be given in both common places, that is to say, spiritual and temporal. But of all it shall be commonly taught and preached, that the cross and image of the crucifix, and other images of saints, in the honour of them whom they represent, are to be worshipped with procession, bowing of knees, offering of frankincense, kissing, oblations, lighting of candles, and pilgrimages, and with all other kind of ceremonies and manners that have been used in the time of our predecessors; and that giving of oaths in cases expressed in the law, and used of all men to whom it belongeth, in both common places, ought to be done upon the book of the gospel of Christ. Contrary unto this whosoever doth preach, teach, or obstinately affirm, (except he recant in manner and form aforesaid,) shall forthwith incur the penalty of heresy, and shall be pronounced a heretic, in all effect of law.

"Item, We do decree and ordain, that no chaplain be admitted to celebrate in any diocese within our province of Canterbury, where he was not born, or received

not orders; except he bring with him his letters of orders, and letters commendatory from his ordinary, and also from other bishops in whose diocese of a long time he hath been conversant, whereby his conversation and manners may appear; so that it may be known, whether he hath been defamed with any new opinions touching the catholic faith, or whether he be free from the same: otherwise, as well he that celebrateth, as he that suffereth him to celebrate, shall be sharply punished at the discretion of the ordinary.

"Finally, Because those things which newly and unaccustomably creep up, stand in need of new and speedy help, and where more danger is, there ought to be more wary circumspection and stronger resistance; and not without good cause, the less noble ought discreetly to be cut away, that the more noble may the more perfectly be nourished: considering, therefore, and in lamentable wise showing unto you, how the ancient university of Oxford, which as a fruitful vine was wont to extend forth her fruitful branches to the honour of God, the great perfection and defence of the church, now partly being become wild, bringeth forth bitter grapes, which being indiscreetly eaten of ancient fathers, that thought themselves skilful in the law of God, hath set on edge the teeth of their children; and our province is infected with divers and unfruitful doctrines, and defiled with a new and damnable name of Lollardy, to the great reproof and offence of the said university, being known in foreign countries, and to the great irksomeness of the students there, and to the great damage and loss of the church of England, which in times past by her virtue, as with a strong wall, was wont to be defended, and now is like to run into ruin not to be recovered: at the supplication, therefore, of the whole clergy of our province of Canterbury, and by the consent and assent of all our brethren and suffragans, and other the prelates in this convocation assembled, and the proctors of them that are absent, lest the river being cleansed, the fountain should remain corrupt, and so the water coming from thence should not be pure, intending most wholesomely to provide for the honour and utility of the holy mother the church and the university aforesaid; we do ordain and decree, that every warden, provost, or master of every college, or principal of every hall within the university aforesaid, shall, once every month at the least, diligently inquire in the said college, hall, or other place where he hath authority, whether any scholar or inhabitant of such college or hall, &c., have holden, alleged, or defended, or by any means proponed, any conclusion, proposition, or opinion, concerning the catholic faith, sounding contrary to good manners, or contrary to the determination of the church, otherwise than appertaineth to necessary doctrine; and if he shall find any suspected or defamed herein, he shall, according to his office, admonish him to desist. And if, after such monition given, the said party offend again in the same or such like, he shall incur *ipso facto* (besides the penalties aforesaid) the sentence of greater excommunication. And nevertheless, if it be a scholar that so offendeth the second time, whatsoever he shall afterward do in the said university shall not stand in effect. And if he be a doctor, a master, or bachelor, he shall forthwith be suspended from any scholar's act, and in both cases shall lose the right that he hath in the said college or hall, whereof he is, *ipso facto*; and by the warden, provost, master, principal, or other to whom it appertaineth, he shall be expelled, and a catholic, by lawful means, forthwith placed in his place. And if the said wardens, provosts, or masters of colleges, or principals of halls, shall be negligent concerning the inquisition and execution of such persons suspected and defamed, by the space of ten days from the time of the true or supposed knowledge of the publication of these presents, that then they shall incur the sentence of greater excommunication, and nevertheless shall be deprived *ipso facto* of all the right which they pretend to have in the colleges, halls,

&c., and the said colleges and halls to be effectually vacant: and after lawful declaration hereof made by them to whom it shall appertain, new wardens, provosts, masters, or principals, shall be placed in their places, as hath been accustomed in colleges and halls, being vacant in the said university. But if the wardens themselves, provosts, masters, or principals aforesaid, be suspected and defamed of and concerning the said conclusions or propositions, or be favourers and defenders of such as do therein offend, and do not cease, being thereof warned by us, or by our authority, or by the ordinary of the place: that then by law they be deprived, as well of all such privilege scholastical, within the university aforesaid, as also of their right and authority in such college, hall, &c., besides other penalties aforementioned, and that they incur the said sentence of greater excommunication.

"But if any man, in any case of this present constitution, or any other above expressed, do rashly and wilfully presume to violate these our statutes in any part thereof, although there be another penalty expressly there limited, yet shall he be made altogether unable and unworthy by the space of three years after, without hope of pardon, to obtain any ecclesiastical benefice within our province of Canterbury: and nevertheless, according to all his demerits and the quality of his excess, at the discretion of his superior, he shall be lawfully punished.

And further, that the manner of proceeding herein be not thought uncertain, considering with ourselves, that although there be a kind of equality in the crime of heresy and offending the prince, as is avouched in divers laws; yet the fault is much unlike, and to offend the Divine Majesty requireth greater punishment than to offend the prince's Majesty: and where it is sufficient, for fear of danger that might ensue by delays, to convince by judgment the offender of the prince's Majesty, proceeding against him fully and wholly, with a citation sent by messenger, by letters, or edict not admitting proof by witnesses, and sentence definitive to be: we do ordain, will, and declare, for the easier punishment of the offenders in the premises, and for the better reformation of the church divided and hurt, that all such as are defamed, openly known, or vehemently suspected, in any of the cases aforesaid, or, in article of the catholic faith, sounding contrary to good manners, by the authority of the ordinary of the place or other superior, be cited personally to appear, either by letters, public messenger being sworn, or by edict openly set at that place where the said offender commonly remaineth, or in his parish church, if he have any certain dwelling-house; otherwise, in the cathedral church of the place where he was born, and in the parish church of the same place where he so preached and taught: and afterwards, certificate being given that the citation was formerly executed against the party cited being absent and neglecting his appearance, it shall be proceeded against him fully and plainly, without sound or show of judgment, and without admitting proof by witnesses and other canonical probations. And also, after lawful information had, the said ordinary (all delays set apart) shall signify, declare, and punish the said offender, according to the quality of his offence, and in form aforesaid; and further, shall do according to justice, the absence of the offender notwithstanding. Given at Oxford."

Who would have thought, by these laws and constitutions, so substantially founded, so circumspectly provided, so diligently executed, but that the name and memory of this persecuted sort should utterly have been rooted up, and never could have stood? And yet, such be the works of the Lord, passing all men's admiration, all this notwithstanding, so far was it off that the number and courage of these good men was vanquished, that rather they multiplied daily and increased. For so I find in registers recorded, that these aforesaid persons, whom the king and the catholic

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fathers did so greatly detest for heretics, were, in divers countries of this realm, dispersed and increased; especially at London, in Lincolnshire, in Norfolk, in Herefordshire, in Shrewsbury, in Calais, and divers other quarters more, with whom the archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Arundel, the same time had much ado, as by his own registers doth appear. Albeit some there were that did shrink; many did revolt and renounce, for danger of the law; among whom was John Purvey, which recanted at Paul's cross, of whom more followeth, the Lord willing, to be said in the year 1421. Also John Edward, priest of the diocese of Lincoln, who revoked in the Green-yard at Norwich; Richard Herbert and Emmot Willy of London; also John Becket, who recanted at London; item, John Seynons of Lincolnshire, who was caused to revoke at Canterbury. The articles of whom, which commonly they did hold, and which they were constrained to abjure, most especially were these which follow:

"First, That the office of the holy cross (ordained by the whole church) celebrated, doth contain idolatry.

"Item, They said and affirmed, that all they which do reverence and worship the sign of the cross, do commit idolatry, and are reputed as idolaters.

"Item, They said and affirmed, that the true flesh and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, is not in the sacrament of the altar, after the words spoken by the priest truly pronounced.

"Item, They said and affirmed the sacrament of the altar to be sacramental bread, not having life, but only instituted for a memorial of Christ's passion.

"Item, They said and affirmed, that the body of Christ, which is taken on the altar, is a figure of the body of Christ as long as we see the bread and wine.

"Item, They said and affirmed, that the decree of the prelates and clergy in the province of Canterbury, in their last convocation, with the consent of the king and the nobles in the last parliament, against him that was burnt lately in the city of London, was not sufficient to change the purpose of the said John, when the substance of material bread is even as it was before in the sacrament of the altar, no change being made in the nature of bread.

"Item, That any layman may preach the gospel in every place, and may teach it by his own authority, without the licence of his ordinary.

"Item, That it is sin to give any thing to the Preaching Friars, to the Minorites, to the Angustines, to the Carmelites.

"Item, That we ought not to offer at the funerals of the dead.

"Item, That the confession of sins to the priest is unneedful.

"Item, That every good man, though he be unlearned, is a priest.

"Item, That the infant, though he die unbaptized, shall be saved.

"Item, That neither the pope, nor the prelate, neither any ordinary, can compel any man to swear by any creature of God, or by the Bible book.

"Item, That the bishop, the simple man, the priest and layman, be of like authority, as long as they live well.

"Item, That no man is bound to give bodily reverence to any prelate."

91. William Thorpe.

Thus much briefly being signified by the way, touching these which have been forced in time of this king to open abjuration, next cometh to our hands the worthy history of Master William Thorpe, a valiant warrior under the triumphant banner of Christ, with the process of his examinations before the aforesaid Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, written by the said Thorpe, and storied by his own pen, at the request of his friends, as by his own words, in the process hereof, may appear; in whose examination, which seemeth first to begin, A. D. 1407, thou shalt have, good reader, both to learn and to marvel: to learn, in that thou shalt hear truth discoursed and discussed, with the contrary reasons of the adversary dissolved; to marvel, for that thou shalt behold here in this man, the marvellous force and strength of the Lord's might, Spirit, and grace, working and fighting in his soldiers, and also speaking in their mouths, according to the word of his promise, Luke xxi. To the text of the story we have neither added nor diminished, but, as we have received, copied out and corrected by Master William Tindal, who had his own hand writing, so we have here sent it, and set it out abroad. Although for the more credit of the matter, I rather wished it in his own natural speech, wherein it was first written; notwithstanding, to put away all doubt and scruple herein, this I thought before to premonish and testify to the reader, touching the certainty hereof, that they be yet alive which have seen the self-same copy in his own old English, resembling the true antiquity both of the speech and of the time, the name of whom, as for record of the same to avouch, is Master Whitehead; who, as he hath seen the true ancient copy in the hands of George Constantine, so hath he given credible relation of the same, both to the printer, and to me. Furthermore, the said Master Tindal, albeit he did somewhat alter and amend the English thereof, and frame it after our manner, yet not fully in all words but that something doth remain, savouring of the old speech of that time. What the causes were, why this good man and servant of Christ, William Thorpe, did write it, and pen it out himself, it is sufficiently declared in his own preface, set before his book, which here is prefixed in manner as followeth:

The preface of William Thorpe.

The Lord God that knoweth all things, wotteth well that I am right sorrowful to write to make known this sentence beneath written: whereby of mine even Christian, set in high state and dignity, so great blindness and malice may be known, that they which do presume of themselves to destroy vices, and to plant in men virtues, neither dread to offend God, nor lust to please him, as their works do show. For certes the bidding of God and his law, which, in the praising of his most holy name, he commandeth to be known and kept of all men and women, young and old, after the cunning and power that he hath given to them, the prelates of this land and their ministers, with the convent of priests chiefly consenting to them, enforce them most busily to withstand and destroy the holy ordinance of God. And therethrough God is greatly wroth, and moved to take hard vengeance, not only upon them that do the evil, but also on them that consent to these antichrist's limbs; which know, or might know, their malice and falsehood, and dress them not to withstand their malice and their great pride. Nevertheless, four things move me to write this sentence beneath.

"The first thing that moveth me hereto is this, that whereas it was known to certain friends, that I came from the prison of Shrewsbury, and as it befell indeed that I should to the prison of Canterbury, then divers friends in divers places spake to me full heartily and full tenderly, and commanded me then if it so were that I should be examined before the archbishop of Canterbury, that if I might in any wise, I should write mine apposing, and mine answering. And I promised to my special friends, that if I might, I would gladly do their bidding as I might.

"The second thing that moveth me to write this sentence is this: divers friends, which have heard that I have been examined before the archbishop, have come to me in prison, and counselled me busily, and coveted greatly that I should do the same thing. And other brethren have sent to me, and required on God's behalf, that I should write out and make known, both mine apposing and mine answering, for the profit that (as they say) upon my knowledging may come thereof. But this they bade me, that I should be busy in all my wits, to go as near the sentence and the words as I could, both that were spoken to me, and that I spake: peradventure this writing may come another time before the archbishop and his council. And of this counselling I was right glad: for in my conscience I was moved to do this thing, and to ask hitherto the special help of God. And so then I, considering the great desire of divers friends of sundry places, according all in one, I occupied all my mind and my wits so busily, that through God's grace I perceived, by their meaning and their charitable desire, some profit might come therethrough. For soothfastness and truth hath these conditions, wherever it is impugned, it hath a sweet smell, and thereof cometh a sweet savour. And the more violently the enemies dress themselves to oppress and to withstand the truth, the greater and the sweeter smell cometh thereof. And therefore this heavenly smell of God's word, will not, as a smoke, pass away with the wind; but it will descend and rest in some clean soul that thirsteth thereafter. And thus some deal by this writing may be perceived through God's grace, how that the enemies of the truth (standing boldly in their malice) enforce them to withstand the freedom of Christ's gospel, for which freedom Christ became man and shed his heart-blood. And therefore it is great pity and sorrow, that many men and women do their own wayward will, and busy them not to know nor to do the pleasant will of God. "The men and women that hear the truth and soothfastness, and hear or know of this, (perceiving what is now in the church,) ought herethrough to be the more moved in all their wits to able them to grace, and to set lesser price by themselves; that they, without tarrying, forsake wilfully and bodily all the wretchedness of this life, since they know not how soon, nor when, nor where, nor by whom God will teach them and essay their patience. For no doubt, whoever will live piteously, that is, charitably in Christ Jesus, shall suffer now here in this life persecution, in one wise or another: that is, if we shall be saved, it behoveth us to imagine full busily the vility and foulness of sin, and how the Lord God is displeased therefore; and because of this vility and hideousness of sin, it behoveth us to busy us in all our wits, to abhor and hold in our mind a great shame of sin ever, and so then we ought to sorrow heartily therefore, and ever fleeing all occasion thereof. And then it behoveth us to take upon us sharp penance, continuing therein, to obtain of the Lord forgiveness of our fore-done sins, and grace to abstain hereafter from sin. And if we force ourselves not to do this wilfully, and in convenient time, the Lord (if he will not utterly destroy and cast us away) will in divers manners move tyrants against us; to constrain us violently to do penance, which we would not do wilfully. And trust that this doing is a special grace of the Lord, and a great token of life and mercy. And no doubt whoever will not apply himself (as is said before) to punish himself wilfully, neither will suffer patiently,

meekly, and gladly the rod of the Lord, howsoever that he will punish him; their wayward wills and their impatience are unto them earnest of everlasting damnation. But because there are but few in number that do able them thus faithfully to grace, to live here so simply and purely, and without gall of malice and of grudging; therefore the lovers of this world hate and pursue them that they know patient, meek, chaste, and wilfully poor, hating and fleeing all worldly vanities and fleshly lusts. For surely their virtuous conditions are even contrary to the manners of this world.

"The third thing that moveth me to write this sentence is this: I thought I shall busy me in myself to do faithfully, that all men and women (occupying all their business in knowing and in keeping of God's commandments) able them so to grace, that they might understand truly the truth, and have and use virtue and prudence, and so deserve to be lightened from above with heavenly wisdom; so that all their words and their works may be hereby made pleasant sacrifices unto the Lord God; and not only for help of their own souls, but also for edification of holy church. For I doubt not, but all they that will apply them to have this aforesaid business shall profit full mickle both to friends and foes. For some enemies of the truth, through the grace of God, shall through charitable folks be made astonished in their conscience, and peradventure converted from vices to virtues; and also, they that labour to know and to keep faithfully the biddings of God, and to suffer patiently all adversities, shall hereby comfort many friends.

"And the fourth thing that moveth me to write this sentence is this: I know by my sudden and unwarned apposing and answering, that all they that will of good heart without feigning able themselves wilfully and gladly, after their cunning and their power, to follow Christ patiently, travailing busily, privily, and openly in work and in word, to withdraw whomsoever that they may from vices, planting in them (if they may) virtues, comforting them and furthering them that stand in grace; so that therewith they be not borne up in vain-glory through presumption of their wisdom, nor inflamed with any worldly prosperity, but ever meek and patient; purposing to continue stedfastly in the will of God, suffering wilfully and gladly, without any grudging, whatsoever rod the Lord will chastise them with; that then this good Lord will not forget to comfort all such men and women in all their tribulations, and at every point of temptation that any enemy purposed for to do against them. To such faithful lovers specially, and patient followers of Christ, the Lord sendeth by his wisdom from above them which the adversaries of the truth may not know nor understand. But through their old and new unshamefast sins, those tyrants and enemies of soothfastness shall be so blinded and obstinate in evil, that they shall ween themselves to do pleasant sacrifices unto the Lord God in their malicious and wrongful pursuing and destroying of innocent men's and women's bodies; which men and women, for their virtuous living, and for their true knowledging of the truth, and their patient, wilful, and glad suffering of persecution for righteousness, deserve through the grace of God, to be heirs of the endless bliss of heaven. And for the fervent desire and great love that these men have, as to stand in soothfastness and witness of it, though they be suddenly and unwarnedly brought forth to be apposed of their adversaries; the Holy Ghost yet, that moveth and ruleth them through his charity, will in that hour of their answering speak in them, and show his wisdom, that all their encmies shall not gainsay, nor gainstand, lawfully.

"And therefore all they that are stedfast in the faith of God, yea, which through diligently keeping of his commandments, and for their patient suffering of whatsoever adversity that cometh to them, hope surely in his mercy, purposing to stand

continually in perfect charity; for those men and women dread not so the adversities of this life, that they will fear (after their cunning and their power) to knowe prudently the truth of God's word, when, where, and to whom they think their knowledging may profit. Yea, and though therefore persecution come to them in one wise or another, certes they patiently take it, knowing their conversation to be in heaven. It is a high reward and a special grace of God to have and enjoy the everlasting inheritance of heaven, for the suffering of one persecution in so short time as is the term of this life. For, lo, this heavenly heritage and endless reward, is the Lord God himself, which is the best thing that may be. This sentence witnesseth the Lord God himself, whereas he said to Abraham, I am thy meed: and as the Lord said, he was and is the meed of Abraham, so he is of all other his saints. This most blessed and best meed, he grant to us all for his holy name that made us of nought, and sent his only most dear worthy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to redeem us with his most precious heart-blood. Amen."



The examination of William Thorpe

The examination of William Thorpe, penned with his own hand.

"Known be it to all men that read or hear this writing, that on the Sunday next after the feast of St. Peter, that we call Lammas, in the year of our Lord 1407, I, William Thorpe, being in prison in the castle of Saltwood, was brought before Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, and chancellor then of England. And when that I came to him, he stood in a great chamber and much people about him; and when that he saw me, he went fast into a closet, bidding all secular men that followed

him to go forth from him soon, so that no man was left then in that closet but the archbishop himself, and a physician that was called Malveren, parson of St. Dunstan's in London, and other two persons unknown to me, which were ministers of the law. And I standing before them, by and by the archbishop said to me, William, I know well that thou hast this twenty winters and more, travelled about busily in the north country, and in divers other countries of England, sowing about false doctrine, having great business if thou might, with thine untrue teaching and shrewd will to infect and poison all this land. But through the grace of God thou art now withstanded and brought into my ward, so that I shall now sequester thee from thine evil purpose, and let thee to envenom the sheep of my province. Nevertheless, St. Paul saith, If it may be, as much as in us is, we ought to have peace with all men: therefore, William, if thou wilt now meekly and of good heart, without any feigning, kneel down, and lay thy hand upon a book and kiss it, promising faithfully as I shall here charge thee, that thou wilt submit thee to my correction, and stand to mine ordinance, and fulfil it duly by all thy cunning and power, thou shalt yet find me gracious unto thee. Then said I to the archbishop, Sir, since ye deem me a heretic, and out of belief, will you give me here audience to tell my belief? And he said, Yea, tell on. And I said, I believe that there is not but one God Almighty, and in this Godhead, and of this Godhead, are three persons, that is, the Father, the Son, and the soothfast, Holy Ghost. And I believe that all these three persons are even in power, and in wisdom, and in might, full of grace and of all goodness. For whatsoever that the Father doth, or can, or will, that thing also the Son doth, and can, and will; and in all their power, cunning, and will, the Holy Ghost is equal to the Father, and to the Son.

"Over this, I believe that through counsel of this most blessed Trinity, in most convenient time before ordained for the salvation of mankind, the second person of this Trinity was ordained to take the form of man, that is, the kind of man. And I believe, that this second person, our Lord Jesus Christ, was conceived through the Holy Ghost in the womb of the most blessed Virgin Mary, without man's seed. And I believe that after nine months Christ was born of this most blessed Virgin, without any pain or breaking of the closter of her womb, and without filth of her virginity.

"And I believe that Christ our Saviour was circumcised in the eighth day after his birth, in fulfilling of the law, and his name was called Jesus, which was so called of the angel, before that he was conceived in the womb of Mary his mother.

"And I believe that Christ, as he was about thirty years old, was baptized in the flood of Jordan of John Baptist; and in the likeness of a dove the Holy Ghost descended there upon him, and a voice was heard from heaven, saying, Thou art my well-beloved Son, in thee I am full pleased.

"And I believe that Christ was moved then by the Holy Ghost to go into the desert, and there he fasted forty days and forty nights, without bodily meat and drink. And I believe that by and by after his fasting, when the manhood of Christ hungered, the fiend came to him, and tempted him in gluttony, in vain-glory, and in covetise; but in all those temptations Christ concluded the fiend, and withstood him. And then without tarrying Jesus began to preach, and say unto the people, Do ye penance, for the realm of heaven is now at hand.

"I believe that Christ in all his time here lived most holily, and taught the will of his Father most truly: and I believe that he suffered therefore most wrongfully greatest reproofs and despisings.

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

" And after this, when Christ would make an end here of this temporal life, I believe that in the day next before that he would suffer passion in the morn, in form of bread and of wine he ordained the sacrament of his flesh and his blood, that is, his own precious body, and gave it to his apostles to eat; commanding them, and by them all their after-comers, that they should do it in this form that he showed to them, use themselves, and teach and commune forth to other men and women this most worshipful and holiest sacrament, in mindfulness of his holiest living, and of his most true preaching, and of his wilful and patient suffering of the most painful passion.

"And I believe that this Christ our Saviour, after that he had ordained this most worthy sacrament of his own precious body, went forth wilfully against his enemies, and he suffered them most patiently to lay their hands most violently upon him, and to bind him, and to lead him forth as a thief, and to scorn him and buffet him, and all to blow or defile him with their spittings. Over this, I believe that Christ suffered most meekly and patiently his enemies, to ding out with sharp scourges the blood that was between his skin and his flesh; yea, without grudging, Christ suffered the cruel Jews to crown him with most sharp thorns, and to strike him with a reed. And after, Christ suffered wicked Jews to draw him out upon the cross, and to nail him thereupon hand and foot. And so through his pitiful nailing, Christ shed out wilfully for man's blood the blood that was in his veins. And then Christ gave wilfully his spirit into the hands or power of his Father, and so, as he would, and when he would, Christ died wilfully for man's sake upon the cross. And notwithstanding that Christ was wilfully, painfully, and most shamefully put to death, as to the world, there was left blood and water in his heart, as before ordained, that he would shed out this blood and this water for man's salvation. And therefore he suffered the Jews to make a blind knight to thrust him in the heart with a spear, and this blood and water that was in his heart, Christ would shed out for man's love: and after this, I believe that Christ was taken down from the cross and buried. And I believe that on the third day, by the power of his Godhead, Christ rose again from death to life. And the fortieth day thereafter, I believe that Christ ascended up into heaven, and that he there sitteth on the right hand of the Father Almighty. And the fiftieth day after his up-going, he sent to his apostles the Holy Ghost that he had promised them before. And I believe that Christ shall come and judge all mankind, some to everlasting peace, and some to everlasting pains.

"And as I believe in the Father, and in the Son, that they are one God Almighty, so I believe in the Holy Ghost that he is also with them the same God Almighty.

"And I believe a holy church; that is, all they that have been, and that now are, and always to the end of the world shall be, a people the which shall endeavour them to know and to keep the commandments of God, dreading over all things to offend God, and loving and seeking most to please him: and I believe that all they that have had, and yet have, and all they that yet shall have, the aforesaid virtues, surely standing in the belief of God, hoping stedfastly in his merciful doings, continuing to their end in perfect charity, wilfully, patiently, and gladly suffering persecutions, by the example of Christ chiefly, and his apostles, all these have their names written in the book of life.

"Therefore, I believe that the gathering together of this people, living now here in this life, is the holy church of God, fighting here on earth against the fiend, the prosperity of the world, and their filthy lusts. Wherefore, seeing that all the gathering

together of this church beforesaid, and every part thereof, neither coveteth, nor willeth, nor loveth, nor seeketh any thing but to eschew the offence of God, and to do his pleasing will; meekly, gladly, and wilfully, with all mine heart, I submit myself unto this holy church of Christ, to be ever buxom and obedient to the ordinance of it, and of every member thereof, after my knowledge and power, by the help of God. Therefore I knowledge now, and evermore shall, if God will, that with all my heart, and with all my might, I will submit me only to the rule and governance of them, whom after my knowledge I may perceive by the having and using of the beforesaid virtues, to be members of the holy church. Wherefore these articles of belief and all other (both of the old law, and of the new, which after the commandment of God any man ought to believe) I believe verily in my soul, as a sinful, deadly wretch, of my cunning and power, ought to believe; praying the Lord God for his holy name, to increase my belief, and to help my unbelief.

"And because, to the praising of God's name, I desire above all things to be a faithful member of holy church, I make this protestation before you all four that are now here present, coveting that all men and women that now be absent knew the same; that is, what thing soever before this time I have said or done, or what thing here I shall do or say at any time hereafter, I believe; that all the old law and new law, given and ordained by counsel of the three persons of the Trinity, were given and written to the salvation of mankind. And I believe that these laws are sufficient for man's salvation. And I believe every article of these laws, to the intent that these articles ordained and commanded of these three persons of the most blessed Trinity are to be believed.

"And therefore to the rule and the ordinance of these God's laws, meekly, gladly, and wilfully, I submit me with all mine heart; that whosoever can or will, by authority of God's law, or by open reason, tell me that I have erred, or now err, or any time hereafter shall err, in any article of belief, (from which inconvenience God keep me for his goodness;) I submit me to be reconciled, and to be buxom and obedient unto those laws of God, and to every article of them. For by authority specially of these laws I will, through the grace of God, be united charitably unto these laws. Yea, sir, and over this, I believe and admit all the sentences, authorities, and reasons of the saints and doctors according unto Holy Scripture, and declaring it truly.

"I submit me wilfully and meekly to be ever obedient, after my cunning and power, to all these saints and doctors, as they are obedient in work and in word to God and to his law, and further not, (to my knowledge,) not for any earthly power, dignity, or state, through the help of God. But, sir, I pray you tell me, if after your bidding I shall lay my hand upon the book, to what intent; to swear thereby? And the archbishop said to me, Yea, wherefore else? And I said to him, Sir, a book is nothing else but a thing coupled together of divers creatures, and to swear by any creature, both God's law and man's law is against it.

"But, sir, this thing I say here to you before these your clerks, with my aforesaid protestation, that how, where, when, and to whom, men are bound to swear or to obey in any wise after God's law, and saints, and true doctors, according with God's law, I will through God's grace be ever ready thereto, with all my cunning and power. But I pray you, sir, for the charity of God, that ye will, before that I swear, (as I have rehearsed to you,) tell me how or whereto that I shall submit me; and show me that whereof ye will correct me, and what is the ordinance that ye will thus oblige me to fulfil.

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

And the archbishop said unto me, I will shortly that now thou swear here to me, that thou shalt forsake all the opinions which the sect of Lollards hold, and is slandered with; so that after this time, neither privily nor apertly, thou hold any opinion which I shall (after thou hast sworn) rehearse to thee here. Nor shalt thou favour any man or woman, young or old, that holdeth any these aforesaid opinions; but after thy knowledge and power thou shalt force thee to withstand all such distroublers of holy church in every diocese that thou comest in; and them that will not leave their false and damnable opinions, thou shalt put them up, publishing them and their names, and make them known to the bishop of the diocese that they are in, or to the bishop's ministers. And over this, I will that thou preach no more unto the time that I know by good witness and true, that thy conversation be such, that thy heart and thy mouth accord truly in one, contrarying all the lewd learning that thou hast taught here before.

"And I, hearing these words, thought in my heart that this was an unlawful asking; and deemed myself cursed of God if I consented hereto, and I thought how Susan said, Anguish is to me on every side. And in that I stood still and spake not, the archbishop said to me, Answer one way or other. And I said, Sir, if I consented to you thus as ye have here-before rehearsed to me, I should become an appealer, or every bishop's espie, somoner of all England. For if I should thus put up and publish the names of men and women, I should herein deceive full many persons; yea, sir, as it is likely by the doom of my conscience, I should herein be cause of the death both of men and women, yea, both bodily and ghostly. For many men and women that stand now in the way of salvation, if I should, for the learning and reading of their belief, publish them therefore up to the bishops or to their unpiteous ministers, I know some deal by experience that they should be so distroubled and diseased with persecution or otherwise, that many of them (I think) would rather choose to forsake the way of truth than to be travelled, scorned, slandered, or punished as bishops and their ministers now use to constrain men and women to consent to them.

"But I find in no place in Holy Scripture, that this office, that ye would now enfeoff me with, accordeth to any priest of Christ's sect, nor to any other Christian man: and therefore to do this were to me a full noyous bond to be bounden with, and over grievous charge. For I suppose, that if I thus did, many men and women would, yea, sir, might justly, to my confusion, say to men, that I were a traitor to God and to them: since (as I think in mine heart) many men and women trust so mickle in this case, that I would not for saving of my life do thus to them. For if I thus should do, full many men and women would (as they might full truly) say that I had falsely and cowardly forsaken the truth, and slandered shamefully the word of God. For if I consented to you to do here after your will, for bonchief or mischief that may befall unto me in this life, I deem in my conscience, that I were worthy heretofore to be cursed of God and also of all his saints: from which inconvenience keep me and all Christian people, Almighty God, now and ever for his holy name.

"And then the archbishop said unto me, Oh, thine heart is full hard indurate, as was the heart of Pharaoh, and the devil hath overcome thee, and perverted thee, and he hath so blinded thee in all thy wit, that thou hast no grace to know the truth, nor the measure of mercy that I have proffered to thee. Therefore, as I perceive now by thy foolish answer, thou hast no will to leave thine old errors.

"But I say to thee, lewd losel, either quickly consent thou to mine ordinance, and submit thee to stand to my decrees, or by St. Thomas thou shalt be degraded, and

follow thy fellow into Smithfield. And at this saying I stood still and spake not, but I thought in mine heart, that God did to me great grace, if he would of his great mercy bring me to such an end. And in mine heart I was nothing afraid with this menacing of the archbishop. And I considered there two things in him. One, that he was not yet sorrowful that he had made William Sautre wrongfully to be burnt: and as I considered, that the archbishop thirsted yet after more shedding out of innocent blood. And fast therefore I was moved in all my wits, to hold the archbishop neither for prelate nor for priest of God. And for that mine inward man was thus altogether departed from the archbishop, methought I should not have any dread of him. But I was right heavy and sorrowful, for that there was no audience of secular men by; but in my heart I prayed the Lord God to comfort me and strengthen me against them that there were against the soothfastness. And I purposed to speak no more to the archbishop and his clerks than me need behoved: and all thus I prayed God for his goodness to give me then and alway grace to speak with a meek and an easy spirit: and whatsoever thing that I should speak, that I might thereto have true authorities of the Scriptures or open reason. And for that I stood thus still and nothing spake, one of the archbishop's clerks said unto me, What thing musest thou? Do thou as my lord hath now commanded to thee here.

"And yet I stood still and answered him not: and then soon after the archbishop said to me, Art thou not yet bethought whether thou wilt do as I have said to thee? And I said then to him, Sir, my father and my mother, on whose souls God have mercy, (if it be his will,) spent mickle money in divers places about my learning, for the intent to have made me a priest to God. But when I came to years of discretion, I had no will to be priest, and therefore my friends were right heavy to me, and then methought their grudging against me was so painful to me, that I purposed therefore to have left their company. And when they perceived this in me, they spake sometime full fair and pleasant words to me; but for that they might not make me to consent of good heart to be a priest, they spake to me full oftentimes very grievous words, and menaced me in divers manners, showing to me full heavy cheer. And thus one while in fair manner, another while in grievous, they were long time (as methought) full busy about me, ere I consented to them to be a priest.

"But at the last, when in this matter they would no longer suffer mine excusations, but either I should consent to them, or I should ever bear their indignation, yea their curse (as they said); then I, seeing this, prayed them that they should give me licence to go to them that were named wise priests, and of virtuous conversation, to have their counsel, and to know of them the office and the charge of priesthood. And hereto my father and my mother consented full gladly, and gave me their blessing and good leave to go, and also money to spend in this journey. And so I went to those priests whom I heard to be of best name, and of most holy living, and best learned, and most wise of heavenly wisdom; and so I communed with them unto the time, that I perceived by their virtuous and continual occupations, that their honest and charitable works passed their fame which I had heard before of them.

"Wherefore, sir, by the example of the doctrine of them, and specially for the godly and innocent works which I perceived then of them, and in them, after my cunning and power, I have exercised me then and in this time, to know perfectly God's law, having a will and desire to live thereafter, which willeth that all men and women should exercise themselves faithfully thereabout. If then, sir, either for pleasure of them that are neither so wise nor of so virtuous conversation, to my knowledge, nor, by common fame, to any other men's knowledge in this land, as these

men were of whom I took my counsel and information, I should now forsake thus suddenly and shortly, and unwarned, all the learning that I have exercised myself in these thirty winters and more, my conscience should ever be herewith out of measure unquieted: and, sir, I know well, that many men and women should be therethrough greatly troubled and slandered. And as I said, sir, to you before, for mine untruth and false cowardliness, many a one should be put into full great reproof: yea, sir, I dread that many a one (as they might then justly) would curse me full bitterly; and, sir, I fear not, but the curse of God, which I should deserve herein, would bring me to a full evil end, if I continued thus. And if, through remorse of conscience, I repented me any time, returning into the way, which you do your diligence to constrain me now to forsake; yea, sir, all the bishops of this land, with full many other priests, would defame me, and pursue me as a relapse: and they that now have (though I be unworthy) some confidence in me, hereafter would never trust to me, though I could teach and live never so virtuously, more than I can or may. For if after your counsel I left utterly all my learning, I should hereby first wound and defile mine own soul, and also I should herethrough give occasion to many men and women of full sore hurting; yea, sir, as it is likely to me, if I consented to your will, I should herein by mine evil example in it, as far as in me were, slay many folk ghostly, that I should never deserve to have grace of God to the edifying of his church, neither of myself, nor of any other man's life, and should be undone both before God and man.

"But, sir, by example chiefly of some whose names I will not now rehearse, of H., of I. P., and B. and also by the present doing of Philip Rampington, that now is become bishop of Lincoln, I am now learned (as many more hereafter through God's grace shall be learned) to hate and to flee all such slander that these aforesaid men chiefly have defiled principally themselves with. And in it that in them is, they have envenomed all the church of God, for the slanderous revoking at the cross of Paul's, of H. P., and of B., and how now Philip Rampington pursueth Christ's people. And the feigning that these men dissemble by worldly prudence, keeping them cowardly in their preaching and communing within the bonds and terms (which without blame may be spoken and showed out of the most worldly livers) will not be unpunished of God. For to the point of truth, that these men showed out sometime, they will not now stretch forth their lives. But by example each one of them, as their words and their works show, busy them through their feigning to slander and to pursue Christ in his members, rather than they will be pursued.

"And the archbishop said to me, These men, the which thou speakest of now, were fools and heretics, when they were counted wise men of thee and other such losels; but now they are wise men, though thou and other such deem them unwise. Nevertheless, I never wilt any that right said, that any while were envenomed with your contagiousness, that is, contaminated and spotted doctrine.

"And I said to the archbishop, Sir, I think well that these men and other such are now wise as to this world; but as their words sounded sometime, and their works showed outwardly, it was like to move me that they had earnest of the wisdom of God, and that they should have deserved mickle grace of God to have saved their own souls and many other men's, if they had continued faithfully in wilful poverty, and in other simple virtuous living; and specially if they had with these aforesaid virtues continued in their bust fruitful sowing of God's word: as to many men's knowledge they occupied them a season in all their wits, full busily to know the pleasant will of God, travailing all their members full busily to do thereafter, purely and chiefly to the praising of the most holy name of God, and for grace of edification and salvation of

Christian people. But woe worth false covetise, and evil counsel and tyranny, by which they and many men and women are led blindly into an evil end.

"Then the archbishop said unto me, Thou, and such other losels of thy sect, would shave your beards full near to have a benefice. For, by Jesus, I know none more covetous shrews than ye are, when that ye have a benefice; for lo, I gave to John Purvey a benefice but a mile from this castle, and I heard more complaints about his covetousness for tithes, and other misdoings, than I did of all men that were advanced within my diocese.

"And I said to the bishop, Sir, Purvey is neither with you now for the benefice you gave him, nor holdeth he faithfully with the learning that he taught and wrote wrote beforetime; and thus he showeth himself to be neither hot nor cold, and therefore he and his fellows may sore dread, that if they turn not hastily to the way that they have forsaken, peradventure they be put out of the number of God's chosen people.

"And the archbishop said, Though Purvey be now a false harlot, I quit me now to him; but come he more for such a cause before me, (ere we part,) I shall know with whom he holdeth. But I say to thee, which are these holy men and wise, of whom thou hat taken thine information?

"And I said, Sir, Master John Wickliffe was holden of many men the greatest clerk that they knew then living, and therewith he was named a passing ruly man and an innocent in his living; and therefore great men communed of with him, and they loved so his learning, that they wrote it and busily enforced them to rule themselves thereafter. Therefore, sir, this aforesaid learning of Master John Wickliff is yet holden of full many men and women the most agreeable learning unto the living and teaching of Christ, and of his apostles, and most openly showing and declaring how the church of Christ hath been, and yet should be, ruled and governed. Therefore so many men and women covet this learning, and purpose, through God's grace, to conform their living like to this learning of Wickliff. Master John Ashton taught and wrote accordingly and full busily, where, and when, and to whom that he might, and he used it himself right perfectly unto his life's end. And also Philip of Rampington, while he was a canon of Leicester, Nicholas Herford, Davy Gotray of Pakring, monk of Byland, and a master of divinity, and John Purvey, and many other which were holden right wise men and prudent, taught and wrote busily this aforesaid learning, and conformed them thereto. And with all these men I was right homely, and communed with them long time and oft; and so before all other men I chose willingly to be informed of them and by them, and specially of Wickliff himself, as of the most virtuous and godly wise man that I heard of or knew. And therefore of him specially, and of these men, I took the learning that I have taught, and purpose to live thereafter (if God will) to my life's end. For though some of those men be contrary to the learning that they taught before, I wot well that their learning was true which they taught; and therefore with the help of God I purpose to hold and to use the learning which I heard of them, while they sat on Moses's chair, and specially while that they sat on the chair of Christ. But after the works that they now do, I will not do with God's help; for they feign and hide, and contrary the truth, which before they taught out plainly and truly. For as I know well, when some of those men have been blamed for their slanderous doing, they grant not that they have taught amiss or erred beforetime, but that they were constrained by pain to leave to tell out the sooth, and thus they choose now rather to blaspheme God, than

to suffer a while here persecution bodily, for soothfastness that Christ shed out his heart-blood for.

"And the archbishop said, That learning, that thou callest truth and soothfastness, is open slander to holy church, as it is proved of holy church. For albeit that Wickliff, your author, was a great clerk, and though that many men held him a perfect liver, yet his doctrine is not approved of holy church, but many sentences of his learning are damned as they well worthy are. But as touching Philip of Rampington, that was first canon, and after abbot of Leicester, which is now bishop of Lincoln, I tell thee, that the day is coming, for which he fasted the even. For neither he holdeth now, nor will hold, the learning that he taught when he was a canon of Leicester. For no bishop of this land pursueth now more sharply them that hold thy way, than he doth.

"And I said, Sir, full many men and women wondereth upon him, and speaketh him mickle shame, and holdeth him for a cursed enemy of the truth.

"And the archbishop said to me, Wherefore tarriest thou me thus here with such fables, wilt thou shortly (as I have said to thee) submit thee to me or no?

"And I said, Sir, I tell you at one word, I dare not, for the dread of God, submit me to you, after the tenor and sentence that ye have above rehearsed to me.

"And thus, as if he had been wroth, he said to one of his clerks, Fetch hither quickly the certification that came to me from Shrewsbury under the bailiff's seal, witnessing the errors and heresies which this losel hath venomously sown there.

"Then hastily the clerk took out, and laid forth on a cupboard, divers rules and writings, among which there was a little one, which the clerk delivered to the archbishop. And by and by the archbishop read this roll containing this sentence:

"The third Sunday after Easter, the year of our Lord 1407, William Thorpe came unto the town of Shrewsbury, and through leave granted unto him to preach, he said openly in St. Chad's church in his sermon, that the sacrament of the altar, after the consecration, was material bread. And that images should in no wise be worshipped. And that men should not go on pilgrimages. And that priests have no title to tithes. And that it is not lawful to swear in any wise.

"And when the archbishop had read thus this roll, he rolled it up again, and said to me, Is this wholesome learning to be among the people?

"And I said, Sir, I am both ashamed on their behalf, and right sorrowful for them that have certified you these things thus untruly, for I never preached nor taught thus privily nor apertly.

"And the archbishop said to me, I will give credence to these worshipful men which have written to me, and witnessed under their seals there among them. Though now thou deniest this, weenest thou that I will give credence to thee? Thou, losel, hast troubled the worshipful commonalty of Shrewsbury, so that the bailiffs and commonalty of that town have written to me, praying me that am archbishop of Canterbury, primate and chancellor of England, that I will vouchsafe to grant them, that if thou shalt be made (as thou art worthy) to suffer open jouresse for thine heresies, that thou may have thy jouresse openly there among them; so that all they whom thou and such other losels have there perverted, may, through fear of thy deed, be reconciled again to the unity of holy church. And also they that stand in true faith of holy church, may, through thy deed, be more established therein. And as if this

asking well pleased the archbishop, he said, By my thrift this hearty prayer and fervent request shall be thought on.

"But certainly, neither the prayer of the men of Shrewsbury, nor the menacing of the archbishop, made me any thing afraid; but in rehearsing of this malice, and in the hearing of it, my heart greatly rejoiced, and yet doth I thank God for the grace that I then thought, and yet think shall come to all the church of God herethrough, by the special merciful doing of the Lord. And as having no dread of the malice of tyrants, by trusting stedfastly in the help of the Lord, with full purpose to knowledge the soothfastness, and to stand thereby after my cunning and power, I said to the archbishop, Sir, if the truth of God's word might now be accepted as it should be, I doubt not to prove by likely evidence, that they that are feigned to be out of the faith of holy church in Shrewsbury, and in other places also, are in the true faith of holy church. For as their words sound, and their works show to man's judgment, (dreading and loving faithfully God,) their will, their desire, their love, and their business are most set to dread to offend God, and to love to please him in true and faithful keeping of his commandments. And again, they that are said to be in the faith of holy church in Shrewsbury and in other places, by open evidence of their proud, envious, malicious, covetous, lecherous, and other foul words and works, neither know, nor have will to know, nor to occupy their wits truly and effectually in the right faith of holy church. Wherefore neither all these, nor any that follow their manners, shall any time come verily in the faith of holy church, except they enforce them more truly to come in the way which now they despise. For these men and women, that are now called faithful and holden just, neither know, nor will exercise themselves to know (of faithfulness) commandment of God.

"And thus full many men and women now, and especially men that are named to be principal limbs of holy church, stir God to great wrath, and deserve his curse for that they call or hold them just men, which are full unjust, as their vicious words, their great customable swearing, and their slanderous and shameful works, show openly and witness. And therefore such vicious men and unjust in their own confession call them unjust men and women, which after their power and cunning busy themselves to live justly after the commandment of God. And where, sir, ye say that I have distroubled the commonalty of Shrewsbury, and many other men and women with my teaching; if it thus be, it is not to be wondered of wise men, since all the commonalty of the city of Jerusalem was distroubled of Christ's own person, that was very God and man, and the most prudent preacher that ever was or shall be. And also all the synagogue of Nazareth was moved against Christ, and so fulfilled with ire towards him for his preaching, that the men of the synagogue rose up and cast Christ out of their city, and led him up to the top of a mountain to cast him down there headlong; also accordingly hereto the Lord witnesseth by Moses, that he shall put dissensions betwixt his people, and the people that contrarieth and pursueth his people. Who, sir, is he that shall preach the truth of God's word to the unfaithful people, and shall let the soothfastness of the gospel, and the prophecy of God Almighty to be fulfilled?

"And the archbishop said to me, It followeth of these thy words, that thou and such other thinkest that ye do right well to preach and teach as ye do, without authority of any bishop. For you presume that the Lord hath chosen you only to preach, as faithful disciples, and special followers of Christ.

"And I said, Sir, by authority of God's law, and also of saints and doctors, I am learned to deem, that it is every priest's office and duty to preach busily, freely, and

truly the word of God. For no doubt every priest should purpose first in his soul, and covet to take the order of priesthood, chiefly to make known to the people the word of God, after his cunning and power; approving his words ever to be true by his virtuous works: and for this intent we suppose that bishops and other prelates of holy church should chiefly take and use their prelacy, and for the same cause bishops should give to priests their orders. For bishops should accept no man to priesthood, except that he had good will and full purpose, and were well disposed, and well learned to preach. Wherefore, sir, by the bidding of Christ, and by the example of his most holy living, and also by the witnessing of his holy apostles and prophets, we are bound under full great pain, to exercise us after our cunning and power (as every priest is likewise charged of God) to fulfil duly the office of priesthood. We presume not here of ourselves to be esteemed (neither in our own reputation, nor in none other man's) faithful disciples, and special followers of Christ. But, sir, as I said to you before, we deem this, by authority chiefly of God's word, that it is the chief duty of every priest to busy him faithfully to make the law of God known to his people; and so to commune the commandment of God charitably, how that we may best, where, when, and to whom that ever we may, is our very duty: and for the will and business that we owe of due debt to do justly our office through the stirring and special help, as we trust, of God, hoping stedfastly in his mercy, we desire to be the faithful disciples of Christ, and we pray this gracious Lord for his holy name, that he make us able to please him with devout prayers, and charitable priestly works, that we may obtain of him to follow him thankfully.

"And the archbishop said to me, Lewd losel, whereto makest thou such vain reasons to me? Asketh not St. Paul, How should priests preach except they be sent? But I sent thee never to preach. For thy venomous doctrine is so known throughout England, that no bishop will admit thee to preach by witnessing of their letters. Why then, lewd idiot, wilt thou presume to preach, since thou art not sent nor licensed of thy sovereign to preach? Saith St. Paul, that subjects ought to obey their sovereigns, and not only good and virtuous, but also tyrants that are vicious.

