



Luthers Predecessours :

OR AN

ANSWERE

TO

THE QUESTION
OF THE PAPISTS.

Where was your Church before Luther ?



LONDON,

Imprinted by *Felix Kingston* for *George Winder*, and are to be sold at his shop in
Saint *Dunstons* Church-yard in Fleet-
street. 1 6 2 4.

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By
J. B. ...
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Amongst all those Creatures that yeeld an vnpleasant sound, none are so clamorous and obstreperous, as Frogs, and Locusts; these by land, the other by water, saluting each passenger with an vnwelcome note: the iust picture and resemblance of popish Priests, and Iesuites, which certainly are the Frogs which S. Iohn saw to come forth of the mouth of the Beast, and the false prophet; whose croaking and vnwelcome noise doth not a little trouble each Christian passenger: Amongst other harsh notes of theirs, this question hath his place: for what musicke can there be in it? *Where was your Church before Luther?* To what end is this question mooued, except it bee to trouble men? for, what, if wee could not prooue, that our English Church was before *Luther*? must it needs

follow, that the doctrine we hold is vntrue? or shall the doctrine of the Church of *Rome* be euer the truer, because of onely antiquity? what if *Arrius* or *Nestorius* could haue deduced the Patrons of their opinions from *Adam*, should they for that haue beene orthodoxall? No certainly: and why not? Because the Church must be prooued and allowed by the doctrine, and not the doctrine authorized by the Church, which the Papists (a people wise in their generation) well knowing, haue ouerturned the course of nature, & will haue the Scripture and all doctrine to hang vpon the determination of the Church: and vpon this ground it is, that they proceede to such questions as these, hoping that if they haue once amazed any one with the name of the Church, and shall haue driven him from title and interest to the Church before *Luthers* time, they shall easily make him call in question the whole frame of doctrine of the reformed Churches.

Vnto this question answers haue beene made, arguments alledged to prooue that the doctrine of the Protestant Religion hath had his being in the world long before the dayes of *Luther*: That argument of the worthy Doctor *Featly* cannot by any Iesuite be answered, who concludeth, that the doctrine of the reformed Churches must needs haue Professours in all ages, because it is eternall: for eternitie must needs haue a perpetuall duration without interruption.

The argument of Induction, is that which better pleaseth the Iesuite, but by no meanes will hee suffer our enumeration to begin with Christ and his Apostles; for then what shifts, what cauls and tergiversations they haue, may easily appeare by the proceedings of the late conference betwixt *D. White*, and *D. Featly*, against

Fisher,

Fisher, and Sweet : Wherefore, to answer a foole, according to his folly, I haue indeuoured to draw the argument of Induction *à posteriore*, beginning with the ages next before *Luther*; the which is not so hard a taske as commonly is imagined : But first, we must agree vpon the termes of this question, *Where was your Church, &c?* where wee must first know what is meant by *your*, and what by *Church*.

For, if by *your*, they meane the Church of our Nation, that is, Where was your English reformed Church? Then are we to answer out of our own Chronicles, and so shall we be able to name the fewer in all ages, and in some ages perhaps none; not that there were none, but that the Euidences are lost : But I suppose they doe not by the termes, *your Church*, vnderstand a Nationall or Prouinciall Church, because then must they prooue, that the Church of the New Testament is tyed to a place: so that where it once hath beene planted, there it should continue, which is contrary to all experience: besides, had they meant so, they would haue rather named *Tyndall*, or some other Englishman, then *Luther* a German. By *your Church*, they meane then those men in what Country soeuer, which confessed and maintained the same doctrine.

Then, for the meaning of the word *Church*, wee demand whether they mean a visible constituted Church, which might haue beene knowne by the distinction and succession of Bishops, Elders, Deacons, &c. or whether they meane generally any company of men, holding and professing those truths and doctrines which we maintaine?

For, if they will tye vs to the former, I say still, the taske is vnequall, because the Records are wanting, but especially,

especially, because they cannot prooue that the Church must alwayes bee in such manner visible: for in *Elias* time there were 7000. vnknowne to him, much more to *Ahab*. In the time of Christs passion some of the Papists say, that the Church rested onely in *Marie*; and all doe vsually compare the Church to the Moone, which is alwayes lasting, but not alwaies in the Full.

But, if they meant the latter, namely, a company of men professing the same faith which wee doe; then wee further propound to them two questions.

The first is, Whether the persecuting of any *de facto*, doe hinder the iustifying of them *de iure*, which they must needs denie, except they will beg the question: and then, though we finde such, and such, in former ages to haue beene condemned, yet if *de iure*, they ought not, and that we can iustifie their Tenents, we shall proceed more easily in challenging them for ours: But if they would haue vs to name men vncondemned, liuing in peace, free from persecution, they must then prooue, that persecution doth take away the priuiledge of the Church; that those men shall not be of the Church, because persecuted: which if they goe about, they must wipe out the whole infancy of the Church for the first 300. yeeres; but they shall neuer be able to prooue it: for the woman in *Reuel. 12.* was constrained to flie into the wildernesse for feare of the Dragon.