"And I said to the archbishop, Sir, as touching your letter of licence, or other bishop's, which, ye say, we should have to witness that we are able to be sent to preach; we know well that neither you, sir, nor any other bishop of this land, will grant to us any such letters of licence, but if we should oblige us to you and to other bishops, by unfeeling oaths, not to pass the bounds and terms which ye, sir, or other bishops, will limit to us. And since in this matter your terms be some too large, and some too strait; we dare not oblige us thus to be bounden to you to keep the terms, which you will limit to us, as you do to friars and such other preachers; and therefore, though we have not your letter, sir, nor letters of any other bishops written with ink upon parchment, we dare not therefore leave the office of preaching (to which preaching all priests after their cunning and power are bound, by divers testimonies of God's law, and great doctors) without any mention making of bishops' letters. For as mickle as we have taken upon us the order of priesthood, though we are unworthy thereto, we came and purpose to fulfil it with the help of God, by authority of his own law, and by witness of great doctors and saints, accordingly hereto trusting stedfastly in the mercy of God. For that he commandeth us to do the office of priesthood, he will be our sufficient letters and witness, if we, by example of his holy living and teaching, specially occupy us faithfully to do our office justly: yea, the people to whom we preach, be they faithful or unfaithful, shall be our letters, that is, our witness-bearers: for the truth where it is sown may not be unwitnessed. For all that are converted and

saved by learning of God's word, and by working thereafter, are witness-bearers, that the truth and soothfastness, which they heard and did after, is cause of their salvation: and again, all unfaithful men and women which heard the truth told out to them, and would not do thereafter; also all they that might have heard the truth, and would not hear it, because that they would not do thereafter; all these shall bear witness against themselves, and the truth which they would not hear, or else heard it and despised to do thereafter through their unfaithfulness, is and shall be cause of their damnation. Therefore, sir, since this aforesaid witnessing of God, and of divers saints and doctors, and of all the people good and evil, sufficeth to all true preachers; we think that we do not the office of priesthood, if that we leave our preaching, because that we have not, or may not have duly, bishops' letters, to witness that we are sent of them to preach. This sentence approveth St. Paul, where he speaketh of himself and of faithful apostles and disciples, saying thus: We need no letters of commendations as some preachers do, which preach for covetousness of temporal goods, and for men's praising. And where ye say, sir, that Paul biddeth subjects obey their sovereigns, that is sooth, and may not be denied. But there be two manner of sovereigns, virtuous sovereigns, and vicious tyrants. Therefore to these last sovereigns neither men nor women, that be subject, owe to obey in two manners. To virtuous sovereigns and charitable subjects they owe to obey wilfully and gladly, in hearing of their good counsel, in consenting to their charitable biddings, and in working after their fruitful works.

"This sentence Paul approveth, where he saith to subjects, Be ye mindful of your sovereigns, that speak to you the word of God, and follow you the faith of them, whose conversation you know to be virtuous. For, as Paul saith after, these sovereigns to whom subjects ought to obey in following of their manners, work busily in holy studying, how they may withstand and destroy vices, first in themselves and after in all their subjects, and how they may best plant in them virtues. Also these sovereigns make devout and fervent prayers to purchase grace of God, that they and their subjects may over all things dread to offend him, and to love to please him. Also these sovereigns to whom Paul biddeth us obey, as it is said before, live so virtuously, that all they that will live well, may take of them good example, to know and to keep the commandments of God., But in this aforesaid wise, subjects ought not to obey nor to be obedient to tyrants, while they are vicious tyrants, since their will, their counsel, their biddings, and their works are so vicious, that they ought to be hated and left. And though such tyrants be masterful and cruel in boasting and menacing, in oppressions and divers punishings, St. Peter biddeth the servants of such tyrants to obey meekly such tyrants, suffering patiently their malicious cruelty; but Peter counselleth not any servant or subject to obey any lord, or prince, or sovereign, in any thing that is not pleasing to God.

"And the archbishop said unto me, If a sovereign bid his subject do that thing that is vicious, this sovereign herein is to blame, but the subject for his obedience deserveth meed of God; for obedience more pleaseth God than any sacrifice.

"And I said, Samuel the prophet said to Saul the wicked king, that God was more pleased with the obedience of his commandments than with any sacrifice of beasts. But David saith, and St. Paul, and St. Gregory accordingly together, that not only they that do evil are worthy of death and damnation, but also they that consent to evil-doers. And, sir, the law of the holy church teacheth in the decrees, that no servant to his lord, nor child to the father or mother, nor wife to her husband, nor monk to his abbot, ought to obey, except in lefull things, and lawful.

"And the archbishop said to me, All these allegings that thou bringest forth, are not else but proud presumptuousness. For hereby thou enforcest thee to prove, that thou and such other are so just, that ye ought not to obey to prelates. And thus, against the learning of St. Paul, that teacheth you not to preach but if ye were sent, of your own authority ye will go forth and preach, and do what ye list.

"And I said, Sir, presenteth not every priest the office of the apostles, or the office of the disciples of Christ? And the archbishop said, Yea. And I said, Sir, as the 10th chapter of Matthew and the last chapter of Mark witnesseth, Christ sent his apostles to preach. And the 10th chapter of Luke witnesseth, that Christ sent his two and seventy disciples to preach in every place that Christ was to come to. And St. Gregory in the common law saith, that every man that goeth to priesthood, taketh upon him the office of preaching: for, as he saith, that priest stirreth God to great wrath, of whose mouth is not heard the voice of preaching. And as other more glosses upon Ezekiel witness, that the priest that preacheth not busily to the people, shall be partaker of their damnation that perish through his default. And though the people be saved by other special grace of God, than by the priests' preaching, yet the priests, in that they are ordained to preach, and preach not, as before God they are manslaughterers. For as far as on them is, such priests as preach not busily and truly, slay all the people ghostly; in that they withhold from them the word of God, that is the life and substance of men's souls. And St. Isidore said, Priests shall be damned for wickedness of the people, if they teach not them that are ignorant, or blame not them that are sinners: for all the work or business of priests standeth in preaching and teaching, that they edify all men as well by cunning of faith, as by discipline of works, that is, virtuous teaching; and as the Gospel witnesseth, Christ said in his teaching, I am born and come into this world, to bear witness to the truth, and he that is of the truth heareth my voice.

"Then, sir, since by the word of Christ specially, that is, his voice, priests are commanded to preach, whatsoever priest that it be, that hath not good will and full purpose to do thus, and ableth not himself after his cunning and power to do his office by the example of Christ and of his apostles, whatsoever other thing that he doth, displeaseth God. For, lo, St. Gregory saith, that thing left that a man is bound chiefly to do, whatsoever other thing that a man doth, it is unthankful to the Holy Ghost; and therefore saith Lincoln, The priest that preacheth not the word of God, though he be seen to have none other default, he is antichrist and Satan's, a night thief, and a day thief, a slayer of souls, and an angel of light turned into darkness. Wherefore, sir, these authorities and other well considered, I deem myself damnable, if I, either for pleasure or displeasure of any creature, apply me not diligently to preach the word of God. And in the same damnation I deem all those priests, which of good purpose and will enforce them not busily to do thus, and also all them that have purpose or will to let any priest of this business.

"And the archbishop said to those three clerks that stood before him, Lo, sirs, this is the manner and business of this losel and such other, to pick out such sharp sentences of Holy Scripture and doctors, to maintain their sect and lore against the ordinance of holy church. And therefore, losel, it is thou that covetest to have again the Psalter that I made to be taken from thee at Canterbury, to record sharp verses against us. But thou shalt never have that Psalter nor any other book, till that I know that thy heart and thy mouth accord fully to be governed by holy church.

"And I said, Sir, all my will and power is, and ever shall be, (I trust to God,) to be governed by holy church.

"And the archbishop asked me, what was holy church.

"And I said, Sir, I told you before what was holy church. But since ye ask me this demand, I call Christ and his saints holy church.

"And the archbishop said unto me, I wot well that Christ and his saints are holy church in heaven, but what is holy church in earth?

"And I said, Sir, though holy church be every one in charity, yet it hath two parts: the first and principal part hath overcome perfectly all the wretchedness of this life, and reigneth joyfully in heaven with Christ. And the other part is here yet in earth, busily and continually fighting day and night against temptations of the fiend; forsaking and hating the prosperity of this world, despising and withstanding their fleshly lusts, which only are the pilgrims of Christ, wandering toward heaven by stedfast faith, and grounded hope, and by perfect charity. For these heavenly pilgrims may not nor will not be letted of their good purpose, by the reason of any doctors discording from Holy Scripture, nor by the floods of any tribulation temporal, nor by the wind of any pride, of boast, or of menacing of any creature; for they are all fast grounded upon the sure stone, Christ; hearing his word and loving it, exercising them faithfully and continually in all their wits to do thereafter.

"And the archbishop said to his clerks, See ye not how his heart is indurate, and how he is travailed with the devil, occupying him thus busily to inedge such sentences to maintain his errors and heresies. Certain, thus he would occupy us here all day, if we would suffer him.

"One of the clerks answered, Sir, he said right now, that this certification, that came to you from Shrewsbury, is untruly forged against him. Therefore, sir, appose you him now here in all the points which are certified against him, and so we shall hear of his own mouth his answers, and witness them.

"And the archbishop took the certification in his hand, and looked thereon awhile, and then he said to me,

"Lo here it is certified against thee by worthy men and faithful of Shrewsbury, that thou preachedst there openly in St. Chad's church, that the sacrament of the altar was material bread after the consecration; what sayest thou? Was this truly preached?

"And I said, Sir, I tell you truly that I touched nothing there of the sacrament of the altar, but in this wise as I will, with God's grace, tell you here. As I stood there in the pulpit, busying me to teach the commandment of God, there knelled a sacred bell, and therefore mickle people turned away hastily, and with noise ran from towards me. And I, seeing this, said to them thus, Good men, ye were better to stand here still and to hear God's word. For certes the virtue and the meed of the most holy sacrament of the altar standeth mickle more in the belief thereof that you ought to have in your soul, than it doth in the outward sight thereof; and therefore ye were better to stand still quietly to hear God's word, because that through the hearing thereof men come to very true belief. And otherwise, sir, I am certain I spake not there of the worthy sacrament of the altar.

"And the archbishop said to me, I believe thee not, whatsoever thou sayest, since so worshipful men have witnessed thus against thee; but since thou deniest that

thou saidst thus there, what sayest thou now? Resteth there, after the consecration in the host, material bread or no?

"And I said, Sir, I know in no place in Holy Scripture where this term material bread is written; and therefore, sir, when I speak of this matter, I use not to speak of material bread.

"Then the archbishop said to me, How teachest thou men to believe in this sacrament?

"And I said, Sir, as I believe myself, so I teach other men.

"He said, Tell out plainly thy belief thereof.

"And I said with my protestation, Sir, I believe that the night before that Christ Jesus would suffer (wilfully) passion for mankind on the morn after, he took bread in his holy and most worshipful hands, lifting up his eyes, and giving thanks to God his Father, blessed this bread, and brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying to them, Take and eat of this all you, this is my body. And that this is, and ought to be, all men's belief, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Paul witnesseth. Other belief, sir, I have none, nor will have, nor teach; for I believe that this sufficeth in this matter. For in this belief with God's grace I purpose to live and die, knowledging, as I believe, and teach other men to believe, that the worshipful sacrament of the altar is the sacrament of Christ's flesh and blood in the form of bread and wine.

"And the archbishop said to me, It is sooth that this sacrament is very Christ's body in form of bread, but thou and thy sect teachest it to be substance of bread. Think you this true teaching?

"And I said, Neither I, nor any other of the sect that ye damn, teach any otherwise than I have told you, nor believe otherwise to my knowing. Nevertheless, sir, I ask of you for charity, that you will tell me here plainly, how ye shall understand the text of St. Paul, where he saith thus, This thing feel you in yourself that is in Christ Jesus, while he was in the form of God. Sir, calleth not Paul here the form of God, the substance or kind of God? Also, sir, saith not the church, in the hours of the most blessed Virgin accordingly hereto, where it is written thus, Thou author of health, remember that sometime thou took of the undefiled virgin the form of our body? Tell me for charity, therefore, whether the form of our bodies be called here the kind of our body or no?

"And the archbishop said to me, Wouldst thou make me to declare this text after thy purpose, since the church now hath determined that there abideth no substance of bread, after the consecration, in the sacrament of the altar? Believest thou not this ordinance of the church?

"And I said, Sir, whatsoever prelates have ordained in the church, our belief standeth ever whole. I have not heard that the ordinance of men under belief should be put into belief.

"And the archbishop said to me, If thou hast not learned this before, learn now to know that thou art out of belief, if in this matter and other thou believest not as the holy church believeth. What say doctors treating of this sacrament?

"And I said, Sir, St. Paul, that was a great doctor of holy church, speaking to the people, and teaching them in the right belief of this most holy sacrament, calleth it bread that we break. And also in the canon of the mass, after the consecration, this

most worthy sacrament is called holy bread. And every priest in this land, after that he hath received this sacrament, saith in this wise, That thing that we have taken with our mouth, we pray God that we may take it with a pure and clean mind; that is, as I understand, We pray God that we may receive, through very belief, this holy sacrament worthily. And, sir, St. Augustine saith, That thing that is seen is bread, but that men's faith asketh to be informed of is very Christ's body. And also Fulgence, an ententive doctor, saith, As it were an error to say that Christ was but a substance, that is, very man, and not very God, or to say that Christ was very God and not very man; so is it, this doctor saith, an error to say, that the sacrament of the altar is but a substance. And also, sir, accordingly hereto, in the secret of the mid mass on Christmas day, it is written thus, *Idem refulsit Deus, sic terrena substantia nobis conferat quod divinum est*; which sentence, sir, with the secret of the fourth ferie, *quatuor temporum Septembris*, I pray you, sir, declare here openly in English.

"And the archbishop said to me, I perceive well enough whereabout thou art, and how the devil blindeth thee, that thou may not understand the ordinance of holy church, nor consent thereto; but I command thee now, answer me shortly, believest thou that, after the consecration of this aforesaid sacrament, there abideth substance of bread or not?

"And I said, Sir, as I understand, it is all one to grant or believe that there dwelleth substance of bread, and to grant and to believe that this most worthy sacrament of Christ's own body is accident without subject. But, sir, for as mickle as your asking passeth my understanding, I dare neither deny it, nor grant it; for it is school matter, about which I busied me never to know; and, therefore, I commit this term, *accidens sine subjecto*, to those clerks which delight them so in curious and subtle sophistry, because they determine oft so difficult and strange matters, and wade and wander so in them from argument to argument, with *pro et contra*, till that they wot not where they are, and understand not themselves. But the shame that these proud sophisters have to yield them to men, and before men, maketh them oft fools, and to be concluded shamefully before God.

"And the archbishop said to me, I purpose not to oblige thee to the subtle arguments of clerks, since thou art unable thereto; but I purpose to make thee obey to the determination of holy church.

"And I said, Sir, by open evidence and great witness, a thousand years after the incarnation of Christ, the determination which I have here before you rehearsed, was accept of holy church, as sufficient to the salvation of all them that would believe it faithfully, and work thereafter charitably. But, sir, the determination of this matter was brought in, since the fiend was loosed, by Friar Thomas again, especially calling the most worshipful sacrament of Christ's own body an accident without subject: which term, since I know not that God's law approveth it in this matter, I dare not grant, but utterly I deny to make this friar's sentence, or any such other, my belief; do with me God what thou wilt.

"And the archbishop said to me, Well, well, thou shalt say otherwise ere that I leave thee. But what sayest thou to this second point that is recorded against thee by worthy men of Shrewsbury, saying that thou preachedst there, that images ought not to be worshipped in any wise?

"And I said, Sir, I preached never thus, nor through God's grace will I at any time consent to think, or to say thus, either privily or apertly. For lo, the Lord

witnesseth by Moses, that the things which he made were right good, and so then they were, and yet they are and shall be good and worshipful in their kind. And therefore, to the end that God made them so, they are all praiseable and worshipful, and specially man, that was made after the image and likeness of God, is full worshipful in his kind, yea, this holy image, that is man, God worshippeth. And therefore every man should worship other, in kind, and also for heavenly virtues that men use charitably. And also I say, wood, tin, gold, silver, or any other matter that images are made of, all these creatures are worshipful in their kind, and to the end that God made them for. But the carving, casting, and painting of an imagery, made within man's hand, albeit that this doing be accept of man of highest state and dignity, and ordained of them to be a calendar to lewd men, that neither can nor will be learned to know God in his word, neither by his creatures, nor by his wonderful and divers workings; yet this imagery ought not to be worshipped in form, nor in the likeness of man's craft. Nevertheless, that every matter the painters paint with, since it is God's creature, ought to be worshipped in the kind, and to that end that God made and ordained it to serve man.

"Then the archbishop said to me, I grant well that nobody ought to do worship to any such images for themselves. But a crucifix ought to be worshipped for the passion of Christ that is painted therein, and so brought therethrough to man's mind; and thus the images of the blessed Trinity, and of the Virgin Mary, Christ's mother, and other images of saints, ought to be worshipped. For lo, earthly kings and lords which use to send their letters ensealed with their arms, or with their privy signet, to them that are with them, are worshipped of these men. For when these men receive their lords' letters, in which they see and know the wills and biddings of the lords, in worship of their lords, they doff their caps to these letters. Why not then, since in images made with man's hand, we may read and know many and divers things of God, and of his saints, shall we not worship their images?

"And I said, Within my aforesaid protestation I say, that these worldly usages of temporal laws that ye speak now of, may be done in case without sin. But this is no similitude to worship images, made by man's hand, since that Moses, David, Solomon, Baruch, and other saints in the Bible, forbid so plainly the worshipping of such images.

"Then the archbishop said to me, Lewd losel, in the old law before that Christ took mankind, was no likeness of any person of the Trinity neither showed to man, nor known of man: but now since Christ became man, it is lefull to have images to show his manhood, yea, though many men which are right great clerks, and other also, held it an error to paint the Trinity; I say, it is well done to make and to paint the Trinity in images. For it is great moving of devotion to men, to have and to behold the Trinity and other images of saints carved, cast, and painted. For beyond the sea are the best painters that ever I saw. And, sirs, I tell you, this is their manner, and it is a good manner; when that an image-maker shall carve, cast in mould, or paint any images, he shall go to a priest, and shrive him as clean as if he should then die and take penance, and make some certain vow of fasting or of praying, or pilgrimages doing, praying the priest specially to pray for him, that he may have grace to make a fair and a devout image.

"And I said, Sir, I doubt not if these painters that ye speak of, or any other painters, understood truly the text of Moses, of David, of the wise man, of Baruch, and of other saints and doctors; these painters should be moved to shrive them to God

with full inward sorrow of heart, taking upon them to do right sharp penance for the sinful and vain craft of painting, carving, or casting they had used: promising God faithfully never to do so after: knowledging openly before all men their reprobable learning. And also, sir, these priests that shrive (as you do say) painters, and enjoin them to do penance, and pray for their speed, promising to them help of their prayers to be curious in their sinful crafts, sin herein more grievously than the painters. For these priests do comfort and give them counsel to do that thing, which of great pain, yea, under the pain of God's curse, they should utterly forbid them. For certes, sir, if the wonderful working of God, and the holy living and teaching of Christ, and of his apostles and prophets, were made known to the people by holy living, and true and busy teaching of priests; these things (sir) were sufficient books and calendars to know God by, and his saints, without any images made with man's hand. But certes, the vicious living of priests and their covetousness are chief cause of this error, and all other viciousness that reigneth among the people.

"Then the archbishop said unto me, I hold thee a vicious priest and accurst, and all they that are of thy sect; for all priests of holy church, and all images that move men to devotion, thou and such other go about to destroy. Losel, were it a fair thing to come into the church, and see therein none image?

"And I said, Sir, they that come to the church, to pray devoutly to the Lord God, may in their inward wits be the more fervent, that all their outward wits be close from all outward seeing and hearing, and from all disturbance and lettings. And since Christ blessed them that saw him not bodily, and have believed faithfully in him; it sufficeth then to all men, through hearing and knowing God's word, and doing thereafter; to believe in God, though they never see images made with man's hand after any person of the Trinity, or of any other saint.

"And the archbishop said to me with a fervent spirit, I say to thee, losel, that it is right well done to make and to have an image of the Trinity: yea, what sayest thou? is it not a stirring thing to behold such an image?

"And I said, Sir, ye said right now, that in the old law, ere Christ took mankind, no likeness of any person of the Trinity was showed to men: wherefore, sir, ye said it was not then lefull to have images, but now ye say, since Christ is become man, it is lefull to have and to make an image of the Trinity, and also of other saints. But, sir, this thing would I learn of you: since the Father of heaven, yea, and every person of Trinity, was without beginning God Almighty, and many holy prophets that were deadly men, were martyred violently in the old law, and also many men and women then died confessors; why was it not then as lefull and necessary as now, to have made an image of the Father of heaven, and to have made and had other images of martyrs, prophets, and holy confessors, to have been calendars to advise men and move them to devotion, as ye say that images now do?

"And the archbishop said, The synagogue of the Jews had not authority to approve those things as the church of Christ hath now.

"And I said, Sir, St. Gregory was a great man in the new law, and of great dignity, and, as the common law witnesseth, he commended greatly a bishop, in that he forbade utterly the images made with man's hand should be worshipped.

"And the archbishop said, Ungracious losel, thou savourest no more truth than a hound. Since at the rood at the north door at London, at our Lady at Walsingham, and many other places in England, are many great and praiseable miracles done:

should not the images of such holy saints and places at the reverence of God, and of our Lady, and other saints, be more worshipped than other places and images, where no miracles are done?

"And I said, Sir, there is no such virtue in any imagery, that any image should heretofore be worshipped; wherefore I am certain that there is no miracle done of God in any place in earth, because that any images made with man's hand should be worshipped. And therefore, sir, as I preached openly at Shrewsbury and other places, I say now here before you, That nobody should trust that there were any virtue in imagery made with man's hand; and therefore no body should vow to them, nor seek them, nor kneel to them, nor bow to them, nor pray to them, nor offer any thing to them, nor kiss them, nor incense them. For, lo, the most worthy of such images, the brazen serpent, by Moses made, at God's bidding, the good king Hezekiah worthily and thankfully, and all because it was incensed. Therefore, sir, if men take good heed to the writing and the learning of St. Augustine, of St. Gregory, and of St. John Chrysostom, and of other saints and doctors, how they spake and wrote of miracles, that shall be done now in the last end of the world; it is to be dreaded, that for the unfaithfulness of men and women, the fiend hath great power to work many of the miracles that now are done in such places. For both men and women delight now more to hear and know miracles, than they do to know God's word, or to hear it effectually. Wherefore, to the great confusion of all them that thus do, Christ saith, The generation of adulterers requireth tokens, miracles, and wonders. Nevertheless, as divers saints say, now when the faith of God is published in Christendom, the word of God sufficeth to man's salvation, without such miracles; and thus also the word of God sufficeth to all faithful men and women without any such images. But, good sir, since the Father of heaven, that is God in his Godhead, is the most unknown thing that may be, and the most wonderful Spirit, having in it no shape nor likeness and members of any deadly creature; in what likeness, or what image, may God the Father be showed or painted?

"And the archbishop said, As holy church hath suffered the images of the Trinity, and all other images, to be painted and showed, it sufficeth to them that are members of holy church. But since thou art a rotten member, cut away from holy church, thou savourest not the ordinance thereof. But since the day passeth, leave we this matter.

"And then he said to me, What sayest thou to the third point that is certified against thee, preaching openly in Shrewsbury, that pilgrimage is not lefull? And over this thou saidst that those men and women that go on pilgrimages to Canterbury, to Beverley, to Karlington, to Walsingham, and to any other such places, are accursed and made foolish, spending their goods in waste.

"And I said, Sir, by this certification I am accused to you that I should teach, that no pilgrimage is lefull. But I never said thus. For I know that there be true pilgrimages and lefull, and full pleasant to God; and therefore, sir, howsoever mine enemies have certified you of me, I told at Shrewsbury of two manner of pilgrimages.

"And the archbishop said to me, Whom callest thou true pilgrims?

"And I said, Sir, with my protestation I call them true pilgrims travelling toward the bliss of heaven, which, in the state, degree, or order that God calleth them to, do busy them faithfully to occupy all their wits, bodily and ghostly, to know truly and to keep faithfully the biddings of God, hating and fleeing all the seven deadly

sins, and every branch of them: ruling them virtuously (as it is said before) with their wits, doing discreetly, wilfully, and gladly, all the works of mercy, bodily and ghostly, after their cunning and power, abling them to the gifts of the Holy Ghost, disposing them to receive them in their souls, and to hold therein the right blessings of Christ; busying them to know and to keep the seven principal virtues, and so then they shall obtain herethrough grace, to use thankfully to God all the conditions of charity. And then they shall be moved with the good Spirit of God, to examine oft and diligently their conscience, that neither wilfully nor wittingly they err in any article of belief, having continually, as frailty will suffer, all their business to dread and to fly the offence of God, and to love over all, and to seek ever to do his pleasant will. Of these pilgrimages I said, whatsoever good thought that they at any time think, what virtuous word that they speak, and what fruitful work that they work; every such thought, word, and work is a step numbered of God toward him into heaven. These aforesaid pilgrims of God, delight sore when they hear of saints, or of virtuous men and women, how they forsook wilfully the prosperity of this life, how they withstood the suggestion of the fiend, how they restrained their fleshly lusts, how discreet they were in their penance doing, how patient they were in all their adversities, how prudent they were in counselling of men and women, moving them to hate all sins, and to fly them, and to shame ever greatly thereof, and to love all virtues, and to draw to them; imagining how Christ, and his followers by example of him, suffered scorns and slanders, and how patiently they abode and took the wrongful menacing of tyrants; how homely they were, and serviceable to poor men, to relieve and to comfort them, bodily and ghostly, after their power and cunning; and how devout they were in prayers, how fervent they were in heavenly desires, and how they absented them from spectacles of vain sayings and hearings; and how stable they were to let and destroy all vices, and how laborious and joyful they were to sow and to plant virtues. These heavenly conditions and such other have pilgrims, or endeavour to have them, whose pilgrimage God accepteth.

"And again, I said, As their works show, the most part of men and women that go now on pilgrimages, have not these aforesaid conditions, nor love to busy them faithfully to have. For as I well know, since I have full oft essayed, examine whosoever will twenty of these pilgrims, and he shall not find three men or women that know surely a commandment of God, nor can say their *Pater Noster* and *Ave Maria*, nor their creed, readily in any manner of language. And as I have learned, and also know somewhat by experience, of these same pilgrims, telling the cause why that many men and women go hither and thither now on pilgrimage, it is more for the health of their bodies than of their souls; more to have riches and prosperity of this world, than to be enriched with virtues in their souls; more to have here worldly and fleshly friendship, than to have friendship of God and of his saints in heaven; for whatsoever thing man or woman doth, the friendship of God, or of any other saint, cannot be had, without keeping of God's commandments. Further with my protestation, I say now, as I said in Shrewsbury, though they that have fleshly wills, travel far their bodies, and spend mickle money, to seek and to visit the bones or images (as they say they do) of this saint or of that, such pilgrimage-going is neither praiseable nor thankful to God, nor to any saint of God, since, in effect, all such pilgrims despise God and all his commandments and saints; for the commandments of God they will neither know, nor keep, nor conform them to live virtuously by example of Christ and of his saints. Wherefore, sir, I have preached and taught openly, and so I purpose all my lifetime to do with God's help, saying that such fond people waste blamefully God's goods in their vain pilgrimages, spending their goods

upon vicious hostelars, which are oft unclean women of their bodies; and, at the least, those goods with the which they should do works of mercy, after God's bidding, to poor needy men and women.

"These poor men's goods, and their livelode, these runners about offer to rich priests, which have mickle more livelode than they need; and thus those goods they waste wilfully, and spend them unjustly against God's bidding upon strangers, with which they should help and relieve, after God's will, their poor needy neighbours at home; yea, and over this folly, oftentimes divers men and women, of these runners thus madly hither and thither into pilgrimage, borrow hereto other men's goods, yea, and sometimes they steal men's goods hereto, and they pay them never again. Also, sir, I know well that when divers men and women will go thus after their own wills, and finding out one pilgrimage, they will ordain with them before, to have with them both men and women, that can well sing wanton songs, and some other pilgrims will have with them bagpipes, so that every town that they come through, what with the noise of their singing, and with the sound of their piping, and with the jangling of their Canterbury bells, and with the barking out of dogs after them, they make more noise than if the king came there away with all his clarions, and many other minstrels. And if these men and women be a month out in their pilgrimage, many of them shall be an half year after great janglers, tale-tellers, and liars.

"And the archbishop said to me, Lewd losel, thou seest not far enough in this matter, for thou considerest not the great travail of pilgrims, therefore thou blamest that thing that is praiseable. I say to thee, that it is right well done, that pilgrims have with them both singers and also pipers; that when one of them that goeth barefoot striketh his toe upon a stone, and hurteth him sore, and maketh him to bleed, it is well done that he or his fellow begin then a song, or else take out of his bosom a bagpipe, to drive away with such mirth the hurt of his fellow: for with such solace the travail and weariness of pilgrims is lightly and merrily borne out.

"And I said, Sir, St. Paul teacheth men to weep with them that weep.

"And the archbishop said, What janglest thou against men's devotion? Whatsoever thou or such other say, I say that the pilgrimage that now is used, is to them that do it a praiseable and a good mean to come the rather to grace. But I hold thee unable to know this grace, for thou enforcest thee to let the devotion of the people, since by authority of Holy Scripture men may lefully have and use such solace as thou reprovest: for David, in his last psalm, teacheth men to have divers instruments of music to praise God therewith.

"And I said, Sir, by the sentence of divers doctors, expounding the Psalms of David, that music and minstrelsy that David and other saints of the old law spake of, ought now neither to be taken nor used by the letter; but these instruments with their music ought to be interpreted ghostly, for all those figures are called virtues and grace, with which virtues men should please God, and praise his name. For St. Paul saith, all such things befell to them in figure. Therefore, sir, I understand that the letter of this psalm of David, and such other psalms and sentences, doth slay them that take them now literally; this sentence, as I understand, sir, Christ himself approveth, putting out the minstrels, that he would quicken the dead damsel.

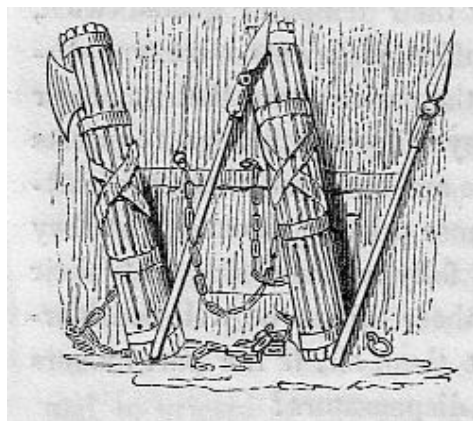
"And the archbishop said to me, Lewd losel, is it not lefull to us to have organs in the church to worship therewithal God? And I said, Yea, sir, by man's ordinance;

but by the ordinance of God, a good sermon, to the people's understanding, were mickle more pleasant to God.

"And the archbishop said, that organs and good delectable songs quickened and sharpened more men's wits, than should any sermon.

"But I said, Sir, lusty men and worldly lovers delight, and covet, and travail to have all their wits quickened and sharpened with divers sensible solace, but all the faithful lovers and followers of Christ, have all their delight to hear God's word, and to understand it truly, and to work thereafter faithfully and continually. For no doubt, to dread to offend God, and to love to please him in all things, quickeneth and sharpeneth all the wits of Christ's chosen people; and ableth them so to grace, that they joy greatly to withdraw their ears and all their wits and members from all worldly delight, and from all fleshly solace. For St. Jerome (as I think) saith, Nobody may joy with this world and reign with Christ.

"And the archbishop (as if he had been displeased with my answer) said to his clerks, What guess ye that this idiot will speak there where he hath no dread, since he speaketh thus now here in my presence? Well, well, by God, thou shalt be ordained for. And then he spake to me all angerly.



hat sayest thou to this fourth point, that is certified against thee, preaching openly and boldly in Shrewsbury, that priests have no title to tithes?

"And I said, Sir, I named there no word of tithes in my preaching. But more than a month after that I was arrested there in prison, a man came to me into the prison, asking me what I said of tithes; and I said to him, Sir, in this town are many clerks and priests, of which some are called religious men, though many of them be seculars, therefore ask ye of them this question. And this man said to me, Sir, our prelates say, that we also are obliged to pay our tithes of all things that renew to us; and that they are accursed that withdraw any part wittingly from them of their tithes. And I said, sir, to that man, as with my protestation I say now before you, that I wonder that any priest dare say man to be accursed, without any ground of God's word. And the man said, Sir, our priests say, that they curse men thus by the authority of God's law. And I said, Sir, I know not where this sentence of cursing is authorized now in the Bible. And therefore, sir, I pray ye that ye will ask the most cunning clerk of this town, that ye may know where this sentence of cursing them that tithe not, is now written in God's law; for if it were written there, I would right gladly be learned where. But, shortly, this man would not go from me to ask this question of another body, but required me there, as I would answer before God, if in this case that cursing of priests were lawful and approved of God? And shortly herewith came to my mind the learning of St. Peter, teaching priests specially to hallow the Lord Christ in their hearts, being evermore ready, as far as in them is, to answer through faith and hope to them that ask of them a reason. And this lesson Peter teacheth men to use with a meek spirit, and with dread of the Lord. Wherefore, sir, I said to this man in this wise, In the old law, which ended not fully till the time that Christ rose up again from death to life,

God commanded tithes to be given to the Levites, for the great business and daily travail that pertained to their office. But priests, because their travail was mickle more easy and light, than was the office of the Levites, God ordained the priests should take for their livelihood to do their office, the tenth part of those tithes that were given to the Levites. But now, I said, in the new law, neither Christ nor any of his apostles took tithes of the people, nor commanded the people to pay tithes, neither to priests, nor to deacons. But Christ taught the people to do alms, that is, works of mercy, to poor needy men, (of surplus, that is, superfluous of their temporal goods,) which they had more than they needed reasonably to their necessary livelihood. And thus, I said, not of tithes, but of pure alms of the people, Christ lived and his apostles, when they were so busy in preaching of the word of God to the people, that they might not travail otherwise to get their livelihood. But after Christ's ascension, and when the apostles had received the Holy Ghost, they travailed with their hands to get their livelihood, when that they might thus do for busy preaching. Therefore, by example of himself, St. Paul teacheth all the priests of Christ to travail with their hand, when for busy teaching of the people they might thus do. And thus all these priests, whose priesthood God accepteth now, or will accept, or did in the apostles' time, and after their decease, will do to the world's end. But, as Cisterciensis telleth, in the thousand year of our Lord Jesus Christ, 211 year, one Pope Gregory the Tenth ordained new tithes first to be given to priests now in the new law. But St. Paul in his time, whose trace or trample all priests of God enforce them to follow, seeing the covetousness that was among the people, desiring to destroy that foul sin through the grace of God and true virtuous living and example of himself, wrought and taught all priests to follow him as he followed Christ, patiently, willingly, and gladly in high poverty: wherefore Paul saith thus, The Lord hath ordained that they that preach the gospel, shall live of the gospel. But we, saith Paul, that covet and busy us to be faithful followers of Christ, use not this power. For lo, (as Paul witnesseth afterward,) when he was full poor and needy, preaching among the people, he was not chargeous unto them, but with his hands he travailed not only to get his own living, but also the living of other poor and needy creatures; and since the people was never so covetous nor so avaricious, I guess, as they are now, it were good counsel that all priests took good heed to this heavenly learning of Paul, following him here in wilful poverty, nothing charging the people for their bodily livelihood. But because that many priests do contrary to Paul in this aforesaid doctrine, Paul biddeth the people take heed to those priests that follow him as he had given them example. As if Paul would say thus to the people; Accept ye none other priests than they, that live after the form that I have taught you. For certain, in whatsoever dignity or order that any priest is in, if he conform him not to follow Christ and his apostles in wilful poverty, and in other heavenly virtues, and specially in true preaching of God's word; though such a one be named a priest, yet he is no more but a priest in name, for the work of a very priest in such a one wanteth. This sentence approveth Augustine, Gregory, Chrysostom, and Lincoln, plainly.

"And the archbishop said to me, Thinkest thou this wholesome learning to sow openly, or yet privily among the people? Certain this doctrine contrarieth plainly the ordinance of holy fathers, which have ordained, granted, and licensed priests to be in divers degrees, and to live by tithes and offerings of the people, and by other duties.

"And I said, Sir, if priests were now in measurable measure and number, and lived virtuously, and taught busily and truly the word of God, by example of Christ

and of his apostles, without tithes, offerings, and other duties that priests now challenge and take, the people would give them freely sufficient livelihood.

"And a clerk said to me, How wilt thou make this good, that the people will give freely to priests their livelihood; since that now by the law every priest can scarcely constrain the people to give them their livelihood?

"And I said, Sir, it is now no wonder though the people grudge to give priests the livelihood that they ask; mickle people know now, how that priests should live, and how that they live contrary to Christ and to his apostles. And therefore the people is full heavy to pay, as they do, their temporal goods to parsons, and to other vicars and priests, which should be faithful dispensators of the parish's goods; taking to themselves no more but a scarce living of tithes, nor of offerings, by the ordinance of the common law. For whatsoever priests take of the people (be it tithe or offering, or any other duty or service) the priests ought to have thereof no more but a bare living; and to depart the residue to the poor men and women, specially of the parish of whom they take this temporal living. But the most deal of priests now wasteth their parishes' goods, and spendeth them at their own will after the world, in their vain lusts: so that in few places poor men have duly, as they should have, their own sustenance, neither of tithes, nor of offerings, nor of other large wages and foundations that priests take of the people in divers manners above that they need for needful sustenance of meat and clothing: but the poor needy people are forsaken and left of priests to be sustained of the parishioners, as if the priests took nothing of the parishioners to help the people with.

"And thus, sir, into over-great charges of the parishioners they pay their temporal goods twice, where once might suffice, if priests were true dispensators. Also, sir, the parishioners that pay their temporal goods, be they tithes or offerings, to priests that do not their office among them justly, are partners of every sin of those priests; because that they sustain those priests' folly in their sin, with their temporal goods. If these things be well considered, what wonder is it then, sir, if the parishioners grudge against these dispensators?

"Then the archbishop said to me, Thou that shouldst be judged and ruled by holy church, presumptuously thou deemest holy church to have erred in the ordinance of tithes and other duties to be paid to priests. It shall be long ere thou thrive, losel, that thou despisest thy ghostly mother. How darest thou speak this, losel, among the people? Are not tithes given to priests to live by?

"And I said, Sir, St. Paul saith, that tithes were given in the old law to Levites and to priests, that came of the lineage of Levi. But our priests, he saith, came not of the lineage of Levi, but of the lineage of Judah, to which Judah no tithes were promised to be given. And therefore Paul saith, since the priesthood is changed from the generation of Levi to the generation of Judah, it is necessary that changing also be made of the law. So that priests live now without tithes and other duties that they claim, following Christ and his apostles in wilful poverty, as they have given them example. For since Christ lived, all the time of his preaching, by pure alms of the people; and by example of him his apostles lived in the same wise, or else by the travail of their hands, as it is said above: every priest, whose priesthood Christ approveth, knoweth well, and confesseth in word and work, that a disciple ought not to be above his master; but it sufficeth to a disciple to be as his master, simple and pure, meek and patient; and by example specially of his Master Christ, every priest

should rule him in all his living; and so, after his cunning and power, a priest should busy him to inform and to rule whomsoever he might charitably.

"And the archbishop said to me with a great spirit, God's curse have thou and mine for this teaching; for thou wouldst hereby make the old law more free and perfect than the new law. For thou sayest that it is lawful to Levites and to priests to take tithes in the old law, and so to enjoy their privileges: but to us priests in the new law, thou sayest it is not lawful to take tithes; and thus thou givest to Levites of old law more freedom than to priests of the new law.

"And I said, Sir, I marvel that ye understand this plain text of Paul thus. Ye wot well, that the Levites and priests in the old law that took tithes, were not so free nor so perfect as Christ and his apostles that took no tithes. And, sir, there is a doctor (I think that it is St. Hierome) that saith thus, The priests that challenge now in the new law tithes, say, in effect, that Christ is not become man, nor that he hath yet suffered death for man's love. Wherefore this doctor saith this sentence: Since tithes were the heirs and wages limited to Levites and to priests of the old law for bearing about of the tabernacle, and for slaying and flaying of beasts, and for burning of sacrifice, and for keeping of the temple, and for trumping of battle before the host of Israel, and other divers observances that pertained to their office; those priests that will challenge or take tithes, deny that Christ is come in the flesh, and do the priests' office of the old law, for whom tithes were granted, for else, as this doctor saith, priests now take tithes wrongfully.

"And the archbishop said to his clerks, Heard you ever losel speak thus? Certain this is the learning of them all, that wheresoever they come, and they may be suffered, they enforce them to expugn the freedom of holy church.

"And I said, Sir, why call ye the taking of tithes and of such other duties that priests challenge now, wrongfully, the freedom of holy church, since neither Christ nor his apostles challenged nor took such duties? Therefore these takings of priests now are not called justly the freedom of holy church, but all such giving and taking ought to be called and holden, the slanderous covetousness of men of the holy church.

"And the archbishop said to me, Why, losel, wilt not thou, and other that are confederate with thee, seek out of Holy Scripture and of the sense of doctors, all sharp authorities against lords, knights, and squires, and against other secular men, as thou dost against priests?

"And I said, Sir, whatsoever men or women, lords or ladies, or any other that are present in our preaching specially, or in our communing, after our cunning, we tell out to them their office and their charges; but, sir, since Chrysostom saith, that priests are the stomach of the people, it is needful in preaching, and also in communing, to be most busy about this priesthood: since by the viciousness of priests both lords and commons are most sinfully infected and led into the worst. And because that the covetousness of priests and pride, and the boast that they have and make of their dignity and power, destroyeth not only the virtues of priesthood in priests themselves, but also over this, it stirreth God to take great vengeance both upon the lords, and upon the commons, which suffer these priests charitably.

"And the archbishop said to me, Thou judgest every priest proud that will not go arrayed as thou doest: by God, I deem him to be more meek that goeth every day in a scarlet gown, than thou in thy threadbare blue gown. Whereby knowest thou a proud man?

"And I said, Sir, a proud priest may be known, when he denieth to follow Christ and his apostles in wilful poverty and other virtues; and coveteth worldly worship, and taketh it gladly, and gathereth together, with pleading, menacing, or with flattering, or with simony, any worldly goods; and most, if a priest busy him not chiefly in himself, and after in all other men and women after his cunning and power, to withstand sin.

"And the archbishop said to me, Though thou knewest a priest to have all these vices, and though thou sawest a priest a fornicator, wouldst thou therefore damn this priest damnable? I say to thee, that in the turning about of thy hand, such a sinner may be verily repented.

"And I said, Sir, I will not damn any man for any sin that I know done or may be done, so that the sinner leaveth his sin. But by authority of Holy Scripture, he that sinneth thus openly as you show here, is damnable for doing of such a sin; and most specially a priest, that should be example to all other to hate and flee sin. And in how short time soever ye say that such a sinner may be repented, he ought not of him that knoweth his sinning, to be judged verily repentant, without open evidence of great shame and hearty sorrow for sin. For whosoever (and specially a priest) that useth pride, envy, covetousness, lechery, simony, or any other vices, showeth not as open evidence of repentance as he hath given evil example and occasion of sinning, if he continue in any such sin as long as he may, it is likely that sin leaveth him, and he not sin. And, as I understand, such a one sinneth unto death, for whom nobody oweth to pray, as St. John saith.

"And a clerk said then to the archbishop, Sir, the longer that ye oppose him, the worse he is; and the more you busy you to amend him, the waywarder he is. For he is of so shrewd a kind, that he shameth not only to be himself a foul nest, but without shame he busieth him to make his nest fouler.

"And then the archbishop said to his clerk, Suffer a while, for I am at an end with him, for there is another point certified against him, and I will hear what he saith thereto.

"And so then he said to me, Lo, it is here certified against thee, that thou preachedst openly at Shrewsbury, that it is not lawful to swear in any case.

"And I said, Sir, I never preached so openly, nor have I taught in this wise in any place. But, sir, as I preached in Shrewsbury, with my protestation I say to you now here, that by the authority of the Epistle of St. James, and by witness of divers saints and doctors, I have preached openly in one place or other, that it is not lefull in any case to swear by any creature. And over this, sir, I have also preached and taught by the aforesaid authorities, that nobody should swear in any case, if that without oath in any wise he that is charged to swear might excuse him to them that have power to compel him to swear in lefull thing and lawful. But if a man may not excuse him, without oath, to them that have power to compel him to swear, then he ought to swear only by God, taking him only, that is soothfastness, to witness to soothfastness.

"And then a clerk asked me, If it were not lefull to a subject, at the bidding of his prelate, to kneel down and touch the holy gospel book, and kiss it, saying, So help me God and this holy dame? for he should after his cunning and power do all things that his prelate commandeth him.

"And I said to them, Sirs, ye speak here full generally or largely. What if a prelate commanded his subject to do an unlawful thing, should he obey thereto?

"And the archbishop said to me, A subject ought not to suppose that his prelate will bid him do an unlawful thing. For a subject ought to think that his prelate will bid him do nothing but that he will answer for before God, that it is lefull: and then, though the bidding of the prelate be unlawful, the subject hath no peril to fulfil it, since that he thinketh and judgeth, that whatsoever thing his prelate biddeth him to do, that it is lefull to him for to do it.

"And I said, Sir, I trust not thereto. But to our purpose: sir, I tell you that I was once in a gentleman's house, and there were then two clerks there, a master of divinity, and a man of law, which man of law was also communing in divinity. And among other things, these men spake of oaths; and the man of law said, At the bidding of his sovereign which had power to charge him to swear, he would lay his hand upon a book, and hear his charge; and if his charge to his understanding were unfeull, he would hastily withdraw his hand upon the book, taking there only God to witness, that he would fulfil that lefull charge, after his power. And the master of divinity said then to him thus, Certain, he that layeth his hand upon a book in this wise, and maketh there a promise to do that thing that he is commanded, is obliged thereby by book-oath, then to fulfil his charge. For no doubt, he that chargeth him to lay his hand thus upon a book (touching the book, and swearing by it, and kissing it, promising in this form to do this thing or that) will say and witness that he that toucheth thus a book, and kisseth it, hath sworn upon that book. And all other men that see that man thus do, and also all those that hear hereof, in the same wise will say and witness, that this man hath sworn upon a book. Wherefore, the master of divinity said, it was not lefull either to give or to take any such charge upon a book; for every book is nothing else, but divers creatures of which it is made of. Therefore to swear upon a book, is to swear by creatures, and this swearing is ever unfeull. This sentence witnesseth Chrysostom plainly, blaming them greatly that bring forth a book to swear upon, charging clerks that in nowise they constrain any body to swear, whether they think a man to swear true or false.

"And the archbishop and his clerks scorned me, and blamed me greatly for this saying. And the archbishop menaced me with great punishment and sharp, except I left this opinion of swearing.

"And I said, Sir, this is not my opinion, but it is the opinion of Christ our Saviour, and of St. James, and of Chrysostom, and of other divers saints and doctors.

"Then the archbishop had a clerk read this homily of Chrysostom, which homily this clerk held in his hand written in a roll, which roll the archbishop caused to be taken from my fellow at Canterbury. And so then this clerk read this roll, till he came to a clause where Chrysostom saith, That it is sin to swear well.

"And then a clerk (Malveren, as I guess) said to the archbishop, Sir, I pray you wete of him, how he understandeth Chrysostom here, saying it to be sin to swear well.

"And so the archbishop asked me, how I understood here Chrysostom.

"And certain, I was somewhat afraid to answer hereto. For I had busied me to study about the sense thereof, but lifting up my mind to God, I prayed him of grace. And as fast as I thought how Christ said to his apostles, When for my name ye shall be brought before judges, I shall give into your mouth wisdom that your adversaries shall not against say. And trusting faithfully in the word of God, I said, Sir, I know well that many men and women have now swearing so in custom, that they neither know, or will know, that they do evil to swear as they do: but they think and say, that

they do well to swear as they do, though they know well that they swear untruly. For they say, they may by their swearing, though it be false, void blame or temporal harm, which they should have if they swear not thus. And, sir, many men and women maintain strongly that they swear well, when that thing is sooth that they swear for. Also full many men and women say now, that it is well done to swear by creatures, when they may not, as they say, otherwise be believed. And also, full many men and women now say, that it is well done to swear by God, and by our Lady, and by other saints, to have them in mind. But since all these sayings are but excusations, and sin; methinketh, sir, that this sense of Chrysostom may be alleged well against all such swearers: witnessing that all these sin grievously, though they think themselves to swear in this aforesaid wise well: for it is evil done, and great sin, to swear truth, when in any manner a man may excuse himself without oath.

"And the archbishop said, that Chrysostom might be thus understood.

"And then a clerk said to me, Wilt thou tarry my lord no longer, but submit thee here meekly to the ordinance of holy church, and lay thy hand upon a book, touching the holy gospel of God, promising not only with thy mouth, but also with thine heart, to stand to my lord's ordinance?