The second is, What those doctrines are, which we must prooue, those whom wee seeke for to haue held: for, if they meane the fundamentall poynts of Religion, contained in the *Creed* for matters of faith, in the *Decalogue* for matter of practice, and in the *Lords Praier* for matter of praier, they themselves shall be our spokesmen, for they and wee hold these in common; but if they

they meane those points of doctrine wherein we dissent from the present Church of Rome. (which they must do if they vnderstand themselves in the question) then we further desire to know whether they will not allow vs to challenge those for ours, who held the most, and mainest, for which they suffered as well as wee.; although (perhaps) in some other points they dissented from vs in our generall Tenents: for, if they will allow vs onely such, who both in doctrine and discipline did in all points agree, they are too narrow for any dispute; besides, they must prooue that there hath beene alwaies such an vnity of words and doctrine, that in no point the professours haue or may dissent, and yet remaine members of the Church: a taske that will neuer sadge well, especially with them in their mutinous multitude and rabble of religious orders; yea, let them then call to minde how weakely *Harding* hath defended his answer of Bishop *Jewels* challenge; or, let them answer *Perkins* Problem, and prooue where their Church was before the *Trent* Councell; for it will asmuch trouble them to name a company of men in all points professing the *Trent* faith, as vs, to finde a company of men professing in all points the doctrine of the reformed religion: But if they giue vs liberty to make challenge to them, who in the most and greatest points haue agreed with vs (which is but reasonable) then in the next place we desire to grow to a point, and agree vpon the maine points of difference betwixt vs and them: All which in generall do concerne either the offices of Christ, or the fruites of his office, the which by their doctrine are ouerthrowne.

For first, the kingly office of Christ is ouerthrowne by the supremacy of the Pope, which draweth with it

the pride of the Clergy, and exaltation of them about the temporall power.

Secondly, the Prophetickall office is ouerthrowne by their silencing the Scripture, and by giuing such liberty to the Church, yea, and to the Pope, to frame articles of faith.

Thirdly, the Priestly office is ouerthrowne in the worke of satisfaction, by Merits, Indulgences, Purgatory, &c. In the worke of Application, by their abuses thrust into the Sacraments, especially Transubstantiation, reall Presence, Exorcismes, &c. & by their false sacraments, which were neuer appointed by Christ, as meanes of application. In the worke of Intercession, by Angels, Saints, Images, whom they haue made their mediators of intercession.

Lastly, the fruites of Christs office, redounding to vs by the mediation of Christ, is our Iustification before God, which doctrine they haue laboured to overthrow.

Now to the point; this our taske wee are to shew forth the names of such men, who haue consented with vs in the opposition of the Supremacy, exemption of the Clergy from Ciuill iurisdiction, in the authority of the Scriptures, and in the communicating of them to the people, in condemning Merits, Indulgences, Purgatory, Transubstantiation, reall presence, intercession of Saints, and Angels, Image-worship, Pilgrimage; in the doctrine of our free iustification by faith, and such other points, which are controuerted betwixt vs, and the Church of Rome. And this wee will doe first in the instance of our owne Countymen, and then proceed to others.

Know all men therefore by these presents, that about

bout the yeere of Grace 1370. in the time of *Edward* the third, King of England, at what time all the world was in most desperate and vile estate, and that lamentable ignorance and darkenesse of Gods truth, had ouer-shaddowed the Church most; *John Wickliffe*, who almost 200. yeeres before *Luther*, by the especiall prouidence of God, was raised vp here in England, to detect more fully and amply, the poison of the Popes doctrine, and to purge Religion from those dregs and filthinesse, with which it was defiled; a Professor of Diuinitie was he in Oxford, a man of note in his time, and of famous memory in the ages following: For after hee had begunne to publish some conclusions touching the Doctrine of the Sacrament, and other abuses of the Church, (which boyle and sore could not be touched, without the great paine and grieve of the world) hee was much infested with the Monkes and Friers, who like Hornets, did assaile the good man on euery side: After them, the Priests tooke the matter in hand, and *Symon Sudbery*, Archbishop, depriued him of his Benefice in Oxford; yet by the friendly and fauourable assistance of *John of Gaunt*, Duke of Lancaster, and *Henry Percy*, Earle Marshal, (being also befriended of the King, who had heretofore made vse of him in an Ambassage) he bore out the malice of the Friers, and of the Archbishop, all the dayes of *Edward* the third, and of Pope *Vrbane*; who being busied in suppressing his aduersary, *Clement* the seuenth, could not spare any time to deale with *Wickliffe*: and so it came to passe, by Gods prouidence, that the truth began to take some place and roote in mens hearts.

Afterward in the beginning of *Richard* the 2. and of *Gregory* the eleuenth, his aduersaries espied their time,

and incensed the Pope against him, who sendeth forth his Bull to the Vniuersity of Oxford, and an Epistle to the King, with diuers Letters to the Bishops, dated all 11. kal. of Iune, in the seuenth yeere of his Pontificality 1378. By which it appeareth, that *Wickliffe* was a man of note, and that these things were not done in a corner, but that his preaching had taken effect: So that the Bishops had neede of the Popes owne helpe to suppress him and his abettors, the which although they attempted, yet could they not bring to passe: his commendation testified by the Vniuersitie is this: That he behaued himselfe as a stout Champion of the Faith, neither was hee conuict of any heresie: and God forbid (saith the Testimoniall) that our Prelates should haue condemned a man of such honesty, of heresie.

His bookes were many, and spred abroad, not onely throughout England, but also by occasion of *Queene Anne*, wife to *Richard the second*, sister to *Wenceslaus King of Bohemia*, carried into Bohemia, whence *John Husse* learned the beginnings of his knowledge. Thus was this man a most worthy instrument in the Church of God, like a bright Starre shining farre and neere.