"And I said, Sir, have I not told you here, how that I heard a master of divinity say, that in such case it is all one to touch a book, and to swear by a book?

"And the archbishop said, There is no master of divinity in England so great, but if he hold this opinion before me, I shall punish him as I shall do thee, except thou swear as I shall charge thee.

"And I said, Sir, is not Chrysostom an ententive doctor?

"And the archbishop said, Yea.

"And I said, If Chrysostom proveth him worthy great blame, that bringeth forth a book to swear upon; it must needs follow, that he is more to blame that sweareth on that book.

"And the archbishop said, If Chrysostom meant accordingly to the ordinance of holy church, we will accept him.

"And then said a clerk to me, Is not the word of God and God himself equipollent, that is, of one authority.

"And I said, Yea.

"Then he said to me, Why wilt thou not swear then by the gospel of God, that is, God's word, since it is all one to swear by the word of God and by God himself?

"And I said, Sir, since I may not now otherwise be believed but by swearing, I perceive (as Augustine saith) that it is not speedful that ye that should be my brethren, should not believe me; therefore I am ready by the word of God (as the Lord commanded me by his word) to swear.

"Then the clerk said to me, Lay then thine hand upon the book, touching the holy gospel of God, and take thy charge.

"And I said, Sir, I understand that the holy gospel of God may not be touched with man's hand.

"And the clerk said I fonded, and that I said not truth.

"And I asked this clerk, whether it were more to read the gospel than to touch the gospel.

"And he said, It was more to read the gospel.

"Then I said, Sir, by authority of St. Hierome, the gospel is not the gospel for reading of the letter, but for the belief that men have in the word of God. That it is the gospel that we believe, and not the letter that we read; because the letter that is touched with man's hand, is not the gospel, but the sentence that is verily believed in man's heart, is the gospel. For so Hierome saith, The gospel, that is the virtue of God's word, is not in the leaves of the book, but it is in the root of reason. Neither the gospel, he saith, is in the writing alone of the letters, but the gospel is in the marking of the sentence of Scriptures. This sentence approveth St. Paul, saying thus, The kingdom of God is not in word, but in virtue. And David saith, The voice of the Lord, that is, his word, is in virtue. And after David saith, Through the word of God the heavens were formed, and in the spirit of his mouth is all the virtue of them. And I pray you, sir, understand ye well how David saith then, In the spirit of the mouth of the Lord is all the virtue of angels and of men.

"And the clerk said to me, Thou wouldst make us too fond with thee. Say we not that the gospel is written in the mass book?

"And I said, Sir, though men use to say thus, yet it is an imperfect speech, for the principal part of a thing is properly the whole thing; for lo, man's soul, that may not now be seen here, nor touched with any sensible thing, is properly man. And all the virtue of a tree is in the root thereof that may not be seen; for do away the root, and the tree is destroyed. And, sir, as ye said to me right now, God and his word are of one authority; and, sir, St. Hierome witnesseth that Christ, very God and very man, is hid in the letter of the law; thus, also, sir, the gospel is hid in the letter. For, sir, as it is full likely, many and divers men and women, here in the earth, touched Christ and saw him, and knew his bodily person, which neither touched, nor saw, nor knew ghostly his Godhead; right thus, sir, many men now touch, and see, and write, and read the Scriptures of God's law, which neither see, touch, nor read effectually the gospel. For as the Godhead of Christ, that is, the virtue of God, is known by the virtue of belief, so is the gospel, that is, Christ's word.

"And a clerk said to me, These be full misty matters and unsavoury, that thou showest here to us.

"And I said, Sir, if ye that are masters know not plainly this sentence, ye may sore dread that the kingdom of heaven be taken from you, as it was from the princes of priests, and from the elders of the Jews.

"And then a clerk (as I guess, Malveren) said to me, Thou knowest not thine equivocations; for the kingdom of heaven hath divers understandings. What callest thou the kingdom of heaven in this sentence that thou showest here?

"And I said, Sir, by good reason and sentence of doctors, the realm of heaven is called here the understanding of God's word.

"And a clerk said to me, From whom thinkest thou that this understanding is taken away?

"And I said, Sir, (by authority of Christ himself,) the effectual understanding of Christ's word is taken away from all them chiefly, which are great lettered men, and presume to understand high things, and will be holden wise men, and desire

mastership and high state and dignity, but they will not conform them to the living and teaching of Christ and of his apostles.

"Then the archbishop said, Well, well, thou wilt judge thy sovereigns. By God, the king doth not his duty, unless he suffer thee to be condemned.

"And then another clerk said to me, Why (on Friday that last was) counselledst thou a man of my lord's that he should not shrive him to no man, but only to God?

"And with this asking I was abashed; and then by and by I knew that I was subtly betrayed of a man that came to me in prison on the Friday before, communing with me in this matter of confession: and certain, by his words I thought that this man came then to me of full fervent and charitable will, but now I know he came to tempt me and to accuse me; God forgive him if it be his will. And with all my heart when I had thought thus, I said to this clerk, Sir, I pray you that you would fetch this man hither, and all the words, as near as I can repeat them, which I spake to him on Friday in the prison, I will rehearse now here before you all, and before him.

"And, as I guess, the archbishop said then to me, They that are now here suffice to repeat them. How saidst thou to him?

"And I said, Sir, that man came and asked me in divers things, and after his asking, I answered him (as I understood) that good was. And as he showed to me by his words, he was sorry of his living in court, and right heavy for his own vicious living, and also for the viciousness of other men, and specially of priests' evil living, and therefore he said to me, with a sorrowful heart, as I guessed, that he purposed fully within short time to leave the court, and to busy him to know God's law, and to conform all his life thereafter. And when he had said to me these words, and more other which I would rehearse if he were present, he prayed me to hear his confession. And I said to him, Sir, wherefore come ye to me to be confessed of me? Ye wot well that the archbishop putteth and holdeth me here, as one unworthy either to give or to take any sacrament of holy church.

"And he said unto me, Brother, I wot well, and so wot many other more, that you and such other are wrongfully vexed, and therefore I commune with you the more gladly. And I said to him, Certain I wot well that many men of this court, and specially the priests of this household, would be full evil apaid both with you and me, if they wist that ye were confessed of me. And he said, that he cared not therefore, for he had full little affection in them. And, as methought, he spake these words and many other of a good will, and of a high desire to have known and done the pleasant will of God; and I said to him, as with my aforesaid protestation I say to you now here, Sir, I counsel you to absent you from all evil company, and to draw you to them that love and busy them to know and to keep the precepts of God, and then the good Spirit of God will move you to occupy busily all your wits in gathering together of all your sins, as far as ye can bethink you, shaming greatly of them and sorrowing heartily for them; yea, sir, the Holy Ghost will then put in your heart a good will and a fervent desire to take and to hold a good purpose, to hate ever and to flee, after your cunning and power, all occasion of sin: and so then wisdom shall come to you from above, lightening, with divers beams of grace and of heavenly desire, all your wits, informing you how ye shall trust stedfastly in the mercy of the Lord, knowledging to him only all your vicious living, praying to him ever devoutly of charitable counsel and continuance, hoping without doubt, that if ye continue thus, busying you faithfully to know and to keep his biddings, he will, for he only may, forgive you all

your sins. And this man said to me, Though God forgive men their sins, yet it behoveth men to be assoiled of priests, and to do the penance that they enjoine them.

"And I said to him, Sir, it is all one to assoil men of their sins, and to forgive men their sins. Wherefore, since it pertaineth only to God to forgive sin, it sufficeth in this case, to counsel men and women to leave their sin, and to comfort them that busy them thus to do, to hope stedfastly in the mercy of God. And again, priests ought to tell sharply to customable sinners, that if they will not make an end of their sin, but continue in divers sins while that they may sin, all such deserve pain without any end. And therefore, priests should ever busy them to live well and holily, and to teach the people busily and truly the word of God, showing to all folk, in open preaching and in privy counselling, that the Lord God only forgiveth sin. And, therefore, those priests that take upon them to assoil men of their sins, blaspheme God; since that it pertaineth only to the Lord to assoil men of all their sins. For no doubt a thousand years after that Christ was man, no priest of Christ durst take upon him to teach the people, neither privily nor apertly, that they behoved needs to come to be assoiled of them as priests now do. But by authority of Christ's word priests bound indurate customable sinners to everlasting pains, which in no time of their living would busy them faithfully to know the biddings of God, nor to keep them. And again, all they that would occupy all their wits to hate and to flee all occasion of sin, dreading over all things to offend God, and loving to please him continually; to these men and women priests showed how the Lord assoiled men of all their sins; and thus Christ promised to confirm in heaven all the binding and loosing that priests by authority of his word bind men in sin that are indurate therein, or loose them out of sin here upon earth that are verily repentant. And this man hearing these words said, that he might well in conscience consent to this sentence. But he said, Is it not needful to the lay-people that cannot thus do, to go shrive them to priests? And I said, If a man feel himself so distroubled with any sin, that he cannot by his own wit avoid this sin without counsel of them that are herein wiser than he; in such a case the counsel of a good priest is full necessary. And if a good priest fail, as they do now commonly, in such a case, St. Augustine saith, that a man may lawfully commune and take counsel of a virtuous secular man. But certain, that man or woman is overladen and too beastly, which cannot bring their own sins into their mind, busying them night and day to hate and to forsake all their sins, doing a sigh for them after their cunning and power. And, sir, full accordingly to this sentence upon Mid-lent Sunday, two years, as I guess, now agone, I heard a monk of Feversham, that men called Borden, preach at Canterbury at the cross within Christ-church abbey, saying thus of confession, That as through the suggestion of the fiend, without counsel of any other body, of themselves many men and women can imagine and find means and ways enough to come to pride, to theft, to lechery, and other divers vices; in contrariwise this monk said, since the Lord God is more ready to forgive sin than the fiend is or may be of power to move any body to sin, then whosoever will shame and sorrow heartily for their sins, knowledging them faithfully to God, amending them after their power and cunning, without counsel of any other body than of God and of himself, through the grace of God, all such men and women may find sufficient means to come to God's mercy, and so to be clean assoiled of all their sins. This sentence I said, sir, to this man of yours, and the self words as near as I can guess.

"And the archbishop said, Holy church approveth not this learning.

"And I said, Sir, holy church, of which Christ is Head, in heaven and in earth, must needs approve this sentence. For lo, hereby all men and women may, if they

will, be sufficiently taught to know and keep the commandments of God, and to hate and to fly continually all occasion of sin, and to love and to seek virtues busily, and to believe in God stably, and to trust in his mercy stedfastly, and so to come to perfect charity and continue therein perseverantly. And more the Lord asketh not of any man here now in this life. And certain, since Jesus Christ died upon the cross wilfully, to make men free; men of the church are too bold and too busy to make men thrall, binding them under the pain of endless curse (as they say) to do many observances and ordinances, which neither the living nor teaching of Christ nor of his apostles approveth.

"And a clerk said then to me, Thou showest plainly here thy deceit, which thou hast learned of them that travailed to sow the popple among the wheat; but I counsel thee to go away clean from this learning, and submit thee lowly to my lord, and thou shalt find him yet to be gracious to thee.

"And as fast then another clerk said to me, How wast thou so bold at Paul's Cross in London, to stand there hard with thy tippet bounden about thine head, and to reprove in his sermon the worthy clerk Alkerton, drawing away all that thou mightest? yea, and the same day at afternoon, thou, meeting the worthy doctor in Watling Street, calledst him false flatterer and hypocrite.

And I said, Sir, I think certainly that there was no man nor woman that hated verily sin and loved virtues, hearing the sermon of the clerk at Oxford, and also Alkerton's sermon, but they said, or might justly say, that Alkerton reproveth that clerk untruly, and slandered him wrongfully and uncharitably. For, no doubt, if the living and teaching of Christ chiefly and of his apostles be true, nobody that loveth God and his law will blame any sentence that the clerk then preached there, since by authority of God's word, and by approved saints and doctors, and by open reason, this clerk approved all things clearly that he preached there.

"And a clerk of the archbishop said to me, His sermon was false, and that he showed openly, since he dare not stand forth and defend his preaching that he then preached there.

"And I said, Sir, I think that he purposeth to stand stedfastly thereby, or else he slandereth foully himself, and also many other that have great trust that he will stand by the truth of the gospel. For I wot well, this sermon is written both in Latin and English, and many men have it, and they set great price thereby. And, sir, if ye were present with the archbishop at Lambeth when this clerk appeared and was at his answer before the archbishop, ye wot well that this clerk denied not there his sermon, but two days he maintained it before the archbishop and his clerks.

"And then the archbishop or one of his clerks said, I wot not which of them, That harlot shall be met with for that sermon; for no man but he and thou, and such other false harlots, praiseth any such preaching.

"And then the archbishop said, Your cursed sect is busy, and it joyeth right greatly, to contrary and to destroy the privilege and freedom of holy church.

"And I said, Sir, I know no men that travail so busily as this sect doth, which you reprove, to make rest and peace in holy church; for pride, covetousness, and simony, which distrouble holy church, this sect hateth and fleeth, and travaileth busily to move all other men in like manner, unto meekness, and wilful poverty, and charity, and free ministering of the sacrament; this sect loveth and useth, and is full busy to

move all other folks thus to do. For these virtues owe all members of holy church to their Head, Christ.

"Then a clerk said to the archbishop, Sir, it is far day, and ye have far to ride to-night, therefore make an end with him, for he will none make; but the more, sir, that ye busy you to draw him toward you, the more contumacious he is made and the further from you.

"And then Malveren said to me, William, kneel down, and pray my lord's grace, and leave all thy fantasies, and become a child of holy church.

"And I said, Sir, I have prayed the archbishop oft, and yet I pray him for the love of Christ, that he will leave his indignation that he hath against me, and that he will suffer me, after my cunning and power, to do mine office of priesthood, as I am charged of God to do it; for I covet nought else but to serve my God to his pleasing in the state that I stand in, and have taken me to.

"And the archbishop said to me, If of good heart thou wilt submit thee now here meekly, to be ruled from this time forth by my counsel, obeying meekly and wilfully to my ordinance, thou shalt find it most profitable and best to thee to do thus: therefore tarry thou me no longer, grant to do this that I have said to thee now here shortly, or deny it utterly.

"And I said to the archbishop, Sir, owe we to believe that Jesus Christ was and is very God and very man?

"And the archbishop said, Yea.

"And I said, Sir, owe we to believe that all Christ's living and his teaching is true in every point? "And he said, Yea.

"And I said, Sir, owe we to believe that the living of the apostles, and the teaching of Christ and all the prophets, are true, which are written in the Bible for the health and salvation of good people?

"And he said, Yea.

"And I said, Sir, owe all Christian men and women, after their cunning and power, to conform all their living to the teaching specially of Christ, and also to the teaching and living of his apostles and of prophets, in things that are pleasant to God, and edification of his church?

"And he said, Yea.

"And I said, Sir, ought the doctrine, the bidding, or the counsel of any body to be accepted or obeyed unto, except this doctrine, these biddings, or this counsel may be granted and affirmed by Christ's living and his teaching specially, or by the living and teaching of his apostles and prophets?

"And the archbishop said to me, Other doctrines ought not to be accepted, nor owe we to obey to any man's bidding or counsel, except we can perceive that this bidding or counsel accordeth with the life and teaching of Christ, and of his apostles and prophets.

"And I said, Sir, is not all the learning, and biddings, and counsels of holy church, means and healing remedies, to know and understand the privy suggestions and the apert temptations of the fiend? and also ways and healing remedies to slay

pride and all other deadly sins, and the branches of them, and sovereign means to procure grace to withstand and overcome all the fleshly lusts and movings?

"And the archbishop said, Yea.

"And I said, Sir, whatsoever thing ye or any other body bid or counsel me to do, accordingly to this aforesaid learning, after my cunning and power, through the help of God, I will meekly with all my heart obey thereto.

"And the archbishop said to me, Submit thee then now here meekly and wilfully to the ordinance of holy church, which I shall show to thee.

"And I said, Sir, accordingly as I have here now before you rehearsed, I will now be ready to obey full gladly to Christ the Head of the holy church, and to the learnings, and biddings, and counsels of every pleasing member of him.

"Then the archbishop, striking with his hand fiercely upon a cupboard, spake to me with a great spirit, saying, By Jesus, but if thou leave not such additions, obliging thee now here without any exception to mine ordinance, or that I go out of this place, I shall make thee as sure, as any thief that is in the prison of Lanterne; advise thee now what thou wilt do. And then, as if he had been angered, he went from the cupboard where he stood, to a window.

"And then Malveren and another clerk came nearer me, and they spake to me many words full pleasantly; and another while they menaced me, and counselled full busily to submit me, or else they said I should not escape punishing over measure; for they said I should be degraded, cursed, and burned, and so then damned. But now they said, Thou mayst eschew all these mischiefs, if thou wilt submit thee wilfully and meekly to this worthy prelate, that hath cure of thy soul. And for the pity of Christ (said they) bethink thee, how great clerks the bishop of Lincoln, Herford, and Purvey were, and yet are, and also B., that is a well understanding man; which also have forsaken and revoked all the learning and opinions that thou and such other hold. Wherefore since each of them is mickle wiser than thou art, we counsel thee for the best; that by the example of these four clerks, thou follow them, submitting thee as they did.

"And one of the bishop's clerks said then there, that he heard Nicholas Herford, say, that since he forsook and revoked all the learning and Lollards' opinions, he hath had mickle greater favour and more delight to hold against them, than ever he had to hold with them, while he held with them.

"And therefore Malveren said to me, I understand and thou wilt take thee to a priest, and shrive thee clean, forsake all such opinions, and take the penance of my lord here for the holding and teaching of them, within short time thou shalt be greatly comforted in this doing.

"And I said to the clerks, that thus busily counselled me to follow these aforesaid men, Sirs, if these men, of whom ye counsel me to take example, had forsaken benefices of temporal profit, and of worldly worship, so that they had absented them, and eschewed from all occasions of covetousness and of fleshly lust, and had taken upon them simple living and wilful poverty, they had herein given good example to me and to many other to have followed them. But now since all these four men have slanderously and shamefully done the contrary, consenting to receive and to have and to hold temporal benefices, living now more worldly and more fleshly than they did before, conforming them to the manners of this world; I forsake them herein,

and in all their aforesaid slanderous doing. For I purpose, with the help of God, into remission of my sins, and of my foul, cursed living, to hate and to flee privily and apertly to follow these men, teaching and counselling whomsoever that I may, to flee and to eschew the way that they have chosen to go in, which will lead them to the worst end, if in convenient time they repent them not, verily forsaking and revoking openly the slander that they have put, and every day yet put to Christ's church. For certain, so open blasphemy and slander as they have spoken and done in their revoking and forsaking of the truth, ought not, nor may not, privily be amended duly. Wherefore, sirs, I pray you that you busy not to move me to follow these men, in revoking and forsaking the truth, soothfastness as they have done, and yet do; wherein by open evidence they stir God to great wrath, and not only against themselves, but also against all them that favour them, or consent to them herein, or that commune with them, except it be to their amendment. For whereas these men first were pursued of enemies, now they have obliged them by oath to slander and pursue Christ in his members. Wherefore, as I trust stedfastly in the goodness of God, the worldly covetousness, and the lusty living, and the sliding from the truth, of these runagates, shall be to me and to many other men and women an example and an evidence to stand more stiffly by the truth of Christ.

"For certain, right many men and women do mark and abhor the foulness and cowardness of these aforesaid untrue men, how that they are overcome and stopped with benefices, and withdrawn from the truth of God's word, forsaking utterly to suffer therefore bodily persecution. For by this unfaithful doing and apostacy of them, specially, that are great lettered men, and have knowledged openly the truth, and now, either for pleasure or displeasure of tyrants, have taken hire and temporal wages to forsake the truth, and to hold against it, slandering and pursuing them that covet to follow Christ in the way of righteousness; many men and women therefore are now moved. But many more, through the grace of God, shall be moved hereby to learn the truth of God to do thereafter, and to stand boldly thereby.

"Then the archbishop said to his clerks, Busy you no longer about him, for he, and other such as he is, are confederate together that they will not swear to be obedient, and to submit them to prelates of holy church. For now since I stood here, his fellow also sent me word that he will not swear, and that this fellow counselled him that he should not swear to me. And, losel, in that thing that in thee is, thou hast busied thee to loose this young man; but blessed be God, thou shalt not have thy purpose of him. For he hath forsaken all thy learning, submitting him to be buxom and obedient to the ordinance of holy church, and weepeth full bitterly, and curseth thee full heartily, for the venomous teaching which thou hadst showed to him, counselling him to do thereafter.

"And for thy false counselling of many other and him, thou hast great cause to be sorry. For long time thou hast busied thee to pervert whomsoever thou mightest. Therefore, as many deaths thou art worthy of, as thou hast given evil counsels. And therefore, by Jesus, thou shalt go thither where Nicholas Herford and Thomas Purvey were harboured. And I undertake ere this day eight days, thou shalt be right glad to do what thing that ever I bid thee to do. And, losel, I shall essay if I can make thee there as sorrowful as (it was told me) thou wast glad at my last going out of England. By St. Thomas, I shall turn thy joy into sorrow.

"And I said, Sir, there can nobody prove lawfully that I joyed ever of the manner of your going out of this land.

"But, sir, to say the sooth, I was joyful when ye were gone; for the bishop of London, in whose prison ye left me, found in me no cause to hold me longer in his prison, but at the request of my friends, he delivered me to them, asking of me no manner of submitting.

"Then the archbishop said to me, Wherefore that I yede out of England, is unknown to thee; but be this thing well known to thee, that God (as I wot well) hath called me again, and brought me into this land, to destroy thee and the false sect that thou art of; as, by God, I shall pursue you so narrowly, that I shall not leave a slip of you in this land.

"And I said to the archbishop, Sir, the holy prophet Jeremy said to the false prophet Anany, When the word, that is, the prophecy, of a prophet is known or fulfilled, then it shall be known, that the Lord sent the prophet in truth.

"And the archbishop, as if he had not been pleased with my saying, turned him awayward hither and thither, and said, By God, I shall set upon thy shins a pair of pearls, that thou shalt be glad to change thy voice.

"These and many more wonders and convincing words were spoken to me, menacing me and all other of the same sect to be punished and destroyed unto the uttermost.

"And the archbishop called then to him a clerk, and rowned with him; and that clerk went forth, and soon he brought in the constable of Saltwood castle, and the archbishop rowned a good while with him; and then the constable went forth, and then came in divers seculars, and they scorned me on every side, and menaced me greatly, and some counselled the archbishop to burn me by and by, and some other counselled him to drown me in the sea, for it is near hand there.

"And a clerk standing beside me, there kneeled down to the archbishop, praying him that he would deliver me to him to say matins with him, and he would undertake, that within three days I should not resist any thing that were commanded me to do of my prelate.

"And the archbishop said, that he would ordain for me himself.

"And then after came again the constable and spake privily to the archbishop; and the archbishop commanded the constable to lead me forth thence with him, and so he did. And when we were gone forth thence, we were sent after again. And when I came in again before the archbishop, a clerk had me kneel down and ask grace, and submit me lowly, and I should find it for the best.

"And I said then to the archbishop, Sir, as I have said to you divers times to-day, I will wilfully and lowly obey and submit me to be ordained ever, after my cunning and power, to God and to his law, and to every member of holy church, as far forth as I can perceive that these members accord with their Head, Christ, and will teach me, rule me, or chastise me by authority specially of God's law.

"And the archbishop said, I wist well he would not without such additions submit him.

"And then I was rebuked, scorned, and menaced on every side; and yet after this divers persons cried upon me to kneel down and submit me; but I stood still, and spake no word. And then there was spoken of me, and to me, many great words, and I stood and heard them menace, curse, and scorn me: but I said nothing.

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

"Then awhile after the archbishop said to me, Wilt thou not submit thee to the ordinance of holy church?"

"And I said, Sir, I will full gladly submit me, as I have showed you before.

"And then the archbishop bade the constable to have me forth thence in haste.

"And so then I was led forth, and brought into a foul, unhonest prison, where I came never before. But thanked be God, when all men were gone forth then from me, and had sparred fast the prison door after them; by and by after, I therein by myself busied me to think on God, and to thank him for his goodness. And I was then greatly comforted in all my wits, not only for that I was then delivered for a time from the sight, from the hearing, from the presence, from the scorning, and from the menacing of mine enemies; but much more I rejoiced in the Lord, because that through his grace he kept me so, both among the flattering especially, and among the menacing of mine adversaries, that without heaviness and anguish of my conscience I passed away from them. For as a tree laid upon another tree overthwart or cross-wise, so was the archbishop and his three clerks always contrary to me, and I to them.

"Now, good God, for thine holy name, and to the praising of thy most blessed name, make us one together, if it be thy will, by authority of thy word, that is true perfect charity, and else not. And that it may thus be, all that this writing read or hear, pray heartily to the Lord God, that he for his great goodness, that cannot be with tongue expressed, grant to us, and to all other which in the same wise, and for the same cause specially, or for any other cause, be at distance, to be knit and made one in true faith, in stedfast hope, and in perfect charity. Amen."

What was the end of this good man, and blessed servant of God, William Thorpe, I find as yet in no story specified. By all conjectures it is to be thought that the archbishop, Thomas Arundel, being so hard an adversary against those men, would not let him go; much less it is to be supposed, that he would ever retract his sentence and opinion, which he so valiantly maintained before the bishop; neither doth it seem that he had any such recanting spirit. Again, neither is it found that he was burned; wherefore it remaineth most like to be true, that he, being committed to some strait prison, (according as the archbishop in his examination before did threaten him,) there, (as Thorpe confesseth himself,) was so straitly kept, that either he was secretly made away with, or else there he died by sickness.

The like end also I find to happen to John Ashton, another good follower of Wickliff, who, for the same doctrine of the sacrament, was condemned by the bishops; and, because he would not recant, he was committed to perpetual prison, wherein the good man continued till his death, A. D. 1382.



William Thorpe in prison

92. John Purvey.

Furthermore, in the said examination of William Thorpe, mention is made, as ye heard, of John Purvey, of whom also something we touched before; promising of the said John Purvey more particularly to treat, in order and process of time. Of this Purvey, Thomas Walden writeth thus in his second tome: "John Purvey," saith he, "was the brary of Lollards, and glosser upon Wickliff. He said that the worshipping of Abraham was but a salutation." And in his third tome he saith, "This John Purvey, with Herford, a doctor of divinity, were grievously tormented and punished in the prison of Saltwood, and at the length recanted at Paul's Cross at London; Thomas Arundel being then archbishop of Canterbury. Afterward again, he was imprisoned under Henry Chichesley, archbishop of Canterbury, in the year of our Lord 1421." Thus much writeth Walden. The works of this man which he wrote, were gathered by Richard Lavingham, his adversary, which I think worthy to be remembered. First, as touching the sacrament of the last supper, the sacrament of penance, the sacrament of orders, the power of the keys, the preaching of the gospel, of marriages, of vows, of possessions, of the punishing and correcting of the clergy, of the laws and decrees of the church, of the state and condition of the pope and the clergy; of all these generally be left divers monuments gravely and exactly written, part whereof here in the end of his story we thought to exhibit, being translated out of Latin into English.

The articles which he taught, and afterwards was forced to recant at Paul's Cross, were these hereafter following:

"1. That in the sacrament of the altar, after the consecration, there is not, neither can be, any accident without the subject; but there verily remaineth the same substance, and the very visible and corruptible bread, and likewise the very same wine, the which, before the consecration, were set upon the altar to be consecrate of the priest; likewise as when a pagan or infidel is baptized, he is spiritually converted into a member of Christ through grace, and yet remaineth the very same man which he before was, in his proper nature and substance.

"2. That auricular confession, or private penance, is a certain whispering, destroying the liberty of the gospel, and newly brought in by the pope and the clergy, to entangle the consciences of men in sin, and to draw their souls into hell.

"3. That every layman being holy and predestinate unto everlasting life, albeit he be a layman, yet is he a true priest before God.

"4. That divers prelates and other of the clergy do live wickedly, contrary to the doctrine and example of Christ and his apostles: therefore they which so live have not the keys either of the kingdom of heaven, or yet of hell; neither ought any Christian to esteem his censure any more than as a thing of no force. Yea, albeit the pope should, peradventure, interdict the realm, yet could he not hurt, but rather profit us, forasmuch as thereby we should be dismissed from the observation of his laws, and from saying of service according to the custom of the church.

"5. That if any man do make an oath or vow, to keep perpetual chastity, or do any thing else whereunto God hath not appointed him, giving him grace to perform his purpose, the same vow or oath is unreasonable and indiscreet, neither can any prelate compel him to keep the same, except he will do contrary unto God's ordinance.

But he ought to commit him unto the governance of the Holy Ghost and of his own conscience; forasmuch as every man, which will not fulfil his vow or oath, cannot do it for that cause.

"6. That whosoever taketh upon him the office of priesthood, although he have not the charge of souls committed unto him according to the custom of the church, not only may, but ought, to preach the gospel freely unto the people; otherwise he is a thief, excommunicated of God, and of the holy church.

"7. That Innocent the Third, pope, and six hundred bishops, and a thousand other prelates, with all the rest of the clergy, which together with the same pope agreed and determined, that in the sacrament of the altar, after the conversion of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, the accidents of the said bread and wine do remain there without any proper subject of the same; the which also ordained, that all Christians ought to confess their sins once a year unto a proper priest, and to receive the reverend sacrament at Easter, and made certain other laws at the same time: all they, saith he, in so doing, were fools and blockheads, heretics, blasphemers, and seducers of Christian people. Wherefore we ought not to believe the determinations of them, or of their successors; neither ought we to obey their laws or ordinances, except they be plainly grounded upon the Holy Scripture, or upon some reason which cannot be impugned."

Other articles drawn out of Purvey's books more at large, by Richard Lavingham.

"As touching the sacrament of thanksgiving, he saith, That that chapter of repentance and remission, *Omnis utriusque sexus*, wherein it is ordained that every faithful man ought once every year at the least, that is to say, at Easter, to receive the sacrament of the eucharist, is a beastly thing, heretical and blasphemous.

"Item, That Innocent the Third, pope, was the head of antichrist, who, after the letting loose of Satan, invented a new article of our faith, and a certain feigned verity touching the sacrament of the altar; that is to say, that the sacrament of the altar is an accident without a substance, or else a heap of accidents without a substance: but Christ and his apostles do teach manifestly, that the sacrament of the altar is bread and the body of Christ together, after the manner that he spake. And in that he calleth it bread, he would have the people to understand, as they ought with reason, that it is very and substantial bread, and no false nor feigned bread.

"And although Innocent, that antichrist, doth allege, that in the Council of Lyons, where this matter was decided, were six hundred bishops with him, and one thousand prelates, which were in one opinion of this determination, all those notwithstanding he calleth fools, according to that saying of Eccles. i., Of fools there are an infinite number. And so in like manner he calleth them false Christs and false prophets, of whom Christ speaketh in the 24th of Matthew, Many false Christs and false prophets shall arise, and deceive many. And therefore every Christian man ought to believe firmly, that the sacrament of the altar is very bread indeed, and no false nor feigned bread. And although it be very bread indeed, yet, notwithstanding, it is the very body of Christ in that sort he spake, and called it his body; and so it is very bread, and the very body of Christ. And as Christ, concerning his humanity was both visible and passible, and by his Divinity was invisible and impassible; so likewise this sacrament, in that it is very bread, may be seen with the corporal eye, and may also abide corruption. But although a man may see that sacrament, yet notwithstanding cannot the body of Christ in that sacrament be seen with the corporal eye, although it

be the body of Christ in that manner he spake it; for, that notwithstanding, the body of Christ is now incorruptible in heaven. So the sacrament of the cup is very wine, and the very blood of Christ, according as his manner of speaking was. Also, Innocent the Third, with a great multitude of his secular clerks, made a certain new determination, That the sacrament of the altar is an accident without a substance, whereas neither Jesus Christ, nor any of his apostles, taught this faith, but openly and manifestly to the contrary, neither yet the holy doctors, for the space of a thousand years and more, taught this faith openly.

"Therefore when antichrist, or any of his shavelings, doth ask of thee that art a simple Christian, whether that this sacrament be the very body of Christ or not? affirm thou it manifestly so to be. And if he ask of thee whether it be material bread, or what other bread else? say thou, that it is such bread as Christ understood and meant by his proper word; and such bread as the Holy Ghost meant in St. Paul, when he called that to be very bread which he brake; and wade thou no further therein. If he ask thee how this bread is the body of Christ? say thou, As Christ understood the same to be his body, which is both omnipotent and true, and in whom is no untruth; say thou also as the holy doctors do say, That the terrestrial matter or substance may be converted into Christ, as the pagan or infidel may be baptized, and hereby spiritually be converted, and be a member of Christ, and so, after a certain manner, become Christ, and yet the same man remain still in his proper nature. For so doth St. Augustine grant that a sinner, forsaking his sin, and being made one spirit with God by faith, grace, and charity, may be converted into God, and be, after a manner, God, as both David and St. John do testify, and yet be the same person in substance and nature, and in soul and virtue be altered and changed. But yet men of more knowledge and reason may more plainly convince the falsity of antichrist, both in this matter and in others, by the gift of the Holy Ghost working in them. Notwithstanding, if those that be simple men will humbly hold and keep the manifest and apparent words of the Holy Scripture, and the plain sense and meaning of the Holy Ghost, and proceed no further, but humbly commit that unto the Spirit of God, which passeth their understanding; then may they safely offer themselves to death, as true martyrs of Jesus Christ.

"As touching the sacrament of penance, that chapter by which a certain new-found auricular confession was ordained, is full of hypocrisy, heresy, covetousness, pride, and blasphemy, he saith; and reproveth the same chapter, and that by the sentences of the same process: also, that the penance and pains limited by the canons be unreasonable and unjust, for the austerity and rigorousness which they contain, more than are taxed by God's law. He also doth exemplify of the solemn and public denial of penitents to be received into orders, according to the decree of the general council: also of the sevenfold penance of a priest committing fornication, according to the chapter, *Presbyter*, Dist. 82. And further he showeth another example of the penance of priests, according to that chapter, *Qui presbyterium, &c.*, where the decretal of the general council saith, That such a one ought to remain continuing his life in the wars, and not to marry; and how Innocent the Third brought, in a new-found confession, whereby the priests do oppress the simple laymen; and that many other things they do, compelling them to confess themselves to blind and ignorant priests, in whom is nothing else but pride and covetousness, having such in contempt as are learned and wise. Also, that the decretal of Innocent the Third, touching the aforesaid auricular or vocal confession, was brought in and invented to intricate and entangle men's consciences with sin, and to draw them down to hell; and furthermore, that such manner of confession destroyeth the evangelical liberty, and doth let men to

inquire after and to retain the wise counsel and doctrine of such as be good priests, which know faithfully how to observe his precepts and commandments, and which would willingly teach the people the right way to heaven: for which abuse all Christian men, and especially all Englishmen, ought to exclaim against such wicked laws.

"As touching the sacrament of order, Purvey saith, That all good Christians are predestinate and be ordained of God, and made true priests to offer Christ in themselves, and to Christ themselves; as also to teach and preach the gospel to their neighbours, as well in word, as in example of living. But the worldly shavelings do more magnify the naked and bare signs of priesthood, invented by sinful men, than the true and perfect priesthood of God, grounded by a true and lively faith, annexed with good works. Also, if it were needful to have such shavelings, God knoweth how, and can make, when it pleaseth him, priests (without man's working and sinful signs; that is to say, without either sacraments or characters) to be known and discerned of the people by their virtuous life and example, and by their true preaching of the law of God; for so made he the first-made priests and elders before the law of Moses; and so made he Moses a priest before Aaron, and before the ceremonies of the law, without man's operation at all; and even so hath God made all such as are predestinate, to be his priests. But such as be true Christians receive none such as priests, unless they follow Christ and his apostles; neither do they believe that they make the sacrament of the altar, which they affirm to be God's body, when it pleaseth them, lest haply God be not with them, forasmuch as they do this thing for covetousness' sake, or else to brag of their own power. And therefore, such as be simple men will worship that sacrament in this doubtfulness, with a silent condition, that is, if it be made by God's authority, and have their devotion to the body of Christ in heaven. Also, that such as be elders, if they be God's priests, be bishops, prelates, and curates of their Christian brethren, whom they may lead to heaven by the example of their holy conversation, and by preaching of the gospel, although they make no sacrifice to that antichrist of Rome for their confirmation; neither be they dedicated to the world by secular divine things, and by consuming the livings of the poor, as be those secular bishops, prelates, and curates. Also, that although there were no pope, according as the custom of the church is, yet Christ, which is the Head of his church, doth ordain such a pope as pleaseth him; and that is, whosoever is most humble and lowly, and best doth the office of a true priest, although he be unknown to the world; and although there were no such proud bishop above all the rest as the church doth use, yet all the priests might well govern the church by common assent, as once they did, before such worldly pride crept in amongst the bishops, &c. And, admit that no such priests were according to the accustomed use now of receiving of order and tonsure by such a mitred bishop and his tonsure, yet Christ knoweth both how to make and choose such as shall well please him both in conversation of life and sincere preaching of the gospel, in ministering to his people all necessary sacraments. And every holy man which is a minister of Christ, although he be not shaven, is a true priest ordained of God, although no mitred bishop ever laid his character upon him: so that the pope and prelates do make more estimation of their characters (as tonsures and crowns by them invented) than of the true and perfect priesthood ordained of God; whereas all those that are predestinate, are true priests made of him.

"As touching the authority of the keys and censures, no Christian man ought to esteem Satan, whom men call the pope, and his unjust censures, more than the hissing of a serpent, or the blast of Lucifer. Also, that no man ought to trust or put confidence

in the false indulgences of covetous priests, which indulgences do draw away the hope which men ought to repose in God, to a sort of sinful men, and do rob the poor of such alms as is given to them. Such priests be manifest betrayers of Christ and of the whole church, and be Satan's own stewards, to beguile Christian souls by their hypocrisy and feigned pardons. Also, forasmuch as those prelates and clergymen lived so execrable a life, contrary to the gospel of Christ and examples of his apostles, and teach not truly the gospel, but only lies and the traditions of sinful, wicked men, it appeareth most manifestly, that they have not the keys of the kingdom of heaven, but rather the keys of hell; and they may be right well assured that God never gave unto them authority to make and establish so many ceremonies and traditions, which be contrary to the liberty of the gospel, and are blocks in Christian men's ways, that they can neither know nor observe the same his gospel in liberty of conscience, and so attain a ready way to heaven.

"Also, that all manner of religious men, notwithstanding the chapter *Religiosi*, touching the privileges in the Clementines, may lawfully minister all sacraments to them that are worthy the same; forasmuch as the same is a work of charity, which only the will and ordinance of the pope and his abettors in this case is to hinder and let. Item, If the pope shall interdict this our realm, that cannot hurt us, but much profit us, because that thereby he should separate us from all his wicked laws, and from the charges of sustaining of so many thousand shavelings, which, with small devotion, or none at all, patter and chatter a new-found song, *Secundum usum Sarum*: so that not whatsoever the pope in his general council bindeth on earth, is bound of God in heaven, either for that he bindeth unreasonably, and contradictorily doth against himself, or else, for that he hath forsaken the judgment of God.

"As touching the preaching of the gospel, whosoever receiveth or taketh upon him the office of a priest, or of a bishop, and dischargeth not the same by the example of his good conversation and faithful preaching of the gospel, is a thief, excommunicated of God, and of holy church. And further, if the curates preach not the word of God, they shall be damned; and if they know not how to preach, they ought to resign their benefices: so that those prelates which preach not the gospel of Christ, although they could excuse themselves from the doing of any other evil, are dead in themselves, are antichrists, and Satans transfigured into angels of light, night-thieves, man-quellers by daylight, and betrayers of Christ's people.

"Concerning the sacrament of matrimony: notwithstanding any spiritual kindred or gossopry, a man and woman may lawfully marry together by the law of God, without any dispensation papistical. And in the same place he saith, that if our realm do admit one not born in matrimony, or illegitimate, to the imperial crown, so that he doth well discharge the office of a king, God maketh him a king, and by consequence doth reject another king or heir of the kingdom, being born in matrimony and legitimate: so for such spiritual kindred there ought no divorce to be made. Also, notwithstanding if any man shall make any contract with any woman by the words of the future tense, by an oath taken, and afterwards shall with another woman make the like contract by the words of the present tense, that then the second contract standeth. Also, if a man make any contract with a woman by the words of the future tense, upon his oath taken, and maketh afterwards the like contract with another, not altering the words, and hath carnal connexion upon the same, the first contract maketh the matrimony good, and not the second. Also if a man, before witness, assure himself to a woman by a contract made in the present tense, and hath children by the same woman, and afterwards the same man marrieth another woman, with the like words in

the present tense before witness, although the first witnesses be dead, or, else by bribes corrupt, and the second bring his witnesses before the judge to prove the second contract, the first contract yet standeth in force, although the pope, allowing the second contract, doth compel them to live in adultery against the commandment of God. Also he condemneth the decretal of the restitution of things stolen, which willeth, that a man and woman having carnal connexion in the degree of consanguinity forbidden, and hath no witness hereof, if the woman will depart from the man, she shall be compelled by the censures to remain with him, and to yield her debt. Also, in case where a man hath made contract with two women, with one secretly, having no witness, and with the other openly, having witness, then were it better to acknowledge the insufficiency of the law, and to suffer men to be ruled by their own consciences, than by the censures to compel them to commit and live in adultery.

"As touching the keeping and making of vows: that vow or oath is beastly, and is without discretion made, which to perform and keep a man hath no power, but by grace given him of God; because that some such there be, whom God not doth accept to persevere in the state of chastity and perpetual virginity; and such a one cannot keep his vow, although he make the same. Also, that every one making a vow of continency or chastity, when, making the same, he shall not be accepted of God, doth very indiscreetly, and as one without all reason maketh the same, when he is not able of himself, without the gift of God, to fulfil his promise, according to that saying of the wise man, chap. viii., No man hath the gift of continency, unless that God give it unto him: for otherwise, if God help not such a one to perform the vow or oath which he hath made and taken, no prelate can compel him, unless he do contrary to God's ordinance; but he ought to commit himself to the government of God's Holy Spirit and his own conscience.

"For the possessions of the church, in another treatise it is declared, how the king, the lords, and commons, may, without any charge at all, keep fifteen garrisons, and find fifteen thousand soldiers, (having sufficient lands and revenues to live upon,) out of the temporalities gotten into the hands of the clergy, and feigned religious men, which never do that which pertaineth to the office of curates to do, nor yet to secular lords. And, moreover, the king may have, every year, twenty thousand pounds to come freely into his coffers, and above. Also he may find or sustain fifteen colleges more, and fifteen thousand priests and clerks with sufficient living, and a hundred hospitals for the sick, and every house to have one hundred marks in lands. And all this may they take of the aforesaid temporalities, without any charge to the realm; whereunto the king, the lords, and the commons are to be invited: for otherwise, there seemeth to hang over our heads a great and marvellous alteration of this realm, unless the same be put in execution. Also, if the secular priests and feigned religious, which be simoniacs and heretics, which feign themselves to say mass, and yet say none at all, according to the canons, which to their purpose they bring and allege, by which chapter such priests and religious do not make the sacrament of the altar: that then all Christians, especially all the founders of such abbeyes, and endowers of bishoprics, priories, and chantries, ought to amend this fault and treason committed against their predecessors, by taking from them such secular dominions which are the maintenance of all their sins: and also, that Christian lords and princes are bound to take away from the clergy such secular dominion as noursleth and nourisheth them in heresies, and ought to reduce them unto the simple and poor life of Christ Jesus and his apostles.

"And further, that all Christian princes, if they will amend the malediction and blasphemy of the name of God, ought to take away their temporalities from that shaven generation, which most of all doth nourish them in such malediction. And so in like wise the fat tithes from churches appropriate to rich monks, and other religious, feigned by manifest lying, and other unlawful means; likewise ought to debar their gold to the proud priest of Rome, which doth poison all Christendom with simony and heresy. Further, that it is a great abomination that bishops, monks, and other prelates, be so great lords in this world; whereas Christ, with his apostles and disciples, never took upon them secular dominion, neither did they appropriate unto them churches, as these men do, but led a poor life, and gave a good testimony of their priesthood. And therefore, all Christians ought, to the uttermost of their power and strength, to swear that they will reduce such shavelings to the humility and poverty of Christ and his apostles; and whosoever doth not thus, consenteth to their heresy. Also, that these two chapters of the immunity of churches are to be condemned, that is, cap. *Non minus*, and cap. *Adversus*; because they do decree, that temporal lords may neither require tallages nor tenths of any ecclesiastical persons.

"Now to the correction of the clergy. By the law of God, and by reason, the king and all other Christians may take revenge of Italy, and of all the false priests and clerks within the same, and reduce them unto the humble ordinance of Jesus Christ. Also, that the law of Silvester the pope, is contrary to the law of Christ, and either Testament: and that proud and ambitious Silvester, by his law, so defended two cardinals which were not to be defended by the law of Christ, that by no means they might be convinced, although they were both vicious and evil: and although Christ sustained and suffered the judgment of unjust temporal judges, our mitred prelates in these days so magnify themselves beyond Christ and his apostles, that they refuse and will none of such judgments. Also, that those decretals of accusations, which do prohibit that any clerks should be brought before a secular judge to receive judgment, do contain both heresy, blasphemy, and error, and bring great gain and commodity to antichrist's coffers.

"Furthermore, that all Christian kings and lords ought to exclaim against the pope and those that be his abettors, and banish them out of their lands, till such time as they will obey God and his gospel, kings, and other ministers of God's justice. Also, that bishops and their favourers, that say it appertaineth not to kings and secular lords, but unto them and their officials, to punish adultery and fornication, do fall into manifest treason against the king, and heresy against the Scripture. Also, that it appertaineth to the king to have the order both of priests and bishops, as these kings Solomon and Jehoshaphat had.

"Furthermore, that chapter by the which secular judges are forbidden, without the bishop's commandment, to condemn any clerk to death, is manifestly against the Holy Scripture, declaring that kings have power over clerks and priests, to punish them for their deserved crimes. Also, that the decree of Boniface, made against the prosecutors, strikers, and imprisoners of cardinals, is contrary both to the Holy Scripture, and to all reason. Also, that by the law of God and reason, a secular lord may lawfully take a cardinal and put him in prison for committing the crime of open simony, adultery, and manifest blasphemy. Also, that the chapter which saith that the pope ought to be judged of none, unless he be *devius a fide*, is contrary to the gospel, which saith, If thy brother sin against thee, correct him. Also, whereas St. Gregory and St. Augustine called themselves the servants of God's servants, this proud bishop of Rome, which will not be judged by his subjects, (which be in very deed his lords, if

they be just and good men,) doth destroy the order of God's law, and all humility, and doth extol himself above God and his apostles. Also, that Christian kings ought not only to judge this proud bishop of Rome, but also to depose him, by the example that Cestrensis, lib. 6. cap. 8, declareth of Otho the emperor, which deposed John the Twelfth, and did institute Leo in his place. And further, he maketh an exhortation to the princes to judge the Church of Rome, which he calleth the great and cursed strumpet, of whom St. John writeth in the Apocalypse, chap. xviii.

Lastly, touching the laws and determinations of the church, Christians have reasonable excuses and causes to repel the statutes of the pope and of his shavelings, which be not expressly grounded on the Holy Scriptures, or else upon reason inevitable. Also he saith, That such secular men as do not receive the sacrament of the altar at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide, are not to be counted amongst the number of Christians, nor are to be esteemed as Christians; whereby it followeth that all clerks and laymen that observe not the same, it seemeth they go straight to hell. But if this law be of no force, for that the custom and use in receiving is contrary to the same, then may we bless such rebellion and disobedience to the pope and his law; for otherwise we should flee to hell without any stay or let. Whereby we may conclude, that all Christians ought well to practise this school of disobedience against the pope and all his laws, (not founded upon the Holy Scripture,) which do let men to climb to heaven by the keeping of charity, and the liberty of the gospel. Also, that Christian men have great cause to refuse the laws and statutes of these worldly clerks, which the people call the papal laws and bishop-like statutes, for the covetousness and voluptuousness of them; without the which the church and congregation of God might safely run towards heaven by the sweet yoke of the Lord, as it did a thousand years before the said laws were prescribed and sent to the universities, and withdrew men from studying of the Holy Scripture, for the desire of benefices and worldly goods. Also, that simple men do reverently receive the sentences of the doctors and other laws, so far forth as they be expressly grounded upon the Holy Scripture or good reason. Also, that whereas the pope's laws, and laws of his ministers and clerks, be both contrary to themselves, and have not their foundation either upon the Scripture, or yet upon reason, simple men ought to bid them farewell. Also, that when all the apostles' faith failed them in the time of the Lord's passion, faith then rested in the blessed Virgin, much more might that proud priest of Rome, with all his rabble, easily err in the faith; and yet is the Christian faith preserved whole and safe in the faithful members of Christ, which are his true church; but the pope and all his rabblement cannot prove that they be any part of his church. Also that the pope, with all his supporters, may as well be deceived by a lying spirit, as was Ahab and all his prophets; and that one true prophet, as was Micaiah, may have the verity showed unto him, *contra concilium*. Also, that all good Christians ought to cast from them the pope's laws, saying, Let us break their bands in sunder, and let us cast from our necks those heavy yokes of theirs. Also, that where these prelates do burn one good book, for one error, perhaps, contained in the same, they ought to burn all the books of the canon law, for the manifold heresies contained in them."