Now for his conclusions which are recorded for him; they are many, & gathered by his aduersaries, and therefore if in all points they sound not so well as we could desire, yet certainly wee may beleue that they were not so bad as some of them are deliuered.

Wee finde that in a Conuention at London 1382: May 17. they proceeded to the condemnation of his articles, some as hereticall, some as erroneous: The which also were afterward presented to the Councell of *Constance*, with diuers others to the number of 45. in all, and by the same Councell condemned, the which for

breuitie

breuitie sake I haue collected vnto their seuerall heads.

1. Touching the supremacy, hee held that it is not necessary to saluation, to beleue that the Church of Rome is supreme head of all Churches: That the Church of Rome is the Synagogue of Satan; Neither is the Pope immediately the Vicar of Christ, nor his Apostles, and that the Excommunication of the Pope and his Prelates is not to bee feared, because it is the censure of Antichrist.

2. Concerning religious orders (which are the tayle of Antichrist) he taught, That those holy men, as *Francis, Dominick, Benedict, &c.* which haue instituted priuate religions whatsoeuer they be, in so doing, haue grieuously offended; And such who do found Monasteries, doe offend and sin; so all such who enter into such religions, are thereby vnable to keepe the commandments of God, as also to attaine to the Kingdome of heauen, except they returne from the same: yea, that religious men being in their priuate religion, are not of the Christian Religion, but are members of the Diuell.

3. Concerning the Authoritie of the Church, his doctrine was, that whatsoeuer the Pope and his Cardinals can deduce cleerely out of the Scriptures, that onely is to bee beleueed; or to bee done at their admonition; and that whatsoeuer else they command, is to bee condemned as hereticall; As for the decretals of the Pope, they are Apocrypha, and seduce men from the faith of Christ; and the Clergy that studie them, are fooles.

4. As touching preaching and hearing the Word, which is the execution of Christs Propheticall Office,

hee taught; That it is lawfull for any man either Priest or Deacon, to preach the Word of God, without the authoritie of the Apostolike Sea, or any other of his Catholikes; and that all such, who doe leaue preaching or hearing the Word, for feare of their excommunication, they are already excommunicated, and in the Day of iudgement, shalbe counted traitors against God.

5. Hee opposed also the selling of Prayers, Pardons, Indulgences, and such Popish trash, by which the satisfaction of Christ is weakened; affirming, that it was but a folly to belecue the Popes Pardons. Item, that all such, as bee hired for temporall liuing to pray for other, doe offend and sinne in Simony.

6. In the doctrine of the Sacraments, which are the instruments of Christ, to apply to vs the work of his satisfaction, he laboureth much to reforme the abuses.

1. In Baptisme, hee found fault with their doctrine of necessity; teaching, that they which doe affirme, that the infants of the faithfull departing without the Sacrament of Baptisme, are not saued, are presumptuous and fooles in so affirming.

2. In the Supper of the Lord, hee opposed the real presence, and transubstantiation, teaching, that Christ is not really in the Sacrament of the Altar, in his proper and corporall person, but only figuratively; That without alldoubt it is a figuratiue speech to say, This is my body. Item, that the substance of materiall bread and wine, euen bread in his owne substance, doth remaine in the Sacrament of the Altar, and ceaseth not to be bread still. That the Accidents do not remain without the Subiect in the same Sacrament, after the consecration. So also hee taught; That it is not found,

or established by the Gospell, that Christ did ordaine Masse.

3. As for the other five, which we count bastard-sacraments, some he did doubt of, as, Extreame Vnction: for this is one article, if corporall vnction, or anneyling, were a Sacrament as it is faigned to be, Christ and his Apostles would not haue left the ordinance thereof vn- touched. So also for Shrift; if a man be duely and truely contrite and penitent, all outward confession is superfluous and vnprofitable.

Other Sacraments he complained of, as being abused; hallowing of Churches, (saith hee) confirmation of children, and the Sacrament of Orders, be reserued to the Pope and Bishops onely, for the respect of temporall lucre. So also concerning Matrimony, he held, that the causes of diuorcement, of consanguinity, or affinity, be not founded in the Scripture, but are onely the ordinances of men, and humane inuentions.

7. Lastly, concerning the power of the Keyes, and the Churches censures, his positions are; That no Prelate ought to excommunicate any man, except he know him first to be excommunicate of God: and that he that doth excommunicate any other man, is thereby himselfe either an hereticke, or excommunicate. *Item*, that a Prelate excommunicating any man of the Clergy, which hath appealed to the King, or to the Councell, is thereby himselfe a traitour to the King and Realme.

This in effect is the summe of his doctrine, wherein howsoeuer there may be some few small slips, or harsh phrases, yet no pernicious errors, much lesse, damnable heresie; but for the substance, it is sound and good, and agreeable to the Canon of the Word. Wherefore, howsoeuer the Synod of *London*, and the Councell of

Constance

Constance, haue agreed to condemne these Articles and his Books, yea, & his bones also to the fire (41. yeeres after his death) yet since *de iure* they ought not so to haue done, and that we are able to iustifie his doctrine, we are bold to challenge him as a fit instance to answer the question proposed; and doe conclude, that our Church had a being, and the doctrine of the reformed Churches had professors, long before the dayes of *Luther*.

But goe to, let vs goe on, and see what other can be named; one Swallow maketh no Summer, nor one professor a Church. True: and therefore except we can draw downe the profession of this doctrine successiue from *Wickliffe*, to the dayes of *Luther*, let vs lose all this labour: wherefore we are to know, that both together with *Wickliffe*, and after him, arose a multitude in the Church of *England*, maintaining the same doctrine, and spreading it abroad among the people, labouring with might and maine to defend it. Such were *Lau. Redman*, Master of Arts, *Dan. Sawtree*, Diuine, *John Aschwarby*, Vicar of *S. Maries Church* in *Oxford*, *William Jones*, an excellent young-man, well learned, *Th. Brightwell*, *Will. Haulam* a Ciuilian, *Ralph Grenhurst*, *Io. Scut*, *Ph. Norrice*, who being excommunicate by Pope *Eugenius* the fourth, appealed to a generall Councell; *Peter Paine*, Lord *Cobham*, with diuers others, whose names are mentioned in the Kings writ, sent to the Sheriffe of *Northampton*, giuen at the Mannor of *Langly*, March 8. in the 12. of *Richard* the second: so also, for confirmation of their multitudes, the words of the Statute made Anno 5. of *Richard* 2.

About this time *W. Courtney* Archbishop, being in his Visitation at *Leicester*, conuented diuers before him, as *Dexter*, *Taylor*, *Wagstaffe*, *Scriuener*, *Smith*, *Henry*, *Parchmeanar*,

meanar, Goldsmith; these, with other moe, were accused to the Archbishop, for holding the opinion of the sacrament of the Altar, auricular confession, and other sacraments, contrary to that which the Church of Rome did teach: The which persons, because being cited they came not in, were solemnely accursed as hereticks with bell, booke, and candle; yea, and by the same Archbishop was the whole Towne of *Leicester* interdicted, so long as any of these excommunicate persons should remaine in it. There was also one *Matilda* an Anchoreesse accused of the same opinions: all this happened in 1387. in the 10. yeere of *Richard 2.* About the same time *Peter Patehall* an *Austen* Frier, hauing obtained leaue of the Pope to change his coate and religion, hearing the doctrine of *Wickliffe*, and others of the same sort, began to preach openly, and to detest the vices of his Couent, preaching in *London*, & by the Londoners graciously entertained and vpheld against the turbulent Friers, who sought to molest him. Thus by the preaching of *Wickliffe*, and others, the Gospell began to fructifie and spread abroad in *London*, and other places of the Realme, and more would haue done, had not the Prelates set themselues so forcibly with might and maine to gaine-stand the course thereof.

1389. *William Swinderby* a worthy defender of the faith, with *Wickliffe*, was accused to the Bishop of *Lincolne*, of certaine Articles, both vntruely collected and cruelly exhibited against him by the Friers, & by their vehemency was vrged to reuoke: afterward he remoouing into the Diocesse of *Hereford*, was there also molested and troubled vnder *Iohn Tresnant* Bishop of *Hereford*, vpon the same Articles; the which Articles as they were giuen in by the Friers, and how answered by

Swinderby in his protestation, hangeth vpon record, and out of the Registers in the same old English in which it was written, is by *M. Fox* transcribed into his History of the Church : By the reading of which protestation, wee may note a notable piece of knauery in his accusers, viz. not to deliuer his assertions faithfully, as he did deliuer them, but as they supposed to make him most odious in the defence of them; and by that we may well guesse, that these points in *Wickliffe*, which seeme rough and harsh, met with such vnhandsome workmen. The processe against this *Swinderby*, his declaration vpon certaine conclusions touching the Sacrament of the Altar, Confession, Indulgences, and touching Antichrist, his appeal to the King, his letter to the Parliament, doe sufficiently confirme his worth and sufficiency in the cause.

1391. *Walter Brute* a man of sufficient learning, though no Priest, was conuented before the Bishop of *Worcester*, and accused of the same Articles with *Swinderbies* : admirable it is to reade his storie, especially in it, his learned declarations concerning Antichrist, the Popes vsurped power, the power of the Keyes, free iustification by faith onely, auricular confession, absolution, the matter of the Sacrament, Transubstantiation, Idolatry, Exorcising, priestly blessing, buying and selling of prayers, and other Romish dregs, the lawfull vse of an oath ; in which hee also prooueth that the City of Rome is *Babylon*. What could hee haue done more in our cause, had he liued since *Luther* ? Out of his declarations may be taken a sufficient Commentary and Exposition of those Articles, which as they are ascribed vnto *Wickliffe*, seeme something harsh. Furthermore, the Bull of Pope *Boniface* the 9. dated the 15. Kal. Oct. in
the

the 6. yeere of his Popedome, directed to King *Richard* the 2. and to the Bishop of *Hereford*, doth confesse, that these Christians whom the common people called *Lollards*, did daily grow and increase, and preuaile against their Diocesans, for which cause the Pope stirreth vp the King against them, who therupon directed forth a commission to the Bishops, to proceed with greater authority against *William Swinderby*, *Stephen Bell*, *Walter Brute*, and others of the same opinions : By which meanes the growth of the Gospell was nipped, and a little kept in, but afterward it brake forth with more effectualnesse, as may appeare by the booke of conclusions exhibited to the Parliament holden at *London*, in the 18. of *Richard* the 2.