This I thought good to annex further in our story, after the examination of William Thorpe, and the martyrdom of William Sautre, and of John Badby, thus described, as ye have heard; which was about the year 1409.

93. Continuing Schism.

By the way, here is to be considered, at least to be admonished, that all this while the schism in the Church of Rome did yet continue, and so endured till the Council of Constance, which was, in the whole, the space of twenty-nine years; the origin whereof, as was said before, first began at Urban the Fifth, which Urban being dead, A. D. 1389, next followed Pope Boniface the Ninth, who sat fourteen years. He, in selling his pardons, was so impudent and so past shame, that he brought the keys of Peter, as saith Platina, in contempt. After him succeeded Innocent the Seventh, and sat two years; who being dead, the cardinals consulting together, and seeing the foul enormity and inconvenience growing upon this contentious schism in their Church of Rome, (minding to provide some remedy for the same, after the best device they could,) in their conclave where they were assembled for a new election for the pope, took this order, promising among themselves with solemn vow made to God, to Mary the blessed Virgin, to Peter and Paul, and to all the blessed company of saints: That if any of them, within the college or without the college, should be called to that high place of apostolical pre-eminence, he should effectuously renounce the jurisdiction and title of his popedom, if or whensoever the contrary pope for the time being would in like manner renounce his place and title, and his cardinals in the like manner condescend to the other cardinals of Rome; so that both these two colleges of cardinals agreeing together, one chief bishop might be chosen and taken out of them both, to be made the true pope: provided, moreover, that none should seek any releasement or absolution from the said promise, vow, and bond, once passed among them: unto all which things furthermore every one subscribed with his hand. These things thus prefixed and ratified upon the same, they proceeded to the election, in which was chosen Gregory the Twelfth, who, the same day of his election, in the presence of all the cardinals, confirmed the vow, sacrament, and promise made, subscribing the same with his hand in form as followeth: "And I, Gregory, this day, being the last of November, in the year of our Lord 1407, chosen and elected for bishop of Rome, do swear, vow, and promise, and confirm, all the premises above contained," &c. This being done, shortly after he was crowned, being of the age of eighty years. As the time thus passed, the people and cardinals were in great expectation, waiting when the pope, according to his oath, would give over, with the other pope also. And not long after, the matter began indeed between the two popes to be attempted by letters from one to another, assigning both day and place, where and when they should meet together; but yet no effect did follow.

This so passing on, great murmuring was among the cardinals, to see their holy perjured father so to neglect his oath and vow aforenamed; insomuch that at length divers of them did forsake the pope, as being perjured, as no less he was, sending, moreover, to kings and princes of other lands, for their counsel and assistance therein, to appease the schism. Amongst the rest, Cardinal Bituriensis was sent to the king of England; who, publishing divers propositions and conclusions, (remaining in the registers of Thomas Arundel,) disputeth, that the pope ought to be subject to laws and councils. Then King Henry (moved to write to Gregory the pope) directeth his letter hereunder ensuing, which was the year of our Lord 1409. The contents of the letter be these:

"Most blessed father! if the discreet providence of the apostolical see would call to mind with what great perils the universal world hath been damnified, hitherto, under pretence of this present schism; and especially would consider, what slaughter of Christian people, to the number of two hundred thousand, (as they say,) hath been, through the occasion of war raised up in divers quarters of the world; and now of late, to the number of thirty thousand soldiers, which have been slain through the dissension moved about the bishopric of Leodium between two set up, one by the authority of one pope, the other by the authority of the other pope, fighting in camp for the title of that bishopric: certes, ye would lament in spirit and be sore grieved in mind for the same, so that with good conscience ye would relinquish rather the honour of the see apostolic, than suffer such horrible bloodshed hereafter to ensue, under the cloak of dissimulation; following herein the example of the true mother in the Book of Kings, who pleading before Solomon for the right of her child, rather would depart from the child, than the child should be parted by the sword. And although it may be vehemently suspected by the new creation of nine cardinals, by you last made, contrary to your oath, (as other men do say,) that you do but little heed or care for ceasing the schism, yet far be it from the hearing and noting of the world, that your circumspect seat should ever be noted and distained with such an inconstancy of mind, whereby the last error may be worse than the first."

King Henry the Fourth to the cardinals.

And to the cardinals, likewise, the said king directeth another letter with these contents here following: "We, desiring to show what zeal we have had and have to the reformation of peace of the church, by the consent of the states of the realm, have directed to the bishop of Rome our letters after the tenor of the copy herewith in these presents enclosed, to be executed effectually: wherefore we seriously beseech your reverend college, that if it chance the said Gregory to be present at the council of Pisa, and to render up his popedom, according to your desire, and his own oath, you then so ordain for his state totally, that chiefly God may be pleased thereby, and that both the said Gregory, and also we, which entirely love his honour and commodity, may have cause to give you worthily condign thanks for the same."

This being done in the year of our Lord 1409, afterward in the year next following, A. D. 1410, the cardinals of both the popes, to wit, of Gregory and Benedict, by common advice assembled together at the city of Pisa, for the reformation of unity and peace in the church. To the which assembly a great multitude of prelates and bishops being convened, a new pope was chosen, named Alexander the Fifth. But to this election neither Gregory nor Benedict did fully agree, whereby there were three popes together in the Roman church; that is to understand, not three crowns upon one pope's head, but three heads in one popish church together. This Alexander, being newly made pope, scarcely had well warmed his triple crown, but straight giveth out full remission, not of a few, but of all manner of sins whatsoever, to all them that conferred any thing to the monastery of St. Bartholomew, by Smithfield, resorting to the said church any of these days following: to wit, on Maundy-Thursday, Good Friday, Easter-even, the feast of the Annunciation, from the first even-song to the latter. But this pope, which was so liberal in giving remission of many years to others, was not able to give one year of life to himself, for within the same year he died: in whose stead stepped up Pope John the Twenty-third.

94. John Huss Condemned by Pope Alexander V.

In the time of this Alexander great stir began in the country of Bohemia, by the occasion of the books of John Wickliff, which, then coming to the hands of John Huss, and of others, both men and women, especially of the lay-sort, and artificers, began there to do much good; insomuch that divers of them, not only men, but women also, partly by the reading of their books translated into their tongue, partly by the setting forward of John Huss, a notable learned man, and a singular preacher at that time in the university of Prague, were in short time so ripe in judgment, and prompt in the Scriptures, that they began to move questions, yea, and to reason with the priests, touching matters of the Holy Scriptures.

By reason whereof complaint was brought to the said Pope Alexander the Fifth, who caused eftsoons the aforesaid John Huss to be cited up to Rome: but when he came not at the pope's citation, then the said Pope Alexander addressed his letters to the archbishop of Swinco, wherein he straitly charged him to prohibit and forbid, by the authority apostolical, all manner of preachings or sermons to be made to the people, but only in cathedral churches, or colleges, or parish churches, or in monasteries, or else in their churchyards; and that the articles of Wickliff should in no case, of any person, of what state, condition, or degree soever, be suffered to be holden, taught, or defended, either privily or apertly; commanding, moreover, and charging the said archbishop, that he, with four bachelors of divinity, and two doctors of the canon law joined unto him, would proceed upon the same, and so provide that no person in churches, schools, or any other place, should teach, defend, or approve any of the aforesaid articles, so that whosoever should attempt the contrary, should be accounted a heretic, and, unless he shall revoke solemnly and publicly the said articles, and shall for ever abjure the books wherein the aforesaid articles be contained, so that they may be utterly abolished out from the eyes of the faithful, the same should be apprehended and imprisoned, all appellation set apart, the help also of the secular arm being called thereunto, if need shall require, &c. These were the contents of this mighty and fierce bull of Pope Alexander.

Against the which bull, on the other side, John Huss, justly complaining, excepteth again, and objecteth many things: he declareth this mandate of the pope to stand directly against the doings and sayings both of Christ and of his apostles; considering how Christ himself preached to the people, both in the sea, in the desert, in fields, in houses, in synagogues, in villages; and the apostles also, in all places, did the same, the Lord mightily working with them. He declared, moreover, the said mandate or bull of the pope to redound unto the great detriment of the church, in binding the word of God, that it might not have his free passage; also, the same to be prejudicial unto chapels newly erected for the word of God to be preached in them: "Wherefore," saith he, "from this commandment or mandate of Pope Alexander, I did appeal unto the said Alexander, being better informed and advised; and, as I was prosecuting my appeal, the lord pope," saith John Huss, "immediately died."

Then the archbishop of Swinco aforesaid, to whom this present bull was directed, when he saw the process, bulls, and mandates of the bishop of Rome to be thus contemned of John Huss and his fellows, neither having any hope of redress in Wincelous the king, which seemed to neglect the matter, went out of his country into

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Hungary, to complain unto Sigismund, king of Hungary, and brother to the said Wincelaus. But this quarrelling archbishop, whether before, as the Bohemians say, or after, as Silvius saith, that he had spoken with Sigismund, immediately there, by the just judgment of God, died in Hungary, as the story saith, for sorrow; whereby a little more liberty and quiet was given by the Lord unto his gospel, newly beginning to take root among the Bohemians. Albeit, this tranquillity there did not long continue without trouble and persecution, neither could it in those furious days and reign of antichrist; for after this Alexander succeeded Pope John the Twenty-third, who, likewise playing his part in this tragedy, bent all his might and main to disturb the Bohemians, as more hereafter, Christ willing, shall be declared in further process of our history, coming to the year of our Lord 1413.

95. Insufferable Pride and Vainglory of The Prelates

Thus the poor Christians, as ye see, like to the silly Israelites under the tyranny of Pharaoh, were infested and oppressed in every place, but especially here in England; and that so much the more here, because that the king, not like to Wincelous, went full and whole with the pope and his prelates against the gospellers; by reason whereof the kingdom of the pope and his members here in this realm began to be so strong, that none durst stir or once mute against them. The bishops, having the king so full on their side, armed, moreover, with laws, statutes, punishments, imprisonments, sword, fire, and faggot, reigned and ruled as they listed, as kings and princes within themselves. So strong were they of power, that no human force was able to stand against them; so exalted in pride, and puffed up in glory, that they thought all things to be subject to their reverend majesties. Whatsoever they set forth or decreed, it must of all men be received and obeyed. And such was their superstitious blindness and curious vanity, that whatsoever toy came once in their fantasy, it was straightways determined and established for a law of all men to be observed, were it never so frivolous or superstitious; as well appeareth by Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, and others, who, having now a little leisure from slaying and killing the innocent people, martyrs, and confessors of the Lord, and having now brought their enemies, as they thought, under feet, began to set up themselves, and to invent new customs, as the guise of the pope's church is, ever to intrude into the church of God some ceremony or custom of their own making, whereby the church of Christ hath been hitherto exceedingly pestered. So likewise this Thomas Arundel, thinking the church yet not sufficiently stuffed with ceremonies and vain traditions of men, bringeth in a new-found gaud, commonly called The tolling of *Aves*, in honour of our Lady, with certain *Aves* to be said, and days of pardon to be given, for the same; for the ratification whereof, under the pretence of the king's request, he directed his mandate to the bishop of London, well stuffed with words of idolatry, as by the reading thereof may appear, in form of terms as followeth

A mandate of Thomas Arundel, directed to the bishop of London, to warn men to say certain prayers at the tolling of the Ayes, or ringing of the curfew.

"Thomas, &c. To the right reverend our brother, the Lord Robert, by the grace of God bishop of London, greeting, &c. While we lift our eyes round about us, and behold attentively with circumspect consideration, how the most high Word that was in the beginning with God, chose to him a holy and immaculate virgin of the kingly stock, in whose womb he took true flesh by inspiral inspiration, that the merciful goodness of the Son of God, that was uncreate, might abolish the sentence of condemnation, which all the posterity of mankind, that was created, had by sin incurred: amongst other labours in the vine of the Lord of Sabaoth, we sung to God our Saviour with great joy in him, carefully thinking, that though all the people of the Christian religion did extol with voices of praises so worthy a virgin, by whom we received the beginnings of our redemption, by whom the holy day first shined to us, which gave us hope of salvation; and although all the same people were drawn to reverence her, which, being a happy virgin, conceived the Son of God, the King of heaven, the Redeemer and Saviour of all nations, ministering light to the people that were miserably drowned in the darkness of death: we truly, as the servants of her own inheritance, and such as are written of, to be of her peculiar dower, as we are by every

man's confession acknowledged to be, we, I say, ought more watchfully than any others to show the endeavours of our devotion in praising her, who being hitherto merciful to us, yea, being even cowards, would that our power, being, as it were, spread abroad every where through all the coasts of the world, should, with a victorious arm, fear all foreign nations; that our power, being on all sides so defended with the buckler of her protection, did subdue unto her victorious standards, and made subject unto us, nations both near at hand and far off.

"Likewise our happy estate, all the time that we have passed since the beginning of our lives, may be well attributed only to the help of her medicine; to whom also we may worthily ascribe now of late in these our times, under the mighty government of our most Christian king, our deliverance from the ravening wolves, and the mouths of cruel beasts, which had prepared against our banquets a mess of meat mingled full of gall, and hated us unjustly, secretly lying in wait for us, in recompence of the good will that we showed to them. Wherefore, that she being on high, sitting before the throne of the heavenly Majesty, the defendress and patroness of us all, being magnified with all men's praises, may more plentifully exhibit to us, the sons of adoption, the teats of her grace, in all those things that we shall have to do: at the request of the special devotion of our lord the king himself, we command your brotherhood, straitly enjoining you, that you command the subjects of your city and diocese, and of all other suffragans, to worship our Lady Mary, the mother of God and our patroness and protectress, evermore in all adversity, with such-like kind of prayer and accustomed manner of ringing, as the devotion of Christ's faithful people is wont to worship her at the ringing of curfew. And when before day in the morning ye shall cause them to ring, that with like manner of prayer and ringing she be every where honoured devoutly by the aforesaid our and your suffragans, and their subjects as well religious as secular, in your and their monasteries and collegiate churches: that we, so humbly calling upon the mercy of the heavenly Father, the right hand of the heavenly Piety, may mercifully come to the help, the protection and defence of the same our Lord the king, who, for the happy remedy of quietness, and for our succour from tempestuous floods, is ready to apply his hands to work, and his eyes, with all his whole desire, to watching. We, therefore, coveting more earnestly to stir up the minds of all faithful people to so devout an exercise of God, &c., we grant by these presents, to all and every man, &c., that shall say the Lord's prayer and the salutation of the angel five times at the morning peal with a devout mind, forty days' pardon by these presents. Given under our seal, in our manor of Lambeth, the tenth day of February."

By this frivolous and barbarous constitution, with many other of like sort heaped into the church by the papists, appeareth the proper natures and condition of this catholic generation; who, being themselves not greatly exercised nor experienced in any serious cogitation of spiritual matter, as seemeth, take upon them to govern the spiritual church of Christ, whereof indeed they have no skill or very little: and, therefore, according to their unskilful handling, they lead and rule the church after such outward sights and ceremonies, seemly perhaps to their own gross affection, but not agreeing, nay rather clean contrary, to the right nature and condition of the spiritual house and kingdom of the Lord: and like as in their inventions they swerve utterly from the right handling of all spiritual government, so, in their manners and form of life likewise, they do resemble little or no part almost of such as are, and ought to be, true pastors and ministers of the mystical body of Christ.

Examples hereof are plenty and plain in these Roman prelates to be noted, whoso, well considering the humble state and lowly spirit which ought to be in

pastoral leaders of the church, will compare the same with the usual pomp of these glorious potentates.

As for example: What can be more convenient for a true pastor ecclesiastical, than humility of heart and spirit, according to the example of the head bishop himself? so what greater show of arrogancy and pride could there be, than in this, whom I have oft named before, Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury? who, passing by the high street of London, did not only look and wait for the ringing of the bells, for a triumph of his coming, but took great snuff, and did suspend all such churches in London, (not only with the steeple and bells, but also with the organs,) so many as did not receive his coming with the noise of bells, according as out of his own registers may appear, the words whereof, written to his own somner, I have hereto annexed in his own form, as followeth.

A commission directed to the somner, to suspend certain churches of London, because they rung not their bells at the presence of my lord, the archbishop of Canterbury.

"Thomas, by the permission of God, &c. To our well-beloved Thomas Wilton, our somner sworn, health, grace, and blessing. The comeliness of our holy church of Canterbury, over which we bear rule, deserveth and requireth, that while we pass through the province of the same our church, having our cross carried before us, every parish church in their turns ought, and are bounden, in token of special reverence that they bear to us, to ring their bells: which notwithstanding, yea, on Tuesday last past, when we, betwixt eight and nine of the clock before dinner, passed openly on foot as it were, through the midst of the city of London, with our cross carried before us, divers churches, whose names are here beneath noted, showed towards us willingly, though they certainly knew of our coming, unreverence rather than reverence, and the duty that they owe to our church of Canterbury, ringing not at all at our coming. Wherefore we, being willing to revenge this injury, for the honour of our spouse, as we are bounden, command you, that by our authority you put all those churches under our indictment, suspending God's holy organs and instruments in the same: which we also suspend by the tenor of these presents, till the ministers of the aforesaid churches be able hereafter to attain of us the benefit of more plentiful grace. Given," &c.

What great reason was in this, why this archbishop either should thus look for the ringing of the bells, or why he should be thus displeased with not ringing, I do not see. Belike, his mind, in the mean time, was greatly occupied with some great muse, as feeling of God's fear, with repentance and remembrance of his sins, with zealous care and solicitude for his flock, with the earnest meditation of the passion and life of our Saviour, who in this world was so despised; or else was set upon some grave study, while he so waited for the ringing of the bells, which were wont to be so noisome to all students. And why were not the trumpeters also shent as well, because they did not sound before his person? But though the bells did not clatter in the steeples, and therefore his thunderbolt should have fallen upon the steeples, which had deserved, why should the body of the church therefore be suspended? At least, the poor organs, methinketh, had some part of wrong to be put to silence in the quire, because the bells rang not in the tower.

Of the like matter, also, we read in the said registers, falling between the bishop of Worcester and the priory of the same town, for not ringing at the bishop's coming into the church: whereupon much suit and contention was between them, till at length the archbishop of Canterbury took up the matter, moderating it, as in the said registers, fol. 441, appeareth to be seen as followeth:

"Thomas, &c. Whereas there happened variance lately between our reverend brother the lord bishop of Worcester on the one party, and the religious and discreet men the prior and convent of the same church on the other party, for not ringing of bells at the coming of our said brother to his aforesaid church, at length the parties, considering the great inconvenience that might come thereof, at our instance and request did agree on this manner: that as often as it shall happen our reverend brother to go to his aforesaid church, either to celebrate orders, or to visit his church in the head or in the inferiors, or to make cream and oil in the same church, also in the feast of the Assumption of the blessed Virgin Mary, which is the chiefest feast in the abbey aforesaid; then the prior and the convent, and their successors for the time being, shall ring solemnly against his coming, or shall cause to be rung solemnly, without all contradiction, or any reclaiming hereafter to be made against the same: which agreement that it may be more firmly kept, we let you all understand by these presents, sealed with our seal. Given at our palace of Canterbury, July 12, the tenth year of our government."

The like stir for bell-ringing and for processions had almost happened between the archbishop of Canterbury, successor to this Thomas Arundel, named Henry Chichesley, on the one party, and the abbey of St. Alban's on the other party, had not the abbot, in time submitting himself to the archbishop, so provided, that the ringing of their bells at his coming might not redound to any derogation of their liberties. Whereunto the archbishop granted by these his letters as followeth:

"Henry, &c., to the religious men, the abbot and convent of the monastery of St. Alban's, in the diocese of Lincoln, health, &c. Whenas of late there happened a matter of variance between us, and you, the abbot and convent, by reason of not giving reverence to us, being due to our province of Canterbury, that is, for not ringing the bells, and meeting us with processions when we passed by divers places of our province, as well due of common custom, as of old use and for the prerogative of the church of Canterbury, as also being due of every one being within the compass of this our said province, when and as often as we shall pass by their places; at length your lord abbot, coming personally to us, did grant both for you and the convent aforesaid, to do and to give of your gentleness all reverence and honour, with such reverence both to us and our church of Canterbury, as often as we pass by your monastery, or the places nigh or adjoining thereto, or shall hereafter go by; so that it might not be prejudicial to your exemption, and nothing be attempted to the violating of your privilege; and that it might not be challenged for duty hereafter. Wherefore we, desiring to keep you from damage, let you understand by these presents, that it is not our intent to derogate your exemptions or privilege whatsoever herein; nor by any means to be prejudicial to you by these your reverences or other duties, whatsoever you have or shall grant to us of your devotion and liberality, both by you, and in places under your dominion. In witness whereof," &c.

To express, moreover, and describe, the glorious pomp of these prince-like prelates, in these blind days of popish religion, reigning then in the church, I thought to adjoin hereunto another example not much unlike, neither differing much in time, concerning certain poor men cited up, and enjoined strait penance by William Courtney, predecessor of the said Thomas Arundel, for bringing litter to his horse, not in wains as they should do, but in privy sacks, in a secret manner under their cloaks or coats: for the which so heinous and horrible trespass, the said archbishop, sitting in his tribunal seat, did call and cite before him the said persons, and, after their submission, enjoined them penance; which penance what it was, and what were the names of the

aforesaid parties, here followeth out of the said archbishop's registers, both by his own words, and by picture of the persons in the same registers annexed and painted, in all resemblance, as there standeth, and here is also to be seen.



A peasant carrying a sack of straw as a penance

"Ignorance, the mother of error, so much hath blinded and deceived certain persons, to wit, Hugh Pennie, John Forstall, John Boy, John Wanderton, William Hayward, and John White, tenants of the lord of Wengham, that against the coming of the aforesaid archbishop to his palace of Canterbury on Palm Sunday even, the year of our Lord 1390, where they, being warned by the bailiff to convey and carry hay, straw, and other litter to the aforesaid palace, as they were bound by the tenor of their

lands, which they hold of the see of Canterbury; refusing and disdainng to do their service, as they were accustomed, brought their straw and other litter, not in carts and wains openly and sufficiently, but by piece-meal and closely in bags or sacks, in contempt of their lord, and derogation of the right and title of the see of Canterbury. Whereupon they, being cited and presented before the archbishop, sitting in judgment at his manor of State-wood, yielded and submitted themselves to his lordship's pleasure, humbly craving pardon of their trespass. Then the aforesaid archbishop absolved the above-named Hugh Pennie, &c., they swearing to obey the laws and ordinances of holy church, and to do the punishment that should be appointed them for their deserts: that is, that they, going leisurely before the procession, every one of them should carry openly on his shoulder his bag stuffed with hay and straw, so that the said hay and straw should appear hanging out, the mouths of the sacks being open."

96. Notes of Certain Parliament Matters Passed in King Henry V's Days.

To proceed now further in the reign of this king, and to treat also something of his parliaments as we have done of other before: first, we will begin with the parliament holden in the first year of his coming in.

Moreover, forasmuch as our catholic papists will not believe, yet the contrary, but that the jurisdiction of their father the pope hath ever extended throughout all the world, as well here in England, as in other places, here, therefore, speaking of the parliaments holden in this king's days concerning this matter, I refer them to the parliament of the said King Henry, in his first year holden, and to the twenty-seventh article of the same, where they may read, in the tenth objection laid against King Richard, in plain words, how that, "Forasmuch as the crown of this realm of England, and the jurisdiction belonging to the same, as also the whole realm itself, at all times lately past, hath been at such liberty, and enjoyed such prerogative, that neither the pope, nor any other out of the same kingdom, ought to intrude himself nor intermeddle therein: it was, therefore, objected unto the afore-named King Richard the Second, for procuring the letters apostolical from the pope, to the confirming and corroborating of certain statutes of his, and that his censures might be prosecuted against the breakers thereof, which seemed then to the parliament to tend against the crown and regal dignity, as also against the statutes and liberties of this the said our realm of England.

"Furthermore, in the second year of the said king, this was in the parliament required, that all such persons as shall be arrested by force of the statute made against the Lollards, in the second year of Henry the Fourth, may be bailed, and freely make their purgation; that they be arrested by none other than by the sheriffs, or such-like officers, neither that any havoc be made of their goods. The king granted to their advice therein.

"In the eighth year, moreover, of this king's reign, it was likewise propounded in the parliament, that all such persons as shall procure, or sue in the court of Rome, any process touching any benefice, collation, or presentation of the same, shall incur the pain of the statute of provisors, made in the thirteenth year of Richard the Second, whereunto the king granted, that the statutes heretofore provided should be observed.

"Item, in the said parliament there, it was put up by petition, that the king might enjoy half the profits of every parson's benefice who is not resident thereon. Thereunto the king answered, That the ordinaries should do their duties therein, or else he would provide further remedy to stay their pluralities.

"Item, in the said parliament it was required, that none do sue to the court of Rome for any benefice, but only to the king's courts."

In the next year following, which was the ninth of this king, another petition of the commons was put in parliament against the court of Rome, which I thought good here to express, as followeth:

"The commons do beseech, that forasmuch as divers provisors of the benefices of holy church, dwelling in the court of Rome, through their singular covetousness,

now newly imagined to destroy those that have been long time incumbents in divers their benefices of holy church peaceably, some of them by the title of the king, some by title ordinary, and by the title of other true patrons thereof, by colour of provisions, relations, and other grants made to the same provisors by the apostoil, of the said benefices, do pursue processes in the said court by citation made beyond the sea, without any citations made within the realm, in deed, against the same incumbents, whereby many of the said incumbents, through such privy and crafty processes and sentences of privation and inabilitation, have lost their benefices, and others put in the places of the said incumbents, before the publication of the same sentences, they not knowing any thing; and many are in great hazard to lose their benefices through such processes, to their perpetual destruction and mischief: and forasmuch as this mischief cannot be holpen without an especial remedy be had by parliament: pleaseth it the king to consider the great mischief and danger that may so come unto divers his subjects without their knowledge, through such citations out of the realm, and thereupon to ordain, by the advice of the lords of this present parliament, that none presented be received by any ordinary unto any benefice of any such incumbent for any cause of privation or inabilitation, whereof the process is not founded upon citation made within the realm, and also that such incumbents may remain in all their benefices, until it be proved by due inquest in the court of the king, that the citations, whereupon such privations and inabilitations are granted, were made within the realm; and that if such ordinaries, or such presented, or others, do pursue the contrary, that then they and their procurators, supporters, and counsellors, do incur the pains contained in the statute made against provisors in the thirteenth year of the reign of the late Richard the Second, king of England, by processes to be made, as is declared in the statute made against such provisors in the twenty-seventh year of the reign of King Edward, predecessor to our lord the king that now is, any royal licences or grants in any manner to the contrary notwithstanding; and that all other statutes made against provisors, and not repealed before this present parliament, be in their full force, and be firmly kept in all points.

"That the king's council have power by authority of parliament, in case that any man find himself grieved in particular, that he may pursue; and that the said council, by the advice of the justices, do right unto the parties. This to endure until the next parliament, reserving always unto the king his prerogative and liberty.

"Item, That no pope's collector thenceforth should levy any money within the realm for first-fruits of any ecclesiastical dignity, under pain of incurring the statute of provisions."

Besides, in the said parliament holden the eleventh year of this king, is to be noted, how the commons of the land put up a bill unto the king, to take the temporal lands out from spiritual men's hands or possession; the effect of which bill was, "That the temporalities disordinately wasted by men of the church, might suffice to find to the king fifteen earls, one thousand five hundred knights, six thousand two hundred esquires, and a hundred houses of almose, to the relief of the poor people, more than at those days within England. And over all these aforesaid charges, the king might put yearly in his coffers twenty thousand pounds.

"Provided, that every earl should have of yearly rent three thousand marks; and every knight a hundred marks and four plough lands; and every esquire forty marks by year, with two plough lands; and every house of almose a hundred marks, with oversight of two true seculars unto every house; and also with provision, that

every township should keep all poor people of their own dwellers, which might not labour for their living: with condition, that if more fell in a town than the town might maintain, then the said alms-houses to relieve such townships.

"And to hear these charges, they alleged by their said bill, that the temporalties, being in possession of spiritual men, amounted to three hundred and twenty-two thousand marks by year, whereof they affirmed to be in the see of Canterbury, with the abbeys of Christ's-church, of St. Augustine's, Shrewsbury, Coggeshal, and St. Osus, twenty thousand marks by year; in the see of York, and abbeys there, twenty thousand marks; in the see of Winchester, and abbeys there, twenty thousand marks; in the see of London, with abbeys and other houses there, twenty thousand marks; in the see of Lincoln, with the abbeys of Peterborough, Ramsey, and others, twenty thousand marks; in the see of Norwich, with the abbeys of Bury and others, twenty thousand marks; in the see of Ely, Spalding, and others, twenty thousand marks; in the see of Bath, with the abbey of Okinborne, and others, twenty thousand marks; in the see of Worcester, with the abbeys of Evesham, Abingdon, and others, twenty thousand marks; in the see of Chester, with the precinct of the same, with the sees of St. David, of Salisbury, and Exeter, with the precincts, twenty thousand marks; the abbeys of Ravens or Revens, of Fountaines, of Gernons, and divers others, to the number of five more, twenty thousand marks; the abbeys of Leicester, Walthun, Gosborne, Merton, Ticeter, Osney, and others, unto the number of six more, twenty thousand marks; the abbeys of Dover, Battle, Lewes, Coventry, Daventry, and Tournay, twenty thousand marks; the abbeys of Northampton, Thornton, Bristol, Killingworth, Winchcomb, Hailes, Parchissor, Frideswide, Notly, and Grimsby, twenty thousand marks.

"The which aforesaid sums amount to the full of three hundred thousand marks. And for the odd twenty-two thousand marks, they appointed Hertford, Rochester, Huntingdon, Swinshed, Crowland, Malmesbury, Burton, Tewkesbury, Dunstable, Sher-borne, Taunton, and Biland.

"And over this, they alleged by the said bill, that over and above the said sum of three hundred and twenty-two thousand marks, divers houses of religion in England possessed as many temporalties as might suffice to find yearly fifteen thousand priests and clerks, every priest to be allowed for his stipend seven marks by the year.

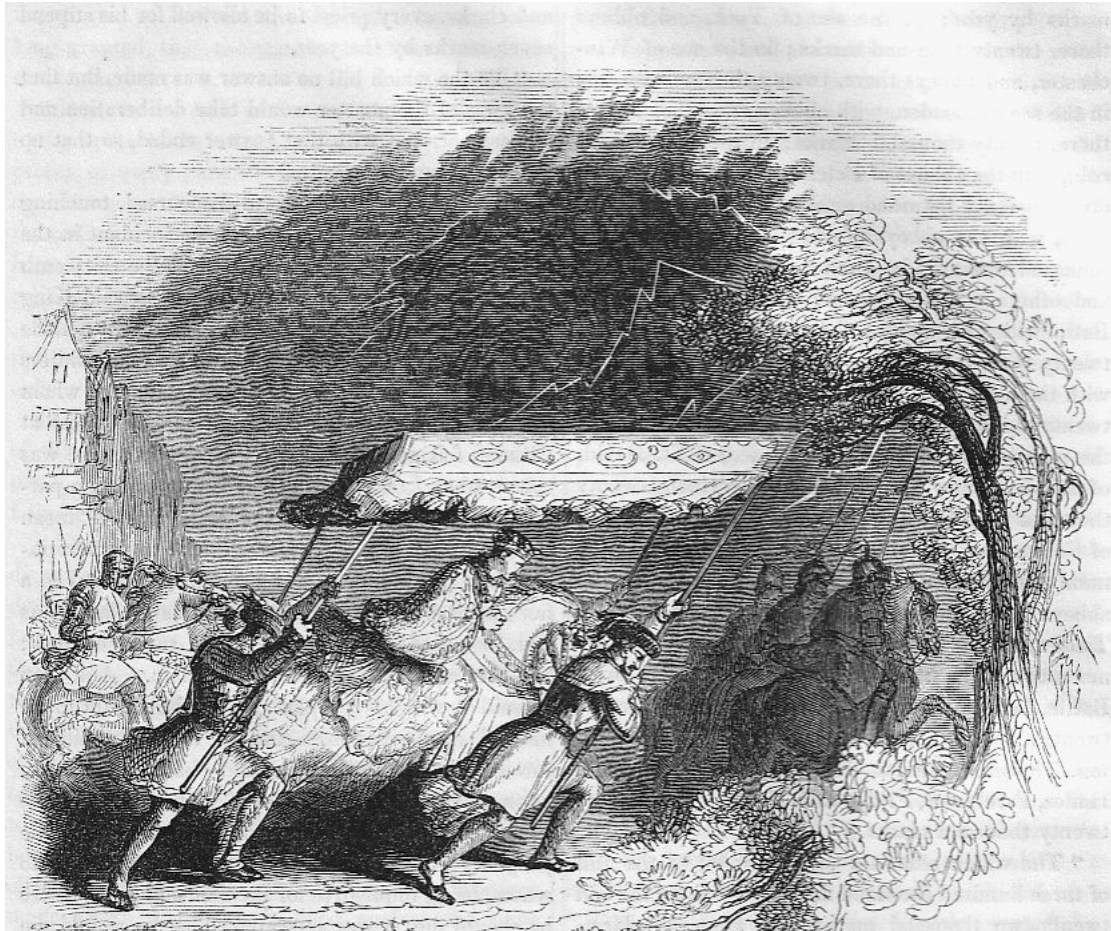
"To the which bill no answer was made, but that the king of this matter would take deliberation and advisement, and with that answer ended, so that no further labour was made."

These things thus hitherto discoursed, touching such acts and matters as have been incident in the lifetime of this king, followeth next the thirteenth year of his reign. In the which year the said King Henry the Fourth, (after that he had sent a little before a certain company of captains and soldiers to aid the duke of Burgundy in France, among whom was the Lord Cobham,) keeping his Christmas at Eltham, fell grievously sick. From thence he was conveyed to London, where he began to call a parliament, but tarried not the end. In the mean time, the infirmity of the king more and more increasing, he was taken and brought into a bed in a fair chamber at Westminster; and as he lay in his bed, he asked how they called the same chamber; and they answered and said, Jerusalem. And then he said it was his prophecy, That he should make his end in Jerusalem. And so, disposing himself toward his end in the aforesaid chamber, he died; upon what sickness, whether of leprosy, or of some other sharp disease, I have not to affirm. The like prophecy we read of Pope Silvester the

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Second; to whom, being inquisitive for the time and place where he should die, it was answered, That he should die in Jerusalem. Who then saying mass in a chapel, called likewise Jerusalem, perceived his end there to be near, and died. And thus King Henry the Fourth, successor to the lawful King Richard the Second, finished his life at Westminster, and was buried at Canterbury by the tomb of Thomas Becket, A. D. 1413.

97. Coronation of Henry V. Synod of London



Storm at the coronation of Henry V



AFTER this Henry the Fourth, reigned Henry the Fifth, his son, who was born at Monmouth in Wales, of whose other virtues, and great victories gotten in France, I have not greatly to intermeddle; especially, seeing the memory of his worthy prowess being sufficiently described in other writers in this our time, may both content the reader and unburden my labour herein; especially seeing these latter troubles and perturbations of the church offer me so much, that scarcely any vacant leisure shall be left to intermeddle with matters profane.

After the coronation then of this new king, which was the ninth day of April, called then Passion Sunday, which was an exceeding stormy day, and so tempestuous, that many did wonder at the portent thereof, not long after the same, a parliament began to be called, and to be holden after the feast of Easter, at Westminster, A. D. 1413. At which time, Thomas Arundel, the archbishop of Canterbury, collected in Paul's church at London a universal synod of all the bishops and clergy of England. In that synod, among other weighty matters and ponderous, it was determined, that the

day of St. George, and also of St. Dunstan, should be a double feast, called *Duplex festum*, in holy church; in holy kitchen, I would say.

And because the order and manner of those pope-holy feasts either yet is not sufficiently known to some rude and gross capacities, or may, peradventure, grow out of use, and be strange and unknown to our posterity hereafter, therefore, to give a little memorandum thereof, by the way, for erudition of times hereafter to come, touching this mystical science of the pope's deep and secret divinity, here is to be noted, that the feasts of the pope's holy mother, catholic church, be divided into sundry members. Like as a plentiful root in a fruitful field riseth up and brancheth into manifold arms, and the arms again do multiply into divers and sundry branches, out of the which, moreover, although no fruit do come, yet both leaves and flowers do bud and blossom in most copious wise, right beautiful to behold: even so this *festum*, containing a large matter of great variety of days and feasts, groweth in itself, and multiplieth, being thus divided: first, into *festum duplex*, and into *festum simplex*; that is, into feast double, and into feast simple. Again, this *festum duplex* brancheth four-fold wise; to wit, into *festum principale duplex*, into *majus duplex*, into *minus duplex*, and *inferius duplex*; that is, into principal double, into greater double, into lesser double, and inferior or lower double. Unto these several sorts of feasts, what days were peculiarly assigned, it were too long to recite. For this present purpose it shall suffice to understand, that as unto the principal double feast only belonged eight days in the year, so the *majus duplex festum* had given unto it by this convocation the day of St. George and of St. Dunstan, as is before remembered: albeit by constitution it was so decreed, yet by custom it was not so used. Item, it is to be noted, that these two feasts, to wit, *principale duplex*, and *majus duplex*, did differ, and were known from all other, by four notes: by service in the kitchen, and by service in the church, which were both double; by ringing in the steeple, which was with double peal; by copes in the quire; and by thurifying or censuring the altars: for in these two principal and greater double feasts, the seventh, eighth, and ninth lesson must be read with silken copes. Also at the said feasts, in the time of the lessons, the altars in the church must be thurified; that is, smoked with incense, &c. And likewise the *minus duplex* and *inferius duplex* had also their peculiar service to them belonging. Secondly, the *simplex festum*, which is the second arm springing of this division, is thus divided: either having a triple invitatory, or a double, or else a single invitatory; of the which, moreover, some have three lessons, some have nine, &c.

And thus much, by occasion, for popish feasts; not that I do so much deride them, as I lament, that so much and manifest idolatry in them is committed, to the great dishonour of our Lord God, which is only to be honoured.

98. The Trouble and Persecution of the Lord Cobham.

But to let this by-matter pass, again to return to the aforesaid universal synod, assembled by Thomas Arundel at St. Paul's church in London, as is before remembered, the chief and principal cause of the assembling thereof, as reporteth the Chronicle of St. Alban's, was to repress the growing and spreading of the gospel, and especially to withstand the noble and worthy Lord Cobham, who was then noted to be a principal favourer, receiver, and maintainer of them, whom the bishop misnamed to be Lollards; especially in the dioceses of London, Rochester, and Hereford, setting them up to preach whom the bishops had not licensed, and sending them about to preach, which was against the constitution provincial, before remembered; holding also and teaching opinions of the sacraments, of images, of pilgrimage, of the keys and Church of Rome, contrary and repugnant to the received determination of the Romish Church, &c.

In the mean time, as these were in talk amongst themselves concerning the good Lord Cobham, there resorted unto them the twelve inquisitors of heresies, whom they had appointed at Oxford the year before, to search out heretics, with all Wickliff's books; who brought two hundred and forty-six conclusions, which they had collected as heresies out of the said books. The names of the said inquisitors were these:

John Whitnam, a master in the New College; John Langedon, monk of Christ's Church in Canterbury; William Ufford, regent of the Carmelites; Thomas Claxton, regent of the Dominics; Robert Gilbert, Richard Earthisdale, John Lucke, Richard Snedisham, Richard Flemming, Thomas Rotborne, Robert Ronbery, Richard Grafdale.

These things thus done, and the articles being brought in, further they proceeded in their communication, concluding among themselves, that it was not possible for them to make whole Christ's coat without seam (meaning thereby their patched popish synagogue) unless certain great men were brought out of the way, which seemed to be the chief maintainers of the said disciples of Wickliff. Among whom this noble knight, Sir John Oldcastle, the Lord Cobham, was complained of by the general proctors to be the chief principal. Him they accused, first, for a mighty maintainer of suspected preachers in the dioceses of London, Rochester, and Hereford, contrary to the minds of the ordinaries. Not only they affirmed him to have sent thither the said preachers, but also to have assisted them there by force of arms, notwithstanding their synodal constitution made before to the contrary. Last of all, they accused him that he was far otherwise in belief of the sacrament of the altar, of penance, of pilgrimage, of image-worshipping, and of the ecclesiastical power, than the holy Church of Rome had taught many years before.

In the end it was concluded among them, that, without any further delay, process should be awarded out against him, as against a most pernicious heretic.

Some of that fellowship which were of more crafty experience than the others, thought it not best to have the matter so rashly handled, but by some preparation made thereunto before: considering the said Lord Cobham was a man of great birth, and in favour at that time with the king, their counsel was to know first the king's mind, to save all things upright. This counsel was well accepted, and thereupon the archbishop,

Thomas Arundel, with his other bishops, and a great part of the clergy, went straightways unto the king then remaining at Kennington, and there laid forth most grievous complaints against the said Lord Cobham, to his great infamy and blemish, being a man right godly.

The king gently heard those blood-thirsty prelates, and far otherwise than became his princely dignity: notwithstanding requiring, and instantly desiring them, that in respect of his noble stock and knighthood, they should yet favourably deal with him; and that they would, if it were possible, without all rigour or extreme handling, reduce him again to the church's unity. He promised them also, that in case they were contented to take some deliberation, himself would seriously commune the matter with him.



Lord Cobham and the King

Anon after, the king sent for the said Lord Cobham, and as he was come, he called him secretly, admonishing him betwixt him and him, to submit himself to his mother the holy church, and, as an obedient child, to acknowledge himself culpable. Unto whom the Christian knight made this answer: "You, most worthy prince," saith he, "I am always prompt and willing to obey, forasmuch as I know you a Christian

king, and the appointed minister of God, bearing the sword to the punishment of evil-doers, and for safeguard of them that be virtuous. Unto you, next my eternal God, owe I my whole obedience, and submit thereunto, as I have done ever, all that I have, either of fortune or nature, ready at all times to fulfil whatsoever ye shall in the Lord command me. But, as touching the pope and his spirituality, I owe them neither suit nor service, forasmuch as I know him, by the Scriptures, to be the great antichrist, the son of perdition, the open adversary of God, and the abomination standing in the holy place." When the king had heard this, with such-like sentences more, he would talk no longer with him, but left him so utterly.

And as the archbishop resorted again unto him for an answer, he gave him his full authority to cite him, examine him, and punish him according to their devilish decree, which they called The Laws of holy Church. Then the said archbishop, by the counsel of his other bishops and clergy, appointed to call before him Sir John Oldcastle, the Lord Cobham, and to cause him personally to appear, to answer to such suspect articles, as they should lay against him: so he sent forth his chief summoner, with a very sharp citation, unto the castle of Cowling, where he at that time dwelt for his solace; and as the said summoner was come thither, he durst in no case enter the gates of so noble a man without his licence, and therefore he returned home again, his message not done.

Then called the archbishop one John Butler unto him, which was then the door-keeper of the king's privy chamber, and with him he covenanted, through promises and rewards, to have this matter craftily brought to pass under the king's name. Whereupon the said John Butler took the archbishop's summoner with him, and went unto the said Lord Cobham, showing him that it was the king's pleasure that he should obey that citation, and so cited him fraudulently. Then said he to them in few words, that he in no case would consent to those most devilish practices of the priests. As they had informed the archbishop of that answer, and that it was for no man privately to cite him after that, without peril of life, he decreed by and by to have him cited by public process or open commandment; and, in all the haste possible, upon the Wednesday before the nativity of our Lady, in September, he commanded letters citatory to be set upon the great gates of the cathedral church of Rochester, (which was but three English miles from thence,) charging him to appear personally before him at Ledis, the eleventh day of the same month and year, all excuses to the contrary set apart. Those letters were taken down anon after, by such as bore favour unto the Lord Cobham, and so conveyed aside. After that caused the archbishop new letters to be set up on the nativity day of our Lady, which also were rent down, and utterly consumed.

Then, forasmuch as he did not appear at the day appointed at Ledis, (where he sat in consistory, as cruel as ever was Caiaphas, with his court of hypocrites about him,) he judged him, denounced him, and condemned him, of most deep contumacy. After that, when he had been falsely informed by his hired spies, and other glosing glaverers, that the said Lord Cobham had laughed him to scorn, disdained all his doings, maintained his old opinions, contemned the church's power, the dignity of a bishop, and the order of priesthood, (for all these was he then accused of,) in his moody madness, without just proof, did he openly excommunicate him. Yet was not with all this his fierce tyranny satisfied, but he commanded him to be cited afresh, to appear before him the Saturday before the feast of St. Matthew the apostle, with these cruel threatenings added thereunto, that if he did not obey at the day, he would more extremely handle him. And to make himself more strong towards the performance

thereof, he compelled the lay-power, by most terrible menacings of curses and interdictions, to assist him against that seditious apostate, schismatic, and heretic, the troubler of the public peace, that enemy of the realm, and great adversary of holy church; for all these hateful names did he give him.

This most constant servant of the Lord, and worthy knight, Sir John Oldcastle, the Lord Cobham, beholding the unpeaceable fury of antichrist thus kindled against him, perceiving himself also compassed on every side with deadly dangers; he took paper and pen in hand, and so wrote a Christian confession or reckoning of his faith, (which followeth hereafter,) both signing and sealing it with his own hand; wherein he also answered to the four chiefest articles that the archbishop laid against him. That done, he took the copy with him, and went therewith to the king, trusting to find mercy and favour at his hand. None other was that confession of his, than the common belief or sum of the church's faith, called The Apostles' Creed, of all Christian men then used, with a brief declaration upon the same, as hereunder ensueth:

The Christian belief of the Lord Cobham.

"I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, which was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, crucified, dead, and buried, went down to hell, the third day rose again from death, ascended up to heaven, sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; and from thence shall come again to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the universal holy church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the uprising of the flesh, and everlasting life. Amen.

"And for a more large declaration (saith he) of this my faith in the catholic church, I stedfastly believe, That there is but one God Almighty, in and of whose Godhead are these three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and that those three persons are the selfsame God Almighty. I believe also, that the second person of this most blessed Trinity, in most convenient time appointed thereunto before, took flesh and blood of the most blessed Virgin Mary, for the safeguard and redemption of the universal kind of man, which was before lost in Adam's offence.

"Moreover I believe, That the same Jesus Christ our Lord, thus being both God and man, is the only head of the whole Christian church, and that all those that have been or shall be saved, be members of this most holy church. And this holy church I think to be divided into three sorts or companies.

"Whereof the first sort be now in heaven, and they are the saints from hence departed. These, as they were here conversant, conformed always their lives to the most holy laws and pure examples of Christ, renouncing Satan, the world, and the flesh, with all their concupiscence and evils.

"The second sort are in purgatory, (if any such place be in the Scriptures,) abiding the mercy of God, and a full deliverance of pain.

"The third sort are here upon the earth, and be called the church militant; for day and night they contend against crafty assaults of the devil, the flattering prosperities of this world, and the rebellious filthiness of the flesh.

"This latter congregation, by the just ordinance of God, is also severed into three divers estates; that is to say, into priesthood, knighthood, and the commons; among whom the will of God is, that the one should aid the other, but not destroy the

other. The priests, first of all, secluded from all worldliness, should conform their lives utterly to the examples of Christ and his apostles. Evermore should they be occupied in preaching and teaching the Scriptures purely, and in giving wholesome examples of good living to the other two degrees of men. More modest also, more loving, gentle, and lowly in spirit, should they be, than any other sorts of people.

"In the knighthood are all they which bear sword by law of office: these should defend God's laws, and see that the gospel were purely taught, conforming their lives to the same, and secluding all false preachers; yea, those ought rather to hazard their lives, than to suffer such wicked decrees as either blemish the eternal testament of God, or yet let the free passage thereof, whereby heresies and schisms might spring in the church. For of none other arise they, as I suppose, than of erroneous constitutions, craftily first creeping in under hypocritical lies, for advantage. They ought also to preserve God's people from oppressors, tyrants, and thieves, and to see the clergy supported so long as they teach purely, pray rightly, and minister the sacraments freely. And if they see them do otherwise, they are bound by the law or office to compel them to change their doings; and to see all things performed according to God's prescript ordinance.

"The latter fellowship of this church, are the common people; whose duty is to bear their good minds and true obedience to the aforesaid ministers of God, their kings, civil governors, and priests. The right office of these, is justly to occupy every man his faculty, be it merchandise, handicraft, or the tithe of the ground. And so one of them to be as a helper to another, following always, in their sorts, the just commandments of the Lord God.

"Over and besides all this, I most faithfully believe, That the sacraments of Christ's church are necessary to all Christian believers; this always seen to, that they be truly ministered according to Christ's first institution and ordinance. And, forasmuch as I am maliciously and most falsely accused of a misbelief in the sacrament of the altar, to the hurtful slander of many, I signify here unto all men, that this is my faith concerning that: I believe in that sacrament to be contained very Christ's body and blood under the similitude of bread and wine, yea, the same body that was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, done on the cross, died and was buried, arose the third day from the death, and is now glorified in heaven. I also believe the universal law of God to be most true and perfect, and they which do not so follow it in their faith and works (at one time or another) can never be saved: whereas he that seeketh it in faith, accepteth it, learneth it, delighteth therein, and performeth it in love, shall taste for it the felicity of everlasting innocency.

"Finally, this is my faith also, That God will ask no more of a Christian believer in this life, but only to obey the precepts of that most blessed law. If any prelate of the church require more, or else any other kind of obedience, than this to be used, he contemneth Christ, exalting himself above God, and so becometh an open antichrist. All the promises I believe particularly, and, generally, all that God hath left in his Holy Scripture, that I should believe; instantly desiring you, my liege lord and most worthy king, that this confession of mine may be justly examined by the most godly-wise and learned men of your realm; and, if it be found in all points agreeing to the verity, then let it be so allowed, and I, thereupon, holden for none other than a true Christian. If it be proved otherwise, then let it be utterly condemned: provided always, that I be taught a better belief by the word of God; and I shall most reverently at all times obey thereunto."

This brief confession of his faith the Lord Cobham wrote, as is mentioned before, and so took it with him to the court, offering it with all meekness unto the king, to read it over. The king would in no case receive it, but commanded it to be delivered unto them that should be his judges. Then desired he, in the king's presence, that a hundred knights and esquires might be suffered to come in upon his purgation, which he knew would clear him of all heresies. Moreover, he offered himself, after the law of arms, to fight for life or death with any man living, Christian or heathen, in the quarrel of his faith; the king and the lords of his council excepted. Finally, with all gentleness, he protested before all that were present, that he would refuse no manner of correction that should, after the laws of God, be ministered unto him; but that he would at all times with all meekness obey it. Notwithstanding all this, the king suffered him to be summoned personally in his own privy chamber. Then said the Lord Cobham to the king, that he had appealed from the archbishop to the pope of Rome, and therefore he ought, he said, in no case to be his judge.



Examination of Lord Cobham

As the day of examination was come, which was the twenty-third day of September, the Saturday before the feast of St. Matthew, Thomas Arundel, the archbishop, sitting in Caiaphas' room, in the chapter-house of Paul's, with Richard Clifford, bishop of London, and Henry Bolingbrook, bishop of Winchester; Sir Robert Morley, knight, and lieutenant of the Tower, brought personally before him the said Lord Cobham, and there left him for the time; unto whom the archbishop said these words:

"Sir John, in the last general convocation of the clergy of this our province, ye were detected of certain heresies, and by sufficient witnesses found culpable: whereupon ye were, by form of spiritual law, cited, and would in no case appear. In conclusion, upon your rebellious contumacy, ye were both privately and openly excommunicated. Notwithstanding we neither yet showed ourselves unready to have given you absolution, nor yet do to this hour, would ye have meekly asked it."

Unto this the Lord Cobham showed as though he had given no ear, having his mind otherwise occupied, and so desired no absolution; but said he would gladly, before him and his brethren, make rehearsal of that faith which he held, and intended always to stand to, if it would please them to license him thereunto. And then he took out of his bosom a certain writing, indented, concerning the articles Whereof he was accused, and so openly read it before them, giving it unto the archbishop, as he had made thereof an end; whereof this is the copy:

"I, John Oldcastle, knight, lord of Cobham, will that all Christian men know and understand, that I call Almighty God to witness, that it hath been, now is, and ever, with the help of God, shall be, mine intent and my will, to believe faithfully and fully all the sacraments that ever God ordained to be done in holy church; and moreover, do declare me in these four points: I believe that the most worshipful sacrament of the altar is Christ's body in form of bread, the same body that was born of the blessed Virgin, our lady St. Mary, done on the cross, dead and buried, the third day rose from death to life, the which body is now glorified in heaven.

"Also, as for the sacrament of penance, I believe, that it is needful to every man that shall be saved, to forsake sin, and do due penance for sin before done, with true confession, very contrition, and due satisfaction as God's law limiteth and teacheth, and else may not be saved; which penance I desire all men to do.

"And as for images, I understand that they be not of belief, but that they were ordained since the belief of Christ was given by sufferance of the church, to be calendars to lewd men, to represent and bring to mind the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and martyrdom and good living of other saints: and that whoso it be that doth the worship to dead images that is due to God, or putteth such hope or trust in help of them as he should do to God, or hath affection in one more than in another, he loth in that the greatest sin of image worship.

"Also I suppose this fully, That every man in this earth is a pilgrim toward bliss, or toward pain; and that he that knoweth not, ne will not know, ne keep the holy commandments of God in his living here, albeit that he go on pilgrimages to all the world, and he die so, he shall be damned: he that knoweth the holy commandments of God, and keepeth them to his end, he shall be saved, though he never in his life go on pilgrimage, as men now use, to Canterbury, or to Rome, or to any other place."

This answer to his articles thus ended and read, he delivered it to the bishops, as is said before. Then counselled the archbishop with the other two bishops and with divers of the doctors, what was to be done in this matter; commanding him, for the time, to stand aside. In conclusion, by their assent and information, he said thus unto him: "Come hither, Sir John: in this your writing are many good things contained, and right catholic also, we deny it not; but ye must consider that this day was appointed you to answer to other points concerning those articles, whereof as yet no mention is made in this your bill: and therefore ye must yet declare us your mind more plainly. And thus, whether that ye hold, affirm, and believe, that in the sacrament of the altar, after the consecration rightly done by a priest, remaineth material bread, or not? Moreover, whether ye do hold, affirm, and believe, that, as concerning the sacrament of penance, where a competent number of priests are, every Christian man is necessarily bound to be confessed of his sins to a priest ordained by the church or not?"

After certain other communication, this was the answer of the good Lord Cobham: That none otherwise would he declare his mind, nor yet answer unto his articles, than was expressly in his writing there contained. Then said the archbishop again unto him; "Sir John, beware what ye do; for if ye answer not clearly to those things that are here objected against you, especially at the time appointed you only for that purpose, the law of holy church is, That, compelled once by a judge, we may openly proclaim you a heretic. Unto whom he gave this answer, "Do as ye shall think best, for I am at a point." Whatsoever he or the other bishops did ask him after that, he bade them resort to his bill; for thereby would he stand to the very death. Other answer would he not give that day; wherewith the bishops and prelates were in a manner amazed and wonderfully disquieted.

At the last the archbishop counselled again with his other bishops and doctors, and in the end thereof declared unto him, what the holy Church of Rome, following the saying of St. Augustine, St. Jerome, St. Ambrose, and of the holy doctors, had determined in these matters: no manner of mention once made of Christ! "which determination "(saith he) "ought all Christian men both to believe and follow."

Then said the Lord Cobham unto him, that he would gladly both believe and observe whatsoever holy church of Christ's institution had determined, or yet whatsoever God had willed him either to believe or to do: but that the pope of Rome, with his cardinals, archbishops, bishops, and other prelates of that church, had lawful power to determine such matter as stood not with His word thoroughly that, would he not (he said) at that time affirm. With this the archbishop bade him to take good advisement, till the Monday next following, (which was the twenty-fifth day of September,) and then justly to answer, specially unto this point: Whether there remained material bread in the sacrament of the altar, after the words of consecration, or not? He promised him also, to send unto him in writing those matters clearly determined, that he might then be the more perfect in his answer-making. And all this was nought else, but to blind the multitude with somewhat. The next day following, according to his promise, the archbishop sent unto him into the Tower this foolish and blasphemous writing, made by him and by his unlearned clergy.

"The faith and determination of the holy church touching the blissful sacrament of the altar, is this: That after the sacramental words be once spoken by a priest in his mass, the material bread, that was before bread, is turned into Christ's very body; and the material wine, that was before wine, is turned into Christ's very

blood; and so there remaineth in the sacrament of the altar, from thenceforth, no material bread, nor material wine, which were there before the sacramental words were spoken. — How believe ye this article?

"Holy church hath determined that every Christian man, living here bodily upon the earth, ought to be shriven to a priest ordained by the church, if he may come to him. — How feel ye this article?

"Christ ordained St. Peter the apostle to be his vicar here in earth, whose see is the holy Church of Rome; and he granted that the same power which he gave unto Peter should succeed to all Peter's successors, which we call now popes of Rome; by whose power, in churches particular, be ordained prelates, as archbishops, bishops, parsons, curates, and other degrees more; unto whom Christian men ought to obey after the laws of the Church of Rome. This is the determination of holy church. — How feel ye this article?

"Holy church hath determined, that it is meritorious to a Christian man to go on pilgrimage to holy places, and there specially to worship holy relics and images of saints, apostles, and martyrs, confessors and all other saints besides, approved by the Church of Rome. — How feel ye this article? "

And as the Lord Cobham had read over this most wretched writing, he marvelled greatly of their mad ignorance; but that he considered again, that God had given them over, for their unbelief's sake, into most deep errors and blindness of soul. Again, he perceived hereby, that their uttermost malice was purposed against him, howsoever he should answer. And therefore he put his life into the hands of God, desiring his only Spirit to assist him in his next answer. When the said twenty-fifth day of September was come, (which was also the Monday before Michaelmas,) in the said year of our Lord 1413, Thomas Arundel, the archbishop of Canterbury, commanded his judicial seat to be removed from the chapter-house of Paul's to the Dominic Friars within Ludgate at London. And as he was there set, with Richard the bishop of London, Henry the bishop of Winchester, and Bennet the bishop of Bangor, he called in unto him his council and his officers, with divers other doctors and friars, of whom these are the names here following: Master Henry Ware, the official of Canterbury; Philip Morgan, doctor of the laws; Howel Kiffin, doctor of the canon law; John Kempe, doctor of the canon law; William Carleton, doctor of the canon law; John Whitnam, of the New College in Oxford; John Whitehead, doctor in Oxford also; Robert Wombewel, vicar of St. Lawrence in the Jewry; Thomas Palmer, the warden of Minors; Robert Chamberlain, prior of the Dominics; Richard Dodington, prior of the Augustines; Thomas Walden, prior of the Carmelites: all doctors of divinity. John Stephens also, and James Cole, both notaries, appointed there purposely to write all that should be either said or done. All these, with a great sort more of priests, monks, canons, friars, parish clerks, bell-ringers, pardoners, disdained him with innumerable mocks and scorns, reckoning him to be a horrible heretic, and a man accursed before God.

Anon the archbishop called for a mass-book, and caused all these prelates and doctors to swear thereupon, that every man should faithfully do his office and duty that day; and that neither for favour nor fear, love nor hate of the one party or the other, any thing should there be witnessed, spoken, or done, but according to the truth, as they would answer before God and all the world, at the day of doom. Then were the two aforesaid notaries sworn also to write and to witness the process that there should be uttered on both parties, and to say their minds, if they otherwise knew, before they

should register it. And all this dissimulation was but to colour their mischiefs before the ignorant multitude.

Consider herein, gentle reader, what this wicked generation is, and how far wide from the just fear of God; for as they were then, so are they yet to this day.

After that, came out before them Sir Robert Morley, knight, and lieutenant of the Tower; and he brought with him the good Lord Cobham, there leaving him among them as a lamb among wolves, to his examination and answer.

"Then said the archbishop unto him, Lord Cobham, ye be advised, I am sure, of the words and process which we had unto you upon Saturday last past, in the chapter-house of Paul's, which process were now too long to be rehearsed again. I said unto you then, that you were accursed for your contumacy and disobedience to the holy church, thinking that ye should with meekness then have desired your absolution.

"Then spake the Lord Cobham with a cheerful countenance, and said, God said by his holy prophet, I shall curse where you bless.

"The archbishop made then as though he had continued forth his tale and not heard him, saying, Sir, at that time I gently proffered to have assoiled you if you would have asked it; and yet I do the same if ye will humbly desire it in due form and manner as holy church hath ordained.

"Then said the Lord Cobham, Nay, forsooth will I not, for I never yet trespassed against you, and therefore I will not do it. And with that he kneeled down on the pavement, holding up his hands towards heaven, and said, I shrive me here unto thee, my eternal living God, that in my frail youth I offended thee, O Lord! most grievously in pride, wrath, and gluttony, in covetousness, and in lechery. Many men have I hurt in mine anger, and done many other horrible sins; good Lord, I ask thee mercy. And therewith weepingly he stood up again, and said with a loud voice, Lo, good people! lo! for the breaking of God's law and his great commandments, they never yet cursed me, but, for their own laws and traditions most cruelly do they handle both me and other men; and therefore, both they and their laws, by the promise of God, shall utterly be destroyed.

"At this the archbishop and his company were not a little blemished. Notwithstanding, he took stomach unto him again after certain words had, in excuse of their tyranny, and examined the Lord Cobham of his Christian belief.

"Wherunto the Lord Cobham made this godly answer: I believe, saith he, fully and faithfully in the universal laws of God; I believe that all is true which is contained in the holy sacred scriptures of the Bible; finally, I believe all that my Lord God would I should believe.

"Then demanded the archbishop an answer of that bill which he and the clergy had sent him into the Tower the day before, in manner of a determination of the church concerning the four articles whereof he was accused; especially for the sacrament of the altar, how he believed therein.

"Whereunto the Lord Cobham said, That with that bill he had nothing to do; but this was his belief, he said, concerning the sacrament, that his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, sitting at his last supper, with his most dear disciples, the night before he should suffer, took bread in his hand; and giving thanks to his eternal Father, blessed it, brake it, and so gave it unto them, saying, Take it unto you, and eat thereof all: this is my body which shall be betrayed for you: do this hereafter in my remembrance.

This do I thoroughly believe, saith he, for this faith am I taught in the Gospel of Matthew, chap. xxvi., in Mark, chap. xiv., and in Luke, chap. xxii., and also in the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, chap. xi.

"Then asked the archbishop, If he believed that it were bread after the consecration or sacramental words spoken over it.

"The Lord Cobham said, I believe that in the sacrament of the altar is Christ's very body in form of bread, the same that was born of the Virgin Mary, done on the cross, dead, and buried, and that the third day arose from death to life, which now is glorified in heaven.

"Then said one of the doctors of the law, After the sacramental words be uttered, there remaineth no bread, but only the body of Christ.

"The Lord Cobham said then to one Master John Whitehead, You said once unto me in the castle of Cowling, that the sacred host was not Christ's body; but I held then against you, and proved that therein was his body, though the seculars and friars could not therein agree, but held each one against the other in that opinion. These were my words then, if ye remember it.

"Then shouted a sort of them together, and cried with great noise, We say all, that it is God's body. "And divers of them asked him in great anger, Whether it were material bread after the consecration, or not?

"Then looked the Lord Cobham earnestly upon the archbishop, and said, I believe surely that it is Christ's body, in form of bread. Sir, believe not you thus?

"And the archbishop said, Yes, marry, do I.

"Then asked him the doctors, Whether it were only Christ's body after the consecration of a priest, and no bread, or not?

"And he said unto them, It is both Christ's body and bread; I shall prove it thus: for like as Christ's dwelling here upon the earth had in him both Godhead and manhood, and had the invisible Godhead covered under that manhood, which was only visible and seen in him; so, in the sacrament of the altar, is Christ's very body and bread also: as I believe the bread is the thing that we see with our eyes, the body of Christ, which is his flesh and his blood, is thereunder hid, and not seen but in faith.

"And, moreover, to prove that it is both Christ's body and also bread after the consecration, it is by plain words expressed by one of your own doctors, writing against Eutyches, which saith, Like as the selfsame sacraments do pass by the operation of the Holy Ghost into a Divine nature, and yet, notwithstanding, keep the property still of their former nature, so that principal mystery declareth to remain one true and perfect Christ, &c.

"Then smiled they each one upon another, that the people should judge him taken in a great heresy. And with a great brag divers of them said, It is a foul heresy.

"Then asked the bishop what bread it was? And the doctors also inquired of him whether it were material or not?

"The Lord Cobham said unto them, The Scriptures make no mention of this word material, and therefore my faith hath nothing to do therewith: but this I say and believe, that it is Christ's body and bread; for Christ said in the sixth of John's Gospel, I, who came down from heaven, am the living, and not the dead bread. Therefore I say

now again, as I said before, as our Lord Jesus Christ is very God and very man, so in the most blessed sacrament of the altar is Christ's very body and bread.

"Then said they all with one voice, It is a heresy!

"One of the bishops stood up, by and by, and said, What? it is a heresy manifest to say, that it is bread after the sacramental words be once spoken, but Christ's body only.

"The Lord Cobham said, St. Paul the apostle was, I am sure, as wise as you be now, and more godly learned, and he called it bread, writing to the Corinthians: The bread that we break, saith he, is it not the partaking of Christ? Lo! be called it bread! and not Christ's body, but a mean whereby we receive Christ's body.

"Then said they again, Paul must be otherwise understood; for it is sure a heresy to say that it is bread after the consecration, but only Christ's body.

"The Lord Cobham asked, How they could make good that sentence of theirs?

"They answered him thus, For it is against the determination of holy church.

"Then said the archbishop unto him, Sir John, we sent you a writing concerning the faith of this blessed sacrament, clearly determined by the Church of Rome, our mother, and by the holy doctors.

"Then he said again unto him, I know none holier than Christ and his apostles. And as for that determination, I wot it is none of theirs; for it standeth not with the Scriptures, but manifestly against them. If it be the church's, as ye say it is, it hath been hers only since she received the great poison of worldly possessions, and not before.

"Then asked they him, to stop his mouth therewith, if he believed not in the determination of the church?

"And he said unto them, No, forsooth, for it is no God. In all our creed, this word in is but thrice mentioned concerning belief: In God the Father, in God the Son, in God the Holy Ghost, three persons and one God. The birth, the death, the burial, the resurrection and ascension of Christ, hath none in for belief, but in him; neither yet hath the church the sacraments, the forgiveness of sin, the latter resurrection, nor yet the life everlasting, nor any other in than in the Holy Ghost.

"Then said one of the lawyers, Tush, that was but a word of office; but what is your belief concerning holy church?

"The Lord Cobham answered, My belief is, as I said before, that all the Scriptures of the sacred Bible are true. All that is grounded upon them I believe thoroughly, for I know it is God's pleasure that I should so do. But in your lordly laws and idle determinations have I no belief. For ye be no part of Christ's holy church, as your open deeds do show; but ye are very antichrists, obstinately set against his holy law and will. The laws that ye have made are nothing to his glory, but only for your vain-glory and abominable covetousness.

"This, they said, was an exceeding heresy, and that in a great fume, not to believe the determination of holy church.

"Then the archbishop asked him, What he thought of holy church?

"He said unto him, My belief is, that the holy church is the number of them which shall be saved, of whom Christ is the Head. Of this church one part is in heaven

with Christ, another in purgatory, you say, and the third is here in earth. This latter part standeth in three degrees, in knighthood, priesthood, and the commonalty, as I said before plainly in the confession of my belief.

"Then said the archbishop unto him, Can you tell me who is of this church?

"The Lord Cobham answered, Yea, truly can I.

"Then said Doctor Walden, the prior of the Carmelites, It is doubt unto you, who is thereof. For Christ saith in Matthew, Presume to judge no man. If ye be here forbidden the judgment of your neighbour or brother, much more the judgment of your superior.

"The Lord Cobham made him this answer: Christ saith also in the selfsame chapter of Matthew, That like as the evil tree is known by his fruit, so is a false prophet by his works, appear they never so glorious. But that ye left behind ye. And in John he hath this text: Believe you the outward doings. And in another place of John: When we know the thing to be true, we may so judge it, and not offend. For David said also, Judge rightly always ye children of men. And as for your superiority, were ye of Christ, ye should be meek ministers, and no proud superiors.

"Then said Doctor Walden unto him, Ye make here no difference of judgments; ye put no diversity between the evil judgments which Christ hath forbidden, and the good judgments which he hath commanded us to have. Rash judgment and right judgment, all is one with you. So swift judges always are the learned scholars of Wickliff.

"Unto whom the Lord Cobham thus answered, It is well sophistered of you, forsooth. Preposterous are your judgments evermore. For as the prophet Isaiah saith, Ye judge evil good, and good evil: and therefore the same prophet concludeth, that your ways are not God's ways, nor God's ways your ways. And as for the virtuous man Wickliff, whose judgments ye so highly disdain, I shall say here, of my part, both before God and man, that before I knew that despised doctrine of his, I never abstained from sin. But since I learned therein to fear my Lord God, it hath otherwise, I trust, been with me: so much grace could I never find in all your glorious instructions.

"Then said Doctor Walden again yet unto him, It were not well with me (so many virtuous men living, and so many learned men teaching the Scripture, being also so open, and the examples of fathers so plenteous) if I then had no grace to amend my life, till I heard the devil preach. St. Jerome saith, That he which seeketh such suspected masters shall not find the mid-day light, but the mid-day devil.

"The Lord Cobham said, Your fathers, the old Pharisees, ascribed Christ's miracles to Beelzebub, and his doctrine to the devil; and you, as their natural children, have still the selfsame judgment concerning his faithful followers. They that rebuke your vicious living must needs be heretics, and that must your doctors prove, when you have no Scripture to do it. Then said he to them all To judge you as you be, we need go no further than to your own proper acts. Where do you find in all God's law, that ye should thus sit in judgment of any Christian man, or yet give sentence upon any other man unto death, as ye do here daily? No ground have ye in all the Scripture so lordly to take it upon you, but in Annas and Caiaphas, which sat thus upon Christ, and upon his apostles after his ascension. Of them only have ye taken to judge Christ's members as ye do; and neither of Peter nor John.

"Then said some of the lawyers, Yes, forsooth, sir, for Christ judged Judas.

"The Lord Cobham said, No! Christ judged him not, but he judged himself, and thereupon went forth and so did hang himself: but indeed Christ said, Woe unto him, for that covetous act of his, as he doth yet still unto many of you. For since the venom of him was shed into the church, ye never followed Christ, neither yet have ye stood in the perfection of God's law.

"Then the archbishop asked him, what he meant by that venom?

"Then Lord Cobham said, Your possessions and lordships. For then cried an angel in the air, as your own chronicles mention, Woe, woe, woe, this day is venom shed into the church of God. Before that time all the bishops of Rome were martyrs in a manner; and since that time we read of very few. But indeed, since that same time, one hath put down another, one hath poisoned another, one hath cursed another, and one hath slain another, and done much more mischief besides, as all the chronicles tell. And let all men consider well this, that Christ was meek and merciful; the pope is proud and a tyrant: Christ was poor and forgave; the pope is rich and a malicious manslayer, as his daily acts do prove him: Rome is the very nest of antichrist; and out of that nest come all the disciples of him: of whom prelates, priests, and monks are the body, these pilled friars are the tail, which covereth his most filthy part.

"Then said the prior of the friars Augustines, Alack, sir, why do you say so? that is uncharitably spoken.

"And the Lord Cobham said, Not only is it my saying, but also the prophet Isaiah, long afore my time. The prophet, saith he, which preacheth lies, is the tail behind. For as you friars and monks be, like Pharisees, divided in your outward apparel and usages, so make ye division among the people. And thus you, with such others, are the very natural members of antichrist.

"Then said he unto them all, Christ saith in his gospel, Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye close up the kingdom of heaven before men, neither enter ye in yourselves, nor yet suffer any other that would enter into it, but ye stop up the ways thereunto with your own traditions, and therefore are ye the household of antichrist: ye will not permit God's verity to have passage, nor yet to be taught of his true ministers, fearing to have your wickedness reproved. But by such flatterers as uphold you in your mischiefs, ye suffer the common people most miserably to be seduced.

"Then said the archbishop, By our Lady, sir, there shall none such preach within my diocese, and God will, nor yet in my jurisdiction, if I may know it, as either make division, or yet dissension among the poor commons.

"The Lord Cobham said, Both Christ and his apostles were accused of sedition-making, yet were they most peaceable men. Both Daniel and Christ prophesied that such a troublous time should come, as hath not been yet since the world's beginning. And this prophecy is partly fulfilled in your days and doings; for many have ye slain already, and more will ye slay hereafter, if God fulfil not his proChrist saith also, If those days of yours were not shortened, scarcely should any flesh be saved; therefore look for it justly, for God will shorten your days. Moreover, though priests and deacons, for preaching of God's word, and for ministering the sacraments, with provision for the poor, be grounded on God's law, yet have these other sects no manner of ground hereof, so far as I have read.

"Then a doctor of law, called Master John Kemp, plucked out of his bosom a copy of the bill which they had before sent him into the Tower by the archbishop's council, thinking thereby to make shorter work with him; for they were so amazed with his answers, not all unlike to them which disputed with Stephen, that they knew not well how to occupy the time; their wits and sophistry, as God would, so failed them that day.

"My Lord Cobham, saith this doctor, we must briefly know your mind concerning these four points here following. The first of them is this: and then he read upon the bill, The faith and determination of holy church touching the blessed sacrament of the altar is this, That after the sacramental words be once spoken of a priest in his mass, the material bread, that was before bread, is turned into Christ's very body, and the material wine is turned into Christ's blood. And so there remaineth, in the sacrament of the altar, from thenceforth no material bread, nor material wine, which were there before the sacramental words were spoken. Sir, believe you not this?

"The Lord Cobham said, This is not my belief; but my faith is, as I said to you before, that in the worshipful sacrament of the altar is Christ's very body in form of bread.

"Then said the archbishop, Sir John, ye must say otherwise.

"The Lord Cobham said, Nay, that I will not, if God be upon my side, as I trust he is; but that there is Christ's body in form of bread, as the common belief is.

"Then read the doctor again:

"The second point is this: Holy church hath determined, that every Christian man, living here bodily upon earth, ought to be shriven of a priest ordained by the church, if he may come to him. Sir, what say you to this?

"The Lord Cobham answered and said, A diseased or sore wounded man hath need to have a sure wise chirurgeon and a true, knowing both the ground and the danger of the same. Most necessary were it therefore to be first shriven unto God, which only knoweth our diseases, and can help us. I deny not in this the going to a priest, if he be a man of good life and learning; for the laws of God are to be required of the priest, which is godly learned. But if he be an idiot, or a man of vicious living, that is my curate, I ought rather to fly from him than to seek unto him; for sooner might I catch evil of him that is naught, than any goodness towards my soul's health.

"Then read the doctor again:

"The third point is this: Christ ordained St. Peter the apostle to be his vicar here in earth, whose see is the Church of Rome. And he granted that the same power which he gave unto Peter should succeed unto all Peter's successors, which we call now popes of Rome: by whose special power in churches particular be ordained prelates and archbishops, parsons, curates, and other degrees more, to whom Christian men ought to obey after the laws of the Church of Rome. This is the determination of holy church. Sir, believe ye not this?

"To this he answered and said, He that followeth Peter most nighest in pure living, is next unto him in succession; but your lordly order esteemeth not greatly the lowly behaviour of poor Peter, whatsoever ye prate of him. Neither care ye greatly for the humble manners of them that succeeded him, till the time of Silvester, which, for the more part, were martyrs, as I told you before. Ye can let all their good conditions

go by you, and not hurt yourselves with them at all. All the world knoweth this well enough by you, and yet ye can make boast of Peter.

"With that, one of the other doctors asked him, Then what do you say of the pope?

"The Lord Cobham answered, As I said before, so I say again, that he and you together make whole the great antichrist, of whom he is the great head: you bishops, priests, prelates, and monks, are the body, and the Begging Friars are the tail, for they cover the filthiness of you both with their subtle sophistry; neither will I in conscience obey any of you all, till I see you with Peter follow Christ in conversation.

"Then read the doctor again: The fourth point is this: Holy church hath determined, that it is meritorious to a Christian man to go on pilgrimage to holy places, and there specially to worship the holy relics and images of saints, apostles, martyrs, confessors, and all other saints besides, approved by the Church of Rome. Sir, what say you to this?

"Whereunto he answered, I owe them no service by any commandment of God, and therefore I mind not to seek them for your covetousness. It were best ye swept them fair from cobwebs and dust, and so laid them up for catching of scathe, or else to bury them fair in the ground as ye do other aged people, which are God's images.

"It is a wonderful thing, that saints now being dead should become so covetous and needy, and thereupon so bitterly beg, which all their lifetime hated all covetousness and begging. But this I say unto you, and I would all the world should mark it, that with your shrines and idols, your feigned absolutions and pardons, ye draw unto you the substance, wealth, and chief pleasures of all Christian realms.

"Why sir, said one of the clerks, will ye not worship good images?

"What worship should I give unto them? said the Lord Cobham.

"Then said Friar Palmer unto him, Sir, will ye worship the cross of Christ, that he died upon? "Where is it? said the Lord Cobham.

"The friar said, I put you the case, sir, that it were here, even now before you.

"The Lord Cobham answered, This is a great wise man, to put me an earnest question of a thing, and yet he himself knoweth not where the thing itself is. Yet once again I ask you, what worship I should do unto it.

"A clerk said to him, Such worship as Paul speaketh of, and that is this; God forbid that I should joy, but only in the cross of Jesus Christ.

"Then said the Lord Cobham, and spread his arms abroad, This is the very cross, yea, and so much better than your cross of wood, in that it was created of God; yet will not I seek to have it worshipped.

"Then said the bishop of London, Sir, ye wot well that he died on a material cross.

"The Lord Cobham said, Yea, and I wot also, that our salvation came not in by that material cross, but alone by him which died thereupon. And well I wot, that holy St. Paul rejoiced in none other cross, but in Christ's passion and death only, and in his own sufferings of like persecution with him, for the selfsame verity that he hath suffered for before.

"Another clerk yet asked him, Will ye then do none honour to the holy cross?

He answered him, Yes, if it were mine own, I would lay him up honestly, and see unto him that he should take no more scathe abroad, nor be robbed of his goods, as he is now adays.

"Then said the archbishop unto him, Sir John, ye have spoken here many wonderful words to the slanderous rebuke of the whole spirituality, giving a great evil example unto the common sort here, to have us in the more disdain. Much time have we spent here about you, and all in vain, so far as I can see. Well, we must now be at this short point with you, for the day passeth away: ye must either submit yourself to the ordinance of the holy church, or else throw yourself (no remedy) into most deep danger. See to it in time, for anon it will be else too late.

"The Lord Cobham said, I know not to what purpose I should otherwise submit me. Much more have you offended me, than ever I offended you, in this troubling me before this multitude.

"Then said the archbishop again unto him, We once again require you to remember yourself well, and to have none other manner of opinion in these matters, than the universal faith and belief of the holy Church of Rome is. And so, like an obedient child, return again to the unity of your mother. See to it, I say, in time, for yet ye may have remedy, whereas, anon, it will be too late.

"The Lord Cobham said expressly before them all, I will none otherwise believe in these points than that I have told you here before. Do with me what you will.



inally, then the archbishop said, Well, then I see none other but we must needs do the law; we must proceed forth to the sentence definitive, and both judge you and condemn you for a heretic."

And with that the archbishop stood up, and read there a bill of his condemnation, all the clergy and laity veiling their bonnets. And this was the tenor thereof:

"In the name of God; so be it. We, Thomas, by the sufferance of God, archbishop of Canterbury, metropolitan and primate of all England, and legate from the apostolic see of Rome, will this to be known

unto all men. In a certain cause of heresy, and upon divers articles, whereupon Sir John Oldcastle, knight, and Lord Cobham, after a diligent inquisition made for the same, was detected, accused, and presented before us, in our last convocation of all our province of Canterbury, holden in the cathedral church of Paul's at London, at the lawful denouncement and request of our universal clergy of the said convocation, we proceeded against him according to the law (God to witness) with all the favour possible: and, following Christ's example in all that we might, which willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he might be converted and live; we took upon us to correct him, and sought all other ways possible to bring him again to the church's unity, declaring unto him what the holy and universal Church of Rome hath said, holden, determined, and taught, in that behalf. And though we found him in the catholic faith far wide, and so stiff-necked that he would not confess his error, nor

purge himself, nor yet repent him thereof, we yet, pitying him of fatherly compassion, and entirely desiring the health of his soul, appointed him a competent time of deliberation, to see if he would repent and seek to be reformed; but since that time we have found him worse and worse. Considering, therefore, that he is not corrigible, we are driven to the very extremity of the law, and with great heaviness of heart we now proceed to the publication of the sentence definitive against him."

Then brought he forth another bill, containing the said sentence, and that he read also in his beggarly Latin. *Christi nomine invocato, ipsumquæ solum preoculis habentes. Quia per acta inactitata*, and so forth. Which I have also translated into English, that men may understand it.

"Christ we take unto witness, that nothing else we seek in this our whole enterprise, but his only glory. Forasmuch as we have found, by divers acts done, brought forth, and exhibited, by sundry evidences, signs, and tokens, and also by many most manifest proofs, the said Sir John Oldcastle, knight, and Lord Cobham, not only to be an evident heretic in his own person, but also a mighty maintainer of other heretics against the faith and religion of the holy and universal Church of Rome; namely, about the two sacraments, (of the altar and of penance,) besides the pope's power, and pilgrimages; and that he, as the child of iniquity and darkness, hath so hardened his heart, that he will in no case attend unto the voice of his pastor; neither will he be allured by straight admonishments, nor yet be brought in by favourable words: the worthiness of the cause first weighed on the one side, and his unworthiness again considered on the other side, his faults also aggravated or made double through his damnable obstinacy, (we being loth that he which is naught should be worse, and so with his contagiousness infect the multitude,) by the sage counsel and assent of the very discreet fathers, our honourable brethren, and lords bishops here present, Richard of London, Henry of Winchester, and Bennet of Bangor, and of other great, learned, and wise men here, both doctors of divinity, and of the laws canon and civil, seculars and religious, with divers other expert men assisting us: we sentimentally and definitively, by this present writing, judge, declare, and condemn the said Sir John Oldcastle, knight, and Lord Cobham, for a most pernicious and detestable heretic, convicted upon the same, and refusing utterly to obey the church again, committing him here from henceforth, as a condemned heretic, to the secular jurisdiction, power, and judgment, to do him thereupon to death. Furthermore, we excommunicate and denounce accursed, not only this heretic here present, but so many else besides as shall hereafter, in favour of his error, either receive him or defend him, counsel him, or help him, or any other way maintain him, as very favourers, receivers, defenders, counsellors, aiders, and maintainers of condemned heretics.

"And that these premises may be the better known of all faithful Christian men, we commit it here unto your charges, and give you straight commandment thereupon by this writing also, that ye cause this condemnation and definitive sentence of excommunication concerning both this heretic and his favourers, to be published throughout all dioceses, in cities, towns, and villages, by your curates and parish priests, at such times as they shall have most recourse of people. And see that it be done after this sort: As the people are thus gathered devoutly together, let the curate every where go into the pulpit, and there open, declare, and expound this excess in the mother tongue, in an audible and intelligible voice, that it may be perceived of all men: and that upon the fear of this declaration also the people may fall from their evil opinions conceived now, of late, by seditious preachers. Moreover we will, that after we have delivered unto each one of you bishops, which are here

present, a copy hereof, that ye cause the same to be written out again into divers copies, and to be sent unto the other bishops and prelates, of our whole province, that they may also see the contents thereof solemnly published within their dioceses and cures. Finally, we will that both you and they signify again unto us, seriously and distinctly, by your writings, as the matter is, without feigned colour, in every point performed, the day whereon ye received this process, the time when it was of us executed, and after what sort it was done in every condition, according to the tenor hereof, that we may know it to be justly the same."

A copy of this writing sent Thomas Arundel, the archbishop of Canterbury, afterward from Maidstone, the tenth day of October, within the same year of our Lord, 1413, unto Richard Clifford the bishop London, which thus beginneth: *Thomas, permissione Divina, &c.*

The said Richard Clifford sent another copy thereof, enclosed within his own letters, unto Robert Maschal, a Carmelite friar, which was then bishop of Hereford in Wales, written from Haddam, the twenty-third of October in the same year, the beginning whereof is as followeth: *Reverende in Christo Pater, &c.*

This Robert Maschal directed another copy thereof from London the seven and twentieth day of November in the same year, enclosed in his own commission also, unto his archdeacon and deans in Hereford and Shrewsbury; and this is thereof the beginning, *Venerabilibus et discretis viris, &c.* In like manner did the other bishops within their dioceses.

After that the archbishop had thus read the bill of his condemnation, with most extremity, before the whole multitude, the Lord Cobham said with a most cheerful countenance: "Though ye judge my body, which is but a wretched thing, yet am I certain and sure, that ye can do no harm to my soul, no more than could Satan unto the soul of Job. He that created that, will of his infinite mercy and promise save it. I have, therein, no manner of doubt. And as concerning these articles before rehearsed, I will stand to them even unto the very death, by the grace of my eternal God."

And therewith he turned him unto the people, casting his hands abroad, and saying with a very loud voice, "Good Christian people, for God's love be well ware of these men, for they will else beguile you, and lead you blindfold into hell with themselves. For Christ saith plainly unto you, If one blind man leadeth another, they are like both to fall into the ditch."

After this, he fell down there upon his knees, and thus before them all prayed for his enemies, bolding up both his hands and his eyes towards heaven, and saying, "Lord, eternal! I beseech thee, of thy great mercy sake, to forgive my pursuers, if it be thy blessed will." And then he was delivered to Sir Robert Morley, and so led forth again unto the Tower of London; and thus there was an end of that day's work.

While the Lord Cobham was thus in the Tower, he sent out privily unto his friends; and they, at his request, wrote this little bill here following, causing it to be set up in divers quarters of London, that the people should not believe the slanders and lies that his enemies, the bishop's servants and priests, had made on him abroad. And thus was the letter:

"Forasmuch as Sir John Oldcastle, knight, and Lord Cobham, is untruly convicted and imprisoned, falsely reported and slandered among the common people by his adversaries, that he should both otherwise think and speak of the sacraments of the church, and especially of the blessed sacrament of the altar, than was written in the

confession of his belief; which was intended and taken to the clergy, and so set up in divers open places of the city of London: known be it here to all the world, that he never since varied in any point therefrom, but this is plainly his belief: That all the sacraments of the church be profitable and expedient also to all them that shall be saved, taking them after the intent that Christ and his true church hath ordained. Furthermore he believeth, That the blessed sacrament of the altar is verily and truly Christ's body in form of bread."

After this, the bishops and priests were in great discredit both with the nobility and commons; partly, for that they had so cruelly handled the good Lord Cobham, and partly again, because his opinion (as they thought at that time) was perfect concerning the sacrament. The prelates feared this to grow to further inconvenience towards them both ways, wherefore they drew their heads together, and at the last consented to use another practice somewhat contrary to that they had done afore. They caused it by and by to be blown abroad by their feed servants, friends, and babbling Sir Johns, that the said Lord Cobham was become a good man, and had lowly submitted himself in all things unto holy church, utterly changing his opinion concerning the sacrament. And thereupon, they counterfeited an abjuration in his name, that the people should take no hold of his opinion by any thing they had heard of him before, and so to stand the more in awe of them, considering him so great a man, and by them subdued.

This is the abjuration, say they, of Sir John Oldcastle, knight, sometime the Lord Cobham.

"In Dei Nomine. Amen. I, John Oldcastle, denounced, detected, and convicted of, and upon, divers articles savouring both of heresy and error, before the reverend father in Christ, and my good lord, Thomas, by the permission of God, lord archbishop of Canterbury, and my lawful and rightful judge in that behalf, expressly grant and confess: That as concerning the estate and power of the most holy father the pope of Rome, of his archbishops, his bishops, and his other prelates, the degrees of the church, and the holy sacraments of the same, especially of the sacraments of the altar, of penance, and other observances besides of our mother, holy church, as pilgrimages and pardons; I affirm, I say, before the said reverend father archbishop, and elsewhere, that I, being evil-seduced by divers seditious preachers, have grievously erred, and heretically persisted, blasphemously answered, and obstinately rebelled; and therefore I am, by the said reverend father, before the reverend fathers in Christ also, the bishops of London, Winchester, and Bangor, lawfully condemned for a heretic.

"Yet nevertheless, I now, remembering myself, and coveting by this means to avoid that temporal pain which I am worthy to suffer as a heretic, at the assignation of my most excellent Christian prince and liege lord, King Henry the Fifth, now, by the grace of God, most worthy king both of England and of France; minding also to prefer the wholesome determination, sentence, and doctrine of the holy universal Church of Rome, before the unwholesome opinions of myself, my teachers, and my followers, I freely, willingly, deliberately, and thoroughly confess, grant, and affirm, that the most holy fathers in Christ, St. Peter the apostle, and his successors, bishops of Rome, especially now at this time my most blessed lord, Pope John, by the permission of God, the three and twentieth pope of that name, which now holdeth Peter's seat, (and each of them in their succession,) hath full strength and power to be Christ's vicar in earth, and the head of the church militant: and that by the strength of his office (what though he be a great sinner, and afore-known of God to be damned?) he hath full

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authority and power to rule and govern, bind and loose, save and destroy, accurse and assoil, all other Christian men.

"And agreeably still unto this I confess, grant, and affirm, all other archbishops, bishops, and prelates in their provinces, dioceses, and parishes, appointed by the said pope of Rome to assist him in his doings or business, by his decrees, canons, or virtue of his office, to have had in times past, to have now at this time, and that they ought to have in time to come, authority and power to rule and govern, bind, loose, accurse, and assoil the subjects or people of their aforesaid provinces, dioceses, and parishes, and that their said subjects or people ought, of right, in all things to obey them. Furthermore, I confess, grant, and affirm, that the said spiritual fathers, as our most holy father the pope, archbishops, bishops, and prelates, have had, have now, and ought to have hereafter, authority and power for the state, order, and governance of their subjects or people, to make laws, decrees, statutes, and constitutions, yea, and to publish, command, and compel their said subjects and people to the observation of them.

"Moreover, I confess, grant, and affirm, that all these aforesaid laws, decrees, statutes, and constitutions made, published, and commanded, according to the former spiritual law, all Christian people, and every man in himself is straitly bound to observe, and meekly to obey, according to the diversity of the aforesaid powers, as the laws, statutes, canons, and constitutions of our most holy father the pope, incorporated in his decrees, decretals, Clementines, codes, charts, rescripts, sextiles, and extravagants over all the world; and as the provincial statutes of archbishops in their provinces, the synodal acts of bishops in their dioceses, and the commendable rules and customs of prelates in their colleges, and curates in their parishes, all Christian people are both bound to observe, and also most meekly to obey. Over and besides all this, I, John Oldcastle, utterly forsaking and renouncing all the aforesaid errors and heresies, and all other errors and heresies like unto them, lay my hand here upon this book or holy evangely of God, and swear, that I shall never more from henceforth hold these aforesaid heresies, nor yet any other like unto them, wittingly. Neither shall I give counsel, aid, help, or favour at any time, to them that shall hold, teach, affirm, and maintain the same, as God shall help me, and these holy evangelists.

"And that I shall from henceforth faithfully obey and inviolably observe all the holy laws, statutes, canons, and constitutions, of all the popes of Rome, archbishops, bishops, and prelates, which are contained and determined in their holy decrees, decretals, Clementines, codes, charts, rescripts, sextiles, sums-papal extravagants, statutes provincial, acts synodal, and other ordinary regules and customs constituted by them, or that shall chance hereafter directly to be determined or made. To these and all such other will I myself, with all power possible, apply. Besides all this, the penance which it shall please my said reverend father the lord archbishop of Canterbury hereafter to enjoin me for my sins, I will meekly obey and faithfully fulfil. Finally, all my seducers and false teachers, and all other besides, whom I shall hereafter know suspected of heresy or errors, I shall effectually present, send or cause to be presented, unto my said reverend father, lord archbishop, or to them which have his authority, so soon as I can conveniently do it, and see that they be corrected to my uttermost power."

This abjuration never came to the hands of the Lord Cobham, neither was it compiled of them for that purpose, but only therewith to blind the eyes of the unlearned multitude for a time; after the which like fetch and subtle practice was also

devised the recantation of the archbishop Thomas Cranmer, to stop for a time the people's mouths: which subtlety in like manner was also practised with the false recantation of the Bishop Hooper, and divers other, as in their places hereafter, Christ granting, shall be showed.

And thus much hitherto concerning the first trouble of Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, with all the circumstances of the true time, place, occasion, causes, and order belonging to the same, wherein I trust I have sufficiently satisfied all the parts requisite to a faithful history, without corruption. For the confirmation whereof, to the intent the mind also of the wrangling caviller may be satisfied, and to stop the mouth of the adversary, which I see in all places to be ready to bark, I have, therefore, of purpose annexed withal my ground and foundation, taken out of the archives and registers of the archbishop of Canterbury: whereby may appear the manifest error both of Polydore and of Edward Hall, who, being deceived in the right distinction of the times, assign this citation and examination of the Lord Cobham to be after the Council of Constance, whereas Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, at the Council of Constance was not alive. The copy and testimony of his own letter shall declare the same, being written and sent to the bishop of London in form as followeth:

The copy of the epistle of the archbishop of Canterbury, written to the bishop of London, whereon dependeth the ground and certainty of this aforesaid history of the Lord Cobham above premised.

To the reverend father in Christ, and lord, the Lord Robert, by the grace of God, bishop of Hereford, Richard, by the permission of God, bishop of London, health and continual increase of sincere love: We have of late received the letters of the reverend father in Christ, and lord, the Lord Thomas, by the grace of God, archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, and legate of the apostolic see, to this effect: Thomas, by the permission of God, archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, and legate of the apostolic see, to our reverend brother, the Lord Richard, bishop of London, health and brotherly love in the Lord. It was lately concluded before us, in the convocation of prelates and clergy of our province of Canterbury last celebrate in our church of St. Paul, intreating amongst otherthings with the said prelates and clergy upon the union and reformation of the Church of England, by us and the said prelates and clergy; that it was almost impossible to amend the hole of our Lord's coat which was without seam, unless, first of all, certain nobles of the realm, which are authors, favourers, protectors, defenders, and receivers of these heretics called Lollards, were sharply rebuked, and, if need were, by the censures of the church and the help of the secular power, they be revoked from their errors. And afterward, having made diligent inquisition in the convocation amongst the proctors of the clergy and others, which were there in number out of every diocese of our province, it was found out amongst others, that Sir John Oldcastle, knight, was, and is, the principal receiver, favourer, protector, and defender of them; and that, specially in the dioceses of London, Rochester, and Hereford, he had sent the said Lollards to preach, not being licensed by the ordinaries and bishops of the dioceses or places, contrary to the provincial constitutions in that behalf made, and hath been present at their wicked sermons, grievously punishing with threatenings, terrors, and the power of the secular sword, such as did withstand him: alleging and affirming amongst others, that we and our fellow-brethren, suffragans of our provinces, had not, neither have, any power to make any such constitutions: also he hath holden and doth hold opinion, and teach, as touching the sacraments of the altar, of penance, of pilgrimage,

and the worshipping of saints, and of the keys, contrary to that which the universal Church of Rome doth teach and affirm.