1395. Touching the abuses of the Church, Popish priest.hood, single life of Priests, the fained miracle of Transubstantiation, Exorcismes, and Priestly blessings, Masses for the dead, Pilgrimages, and oblations to Reliques and Images, Confession, Nunnes and Wid.dowes vowing single life, in all which, a reformation was desired in the said Bill, the copy whereof is to bee scene in *Archuiis Regijs* : so also the Kings dealing with certaine of his Lords, as namely, *Richard Sturie*, *Lewis Clifford*, *Tho. Latimer*, *Io. Mountacute*, &c. whom he did sharply rebuke and threaten terribly, for that he heard them to be fauourers of that side. Adde to this the complaints of the Bishops against the Londoners, occasioned by another brawle; but certainly the maine matter was, because the Londoners were fauourers of *Wickliffes* doctrine, as in the story of *S. Albons* is to be scene, vpon which occasion the King remoued the Courts and Termes to be kept at *Yorke*, to the great decay of the City, which happened *An. 1393*. All these things laid

together, doe plainly and demonstratiuely tell vs, that there was more then one or two knowne to be infected, else what need such adoo with Letters, Epistles, Bulls, Mandates, Commissions to roote out the proceeding of a few. No doubt therefore but there were many worthy witnesses and confessors of the truth of the Gospell.

1400. After the deposing of *Richard 2.* when *Henrie 4.* had gotten the Crowne, the next yeere hee called a Parliament, in which one *W. Sawtree*, a good man, and faithfull Priest, inflamed with the zeale of true Religion, required he might be heard for the commodity of the whole Realme. But the matter being smelt out by the Bishops, they obtained that it might be referred to the Conuocation; before whom being conuented & examined of diuers Articles of Religion, agreeable to *Wickliffes* doctrine, for that hee stood constantly in the defence of the truth, was by them condemned, degraded, and lastly burned. And this was the first Martyr that suffered for Religion, since the renuing of it by *Wickliffe*: for howsoeuer the Bishops had obtained the Statute *de comburendo*, in the daies of *Rich. 2.* yet in all his time none suffered death for that cause. But when *Henry 4.* came to the Crowne, hee willing to keepe in with the Clergy, which in those daies was a strong faction, put the Statute in execution, first vpon this *Sawtree*, and after him followed many moe, some whereof are recorded, but certainly the names of many are lost and forgotten. See the words of the Statute made in the second yeere of *Henry* the fourth, mentioning a good company of such Preachers, whom that age called hereticall.

1407. The storie of *William Thorpe* is famous, written by his owne hand, contayning his accusation and examination.

mination before Archbishop *Arundell*; his answer, his commendation of *Wickliffe*, and defence of his doctrine, he taught against the Sacrament of the Altar, Masse, Images, Pilgrimages, pride of Priest, confession, &c. A constant Professour hec was of the Truth, and questionlesse continued to the end, howsoever his end is vnknowne: in all likely-hood he dyed in prison. The like end befell to *John Ashton*, another of *Wickliffes* followers, who for the same Doctrine of the Sacrament, was condemned by the Bishops, and because he would not recant, was committed to perpetuall prison, wherein the good man continued vntill his death. Somewhat before *Thorps* trouble, happened the trouble of *John Puruey*, who, as *Waldensis* writeth, was the Library of the Lollards, and a glosse vpon *Wickliffe*. This *Puruey*, together with *Harford*, a Doct. of Diuinity, were grievously tormented and punished in the Castle of Saltwood, at length-recanted at *Pauls Crosse*; afterward, againe hec was imprisoned vnder Archbishop *Chicheley*, in the yeere 1421. his Articles which he taught, were touching transubstantiation, confession, Power of the keyes, vowes of chastity, the charge of Priests; he said that *Innocent* the third, and the 600. Bishops, and all the rest of the Clergy which in the Councell of Lateran determined the doctrine of transubstantiation and confession, were fooles and blockheads, seducers of the people, Heretickes, and blasphemers: he wrote diuers bookes, as touching the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, of penance, orders, the power of the Keyes, the preaching of the Gospell, of marriages, vowes, possessions, correction of the Clergy, of the lawes and decrees of the Church, of the state and condition of the Pope and Clergy.

1409. *Iohn Badly* first, molested and condemned by the Bishop of Worcester, was afterwards accused before Archbishop *Arundel*, and other his Assistants, for being vnfound in the doctrine of the Sacrament, as denying the reall presence, and transubstantiation: and being demanded whether he would renounce and forsake his opinions, and adhere to the Doctrine of the Catholike Church, hee confessed, That he had both said and maintained the same, and would adhere and stand to these his opinions, and while hee liued, would neuer retract the same; for which hee was condemned, and in Smithfield burned.

After this, the Prelates not contenting themselves with this, that now they had the power of the secular arme to assist them in the punishment of Heretikes, and hauing a King to their mind, ready to serue their turne in al points, at the Parliamēt thē held, procured the Statute *ex Officio*, the sequell whereof cost many a man his life: at the same time also came forth diuers constitutions of Archbishop *Arundell*, forbidding to preach or teach any thing contrary to the Determination of the Church in the points of the Sacrament of the Altar, Matrimony, Confession, or other Sacraments, or other Articles of faith. Item, that no Schoolemasters should, in teaching the Sciences, intermingle any thing concerning the Sacraments, contrary to the determination of the Church. That none of *Wickliffes* bookes should bee read, those onely excepted which the Vniuersitie of Oxford had allowed. Item, That none should translate any Text of Scripture into English. Item, That diligent inquisition should bee made by euery Prouost, Principall, and Master of euery Colledge in Oxford, among the Schollers, for persons defamed of heresie.