"Wherefore, on the behalf of the said prelates and clergy, we were then required that we would vouchsafe to proceed against the said Sir John Oldcastle upon the premises. Notwithstanding, for the reverence of our lord the king, in whose favour the said Sir John at that present was, and no less also for honour of his knighthood, we, with our fellow brethren, and suffragans then present, with a great part of the clergy of our province, coming personally before the presence of our lord the king, being then at his manor of Kennington, put up against the said Sir John a complaint, partly reciting the faults of the said Sir John; but at the request of our lord the king, we, desiring to reduce the said Sir John to the unity of the church, without any reproach, deferred all the execution of the premises for a great time. But at the last, forasmuch as our said lord the king, and his great travails taken about the conversion of him, did nothing at all profit, as our said lord the king vouchsafed to certify us both by word and writing, we immediately decreed to call forth the said Sir John personally to answer before us at a certain time already passed, in and upon the premises, and sent our messengers with these our letters of citation to the said Sir John, then being at his castle at Cowling: unto the which messenger we gave commandment, that he should in no case go into the castle, except he were licensed; but by the mean of one John Butler, porter of the king's chamber, he should require the said Sir John, that he would either licence the said messenger to come into the castle, or that he would cite him, or at the least, that he would suffer himself to be cited, without his castle. The which Sir John openly answered unto the said John Butler, declaring the premises unto him on the behalf of our Lord the king, that he would by no means be cited, neither in any case suffer his citation. Then we, being certified of the premises, lawfully proceeded further.

"First, having faithful report made unto us, that he could not be apprehended by personal citation, we decreed to cite him by an edict, to be openly set up in the porches of the cathedral church of Rochester next unto him, little more than three English miles distant from the said castle of Cowling. As we had thus caused him to be cited, and our edict aforesaid to be publicly and openly set upon the porches of the said church, that he should personally appear before us the eleventh day of September last past, to answer unto the premises, and certain other things concerning heresy: the which day being come, and we, sitting in the tribunal seat in our great chapel within the castle of Leeds, of our diocese, the which we then inhabited, and whereas we then kept residence with our court, and having taken an oath, which is requisite in the premises, and the information by us heard and received, as the common report goeth, in the parts whereas the said Sir John dwelleth, (fortifying himself in his said castle,) defending his opinions manifoldly, contemning the keys of the church and the archbishop's power; we therefore caused the said Sir John Oldcastle, cited as is aforesaid, to be openly, with a loud voice, called by the crier; and so being called, long looked for, and by no means appearing, we judged him (as he was no less worthy) obstinate, and for punishing of his said obstinacy we did then and there excommunicate him. And, forasmuch as by the order of the premises, and other evident tokens of his doings, we understand that the said Sir John, for the defence of his errors doth fortify himself, as is aforesaid, against the keys of the church, by pretence whereof, a vehement suspicion of heresy riseth against him; We have decreed, if he may be apprehended, again personally to cite him, or else, as before, by an edict, that he should appear before us the Saturday next after the feast of St.

Matthew the apostle and evangelist next coming, to show some reasonable cause, if he can, why we should not proceed against him, to a more grievous punishment, as an open heretic, schismatic, and open enemy of the universal church. And personally to declare why he should not be pronounced such a one, or that the aid of the secular power should not be solemnly required against him; and further to answer, do, and receive as touching the premises, whatsoever justice shall require. The which time being come, that is to say, the Saturday next after the feast of St. Matthew, being the twenty-fourth day of September, Sir Robert Morley, knight, lieutenant of the Tower of London, appeared personally before us, sitting in the chapter-house of the church of St. Paul at London, with our reverend fellow-brethren and lords, Richard, by the grace of God, bishop of London, and Henry, bishop of Winchester, and brought with him Sir John Oldcastle, knight, and set him before us; for a little before he was taken by the king's servants, and cast into the Tower: unto which Sir John Oldcastle, so personally present, we rehearsed all the order of the process, as it is contained in the acts of the day before passed, with good and modest words and gentle means; That is to say, how he, the said Sir John, was detected and accused in the convocation of the prelates and clergy of our said province, as is aforesaid, upon the articles before rehearsed, and how he was cited, and for his contumacy, excommunicate: and when we were come to that point, we offered ourselves ready to absolve him. Notwithstanding, the said Sir John not regarding our offer, said, that he would willingly rehearse before us, and my said fellow brethren, the faith which he held and affirmed. So he, having his desire, and obtaining license, took out of his bosom a certain schedule indented, and there openly read the contents of the same, and delivered the same schedule unto us, and the schedule of the articles whereupon he was examined, which was in form following:

"I, John Oldcastle, knight, Lord of Cobham, desire to make manifest unto all Christians, and God to be taken to witness, that I never thought otherwise, or would think otherwise, by God's help, than with a stedfast and undoubted faith to embrace all those his sacraments which he hath instituted for the use of church.

"Furthermore, that I may the more plainly declare my mind in these four points of my faith; first of all, I believe the sacrament of the altar to be the body of Christ under the form of bread. The very same body which was born of his mother Mary, crucified for us, dead, and buried, rose again the third day, sitteth on the right hand of his immortal Father, now being a triumphant partaker with him of his eternal glory.

"Then, as touching the sacrament of penance, this is my belief, That I do think the correction of a sinful life to be most necessary for all such as desire to be saved, and that they ought to take upon them such repentance of their former life, by true confession, unfeigned contrition, and lawful satisfaction, as the word of God doth prescribe unto us; otherwise there will be no hope of salvation.

"Thirdly, as touching images, this is my opinion, That I do judge them no point of faith, but brought into the world, after the faith of Christ, by the sufferance of the church, and so grown in use, that they might serve for a calendar for the lay-people and ignorant; by the beholding whereof they might the better call to remembrance the godly examples and martyrdom of Christ and other holy men: but if any man do otherwise abuse this representation, and give the reverence unto those images which is due unto the holy men whom they represent, or rather unto him to whom the holy men themselves owe all their honour, setting all their trust and hope in

them which ought to be referred unto God; or if they be so affected toward the dumb images, that they be in any behalf addicted unto them, either be more addicted unto one saint than another, in my mind they do little differ from idolatry, grievously offending against God, the author of all honour.

"Last of all, I am thus persuaded, That there be no inhabitants here in earth, but that we shall pass straight either to life or punishment; for whosoever doth so order his life that he stumbleth at the commandments of God, which either he knoweth not, or he will not be taught them, it is but in vain for him to look for salvation, although he ran over all the corners of the world. Contrariwise, he which observeth his commandments cannot perish, although in all his lifetime he walked no pilgrimage, neither to Rome, Canterbury, nor Compostella, or to any other place, whither the common people are accustomed to walk.

"This schedule, with the articles therein contained, being read, as is aforesaid, by the said Sir John, we, with our fellow-brethren aforesaid, and many other doctors and learned men, had conference upon the same; and at the last, by the counsel and consent of them, we spake these words following unto the said Sir John there present: Behold, Sir John! there are many good and catholic things contained in this schedule, but you have at this time to answer unto other matters which savour of errors and heresies, whereunto, by the consent of this schedule, it is not fully answered; and, therefore, you must answer thereunto, and more plainly express and declare your faith and opinions as touching those points in the same bill: that is to say, Whether you hold, believe, and affirm, that in the sacrament of the altar, after the consecration rightly done, there remaineth material bread or not.

"Item, Whether you hold, believe, and affirm, that it is necessary, in the sacrament of penance, for a man to confess his sins unto a priest appointed by the church?

"The which articles in this manner delivered unto him, amongst many other things he answered plainly, That he would make no other declaration or answer thereunto than was contained in the said schedule. Whereupon, we, favouring the said Sir John, with the benign and gentle means we spake unto him in this manner: Sir John! take heed, for if you do not plainly answer to these things which are objected against you, within a lawful time now granted you by the judges, we may declare you to be a heretic: but the said Sir John persevered as before, and would make no other answer. Consequently, notwithstanding, we, together with our said fellow-brethren, and others of our counsel, took advice, and by their counsel declared unto the said Sir John Oldcastle, what the said holy Church of Rome in this matter, following the saying of blessed St. Augustine, Jerome, Ambrose, and other holy men, hath determined: the which determinations every catholic ought to observe. Whereupon the said Sir John answered, That he would believe and observe whatsoever the holy church determined, and whatsoever God would he should observe and believe. But that he would in no case affirm, that our lord the pope, the cardinals, archbishops, and bishops or other prelates of the church, have any power to determine any such matters. Whereunto, we, yet favouring him, under hope of better advisement, promised the said Sir John, that we would give him in writing certain determinations upon the matter aforesaid, whereunto he should more plainly answer, written in Latin, and, for his better understanding, translated into English: whereupon we commanded and heartily desired him, that against Monday next following he should give a plain and full answer; the which determination we caused to be translated the same day, and

to be delivered unto him the Sunday next following. The tenor of which determinations here follow in this manner

"The faith and determination of the holy church upon the holy sacrament of the altar is this: That after the consecration done in the mass by the priest, the material bread shall be changed into the material body of Christ and the material wine into the material blood of Christ; therefore, after the consecration, there remaineth no more any substance of bread and wine, which was there before: — what do you answer to this article?

"And holy mother church hath determined, that every Christian, dwelling upon earth ought to confess his sins unto a priest ordained by the church, if he may come unto him: — how think you by this article?

"Christ ordained St. Peter his vicar on earth, whose seat is in the church of Rome, giving and granting the same authority, which he gave unto Peter, also to his successors, which are now called popes of Rome; in whose power it is to ordain and institute prelates in particular churches, as archbishops, bishops, curates, and other ecclesiastical orders, unto whom the Christian people owe obedience, according to the tradition of the Church of Rome. This is the determination of the holy church: what think you by this article?

"Besides this the holy church hath determined, That it is necessary for every Christian to go on pilgrimage to holy places, and there specially to worship the holy relics of the apostles, martyrs, confessors, and all saints whomsoever the Church of Rome hath allowed: — what think you of this article?

"Upon which Monday, being the five and twentieth day of the said month of September, before us and our fellow-brethren aforesaid, having also taken unto us our reverend brother Benedict, by the grace of God, bishop of Bangor, and, by our commandment, our counsellors and ministers, Master Henry Ware, official of our court of Canterbury; Philip Morgan, doctor of both laws; Howel Kiffin, doctor of the decretals; John Kemp and William Carleton, doctors of law; John Witnam, Thomas Palmer, Robert Wombewell, John Withe, and Robert Chamberlain, Richard Dotington, and Thomas Walden, professors of divinity; also James Cole and John Stephens, our notaries appointed on this behalf: they, all and every one, being sworn upon the Holy Gospel of God, laying their hands upon the book, that they should give their faithful counsel in and upon the matter aforesaid, and in every such cause, and to the whole world: by and by appeared Sir Robert Morley, knight, lieutenant of the Tower of London, and brought with him the aforesaid Sir John Oldcastle, setting him before us; unto whom we gently and familiarly rehearsed the acts of the day before passed, and, as before, we told him that he both is and was excommunicate, requiring and entreating him that he would desire and receive in due form the absolution of the church. Unto whom the said Sir John then and there plainly answered: That in this behalf he would require no absolution at our hands, but only of God. Then, afterwards, by gentle and soft means we desired and required him to make plain answer unto the articles which were laid against him; and first of all, as touching the sacrament of the altar. To the which article, besides other things, he answered and said thus: That as Christ, being here on earth, had in him both Godhead and manhood, notwithstanding, the Godhead was covered and invisible under the humanity, the which was manifest and visible in him: so likewise, in the sacrament of the altar, there is the very body and very bread; bread which we do see, the body of Christ hidden under the same, which we do not see. And plainly he denied, that the faith, as

touching the said sacrament, determined by the Romish church and holy doctors, and sent unto him by us in the said schedule, was the determination of the holy church. But if it be the determination of the church, he said that it was done contrary unto the Scriptures; after the church was endowed, and after that poison was poured into the church, and not afore. Also, as touching the sacrament of penance and confession, he plainly said and affirmed then and there: That if any man were in any grievous sin, out of the which he knew not how to rise, it were expedient and good for him to go unto some holy and discreet priest to take counsel of him; but, that he should confess his sin to any proper priest or to any other, although he might have the use of him, it is not necessary to salvation; forasmuch as by only contrition such sin can be wiped away, and the sinner himself purged. As concerning the worshipping of the cross, he said and affirmed: That the only body of Christ which did hang upon the cross, is to be worshipped; forasmuch as that body alone was and is the cross, which is to be worshipped.

And being demanded what honour he would do unto the image of the cross, he answered by express words: That he would only do it that honour, that he would make it clean and lay it up safe. As touching the power and authority of the keys, the archbishops, bishops, and other prelates, he said, That the pope is very antichrist, that is the head; that the archbishops, bishops, and other prelates, be his members, and that the friars be his tail: the which pope, archbishops, and bishops, a man ought not to obey, but so far forth as they be followers of Christ and of Peter, in their life, manners, and conversation, and that he is the successor of Peter which is best and purest in life and manners. Furthermore, the said Sir John, spreading his hands, with a loud voice said thus to those which stood about him: These men, which judge and would condemn me, will seduce you all and themselves, and will lead you unto hell; therefore take heed of them. When he had spoken those words, we again, as oftentimes before, with lamentable countenance, spake unto the said Sir John, exhorting him, with as gentle words as we might, that he would return to the unity of the church, to believe and hold that which the church of Rome doth believe and hold: who expressly answered, that he would not believe or hold otherwise than he had before declared. Wherefore, we perceiving, as it appeared by him, that we could not prevail, at the last, with bitterness of heart we proceeded to the pronouncing of a definitive sentence in this manner:

"In the name of God, Amen. We, Thomas, by the permission of God, archbishop and humble minister of the holy church of Canterbury, primate of all England, and legate of the apostolic see, in a certain cause or matter of heresy upon certain articles, whereupon Sir John Oldcastle, knight, Lord Cobham, before us, in the last convocation of our clergy of our province of Canterbury holden in the church of St. Paul in London, after diligent inquisition thereupon made, was detected and accused, and by our said province notoriously and openly defamed. At the request of the whole clergy aforesaid thereupon made to us in the said convocation, with all favour possible that we might (God we take to witness), lawfully proceeding against him, following the footsteps and example of Christ, who would not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live, we have endeavoured by all ways and means, we might or could, to reform him, and rather reduce him to the unity of the church, declaring unto him what the holy universal church of Rome doth teach, hold, and determine in this behalf. And albeit that we found him wandering astray from the catholic faith, and so stubborn and stiff-necked, that he would not confess his error, or clear himself thereof, to detest the same; notwithstanding, we, favouring him

with a fatherly affection, and heartily wishing and desiring his preservation, prefixed him a certain competent time to deliberate with himself, and, if he would, to repent and reform himself. And last of all, forasmuch as we perceived him to be unreasonable, observing chiefly those things which by the law are required in this behalf, with great sorrow and bitterness of heart we proceeded to the pronouncing of the definitive sentence in this wise:—

"The name of Christ being called upon, setting him only before our eyes: Forasmuch as by act enacted, signs exhibited, evidences, and divers tokens, besides sundry kind of proofs, we find the said Sir John to be, and have been, a heretic, and a follower of heretics in the faith and observation of the sacred universal church of Rome, and specially as touching the sacraments of the eucharist and of penance; and that as the son of iniquity and darkness he hath so hardened his heart, that he will not understand the voice of his Shepherd, neither will be allured with his monitions, or converted with any fair speech: having first of all searched and sought out, and diligently considering the merits of the cause aforesaid, and of the said Sir John, his deserts and faults aggravated through his damnable obstinacy, not willing that he that is wicked should become more wicked, and infect others with his contagion: by the counsel and consent of the reverend men of profound wisdom and discretion, our brethren, the lords, Richard, bishop of London, Henry, bishop of Winchester, and Benedict, bishop of Bangor, and also of many other doctors of divinity, the decretals and civil law, and of many other religious and learned persons our assistants, we have judged and declared sententially, and definitively condemned the said Sir John Oldcastle, knight, Lord Cobham, being convicted in and upon that most detestable guilt, not willing penitently to return unto the unity of the church, and in those things which the sacred universal church of Rome, doth hold, teach, determine, and show forth. And especially as one erring in the articles above-written, leaving him from henceforth as a heretic, unto the secular judgment.

"Moreover, we have excommunicated, and by these writings do pronounce and excommunicate him, as a heretic, and all other which from henceforth, in favour of his error, shall receive, defend, or give him counsel or favour, or help him in this behalf, as favourers, defenders, and receivers of heretics. And, to the intent that these premises may be known unto all faithful Christians, we charge and command you, that, by your sentence definitive, you do cause the curates which are under you, with a loud and audible voice in their churches, when as most people is present, in their mother tongue, through all your cities and dioceses, to publish and declare the said Sir John Oldcastle, as is before said, to be by us condemned as a heretic, schismatic, and one erring in the articles abovesaid; and all other which from henceforth in favour of his errors shall receive or defend him, giving him any counsel, comfort, or favour in this behalf, to be excommunicate as receivers, favourers, and defenders of heretics: as is more effectually contained in the process. That by such means the erroneous opinions of the people, (which, peradventure, hath otherwise conceived the matter,) by those declarations of the truth, how the matter is, may be cut off: the which thing also we will and command to be written and signified by you, word for word, unto all our fellow brethren, that they all may manifest, publish, and declare throughout all their cities, and dioceses, the manner and form of this our process, and also the sentence by us given, and all other singular the contents in the same; and likewise cause it to be published by their curates which are under them, as touching the day of receipt of these presents, and what you have done in the premises, how you and they have executed this our commandment. We will that you and they duly and distinctly

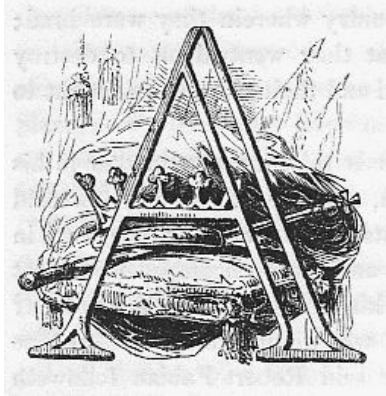
FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

certify us, the business being done, by your and their letters patent according to this tenor.

"Dated in our manor of Maidstone, the tenth of October, A. D. 1413, and in the eighteenth year of our translation."

Thus have you here the judicial process of the bishops against this most noble Christian knight, described by their own letters and style. After all this, the sentence of death being given, the Lord Cobham was sent away, Sir Robert Morley carrying him again unto the Tower, where, after he had remained a certain space, in the night season, (it is not known by what means,) he escaped out and fled into Wales, where he continued by the space of four years.

99. Cope's Book of Lord Cobham, Answered



S I was entering into this story of the Lord Cobham, after the tractation of all the former histories hitherto passed, having next to set upon this present matter, luckily, and as God would, in such opportunity of season, as God may seem to work himself for defence of his saints, cometh to my hands a certain book of new-found dialogues, compiled in Latin by Nicholas Harpsfield, set out by Alanus Copus, an Englishman, a person to me unknown, and obscure, hitherto, unto the world, but now, to purchase himself a name with Erostratus, or with the sons of Anakim, cometh out not with his five eggs, but with his six railing dialogues; in the which dialogues the said Alanus Copus, Anglus (whether he, under the armour of another, or another under the title of his name, I know not, nor pass not,) uncourteously behaving himself, intemperately abusing his time, study, and pen, forgetting himself, neglecting all respect of honesty, and mild modesty, neither dreading the stroke of God, nor caring for shame, neither favouring the living, nor sparing the dead, who, being alive as they never offended him, so now cannot answer for themselves, being gone; thus provoking both God and man against him, after an unseemly sort, and with a foul mouth, and a stinking breath, rageth and fareth against dead men's ashes, taking now the spoil of their good name, after their bodies lie slain in the field; his gall and choler being so bitter against them, that he cannot abide any memory after them to remain upon earth; insomuch that for the hatred of them he spurneth also against me, and flieth in my face, for that in my Acts and Monuments, describing the history of the church, I would say any thing in the favour of them, whom the Romish catholics have so unmercifully put to death. The answer to whose book, although it would require a several tractation by itself (as, if Christ grant space and leisure, hereafter it shall not be forgotten) yet, because such opportunity of the book is offered to me at this present, coming now to the matter of the Lord Cobham, Sir Roger Acton, and others, with whom he first beginneth to quarrel, it shall be requisite a little by the way to cope with this Cope, whatsoever he be, so much as truth shall give me for their defence to say something. And here, to cut off all the offals of his railing talk and dishonest rebukes, which I leave to scolds and men of his profession against they list to brawl, let us briefly and quietly consider the matter for discussing of the truth; wherein first I shall desire the reader, with equality and indifferency, to hear both the parties to speak, as well what the martyrs, hence gone and slain, could say for themselves if they were present, as also what this man here doth object against them now being gone. And so, according to the same, to judge both upon them, as they deserve, and of me, as they shall please.

Now to the scope of Master Cope's matter, which is this: whether this aforesaid Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham (first to begin with him), is rather to be commended for a martyr, or to be reprov'd for a traitor? and whether that I, in writing of him, and of Sir Roger Acton, with others more, in my former edition, have dealt fraudulently and corruptly, in commending them in these Acts and Monuments, or no? Touching the discussion whereof, first I trust the gentle Master Cope, my friend,

neither will nor well can deny any part of all that hitherto, touching the story of the Lord Cobham, hath been premised; who yet all this while was neither traitor to his country, nor rebel to his prince, as by the course of his history hitherto the reader may well understand. First, in the time of King Henry the Fourth, he was sent over to France to the duke of Orleans, he did obey. Afterwards King Henry the Fifth coming to the crown, he was of him likewise well liked and favoured, until the time that Thomas Arundel, with his clergy, complaining to the king, made bate between them. Then the Lord Cobham, being cited by the archbishop, at his citation would not appear: but, sent for by the king, he obeyed and came. Being come, what lowly subjection he showed there to the king, the story declareth. Afterwards he yielded an obedient confession of his faith; it would not be received. Then did he appeal to the bishop of Rome, for the which the king took great displeasure with him, and so was he repealed by the king to the archbishop, and committed to the Tower; which also he did obey. From thence he was brought to his examination once or twice; there, like a constant martyr, and witness of the truth, he stood to his confession, and that unto the very sentence of death defined against him. If this be not the effect of a true martyr, let Alanus Copus say what he will, or what he can: this I say, at least I doubt, whether the said Alanus Copus, Anglus, put to the like trial himself, would venture so narrow a point of martyrdom for his religion, as this Christian knight did for his: certes, it hath not yet appeared.

To proceed: After this deadly sentence was thus awarded against him, the said Lord Cobham was then returned again unto the Tower, which he with patience and meekness did also obey; from the which Tower if he afterward by the Lord's providence did escape, whether hath Alanus Copus herein more to praise God for offering to him the benefit, or to blame the man for taking that which was offered? What catholic in all Louvain, having his house over his head on fire, will not be glad to have, if he might, the door set open to fly the peril? or else why did Alanus Copus fly his country, having so little need, if this man, bleeding almost under the butcher's axe, might not enjoy so great an offer of so lucky deliverance?

Thus hitherto, I trust, the cause of the Lord Cobham standeth firm and strong against all danger of just reprehension; who being, as ye have heard, so faithful and obedient to God, so submiss to his king, so sound in his doctrine, so constant in his cause, so afflicted for the truth, so ready and prepared to death, as we have sufficiently declared, not out of uncertain and doubtful chronicles, but out of the true originals and instruments remaining in ancient records: what lacketh now, or what should let to the contrary, but that he, declaring himself such a martyr, that is, a witness to the verity, for the which also at last he suffered the fire, may therefore worthily be adorned with the title of martyr, which is in Greek as much as a witness-bearer.

But here now steppeth in dame η διαβολη [Greek: E Diabole], with her cousin-sould Alecto, &c., who, neither learning to hold her tongue, nor yet to speak well, must needs find here a knot in a rush, and beginning now to quarrel, inferreth thus "But after," saith he, "that the Lord Cobham was escaped out of the Tower, his fellows and confederates convented themselves together seditiously against the king, and against their country." A great crime no doubt, Master Cope, if it be true; so, if it be not true, the greater blame returneth unto yourself, to enter this action of such slander, unless the ground whereupon ye stand be sure. First, what fellows of the Lord Cobham were these you mean? "Sir Roger Acton," ye say, "Master Brown, and John Beverly, with thirty-six others, hanged and burned in the said field of St. Giles's." A

marvellous matter, that such a great multitude of twenty thousand, specified in story, should rise against the king, and yet but three persons only be known and named. And then to proceed further, I would ask of Master Cope, what was the end of this conspiracy; to rebel against the king? to destroy their country? and to subvert the Christian faith? for so purporteth the story. As like true the one as the other: for even as it is like that they, being Turks, went about to destroy the faith of Christ wherein they died, and to subvert their country wherein they were bred; even so like it is that they went about to destroy the king, whom God and their conscience taught to obey.

Yet further proceeds this furnish promoter in his accusation, and saith, moreover, that these aforesaid fellows and adherents of the Lord Cobham were in the field assembled, and there encamped in a great number against the king. And how is this proved? By Robert Fabian: which appeareth to be as true as that which in the said Robert Fabian followeth in the same place, where he affirmeth, that John Claydon and Richard Turming were burned in the same year, being 1413, when indeed by the true registers they were not burned before the year of our Lord 1415. But what will Master Cope say, if the original copy of the indictment of these pretended conspirators do testify that they were not there assembled or present in the field, as your accusation pretendeth? "But they purposed," you will say, "and intended to come." The purpose and intent of a man's mind is hard for you and me to judge, where no fact appeareth. But grant their intent was so to come, yet might they not come to those thickets near to the field of St. Giles's, having Beverly their preacher with them, as ye say yourself, as well to pray and to preach in that worthy place, as to fight? Is this such a strange thing in the church of Christ, in time of persecution, for Christians to resort in desolate woods and secret thickets, from the sight of enemies, when they would assemble in praying and hearing the word of God? In Queen Mary's time was not the same colour of treason objected against George Eagle, and others more, for frequenting and using into back sides and fields, who suffered for that whereof he was innocent and guiltless? Did not Adam Damlip die in like case of treason, for having a French crown given him at his departure out of Rome by Cardinal Pool? What cannot cankered Calumnia invent, when she is disposed to cavil? It was not the cardinal's crown that made him a traitor, but it was the hatred of his preaching that stirred up the accuser.

In France, what assemblies have there been in late years, of good and innocent Christians congregating together in back fields and coverts, in great routes, to hear the preaching of God's holy word, and to pray; yea, and not without their weapon also, for their own safeguard; and yet never intended nor minded any rebellion against their king. Wherefore, in cases of religion it may and doth happen many times that such congregations may meet without intent of any treason meant. But howsoever the intent and purpose was of these aforesaid confederates of the Lord Cobham, whither to come, or what to do, seeing this is plain by records, as is aforesaid, that they were not yet come unto the place, how will Master Cope now justify his words, so confidently affirming, that they were there assembled seditiously together in the field of St. Giles against the king? And mark here, I beseech thee, gentle reader, how unlikely and untidely the points of this tale are tied and hanged together, I will not say without all substance of truth, but without all fashion of a cleanly lie; wherein these accusers in this matter seem to me to lack some part of Simon's art, in conveying their narration so unartificially. First, say they, the king was come first, with his garrison, unto the field of St. Giles; and then, after the king was there encamped, consequently, the fellows of the Lord Cobham, the captain being away, came and were assembled in the same field where the king was, against the king, and yet not knowing of the king,

to the number of twenty thousand, and yet never a stroke in that field given. And furthermore, of all this twenty thousand aforesaid, never a man's name known but only three: to wit, Sir Roger Acton, Sir John Brown, and John Beverly, a preacher. How this gear is clamped together let the reader judge, and believe as he seeth cause.

But give all this to be true, although by no demonstration it can be proved, yet by the pope's dispensation, which in this earth is almost omnipotent, be it granted, that after the king had taken the field of St. Giles's before, the companions of the Lord Cobham afterward coming and assembling in the thickets near the said field, to fight seditiously against the king, their country, and against the faith of Christ, to the number of twenty thousand, where no stroke being given, so many were taken, that all the prisons of London were full, and yet never a man's name known of all this multitude, but only three; all this I say, being imagined to be true, then followeth to be demanded of Master Cope, whether the Lord Cobham was here present with this company in the field or not? "Not in person," saith Cope, "but with his mind and with his counsel he was present:" and addeth this reason, saying, "and therefore he, being brought again after his escape, was convict both of treason and heresy, and therefore, sustaining a double punishment, was both hanged and burned for the same," &c. And how is all this proved? "By Robert Fabian," he saith. Whereunto briefly I answer, that Robert Fabian in that place maketh no such mention of the Lord Cobham assisting or consenting to them either in mind or in counsel. His words be these, "That certain adherents of Sir John Oldcastle assembled in the field near to St. Giles, in great number, of whom was Sir Roger Acton, Sir John Brown, and John Beverly: the which, with thirty-six more in number, were afterwards convicted of heresy and treason, and for the same were hanged and burned within the said fields of St. Giles," &c. Thus much in Fabian touching the commotion and condemnation of these men; but that the Lord Cobham was there present with them in any part, either of consent or counsel, as Alanus Copus, Anglus, pretendeth, that is not found in Fabian, but is added of his liberal *cornucopiæ*, whereof he is so copious and plentiful, that he may keep an open shop of such unwritten untruths, which he may afford very good and cheap, I think, being such a plentiful artificer.

But here will be objected against me the words of the statute made the second year of King Henry the Fifth, whereupon this adversary, triumphing with no little glory, thinketh himself to have double vantage against me; first, in proving these aforesaid accomplices and adherents of the Lord Cobham to have made insurrection against the king, and so to be traitors: secondly, in convicting that to be untrue, where, in my former book of Acts and monuments, I do report, how that after the death of Sir Roger Acton, Brown, and Beverley, a parliament was holden at Leicester, where a statute was made to this effect: That all and singular such as were of Wickliff's learning, if they would not give over, as in case of felony and other trespasses, losing all their goods to the king, should suffer death in two manner of kinds: that is, they should first be hanged for treason against the king, and then be burned for heresy against God.

Whereupon it remaineth now in examining this objection, and answering the same, that I purge both them of treason, and myself of untruth, so far as truth and fidelity in God's cause shall assist me herein. Albeit in beginning first my history of ecclesiastical matters, wherein I having nothing to do with debatement of causes judicial, but only following the simple narration of things done and executed, I never suspected that ever any would be so captious with me, or so nice-nosed, as to press

me with such narrow points of the law, in trying and discussing every cause and matter so exactly, and straining, as ye would say, the bowels of the statute law so rigorously against me; yet, forasmuch as I am thereunto constrained now by this adversary, I will first lay open all the whole statute made the second year of this aforesaid Henry the Fifth, after the death of the aforesaid Sir Roger Acton and his fellows, at the parliament holden at Leicester, A. D. 1415. That done, I will note upon the words thereof, so as by the circumstances of the same may appear what is to be concluded, either for the defence of their innocency, or for the accusation of this adversary. The tenor and purport of the statute hereunder ensueth:

"Forasmuch as great (A) rumors, congregations and insurrections here in England, by divers the king's majesty's liege people, have been made here of late, as well by those which were of the sect of heresy called Lollardy, as by other of their considerations, excitations and abatement; to the intent (B) to annul and subvert the Christian faith and the law of God within the same realm, as also to (C) destroy our sovereign lord the king himself, and (D) all manner of estates of the same his realm, as well spiritual as temporal, (E) and also all manner of policy and the laws of the land; finally, the same our lord the king, to the honour of God, in conscrvation and fortification of the Christian faith, and also in salvation of his royal estate, and of the estate of all his realm, willing to provide a more open and more due punishment against the malice of such heretics and Lollards, than hath been had or used in that case heretofore, so that for the fear of the same laws and punishments, such heresies and Lollardies may the rather cease in time to come.

"By the advice and assent aforesaid, and at the prayer of the said commons, hath ordained and established; that especially the chancellor, the treasurer, the justice of the one bench and of the other, justices of assize, justices of peace, sheriffs, mayors, and bailiffs of cities and towns, and all other officers, having the government of people either now present, or which for the time shall be, do make an oath in taking of their charge and offices, to extend their whole pain and diligence to put out, to do to put out, cease and destroy, all manner of heresies and errors, commonly called Lollardies, within the places in which they exercise their charges and offices, from time to time, with all their power; and that they assist, favour, and maintain the ordinaries and their commissaries, so often as they or any of them shall be thereunto required by the said ordinaries or their commissaries; so that when the said officers and ministers travel or ride to arrest any Lollard, or to make any assistance at the (F) instance and request of the ordinaries or their commissaries, by virtue of this statute, the same ordinaries and commissaries (G) do pay for their cost reasonably. And that the services of the king, unto whom the officers be first sworn, be preferred before all other statutes for the liberty of holy church and the ministers of the same, and especially for the punishment of heretics and Lollards, made before these days, and not repealed, but being in force; and also that all persons convict of heresy, of whatsoever estate, condition, or degree they be, by the said ordinaries or their commissaries left unto the secular power, according to the laws of holy church, shall leese and forfeit all their lands and tenements which they have in fee simple, in manner and form as followeth: that is to say, that the king shall have all the lands and tenements which the said convicts have in fee simple, and which be immediately holden of him, as forfeited; and that the other lords, of whom the lands and tenements of such convicts be holden, immediately after that the king is thereof seized and answered of the (H) year, day and wast, shall have livery thereof out of the hands of the king, of the lands and tenements aforesaid, so of them holden, as hath been used in

case of attainder of felonies, except the lands and tenements which be holden of the ordinaries or their commissaries, before whom any such impeached of heresy be convict, (I) which lands and tenements shall wholly remain to the king as forfeit. And moreover, that all the goods and chattels of such convicted be forfeit to our right sovereign lord the king, so that no person convict of heresy, and left unto the secular power (according to the laws of holy church), do forfeit his lands before that he be dead. And if any such person so. convicted be enfeoffed, whether it be by fine or by deed, or without deed, in lands and tenements, rents, or services, in fee or otherwise, in whatsoever manner, or have any other possessions or chattels by gift or grant of any person or persons, to the use of any other than only to the use of such convicts; that the same lands, tenements, rents, or services, or other such possessions, or chattels, shall not be forfeit unto our sovereign lord the king in any manner wise.

"And moreover, that the justices of the king's bench, the justices of peace, and justices of assize, have full power to inquire of all such which hold any errors or heresies, as Lollards, and who be their maintainers, receivers, favourers, and sustainers, common writers of such books, as well of their sermons, as schools, conventicles, congregations, and confederacies, and that this clause be put in the commissions of the justices of peace. And if any persons be indicted of any points abovesaid, that the said justices have power to award against them a *capias*, and that the sheriff be bound to arrest the person or persons so indicted, as soon as he can find them, either by himself or by his officers. And forasmuch as the cognisance of heresies, errors, or Lollardies, appertaineth to the judges of holy church, and not unto the secular judges, that such persons indicted, (K) be delivered unto the ordinaries of the places, or to their commissaries, by indentures between them to be made, within ten days after their arrest, or sooner, if it may be done, to be thereof acquitted, or convicted by the laws of holy church, in case such persons be not indicted of any other thing, the cognisance whereof appertaineth to the judges and secular officers; in which case, after they shall be acquitted, or delivered before the secular judges of such things as appertain to the secular judges, they shall be safely sent unto the said ordinaries or their commissaries, and to them to be delivered by indentures, as is aforesaid, to be acquitted or convicted of the same heresies, errors, and Lollardies, as is aforesaid, according to the laws of holy church, and that within the term abovesaid; provided, that the said indictments be not taken in evidence, (L) but only for information before the judges spiritual, against such persons indicted: but that the ordinaries begin their process against such persons indicted, in the same manner as though no such judgment were, having no regard to such indictments. And if any be indicted of heresy, error, or Lollardy, and taken by the sheriff, or any other officer of the king, he may be let to mainprise, within the said ten days, by good surety, for whom the said sheriffs or other officers will answer, so that the person so indicted be ready to be delivered unto the said ordinaries, or to their commissaries, before the end of the tenth day abovehere recited, if he may by any means for sickness. And that every ordinary have sufficient commissaries or commissary abiding in every county, in place notable, so that if any such person indicted be taken, the said commissaries or commissary may be warned in the notable place of his abiding, by the sheriff, or any of his officers, to come unto the king's gaol within the said county, there to receive the same person so indicted, by indenture, as is aforesaid; and that in the inquests in this case taken, the sheriffs and other officers unto whom it appertaineth, do impanel good and sufficient persons, not suspected, nor procured, that is to say, such as have at the least, every one of them that shall be so impanelled in such inquests, within the realm, a hundred shillings by the year, in lands, tenements, or rent, upon pain to leese to the

king's use twenty pounds. And that those which shall be impanelled upon such inquests or sessions and gaols, have, every one of them, to the value of forty shillings by the year. And if any such person arrested, whether it be by the ordinaries, or the officers of the king, (M) either escape or break prison, before he be thereof acquit before the ordinary; that then all his goods and chattels which he had at the day of such arrest, shall be forfeit to the king; and his lands and tenements which he had the same day be seized also into the king's hands, and that the king have the profits thereof from the same day until he render himself to the said prison from whence he escaped. And that the aforesaid justices have full power to inquire of all such escapes and breaking of prisons, and also of the lands, tenements, goods, and chattels of such persons indicted. Provided, that if any such person indicted do not return unto the said prison, and dieth, not being convict, that then it shall be lawful for his heirs to enter into the lands and tenements of his or their ancestor, without any other suit made unto the king for this cause. And that all those which have liberties, or franchises royal, in England, as the county of Chester, the county and liberty of Durham, and other like; and also the lords which have jurisdictions and franchises royal in Wales, where the king's writs do not run, have like power to execute and put in execution in all points these articles, by them or by their officers, in like manner as do the justices and other the king's officers above declared."

Thus having recited the words of the statute, now let us consider the reasons and objections of this adversary, who, grounding peradventure upon the preface or preamble of this aforesaid statute, will prove thereby the Lord Cobham and Sir Roger Acton, with the rest of their abettors, to have been traitors to their king and their country. Whereunto I answer, first, in general, that although the face or preface prefixed before the statute, may show and declare the cause and occasion original why the statute was made, yet the making of the statute importeth no necessary probation of the preface always to be true that goeth before; which being but a colour to induce the making thereof, giveth no force material thereunto, nor is any necessary part of the body of the said statute, but only adhereth as a declaration of the circumstance thereof, and sometimes is clean omitted, and differeth much from the substance of the same. For, as statutes in civil policy most commonly do tend to a public end, and are general, so prefaces before statutes, which most commonly declare the cause or beginning thereof, are private, and do stand only but upon particular facts, which either of ill-will or displeasure may be suggested, or by colour may be exaggerated, or for fear may be believed, at least suspected, as many suspicions do oftentimes rise in princes' heads through false surmises, and malicious complaints of certain evil-disposed about them, whereby many cruel laws, rising upon a false ground, are promulgated, to the ruin of much innocent blood. Example whereof we have not only in this present statute, but also in the like statute, commonly called the statute *Ex officio, vel de comburendo*, made by this king's father and predecessor. In the preface of which bloody statute is contained another like complaint of the prelates and clergy, not only as heinous, but also as shamefully false and untrue, against the poor Lollards, as by the words of the complaint may appear; wherein most falsely they slander and misreport the true servants of Christ to be Lollards, heretics, subverters of the commonwealth, destroyers of the Christian faith, enemies to all good laws, and to the church of Christ. The words of which statute, proceeding much after the like course as doth this present statute, may easily bewray the untruth and false surmise thereof, if thou please, gentle reader, to mark and confer the words according as they are there to be read and seen, as followeth: *Conventiculas et confederationes faciunt, scholas tenent et exercent, libros conficiunt atque scribunt, populum nequiter instruunt et*

informant, et ad seditionem seu insurrectionem excitant, quantum possunt, et magnas dissensiones in populo faciunt, et alia diversa enormia auditui horrenda in dies perpetrant, in fidei catholicae, et ecclesiae subversionem, divinique cultus diminutionem, ac etiam destructionem status, jurium, et libertatum dictae ecclesiae Anglicanae. And after a few words, *Ad omnem juris, et rationis ordinem atque regimen, penitus destruendum, &c.* He that is or shall be acquainted with old histories, and with the usual practices of Satan, the old enemy of Christ, from the first beginning of the primitive church unto this present time, shall see this to be no news, but a common, and, as one would say, a quotidian fever among Christ's children, to be vexed with false accusations and cruel slanders.

Nemesion, the Egyptian and true martyr of Christ, was he not first accused to be a felon? And when that could not be proved, he was condemned at the same judgment for a Christian; and therefore being cast into bands, was scourged, by the commandment of the president, double to the other felons, and at length was burned with the thieves, although he never was found thief nor felon.

Against Cyprian, in like sort, it was slanderously objected by Galenus Maximus, proconsul, that he had long continued with a mind full of sacrilege, and that he had gathered unto him men of wicked conspiracy.

So Justin Martyr, what false and criminous accusations suffered he by Crescens! Cornelius, bishop of Rome, and martyr, was accused of Decius, that he wrote letters unto Cyprian against the commonwealth.

To consider the laws and statutes made by tyrants and emperors in the first persecution of the primitive church, against the innocent servants of Christ, and to compare the same with the laws and statutes in this latter persecution under antichrist, a man shall find, that as they agree all in like cruelty, so was there no great difference in false forging of pretended causes and crimes devised. For as then the Christians were wrongfully accused of the Gentiles for insurrections and rebellions against the emperors and empire, for being enemies to all mankind, for murdering of infants, for worshipping the sun, (because they prayed toward the east,) for worshipping also the head of an ass, &c., upon the rumours whereof divers and sundry laws and statutes were enacted, some engraven in brass, some otherwise written against them; so in this aforesaid statute, and in such other statutes or indictments made and conceived against the Lollards, the case is not so strange, but it may credibly be supposed, that the making thereof did rise rather upon malice and hatred against their religion conceived, than upon any just cause ministered on their parts, whom they did wrongfully charge and accuse. Like as in the time of Domitian, for fear of David's stock, all the nephews of Jude, the Lord's brother in the flesh, were accused to the emperor. And also the like fear and hatred stirred up other emperors and the senate of Rome, to proceed with persecuting laws against the Christian flock of Christ; whereupon rose up those malicious slanders, false surmises, infamous lies, and wrongful accusations against the Christians; so that what crimes soever malice could invent, or rash suspicion could minister, that was imputed against them.

Not unlike also it may seem, that the pope with his prelates, fearing and misdoubting lest the proceeding of the gospel preached by these persons should overthrow the state of their majesty, did therefore, by sinister accusations, inflame the hearts of princes against them, and under some coloured covert, to shadow their cloaked hatred, devised these and other like crimes which were not true, but which might cleanly serve their purpose.

This hitherto have I said as in a general sum, answering to the preamble of the aforesaid statute, for the defence of Sir John Oldcastle, and Sir Roger Acton, and others, as not defining precisely what was, or was not; (for here I may say with Hall, that as I was not present at the deed doing, so, with him, I may also leave the same at large;) but as one, by tracing the footsteps of the truth, as by all conjectures hunting out in this matter, what is most like, would but only say my mind.

Now consequently it followeth that we descend to the special points and particulars of the aforesaid preamble; to consider what thereof may be collected, or necessarily is to be judged, either for proof or disproof, of this aforesaid Sir John Oldcastle and his fellows.

(A) And first, where the proem of this statute beginneth with "rumours, congregations, and insurrections," &c. As it is not like, that if these men had intended any forcible entries or rebellion against the king, they would have made any rumours thereof before the deed done; so is it more credibly to be supposed, all these flourishes of words to be but words of course, or of office, and to savour rather of the rankness of the indicter's pen, who disposed either to show his copy, or else to aggravate the crime; and to make mountains of molehills, first of rumours maketh congregations, and from congregations riseth up to insurrections; whereas in all these rumours, congregations, and insurrections, yet never a blow was given, never a stroke was stricken, no blood spilled, no furniture nor instruments of war, no sign of battle, yea, no express signification either of any rebellious word, or malicious fact, described neither in records, nor yet in any chronicle. Again, if these rumours were words spoken against the king, as calling him a tyrant, a "usurper of the crown," the "prince of priests," &c., why then be none of these words expressed in their indictments, or left in records? Doth Master Cope think for a man to be called a traitor, to be enough to make him a traitor, unless some plain and evident proof be brought for him to be so indeed, as he is called? "Rumours," saith he, "congregations, and insurrections were made." Rumours are uncertain, congregations have been, and may be, among Christian men in dangerous times, for good purposes, and no treason against their princes meant. The term of insurrections may be added εκ του περισσου[Greek: ek ton perisson] by practice, or surmise of the prelates and penmen, who, to bring them the more in hatred of the king, might add this rather of their own gentleness, than of the others' deserving. Certain it is, and undoubted, that the prelates in those days, being so mightily inflamed against these Lollards, were not altogether behind for their parts, nor utterly idle in this matter, but practised against them what they could, first to bring them into hatred, and then to death.

Examples of which kind of practice among the popish clergy have not lacked neither before nor since. Moreover, if these men had made such a rebellious insurrection against the king, as is pretended in the preamble before this statute, which were a matter of high treason, how chanceth then that the whole body of the statute, following after the said preface or preamble, runneth in all the parts or branches thereof, both in matter of arrest, of indictment, information, request, allowance of officers, cognizance of ordinaries, of the forefact, &c., upon cases of heresy, and not of treason, as by particular tractation shall be, Christ willing, declared.

And, forasmuch as these men be so grievously accused of Alanus Copus, for congregating and rising against their king, and the whole realm, if I had so much leisure to defend, as he hath pleasure to defame, here might be demanded of him, to keep him some further play, touching this mighty insurrection, Where they came in

number twenty thousand against the king? in what order of battle-array they marched? what captains, under-captains, and petty captains they had, to guide the wings, and to lead the army? whether they were horsemen or footmen? If they were horsemen, as is pretended, what meant they then to resort to the thickets near to St. Giles's field, which was no meet place for horses to stir? If they were footmen, how standeth that with the author, which reporteth them to be horsemen? Moreover, it is to be demanded, what ensigns or flags, what shot, what powder, what armour, weapons, and other furniture of war? also what treasure of money to wage so many, to the number of twenty thousand? what trumpets, drums, and other noise necessary for the purpose they had? All these preparations for such an enterprise, are requisite and necessary to be had. And, peradventure, if truth were well sought, it would be found at length, that instead of armies and weapons, they were coming only with their books, and with Beverly their preacher, into those thickets. But as I was not there present at the fact, as is before said, so have I neither certainty to define upon their case, nor yet, Master Cope, to exclaim against them; unless, peradventure, that he, taking an occasion of the time, will thus argue against them, that because it was the hot month of January, the second day after the Epiphany, therefore it is like that Sir John Oldcastle, with twenty thousand Lollards, camped together in the fields in all the heat of the weather, to destroy the king and all the nobles, and to make himself regent of England: and why not as well the king, as regent of England, seeing all the nobles should have been destroyed, and he only left alone to reign by himself?

It followeth more in the preamble of the aforesaid statute, (B) to annul, destroy, and subvert the Christian faith, and the law of God, and holy church, &c. He that was the forger and inventor of this report, as it appeareth to proceed from the prelates, seemeth no cunning Dædalus, nor half his crafts-master in lying for the whetstone. Better he might have learned of Sinon in Virgil, more artificially to have framed and conveyed his narration; which although in no case could sound like any truth, yet some colour of probability should have been set upon it, to give it some countenance of a like tale: as if he had first declared the Lord Cobham to have been before in secret confederacy with the great Turk; or if he had made him some Termagant or Mahound out of Babylonia, or some Herod of Judea, or some antichrist out of Rome, or some grand paunched epicure of this world, and had showed, that he had received letters from the great Soldan, to fight against the faith of Christ, and law of God; then had it appeared somewhat more credible, that the said Sir John Oldcastle, with his sect of heresy, went about to "annul, destroy, and subvert the Christian faith and law of God, within the realm of England," &c.

But now, where will either he or Master Cope find men so mad to believe, or so ingenious that can imagine this to be true, that the Lord Cobham, being a Christian, and so faithful a Christian, would, or did, ever cogitate in his mind to destroy and annul the faith of Christ in the realm of England? Whatsoever the report of this pursuant or preface saith, I report me unto the indifferent reader, how standeth this with any face of truth? that he which before, through the reading of Wickliff's works, had been so earnestly converted to the law of God, who had also approved himself such a faithful servant of Christ, that for the faith of Christ he, being examined and tried before the prelates, not only ventured his life, but stood constant unto the sentence of death defined against him, being a condemned and a dead man by law, who had, as much as to devotion and fear appertained, "suffered already what he might or could suffer," as Cyprian said by Cornelius; that he, I say, which a little before, in the month of September, stood so constant in defence of Christ's faith,

would now, in the month of January, rise to destroy, annul, and subvert Christ's faith, and the law of God, and holy church within the realm of England?