Now

Now let all men iudge, whether these constitutions giuen at Oxford in this manner, do not plainly declare, that there was a great company of these men who professed and taught such points, which these constitutions did condemne. Againe, is it any wonder, that after such strength and force, such policy and practices vsed to supplant the doctrine of *Wickliffe*, and his followers, it should bee almost extinguished? The Bishops and Clergy hauing the King on their side, armed with Lawes, Statutes, Punishments, Imprisonments, Fire, Faggot, Sword, and the like, what wonder is it, if they beare all before them? Is it equall to challenge vs to shew foorth our Church, to require a visibility of it, when these who are our aduersaries, hauing the sword in their hand, did labour so abundantly to suppress the memoriall of them? And yet by the goodnesse of God it came to passe, as may appeare by the Registers, that those persons whom they condemned and detested as Heretikes, calling them Lollards, did increase daily in diuers countries, especially at London, in Lincolne-shire, Norfolke, Hereford, Shrewsbury, and in Calice, and other quarters, in the Prouince of Canterbury, with whom Archbishop Arundel had much adoe, as by his Registers doth appeare.

1413. *Henry* the fourth beeing dead, succeeded *Henry* the fifth, crowned on Passion Sunday, presently after began a Parliament to be called and holden after Easter, at Westminster; at which time also was holden a Synod at London vnder Archbishop *Arundel*: The chiefe cause of assembling thereof, was, to repress the growing of the Gospell; and especially to withstand the noble and worthy Lord Cobham, who was then noted to be a principall fauourer, receiuer, and maintainer

tainer of them, whom the Clergy called Lollards, especially in the diocesse of London, Hereford, and Rochester, setting them vp to preach, whom the Bishops had not licensed : hee was also accused to bee farre otherwise in the beliefe of the Sacraments of the Altar, of Penance, of Pilgrimage, Image-worship, and of ecclesiasticall power, then the holy Church of Rome had taught for many yeeres before; his examination, confession, and declaration of his Christian beliefe, his godly answers, and reasons, his constancy in the truth is worth the reading. Finally, he was also condemned, and committed to the Tower, out of which hee made an escape, peraduenture not without the helpe of Sir *Roger Acton*; who himselfe, whatsoeuer hee was otherwise, certaine it is that hee was alwaies of a contrary minde and opinion to the Romish Bishops and Clergy, for which he was greatly hated of the : his friendly helpe to the Lord *Cobham*, is thought to haue bin the cause why hee was apprehended, and brought into trouble; and in the end came to his death, some three yeeres before the Lord *Cobham*; and with him *I. Browne*, and *I. Bouerly* a preacher, suffered the same kind of death in S. Giles fields, with other moe, to the number of 36. as the stories doe report : all which are said to haue bin hanged and burned in the moneth of Ianuary 1413. The which death also the Lord *Cobham* suffred some foure yeeres after his escape, being betrayed and brought in by the Lord *Powes*, either for the hatred of the religion, and true Doctrin of Iesus Christ, or else for greedinesse of the reward promised by the King to them that could bring in the Lord *Cobham* aliue or dead: for being thus taken, he was adiudged to be hanged vpon the new gallows in S. Giles field, and burned hanging: for you must know,

know that the Prelates (the better to suppress this doctrine) had gotten an Act passed, which condemned the Lollards and followers of *Wickliffe*, decreeing, that they should be accounted as traitors to the King and Realme, and so should suffer double punishment, viz. to be burnt as heretikes, and hanged as traitors to the King; testified by *Polydore Virgil*, and by *Waldensis*.

1415. After *Th. Arundel*, succeeded Archbishop *Chicheley*, before whom was conuented *John Claydon*, who for the space of 20. yeeres before had beene suspected of Lollardy; He was accused to haue diuers bookes in English, out of which his Aduersaries collected 15. Articles, which they condemned as hereticall and erronious; for which cause he was condemned, and shortly after, together with *Rich. Turning*, burned in Smithfield. Shortly after, the Archbishop, with the rest of the Clergy, made other constitutions against the Lollards: After the setting forth of which constitutions, great inquisition followed in England, and many good men, whose hearts began to fauour the Gospell, were brought to much vexation and trouble, and caused outwardly to abiure. Thus while Christ had the inward hearts of men, Antichrist would needs possesse the outward body, and make them sing his song: In the number of whom were *I. Taylor*, *W. Iames*, *I. Dwerse*, *John Jourdly*, *M. Roberts*, Parson of *Hegly*, *W. Henry*, *I. Gall*, *Bart. Cornmonger*, *N. Hooper*, *Th. Granter*; so also *Ralph Mongin* Priest, was condemned to perpetuall prison. After this followed the Recantation of *Ric. Menke*, and of *Edmund Friib*, besides many more recorded in the same Register, who likewise for their faith and Religion were much vexed and troubled. The names of 16. are set downe in the proesse of the Archbishop, directed forth against the same persons, whereof some whole households, both men and women, were driuen to forsake their houses & townes

for danger of persecution: yea, so cruelly was the Romish Clergy bent against them, and so grieved to see the poore flocke of Christ to multiply, that *Henry Chichely* stirred vp the Pope against them; alledging that there were so many infected with the doctrine of *Wickliffe* and *Husse* here in England, that without force of an army they could not be suppressed.