How can it be, not like only, but possible to be true, that he, which never in all the time of his life denied the faith; which ever confessed the faith so constantly; which was for the same faith condemned; yea, and at last also burned for the faith; would ever fight against the faith and law of God, to annul and subvert it? Let us proceed yet further, and see when he should have so destroyed and annulled the Christian faith and law of God in England, what faith or law then could he, or did he, intend to bring into the realm of England? the Turk's faith? or the Jew's faith? or the pope's faith? or what faith else I pray you? for he that will be an enemy to the faith of Christ, and will show himself a friend to no other faith besides, I account him not out of his right faith, but out of his right wits.

(C) And therefore, even as it is true, that Sir John Oldcastle with his confederates and abettors were up in arms to subvert and extinguish the faith of Christ and law of God in the realm of England, so, by the like truth, it may be esteemed, that the same persons rose also "to destroy their sovereign lord the king and his brethren." First, thanks be to God, that neither the king nor any of his brethren had any hurt by him. But his intent, saith the preface, was to destroy their sovereign lord the king. Whereunto I answer with this interrogatory, Whether was his intent privily to have destroyed him, or by open force of arms? If privily, what needed then such a great army of twenty thousand men, to achieve that secret feat? rather I would think that he needed more the help of such as were near about the king; as some of the king's privy chamber, or some of his secret counsel; whereof neither chronicle nor record doth insinuate any mention. If his intent was openly to invade the king; you must understand Master Cope, that to withstand a king in his own realm, many things are required: long time, great preparation, many friends, great assistance, and aid of kindred, money, horse, men, armour, and all other things appertaining for the same.

Earl Godwin of Westsax, who had married Canute's daughter, being a man both ambitious and as false a traitor, for all his six sons and great alliance, yet durst not set upon King Edward to invade him in his realm; although he sought many occasions so to do, yet never durst he enterprise openly that which his ambition so greatly presumed unto.

In the time of King Henry the Third, Simon Montfort, earl of Gloucester, Gilbert Clare, earl of Leicester, Humfrey Rone, earl of Ferrence, with a great number of lords and barons, thought themselves to have great right on their sides; yet durst they not, for all their power, openly assail the king in his realm, before great debatement and talk first had between.

Likewise, what murmuring and grudging was in the realm against King Edward the Second, among the peers and nobles, and also prelates, only Walter, bishop of Coventry, excepted, first for Gaveston, then for the Spencers, at what time Thomas, earl of Lancaster, Guido, earl of Warwick, with the most part of all other earls and barons, concordly consenting together to the displacing first of Gaveston, then of the Spencers, yet neither rashly, nor without great fear, durst stir up war in the land, or disquiet or vex the king; but first, by all means of moderate counsel, and humble petition, thought rather to persuade, than to invade the king.

In like manner, and with like grudging minds, in the reign of King Richard the Second, Thomas Woodstock, duke of Gloucester, the king's uncle, with the earls of

Arundel, Warwick, and Derby, with the power almost of the whole commons, stood up in arms against the king; and yet, notwithstanding all their power joined together being so great, and their cause seeming to them so reasonable, yet were they not so hardy, straightways to fly upon the king, but by way of parliament thought to accomplish that which their purpose had conceived; and so did, without any war striking against the king.

After King Richard the Second was deposed, and was in prison yet living, divers noblemen were greatly inflamed against King Henry the Fourth, as Sir John Holland, earl of Huntingdon, Thomas Spenser, earl of Gloucester, the earls likewise of Kent and Salisbury, with Sir John Cheiney, and others more, whereof divers had been dukes before, and now deposed by King Henry the Fourth; although they had conceived in their hearts great grudge and malice against the said King Henry yet had they neither heart nor power openly, with man's force, to assail the king, but secretly were compelled to achieve their conceived intent, which notwithstanding they could not accomplish.

Thus you may see, Master Cope, or else Master Harpsfield, or whatsoever ye be, to gainstand a king, and with open force to encounter with him in his own land, and in his own chamber of London, where he is so sure and strong, what a matter and of how great achievance it is, wherein so many and so great difficulties do lie, the attempt so dangerous, the chances so uncertain, the furniture of so many things required, that scarce in any king's days heretofore any peers or nobles of the realm, were they never so strongly assisted with power, wit, or counsel, yet either were able, or else well durst, ever to enterprise upon a case so dangerous, notwithstanding they were of themselves never so far from all fear of God, and true obedience. And shall we then think, or can we imagine, Master Cope, that Sir John Oldcastle, a man so well instructed in the knowledge of God's word, being but a poor knight by his degree, having none of all the peers and nobles in all the world to join with him, being prisoner in the Tower of London a little before in the month of December, could now, in the month of January, so suddenly, in such a hot season of the year, start up an army of twenty thousand fighting men to invade the king, to kill two dukes his brethren, to annul Christian faith, to destroy God's law, and to subvert holy church? And why doth not he add, moreover, to set also all London on fire, and to turn all England into a fish-pool? Belike these men, which give out these figments of Sir John Oldcastle, did think him to be one of Deucalion's stock, who by casting of stones over his shoulder, could, by and by, make men at his pleasure; or else that he had Cadmus' teeth to sow, to make so many harvest-men to start up at once.

But let us consider yet further of these twenty thousand soldiers, so suddenly, without wages, without victual or other provision, congregated together, what they were, from whence, out of what quarter, county, or counties they came. In other kings' days, whensoever any rebellion was against the king moved by the commons, as when Jack Straw and Wat Tyler, of Kent and Essex, rose in the time of King Richard the Second; when William Mandevil of Abingdon, Jack Cade of Kent, in the time of King Henry the Sixth; in the time of King Henry the Eighth, when the commotion was of rebels in Lincolnshire, then in Yorkshire; when in King Edward the Sixth's time, Humphrey Arundel in Devonshire, and Captain Kett in Norfolk, made stir against the king, the country and parts from whence these rebels did spring, were both noted and also defamed. In this so traitorous commotion, therefore, let us now learn what men these were, and from what county or counties in all England they came. If they came out of any, let the chroniclers declare what counties they were. If they came out of

none, as none is named, then let them come out of Eutopia, where, belike, this figment was first forged and invented. Wherefore, seeing neither the county from whence they came, nor yet the names of any of all these twenty thousand, do appear, what they were, either in chronicle or in record, but remain altogether unknown, I leave it, gentle reader, to thy judgment, to think thereupon, as thy wisdom shall lead thee.

(D) It followeth more in the aforesaid preface: "And to destroy all other manner of estates of the same realm of England, as well spiritual as temporal," &c. By the course of this preamble it appeareth, that the said Sir John Oldcastle was a wonderful cruel tyrant and murderer, who, being not yet satisfied with the blood of the king, nor of the two dukes his brethren, would also make havoc and sweepstake of all manner of estates in the realm of England. What! and leave no manner of estate alive? No! neither lords spiritual nor temporal, but all together shall be destroyed. And what had all these estates done, thus so miserably to be destroyed? Although, percase, the mood of this man might have been incensed and kindled against the king and the lords spiritual, by whom he had been condemned, as is aforesaid; yet why should all other manner of other estates both spiritual and temporal be killed? If none of all the estates in England, neither duke, earl, baron, lord, knight, or other gentleman had been his friend, but all his enemies, how then is it like, that he, having all the estates, peers, nobles, and gentlemen of the realm against him, and none to stand with him, either could or durst attempt any commotion against the whole power of the land, he being but one gentleman only, with Sir Roger Acton and Master Brown left alone? At least, good reason yet would, that those hundred knights should have been spared out of this bloody slaughter, whom he offered to reduce unto the king, before, for his purgation. And, finally, if this was his purpose, that all these estates both spiritual and temporal should have been cut down, what needed then that he should have made himself a regent, whenas he might as well have made himself a king, or what else he would, being left then prince alone?

(E) The preamble, as it began with untruth, and continued in the same figure, heaping one untruth upon another, so now endeth with another misreport as untrue as the rest, showing and declaring that the intent of Sir John Oldcastle was also, "To destroy all manner of policy," and, finally, "the laws of the land," &c. We read of William the Conqueror, otherwise named William Bastard, who, being a puissant duke in his country, when that the crown of England was allotted to him, and he coming over with all his peers, nobles, and barons of his whole land, into this realm, and had with great difficulty obtained victory against King Harold; yet to alter and destroy the policy and the laws of the land, it passed his power; insomuch that it had not been permitted unto him to have proceeded so far as he did, unless he had first sworn to the nobles of this land, to retain still the laws of King Edward, as he found them. And albeit he afterward forswore himself, breaking his oath in altering and changing many of the aforesaid laws, yet, wild he, nild he, he could not so destroy them all, (for the which much war and great commotions endured long after in the realm,) but that he was constrained, and also contented, to allow and admit a great part of the said laws of King Edward. And if he, being king and conqueror, with all his strength of Normans and Englishmen about him, was too weak and insufficient to destroy all manner of policy and laws of this land which he had conquered; how much less then is it to be supposed that Sir John Oldcastle, being but a private subject, and a poor knight, and a condemned prisoner, destitute and forsaken of all lords, earls, and barons, who, to save his own life, had more to do than he could well compass, would either take in hand or conceive in his head any such exploit, after the subversion of

Christian faith and law of God, after the slaughter of the king and all manner of estates, as well spiritual as temporal, in the realm of England, after the desolation of holy church, to destroy also all manner of policy, and finally, the laws of the land? Which monstrous and incredible figment, how true it may seem to Master Cope, or to some other late chroniclers of the like credulity, I cannot tell.

But here will it be said again, perhaps, that the matter of such preambles and prefaces being but pursuants of statutes, and containing but words of course, to aggravate and to give a show of a thing which they would have to seem more odious to the people, is not so precisely to be scanned, or exquisitely to be stood upon, as for the ground of a necessary case of truth.

This is it, Master Cope, that I said before, and now do well grant and admit the same, that such preambles or forefaces lined with a *non sequitur*, containing in them matter but of surmise, and words of course, and rather monsters out of course, and many times rising upon false information, are not always in themselves material or necessary probations in all points to be followed; as appeareth, both by this statute, and also by the statute of this king's father. And yet, notwithstanding, out of these same preambles and forefronts of statutes, and other indictments, which, commonly rising upon matter of information, run only upon words of course, of office, and not upon simple truth, a great part of our chroniclers do often take their matter, which they insert into their stories, having no respect or examination of circumstances to be compared, but only following bare rumours, or else such words as they see in such fabling prefaces or indictments expressed; whereby it cometh so to pass, that the younger chronicler following the elder, as the blind leading the blind, both together fall into the pit of error. And you also, Master Cope, following the steps of the same, do seem likewise to err together with them for good fellowship. And thus concerning the face of this statute hitherto sufficiently.

Now let us consider and discuss in like manner, first the coherence, then the particular contents, of the said statute: as touching the which coherence, if it be well examined, a man shall find almost a chimera of it, in which neither the head accordeth with the body, nor yet the branches of the statute well agree with themselves.

For whereas the preface of the statute standeth only upon matter of treason, conceived by false suggestion and wrong information, the body of the said statute, which should follow upon the same, runneth only upon matter of heresy pertaining to the ordinaries, as by every branch thereof may appear.

(F) For first, Where he saith, "At the instance and request of the ordinaries or their commissaries," &c.: hereby it appeareth, this to be no cause of treason nor felony; for that every man, of duty, is bound to, and by the laws of the realm may, arrest and apprehend a traitor or a felon, if he can; where otherwise by this statute, an officer is not bound to arrest him which offendeth in case of this statute, without request made by the ordinaries or their commissaries; and therefore this offence seemeth neither to be treason nor felony.

(G) Secondly, Where it followeth, that "the same ordinaries and commissaries do pay for their costs," &c.: this allowance of the officers' charges in this sort proveth this offence neither treason nor felony.

(H) Thirdly, Where the statute willeth the king to be "answered of the year, day, and wast," &c.: by this also is proved the offence not to be treason; for else in

cases of treason, the whole inheritance, I trow, Master Cope, (speaking as no great skilful lawyer,) is forfeit to the prince.

(I) The fourth argument I take out of these words of the statute, "Whereas such lands and tenements which are holden of the ordinaries, are willed wholly to remain to the king as forfeit," &c.: whereby it is manifest, that the prelates for their matter of Lollardy only were the occasioners and procurers of this statute; and therefore were barren of the benefit of any forfeit rising thereby, as good reason was they should. And thus it is notorious, that the preface running specially and principally upon treason, and the statute running altogether upon points of heresy, do not well cohere nor join together.

(K) Fifthly, In that "such persons indicted shall be delivered unto the ordinaries of the places," &c.: it cannot be denied, but that this offence concerneth no manner of treason, forasmuch as ordinaries cannot be judges in cases of treason or felony, by the laws of our realm, Bract. in fine libri 1.

(L) Sixthly, By the indictments provided "not to be taken in evidence, but only for information, before the judges spiritual," &c.: it is likewise to be noted, to what end these indictments were taken; to wit, only to inform the ordinaries, which cannot be in cases of treason.

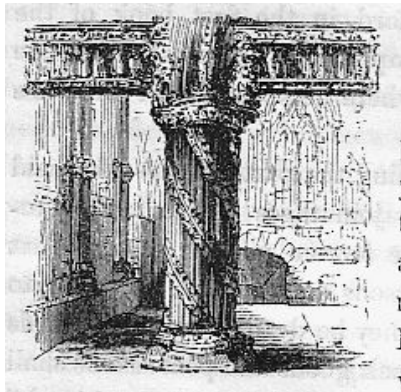
(M) Lastly, Where it followeth, toward the end of the statute, touching escape or breaking of prison, &c.: by this it may lightly be smelt, whereto all the purpose of this statute driveth; that is, to the special escape of the Lord Cobham out of the Tower, to this end, to have his lands and possessions forfeit unto the king. And yet the same escape of the Lord Cobham, in this statute considered, is taken by Mr. Justice Stanford, in the first book of the Pleas of the Crown, cap. 33, to be an escape of one arrested for heresy, where he speaketh of the case of the Lord Cobham.

Moreover, as touching the parts of this aforesaid statute, how will you join these two branches together, whereas in the former part is said, "That the lands of such persons convict shall be forfeit to the king, not before they be dead:" and afterwards it followeth, "That their goods and possessions shall be forfeit at the day of their arrest to the king?" But herein standeth no such great doubt, nor matter to be weighed. This is without all doubt, and notoriously, evidently, and most manifestly may appear, by all the arguments and whole purport of the statute; that as well the preamble and preface thereof, as the whole body of the said statute, were made, framed, and procured only by and through the instigation, information, and excitation, of the prelates and the popish clergy; not so much for any treason committed against the king, but only for fear and hatred of Lollardy tending against their law, which they more dreaded and abhorred than ever any treason against the prince. And then, to set the king and all the states against them, whereby the more readily to work their despatch, they thought it best, and none so compendious a policy, as prettily to join treason together with their Lollardy; wherein the poor men once entangled, could no ways escape destruction.

This, Master Cope, have I said, and say again, not as one absolutely determining upon the matter. At the doing whereof, as I was not present myself, so with your own Hall, I may and do leave it at large, but as one leading the readers by all conjectures and arguments of probability and of due circumstances, to consider with themselves what is further to be thought in these old accustomed practices and proceedings of these prelates. Protesting, moreover, Master Cope, in this matter to

you, that those chronicles which you so much ground upon, I take them in this matter neither to be as witnesses sufficient, nor as judges competent; who, as they were not themselves present at the deed done, no more than I, but only following uncertain rumours, and words of course and office, bringing with them no certain trial of that which they do affirm, may therein both be deceived themselves, and also deceive you and other which depend upon them.

And hitherto concerning this statute enough: out of which statute you see, Master Cope, that neither your chroniclers, nor you, can take any great advantage, to prove any treason in the Lord Cobham, or in his fellows, as hath been hitherto abundantly declared in the premises.



hus then having sufficiently cleared the Lord Cobham and his partners, from all that you can object unto them out of records and statutes, let us now come to your English chroniclers wherewith you seem to press me, and to oppress them, whom ye name to be Robert Fabian, Edward Hall, Polydore Virgil, Thomas Cooper, Richard Grafton, with other brief epitomes and summaries, &c.; concerning which authors, as I have nothing to say, but to their commendations, in this place; so, if that you had avouched the same to the commendation rather than to the reproof of others, I would better have commended your nature, and believed your cause. But now, like a spider-catcher, sucking out of every one what is the worst, to make up your laystall, you heap up a dunghill of dirty dialogues, containing nothing in them but malicious railing, virulent slanders, manifest untruths, opprobrious contumelies, and stinking blasphemy, able almost to corrupt and infect the air. Such is the malady and cacoethes of your pen, that it beginneth to bark, before it hath learned well to write; which of yours, nevertheless, I do not here reproach or contemn, as neither do I greatly fear the same. God, of his mercy, keep the sword out of the papists' hand: it is not the pen of the papists I greatly pass upon, though twenty Copes and so many surplices were set against the Book of Monuments, were I so disposed, Master Cope, to dally, or, as the Greeks do say, *αυτος εση*[Greek: *Autos eoe*] and to repay again as I am provoked. But, in despiteful railing, and in this satirical sort of barking, I give you over, and suffer you therein to pass not only yourself, but also Cerberus himself, if ye will, the great ban-dog of Pluto. Mildness and humanity rather beseemeth, and is the grace of the Latin phrase. If ye could hit upon the vein thereof, it would win you much more honesty with all honest men: but the Lord hereafter may call you, which I beseech him to do, and to forgive you that you have done.

In the mean time, seeing this your prattling pen must needs be walking, yet this you might have learned of these your own authors whom you allege, more civilly to have tempered your fume in exclaiming against them whose cause is to you not perfectly known. And now briefly to answer to these your aforesaid writers, as witnesses produced against these men: there be two things (as I take it) in chronicle writers to be considered; first, the grounds which they follow; secondly, in what place they serve.

As touching the order and ground of writing among these chroniclers, ye must consider, and cannot be ignorant, that as none of all these by you forenamed was present at the deed, nor witness of the fact, so have they nothing of themselves herein certainly to affirm, but either must follow public rumour and hearsay for their author; or else one of them must borrow of another: whereof neither seemeth to me sufficient; for, as public rumour is never certain, so one author may soon deceive another.

By reason whereof it cometh oft to pass, that as these story-writers hit many times the truth, so again all is not in the gospel that they do write: wherefore great respect is here to be had, either not to credit rashly every one that writeth stories, or else to see what grounds they have whom we do follow.

Now to demand, Master Cope, of you, what authority or foundation hath your Robert Fabian, have Polydore Virgil, Edward Hall, and other of your authors, to prove these men to be traitors? what authority do they avouch? what acts, what registers, what records, or out of what court do they show, or what demonstration do they make? And do you think it sufficient, because these men do only affirm it, without further probation, with your *αυτος εον*[Greek: Autos eoe], therefore we are bound to believe it? Take me not so, Master Cope, that I do here diminish any thing, or derogate from the credit of those writers you allege, whose labours have deserved well, and serve to great utility: but coming now to trial of a matter lying in controversy between us, we are now forced to seek out the fountain and bottom of the truth, where it is not enough to say, So it is, but the cause is to be showed why it is so affirmed. And what though Robert Fabian, Polydore Virgil, and Edward Hall should altogether (as they do not) agree in the treason of Sir John Oldcastle, and of the rest? yet neither is this any sufficient surety to prove them traitors;; considering that writers of stories, for the most part following either blind report, or else one taking of another, use commonly all to sound together after one tune, so that as one saith, all say; and if one err, all do err. Wherefore you see, Master Cope, how it is not sufficient nor sure to stick only to the names and authorities of chronographers, unless the ground be found substantial whereupon they stand themselves, which yet in none of these whom you have produced doth appear.

Secondly, In alleging and writing of chronicles, it is to be considered to what place and effect they serve. If ye would show out of them the order and course of times, what years were of dearth and of plenty, where kings kept their Christmas, what conduits were made, what mayors and sheriffs were in London, what battles were fought, what triumphs and great feasts were holden, when kings began their reign, and when they ended, &c.: in such vulgar and popular affairs the narration of the chronicler serveth to good purpose, and may have his credit, wherein the matter forceth not much whether it be true or false, or whether any listeth to believe them. But where a thing is denied, and in cases of judgment, and in controversies doubtful, which are to be decided and bolted out by evidence of just demonstration; I take them neither for judges of the bench, nor for arbiters of the cause, nor as witnesses of themselves sufficient necessarily to be sticked unto: albeit I deny not but histories are taken many times, and so termed, for witnesses of times, and glasses of antiquity, &c., yet not such witnesses as whose testimony beareth always a necessary truth, and bindeth belief.

The two witnesses which came against Susanna, being senators, both of ancient years, bare a great countenance of a most evident testimony, whereby they almost both deceived the people and oppressed the innocent, had not young Daniel, by

the Holy Spirit of God, taken them aside, and severally examining them one from the other, found them to be false liars both; leaving to us thereby a lesson of wholesome circumspection, not rashly to believe all that cometh, and also teaching us how to try them out. Wherefore, Master Cope, following here the like example of Daniel in trying these your records which ye infer against these men, we will, in like manner, examine them severally one from another, and see how their testimony agreeth: first, beginning with your Robert Fabian; which Robert Fabian, being neither in the same age, nor at the deed-doing, can of himself give no credit herein, without due proof and evidence convenient.

How then doth Robert Fabian prove this matter of treason to be true? what probation doth he bring? what authority doth he allege? And doth Robert Fabian think, if he were not disposed to conceive of the Lord Cobham and those men, a better opinion but to be traitors, that men are bound to believe him only at his word, without any ground or cause declared, why they should so do, but only because he so saith, and it pleased him so to write? And if ye think, Master Cope, the word only of this witness sufficient to make authority, speaking against the Lord Cobham, and proving nothing which followed so many years after him; why may not I, as well and much rather, take the word and testimony of Richard Belward, a Norfolk man of the town of Crisam, who, living both in his time, and possibly knowing the party, and punished also for the like truth, is not reported, but recorded also in the registers of the church of Norwich, to give this testimony, among other his articles, for the aforesaid Lord Cobham, viz. that Sir John Oldcastle was a true catholic man, and falsely condemned, and put to death without a reasonable cause, &c.

Against this man if you take exception, and say, that one heretic will hold with another; why may not I, with the like exception, reply to you again, and say as well, one papist will hold with another, and both conjure together, to make and say the worst against a true protestant?

Further yet to examine this aforesaid Fabian, witness against Sir John Oldcastle, as Daniel examined the witnesses against Susanna: I will not here ask under what tree these adherents of Sir John Oldcastle conspired against the king, and subversion of the land, but in what time, in what year and month, this conspiracy was wrought? Fabian witnesseth, that it was in the month of January. Contrariwise, Edward Hall, and others our abridgementers, following him, do affirm that they were condemned in the Guildhall the twelfth of December, and that their execution upon the same was in January following, so that by their sentence the fact was done either in the month of December, or else before; or, if it were in the month of January, as Fabian saith, then is Hall and his followers deceived, testifying the fact to be done in the month of December.

And yet to object, moreover, against the said Fabian, forasmuch as he is such a rash witness against these burned persons, whom he calleth traitors, it would be demanded further of him, or in his absence of Master Cope, in what year this treason was conspired? If it were in the same year, as he confesseth himself, in which year John Claydon, the skinner, and Richard Turming, baker, were burned, then was it neither in the month of January, nor in the first year of King Henry the Fifth, for in the register of Canterbury it appeareth plain, that John Claydon was condemned neither in the time of Thomas Arundel, archbishop, nor yet in the first or second year of King Henry the Fifth, but was condemned in the second year of the translation of Henry Chichesly, archbishop of Canterbury, the seventeenth day of August, which was the

year of our Lord 1415: so that if this conspiracy was in the same year, after the witness of Fabian, in which year John Claydon was burned, then doth the testimony of Fabian neither accord with other witnesses, nor with himself, nor yet with truth. And thus much concerning the witness of Robert Fabian.

Let us next proceed to Polydore Virgil, whose partial and untrue handling of our history, in other places of his books, doth offer to us sufficient exception not to admit his credit in this: and yet because we will rather examine him than exclude him, let us hear a little what he saith, and how he faileth, and in how many points, numbering the same upon my five fingers.

First, ending with the life of King Henry the Fourth, he saith, that he reigned fourteen years and six months, and two days, which is an untruth worthy to be punished with a whole year's banishment, (to speak after the manner of Apuleius,) when, as truth is, he reigned, by the testimony of the story of St. Alban's, of Fabian, of Hall, of our old English chronicle, and of Scala Mundi, but thirteen and six months, lacking, as some say, five days; Hall saith he reigned but twelve years.

The second untruth of Polydore is this, whereas he, speaking of this sedition of Sir John Oldcastle and his adherents, affirmeth the same to be done after the burning of John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, which was, saith he, A. D. 1415, in which year, saith he, Thomas Arundel died: in which words he not only erreth, falsely assigning the cause and occasion of this sedition to the death of John Huss, and of Jerome, but also misseth as much in the order and computation of the years. For neither was Sir Roger Acton, with his aforesaid fellows, alive at the time of the council; neither doth he agree therein with any of our English writers, except only with Hall, who also erreth therein as wide as he.

For the third and fourth untruth I note this, where he addeth and saith, that after this rebellion raised against the king, the said Sir John Oldcastle, being there present himself, was taken and imprisoned in the Tower, and afterward escaped out of the said Tower by night: wherein is contained a double untruth; for neither was Sir John Oldcastle there present himself, if we believe Fabian and Cope, neither yet did he ever escape out of the Tower after that conspiracy, if ever any such conspiracy was.

His fifth, but not the last untruth in Polydore, is this, that he states Thomas Arundel to have died in the same year, noting the year to be A. D. 1415, whereas by the true registers he died A. D. 1414.

To this untruth another may be joined, where he, erring in the computation of the years of the said Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, reporteth him to sit twenty-two years; who was there archbishop but only eighteen years, as is to be seen in the records of Canterbury. Albeit in this I do not greatly contend with Polydore, and, peradventure, the adversary will find some easy shift for this matter.

But let us now pass from Polydore, not, as they say, out of the hall into the kitchen, but out of the kitchen into the hall, examining and perpending what saith Edward Hall, another witness in this matter; upon whom Master Cope bindeth so fast that he supposeth his knot is never able to be loosed. And, moreover, he so treadeth me down under his feet in the dirt, as a man would think him some dirt-dauber's son, "so that the spots thereof," he saith, "will never be gotten out while the world standeth, and a day longer." Notwithstanding I trust, Master Cope, that your dirty pen, with your cockish brags, hath not so bedaubed and bespotted me, nor yet convicted

me to be such a depraver of histories, but I hope to sponge it out. At least with a little *asperges* of the pope's holy water, I trust to come to a *dealbabor* (i. e. a whitener) well enough. But, certes, Master Cope, your mastership must first understand, that if ye think so to depress and disprove me of untruth in my history, you must go more groundly to work, and bring against me other authors than Edward Hall. You must consider, Master Cope, if you be a controller of story-matters, it is not enough for you to bring a railing spirit, or a mind disposed to carp and cavil where any matter may be picked: diligence is required, and great searching out of books and authors, not only of our time, but of all ages. And especially where matters of religion are touched pertaining to the church, it is not sufficient to see what Fabian or what Hall saith; but the records must be sought, the registers must be turned over, letters also and ancient instruments ought to be perused, and authors with the same compared: finally, the writers amongst themselves one to be conferred with another; and so with judgment matters are to be weighed, with diligence to be laboured, and with simplicity, pure from all addition and partiality, to be uttered.

Thus did Aventine, thus did Sleidan, write. These helps also the eldest and best historians seemed to have, both Livy, Sallust, Quintus Curtius, and such-like; as by their letters and records inserted may well appear. The same helps likewise, both in your Fabian, and in your Edward Hall, were to be required, but especially in you, Master Cope, yourself, which take upon you so cockishly, rather than wisely, to be a controller and master moderator of other men's matters: in which matters, to say the truth, you have no great skill, and less experience; neither have you such plenty of authors meet for that purpose, nor yet ever travelled to search out the origins and grounds of that whereof ye write; but contented with such only as cometh next to hand, or, peradventure, receiving such alms as some of your poor friends bestow upon you, you think it sufficient if you can allege Fabian and Hall for your purpose.

Now what purpose and affection herein doth lead you, or rather doth drive you, to the carping and barking against the history of these good men that be hence gone, and had their punishment, all men may see it to be no simple sincerity of a mind indifferent, but the zeal only of your sect of popery, or rather of fury, which setteth your railing spirit on fire. But now, out of the fiery kitchen to come to the hall again, let us see what matter lieth in the testimony of Edward Hall, to prove these men to be traitors. And here forasmuch, Master Cope, as you seem neither sufficiently acquainted with this your own master and author, Master Hall, nor yet well experienced in the searching out of histories, I will take a little pains for you, in this behalf, to certify you, concerning the story of this author, whereof, perchance, you yourself are ignorant.

The truth whereof is this, that as the said Edward Hall, your great master and *testis*, was about the compiling of his story, certain there were which resorted to him, of whom some were drawers of his pedigree and vineat, some were gravers, the names of whom were John Betts, and Tyrral, which be now both dead. And other there were of the same sodality, who be yet alive, and were then in the house of Richard Grafton, both the printer of the said book, and also, as is thought, a great helper of the penning of the same. It so befell, that as Hall was entering into the story of Sir John Oldcastle, of Sir Roger Acton, and their fellows, the book of John Bale, touching the story of the Lord Cobham, was the same time newly come over: which book was privily conveyed, by one of his servants, into the study of Hall, so that in turning over his books it must needs come to his hands. At the sight whereof, when he saw the ground and reasons in that book contained, he turned to the authors in the

aforesaid book alleged; whereupon, within two nights after, moved by what cause I know not, but so it was, that he, taking his pen, rased and cancelled all that he had written before against Sir John Oldcastle and his fellows, and was now ready to go to the print, containing near to the quantity of three pages. And lest, Master Cope, you or any other should think me to speak beside my book, be it therefore known both to you, and to all others, by these presents, that the very selfsame first copy of Hall, rased and crossed with his own pen, remaineth in my hands to be shown and seen, as need shall require. The matter which he cancelled out, came to this effect. Wherein he, following the narration of Polydore, began with like words to declare how the sacramentaries here in England, after the death of John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, being pricked, as he saith, with a demoniacal sting, first conspired against the priests, and after against the king, having to their captains Sir John Oldcastle the Lord Cobham, and Sir Roger Acton, knight; with many more words to the like purpose and effect, as Polydore, and other such-like chroniclers do write against him. All which matter, notwithstanding, the said Hall, with his pen, at the sight of John Bale's book, did utterly extinguish and abolish; adding in the place thereof the words of Master Bale's book, touching the accusation and condemnation of the said Lord Cobham before Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, taken out of the letter of the said archbishop, as is in his own story to be seen.

And thus Edward Hall, your author, revoking and calling back all that he had devised before against the Lord Cobham, (whereof I have his own hand to show, and witness substantial upon the same,) in his printed book recordeth of him no more, but only showeth the process between the archbishop of Canterbury and him, for matters of religion. And so, ending with Sir John Oldcastle, he proceedeth further to the assembly of Sir Roger Acton, (whom he falsely calleth Robert Acton,) John Brown, and Beverly, the narration whereof he handleth in such sort, that he neither agreeth with the record of other writers, nor yet with the truth itself. For where he excludeth the Lord Cobham out of that assembly, he discordeth therein from Polydore and others; and where he affirmeth the fact of that conspiracy to be wrought before, or at the twelfth day of December, that is manifestly false, if the records before alleged be true. And where he reporteth this assembly to be after the burning of John Huss, and of Jerome of Prague, therein he accordeth with Polydore, but not with the truth. Moreover, so doubtful he is and ambiguous, in declaration of his story, that no great certainty can be gathered of him.

First, as touching the confession of them, he confesseth himself that he saw it not, and therefore leaveth it at large; and as concerning the causes of their death, he leaveth the matter in doubt, not daring (as doth Master Cope) to define or pronounce any thing thereof, but only recite the surmises and minds of divers men diversely, some thinking it was for conveying the Lord Cobham out of the Tower, some that it was for treason and heresy. And here cometh in the mention only of a record, but what record it is neither doth he utter it, nor doth he examine it; otherwise again affirming, as he saith, that it was for feigned causes surmised by the spirituality, more of displeasure than truth. And thus your author Hall, having recited the variety of men's opinions, determineth himself no certain thing thereof; but, as one indifferent, neither bound to the conjectures of all men, nor to the witnesses of all men, referreth the whole judgment of the matter free unto the reader. And so, concluding his narration, forasmuch as he was neither a witness of the fact, nor present at the deed, he overpasseth the story thereof.

And what witness then will you, or can you, Master Cope, take of Edward Hall, which denieth himself to be a witness? will you compel him to say that he saw not, and to witness that he cannot? Wherefore, like as Susanna, in the story of Daniel, was quit by right judgment in the case of adultery, because her accusers and witnesses, being examined asunder, were found to vary and halt in their tale, and not to agree in the two trees; so why may not, in like case of treason, Sir Roger Acton, Sir John Oldcastle, Brown, with the rest, claim the same privilege? seeing among the accusers and witnesses produced against them such discord is found, and such halting among them, that neither do they agree in place, person, year, day, nor month.

For first, Where Fabian and his fellows say, that they were assembled together in a great company in the field near to St. Giles, the forged indictment above alleged saith, they were but riding toward the field.

Secondly, Where the aforesaid indictment, and Polydore, give the Lord Cobham to be present personally in that assembly, Hall, and Alanus Copus, Anglus, do exclude his personal presence from thence; and so doth Fabian also seem to agree, speaking only of the adherents of Sir John Oldcastle.

Thirdly, Where Hall and Polydore report this assembly to be after the burning of John Huss and of Jerome, at the council of Constance, which was A. D. 1415, that cannot be; but if there were any such conspiracy in the first year of Henry the Fifth, it must needs be in 1413. And here, by the way, why do certain of your epitome-writers, speaking of the Lord Cobham, committed first to the Tower for heresy, refer the said imprisonment to the year 1412, whereas by their own count, reckoning the year from the Annunciation, it must needs be in the year 1413, being done in harvest-time.

Fourthly, Where Hall with his followers affirm that Sir Roger Acton, Brown, and Beverly were condemned the twelfth day of December, the record is evident against it, which holdeth the fact to be in working, the tenth day of January.

Fifthly, Whereas the aforesaid record of the indictment giveth the Wednesday next after the Epiphany, which was the tenth day of January that present year, both the fact to be committed the same day, the commission also to be granted and delivered to the commissioners the same day, the said commissioners to sit in commission the same day, the sheriffs of Middlesex to return a jury out of the body of Middlesex the same day, and the jurors to find the indictment on the same day; and yet no juror in the indictment named the same day.

Item, the Lord Cobham the same day to be found conspiring to make himself regent, whenas the king, that day and year, was not yet passed into France — how all these can concur and hang together, and all in one day — I suppose it will cost you two days before you, with all your learned council, will study it out; and when you, in your unlawful assemblies, have conspired and conferred together all ye can, yet will ye make it (as I think) three days, before you honestly despatch your hands of the matter.

And where ye think that ye have impressed in me such a foul note of lying, never to be clawed off while the world standeth, yet shall the posterity to come judge between you and me, whether shall appear more honest and true, my defence for that worthy lord, or your uncourteous and viperous wrangling against him, moved with no other cause but only with the peevish spirit of popery, which can abide nothing but that savoureth of your own sect. For else, how many loud lying legends, yea, what legions of lies, are daily used and received in the popish church! What doltish dreams!

what feigned miracles! what blasphemous tales, and friarly fables, and idle inventions, fighting against the sincere religion, doctrine, and cross of Christ! And could you hold your pen from all these, and find nothing else to set your idleness on work, but only to write against the Lord Cobham, Sir Roger Acton, Brown, Onley, Cowbridge, with a few others, whom with much ado at length you have sought out, not so much for any true zeal to rebuke iniquity, as craftily seeking matter by these to deface and blemish the book of Acts and Monuments? which seemeth belike to make you scratch there where it itcheth not. And if I should after the like dealing take in hand your popish portues, and with the like diligence excuse every popish martyr and saint there canonized; think you, Master Cope, I could not make you out half a dozen as rank traitors and rebels to their kings and princes, as ever were any of these of your picking out? What pope almost hath there been these last five hundred years, which hath not been a traitor to his emperor and prince, and to his country? either openly rebelling against them, or privily conspiring their destruction, or proudly setting their feet upon their necks, or spurning their crowns off from their heads, or making the son to fight against the father? How many have they deposed, and set up other in their seats! How many emperors and kings have they wrongfully cursed! What consuls of Rome have they resisted, deposed, and put to death! What wars have they raised up against their own country of Rome! Yea, the continual holding of the city of Rome from his lawful emperor, what is it but a continual point of treason?

What will you answer me, Master Cope, to the pope, which conspired to let fall down a stone upon the emperor's head, kneeling at his prayers?

And though this treachery, being as big as a millstone, seemed but a small mote in your eye, that it could not be espied, yet what will ye say of the monk of Swinstead, that poisoned King John, who was both absolved by his abbot before his treason committed, and after his treason had a perpetual mass sung for him, to help him out of purgatory? And what think ye in your conscience is to be said of Thomas Becket, who did enough, and more than became him, to set the French king and the king of England together by the ears? Of Anselm likewise, and of Stephen Langton, who departed both out of the realm to complain of their princes and sovereigns? The like may be said also of John Peckham. John Stratford, archbishop of the same see of Canterbury, notoriously resisted the king's commandment, being sent for by King Edward the Third, to come to the parliament at York; through the default of whose coming the present opportunity of getting of Scotland was the same time lost.

Richard Scrope, archbishop of York, was openly in arms to rebel and fight against King Henry the Fourth, for the which he was condemned and put to death: and yet, notwithstanding, commission was sent down from the pope shortly after, to excommunicate them which put him to death, his treason notwithstanding. Read the story sincerely of Pope Benedict the Twelfth, and of Pope Clement the Sixth, and see how the traitorous rebellion of these two popes against Louis, their rightful emperor, can be defended; which emperor at last was also poisoned, and not without the practice of Pope Clement, as Hieronimus Marius doth credibly witness.

In the reign of King Edward the Second, mention was made before of Thomas, earl of Lancaster, who, with a great number of other nobles and barons of the realm, rose in armour against their prince, and, therefore, at length were put to death as traitors. And yet, notwithstanding this treason committed, Master Cope, if you be so ignorant in our stories that you know it not, set your setters-on to search, and you shall find it true, that certain noblemen went up to Rome, for the canonizing of the said

Thomas of Lancaster to be made a saint, and obtained the same; insomuch that in a certain old calendar, the name of the said St. Thomas of Lancaster is yet extant to be seen.

In the fourth book of the Acts and Monuments, mention was made of Edmund Abbingdon, archbishop of Canterbury, whom although I do not disprove, but rather commend, in my history, for his bold and sage counsel given unto King Henry the Third, and also for offering the censure of excommunication against the king in so necessary a cause, yet, notwithstanding, the same Edmund afterwards, about his latter end, went up with a rebelling mind to complain of his king unto the pope, and in his journey died, before his return; who, afterward, for the same was canonized by the pope, and now shineth among the saints in the pope's calendar.

Let us come more near to these days and times, and consider the doings of Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, who being first deposed and exiled for his contemptuous deserts against the king, and afterwards coming in with Henry Bolingbroke, duke of Hereford, in open arms, and with main force, rose against his natural and lawful king. Think you, Master Cope, this is not as great a point of treason, as that which was done in Thickets' fields? and though he be not placed among the portuous saints, yet I think nothing contrary, but in your heart you will not greatly stick to say, Holy St. Thomas, pray for us.

All these things well considered, tell me, Master Cope, I pray you, is treason such a strange and uncouth thing in your pope-catholic church, that your burning zeal of obedience to kings and princes cannot read the story of the Lord Cobham and Sir Roger Acton, but your pen must needs be inflamed to write against them, and yet so many traitors in your own calendars neither seen nor once spoken of? And if the traitorous conspiracy and rebellion of so many your calendar saints, committed against emperors, kings, and princes, cannot stir your zeal, nor move your pen; nor if the treason of Pope Gregory the Ninth, raising war against his own city of Rome, and causing thirty thousand citizens in one battle to be slain, deserveth not to be espied and accused, as much as this treason of the Lord Cobham; yet what will you or can you answer to me, Master Cope, as touching the horrible treason of Pope Gregory the Seventh, committed not against emperor nor king, nor any mortal man, but against the Lord himself, even against your God of your own making, being therein, as you say, no substance of bread, but the very personal body, flesh, blood, and bone of Christ himself; which body, notwithstanding, the aforesaid Pope Gregory the Seventh took and cast with his own hands into the burning fire, because he would not answer him to a certain doubt or demand? Soothly, if Sir John Oldcastle had taken the body of King Henry the Fifth, and thrown him into the fire, the fact being so notoriously certain as this is, I would never have bestowed any word in his defence. And could this, and so many other heinous treasons, pass through your fingers, Master Cope, and no other to stick in your pen but the Lord Cobham?

Finally and simply to conclude with you, Master Cope, and not to flatter you, what is the whole working, the proceedings, actions, and practices of your religion, or hath been almost these five hundred years, but a certain perpetual kind of treason, to thrust down your princes and magistrates, to derogate from their right and jurisdiction, and to advance your own majesties and dominations, as hath been sufficiently above proved and laid before your faces in a parliament holden in France, by the Lord Peter de Cugneriis? Wherefore, if the assembly of these forenamed persons, either within or without St. Giles's field, be such a great mote of treason in your eyes, first look upon

the great blocks and millstones of your own traitors at home, and when you have well discussed the same, then after pour out your wallet of trifling dialogues, or trialogues, if ye list, against us, and spare us not. Not that I so think this to be a sufficient excuse to purge the treason of these men, if your popish calendars and legends be found full of traitors: but this I think, that the same cause which made them to suffer as traitors, hath made you also to rail against them for traitors, that is, mere hatred only against their religion, rather than any true affection you have to your princes and governors, who, if they had been as fervent in your popery, and had suffered so much for the holy father of Rome, or for the liberties of the holy mother church of Rome, I doubt not but they, as holy children of Rome, had been rung into your Romish calendar with a *festum duplex*, or at least with a *festum simplex*, of nine lessons; also with a vigil, peradventure, before them.

Now, because they were of the contrary profession, and enemies to your great Diana you play with them as the Ephesian carvers did with St. Paul, and worse. Ye thrust them out as seditious rebels, not only out of life and body, but also cannot abide them to have any poor harbour in their own friends' houses, among our Acts and Monuments to be remembered. In the which Acts and Monuments, if gentle Master Ireneus, with his fellow Critobulus, in your clerkly dialogues, will not suffer them to be numbered for martyrs; yet speak a good word for them, Master Cope, they may stand for tests or witness-bearers of the truth. And thus much for defence of them.

Now to the other part of his accusation; wherein this Alarms Copus, Anglus, in his *εξαπλα* [Greek: exapla], or six-fold dialogues, contendeth and chafeth against my former edition, to prove me in my history to be a liar, forger, impudent, a misreporter of truth, a depraver of stories, a seducer of the world, and what else not; whose virulent words, and contumelious terms, how well they become his popish person, I know not. Certes, for my part, I never deserved this at his hands wittingly, that I do know. Master Cope is a man whom yet never I saw, and less offended, nor ever heard of him before. And if he had not, in the front of his book, entitled himself to be an Englishman, by his writing I would have judged him rather some wild Irishman, lately crept out of St. Patrick's purgatory, so wildly he writeth, so fumishly he fareth.

But I cease here, and temper myself, considering not what Master Cope deserveth to be said unto, nor how far the pen here could run, if it had its scope, but considering what the tractation rather of such a serious cause requireth; and therefore seriously to say unto you, Master Cope, in this matter; where you charge my history of Acts and Monuments so cruelly, to be full of untruths, false lies, impudent forgeries, depravations, fraudulent corruptions, and feigned fables; briefly, and in one word, to answer you, not as the Lacones answered to the letters of their adversary, with *si*, but with *osi*; would God, Master Cope, that in all the whole book of Acts and Monuments, from the beginning to the latter end of the same, were never a true story, but that all were false, all were lies, and all were fables! would God the cruelty of your catholics had suffered all them to live, of whose death ye say now, that I do lie! Although I deny not but in that book of Acts and Monuments, containing such diversity of matter, something might overscape, yet I have bestowed my poor diligence. My intent was to profit all men, to hurt none.

If you, Master Cope, or any other, can better my rude doings, and find things out more finely and truly, with all my heart I shall rejoice with you and the commonwealth, taking profit by you. In perfection of writing, of wit, cunning,

dexterity, finesse, or other endowments required in a perfect writer, I contend neither with you nor any other. I grant that in a laboured story, such as you seem to require, containing such infinite variety of matter as this doth, much more time would be required: but such a time as I had, that I did bestow; if not so laboriously as other could, yet as diligently as I might.

But here partly I hear what you will say — I should have taken more leisure and done it better. I grant and confess my fault; such is my vice, I cannot sit all the day, Master Cope, fining and mincing my letters, and combing my head, and smoothing myself all the day at the glass of Cicero; yet, notwithstanding, doing what I can, and doing my good will, methinks I should not be reprehended, at least not so much railed on at Master Cope's hand; who if he be so pregnant in finding fault with other men's labours, which is an easy thing to do, it were to be wished, that he had enterprised himself upon the matter; and so should have proved what faults might have been found in him. Not that I herein do utterly excuse myself, yea, rather am ready to accuse myself, but yet, notwithstanding, think myself ungently dealt withal at Master Cope's hands; who, being mine own countryman, an Englishman, as he saith, also of the same university, yea, college and school, that I was of; knowing that the first edition of these Acts and Monuments was begun in the far parts of Germany, where few friends, no conference, small information could be had; and the same edition afterward translated out of Latin into English by others, whilst I, in the mean time, was occupied about other registers; and now the said Cope, hearing moreover and knowing that I was about a new edition of the same Acts and Monuments, at this present time to be set forth, for the amending of divers things therein to be reformed, if he had known any fault needful to be corrected, he might gently, by letters, have admonished me thereof; gentleness would so have required it, time would well have suffered it. Neither was he so far off, but he might sooner have written a letter to me, than a book against me; neither was I so ungrateful and inhuman, but I would have thanked him for his monition; neither yet so obstinate, but being admonished, I would have corrected willingly, where any fault had been committed.

But herein your nature, Master Cope, doth right well appear. First, in the said book of Acts and Monuments, where many other good things be contained, not unfruitful nor unprofitable, peradventure, for the instruction of your conscience, and wherein my labours perhaps might have deserved your thanks, all that you dissemble and pass over, only excepting those matters which make for cavillation. Thus the black spider out of pleasant flowers sucketh his poison. And what book is so pleasant and fruitful, though it were the pope's own portues, yea, his own decretals, yea, his own very mass-book, to the reading whereof if I brought the like mind so disposed to cavil, as you brink to the reading of my history, but I could find out twice as many "lies," "faults," "follies," as you have done in these Acts and Monuments? and yet you have done pretty well.

Besides all this, yet better to mark the goodness of your gentle nature: be it so that I had been in some piece of my story deceived, as I do not justify myself in all points therein, yet you, understanding that I was about the correction of my book again, might either have taken the best, and left the worst, or else have gently taken the pains to have advertised me of such notes as you had, without further exclamation, or at least might have deferred your dialogues for a time, till the coming out of my book, to see first what would in the later edition be altered. But belike your gall was full, your haste could not tarry, your venom must needs burst out.

Seeing therefore the order of your doings to be such, and disposition of your nature so far from all humanity, dealing with me so extremely, if I, thus provoked with your extremity again, should now after this your currish nature shape you a name accordingly, and instead of Cope, godfather you to be a perpetual sycophant, could you much blame me? and doth not your sycophantical book well deserve it? or think you I could not repay you again with like extremity as you bring, and dress your drowsy, or rather lousy, Dialogues in their right colours, if I were so disposed? But my purpose is with patience to spare you, and rather to pray for you: God make you a good man! Peradventure he may hereafter call you; and rather had I to win you, than to sting you. Leaving therefore the consideration of your ungrateful doings, I will now consider only the points wherein you charge me in your book, answering briefly unto the same: briefly, I say, because the greatness of this volume, and abundance of other more fruitful matter, giveth me little leisure at this present to stand about brawling words.