1422. *Henry 5.* being dead, his Sonne *Henry 6.* a child of nine moneths old succeeded; In the first yeere of whose raigne was *W. Taylor* accused, conuicted, condemned, & afterward in Smithfield with Christian constancy, after long imprisonment did consummate his martyrdom. Others there were that professed the same truth, but for feare durst not be so bold; so that it appeareth by the Registers of *Norwich* in that Diocese within the space of 3. yeeres, viz. from 1428. to 1431. about the number of 120. men and women were examined, and much vexed for the profession of the Christian faith; of whom three suffered death, viz. Father *Abraham* of Colchester, *W. White*, and *I. Waddon*, Priests; the rest sustained such cruell penance as pleased the Bishop & his Chancellor to lay vpon them, which howsoeuer, through the hard dealing of the times, they were constrained to recant, and many of them to abiure their opinions, yet their good will to the truth is manifest: and it is fit to preserve the memory of their names, if it be but to stop the mouth of such malignant aduersaries, who following blind affection rather then true knowledge of times and antiquities, through ignorance blame they know not what, accusing the true doctrine of the Gospell to be nouelty, and the Preachers thereof to bee Nouelists, whereas this doctrine lacking none antiquity, hath from time to time burst forth, and preuailed in many places, though in the most through tyranny it hath beene suppressed, as by these good men of *Norfolk* & *Suffolk* may appeare,

appeare, who if they had had the liberty which we haue, and authority to back them, it would haue well appeared how old this doctrine is, so that all men would haue acknowledged, that this our Church was long before *Luther*.

1430. Shortly after the solemne Coronation of *Hen. 6.* which was in the 8. yeere of his raigne, was *Richard Henedon*, a Londoner, crowned with martyrdome. The next yeere *Th. Bagly* a Priest, and *Paul Craw* a Bohemian, both valiant defenders of *Wickliffes* doctrine, were condemned and burned. Not long after, about the yeere 1439. which was the 18. of *Henry 6.* was *Ri. Wiche* burned for heresie, as then they counted it. So much the more famous was his martyrdome, because the fame was, that before his death he spake as prophesying, that the Posterne of the Tower should sinke, which came to passe; vpon which hee was counted an holy man. Many came to the place where he was burnt, and there made their oblations, till by the commandement of the King they were forbid, and some punished.

After *Chichely*, in the See of *Canterbury* succeeded *Stafford*, *Kempe*, and then *Burscher*, in whose time fell out the trouble of *Reynold Peacock*, Bishop of *Chichester*; who after the death of *Humfrey Duke of Gloucester*, his Patron, was molested by the Archbishop in the yeere 1457. because he taught against the reall presence, the infallibility of the Councils, the locall dissention into hell: That the Church may erre in matter of faith: That the literall sence of the Scripture is onely to be held: He was at length inforced to giue way; for, what with blustering threats to terrifie him, as also with faire promises to allure him, they left no stone vnrolled, till they brought him to recantation at *Pauls crosse*, where also his bookes were burnt, yet for all this, himselfe (belike he was suspected) was kept in his own house during his naturall life.

1473. King *Henry 6.* being deposed, *Edward 4.* got the Crowne; In the time of whose raigne, a godly and constant seruant of Christ, named *John Goose*, alias *Husse*, was vniustly condemned and burnt at the Tower hill.

1485. *Henry 7.* comming to the Crowne, mention is made in the Registers of *Couentry* and *Lichfield*, of 9. persons persecuted in that Diocesse, whose names are set downe to be *I. Blomston*, *Rich. Hegham*, *Robert Crowther*, *I. Smith*, *Rob. Browne*, *Th. Butler*, *I. Falkes*, *R. Hilman*. The heresies, of which they were accused, were, for opposing Pilgrimages, Images, Merits, Purgatory, Shrift, Transubstantiation, and the like.

After these, in the ninth yeere of *Henry 7.* was burned an old woman of 80. yeeres, *Ioane Boughton* by name, who held eight of *Wickliffes* opinions so stiffely, that all the Doctors in *London* could not turne her: she was burned in *Smithfield* shortly after in *Anno 1497.* Some for feare recanted at *Pauls Crosse*, and in the next yeere, an old man and a Priest, and one *Babram* were burned. 1506. *William Tisworth* was burned for his Religion in *Amersham*, at which time, *Ioane Clarke* the said *Tisworths* daughter, was constrained to put fire to her Father, at whose burning, about 60. other were enioyned to beare fagots, of whom diuers were commanded to beare and weare fagots at *Lincolne* the space of 7. yeeres after, some at one time, some at another. A little after was Father *Roberts* a Miller of *Missenden* burned at *Buckingham*, and 20. other bare fagots, and did penance. About 2. or 3. yeres after, at *Amersham* was burned *Th. Barnard*, & *Ia. Mordon* in one fire, and Father *Rogers*, and Father *Reene* was burned in the cheeke. So also was *W. Littlepage*, and 30. more were burned in the right cheeke, and bare fagots at the same time. The manner of their burning in the cheeke was this: Their neckes being tyed fast to a poste with towels, and their hands holden

holden that they might not stirre, they were marked with a hot iron; The cause of those mens trouble was, because they talked against superstition, and idolatry, and were desirous to heare and reade the holy Scriptures.

Thomas Chase condemned by the Bishop of Lincolne, *William Smith*, and cast into prison, was there murdered, and after slandered to haue made away himselfe. *Thomas Norrice* for the profession of Christs Gospel was burned at Norwich 1507. *Elizabeth Samson* accused to speake against Pilgrimages, adoration of Images, and against the Sacrament of the Altar, was compelled to abiure before *William Harsey*, Chancellor at London 1508. *Laurence Ghest*, two yeeres in prison at Salisbury, was afterward put to death for his religion: so also was there martyred another poore woman, whose death so greedily sought by the Chancellor *Whittington*, was presently reuenged by the enraged Bul, which running through the pcase of people, came to the Chancellor, and gored him thorow with his hornes, carrying his guts along the streets, to the great admiration and wonder of all them that saw it.