First, he seemeth to be highly grieved with me for my calendar prefixed before the Book of Monuments; wherein he hath no cause either to be offended with me, or to chafe with himself. As touching which calendar I have sufficiently and expressly declared before so much, as might quickly satisfy this scruple of Master Cope, if he either would have taken the pains, or else had had leisure to read the words contained in the Latin preface before the book prefixed, which are thus: *Quanquam a me quidem non aliter Calendarium hoc institutum est, nisi ut pro indice duntaxat suum cujusque Martyris mensem et annum designante, at privatum lectoris serviret usum, &c.*: in which words preventing before the cavilling objection of the adversary, I forewarned the reader aforehand touching the calendar, wherefore it was ordained and prefixed; for no other purpose, but to serve the use only of the reader, instead of a table, showing the year and month of every martyr, what time he suffered, &c. What hurt, I pray you, is in this calendar prefixed; before the Book of Monuments, more than in the table of Master Cope's book set after his Dialogues? But Master Cope had no leisure to peruse this place; it made not for his humour.

But this grieveth him in the calendar, and that very sore: for that I place in this calendar, Sir John Oldcastle, Sir Roger Acton, Brown, Beverly, and other for martyrs; and displace for them other holy, ancient martyrs and saints, as Anatholius, Sother, Dorothea, Clarus, Lucianus, Severinus, &c. — Answer. If Master Cope cannot abide the Lord Cobham, Sir Roger Acton, Brown, and Beverly, which were hanged, (as he saith, for treason,) to have the name of martyrs, then let them bear the name of witness-bearers, or *testes* of the truth, because they were also burned for the testimony of their faith: seeing there is no difference in the said names, all is one to me by which they are called. And where he chargeth me for thrusting and shouldering out the old and ancient holy saints aforenamed out of this calendar, and placing other new-come saints in their rooms; this is not the first untruth that Master Cope hath made in his Dialogues, nor yet the least: unto whom I might, therefore, fitly answer again with his own familiar phrase, or rather the phrase of Cicero, which he doth so much affect: *Quod nimirum hic ipse Alanus Copus, Anglus, unde me mendacii coarguit, inde sibi ipsi sempiternam ac indelebilem turpissimum mendacii ac singularis impudentiae notam inurat*; for why have not I as just cause to say this to him, as he to me? forasmuch as in the first beginning and preface of the said book of Acts and Monuments, I so diligently and expressly do warn all men beforehand, first, that I make here no calendar purposely of any saints, but a table of good and godly men that suffered for the truth, to show the day and month of their suffering. My words be extant and

evident, which are these: *Neque vero ideo inter divos a me referuntur isti, quod inseruntur in calendarium, &c.*; and declaring afterward how the said calendar doth stand but instead of a table, my words do follow thus: *Haud aliter calendarium hoc institutum est, nisi ut pro indice duntaxat suum cujusque martyris mensem et annum designante, lectori ad usum atque ad manum serviat, &c.*

Again, neither did I receive these men into that calendar, that holy Anatholius, Sother, Dorothea, with other ancient holy saints, should be removed out, as you do falsely and untruly affirm, but because the course of that story, reaching but five hundred years, did not comprehend those former times of such ancient martyrs, but only of such as suffered in these latter days: therefore, requisite it was, that in the table such should be placed chiefly of whom the whole book did then principally and only treat; to demonstrate thereby the time and day of their martyrdom. Neither yet were the other excluded out of this new calendar, which were never inserted in the same before, but only because both together could not there have standing; necessity so there required these in no case to be omitted; and yet no injury meant to the other to be excluded out of their own calendars, whereto properly they did pertain. As for this calendar, or this table, because they were not pertinent unto it, they could not therein, neither was it necessary they should, be included: and yet neither did I, Master Cope, without due and solemn protestation omit the same in my aforesaid catalogue, to prevent and stop all cavilling mouths; as by special words in the said proem of my book unto the reader doth appear, following in this wise: *Interim nullius ego boni sanctique viri (modo qui vere sanctus sit) causam redo, nec memoriam extinguo, nec gloriam minuo. Et si cui hoc displiceat calendarium, mimeret, non in templis a me collocari sed domesticæ tantum lectioni præparari, &c.* And where is now, Master Cope, this your rejecting, expelling, removing, expulsing, exempting, deturbating, and thrusting out, of Anatholius, Sother, Dorothea, and other holy saints, out of Catalogues, fasts, and calendars? or what man is that, or where dwelleth he, "which tumbleth down true martyrs from heaven into hell?" which if ye mean by me, in one word I answer, ye falsely belie me, Master Copus; I had almost called you Master Capus, so like a capon you speak. Neither have you, nor any other, ever heard me so say. Neither have I ever heard of any so mad, to play so the giants with their mountains to climb the heavens, to tumble down God's true and holy martyrs out of heaven into hell, unless it were yourself, (as yet ye are, ye may be better,) and such other of your gilded and popish fraternity, which make of God's true saints stinking dunghills, (for so ye term them in your books,) and not only thrust into heaven your *pseudosantos*, saints of your own making, whom God by his word, doth not allow; but also depulse down from heaven, and make dunghills of God's well-beloved servants, his faithful people and blessed martyrs, which have died for the word of God. And what marvel then, if in your blasphemous books ye cast down from heaven to hell the poor saints of Christ, when in effect you deject also the blood and cross of the Son of God, Christ Jesus himself, setting up the blood of St. Thomas in his office and place. Say, Master Cope, your conscience indifferently; set all popish partiality apart; whereas the Scripture teacheth us simply, "Without blood there is no remission;" whether ye think, by this blood of the New Testament is meant the blood of Christ alone, or the blood of other more besides? If the blood of one must stand alone, why do ye then with the giants build up your mountains, and make a ladder of Becket's popish blood, for men to scale the heavens? Or in so doing, how can you, but either with the protestants wipe out of your calendar the blood of Thomas, or else demolish from heaven the blood of Christ, with the papists?

Now what will the reader say, or what may he judge, considering and conferring this your cavilling with the matter of my premonition made before, but that you are altogether set to play the perpetual syc — : I had almost called you by your right name, Master Cope. But God make you, as I said, a good man! — Reading further in your book, I could not but smile and laugh at this your ridiculous and most loud-lying hyperbolism; where you, comparing my making of saints with the pope's making, can find, as ye say, in the pope, no such impudent arrogance in presuming, as ye find in me, &c. If the pope had not abused his arrogant jurisdiction in canonizing and deifying his saints, more than I have done, the year should not be cumbered with so many idle holy-days, nor the calendars with so many rascal saints; some of them as good as ever were they that put Christ to death.

But where will you find, Master Cope, any man to believe this your hyperbolical comparison to be true, which seeth and knoweth the infinite and unmeasurable excess of the pope's arrogance, not only in shrining such a rabble of blind saints of his own creating, but also in prescribing the same to be received universally in the whole world; and not to be received only, but also to be invoked for gifts and graces; also to be worshipped for advocates and mediators? wherein riseth a double abomination of the pope, the one for his idolatrous making and worshipping of saints; the other for his blasphemous injury and derogation to Christ in repulsing him out of his office of mediation, and placing other mediators of his own making.

And now, to consider what saints these were, or what were the causes of their sancting: what saint almost among all the pope's saints shall you find, Master Cope, made within these five hundred years, but commonly he was either some pope, or some rich bishop and prelate, or some fat abbot, or some blind friar, some monk or nun, some superstitious regular, or some builder of monasteries, or some giver and benefactor to the popish clergy, or maintainer, agonizing for the dignities and liberties of the popish church? What poor layman or laywoman, were their lives never so Christian, their faith and confession never so pure, their death never so agonizing for the witness of Christ and truth of his word, shall find any place of favour in all the pope's calendar, either in red colour, or else in black?

But here, Master Cope, if ye had the wit so much to defend as ye have to overthrow, you might take me with the manner, and reply again for the defence of your great saint-maker, or rather god-maker, of Rome, that he maketh more martyrs and saints of these aforesaid poor laymen and laywomen, than ever he did of any other: for he burneth them, he hangeth them, he drowneth them, imprisoneth and famisheth them, and so maketh truer martyrs of Christ, than any other of his new shrined saints, whom he hath so dignified in his calendar; for the one he doth rubricate only with his red letters, the other doth he rubricate with their own blood. And, therefore, to answer you, Master Cope, to your comparison made between the pope and me, for making of holy martyrs and saints: briefly I say, and report me to all the world, that therein is no comparison; for if ye speak of true martyrs, who doth make them, but the pope? if ye speak of false martyrs, who doth make them, but the pope? And, furthermore, to compare together the causes of these martyred saints in my calendar with them which shine shrined in the pope's calendar, taking the same proportion of time as I do, within these last five hundred years, why may not I have as good cause to celebrate these in my calendar, which lost their lives and were slain principally for the cause of Christ and of his word, as the pope hath to celebrate his double and simple feasted saints in his calendar; who in their doings, doctrine, and

life, as they seemed rather to serve the pope, than Christ the Lord, so in their death appeared no such cause why they should be sanctified in the church beyond all others? Let not the church of Christ, Master Cope, be deluded with hypocritical names, nor feigned apparitions and fabulous miracles, neither be you deceived yourself, but let us resort sincerely to the word of God.

What was in St. Francis, (look upon his superstitious life and presumptuous testament, wrought no doubt by Satan to diminish and obscure the Testament of Jesus Christ,) why he should be made a saint, and not an enemy, rather, of Christ? What was, likewise, in friar Dominic, who, before Francis, ten years together persecuted the poor Waldenses to death and destruction? why should he stand a saint and a pillar of the church? I pray you what see you in Thomas Becket, but that he died for the ambitious liberties of the popish church? What in Aldelm and in Anselm, but only that they chased away married priests from the churches, and planted in idle monks in their stead? The like also did Dunstan, who was rubricated with a double festival. Elizabeth, who was the wife of the marquis of Thuringia, when she had, with much persuasion, got out her husband to fight against the Turks, and he was there slain, she afterward encloistered herself, and was made a nun. And do ye think these causes to be sufficient why they should be made saints, worshipped in churches, and set in calendars? Long it were to make rehearsal of all this ruff-raff, and almost infinite. One example may suffice for many. St. Gilbert of Sempringham was the son of Jocelin, a knight, who, for the deformity of his body, was set to learning, and afterward made canon, and was author of the Gilbertines in the time of King John.

This Gilbert, after he had erected thirteen monasteries of his order of Sempringham, was afterwards laboured for unto the pope to be made a saint, who, hearing of his miracles, wrote his letters to Hubert, archbishop of Canterbury, in the behalf of the aforesaid Gilbert, willing and commanding that the feast of the said Gilbert should be solemnized through all the province of Canterbury; whereupon, Hubert, the archbishop, directeth down his writings to all the bishops within his province.

The sum of the which writing of the archbishop tendeth to this effect: That forasmuch as the pope, hearing of the life and miracles of Gilbert, master of the order of Sempringham, by sufficient witness and testimonies, hath in his letters commanded him, by the advice of his cardinals, that the said Gilbert should be canonized and ascribed in the catalogue of saints, and that his solemnity should be celebrated solemnly throughout all the province of Canterbury; and also his body to be taken up and shrined to the honour and glory of God; he, therefore, at the pope's commandment writing unto them, willeth all the suffragans within his province of Canterbury, yearly to solemnize, and cause to be solemnized, reverently, the deposition of the said St. Gilbert, confessor; to the intent that their devotion may be commended of the Lord, and of him. And also that the humble intercession of the said saint, may profit them to their salvation.

Furthermore, for the more full canonizing (canvising, I had almost said) of this new-made saint, the said Pope Innocent, writing to Hubert aforesaid, adjoineth withal a collect of his own making, which is this: "Work in us, O eternal Saviour, full remedy of thy virtue, that we which worship the worthy merits of blessed Gilbert, thy confessor, being succoured by his suffrages, may be delivered from all languors and diseases of our souls; who livest and reignest," &c.

The consecration of this one saint, who perhaps was not the worst, I thought here to commemorate, to the intent that the reader, measuring, by this one, the canonization of all the rest, may judge the better upon this comparison of Master Cope, whether of us doth vindicate more impudent authority, the pope in his calendar, or I in mine; or, to make the comparison more fit, whether is more impudent, the pope in his calendar, or else Master Cope, in his Dialogues, more doltish.

But, briefly to make an end of this matter with you: to canonize or to authorize any saints, for man it is presumptuous; to prescribe any thing here to be worshipped, beside God alone, it is idolatrous; to set up any mediators but Christ only, it is blasphemous. And whatsoever the pope doth, or hath done, in his calendar, my purpose in my calendar, was neither to deface any old saint, or to solemnize any new. In my book of Acts and Monuments treating of matters passed in the church, these latter five hundred years, I did regulate out a calendar, not for any canon to constitute saints, but only for a table of them, which, within the same time did suffer for the testimony of the word, whom I did, and do, take to be good and godly men. If any have other judgment of them, I bind no man to my opinion, as the pope doth to his. The day will come which shall judge both them and you. In the mean season it shall be best for you, Master Cope, in my judgment, to keep a good tongue in your head, and to quiet your railing mood. A hard thing it is to judge before the Lord. Man's judgment may fail and is uncertain, the judgment of God is always sure. Best it is, therefore, either to be sure by the word and judgment of God before, what you do say, or else to say the best. Of such slanderous and intemperate railing can come no good; neither to them whom ye rail upon, nor to yourself which railer, nor to the church of God that heareth you rail. For them you cannot hurt; they are gone: to yourself, though your matters be true, yet little honesty it will bring to be counted a railer; and if it be uncertain, your state is dangerous, and if it be false, most miserable: and as to the church, what great edification can proceed of such contentious brawling and barking one against another, I do not greatly see. And if the zeal of the bishop of Rome's church have so much swallowed you up, that you cannot but stamp and stare at traitors when ye see them put in calendars, first, Master Cope, be ye sure that they be traitors (wisdom would) whom you call traitors. And if ye can so prove them, (as ye have not yet,) then let your Irenæus, or Critobulus, tell me, why doth not this flagrant zeal of yours, as hot as purgatory, burn out and flame as well against your own traitors, having so many in your own calendar and church at home?

And if there be such a catholic zeal in you, that hath set your gentle breast on such a pelting chafe, why then is not this your catholic zeal equally indifferent? What indifference, Master Cope, call you this? or what zeal make you this to be? albeit, your zeal I judge not, as I know it not. Swift judgment shall not become me, which go about to correct the same in you; but this I exhort you to beware, Master Cope, that by your own fruits and doings evident, ye do not bewray this zeal in you to be not according to knowledge, nor such a zeal as fighteth *pro domo Dei, sed pro domo pontificis*. As I said, I judge you not. You have your Judge to whom ye stand or fall. My counsel is, that you do not so zeal the bishop of Rome, that for his sake ye lose your own soul. Ye remember the old vulgar voice, it is not good *Ludere cum sanctis*; worse it is *Illudere*; worst of all it is *Debacchari in immerentes*; because that *Deus ipse ultionem Dominus* many times taketh their cause in hand, according as it is written, The rebukes of thy rebuker fell upon me. And seldom have I seen any such blasphemous railers against the end or punishment of God's saints and servants, without great repentance, to come to any good end themselves.

And admit this, as granted unto you, Master Cope, that these men had been traitors, which ye are not able to prove: Well! they had their punishment therefore; the world can go no further, and what would you have more? who, if they repented, why may they not have as good part in Christ's kingdom as yourself? Now, forasmuch as the said persons also suffering a double punishment were so constant in the way of truth, and most principally for the same were persecuted, and chiefly therefore brought to their death: that part of example, because I saw it pertain to the profit of the church, why might I not insert it with other church stories in my book? Let the church take that which belongeth to the church. Let the world take that which to the world pertaineth, and go no further. And if ye think it much, that I would exemplify these whom ye call traitors in the Book of Martyrs; first, ye must understand, that I wrote no such book bearing the title of the Book of Martyrs; I wrote a book called the Acts and Monuments of things passed in the Church, &c., wherein many other matters be contained beside the martyrs of Christ. But this, peradventure, moveth your choler, that in the calendar I name them for martyrs. And why may I not, in my calendar, call them by the name of martyrs, which were faithful witnesses of Christ's truth and testament, for the which they were also chiefly brought unto that end? Or why may I not call them holy saints, whom Christ hath sanctified with his blessed blood? And what if I should also call the thief and murderer, hanging on the right side of the Lord, by the name of a holy saint and confessor, for his witnessing of the Lord? what can Master Cope say against it?

And as for colouring the names of certain martyrs in the said calendar in red or scarlet letters, (although that pertaineth nothing to me, which was as pleased the painter or printer,) yet, if that be it, that so much breaketh patience, why rather doth he not expostulate in this behalf with the great saint-maker of Rome, who hath redded them much more than ever did I? for he did red and dye them with their own blood, whereas I did but only colour them with red letters. And thus for matter of my calendar enough.

Proceeding now out of the calendar unto the book, wherein he chargeth me with so many lies, impudencies, vanities, depravations, and untruths, it remaineth likewise I clear myself, answering first to those lies and untruths, which to the story of Sir Roger Acton, and Sir John Oldcastle do appertain; and after to other particulars, as in order of my book do follow. And first, where he layeth against me whole heaps and cart-loads, I cannot tell how many, of lies and falsities: I here briefly answer Master Cope again, or what English Harpsfield else soever lieth covered under this English Cope, that if a lie be, after the definition of St. Austin, whatsoever thing is pronounced with the intent to deceive another; then, I protest to you, Master Cope, and to all the world, there is never a lie in all my book. What the intent and custom is of the papists to do, I cannot tell: for mine own part I will say, although many other vices I have, yet from this one I have always of nature abhorred, wittingly to deceive any man or child, so near as I could, much less the church of God, whom I with all my heart do reverence, and with fear obey. And therefore, among divers causes that have withdrawn my mind from the papists' faction, almost there is none greater than this; because I see them so little given to truth, so far from all serious feeling and care of sincere religion, so full of false pretended hypocrisy and dissimulation; so little regarding the church of Christ in their inward hearts, which they so much have in their mouths, so as under the title thereof they may hold up their own estate. Otherwise, so little reverence they yield to the true and honourable church of Jesus the Son of God, that what unworthy and rascal ministers they take into it they pass not; what fictions,

what lies and fables, what false miracles and absurd forgeries, they invent to delude it, they care not. I speak not of all.

Some there be of that sect unfeigned in conscience, and more religious and better disposed natures, only of simple ignorance deceived: but such commonly have been, and be, the chief guides and leaders of the papists' church, that little true care and small zeal hath appeared in them toward the church of Christ, not much regarding what corruption increased therein, so that their commodity might not decrease. Thus out of this fountain have gushed out so many prodigious lies in church legends, in saints' lives, in monkish fictions, in fabulous miracles, in false and forged relics; as in pieces of the holy cross, in the blood of Hales, in our Lady's milk, in the nails of Christ, which they make to a great number. Likewise in their false and blind errors, corrupt doctrines, absurd inventions, repugnant to the truth of the word. Item, in their bastard books, forged epistles, their Apocrypha, and Pseudopigrapha. Here come in their forged canons, their foisting and cogging in ancient councils and decrees, as in $\omega\varsigma$ $\alpha\pi\omicron$ $\epsilon\mu\omicron\upsilon$ $\pi\epsilon\tau\rho\upsilon$ [Greek: *os apo emou petrou*], in Canons of the Apostles, (if those canons were the apostles',) foisted into the decrees by Gratian, also the cogging in a false canon to the Council of Nice for the maintenance of the see of Rome, as appeareth in the sixth synod of Carthage.

Here come in also the epistles of Clement, and other sundry epistles decretal, which as they are no doubt fastly inserted by others, so are they the wellhead of many superstitious traditions, oppressing this day the church of Christ. To speak, moreover, of the liturgies of St. James, of Chrysostom and others, of the first mass said by St. Peter at Rome, and that St. Peter sat twenty-five years bishop of Rome. To speak also of the works of Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome, and Gregory, what doctor or famous writer hath there been in the church, under whose name some counterfeited books have not falsely been fathered, and yet stand still authorized under their patronage, to the great detriment of the church? What should I speak of Abdias, Amphilochius, Dionysius Areopagita; the Dialogues of Gregory, which falsely to this day have been ascribed to Gregory the First, whereas indeed they were first written in Greek by Gregory the Third, and afterward translated out of Greek into Latin by Pope Zachary, *vide supra*. Likewise that worthy and imperial sermon entitled, Eusebii Pamphili Sermo ad Conventum Sanctorum, hath to this day wrongfully borne the name of Eusebius; whereas, in very truth, it was made by the good emperor Constantine himself, in his own heroical style in Latin, and afterward translated out of Latin into Greek by Eusebius, as he himself confesseth in his work *De Vita Constant.* lib. 4. But as touching this sermon, although the name be changed, so godly and fruitful it is, that it mattereth not much under whose name it be read, yet worthy to be read under the name of none so much, as of the emperor Constantine himself, who was the true author and owner thereof.

Briefly, except it be the books only of the New Testament, and of the Old, what is almost in the pope's church, but either it is mingled, or depraved, or altered, or corrupted, either by some additions interlaced, or by some diminution mangled and mutilated, or by some gloss adulterate, or with manifest lies contaminate? so that in their doctrine standeth little truth; in their legends, portues, and mass-book, less truth; in their miracles and relics least truth of all. Neither yet do their sacraments remain clear and void of manifest lies and corruption. And specially here cometh in the master-bee, which bringeth in much sweet honey into the pope's hives; the master-lie, I mean, of all lies, where the pope, leaving not one crumb of bread nor drop of wine in the reverend communion, untruly and idolatrously taketh away all substance of bread

from it, turning the whole substance of bread into the substance of Christ's own body; which substance of bread if the pope take from the sacrament, then must he also take the breaking from it; for breaking, and the body of Christ, can in no wise stand literally together by the Scripture. Thus, then, as this is proved by the word of God to be a manifest lie, so think not much, good reader, hereat, as though I passed the bounds of modesty in calling it the arch-lie, or master-lie of all lies; because upon this one, an infinite number of other lies and errors in the pope's church, as handmaids, do wait and depend.

But, forasmuch as I stand here not to charge other men, so much as to defend myself, ceasing therefore, or rather deferring for a time, to stir this stinking puddle of these wilful and intended lies and untruths, which, in the pope's religion, and in papists' books, be innumerable, I will now return to those untruths and impudent lies, which Master Cope hath hunted out in my history of Acts and Monuments, first beginning with those untruths which he carpeth at in the story of the aforesaid Sir John Oldcastle, and Sir Roger Acton, Brown, and the rest.

And first, where he layeth to my charge, that I call them martyrs, which were traitors and seditious rebels against the king, and their country; to this I have answered sufficiently before.

Now here then must the reader needs stay a little, at Master Cope's request, to see my vanity and impudency yet more fully and amply repressed in refuting a certain place in my Latin story, concerning the king's statute made at Leicester, which place and words by him alleged, be these, page 107: *Quocirca rex indicto Leicestriae concilio (quod fortassis Londini ob Cobhami fautores non erat tutum) proposito edicto, immanem denunciatur pœnam his, quicunque deinceps hoc doctrine genus sectarentur; usque adeo in eos severus, ut non modo hæreticos, sed perduelliones etiam haberi, ac proinde gemino eos supplicio, suspendio simul et incendio afficiendos statuerit, &c.; et mox: Adeo ille vires, rationesque intendebat omnes, adversus Wicklevianos. Wickleviani id temporis dicebantur, quicunque Scripturas Dei sua lingua lectitarent, &c.*

Upon these words out of my aforesaid Latin book alleged, Master Cope persuadeth himself to have great advantage against me, to prove me a notorious liar, in three sundry points. First, in that whereas I say, that the king did hold his parliament at Leicester, adding this by the way of parenthesis, *quod fortassis Londini ob Cobhami fautores non erat tutum, &c.*: here he concludeth thereby, *simpliciter* and precisely, that the Lord Cobham and Sir Roger Acton with his fellows, were traitors, &c.; whereby a man may soon shape a caviller, by the shadow of Master Cope. For whereas my Dialysis out of the text speaketh doubtfully and uncertainly, by this word *fortassis* meaning indeed the king to be in fear of the gospellers, that he durst not hold his parliament at London, but went to Leicester: he argueth precisely, therefore, that the Lord Cobham, Sir Richard Acton, and his fellows, went about to kill the king. Secondly, whereas I affirm that the king in that parliament made a grievous law against all such as did hold the doctrine of Wickliff, that they should be taken hereafter, not for heretics, but also for felons, or rebels, or traitors, and therefore should sustain a double punishment, both to be hanged, and also to be burned, &c.: here cometh in Master Momus, with his Cope on his back, and proving me to be a liar, denieth plainly that the king made any such statute; see page 853, line 6, where his words be these: *Atqui quod hæretici pro perduellionibus, et deinceps geminatas pœnas suspendii et incendii luerant, ut nugatur Foxus, nullo modo illic traditur, &c.*

First, here would be asked of Master Cope, what he calleth *patriæ hostes, et proditores*? If he call these traitors, then let us see whether they that followed the sect of Wickliff were made traitors and heretics by the king's law, or not. And first, let us hear what saith Polydore Virgil, his own witness, in this behalf, whose words in his twenty-second book, page 441, be these: "Wherefore it was by public statute decreed, that whosoever were found hereafter to follow the sect of Wickliff, should be accounted for traitors; whereby, without all lenity, they should be punished more severely and quickly," &c.

Thus have you, Master Cope, the plain testimony of Polydore with me. And because ye shall further see yourself more impudent in carping, than I am in depraving of histories, you shall understand, moreover, and hear, what Thomas Walden, one of your own catholic brotherhood, and who was also himself alive, and a doer in the same parliament, being the provincial of the Carmelites, saith in this matter, writing to Pope Martin, whose very words here follow, written in his prologue to the said Martin, in this wise: "And it was not long after, but a public law and statute came out, by the common assent of the general parliament of the whole realm, that all Wicklevists, as they are traitors to God, so also should be counted traitors to the king and to the realm, having their goods lost and confiscate to the king; and, therefore, should suffer double punishment, as to be burned for God, and to be hanged for the king," &c. And thus have you, Master Cope, not only my sentence, but also the very words of my story confirmed by this author; because ye shall not think me to speak so lightly or impudently without my book. And, moreover, to confirm the sentence of Thomas Walden, it followeth also in another place of the aforesaid author: "And yet when the noble King Henry the Fifth, who as yet doth live and reign, began first to reign, he began to set forth a law, by his learned catholics which were about him, against the falseness of these men; so that whosoever was proved to be a Wicklevist, through the whole realm, should be punished for a traitor," &c. What words can you have, Master Cope, more plain these? or what authority can you require of more credit, which lived in the same time, and both did see and hear of the same things done? who, also, writing to Pope Martin, was by the said Pope Martin allowed, approved, and solemnly commended; as appeareth by the pope's epistle to him, wherein the pope declareth how he caused his books "by solemn persons to be seen and examined," &c. So that you must needs grant either this to be true that Walden writeth, or else that the pope, in allowing his writings, may err and be deceived. Choose ye, Master Cope, of these two opinions whether you will take.

And if ye think this my assertion yet not sufficiently rescued with these authorities aforesaid, I will also hereunto adjoin the testimony of another writer, named Roger Wall, who writing *De Gestis Henrici V.* and speaking of the said statute of this parliament something more plainly than the rest, hath these words: "Also in this parliament the noble king, reputed Christ's enemies to be traitors to himself, to the intent that all men should know, without all doubt, that so long as he lived he would be a true and perfect follower of Christian faith, did enact and decree, that whosoever should be found followers and maintainers of this sect, which is called the Lollard's sect, *ipso facto*, should be counted and reputed guilty of treason against the king's Majesty," &c.

By these hitherto alleged, if Master Cope will not be satisfied, yet let the reader indifferently judge. And yet, moreover, to make the matter more certain, mark the exclamation of the said Roger Wall added to the end of those words above recited, whereby we have to understand more clearly both what were the proceedings of the

king in the said parliament, and also what was the blind affection of monks and priests at that time toward their king and prince, which was then called *Princeps sacerdotum*, in condemning and destroying the poor Lollards. The words of the monk be these: "O true friend, who taketh and reckoneth that injury no less done to himself, which is done to his friend; and that prejudice which is intended against him, reputeth to be as his own; and, to bear together the burdens of his friend, sticketh not to lay to his own shoulders, for the easing and helping of him," &c.

How can it now be denied, Master Cope, in reading these authors, and seeing their testimonies, but that Lollardism in the parliament was made both treason and heresy, and had, therefore, a double judgment of punishment annexed, to be hanged for the one, and to be burned for the other; according as in my former Latin story I recorded, and yet I trifled not?

But you will say again, as ye do, that there is no mention made for heresy to be made treason, nor of any double punishment to be inflicted for the same. In the body of the statute, I grant, there is no express mention in words of heresy to be made treason, expressly signified in rigour of words; but that inclusively it is so inferred, it cannot be denied. For, first, where lands, goods, and cattle of the said Lollards were lost and forfeit to the king, what doth this import else, but treason or felony?

And where the Lord Cobham, for whose cause specially this statute seemed to be made, did sustain afterwards both hanging and burning by the vigour of the same statute, what is here contained, but a double penalty? Again, where in the beginning of the statute mention is made of "rumours" and "congregations," and afterwards upon the same followeth "the services of the king, whereunto the officers be first sworn, should be first preferred for liberty of holy church, and punishment of heretics, made before these days and now repealed," *ut supra*: what meaneth this, but to make these congregations of the Lollards to be forceable entries, riots, great ridings, unlawful assemblies, affrayers of the people, armour, routs, and insurrections, and so sendeth them to the former statutes not repealed; that is, to the statute, Anno 13 Hen. IV. cap. vii., where the punishment is left to the discretion of the king; or else to the statute, Anno 15 Rich. II. cap. ii., where the penalty is made fine and ransom; or else to the statute, Anno 5 Rich. II. cap. vi., where such assemblies be made plain treason. And as here is matter of treason sufficiently contained, so for heresy, likewise, the same statute referreth them to the ordinaries, and to the laws properly to heresy appertaining, and to the statute, Anno 2 Hen. IV. cap. xv., where the penalty is burning: also to the statute, Anno 5 Rich. II. cap. v. vi. So that in this present statute here, mention is contained, as ye see, although not in express words, yet inclusively (by referring to other statutes not repealed) both Lollardy, which is punished with burning, and forcible entries, which are punished at the king's pleasure. And thus much concerning the second untruth, which Master Cope untruly noted in me.

The third untruth which he noteth in me concerning this matter is this, wherein he reporteth me, that I say, there was no other cause of devising this sharp law and punishment against these men, but only for having the Scripture books; and, therefore, here is to be noted in the margin *Foxi dolus malus*; but let Master Cope take heed he deceive not himself and others. For my part I remember no such place in this my Latin story where I so say. Only my words be these, added in the latter end of the place above recited: "They were called Wicklevists, whosoever at that time read the Scriptures in English, or vulgar tongue," &c. I say not, that for the Scriptures being read in the English tongue, therefore the law was enacted; but so is Master Cope

disposed to construe it. What law and statutes were made against writing or reading of any book in English, or in any other tongue, contrary to the catholic, that is, the Romish faith, or to the determination of the holy church, that is, of Rome, read, I beseech thee, the bloody statute made Anno 2 Hen. IV. cap. xv., above specified. Also read the constitution provincial of Thomas Arundel above-mentioned, where it was decreed that the text of Holy Scripture should not be had, or read in the vulgar tongue, from the time of Master John Wickliff for ever after, unless the said translation be approved first by the ordinary, or by provincial council, under pain and punishment of heresy. Now let the reader judge whether the reading of Scripture books in the English tongue, by the making or translating of Wickliff, or from the time of Wickliff downward, be counted heresy, or not. As for the approving of the ordinary, or of the provincial council added in the end of the said constitution, it maketh more for a show or pretence, than for any just exception, or any true intention: for what man, having those Scriptures translated into English, would either present them to their ordinaries being so set against the reading of such books? or what ordinary would, or did ever yet, since Arundel's time, approve any such translation, presented unto them? Or else why did the good martyrs of Amersham suffer death, in the beginning of King Henry the Eighth, for having and reading certain books of Scripture, which were, as is said, only four epistles of St. Paul, with certain other prayers? and the others which heard them but only read, did bear faggots; and the same time, the children were compelled to set faggots unto their fathers, at which time Longland, being then bishop of Lincoln, and preaching to them at the stake, said, that whatsoever they were that did but move their lips in reading those chapters, were damned for ever; as when we come to that time, by the grace of Christ, shall hereafter more amply and notoriously appear. And where then is this *dolus malus Foxi* margined against me, for crafty dealing in my story?

Moreover, where Master Cope, proceeding further in this matter, asketh me, "How was the Lord Cobham obedient to the king, whenas for the fear of him the king durst not then keep his parliament at London?" To whom I answer again, asking likewise of Master Cope, How was the king then afraid to hold his parliament at London for the Lord Cobham, when the Lord Cobham at that time was in Wales? And here Master Cope, thinking to have me at a narrow strait, and to hold me fast, biddeth me tell him how it could be otherwise, but the Lord Cobham must needs have favourers? "And who should these favourers be (saith he) but Sir Roger Acton, Brown, and their fellows?" The which mighty question of Master Cope, I answer again; How could Sir Roger Acton, Brown, and their fellows be then favourers of the Lord Cobham, for whom the king durst not hold the parliament at London, whenas the said Roger Acton, Brown, and the rest, were put to death, a whole year almost before the parliament at Leicester began?

And now, as I have hitherto briefly and truly answered your askings, Master Cope, let me be so bold with you again, to propound to you likewise another question, forasmuch as you have put me to the searching of the statutes in this matter, wherewith before I was not much acquainted. Now, out of the same statutes riseth a double scruple, or question, worthy to be solved. The case is this, that forasmuch as so many good martyrs and saints of God hitherto, in this realm of England, have been burned from the time of King Henry the Fourth, Henry the Fifth, Henry the Sixth, Henry the Eighth, to the time, and in the time of Queen Mary, my question is, that you, with all your learned counsel about you, will tell me, by what law or statute of the realm were these men burnt? I know the ancient custom hath been, that heretics

convicted by a provincial council were wont to be left to the secular power. But how will ye prove me, these heretics were either convicted by such provincial council, or that these secular men ought to be your butchers in burning them whom ye have committed to them? If ye allege the six articles made in the reign of King Henry the Eighth, those articles neither did serve before the time of King Henry the Eighth, neither yet were they revived after his time. If ye allege the statute made Anno 5 Rich. II. cap. v., in that statute, I answer, is contained no matter of burning, but only of arrest to be done at the certifications of the prelates, without any further punishment there mentioned. To conclude, if ye allege the statute made Anno 2 Hen. IV. cap. v., and revived in the reign of Queen Mary, mentioned before; to that statute I answer, that although the pretended statute appeareth, in form of words in the printed book, to give unto the temporal officers authority to bring them to the stake, and to burn them whom the bishop delivereth, yet is it not to be proved, either by you or any other, that statute to be law, or warrant sufficient to burn any person or persons committed to the secular power by the clergy. And that I prove thus: for although the statute of King Henry the Fourth, in the books printed, appear to have law and authority sufficient, by the full assent both of the king, of the lords, and of the commons; yet, being occasioned by Master Cope to search further in the statutes, I have found, that in the rolls and first originals of that parliament, there is no such mention either of any petition or else of any assent of the commons annexed, or contained in that statute, according as in the printed books usual in the lawyers' hands, too craftily and falsely is foisted in; as by the plain words thereof may well appear.

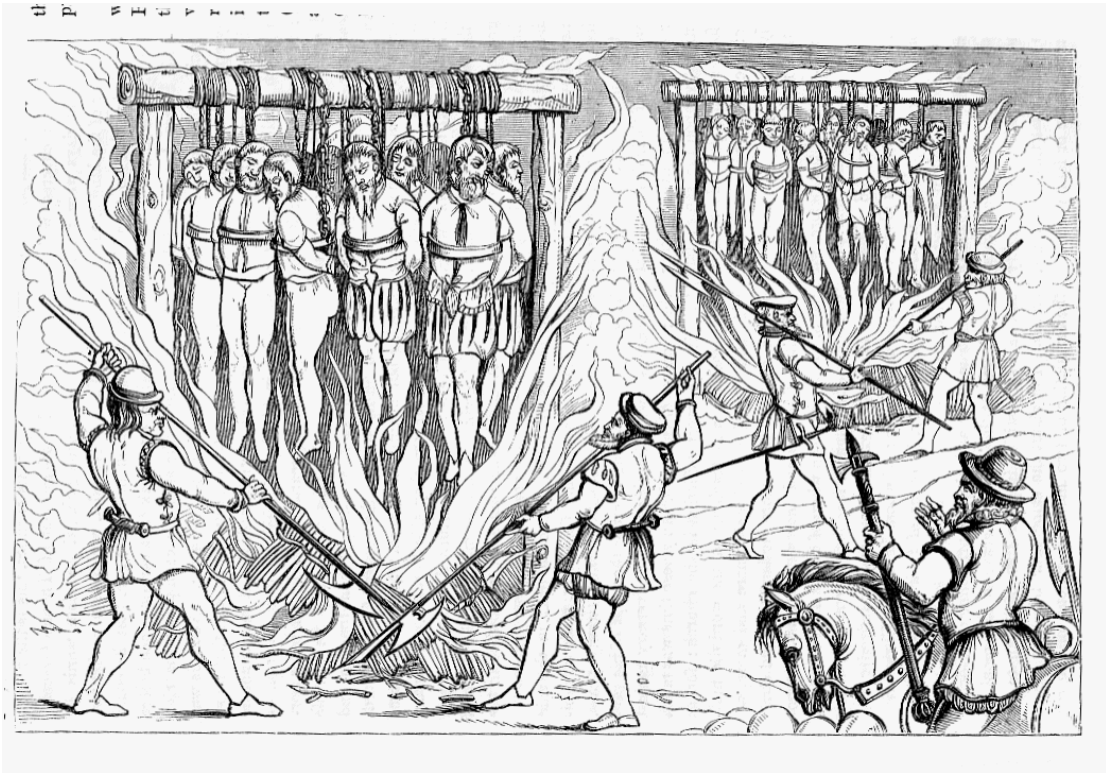
In searching of these statutes, as you have occasioned me to find out these scruples, so being found out, I thought here not to dissemble them, forasmuch as I see and hear many nowadays so boldly to bear themselves upon this statute; and thinking so to excuse themselves, do say, that they have done nothing but the law, the law! to the intent that these men, seeing now how inexcusable they be, both before God and man, having no law to bear them out, may the sooner repent their bloody and unlawful tyranny, exercised so long against God's true servants, yet, in time, before that the just law of God shall find out their unjust dealings; which partly he beginneth already to do, and more, no doubt, will do hereafter.

In the mean time, this my petition I put up to the commons, and to all other which shall hereafter put up any petition to the parliament; that they, being admonished by this abuse, will show themselves hereafter more wise and circumspect, both what they agree unto in parliaments, and also what cometh out in their name. And, as these good commons, in this time of King Henry the Fourth, would not consent or agree to this bloody statute, nor to any other like; for so we read that the commons in that bloody time of King Henry the Fourth, when another like cruel bill was put up by the prelates in Anno 8 Henry the Fourth, against the Lollards, they neither consented to this, and also overthrew the other: so in like manner it is to be wished, that the commons, in this our time, or such other that shall have to do in parliaments hereafter, following the steps of these former times, will take vigilant heed to such cruel bills of the pope's prelacy being put up, that neither their consent do pass rashly, nor that their names in any condition be so abused; considering with themselves that a thing once being passed in the parliament, cannot afterward be called back; and a little inconvenience once admitted, may grow afterward to mischiefs that cannot be stopped. And sometimes it may so happen, that through rash consent of voices, the end of things being not well advised, such a thing may be granted in one day, that afterward many days may cause the whole realm to rue. But I

trust men are bitten enough with such black parliaments, to beware of after-claps. The Lord Jesus, only protector of his church, stop all crafty devices of subtle enemies, and with his wisdom direct our parliaments, as may be most to the advantage of his word, and comfort of his people! Amen, Amen.

And thus much having said for the defence of the Lord Cobham, of Sir Roger Acton, knight, Master John Brown, esquire, John Beverly, preacher, and of other their fellows, against Alanus Copus, Anglus, here I make an end with this present interim, till further leisure serve me hereafter, Christ willing, to pay him the whole interest which I owe unto him: adding this in the mean time, and by the way; that if Master Cope had been a Momus any thing reasonable, he had no great cause so to wrangle with me in this matter, who as I did commend the Lord Cobham, and that worthily, for his valiant standing by the truth of his doctrine before Thomas Arundel, the archbishop; so touching the matter of this conspiracy, I did not affirm or define any thing thereof in my former history so precisely that he could well take any vantage thereof against me, who, in writing of this conspiracy laid against Sir Roger Acton, and Sir John Oldcastle, do but disjunctively or doubtfully speak thereof, not concluding certainly this conspiracy either to be true, or not true, but only proving the same not to be true at that time, as Polydore Virgil, and Edward Hall; in their histories do affirm; which say, that this conspiracy began after the burning of John Huss and Jerome of Prague; which could not be. And thereto tendeth my assertion.

But to the truth of the matter: as I said before, so I say again, whatsoever this worthy, noble, virtuous knight, Sir Roger Acton, was otherwise, this is certain, that he was always of contrary mind and opinion to the bishop of Rome, and to that kind of people; for the which cause he had great envy and hatred at their hands, and could as little bear it: neither do I greatly dissent from them, which do suspect or judge that the Lord Cobham, by his friendly help, escaped out of the Tower; and that, peradventure, was the cause why he was apprehended and brought to trouble, and, in the end, came to his death. Other causes also there might be, that these good men perchance did frequent among themselves some conventicles, (which conventicles were made treason by the statute aforesaid,) either in those thickets, or in some place else, for the hearing of God's word, and for public prayer; and therefore had they this Beverly, their preacher, with them. But to conclude: whatsoever this Sir Roger Acton was, this is the truth, which I may boldly record, as one writing the Acts and things done in the Church, that he was at length apprehended, condemned, and put to death or martyrdom, three years and more before the Lord Cobham died. Likewise Master John Brown, and John Beverly, the preacher, suffered with him the same kind of death, as some say, in the field of St. Giles, with others more, to the number of thirty-six, if the stories be true; which was in the month of January, A. D. 1413, after the computation of our English stories, counting the year from the Annunciation; but after the Latin writers, counting from Christ's nativity, A. D. 1414, according as in this picture is specified.



Lollards hanged and burned

These men, as is said, suffered before the Lord Cobham about three years, of whose death divers do write diversely. Some say they were hanged and burned in St. Giles's field; of whom is Fabian, with such as follow him. Other there be which say that some of them were hanged and burned. Polydore, speaking only of their burning, maketh no mention of hanging. Another certain English chronicle I have in my hands, borrowed of one Master Bowyer, who, somewhat differing from the rest, recordeth thus of Sir Roger Acton, that his judgment before the justice was thus; to be drawn through London to Tyburn, and there to be hanged; and so he was, naked, save certain parts of him covered with a cloth, &c. "And when certain days were past," saith the author, "a trumpeter of the king's, called Thomas Cliff, got grant of the king to take him down, and to bury him; and so he did." And thus have you the story of Sir Roger Acton, and his fellow brethren. As touching their cause, whether it were true, or else by error mistaken of the king, or by the fetch of the bishops surmised, I refer it to the judgment of him which shall judge both the quick and the dead; to whom also I commit you, Master Cope: God speed your journey well to Rome, whither I hear say you are going, and make you a good man.

After the decease or martyrdom of these above mentioned, who were executed in the month of January, A. D. 1414, in the next month following, and in the same year, the twentieth day of February, God took away the great enemy of his word, and rebel to his king, Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury; whose death following after the execution of these good men above recited, by the marvellous stroke of God, so suddenly, may seem somewhat to declare their innocency, and that he was also some great procurer of their death, in that God would not suffer him longer to live, striking him with death incontinently upon the same: but as I did the other before, so this also I do refer to the secret judgment of the Lord, who once shall judge all secrets openly.

In the mean time this may seem strange, that the same Thomas Arundel, who, a little before, sat in judgment against the Lord Cobham, and pronounced sentence of death upon him, did himself feel the stroke of death, and the sentence of God executed upon him before the other. Who would have thought but that the Lord Cobham, being so cast and condemned definitively, by the archbishop's sentence, should have died long before the archbishop? But such be the works of God's almighty hand, who so turned the wheel, that this condemned lord survived his condemner three or four years.

In the death of this archbishop, first Polydore Virgil is deceived, who affirmed his death to be A. D. 1415, and in the second year of King Henry the Fifth, also after the beginning of the Council of Constance; who, indeed, never reached the beginning thereof, nor ever saw the second year of that king, unless ye count the first day for a year, but died before, A. D. 1414, February the twentieth. Furthermore, concerning the death of this Arundel, and the manner thereof, who had been so heavy a troubler of Christ's saints in his time, because the thing seem eth worthy of noting, to behold the punishment of God upon his enemies, this is the report, as I have found it alleged out of Thomas Gascoin, in Dictionario Theologico, whose plain words be these: "Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, was so stricken in his tongue, that he could neither swallow nor speak for a certain space before his death, much like after the example of the rich glutton; and so died upon the same. And this was thought of many to come upon him, for that he so bound the word of the Lord, that it should not be preached in his days." Which if it be true, as it doth well here appear, these and such other horrible examples of God's wrath may be terrible spectacles for such as occupy their tongues and brains so busily to stop the course of God's word, striving but against the stream; against the force whereof neither are they able to resist, and many times in resisting are overturned themselves and drowned therein. And thus much for the death of Thomas Arundel, who continued archbishop in the see of Canterbury the space of eighteen years.

After this Arundel, succeeded next in the said see of Canterbury Henry Chichesly, made archbishop A. D. 1414, and sat five and twenty years. This Henry, following likewise the steps of his predecessor, showed himself no small adversary against the favourers of the truth. In whose time was much trouble and great affliction in the church; for, as the preaching and teaching of the word did multiply and spread abroad daily more and more, so, on the contrary side, more vigilant care and strait inquisition followed and increased against the people of God, by reason whereof divers did suffer, and were burned; some for fear fled the country; many were brought to examination, and by infirmity constrained to abjure; of whom hereafter, Christ willing, particularly, in order of their times, we will treat.

As true piety and sincere preaching of Christ's word began at this time to decay, so idle monkery and vain superstition in place thereof began to increase. For about the same year the king began the foundation of two monasteries, one on the one side of Thames, of Friars Observants, the other on the other side of Thames, called Sheen and Zion, dedicated to Charter-house monks, with certain Bridget nuns or recluses, to the number of sixty, dwelling within the same precinct, so that the whole number of these, with priests, monks, deacons, and nuns, should equal the number of twelve apostles, and seventy-two disciples. The order of these was according to the description of St. Paul the apostle, Col. i., Eat not, taste not, touch not, &c.; to eat no flesh, to wear no linen, to touch no money, &c.

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

About Michaelmas, the same year, the king began his parliament at Leicester, above mentioned. In the which parliament the commons put up their bill again, which they had put up before, in the eleventh year of Henry the Fourth, that temporalities, disorderly wasted by men of the church, might be converted and employed to the use of the king, of his earls, and knights, and to the relief of the poor people, as is before recited; in fear of which bill, lest the king would give thereunto any comfortable audience, as testifieth Robert Fabian and other writers, certain of the prelates and other head men of the church, put the king in mind to claim his right in France: whereupon Henry Chichesly, archbishop of Canterbury, made a long and solemn oration before the king to persuade him to the same, offering to the king, in the behalf of the clergy, great and noble sums: by reason whereof, saith Fabian, the bill was again put off, and the king set his mind for the recovery of the same: so that soon after he sent his letters and messengers to the French king concerning that matter, and received from him again answer of derision, with a pipe of tennis balls, as some record, sent from the Dauphin, for him to play with at home. Whereby the king's mind was incensed the more toward that voyage; who, when furnishing himself with strength and armour, with powder and shot, and gun-stones, to play with in France, and with other artillery for that purpose convenient, so set over into France, where he got Harfleur, with divers other towns and castles in Normandy and Picardy, and, at Agincourt, had a great victory over the French army, they being counted but seven thousand, by pricking sharp stakes before them, &c. After that he won Caen, Touques, Rouen, with other towns more, as Meldune, or Melione, and married with Katharine, the French king's daughter. And yet, notwithstanding, the third time he made his voyage again into France, where at length, at Blois, he fell sick and died: concerning all which voyages, because they are sufficiently discoursed in Fabian, Hall, and other chronographers, referring therefore the reader unto them, I will return my story to other matters of the church more effectual.

END OF VOLUME 3