1509. H. 7. hauing finished his course, after him followed H. 8. in whose dayes hapned much stir and contention about religion, as in the History of the Church doth appeare: In the Regist. of *Fitz-Iames*, B. of London, are contained the names of diuers, to the number of 40. persecuted in the Diocesse of London, betweene the yeere 1509. and 1527. of whom, some, after they had shewed their weaknes in recanting, did afterwards returne to their former profession, and cleauing fast to it, were for it martyred, as *W. Sweeting*, & *I. Bruyster* burned in Smithfield 1511. & *I. Browne* burned in Ashford, about the 4. yere of H. 8. about which time also fell out the trouble of *Rich. Hunne*, whom after his death they condemned of Heresie.

But now the numbers of Confessors and Martyrs arise

to such multitudes, that a long discourse, and a large treatise would hardly suffice to set them downe; wherefore I passe over the story of *I. Stilman, Tho. Man, Rob. Cosin, Chri. Shornaker*, Martyrs; As also diuers Confessors, to the number of 35. abiured about the yeere 1520. for speaking against worshipping of Saints, Pilgrimage, Inuocation of the Virgin, the Sacrament of the Lords body, and for hauiug bookes in English, as the 4. Euangelists, the Epistles of *Paul, Peter, and Iames*, the Book of the Reuelation, a Booke of Antichrist, of the 10. Commandements, and *Wickliffes Wicket*, Bookes no doubt wonderfully stufte with heresies, & doctrine vnmeet for Christians to know, and vnderstand. Oh the subtilty of those Romish Foxes! How many men and women were persecuted in the Diocesse of Lincolne, vnder Bishop *Longland*, anno 1521. for opposing, or not consenting to the Romish doctrine of pilgrimage, Image-worship, Transubstantiation, reall presence: Their arguments they collected out of the Scripture, the Shepheards Calender, *Wickliffes Wicket*, and such other bookes as they had amongst them, and notwithstanding they had not with them any learned man to ground them in the doctrine, yet they conferring together, did conuert one another, the Lords hand working among them maruelously. After the great abiuration which was vnder Bishop *Smith*, they were termed amongst themselues *Knowne men, or iust fast men*; not much vnlike to the present name of Protestants: Amongst whom, to see their trauels, their earnest seeking, burning zeale, their readings, watchings, sweete assemblies, loue, and concord, godly liuing, faithfull meaning, may make vs, now in these our dayes of free profession, to be ashamed.

From all which duely considered, we may easily gather, what would haue bin the number of Professors, had the world

world looked friendly vpon them; For if when the Temporal Magistrate tooke hand with the Ecclesiasticall to suppress them, and roote them out; if when all men of note and learning, either for hope of preferment, or feare of trouble, turned their studies otherwaies; if when the Scripture, and English bookes were forbidden; if when bookes were so rare, and deare, and so hard to come by (as before the Science of printing was inuented they were) if notwithstanding all these hinderances, the Truth of God did so multiply amongst them, what would it haue done, had they had multitude of bookes, or those cheape, the Scripture in English, had they had learned men to guide them, had they liued in a peaceable time, had they had the Magistrate either for them, or at least not against them: for why was the increase of the Gospell in Bohemia by the preaching of *J. Husse*, morere markable and further spread, then here in England, but that the Magistrate with his sword was not so seuerie against them? Whence was it that *Luther* preuailed more then *Wickliffe*, but that hee had a supporter (the Duke of Saxony) which *Wickliffe* wanted? Amongst vs at this day, doe we not all know, that Arminianisme would haue more preuailed, and infected further then yet it doth, if the Kings Maiesty were either for it, or not against it?

Wherefore all men may easily see, that they are much deceiued, who cōdemne this our doctrine of nouelty, and insultingly demand, *Where was your Church before Luther?*

To whom wee answered out of this demonstration hitherto made, That euer since the dayes of *Wickliffe*, almost 200. yeeres before *Luther*, the doctrine of the reformed Churches, that is, those points wherein they differ from the church of Rome, and in which the reformation doth consist, these points (I say) were held and professed: for whence came those persecutions? or vwho vvere they that
thus

thus were persecuted? If of the same profession with them, then is their cruelty vnreasonable, to persecute their owne fraternity: if they were otherwise, how then is the doctrine of the reformed Churches so new, or the Professours thereof so lately start vp, as our aduersaries pretend they be? But this is the fruit of ignorance and carelesnesse to read the Histories of the Church, and the records of antiquity heretofore: For then might men easily see, that the Church of England hath not wanted multitudes of well-disposed hearts; howsoever the publike authority then lacked, to maintaine the open preaching of the Gospel.

Now whilst our aduersaries bethinke themselves what to say to this part of the Induction, concerning the estate of the Church in our owne country of England, in the ages next before *Luther*, I wil passe ouer into Germany, and see what successe the Gospell had there, especially in Bohemia, by the preaching of *Iohn Husse* and others, who liued in the same age with *Wickliffe*: Afterwards will I proceede to prosecute the argument of the Induction, by the demonstration of History in the ages before *Wickliffe*, and *Husse*, if it shall be thought conuenient.

FINIS.



